

Kant *with* Sade



**NLS Seminar
2003-2004**

London Society of
The New Lacanian School

Fantasy and the Limits of Enjoyment

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PIERRE NAVEAU

‘THE MOTHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP’

Thread and Needle

I will speak about the last page of the text, where Lacan writes:

Of what Sade is lacking here, we have forbidden ourselves to say a word [on that point]. One may sense it in the gradation of the Philosophy [the Philosophy in the Boudoir] toward the fact that it is the curved needle [...] which is finally called upon to resolve a girl's Penisneid, and quite a big one.

Be that as it may, it appears that there is nothing to be gained by replacing Diotima with Dolmancé, someone whom the ordinary path seems to frighten more than is fitting and who [...] closes the affair with a Noli tangere matrem. Violated and sewn up, the mother remains forbidden. Our verdict upon the submission of Sade to the Law is confirmed. ('Kant with Sade' p. 75)

My objective is to comment on these lines of the text.

Sadism is, in this text, an affair between a mother and her daughter. That is a very paradoxical point.

Lacan underlines that Sade is not psychotic — he is submitted to the law. Why? Because, for him, the mother remains forbidden. The title of my presentation is ‘Thread and Needle’. You will see why.

The limit between pleasure and jouissance

Jouissance is forbidden. Lacan says precisely: “*Jouissance is forbidden to he who speaks as such*”. (‘Subversion of the Subject and Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious’, in *Écrits*, Routledge, London and New York)

But, it is not the law itself that bars the subject's access to jouissance. It is pleasure that sets the limit on jouissance. This means that there are two laws: Law with a capital ‘L’ and law with a small ‘l’.

My thesis is that the Sadean philosopher tries to find a solution to the problem of the difference between these two laws. On one side, there is the Law of prohibition of *jouissance*, and we can add, of prohibition of the *jouissance* of the mother, and, on the other side, there is the law of pleasure, or rather the law of permission of pleasure. In effect, pleasure erects a barrier against *jouissance*. Thus pleasure is a defence against *jouissance*. We could speak of an antinomy between pleasure and *jouissance*, a natural and a cultural barrier.

For psychoanalysis, the limit between pleasure and *jouissance* is embodied by the phallus. The phallus bears the mark of the prohibition of *jouissance*. Lacan formulates what he considers a principle — the principle of sacrifice. The Sadean philosopher, like Dolmancé — you will hear very much about Dolmancé, who is the principal character in the 'Philosophy in the Boudoir' and appears, at the end of the text, when Lacan says *'there is nothing to be gained by replacing Diotima with Dolmancé'* — the Sadean philosopher, like Dolmancé, rejects this limit. The affect that is linked with that rejection is anger. The Sadean philosopher is an angry man; Dolmancé is always boiling with rage. The presence of the tormentor in "sadistic experience" *"is reduced"*, as Lacan says, *"to being no more than its instrument."* But the fact that the *jouissance* of the tormentor, the executor, is petrified — it is the word used by Lacan — in this experience, does not withdraw it from the humility of an act to which he cannot escape as a being of flesh and, as such, as the slave of pleasure.

I will explain why the Sadean philosopher is an angry man: The fact that his *jouissance* is petrified in the sadistic experience *"does not withdraw it from the humiliation of an act..."*, the sexual act, *"to which he cannot but come as a being of flesh..."* as Lacan says, *"and, to the bones, the serf of pleasure"*. In that sense, a being of flesh and bones is submitted to the law of pleasure. And the Sadean philosopher too, as a being of flesh and bones, is submitted to that law! The expression of Lacan is a poetic one. He says in 'Kant avec Sade': the Sadean philosopher, as a being of flesh and bones, is *"submitted to pleasure whose law is"* — it's a quotation — *"to turn it always too short in its aim"* (Kant avec Sade, *Écrits*, 1966, Speaker's own translation). Lacan describes that unavoidable limit in these poetic terms: *'Always precocious is the fall of the wing'*. Lacan comments on this metaphor by giving the following indication: *"This wing here"*, he says, is raised *"to the function of representing the link of sex to death"*. It is why the Sadean philosopher must sustain his effort with sadistic fantasy. The name of such an effort is anger, or rage!

So what is *jouissance*? *Jouissance* is the inaccessible point that the tormentor tries to reach beyond pleasure. This paradoxical point can only be reached on the other's body, because the crossing over the frontier between this side and beyond produces pain. Lacan emphasises this point. He says that pain begins at the point where pleasure ends. *"Always, and however prolonged pain is supposed to be, it has nevertheless its term, the fainting of the subject"*. Lacan indicates here what the aim of sadistic experience is. It is precisely the fainting of the subject. The Sadean philosopher takes the place of the Other who aims at the subject's splitting. This gives us a sort of formula: here is the place of the

subject and here is the place of the Other. The tormentor takes this place and, therefore, his effort is to create the splitting of the subject:

Other | Subject

(a <> \$)

He takes the place of the Other. The pervert (and for Lacan this is a characteristic of perversion) takes the place of the Other.

Lacan wrote on the blackboard, at the beginning of *Seminar XX 'Encore'*, this sentence: "*The jouissance of the body of the Other is not the sign of love.*" (*Encore*, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XX, W.W. Norton & Company, p. 4)

My thesis is that the Sadean philosopher is the enemy of love. He bets on jouissance against love. So we encounter here another antinomy, the antinomy between jouissance and love. Jouissance is an experience, it is not a sign. Love, on the other hand, is a sign. As Lacan says about Sade in *Encore* "*Love is impossible and the sexual relationship drops into the abyss of nonsense*" (p. 87). From this point of view, Lacan says that "*neurosis is not perversion, neurotics dream of being perverts, but neurotics have none of the characteristics of perverts*" ('Subversion of the subject and dialectic of desire'). Why? Because the place of the neurotic and that of the pervert in the fantasy are not the same. The characteristic of perversion is that there is a direct connection between sexual behaviour and its a-morality. Perversion is a knowledge. It's a knowledge which lacks in the neurotic. Perversion is a know-how to do with sexuality.

The maxim of the Sadean philosopher proposes the formulation of the right to jouissance, you know this maxim, it has been commented on by my predecessors. "*I have the right of enjoyment over your body, anyone can say to me, and I will exercise this right, without any limit stopping me* (the limit between pleasure and jouissance) *in the capriciousness of the exactions that I might have the taste to satiate*" (Kant with Sade, p. 58). The right to jouissance is the right to cross over the frontier between pleasure and jouissance. It is the right to go from this side of the frontier to beyond.

Lacan says that the Sadean problem is the problem of morality. He refers to Freud on that point. In 'Civilisation and its Discontents', Freud writes that the problem of morality is the problem of evil. Jouissance is evil. Jouissance is evil, because it implies suffering for the Other, for my neighbour. Lacan establishes a connection between 'Civilisation and its Discontents' and 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle'. Freud shows in 'Civilisation and its Discontents' that there is an innate tendency to evil in man. Freud writes there in a Sadean style, as Lacan indicated, and I quote: "*Man tries to satisfy his need for aggression at the expense of his neighbour. 1. To exploit his work without any compensation. 2. To use him sexually without his consent. 3. To appropriate his goods. 4. To humiliate him, to inflict suffering upon him, to torture and kill him.*" (Freud writes this in 'Civilisation and its Discontents'). Lacan underlines that, for Freud, pleasure keeps the subject away from jouissance. The pleasure principle, as an unpleasure principle,

naturally embodies a beyond. But the pleasure principle is calculated to keep the subject on this side of the border, rather than to push him to go beyond it. Lacan says, in the *Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, that Sade wants always to go beyond. The name of his desire is to go through; to go beyond. But he is submitted to the law. So there are two kinds of transgression of the law: the transgression of the law of pleasure and the transgression of the law of the prohibition of jouissance.

Comment on the 'Philosophy in the Boudoir'

In the 'Philosophy in the Boudoir', there are six characters on the stage. There is a sister and her brother, Madame de Saint-Ange and Le Chevalier, a virgin girl, Eugenie, the Sadean philosopher, Dolmancé, his valet Augustine, and the mother of Eugenie, Madame de Mistival. I will comment only on the last dialogue, the seventh dialogue, because it is here that Madame de Mistival comes in, and gives us the relation between the mother and her daughter.

There are a sister and her brother, a master and his servant, and a mother and her daughter. The father is absent, but, as we will see, he is indirectly present. Before the arrival of Madame de Mistival, the five characters are present, while Dolmancé is teaching bad manners to Eugenie. In Sade's work, the philosopher is also a teacher and Pierre Klossowski, who wrote a book about Sade, has found a term which characterises this kind of teacher. This word is 'scelerat' in French. Klossowski's book is entitled 'The Philosopher Scelerat'. 'Villain', I think, is the right term: 'The Philosopher Villain'. So we are in the seventh dialogue, and I have to demonstrate that, for Lacan, sadism is a question of the relation between a daughter and her mother. It is an enigma. And we have to solve this enigma: What is the scenario that was invented by Dolmancé?

Eugenie's mother, Madame de Mistival, is being announced and enters.

Madame de Mistival: "I have heard that my daughter is here".

Madame de Saint-Ange: "Hearing your words, one might think that your daughter is in bad hands?"

(The five characters are all half naked or naked)

MdeM: "If one is to judge by the state in which I now find her, I am not wrong in deeming her in bad position".

Dolmancé: "If I were in her place, I would have already had you thrown out of the window."

(First threat)

MdeM: "I am not a woman to be thrown out of the window. I have no idea of what you are." (She will have a strong idea of what he is) "But from the state in which I find you, I can quickly reach a conclusion regarding your bad manners."

[To Eugenie:] "Eugenie, follow me."

Eugenie: "Excuse me, Madame, but I cannot give in to your request."

MdeM: "What? My daughter resists me!"

D: [Sniggering] "It is, as you can see, Madame, a case of formal disobedience. Do not tolerate it! Would you like whips to be brought in to punish this sullen child?"

E: "If the whips were brought in, I'm afraid that they would be used upon Madame rather than upon me."

MdeM: "Impertinent creature!"

D: "Let's have no insults here! All of us here are Eugenie's protectors."

(Dolmancé is sniggering again here. What do they protect? Her virginity? Her jouissance?)

[Approaching Madame de Mistival] "Be careful, you might regret your abruptness with her." (It's tit for tat; you might regret your bad manners with your daughter.)

MdeM: "What? My daughter is to disobey me and I am not able to make her recognise my rights on her?"

D: "Rights? What are these rights, Madame?"

(He is always angry. You must imagine him as always furious, enraged; remember the famous discourse of Dolmancé on the right to jouissance.)

"What are these rights, Madame? Do you believe that they are legitimate? Your daughter is only a consequence. She is the result of sexual relations between your husband, Monsieur de Mistival, and you."

(We can hear, on that point, the contempt of Dolmancé!)

There will now be a problem. I myself will be split between 'half-saying' and 'all-saying'. It is a delicate question. It is my point of view that sadism pushes to 'all-saying'. In French, it is *mi-dire* and *tout-dire*. Do you have a better term? 'Saying-all', perhaps. But Bruce Fink's translation gives 'all-saying'.

So, I apologise for the terms of the Sadean philosopher...

D: "When Monsieur de Mistival shed the drops of spunk inside your cunt which brought Eugenie into being, did you have her in mind during the sexual act? How do you expect her to be grateful to you today, just because, formerly, you discharged when Monsieur de Mistival dared to fuck your selfish cunt?"

(Jouissance is selfish. Sade himself says that) "When your husband was fucking you, you were enjoying to be fucked and you were not thinking of your child. Why would your daughter be grateful to you?"

(As you can see, jouissance, for Dolmancé, is separated from the Other, and from love. Dolmancé wants to separate the child from its mother. In a certain way, he is like a father who would separate the child from its mother. Dolmancé's postulate is that a father and a mother have no feelings for their children; and that children have no feelings for their mother and father. One can say that, for the Sadean philosopher, love is not natural. Love is a cultural creation. There is no love between parents and children. Jouissance and love are as opposed as nature and culture can be.) "What do we see? The son hates his father; the father keeps his son away from him." Love is a fiction, love is an illusion. Dolmancé identifies the father with, as he says, a few drops of sperm – so that the father has no debt towards anybody. He owes nothing to his son. The father is a father in himself. In a word, he is just an instrument, to use Lacan's word. He exists only for himself, not for someone else, which is the opposite definition of the father for Lacan.

The definition of the father for Lacan is that a father creates a link between desire and law. For the Sadean philosopher, it is the contrary. The father breaks off the links. He does not create any link: a father is a selfish being, because *jouissance* is selfish; the father breaks the link between the child and the mother, between *jouissance* and desire, between *jouissance* and love. What Dolmancé says, in his discourse on the right to *jouissance*, is that the son has no debt towards his father, he owes nothing to him: "*They gave you life, but they hold not a single right to ask for any of these feelings, like pity, gratitude and love.*"

Then comes the objection of Madame de Mistival:

MdeM: "*But the care, the care I have given her!*"

D: "*Care? What care? It is the product of social convention, since you had done no more for her than what is required by social convention. Eugenie surely owes you nothing.*"

(The parent's education is reduced, by Dolmancé, to a simple duty.)

"*And her education has been so poor. It was an error, for which we are now obliged to replace all the useless principles you put into her head. Here are your six mistakes: First mistake — You spoke to her of God as if there was such a thing. Second mistake — You spoke to her of virtue, as if virtue was a necessity. Third mistake — You spoke to her of religion, as if religion was not the result of the deception of the strongest one and of the imbecility of the weakest one. Fourth mistake — You spoke to her of Jesus-Christ, as if that scoundrel was anything else than a deceitful rascal and a villain.*"

(Blasphemy is very important in sadism. My question is : Is Dolmancé not speaking about himself ? Dolmancé is a villain, he is the villain philosopher.) "*Fifth mistake — You have told her that to fuck is a sin, whereas to fuck is the most delightful action in life. Sixth mistake — You have wanted to give her good manners, as if a young girl's happiness were not in immorality and debauchery, as if the happiest of women were not the one who wallows in filth and libertinage, the one who defies prejudices and scorns reputation.*" So Dolmancé's verdict is: "*You have done nothing for your daughter, Eugenie owes you nothing but hate and contempt.*"

MdeM: "*But my daughter is doomed, it is clear.*" (She has now a more precise idea of what Dolmancé is) "*Unfortunately, it is clear that, my daughter, you are among monsters here. Tear yourself from them and come with me. I beg you on my knees.*" [And she falls on her knees.] (It's a demand of love.)

D: [still sniggering] "*What a touching scene. Go ahead Eugenie.*"

E: [naked] "*My dear Mama, I give you my buttocks. Kiss them, my dear Mama, suck them with your mouth, it is all your Eugenie can give you.*"

[She gives her mother her buttocks to kiss.] (It's her answer to her mother's demand of love.)

"*Dolmancé, I shall always prove myself worthy of having been your pupil. Dolmancé, you are my master and I am your pupil.*" (We must remind ourselves here that, for Dolmancé, the buttocks are the most valuable part of the body.)

MdeM: [thrusts away her daughter, curses her child]

"*You are no longer my child, cursed be the day on which I gave you life.*"

(Dolmancé has succeeded in breaking off the link between a mother and her daughter)

D: *"But it is an insult — You are no longer my child ! You must be punished. You have repulsed Eugenie with too much brutality, it is a crime, and a punishment is required for this crime. Undress yourself and strip yourself naked to receive this punishment for your brutality."* (The guilty mother is condemned to be in the same state in which they are, naked. In fact, to be a naked woman, for Madame de Mistival, is to be offended and humiliated. The aim of Dolmancé is to humiliate the mother in full view of her daughter. It is a point that has been underlined by Pierre Klossowski in his book.)

[Augustine, Dolmancé's valet, undresses Madame de Mistival, who seeks to defend herself.]

MdeM: [to Madame de Saint-Ange] *"I will make a complaint."*

MdeS-A: *"You will not be able to do so."*

MdeM: *"Am I to be killed here?"*

D: *"Why not ?"*

(Madame de Saint-Ange intervenes here to say that she has learnt from Eugenie that, the day before, Monsieur de Mistival used the whip on his wife and mistreated her until blood came. Thus, the whip comes into play through Eugenie's father ! We are, at this point, in the zone of crime. It is a crime to touch the mother. And, here, it is clear that the mother's body is an incarnation of what Lacan calls the body of the Other. Her body represents here the body of the Other. This point links jouissance with crime. In jouissance, there is a crime which is implied, because it is forbidden to touch the mother's body.)

D: *"I have never seen a body more mistreated than this."* [He kisses her arse.]

MdeM: *"Leave me or I'll scream for help."*

MdeS-A: [seizes her by the arm]

"Listen to me, whore:" (The mother, now the crime is being accomplished, is treated like a whore)

"You are a victim sent to us by your husband. You must now submit to your fate, for nobody can save you from it. What will your fate be ? I have no idea. I can say only this : You will be tortured, but the choice of torture is up to your daughter. She will give the order and you are going to suffer."

(We are deciphering the end of Lacan's text. It clearly stated that the moving force of torture is the revenge of a daughter against her mother, even if Dolmancé is exclusively interested in his unique object, the buttocks of Madame de Mistival.)

D: *"Now Eugenie, come here and put your buttocks next to your mother's. I should like to compare your arses."*

(The most important thing in the daughter / mother relation is the negation of sexual difference, and the sadist or pervert knows how to deny sexual difference. Next, Dolmancé, in a logical threat, sodomises Eugenie's mother. He says, at that point, that he is the rival of Madame de Mistival's husband, Monsieur de Mistival.)

"I can tell that your husband has often trod this path." (Which means that sodomy is not a discovery for Madame de Mistival.)

MdeM: "You are hurting me."

(This complaint does not stop Dolmancé. Very importantly, pain is not recognised as a limit by the Sadean Philosopher. He seeks to reach *jouissance*. He breaks through the limit between pleasure and *jouissance*. Lacan insists on this point of the equivalence between *jouissance*, pain and unpleasure.)

D: "You suffer, you weep, you scream!" (And I have *jouissance*!)

[Eugenie uses a dildo and thrusts it into both her mother's vagina and anus.] (She has the phallus.)

E: "Come, my dear Mama. Let me serve you as a husband. But this instrument is thicker than your husband's one." [At that moment, Dolmancé buggers Eugenie] [She cries victory]: "Here I am, at once incestuous, adulteress and sodomite!"

(Lacan reveals that the secret of this Sadean affair is Eugenie's *Penisneid*, as he wrote on page 75. And as the sadistic fantasy wants it, at this precise point, Madame de Mistival loses consciousness. This point is crucial.)

[Madame de Saint-Ange moves as if to help her, but Dolmancé stops her]

D: "There is nothing so lustful as the sight of a woman who has fainted."

(Lacan shows that what the pervert hates in the mother is the woman! The pervert seeks to reach in the mother the point where she is a woman. So in the 'Philosophy in the Boudoir', the name of this splitting of the subject is the point where the mother is a woman. It is a splitting between mother and woman. Jacques-Alain Miller used the expression: 'the splitting of the mother between mother and woman', at a conference in Lausanne. The subject's fainting — the point where the mother is a woman — is the true secret of Dolmancé's *jouissance*.)

[Madame De Mistival is whipped by Dolmancé. She slowly comes back to life.]

MdeM: "Why do you call me back from the darkness of the grave ? Why do you plunge me again into the horrors of life?"

D: [whips her]

"Because, my dear mother, everything has not been said yet !" (This sentence is essential!)

"You must hear your sentence: I have a valet who suffers from one of the most serious cases of syphilis. He will shoot his bad seed in both of this lady's orifices. As long as she will be ravaged by this disease, the whore will remember not to disturb her daughter, when Eugenie wishes to fuck." (He defends the daughter against her mother.)

MdeM: "Such terrible punishment! Such horrible damnation!"

[The valet does what his master orders him to do.] (He violates her. The poison has been inoculated into the mother who finds herself between life and death. And then, there is the famous idea which is expressed by Madame de Saint-Ange, who reveals herself not to be an angel.)

MdeS-A: "We must now be certain that the poison circulating in Madame's veins cannot escape. To that end, I propose that Eugenie will stitch up her cunt and her

arse so that the poison will, all the more promptly, destroy her bones.”

E: “Good idea ! Quickly fetch me thread and needle!”

(There we are. In ‘Kant with Sade’, Lacan wrote : “One may sense it in the gradation of the ‘Philosophy in the Boudoir’ towards the fact that it is the curved needle which is finally called upon to resolve a girl’s *Penisneid*, and quite a big one.”)

“Open your thighs, my dear mama, so I may sew you tightly, so you may give me no more little brothers or sisters.

[Madame de Saint-Ange gives Eugenie a large needle, through the eye of which is passed a heavy red-waxed thread. Eugenie sews the vagina of her mother.]

MdeM: “Oh my God, what pain!” [Dolmancé is laughing like a madman, writes Sade]

E: “My dear Mama, now it is done.” [And Dolmancé takes the needle and sews up the anus of Madame de Mistival.] (He is the master of everyone’s anus.)

D: “All has been said.” (For Lacan, this expression is the mark of the sadistic fantasy, which means no more words and silence. Jacques-Alain Miller calls this *all has been said* the silence of the fantasy.)

D: “May this lesson serve to remind you that your dear daughter is old enough to do what it pleases her to do. It pleases her to fuck, she loves to fuck, she was born to fuck. If you do not want to be fucked yourself, the best thing for you to do is to let her do whatever she wants.”

(We now understand why the book bears an epigraph of a sentence that is absent in the English translation: ‘A mother must make her daughter read this book. It is a story of a daughter’s revenge against her mother.’)

Conclusion

Firstly — Dolmancé, the Sadean Philosopher, sustains the cause of a daughter’s hatred for her mother. In a word, Dolmancé sustains the cause of a daughter’s *Penisneid*, as Lacan says on page 75.

Secondly — Lacan is the only psychoanalyst to have shown this point, namely that Eugenie’s mother is sewn up: “Violated and sewn up, the mother nevertheless remains forbidden.” The villain philosopher does not know it, but he is: as a sadist, submitted to the law. He does not know that God is dead and he does not know that he is the subject of the law. It is the last sentence in ‘Kant avec Sade’.

Discussion:

Q: *The pervert’s desire is to go beyond. In what way does this differ from the desire of the analyst?*

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S2 // S1

Discourse of the Analyst

The analyst wants the subject to go beyond. The subject is the Other, not the analyst himself. The discourse of the analyst shows its difference to the pervert's fantasy. Lacan says that the analyst gives this position to the subject, in order to be the Other for him. The name of this place is the place of the Other. The pervert steals this place from the subject. The problem lies in the gap between pleasure and jouissance. This gap corresponds to a knowledge. Is it a Sadean drive to want to go further in knowledge. It is a question, but the position is not the same.

Q: To come back to those two different kinds of law, you mentioned stages of pleasure and limit in terms of real, symbolic and imaginary. In which way?

The terms of Lacan are that the one is natural and the other is cultural. The cultural one is the symbolic principle and the natural one — is it real?

Q: If it was the case, there is possibly something to be said about the difference between pleasure and jouissance with regards to the real. Both are linked to the real in different ways. If the Sadean philosopher is fundamentally angry, you presented Eugenie as being very angry too, but here the anger is linked to the Penisneid. One cannot just say that the sadist is angry on behalf of her.

In 1960, there was Pierre Klossowski and Jacques Lacan who sustained this thesis, namely that the pervert takes the side of the girl. That is a strong thesis, and very unusual. You say that it can't be the whole question. Perversion can't be reduced to this. It is a problem, but the end of Lacan's 'Kant avec Sade' puts the accent on that point. From a logical point of view, is there an equivalence between sodomy and taking the side of the girl? Why not? There is a path to take, I must develop this.

I think that to take the side of the girl is a position against woman. And then, against the difference between man and woman, which is the Freudian point of view. He wrote a text about perversion, in which he says that the motive of perversion is the denial of the sexual difference. I think we can understand that if the pervert is submitted to the law, it means that the Oedipus complex works, that it has a function for the pervert. In Sade, we have a certain approach to the father, namely as a villain. Several aspects correspond here: the preference of the girl against the mother and the denial of the difference between men and women. When Dolmancé says to the daughter and mother to both show him their backsides, it is an image of that denial. Lacan says that, in Sade's text, Dolmancé is like a father. He is a wicked father, a father of jouissance. As a villain, he is a father substitute. He prefers the cause of the girl to the cause of the woman. This preference is indicated by his taste for sodomy. The matheme of sadism is precisely to prefer the girl to the woman. Lacan is marked by his reading of Klossowski, I think.

Q : *Is this equivalence an equivalence between Dolmancé and the girl, as they share the denial of castration ?*

For Dolmancé, castration anxiety is not a question. It is what is lacking in this text. Where is Dolmancé's anxiety? The pervert treats the problem of the girl, because he wants to avoid his own problem, the anxiety of castration. Sodomy is the negation of sexual difference. The religion of Dolmancé is that every human being has an anus. He is the master in this religion and an expert.

Q: *Would you say that this denial of castration has something to do with the denial of the castrated Other or the barred Other? In relation to what you said about the pervert trying to reach in the mother the point where she is a woman. To reach femininity beyond motherhood which, in Seminar XX, is the barred Other. There is a failure on the side of the pervert to love and to recognise the barred Other. Is the anger the failure to reach that point ?*

Yes. And it begins in the way of speaking. It is an important point. There is a way of speaking which wounds the modesty; it is the project of the pervert to wound the woman's modesty. The most important thing, for me, in Dolmancé's discourse, is his way of speaking. If I have to write something about this text, I would write about his way of speaking. Because each word that comes out of his mouth tries to wound, to do evil. The Other must be a wounded Other.

Q : *You have talked about the pervert's will to go beyond, to touch on jouissance, to touch upon the woman in the mother. On page 74, Lacan wrote : " Sade thus stops, at the point where desire is knotted together with the law. If something in him held to the law, in order there to find the opportunity Saint Paul speaks of, to be sinful beyond measure, who would throw the first stone ? But he went no further." We have talked about the role of Oedipus in perversion and the role of the father reduced to this point. What would it mean for the pervert to go beyond that point ?*

The 'Philosophy in the Boudoir' is not a treaty on desire. On desire — not a word. "Of what Sade is lacking here, we have forbidden ourselves to say a word." It is important. Lacan shows that, in the text of Sade, there is nothing about desire. It is a question. Jacques-Alain Miller asked the question about Picasso's paintings. With regard to the paintings of Picasso, is it a question of jouissance or of desire? Is Picasso speaking about desire in his paintings? And, I think, Jacques-Alain Miller's feeling is that he is not. And here it is the same question perhaps. Page 75: "Of a treatise truly about desire, there is thus little here, even nothing." And that is the sin of Sade, the moral cowardice of Sade.

Sade seems to be very courageous, very audacious. But, on that point, he is a coward. Not a word about desire. When you defend the cause of the girl, you are not interrogating yourself about desire, about your desire. That is very consistent, in Lacan's position. If it was a question of desire, Sade would speak about a son, as he is a man. "Sade thus stopped at the point where desire is knotted together with the law" because his preoccupation is the relation between the law and jouissance. "The Oedipal father knots the law to desire". This is a sentence of Lacan. The father knots the law to desire. So if Dolmancé is a figure of the father, it is not this kind of father. It is a father who denies desire. It is clear that Dolmancé does not want to hear anything about desire. If Madame de

Mistival, or any other character, says "my desire is...", it would be a strange question for him. It is Greek for him.

Q: *My question before was if nature was the final word about it. In a way, it is surprising that Lacan uses that word nature, when nature is precisely a signifier of the Other mostly used by perverts to justify everything. Why is it that the difference between pleasure and jouissance is called the law? As if we believe in the laws of nature. And if we use that term, we use it differently from the law of the symbolic or the social understanding of it.*

Lacan answers with Levi-Strauss that the prohibition of incest is second and the law of pleasure is first. In a certain way, the prohibition of incest, the Law with a capital 'L', is a form which human beings give to the natural law of pleasure. In that way, there is only one law for Lacan. He says it in the 'Subversion of the Subject...' (It is at the moment where he speaks about Levi-Strauss): "It is not the Law itself that bars the subject's access to jouissance, rather creates out of an almost natural barrier a barred subject." So, for Lacan, in this passage, it is the same thing. The Law with a capital 'L' and the law with a small 'l' is the same thing. As the human being is a cultural being, he gives this form to the law. For Aristotle, it is the first law of life, the law of pleasure and unpleasure. It means that the pervert is treating this primary law, which is the law of life or the difference between pleasure and pain.

Q: *We talked about the distinction between those two laws. The natural law of pleasure and jouissance and the cultural version of that law which is the Oedipal law of the prohibition against the mother. In what way, is that not the version of courtly love which dresses up the impossibility and makes it into an artificial prohibition? Is that the same? You wouldn't think of the pervert as the knight of courtly love.*

Prohibition is a fiction. But the pervert is against love. It is difficult. Lacan says that Gide is a pervert. Can we say that Andre Gide is the enemy of love? Dolmancé rejects love and the idea of love. We can understand this. It is a specified position towards the Other. The Other is approached not as a being that can be loved, nor desired.

Q: *It is the reduction of the Other to object. The reduction from love, as making the Other exist, to jouissance as a reduction of the Other to object. That is why desire is a register that then no longer features.*

This is why Lacan says that Sade teaches us something about our fantasies because, in our fantasies, there is a difficulty with love. It is the definition of a fantasy. There is something in the way.

Q: *There is a disjunction between the all saying and love, which is on the side of the half saying, and also on the side of the Other. Could you say something about this paradox between the all-saying in disjunction with love?*

When you are saying it all, you don't love. Lacan is the first psychoanalyst who said this; that when you want to say everything, you wound modesty. You do not take account of the Other. And, in Lacan, there is a definition of the fantasy that in your fantasy you substitute the Other with the object. The way to write the fantasy is this: a / A. In your fantasy, the Other is reduced to being an object. You cannot love an object, the object can be the cause of your desire, but, if you love

him, it is as a subject that you love him.

Q: *Is that also applicable to the question about the difference between the pervert and the analyst, where the analyst attempts to separate the object and the Other and in a way those two mathemes show how it is the same terrain.*

Yes, I think a man has to learn to love the cause of his desire, but it is not a given thing. He has to learn this.

Q: *Are you saying that the Other of love does exist?*

When you love, you make the Other exist as a contingency, yes. The problem is that it is the same with religion. To make God exist, you love him. That is why there is a relation between God and woman, as Lacan says in *Encore*. What is very enigmatic in Sade is women's jouissance. Very enigmatic!

Kant with Sade – translated by J.B. Swenson, October, MIT press, 1989

Philosophy in the Bedroom – translated by Seaver and Wainhouse, Arrow Books, 1965, London