

“THE PIANO TEACHER” AND THE QUESTION OF PERVERSION

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to demonstrate how perversion, as a subject, activates investigation. As a starting point, it explores Freud’s idea surrounding fetishism as a paradigm of itself; a necessary interval between neurosis and psychosis. This analysis is followed by a presentation of various notions developed by Lacan in his teachings. Subsequently, the article analyzes Haneke’s 2001 film “The piano teacher”, here considered as a case of substitute perversion that adds to the few documented cases of this nature. The movie contributes elements that allow to think about and further develop the notion of substitute perversion in psychosis. In it, “*the teacher*” demonstrates the separation between love, desire, jouissance and what Lacan calls “false hole” through borromean rings. Lastly, questions are posed regarding perversion; organized by answers, opposite the two aforementioned structures.

Keywords: perversion; perverse substitution; The piano teacher; borromean rings; false hole.

Resumo: “A professora de piano” e a questão da perversão. O artigo ocupa-se de mostrar como a perversão é uma temática que ativa a pesquisa. Explora, inicialmente, a ideia de Freud sobre o fetichismo como paradigma desse operador clínico, intervalo necessário entre a neurose e a psicose. Depois apresenta noções formuladas por Lacan em seus ensinamentos. Examina, posteriormente, o filme A professora de piano, de Haneke (2001), considerando-o material que contribui diante da escassez de casos sobre perversão. Encontra no filme elementos para pensar e indagar a suplência perversa na psicose. A professora ensina a propósito da amarração do nó borromeano entre amor, desejo, gozo e do estabelecimento do que Lacan chama: “falso furo”. O artigo, finalmente, formula questões sobre essa estrutura clínica que, diferentemente das outras duas, se organiza não em certezas, mas adiantando respostas.

Palavras-chave: perversão; suplência perversa; A professora de piano; nó borromeano; falso furo.

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INTRODUCTION

Perversion provokes concerns and ignites investigation. In fact, we don't have paradigmatic cases such as *Dora*, *Rat man* or *Schereber* (FREUD, 1905a; 1909; 1911/2008). One may think that the *Young homosexual woman* (FREUD, 1920/2008) fulfills this function, although there have been disagreements, since this would be, to some, hysteria and not perversion. In any case, we are lacking productions that share the importance of neurosis and psychosis arising from the analytical encounter with those who approach the enigma surrounding desire, love and jouissance in a different manner and the discourse regarding the categories of Real, Symbolic and Imaginary.

Given the state of affairs, effects are bound to rise, as illustrated by the homosexual question. When it is related *de facto* with perversion, it brings consequences; one need only think of how this alignment leads to the negate of psychoanalytical practices to homosexuals. Damaging sequels derived from equating transsexuality to psychosis or any other structure. These courses of action omit the basic premise of psychoanalytic clinic: it's non phenomenal nature

Further psychoanalytical elaborations dissent in regard to perversion. Let us remember: the Viennese professor borrows elements from both sexology and XIX century psychiatry to make unheard of elaborations. The perverse, understood from Freud's perspective, is the distinctive sign of human sexuality. The inaugural gesture generalizes perversion: it's intrinsically ours and it's because of it that we're sexed! Since then, whoever chooses to use the idea of perversion to insult in any way, includes themselves there, along with all humans.

That is not all, the investigations carried out by the father of psychoanalysis distinguish the perversion as a noseologic perspective. It is the "positive perversion", (FREUD, 1905b/2008) or perverse structure, according to lacanian teachings. Thus, since the 1930s, there is an analytical collection according to which, the fetishistic way of dealing with maternal castration is paradigmatic of this operator. The phallus, in it, is the Other's object in which (it is believed, despite the founded knowledge of it not existing), the maternal phallus is initially referred and later, logically, referred to a donation stemming from the father (FREUD, 1927/2008). The phallus belongs to a series along with *it* that comes *between* any couple and functions as a signifier, not any signifier, but rather a privileged one, according to lacanian developments (LACAN, 1958/1971).

The works of the Viennese author establish dualities in order to provide an account of how perversion works, the first pair being masochism and voyeurism with exhibitionism (FREUD, 1924/2008). Lacan transforms these nexuses, along with what would be feminine perversion, through his creation of the notion: object *a*. The links are established between masochism and exhibitionism. The trick lies in bringing out the object from the Other; the gaze and the voice, respectively. The second pair consists of sadism and voyeurism, in which the ploy is to use the victim, *the partenaire*, as a means to guarantee the existence of the Other, as well as it's jouissance, restoring object *a* to the Other (LACAN, 1968-1969/2008).

Concerning feminine perversion, it's enough to consider: if a woman is not-whole she would be the opposite of perversion, given that the feminine jouissance is opposed to the jouissance linked to the object *a* and the phallus. Thus, this affirmation leads to questions and entails consequences for psychoanalytic endeavours: *strictly speaking, is there a feminine perversion? What would be the implications of not passing or saving perversion, for a woman?*

The psychogenesis of a case of female homosexuality (FREUD, 1920/2008) admits further investigations. From it, it can be discussed whether the structurally perverse revolves around the paternal challenge and to procure oneself a phallus with the objective of deny the lack of it through suicide. In it, dying and giving birth are joined for the "young homosexual woman", as said by Lacan. Or rather, the discussion may stem from the consideration of the perverse being a case of hysteria in which she "borrows her body when she finds herself reduced to the *partenaire's* object of desire, or rather she stands her placement as a displeasure that is subjectively translated as disgust" (IUALE; LUTEREAU; THOMPSON, 2014, p. 133)¹. These analysts were able to obtain this outcome by using data from publications from the XXI century about "the young woman", renamed today as "Csillag" by her biographers (RIEDER; VOIGT, 2004). They contributed elements that neither Lacan nor Freud had access to. Truth to be told, as in any case study, there is no closure and fragments of Real make us stumble.

Once published, these biographical letters scorch other publications, such as (ALLOUCH, 2004). The material is clinical, since perversion takes shape as a text, a contract, a movie... Precisely, sadism and masochism are irreducible aesthetics to Marquis de Sade and Leopold Von Sacher Masoch. In fact, perverse structuration is a discursive knot that joins body administration policies and therefore of jouissance.

1 Free translation: "prestar su cuerpo cuando se ve reducida a ser objeto del deseo del partenaire, o bien soporta tal lugar como un displacer que se traduce subjetivamente como asco" (IUALE; LUTEREAU; THOMPSON, 2014, p. 133).

The manners of perverse subjection of desire invoke the interweaving reader producer text. Serge André desciphers this idea in Sade; in the imperialistic pretension in his writing, the dictatorial character present in his texts that pretended to erase remnants, the necessary excess and the dimension of the *jouissance* (ANDRÉ, 1995). Is the paradoxical unconscious condemnation that inhabits the sadist, as they kidnap, through words, the excess resulting of the signification itself. It's their incessant attempt to enclose a new possible *jouissance* or Other *jouissance*. It's the effort of perverse reductionism: it's abolitionist crusade of feminine *jouissance*.

Marquis de Sade is a clear example of differences and discussions that persist. For some, his perversions lie in his written material, in pretending to write everything sexual, in absorbing the Real through the Symbolic. Thus, leaving no room to go beyond the phallic logic. Sade, as a man, would be subjected to neurosis (ANDRÉ, 1995). Other authors like Pierre Bruno, however, consider him to be perverse and a theorist of perversion (BRUNO, 2005). Elizabeth Roudinesco, along with the Marquis, places the inversion of the law as a perverse distinctive and traces it back to medieval believers, the birth of science, the nazi regime and the modern fight for animal rights. Roudinesco, a historian and analyst, considers that Sade accomplishes the production of the most unclassifiable literary piece “since during his life he faced three political regimes, stemming from monarchy to the Empire that instigated in him and his works the most vile from what they themselves were carrying out”² (ROUDINESCO, 2009, p. 82).

It becomes necessary to insist, Freud opens a never before seen terrain in the field of perversions, now considered as a different way to approach the unconscious desire and the relationship with the phallus. It's the fetishist path related to the masculine weakness for the field. Furthermore, the Viennese establishes three masochisms, one of which would be the feminine masochism (FREUD, 1924). The aim here is not to discuss but rather stress that:

For psychoanalysis there are problems and these problems admit answers, either exhaustive or partial. But in this case, this is a true enigma: masochism is that “extravagant” perversion [...] of a more extreme and therefore more significant goal.³ (ASSOUN, 2005, p. 13).

While this “extravagant” perversion is paradigmatic for Lacan, the fetishism, for Freud, is the “Schibboleth or password that grants the access to the psychoanalytical [...] to men's knowledge captured by the symptom”⁴ (ASSOUN, 1995, p. 11). The division between both authors becomes crystal clear. Lacanian education has tones. Thereby, in his “return” the phallic pathway of the fetish carries on, it goes back to the absent and introduces the function of the veil through screen memories (LACAN, 1956-1957/2008). An additional variation is the masochist manner of the instrumentation of object *a* (LACAN, 1968-1969/2008). A further variety is the use of the *partenaire's* body, as a function of the kantian universal, to demonstrate, by means of a phantasy scenification, the non-existent sexual relationship (LACAN, 1963/2009). Additionally, inflections of the transition to the *partenaire* of the subjective division and the answers (always aberrant or perverse) from the phallic logic to the unsettling nature of the feminine *jouissance*. To this listing, we must add the conception of the *pèreversion* and the consequences that detach themselves from the nodal logic... as well as other modulations.

Such variety answers to the perversion as a noseologic prism, a gap between Neurosis Psicosis that, by means of the “lalengua” “displays different shapes depending on the perspective from which it is described”⁵ (OTERO, 2013, p. 11). The denial, for this reason, can be on the analyst's side.

[...] Lacan never used that term of Verleugnung for perversion, but instead reserved it to designate the relationship of the speaker with their act, to make them fall with all the weight right there where ignorance of the act is more pathetic, which is not the case of the perverse but that of the psychoanalyst - whose specialty and whose ethics are based on the subject's relationship with the act⁶. (LOMBARDI, 2013, p. 13).

2 Free translation: “porque en vida se enfrentó a tres regímenes políticos, desde la monarquía hasta el Imperio, que hicieron de él y de su obra el lado más oscuro de lo que ellos mismos estaban llevando a cabo” (ROUDINESCO, 2009, p. 82).

3 Free translation: “Para el psicoanálisis existen problemas y estos problemas admiten respuestas, bien sean exhaustivas o parciales. Pero en este caso se trata de un verdadero enigma: el masoquismo es esa perversión ‘extravagante’ [...] de meta más extrema y por ello misma más significativa” (ASSOUN, 2005, p. 13).

4 Free translation: “Schibboleth o contraseña que decide el acceso a la cosa psicoanalítica [...] al saber del hombre capturado por el síntoma” (ASSOUN, 1995, p. 11).

5 Free translation: “muestra diferentes formas según la perspectiva desde donde se lo describa” (OTERO, 2013, p. 11).

6 Free translation: “[...] Lacan jamás empleó ese término de Verleugnung para la perversión, sino que lo reservó para designar la relación del ser hablante con su acto, para hacerlo caer con todo el peso justo allí donde el desconocimiento del acto resulta más patético, que no es en el caso del perverso sino el del psicoanalista – cuya especialidad y cuya ética se basan en la relación del sujeto con el acto” (LOMBARDI, 2013, p. 13).

DENOUEMENT

The most “trifling” act is the most “abhorrent”: speaking, committing to a saying (LUTERAU, 2015). It’s scandalizing even to the perversion itself as it opens the way, without backing down, to a certain truth. It is the foundation of the psychoanalytic act! In a film like *The Piano teacher* by Michael Haneke (2001), clinic stumbles upon novelties. There the clinic can learn and it thinks itself. In perversion, above all, it becomes necessary to resort to aesthetic and literary productions, due to the lack of case studies. Immediately comments regarding the differential diagnosis present in the film are brought up, without first having consulted the novel in which it was based. The result of it is but a hypothesis as the subjective structure could only occur in a psychoanalysis, as a transference. The structure is not found necessarily in the beginning, as it usually is; it’s a matter of the end.

The piano teacher establishes itself as study material, not unlike literature, philosophy or mathematics, able to provide a constant contribution to the field of psychoanalysis. The design of this text follows the film’s sequences, beginning, as the analysis has taught us, from the *aposteriori*; where the narration is no longer dependant of the screen, situations are no longer staged. This becomes an index of the singular relationship, in every structure, with the act.

Erika protrudes the scene with a bleeding hole per chance resonance that love does kill. She can’t be quite placed as a woman with lack or desire, whom she has cut. She leaves, on stage, a mother who will undoubtedly resort to alcohol and dresses to plug holes. She is absent in regards to the name that represents her: “The teacher”. She is not completely present for the spectator’s knowledge as she comes through the screen or the veil of projection, leaving behind only a facade, murmurs and a night.

Identifying how it came down to this allows us to consider the subjective position. The film shows *Erika*’s movement to knot desire, love and jouissance. Remember: without a body or an object, there is no perversion. With the last step she takes exciting the scene, she tries to build a body to enjoy (as jouissance) and assemble the objects: object *a*.

Now we must revert to the beginning of the film, to the struggle between two women. On the one hand, the mother holding the daughter accountable for how she hasn’t heard news about her. On the other hand, as an answer, the daughter shaves her head and elicits the response of her mother: tearing *The teacher*’s unused dress. The scene displays an attempt to create a hole, of producing a Symbolic gap with effects on the Real between both women yet the conduct is Imaginary. Could it be the index of a relationship full of havoc? It would seem that it is an imaginary duality, for it’s distance and reversibility. The issue regarding the dresses and the perverse scenifications would be a movement in function of the desire, a use of the phantasy, ever perverse! in a psychotic structuration.

What place does *Erika* occupies in regards to the mother? The words exchanged during the struggle give a sign, they speak of another woman, of a student. *Be the best, don’t let them surpass you!* is inscribed in the motherly words and it configures the terms of its demand. *The teacher* follows this path by, for example, cutting her rival’s hands. Sleeping together follows the same logic, along with the paternal reference of the bed, it’s a musical mention: Schubert. A pianist committed to an asylum, a great compositor, according to the absent father it that bed.

Immediately after, the scene presents its two female protagonists inside an elevator in which they literally close its door to the man; *Walter, the student*. Nevertheless, he will persist. He will fixate his desire onto his teacher and he will make an enigmatic love demand since she responds as a pianist to the motherly demand. She will teach and achieve by moments to split from her vigilance. In the *rendez vous* the paternal is brought up again. *Walter* and *Erika* talk about Schubert and Schumann: both “crazy” pianists, one of whom had a mangled hand as a result of his musical passion.

Women would be the strong sex with reference to the perversion, said strength comes from bearing children. Then, perversity is replaced by maternity. However, the son is, by structure, in a phallic position, not necessarily fulfilling the function of the fetish. *Erika* is neither a replacement nor a consecrated instrument that garanties the jouissance of the maternal Other. It’s in its Ideal function of the Ego, without capitalizing a plus from the jouissance or denying the structural castration or the castration regarding the language, as speakers of it. One thing is clear, the mother of the teacher covers the woman, her universe is reduced to her daughter. Then the melancholic and paranoid manifestations caused by the sexual intrusion and carried by the student are on the agenda.

A maternal field that lacks the “screening” function is weak to perversion. A parental position that is in plain sight closes at its opening it opens holes in the unconscious and the pulsional, producing a sinister effect rather than a knotted one. The familial indicates that not everything can be exposed or sealed; an essential step between erotica and pornography. This function is articulated through its formulation, from the son’s position,

from a viable *can you lose me?* when something creates a lapse on the maternal.

Watching TV, drinking wine, meandering home. Going beyond the act and committing suicide? A delirium around stolen children?... In any case, thinking about the course of the movie, meaning what would be the logical continuity to loss, the index of the castration, to a mother such as *The teacher*, would lead to psychotic reparations and not to perverse solutions.

In the next scene, *Erika*, distant from the maternal universe, goes to a cabin to see, like the men in it, sex between a couple. She chooses a porn film in which the mouth, the pulsional hole that is most established in her, is used. There is no masturbation but through the acting of smelling a napkin she tries to understand something. In the napkin she finds traces of semen, sign of the masculine jouissance. This complication would be the indicator of a lapsus in the knotting sexual jouissance, in function of the object of desire and love. Actions such as the formers seem to point out the beginning of the formation of the phantasy; they are trait, not a “positive perversion” (FREUD, 1905b/2008).

Let us remember: the phantasy, as an answer to the enigma surrounding the Other’s desire, holds up. The phantasy of what the subject would be as an object guides the desire and regulates the jouissance. The key here is that the invention of the known unknown is the subject’s, not the Other’s. This is a structural fundament. The perversion institutes the answers on the basis of an instrumentalization of the phantasy, meanwhile the neurosis locates questions and the psychosis, certainties. The use of the phantasy in perversion is public, not private as it is in the neurosis. For the psychosis, on the other hand, this knowledge returns from the Real.

Note that for *The teacher* it’s not about a desire to go beyond, towards a will for jouissance, nor is it about a dissatisfied desire, prevented or inadmissible, but rather an impossibility, born from the body, that blocks the sexual enjoyment (as jouissance). This is a common trait in every encounter: by looking at the couple in the car, by shredding the genital area and then, in the four rendezvous with *Walter*.

The next sequence corresponds to his entrance as a student. During the exam she makes some traces on the paper using her pen. Immediately after we find her on the bathroom, cutting herself, making traces on her genitals along with the protruding liquid of blood. This is done, perhaps, with the intention of draining the jouissance from that body, complicated on it’s libidinal investiture. A body that’s doesn’t go through and it’s not stirred by music. It constitutes a display of the failure to sectionate or to be sexed. Note that: *sex* comes from *sectum*, cut or chop.

What kind of *sectum* is intended to be instaurated on the body and precisely on the genitals? Doesn’t it illustrate the effects of the broken knot between the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real?

The scene right after features her prying on the couple on the car, this time even with her body. This is a reference to the primal scene in which one can (or can’t) hold up the desire, place of Real absence of the object for every one. It’s also a phantastic attempt to treat this impossible as forbidden and dream it as a reality. An additional liquid sprouts: urine. However it is an improvement on the action of knotting, in it’s own way, love, desire and jouissance. In this situation, tainted by voyeurism, it’s not about the perverse desire taken to jouissance. It’s not about seeing, being seen or making oneself be seen, used to give utility to the gaze and retribute *a* to *A*.

After the man catches her staring, *The teacher* goes home to struggle, once again, with the mother, who utters the phrase: “*your father died this afternoon*”. How can one place this assertion? Becoming, perhaps, the most mysterious throughout the film. We keep trying...

The scene that follows shows her cutting the hands of a woman with signs of division, of a failing student and who is later comforted by *Walter*. This gives way to question: how does he desire? Who is the Other? What’s the enigma of desire? The answer comes from the specular Imaginary. Then, *Erika* produces a new incision on body, this time by the hands of the other woman; her rival. The man, her student, understands something behind that envious *acting out*. They meet on the bathroom, she goes for the organ. Does this imply to be at the service of the Other’s jouissance? The teacher doesn’t show signs of division but he does. It seems she’s in control and knows about the enjoyment (as jouissance). Nonetheless, as the film demonstrates, this is not the case.

This rendezvous culminates with the student jumping, startled by the interruption she has orchestrated and, in doing so, interrupting his phallic jouissance. Like a boxer hiding the strenght of his punch as a sign of the non-tuning between the sexes. By this point it’s appropriate to note that the perverse couple, not always, is a perverse other but instead a neurotic slash, gnawed in some point, like some students! Constrarily, the *partenaire* of the perverse continues without *sectum* or sexing, giving a clinic sign of it’s psychotic determination. There isn’t yet much information regarding perverse couples organized in function of the dodge, the feint... or something much worse.

Now, the structure is in the details. The index demand of desire and a singular way of enjoyment (as

jouissance) are repetitive elements. The detail of the essay of *The teacher's* sexual relationship redoubles the mother-daughter duality and the men's dominion becomes an echo of her method to teach her students. The approach she resorts to in order to feel connected with music is another detail regarding the constitution of the Symbolic. For her, music is akin to the "lalengua", her tool to read and create phrases with a predominance of the transcription over the production.

In class, *Walter* demands love by inviting her to break regularities, to give in: the kiss on her neck as evidence. How does *Erika* react? By coughing and bringing up the letter. This gesture, hysteric in tone, gives account of an unspeakable *it* looking to be tangled on the writing. She gives him a type of sheet music without losing her composure. They read this letter at the house, where *Walter*, with his intromission, produces what's fitting in any creation: a hole, intimate exclusion, here with both of them enclosed inside the house. There, contrary to the agreements of the demand, he reiterates his love request. At the same time she is still attached to the text with masochist tones.

The masochist arrangement is a contract that instaurates a law and settles the place, as an object, of the subject for the usufruct of the Other. Contrary to the phenomenal, the masochist dictates. "*The teacher* arranges what he must perform. Not only that, it's a common trait to demand to the *partenaire*: enjoy as commanded! The enjoyment (as jouissance) of pain doesn't prevail on masochism as it aims to introduce a "beyond" for the desire: a failed law of will, paradoxically, for the attempt to divide the *partenaire* and demonstrate that the lack or castration is occasional and, thus, not permanent nor structural for the sake of talking. Being free or outside the law doesn't equal being in perversion. This is a singular morality, it's the subjection to the law of a different God from the one of the psychosis and the one of the neurosis. This accords a shared version along with the one from the wild capitalism: submission to a deity that's "desiring, that inspires respect and instills terror, a living God, who enjoys the sacrifice of men, where the most sacred becomes profane"⁷ (OTERO, 2013, p. 72). In short, masochism teaches that perversion, as any other structure, it's a safekeeping where "what appears from the outside as satisfaction without brake is defense, and put into practice of a law, as it brakes, suspends, stops the subject on his way to jouissance"⁸ (LACAN, 1962-1963/2006, p. 164).

There's a detail that corroborates what's been said, a script proposed by her is a homely masochist performance according to which she, bound and unarmed, can't be reached by the devoid mother because of the man of the rooms' keys that *open and close doors*. An aesthetic *mise-en-scène* of the castration, it puts in motion the compartments to answer to the knocking of the jouissance fluxes or desires by using phallic keys, objects *a*. Introducing a rhythmic contradiction, a syncopation. A "no" serves to channel the erotic and understanding what to do on the edges, with the pulsional holes that echo the primordial repression; of the constitution of The Father's Name. In conclusion: it's the paternal function embodied in *Walter* père-versly oriented. Only now we know of the father's by his absence just as we know of music for it's silence.

It's not irrelevant to hear her utter in that room, the only time, that she is not a poet and she writes as a pianist. This becomes an indication of how the musical subjection is not her only support but now there's an amorous tone poetic, a feminine accent. Precisely, the writings feminize and the traces on the letter are different. While it does contain a masochist statement it also brings out other tones that, on the *aposteriori*, can be linked with the hysterically colored cough mentioned before.

There's another element we must stress on in this instant of the homely masochist performance. *Walter* cracks, anguish buds from her and she promises to obey in every aspect, even agreeing on wearing the clothes he's chosen. The closet, brimming with clothes, seems to have found its purpose. Yet, everything is in vain... Not the fallen (the object) nor the sexed (the subject) takes place: there's no way from the mother to the *partenaire*. *Walter*, embodying the masculine position, will continue to, as many speakers, determined by the passionate trio of love-hate-ignorance, execute in his sexual encounters a mad musical operetta, quotidian and far-fetched: a short circus.

What follows the failed masochist attempt corroborates our hypothesis. *Erika* goes to her mother's room as she, as always, reproaches her. She cries, tells her she loves her and gives her a kiss. She adds "*I saw the hairs on your sex*". The scene is surprising since one would expect it a few minutes early on the other room. Clearly the defense of the perverse phantasy is a front to the unbearable motherly as place of *das Ding*. Enjoyment (as jouissance) that will remain veiled behind the door. Stumbling across the sexual hole, *Erika* places *it* in the hole and proceeds to the fetishist manner: *seeing hairs on the Real*.

7 Free translation. "deseante, que inspira respeto e infunde terror, un Dios vivo, que goza del sacrificio de los hombres, donde lo más sagrado se transforma en profano" (OTERO, 2013, p. 72).

8 Free translation: "lo que aparece desde el exterior como satisfacción sin freno es defensa, y puesta en ejercicio de una ley, en tanto que frena, suspende, detiene al sujeto en su camino al goce" (LACAN, 1962-1963/2006, p. 164).

This is how things are, if perversion is one of the singular approaches to respond to the lack of the Other; meaning the Other of the language, the Other of the body and the Other of the sex. Now if said answer is a denial of the castration and a will towards jouissance in regards to the sexual partner, it doesn't seem to be a prevalent issue on *The piano teacher*.

Erika and *Walter's* other encounters are very telling. One of which features her using her mouth hole puking and adding: “*I'm all clean. Like a baby*”. It's there where the progressive downfall or departure from the scene is profiled a step towards the act? with which the film ends. Precipitated by his fierce irruption on her home and with the repetition of the impossibility of sexual enjoyment (as jouissance). That night, as he enters her vaginal hole, she languishes absentmindedly. This recurrent sexual futility wouldn't correspond to the logic of the hysterical anesthesia and it doesn't seem feeled as an imaginary paralysis. Unlike psychotic anaesthetics, hysteric anaesthetics, in their eagerness to identify the body and the phallus, are prone to anguish. This clinical indicator, pointed out by J-C Maleval, is conspicuous by its absence in *Erika, the teacher* from whom we seek to learn.

Continuing: on the morning, before the concert where she will substitute another woman, where she could, passing through the Other embodied in *Walter*, stumble across an answer about being desired by her lack (in being or having). With it she *opens and closes doors*. *The pianist* takes a knife. Now we're sure that the stab was waiting for a gaze or a reaction from the man to hold her on the scene. We know of the incision: it could have gone to the mother, to her rival or to the *partenaire*... but a decision perhaps inscrutable produces a “fake hole” on the phantastic heart: a certainty of the mortality of love?

A note on psychosis and love is relevant. There's a recurring thesis for Lacan: the “*fault of love in psychosis*”⁹ (IZCOVICH, 2011). The examination of this fault is done from three cases. The first, the case of Aimée, where erotomania is a prevalent question; later on present on the love toward a deity, the God conceived by Schreber. The third lies on James Joyce's amorous problematic with Nora, the love of his life, illustrating the permanence of love on the psychosis. Where might we find instability other than on the affection? Joyce's analysis show that “the letter creates a substitute for their love”¹⁰ and like in other cases, the shape of the bond with the *partenaire* “oscillates between love and jouissance”¹¹. Then we understand: it's this going back and forth by the bond where “[...] the fault of love is revealed to make the jouissance condescend to the desire”¹².

Meaning that, the lack of love in the psychosis is a knotting; the lines along which *The piano teacher* goes follow this direction. The exploration of the statement of love in psychosis leads to the following conclusion:

This would be a characteristic trait of psychosis that demonstrates the coherence of Lacan's teachings. If, with erotomania, the woman finds the man, if it is also a supreme love, her fault is verified in the limits of this love in terms of making the step to desire.¹³ (IZCOVICH, 2011, p. 96).

When this step is obstructed for a woman like *Erika*, it would seem all that's left is to exit the scene, a step towards the act. This step forward is done through an incision, a failed corporal sectum. It's a stab that hollows an organ full of significance, regarding to the *elusive god*. The Eros continues to inspire the elaboration of countless letter and scores, as well as carrying out *performances* interwoven with the Imaginary and the Symbolic. Or perhaps steps to the act that try to enclosure it without acceding to the Real, tied to the sex. *The piano teacher*, with this step, gives evidence of the failing psychotic method, of the lapsus and of the unknotting that doesn't allow the sexual enjoyment (as jouissance) to condescend to the desire. All this, possible due to the *elusive god's* arts.

KNOT

The “false hole” refers to the two “bulls”; the Other and the subject, superimposed. The Real, Symbolic and Imaginary registers seem to be joined, considering the topological knot theory, but they are not and, therefore, there's no interpenetration. They are not traversed by a third instance that, as an infinite straight, passes through the central hole of every one and knots them, much like a borromean knot (LACAN, 1975-1976/2006). In this

9 Free translation; “falla del amor en la psicosis” (IZCOVICH, 2011).

10 Free translation: “la carta hace suplencia a su amor” (IZCOVICH, 2011, p. 96).

11 Free translation: “oscila entre amor y goce” (IZCOVICH, 2011, p. 96).

12 Free translation. “[...] se revela el fracaso del amor para hacer condescender el goce al deseo” (IZCOVICH, 2011, p. 96).

13 Free translation: “Esto sería un rasgo propio de la psicosis que demuestra la coherencia de la enseñanza de Lacan. Si con la erotomanía la mujer encuentra al hombre, si se trata también de un amor supremo, su falla se constata en los límites de este amor en cuanto a realizar el paso al deseo” (IZCOVICH, 2011, p. 96).

regard it is worth clarifying that the notion of hole in Psychoanalysis refers to two reals, “the Real from the unconscious hole and the pulsional Real. The former, between Real and Symbolic and the latter between Real and Imaginary”¹⁴ (SCHEJTMAN, 2015, p. 594).

The mistakes or lapsus in the knotting may be deduced through the complications of the bodily holes, of the pulsional edges as surfaces that concede the exchange from the inside-out (LACAN, 1973-1974). *The teacher* with her complications to access sexual enjoyment (as jouissance) gives testimony to them. It also teaches “[...] that the constitution of the Imaginary provides a beneficial gain to the human being, because together with the veiling of the Real, it categorizes the holes in the body and enables feelings”¹⁵ (FLESLE, 2011, p. 93).

The piano teacher, by Michael Haneke (2001), has been taken as a clinical material because it allows prying on undiscerned issues of analytical work. This is done particularly notorious in the case of the perverse subjection of desire and even more patent when investigating the “nodal psychoanalytic clinic” (SCHEJTMAN, 2013), inspired in Lacan’s topological proposal. What does *The teacher* teach about perverse substitution? Considering its fictional plot, analogous with psychotic structuring. *what can be said about the perverse fulfilling the function of a symptom that unknots or of a sinthome as a nomination that knots or repairs?* Following the proposal by Schejtmán (2013), what could *Walter* and *Erika* teach about the man as havoc of a woman by unknot a psychosis? These are necessary questions in the search for clinical advances.

This note provides a framework in which one may place such questions:

[...] that there is no treatment of the non-relationship that escapes from... the perversion is something Freud already gave in his “Three essays on sexual theory”, the same place where he teaches that the best that can be achieved from child polymorphic perversion is a monomorphism more or less boring, although no less perverse, that classically stabilizes the so-called adult.¹⁶ (SCHEJTMAN, 2013, p. 309).

From there, Fabian Schejtmán wonders about finding, in the clinic of the time of capitalist dominance, men and women who are not directed or ordered “steadfastly” to a certain form of the object *a*. He proposes a certain “weakness” and phantastic “ineffectiveness” that would imply a surprising “polymorphism”. This flourishing perverse phenomenology is framed by mercantilist proposals to enjoy (as jouissance), one of which imperatives is “Don’t leave anything untasted!”¹⁷ (SCHEJTMAN, 2013, p. 311).

If that is the case, one might think that a construction of the phantasy, undertaken by a fictional character with it’s touch of truth like *Erika*, shows that the polymorphism in the voyeurist, fetishist and masochist traits seeking to repair a knot’s fault. With regards to this hypothesis, the precise coordinates of the location of the lapsus, the consequent unknotting and the possible formalization remain to be established.

Let us highlight another issue, following the writings of the same Argentine analyst: the need to work the stability given, in each subjective structure, by psychosomatic phenomena, *or by certain perverse features*, or by friendly, couple or family ties... anyhow. Clinical research points to the establishment of how each of these gives the possibility of repairing lapsus of the knot or forclusion of the Father-Name; either passing from one of these solutions to the others or adding them, with the so-called “redundant supports”¹⁸ (SCHEJTMAN, 2013, p. 312).

There is a need to investigate knots such as the ones present in phobias and perversion. Essays dedicated to them are precarious. Perhaps it is due to the indeterminacy of the two entities. In the case of the phobias Schejtmán himself points out it is due to its dual character: first, because phobia is another form of neurosis or “turntable” (LACAN, 1968-1969/2008). Second, due to the fact that the phobia is a trans-structural stage. With the perversion something similar happens. Although Lacan manages to establish it as a structure, it is necessary to return to the developments that go from there to the end of his teaching. This is because with the introduction of the notion of “père-version” the notion itself of perversion is questioned as a “subjective

14 Free translation: “el Real del agujero del inconsciente y el Real pulsional. El primero entre Real y Simbólico y el segundo entre Real e Imaginario” (SCHEJTMAN, 2015, p. 594).

15 Free translation: “[...] que la constitución de lo Imaginario brinda una benéfica ganancia al ser humano, pues junto con el velamiento de lo Real, categoriza los orificios del cuerpo y habilita los sentimientos” (FLESLE, 2011, p. 93).

16 Free translation: “[...] que no haya tratamiento de la no relación que escape de la... perversion es algo que ya entrevió Freud en sus ‘Tres ensayos de teoría sexual’, el mismo lugar donde enseña que de la perversion polimorfa infantil lo mejor que se consigue es un monomorfismo más o menos aburrido, aunque no menos perverso, que estabiliza clásicamente al llamado adulto” (SCHEJTMAN, 2013, p. 309).

17 Free translation: “¡Que no te quede nada por probar!” (SCHEJTMAN, 2013, p. 311).

18 Free translation: “soportes redundantes” (SCHEJTMAN, 2013, p. 312).

structure”¹⁹ (SCHEJTMAN, 2013, p. 351).

The previous paragraph illustrates what is proposed in this article: the fact that perversion causes concerns and fuels the investigation. There are productions related to perverse substitution in psychosis, just two pieces of work stand out here. One is that of J-C Maleval, who returns to the publications that a man incited, both to the analyst who attended him, and to a group of doctors, after going to them to report, exhibit and provoke examinations in relation to his bizarre sexual and bodily practices. Many did not hesitate to consider, in the face of the facts, that it was a true masochist, since what he experienced was beyond the feint, the dribble or the bluff. However, we must reiterate: the psychoanalytic clinic is subtracted from the purely phenomenal (MALEVAL, 2007).

The other work corresponds to the “Blood Countess”, and her 610 female victims. Cases like that of this woman, Erzsébet Báthory, where there would be a perverse substitution, the supposed true masochist that J-C Maleval brings to light, of *The piano teacher* and others, are an “invention that, stemming from any morality becomes abhorrent and fatal, but that from the logic that reigns it it’s able to shine” (OTERO, 2013, p. 103)²⁰.

Genius and ingenuity against what? To the solution of each of us as “we all come up with a trick to be able to fulfill a hole on the Real. Where there is no sexual relationship and, therefore, produces *troumatisme*. One invents. Of course, one invents whatever one can”²¹ (LACAN, 1985, p. 106).

Isn’t that a lesson to be learned and the foundation of all investigation?

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