

"Consent, Obedience, Anxiety in the Treatment"

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Consent is a key concept of our time, because it is from the experience of consent that we question love, sexuality and trauma in the 21st century. At the time when concern for sexual liberation prevailed, consent was not central to our understanding of desire. In our time, it's from the experience of consent that we question our relationship to desire and enjoyment [jouissance]. So we're in a different era.

Yet the enigmatic dimension of consent lies at the heart of the analytic experience. To enter an analysis is to put one's consent at stake. An analysis presupposes an inaugural consent to the unconscious. But it is also the place of an exploration of one's own consent throughout one's existence. What have I consented to in my relationship with the Other? Where did I let myself go? [me suis-je *lâissé faire*]? In what foundational experiences have I been able to force *myself* and also force *my* desire? Analysis questions the issue of consent in a whole new way. Consent is not at all obedience. It is to desire what happens. Whereas to obey is to submit to an authoritative word. Sometimes obeying is also forcing our own consent. From the dimension of the superego - always toxic - analysis raises the question of obedience in a new way. Rather than obedience to the other, it's a question of obedience to the superegoic injunctions, both in its aspect of sacrifice of desire and of injunction to enjoy. This is what gives Lacan's "Kant with Sade" (1963) a new value in terms of the duty of jouissance proper to our time.

I propose that we explore together the value of these three terms – “consent, obedience, anxiety” – to think about the experience of the treatment and its ethical and political implications. Anxiety is a central concept in psychoanalysis for both Freud and Lacan. Consent and obedience are two terms that I'm going to introduce to think about the experience of analysis as a place for exploring the relation to desire. Consent, obedience and anxiety - these three subjective experiences undergo transformations in analysis. It is by crossing *the point of anxiety* that the analysand can be led to a new relation with desire, allowing him to glimpse

what he has obeyed up to now, and also leading him to *no longer give ground on his desire* [*ne plus céder sur son désir*].

Now, let's explore those verbs : “to consent”, “to obey”, “to let oneself go” and “to disobey”.

To consent

A sentiment of absolute risk

The term consent has come to occupy a central place in contemporary discourse. However, if we explore this term from a psychoanalytical perspective, it cannot be reduced to the dimension of a contract, one that can guarantee an enlightened sexuality. Consent is a much deeper, much more intimate, much more opaque matter that deserves to be interpreted from a psychoanalytical perspective. Why and how? Because the analytical experience always presupposes an inaugural consent, and because this consent introduces the subject to a new regime of relation to speech.

Let's start again. There can be no analysis without the subject's consent. In analysis, it's a question of consenting *to not knowing what one thinks*,¹ in other words, to not knowing it in advance. It's also a question of consenting *to not knowing what one says*,² that is to say, to consent to say what you didn't even know you could say. It is only on this condition that the subject can learn something new about his suffering. The experience of analysis therefore presupposes a consent to not knowing, which also implies for the analyst to whom I am speaking not to be in a power relationship – that is, not to hinder the analytic adventure. I mention the power relationship because it's also a specific concern of our time, and perhaps a lucidity. If psychoanalysis can be perceived by some as a power relationship, it is because the risk of this drift exists. This is why Jacques-Alain Miller has emphasised the need to renounce any exercise of power in order to practise interpretation.³ Power is always a form of betrayal of consent. Psychoanalysis is an adventure based on (the) encounter and consent. For the analyst, it is a question of renouncing any hold, any exercise of power, any direction of consciousness. This is the strong thesis Lacan defends in his 1958 essay on *The Direction of the Treatment and the Principles of its Power*.⁴

¹ Lacan J., Seminar XVI, *From an Other to the other*, text established by J.-A. Miller, transl. B. Fink, Polity Press, 2024, p.237 (FR: p. 274)

² Lacan J., Seminar XVIII, *D'un discours qui ne serait pas du semblant*, text established by J.-A. Miller, Champ freudien, Seuil, p. 44. Unpublished

³ Miller J.-A., *Comment finissent les analyses*, Champ freudien, Navarin Editeur, p. 215. Unpublished

⁴ Lacan J., “The Direction of the Treatment and the Principles of Its Power,” *Ecrits*, transl. B. Fink, WW Norton & Co, 2006, p. 490.

Just like consent in love, analytical consent is a form of divestment of oneself in favour of the Other. I consent without knowing what I'm going to discover through the experience of analysis, but I consent because I trust the desire of the Other. Lacan underlined this as early as 1964 when he asked this very simple question: what makes us trust the analyst, whom we don't know? What makes us trust this Other who listens to us? What makes us consent to allow ourselves to be interpreted by him? This trust is not based on a prior knowledge we would have about the Other, but on trusting his desire.⁵ In psychoanalysis, the notion of consent is therefore defined by transference. Consent presupposes transference. Thus, the consent involved in analysis is not an *informed* consent but a *desiring* consent. In this sense, psychoanalysis also allows us to discover that there is no such thing as informed consent. If we take seriously the experience of consent in matters of love and sex, we cannot reduce consent to a contract between two parties. The experience of analysis, as well as the enigma that is always present in love and sexual life, leads us to tear consent away from the sphere of the contract. It's a question of thinking about another system of consent than the legal system. This other regime at play in the analytic clinic - and in love and sexual life - is consent as enigma. The truth of consent is, in short, already its enigma insofar as it is at stake in the treatment.

There is no such thing as informed consent because consent is not just a rational affair. Etymologically speaking, consent always involves the body. It is a *cum-sentire*, a "feeling" in accordance with what's happening, not only with what's happening with the other, but with what's happening in our body. To consent then, is to not know in advance what we are consenting to. It's a "yes" without prior knowledge. An impulse [*elan*] towards the other that puts in play desire and *jouissance*. The beauty and the stir of consent - both in love and in analysis - lies in this dimension of not knowing. Consent is a matter of encounter, an encounter that's always unexpected, always risky, always contingent. Consent is the order of a leap - *I go there without knowing why, but I desire it*.

In short, the idea of *free and informed consent* masks this zone of non-knowledge, of not-knowing, which is also from where the miracle of transference is established. In analysis, it's therefore a question of moving towards the spoken word [*la parole*] by consenting to not-knowing, consenting to the paths that lead nowhere as Heidegger called them, consenting to

⁵ Lacan J., Seminar XI, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, text established by J.-A. Miller, transl. A. Sheridan, Karnac, 2004, pp. 230-234, (FR: p. 209).

venture onto the *Holzwege* that may lead us somewhere, provided we venture onto them without guarantee. I don't know in advance where my words will lead me, to what truth, to what discovery, and to what trial. But I consent to say what I don't know and I consent to wager. I wager that "I" exist, beyond identity, beyond the ego, beyond the "we" and above all, beyond the relation to "surplus jouissance" [*plus-de-jouir*]. The wager is speech in favour of the "I." "For that, one would have to possess a sentiment of absolute risk in analysis."⁶ Lacan says. The sentiment of an absolute risk - this is what the inaugural consent to analysis is all about, a consent replayed at each session and right up until the end. I have no idea where I'm going, but I'm committed, I'm going there. This is perhaps the dimension of the act at the beginning of the analysis. Irreversible.

To let oneself go

A Border between yielding and consenting

Consent, obedience, anxiety, therefore. Let's turn then to the effect produced by the experience on this knot between consent and anxiety. For if I am led in my existence to force my consent and to lose sight of my desire, it is because of anxiety.

By putting consent into play, the treatment leads us to see more clearly what comes under consent-desire and what comes under forcing consent. But it also leads us to circumscribe the repetition from that which constituted a trauma. Thanks to analysis, I can get closer to the point where something in me yielded to the situation. I can then extricate myself from this effect of repetition that has always distanced me from my desire.

Let's return then to this distinction between consenting and yielding, in order to grasp where anxiety arises. The ambiguity of consent, its always opaque and mysterious dimension, must not be confused with the experience of forcing and trauma. The maxim "to yield is not the same as to consent" has taken on a new meaning since psychoanalysis. "*To yield is not to consent*" is an aphorism that may seem obvious, but which nevertheless deserves to be deciphered. This aphorism means that "to force oneself" is not the same as "to consent," but also that "to have a bad encounter" is to undergo a forcing in one's body to which the subject cannot respond. So it is not because there is no informed consent that we should confuse the experience of

⁶ Lacan J., Seminar XXIII, *The Sinthome*, text established by J-A. Miller, transl. A. R. Price, Polity, 2016, p. 33, (FR: p. 45).

“yielding” - to which I give the Lacanian meaning of “yielding to the situation”⁷ - with the experience of “consenting.” There is both an ethical and a clinical issue here. If, in the name of the ambiguity of consent, we no longer distinguish between these two experiences, we deny the traumatic dimension of forcing. We no longer recognise the effects of psychic and sexual trauma. It is therefore necessary to not confuse the opacity of consent with the bad encounter that leads to trauma. However, psychoanalysis allows us to make this distinction in oneself.

Where is the border? Because there is a border. And it is even its crossing that causes trauma. The border is located in the body. Trauma presupposes a psychical and sexual intrusion that is a forcing. The subject does not agree with what is happening in his body, but it happens to him against his will, and even before he has time to be anguished about it. This forcing defines trauma as an experience in which the subject “yields to the situation.” This is the formula Lacan used in 1963 in his Seminar *Anxiety*. “In the traumatic confrontation, the subject yields to the situation. What does it mean at this moment to yield? [...] It is literally a cession.” The subject cannot respond in the traumatic confrontation. He *yields* in the legal sense of the word, in the sense that *yielding property or land* means letting the other enjoy it. He yields his body and, as subject, he falls. This conception of psychic and sexual trauma as a “yielding to the situation,” invites us to question the aphorism “he who says nothing consents.” This aphorism misunderstands the status of silence in trauma. “Not being able to say a word” is not a sign of consent but the signature of trauma. This is what Freud showed at the very beginning of psychoanalysis. Trauma confronts the subject with an impossibility of responding, both to the other and to “what is happening / what is taking place.” The subject *yields to the situation*, in other words, the relation to speech is short-circuited by a forcing in the body. Silence, language cut, speech confiscated, does not mean consent, but forcing of the body, an effraction, a breaking into the body.

Degrees of “letting oneself go”

We must recognise however, that there are degrees, nuances and uncertain experiences that seem to lie between “consenting” and “yielding.” These are experiences that make us question our own consent, not always knowing whether we have consented or whether we have forced ourselves. This is why, in order to explore this zone that we also call “grey,” to say that it is

⁷ Lacan J., Seminar X, *Anxiety*, text established by J.-A. Miller, transl. A. R. Price, Polity, 2014, p. 312 (FR: p. 362).

neither “yes” nor “no,” neither black nor white, I propose to define a third form of experience. Analysis is the place where I can question the experiences that led me to *let myself go* [*me laisser faire*]. There's a paradox in the passive form of the verb "to let oneself go." “*To let oneself go*” is a modality of response to the encounter, to the event. But "letting oneself go” can take on radically different meanings according to the encounter. In “letting oneself go” there is both the idea of a choice of the subject, but also the possibility of a total absence of choice. How do we situate “letting oneself go” as a response to the event? The “letting oneself go” is introduced between "consent" and "obey" to account for a passive form. The “letting oneself go” is an experience that refers to passivity, but not necessarily a traumatic one. I propose three degrees of “letting oneself go” which allow us to introduce nuances that elucidate the distinction between “yielding” and “consent.” In my view, “letting oneself go” lies between “consenting” and “yielding,” and an exploration of “letting oneself go” allows us to approach, step by step, the boundary that I'm trying to define with forcing in the body.

The first degree of “to let oneself go” is the degree that is of the order of a consent. There is a consented "letting oneself go”, which presupposes an agreement with what is produced in one's body under the effect of the encounter with desire. This "letting oneself go” is not of the order of trauma nor an experience of displeasure. It is a "letting oneself go” that happens because of the *kairos*, the contingency of the good encounter. It is an openness to the event. It is the "letting oneself go" for example, with the emergence of a passionate love. In her novel *Simple Passion*, Annie Ernaux gives a precise testimony of this. She lets herself go in the encounter with this foreign lover, and she expects nothing more than this excitement [*émoi*] that traverses her body when they meet again. It is not possible to spend one's life without ever letting oneself go with whatever happens - otherwise nothing ever happens to us. This is what allows for the new in our existence. The consented “letting oneself go” is also close to consent at the beginning of the analytical experience. I let go of the moorings of speech and I am sensitive via interpretation to a new relation to speech.

There's a second degree of "letting oneself go” which brings us closer to the border with forcing, but which is not yet forcing. It's "to let oneself go” out of anxiety. This "to let oneself go” is a way of questioning the desire of the other and its intentions, when anxious. There is something close to the act of obeying here. As Lacan said, (again in his 1963 Seminar on *Anxiety*), anxiety arises in the face of the desire of the Other. Why does it arise in this way? Precisely because I don't know what this desire is about.

Anxiety arises in the face of this desire, the point at which I wonder what do I represent for the Other, as an object of desire and jouissance. In my existence, I can come to *let myself go* out of anxiety. I can obey out of anxiety. Without being able to formulate it for myself, by letting myself go, I am nevertheless trying to find out what the Other wants from me, what am I for the Other. The “letting myself go” out of anxiety is a modality of responding to the desire of the Other so that the Other reveals what he wants. The character of Camille in Jean-Luc Godard's “Contempt” [*Le Mépris*] is paradigmatic in this respect.

Does Camille (Brigitte Bardot) *let herself go*,” does she consent to finding herself in the arms of the producer or does she rebel? Camille *lets herself go*” to her partner Paul (Michel Piccoli) in order to know what he wants from her. She lets herself go in order to know if he really loves her. She lets herself go in order to know if he is ready to lose her by giving her to someone else. She *lets herself go*” in experiencing anxiety, but in the end she turns this passivity into an act. She leaves Paul and despises him, once she has seen how far he is prepared to go to scorn their love.

This second degree is still not of the order of traumatism. From this dimension of anxiety, we come close to the border, but we don't cross it. Here, in Camille's case, the "letting oneself go" is reversed into an act. But "letting oneself go out of anxiety" (or obeying the other out of anxiety) can also lead to forcing oneself to the point of sacrificing your desire. In my opinion, this second degree is also the turning point towards “forcing oneself.” It is under the effect of anxiety that I obey the injunctions of the toxic Superego. “Forcing myself” is of the order of a "forcing myself to obey," an injunction that undermines my desire. Analysis is the only way to avoid responding to anxiety by means of an *acting out* or a *passage to the act*. Only analysis can circumscribe the point of anxiety. Analysis - once the point of anxiety has been crossed - leads me to stop confusing my desire with the injunctions of the always toxic Superego.

But there is an ultimate level of “letting oneself go” that is distinct from the previous levels, and which can only be reached through psychoanalysis. Here, it is no longer a question of consent or anxiety. It is no longer a question of “forcing oneself” or of obeying. It is a question of petrification, of disappearance, of the falling of the subject. The traumatic rupture (effraction) confronts the subject with an irruption of jouissance that short-circuits the field of speech. The subject lets itself go, not because he desires to, not because he is anxious, not because he is forcing himself to do what he doesn't want to do, but because he has fallen as

subject. This is the “yielding to the situation” defined by Lacan in the Seminar *Anxiety* as the hallmark of trauma.

To illustrate this point, my essay *To Yield is not to Consent*⁸ draws on one of the earliest cases in psychoanalysis - the Emma case - found in Freud's *Project for a Scientific Psychology*. Emma was one of Freud's first patients. Freud saw her in 1896 when she was just 18 years old. Emma suffered from a symptom of not being able to enter a shop alone, without running out overwhelmed by anxiety. Through her analysis, she recalls a first memory from when she was 14 years old, when as a teenager she went into a shop and had the feeling that the two grocery clerks were looking at her dress, and even that one of them was laughing at her. Anxious, she ran out. By rediscovering this screen-memory of when she was 14, she will be able to use the association generated by the signifiers - dress, grocer, laughter – to rediscover the traumatic memory of when she was 8 years old, which she had never spoken of and which had been struck by amnesia. When she was a little girl aged 8, she went alone to the grocery shop to buy some sweets. Just as she was about to pay, the shopkeeper put his hand on her dress over her genitals. She was petrified. The enigma of this traumatic scene leads to repetition. Emma tells Freud that she remembers coming back to the shop a second time. Why did she come back? Does this mean that she consented? To what did she obey? We had to wait until 1920 and the discovery of what Freud called *beyond the pleasure principle* to account for this repetition, as the very effect of the traumatic encounter. Repetition is the signature of trauma. The forcing in the body - in this case, a child who was subjected to a gesture that gave rise to a traumatic jouissance - produces petrification, repetition, and amnesia. In this case, "she who doesn't say a word" does not consent, but *yields to the situation*, is dropped [*chute*], falls [*tombe*] as subject. How was Emma able to rediscover the scene that had been excluded from her history? By confronting her anxiety and questioning the enigma of her symptom, she was able to remember the forgotten event for the first time. Remembering it was also a way out.

⁸ Leguil C., *Céder n'est pas consentir, une approche clinique et politique du consentement*, PUF, 2021. Unpublished.

To obey

Experience of the toxic Superego

The question of obedience thus leads us to plunge into the darkness of what Etienne de la Boétie called "voluntary servitude" in his pamphlet on tyranny,⁹ but to plunge into it from a choice that engages the subject of the unconscious. The notion of "voluntary servitude" complicates the question of obedience, by removing it from the pure relation of force or domination, and showing that disobedience implies confronting one's own voluntary servitude, one's own inner forcing, one's own renunciation. Lacan's theory of voluntary servitude takes us even further than Etienne de la Boétie's *Contr'un*. The question of "what I obey" confronts each of us with an opacity within ourselves, because obedience has to do with the death drive and the betrayal of desire. The experience of analysis leads the subject to question what he obeys in an unprecedented way, what he always submits to in the same way. Beyond Group Psychology, beyond the obscure authority of the real other, the question of obedience is posed in terms of the complicity with the drive. What am I making myself an accomplice to when I obey a command that presents itself in the name of the Good, and yet only activates evil, malaise, the toxicity of an obscure jouissance, in me?

The toxic experience, the one that every subject may have when he yields to *too much jouissance* that jeopardises his relation with desire, is indeed one that can be accounted for from the dimension of the Superego. But be careful – it is not about calling upon the Superego as a remedy against toxicity, but of showing precisely that the toxic experience refers to a new modality of the Superego which Lacan explored in the 1960s. *Kant with Sade*, written in 1963 is crucial to decipher the toxic experience as an experience of jouissance that undermines desire. This text is crucial to account for the forcing of consent and obedience as obedience to the drive. What was intended as a preface to Sade's *Philosophy in the Bedroom* thus takes on a new relevance in relation to the toxicity of our time, and enables us to grasp the way in which the question of obedience is brought into play in analysis. To immerse oneself in the toxic experience is also to question what endangers desire. To immerse oneself in the toxic experience is also to question the forcing of jouissance itself, which violates consent, which annihilates it, and which takes with it the subject of desire, the *metonymy of the subject's being* that is desire.

⁹ Boétie (de) E., *Discours sur la servitude volontaire, Contr'Un*, GF-Flammarion. The Politics of Obedience: The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude, Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2015

To propose a dramaturgical reading of *Kant with Sade*, and to also show how this work speaks of analysis to us, let's start with what Freud called *beyond the pleasure principle* in 1920. For it is here that something of the order of destiny comes into play. How do we respond to the repetition compulsion, which acts as a forcing mechanism leading the subject to drift towards the death drive? At first, I may believe that it's necessary to counter the drive by submitting to a severe Superego, which orders me to sacrifice all desire. I can try to deal with it [*m'en sortir*] by sacrificing both pleasure and desire in the name of moral duty. This is the Kantian solution. It is the one that Kant, before Freud, implements in his morality by stating a duty to obey the categorical imperative, to submit to the law of reason in order to act morally, in the name of a universal. I can then seek a solution to the repetition compulsion by trying to obey something else and by becoming rigorist [puritanical]. I can try to ignore what I want, because I can no longer see how to distinguish between what I desire and what hurts me, what the other imposes on me and what I must flee. But Lacan's subversive reading in 1963 consists in uncovering a hint of cruelty in this Kantian morality. In effect, Kantian morality is about never taking account of one's inclinations, one's particular interests and ultimately, one's true desire. It is about sacrificing everything you hold dear, even if it means experiencing a bit of pain, in order to act solely from the point of view of the universality of the law. It is therefore a question of always sacrificing the object of desire. This is the circle to which I may be confronted with, as I no longer know how to get rid of the drive that leads me to repeat the same experiences that damage my desire - either by yielding to the drive, or by yielding to the cruelty of the Superego. Lacan's unprecedented contribution then, is to show that both the invitation to sacrifice what I value and the invitation to enjoy are about mistreating desire in the same way.

Lacan thus shows that this dimension of the Kantian Superego is perfectly analogous to the Sadian imperative of *jouissance*, which orders the sacrifice of all inclinations, all passions, in the name of a duty of *jouissance*. Basically, the *Kantian duty* to sacrifice desire is matched by the *Sadian duty* to enjoy without limit. "I have the right to enjoy your body," anyone can say to me, "and I will exercise this right without any limit to the capriciousness of the exactions I may wish to satiate with your body."¹⁰ states the Sadian maxim as reformulated by Lacan. The Superego in its sadistic version is therefore the one that makes *jouissance* an imperative, an injunction of the moral law. It tolerates no exceptions, no deviations, no failures from the point

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 769.

of view of jouissance itself. It is the one that forces us to enjoy, again and again. The toxic experience is indeed that in which the subject feels caught when an imperative of jouissance is activated within him, ordering him to sacrifice all inclinations, all that he holds dear, all that he could give weight to in his existence. The Superego here that I call *toxic*, the Superego of our times, is more akin to a sadistic Superego than a Kantian Superego. It is the one that orders us to enjoy more and more until we lose ourselves in the toxicity of extreme jouissance.

To counter the toxicity of the Superego, which is also the Superego of our civilisation forcing jouissance, psychoanalysis will not lead me to the side of Kantian morality. There will be no return to Kant. But nevertheless, Lacan will borrow from Kant's morality, its unconditionality in order to think the ethics of psychoanalysis. For disobeying the Superego, no longer consenting to be mistreated by one's own Superego, presupposes a radical determination. So what does Lacan borrow from Kant to subvert ethics? It is the "without-object." Kantian morality is without object. It is a question of making "counterbalancing" [counteracting, *anti-poids*],¹¹ in other words, of eliminating all objects from the scales and leaving the inclinations to weigh on one side on their own, so that they can fly away into the intelligibility of the moral law. Kant does not prescribe an object to be preferred over inclinations, but prescribes the pure form of the moral law. We must not want anything other than this law, which says "act in obedience to the moral duty." The *without-object* is a way of counterbalancing inclinations. With Lacan, it's a question of making another use of counterbalancing. It's a question of situating desire in place of the moral law, as in its inverted foundation. The experience of psychoanalysis leads us to save desire by disobeying the Superego. Desire has no specific object, it is much more than a desire for this or for that. Desire in the Lacanian sense is the metonymy of my being. It allows me to persevere in being departing from my power to act. In the analytical experience, I discover in my own flesh that only desire can counterbalance the drive.

To disobey or "to not give ground on one's desire"

The experience of analysis, between exploring consent, questioning obedience and confronting the point of anxiety, produces an antidote to toxicity. It allows us to detoxify that which has poisoned us. Between a bad encounter and a *first saying*, the effects of poison of language in

¹¹ Lacan J., "Kant with Sade", *Ecrits*, transl. B. Fink, WW Norton & Co, 2006, p. 648, (FR: p. 767).

the body are those that I explore in analysis. Psychoanalysis leads us to find a path other than that of the toxic Superego, defined from the imperative of sadistic jouissance - but also other than that of the ascetic Superego. It leads me to discover another good, that of desire. It invites me to a new asceticism, the asceticism of desire. *To not give ground on one's desire* means to never *let happen* what destroys desire. It is also to never give up knowing what has come in my existence to force and bully [*malmener*] my relation to desire. *To not give ground on one's desire* implies to "not to give in to the drive," or "to counterbalance" the drives' demands, and also "to not submit" to the imperative of working in the service of power, sacrificing one's desire. In order not to submit to the Superego, we need a relation to desire that is of the order of the unconditional, a relation to desire that yields on nothing, a relation to desire that endures the betrayal of the other, so as to never betray ourselves. For Lacan, this is the true formula of disobedience: "*to not give ground on one's desire.*" It is formulated not just in relation to the other, but in relation to desire.

It is this relation to desire that gives renewed meaning to disobedience. From the perspective of psychoanalysis, disobedience means not giving in to the authoritarian voice of the Superego, which says "Sacrifice your desire" and "Enjoy!" Disobedience means knowing how to say "no" to the Superego, both within oneself and to the Superego of civilisation when it goes against desire. It is no longer to let oneself go by the one who says: "I have the right to enjoy your body," in other words, by that which, within myself, comes to violate my consent. Disobedience means taking responsibility for what we say "yes" to, as well as being able to say "no." By crossing the point of anxiety in analysis, by confronting the traumatic traces, I succeed in no longer submitting to the injunctions of the Superego, in no longer yielding to this obligation of jouissance, which passes through what is heard: the I-hear (the *j'ouïr – play on jouir – I enjoy*). I can then recognise the voice of desire and no longer confuse it with that of the Superego.

Desire does not command, does not vociferate, does not bully. Desire murmurs, whispers, it says "I am here," it says "what do you want of me", it says also: "do you really want what you desire?" Desire says: "now it depends on you." And analysis finally allows me to answer: yes!

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