



Alma Jeftić

Between Madness and Pleasure within European Borders

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Psychoanalytic Ruts of Law and Prohibition

Hieronymus Bosch imagined humanity as a small boat of insane that aimlessly travels and never finds its port. That was, for him, the way people spend their lives: they eat, drink, flirt, cheat, play silly games, tend to unachievable goals.

An eccentric genius, Bosch not only touched the heart by his painting, but he „immersed“ humanity in full consciousness. These vile and monstrous figures he presents are hidden creations of our inner self-love, distorted demons that act on the other side of courage. Since that time the madness and the insane become major figures, both the threat and the ridicule, the world of madness and the world of fun, as pointed out by *Michel Foucault*. Since that time closing, as a way to avoid the fear, came into the scene.

Even *Friedrich Nietzsche* argued that body is a social structure, and, therefore, philosophy is merely interpretation of bodily states, either hidden or revealed. Almost a century later, Michel Foucault elaborated Nietzsche's thesis on a body as a manifold, which is basically an affective and instinctual (Dionysian), primary and a true battlefield of instincts. It is manifold because it is correlated and function of fundamentally heterogeneous and psycho-physiological processes, the expression of multiple drives and affects, rather than immortal, transcendental or metaphysical essence. Therefore he came up with the idea to describe history of punishment by the history of body.

Jacques Lacan claimed that we do not enjoy despite the law, but because of it. That is what his term *jouissance* presents: it is neither the title of visceral pleasure that is opposed the law, nor the fulfillment of natural demand or suspension of the current moral constraints, it is Lacan's term for Freud's death instinct. This is the name for dimension of suffering and punishment that inhabit the human enjoyment, dimension that is only possible because the body and the pleasure are denatured in its essence, and always related to presentation.

According to Lacan, the pleasure principle functions as a restriction of pleasure, because the law is that dictates individual to enjoy as less as possible. At the same time, the individual is constantly trying to exceed the prohibitions directed at his/her pleasure, to go beyond the pleasure principle. That results in pain, since all that remains is just a small part of satisfaction that an individual can receive.

This pain principle is called *jouissance*. *Jouissance* is thus linked to the sentence, organised neither in defiance of repressive agreements of humankind, nor through the violation of moral law, but through relationship with the law. Enjoyment is in itself imposed, ordered, because when we enjoy, we never do it spontaneously, but we always follow certain commands. Psychoanalytic term for these commands is *Superego*.

Here we find one particular form of power, that leads to the law of language in which the force is associated with the performance. The relationship between law and the offence is such that legal rules exist not in order to „make a pressure“ or „prohibit“, but to produce their own exceptions, not to function, but to function in a

wrong way, manifesting incompleteness of the law, lack of closure, element that destabilizes structural, symbolic totality. As a result, symbolic works merely on the basis of these exceptions, this unusual reminder, just like the rules somehow depend on the level of erroneous and perverse pleasure („the death instinct“ or „jouissance“).

Freud explained the relationship between law and transgression in „Totem and Taboo“, presenting two forms of primordial father. It does not refer immediately to the terms or prohibitions of law, but reveals ancient division in which the law is associated with the perversion of law. Freud did not conceive desire as a natural fact that will become organised by the prohibitions. He actually showed that the origin is strictly and strongly mythical.

One of the two aspects of father is the one that represents a limiting function of castration, while the other is the primordial father, the mythical figure who, before he was killed, possessed all the women and stood somewhere outside the law. His pleasure is unlimited, and he finds it in punishment.

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