

Impressum

Klaus Bung: Le Non, ou: La maîtresse veut être maître

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EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

"Le Non, ou: La maîtresse veut être maître" (01) is a stream-of-consciousness story in the vein of the après-midi d'un faun. A French intellectual, with roots in several European countries, muses about his international sexual experiences (ma in Spagna son gia mille tre) while he denies his body to his mistress. He is a Dionysian, who protests against all attempts (puritan, conservative, feminist, libertine, politically correct, &c, alike) to regulate the uncheckable forces of sex instead of letting it take its natural course. He neither wants to have sex forced upon him nor to be forced to forgo it. The story is unusual in being a non-story, describing a non-event, the refusal of sex, where a libertine does the refusing. and it is the prude who is left high and dry.

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"... une histoire, messieurs, un peu piquante et salacieuse peut-être, mais oh là-là ..." (02), continued the old man with the maniac looks and the compulsion to tell, then remembered where he was, changed his style and his voice, and started his story again - in English.

In years gone past, it was a woman's duty, today it is her right, to say No. But I know of only two cases in recent history (since we do not wish to dwell on the chaste Joseph of Egypt) where a man chose to say No.

The first made headlines in the British press in September and October 1977, when a heroic Mormon missionary, Kirk Anderson (age 21) suffered the fate worse than death, as we used to say, at the hands of Joyce McKinney (age 27), a former stripper who fell in love with him (03), wouldn't take No for an answer, pursued him all over the USA, drove the despairing virtuous man to take refuge in England, in vain, as it turned out, so that he addressed her even in his prayers: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there". (04)

In England she hired a gang of desperados to kidnap him and take him to a cottage which she had rented near Okehampton in Devon, where she chained him to a bed on the very day on which the church celebrates the festival of St Petri ad Vincula (05), and on this altar of love she managed to rape him without his consent. The Devon police eventually located and rescued him from his Venusberg ordeal. When Chief Inspector Hucklesby confronted the eager press, he was reluctant to give details of what exactly had happened in the cottage and on that bed. The police, he stammered, had found "certain equipment", and he could not go into details, but "I'll tell you what, I've never been lucky enough to have anything like that happen to me." The remaining details can be found in the newspapers of the day.

The second case, less well publicised, but psychologically more informative, is that of Jean-Paul Calvin, who, in spite of his austere namesake, was generally not averse to saying Yes, but occasionally felt that, like any woman, he too had the right to dig his heels in if he so wished. His story is so significant for the sadly declining sexual mores of our time and for the chilling changes that are taking place today in the relationship between the sexes that it merits to be told on these pages in all its gory details.

Jean-Paul Calvin was born in Avignon, le fils naturel du pape (06), or, as some people claim, donc naturellement le fils du pape (07), but perhaps they are behind the times, or it doesn't make any difference anyway, for a pope cannot possibly have any artificial children, he must not even prevent them from being born, unless they are homunculi, geniti non facti, in vitro, consubstantiales Matri, per quam omnia fuckta sunt (08), in which case he must worship them. That harebrained logic was the gleeful superglue that held his schizophrenic brain together.

Certainly his first name should have been Giovanni or Paolo or Italo to give some indication of his tapestry, and it is surprising that his second was not Woytila (09). He now lived a few hundred miles north of his birthplace, in Lyon, where he was trying to ruin the reputation of its quondam Archbishop Agobardus (10), the great anti-semite, and his successor Klaus Long Agobarbie (11), born in Bad Godesberg and founding father of an Aryan race of dolls (12). Long Ago Barbie had applied for the post in Lyon because he, the son of a Catholic Rhenish family (13), knew Saint Agobardus and wanted to complete the work which the saintly Archbishop had so bravely pioneered.

Jean-Paul had inherited some money, owned a few shares in a cloth factory in nearby Nîmes which used to supply the American goldiggers with their de-Nîmes (14). However, it was not because of those shares but because of a relationship avec une Arlésienne (15) that he claimed, on his business card, to be un homme d'affaires (16). He may have earned this title not because of his frequent visits from Avignon to Arles but because of his infrequent visits from Lyon to Vichy, where he had a mistress who, as some unkind observers said, looked the way that Vichy water (17) tasted. But that, to be sure, was an exaggeration.

Nobody ever knew how he came to be involved with her, so incompatible were they in character, or why each of them continued their relationship. He preferred to pursue his historical research and his anticlerical agitation in Lyon and, for his relaxation, to travel in the region between and around the cities of Geneva, where he had some smashing friends at CERN (18) and at Ferney (19), and of Bologna and Venice. That circumscribes the blessed cross-border region in which he lives and loves.

He conducted a holding operation with his mistress, visiting her as seldom as possible but as often as necessary to ensure that she did not break off the relationship altogether. We do not know what he hoped to gain from its continuance.

We will overhear them now during one of his infrequent visits, which, because of their rarity, are precious to her. Whatever it is she wants from him, she has to get it now or never - well, not for another six months or so.

He has long wanted to break off the relationship because he detests everything she stands for. She has gone beyond the pale.

She is, in his eyes, so dim that she has become interesting again, as a case study in stupidity. "She is too simple to know that she is stupid," he says, "that makes her interesting. You don't often come across people who make it so easy for you to be nasty. I love her for that. O felix culpa!" (20) He treats her like a drunkard who empties his second bottle of whisky to get sober, and then another to get drunk again, and so on.

Therefore one day he started to observe her more closely and to take her words as something to be analysed and remembered rather than something to be responded to. If he responded, it would be to humour her, not because he took her seriously. When she was angry, he observed: "She is angry, and when she is angry she makes the following noises and uses the following words. How interesting!" Had he taken her seriously, he would presumably have murdered her. He may yet muster the courage to do just that!

From then on he put his mistress and himself under the microscope, looking at her with the icy analytical eye of a Monsieur Teste. (21) Her flat became his behaviour laboratory. He turned her from an object of love or lust into an object of observation.

He continues to collect incriminating evidence against his mistress. Tonight she provided more.

IL SLIPPINO

He had had his shower at 8 p.m. and put on a fresh mini slip of the triangular kind, which the Italians call "slippino" (22), and for which the English and the Americans have no attractive word, except "panties", but that is used only for women, men can, by definition, not wear panties, whatever their shape, size or design, just as, by definition, they can neither be pregnant nor not-pregnant. But a man can be a cunt, whereas a woman cannot be a prick: yet another example of discrimination. Men have square jaws, wear boxer shorts, and are proud of it. Are they trying to appeal to women, or to their mates? Do women find this fashion attractive or do they ignore it like other features of men they do not like? You have to take the beasts, don't you, the way they come.

Being half French and half Italian (French intellect and Italian beauty), Jean-Paul Calvin liked the Italian men's fashion and its fuzzy boundaries between what was permitted to men and what to women. Italy was the first country in which men were allowed, by fashion, to carry handbags and were not forced to stuff their tobacco, chewing gum, contraceptives, mints, wallet, cheque book, credit cards, pens, pen-knives, pistols, toads and balls into their trouser pockets. It was the first country in which their clothes were permitted to be beautiful and colourful, and the first country which gave their underwear the triangular feminine touch (that "barbaric invention of the sex industry", as the Countess's mother used to say).

The result were "gli slippini" (22). They came in bright colours and in smooth, silky materials which invited female fingers to gently glide over them. Il slippino encouraged a man to feel himself half a woman and forced him to woo her and lure her rather than to impress, batter or overpower her with his uncouth gorilla strength.

Jean-Paul had a subtle, differentiated, view of his body and of his sex. He liked to play. He did not disdain fetishism as a weakness or perversion but saw it as inherent in all lovemaking. For him, like for other women, love was a state of the soul, lovemaking an activity of two souls, and the body (you cannot make love without a body) the fetish of the soul. Clothes, especially clothes inciting to lovemaking (and all clothes except boxer shorts and square jaws can do that), are just another layer of fetishes. If make-up is, and perfumes are, permitted for making the body more attractive, then why not clothes?

VIVENT LES FÉTICHES! (23)

He remembered coming home from a hike through muddy fields with his girlfriend Ilana Abramovitch. He had lent her a pair of his white jeans for the walk, he was wearing an identical pair, and they both were like twins, their hearts were together - there was only la petite différence délicieuse. (24)

White jeans are not ideal for mud walks. When they returned from their walk, both of them were soiled, intimately soiled so to speak, even though they had not made love during that walk. They came home, took off their boots and lay down fully clothed on the bed. They embraced each other, intertwined their legs, and immediately fell asleep.

He awoke after half an hour, aroused by her caresses, her hand deftly moving over his stomach and crotch, but always outside, never touching his skin. He responded in kind because he had learnt that often a woman will do to you what she wants you to do to her. Soon they were lying on top of one another, sometimes she was his missionary and sometimes he tried to convert her. The brown clay on her white jeans was ground into his and that on his was absorbed into hers, and their mixture of tenderness and passion held them together like this for a long time.

She had explained to him then, much to his delight, that the imperfection, the humanity (if that is not too grand a word) of soiled trousers, especially white ones, which are not meant to be soiled, turned her on.

For Jean-Paul, il slippino is not merely a garment, it is a proclamation of a weltanschauung (25), an ideology, a demand for acceptance, for the right to have a prick and yet be feminine in behaviour, to disregard the rigid fashions (was die Mode streng geteilt) (26) which dare to dictate what colours, which shapes,

which utensils are "appropriate" for a man, and which for a woman - which had made man square and woman triangular.

Il slippino is a pair of panties, just one size larger, and without the irritating lace which may be pretty to look at but makes it impossible to caress her. He wants to touch and be touched.

Il slippino makes him equal to the woman he loves. She can wear his slippino, and he can wear her panties, if that equality is accepted, and he can call his mutandine (27) "panties" or "petites culottes" (28) and neither of them has to be ashamed of it. On the contrary, the quality and the sharing is a matter of joy and pride. Their bodies are their fetishes, and they celebrate them.

But Jean-Paul does not always think of sexual ideology. His slippino is also a practical garment, and he also wears it at night. It insures that he does not lose his dangling bits and pieces and especially that he does not forget them when he wakes up in the morning, for tonight they may be in demand, and he would hate to disappoint her who asks for them. Apart from that, he likes to look pretty, yes Sir, whether he is alone or in company but he does not feel obliged to sleep naked, whatever his neighbour Jean-Jacques might say. It takes all sorts...

So here was Jean-Paul, sprawling on the Contessa's bed (29), practically naked, except for his red panties, as we will now provocatively call them.

It was a hot and long July evening, and the Countess was meticulously tidying up her little flat while he slept the sleep of exhaustion. The doors to the balcony were open, but he did not hear the half-naked children playing football in the court which formed the centre of a group of cheap concrete high rise buildings, which accommodated people of all nationalities, races and classes.

The impoverished Countess did not live here by choice. This little flat was all she could afford, and she had delicately furnished it exclusively with antiques and even managed to squeeze the grand piano, inherited from her father, into it. She resented the world, and what life had done to her. She felt superior, but the world accepted her not (30). So she had to give herself airs and graces.

LES ENFANTS (31)

She arrived in the bedroom at 10 p.m. and Jean-Paul awoke. She complained angrily, as so often before, about the five children who were still kicking their football about in the yard.

"These children should be in bed. No games in the yard after 10 p.m., that's what the rules say. All the parents have the tenancy agreement, why don't they call their children in? Why do they let them run wild? No wonder they become criminals, drug addicts, and whores. They should have some respect for people who have to get up and work in the morning. We are not all lazy chômeurs (32)."

These well rehearsed sentiments got up Jean-Paul's hackles immediately: "Noise? What noise? I didn't hear any noises. I slept soundly for the last two hours. The boys would have woken me up if they had been noisy."

"You managed to sleep? I wouldn't be able to sleep with that noise."

"But you didn't try, did you? You were tidying up the flat. You must be tired now. If you lie down and try to sleep instead of listening out for the ball, you will fall asleep immediately."

"I couldn't possibly sleep while that racket is going on."

"But these children are young, they need to have fun. Let them enjoy themselves while they can. It is not often that they have such a beautiful evening, when it is warm and when it is bright so long. Soon it will be winter and all the evening fun will be over for them."

"No, they have no right to do this. It is wrong. It is written in the tenancy agreement and the house rules. They cannot simply be allowed to break them. These are the criminal classes. The parents are just as bad as the children. If you let them do as they please, you educate them to be criminals. They should be brought up with a little bit of discipline. There is a time for everything. This is not the time for playing, it is the time for being at home."

"But these are nice children. Have you ever watched them during the day, how nicely they play and how well they all get on with each other? Isn't it better for them to be noisy and play football than to be quiet, hide, and inject themselves with drugs?"

She huffed and puffed angrily and did not reply.

Jean-Paul had heard all this before and was already full of renewed disapproval of her stuffy, spoil-sport, grand-motherly, teacher-like, ultra-conservative attitude. She is against

everything that makes other simple, "inferior", people happy - unless it be meditation, and he hated her for it.

THE TUG OF WAR

Then she turned towards him. Now it was fun-time. She saw him wearing his panties, specially chosen to be pretty and touchable, and she saw red. There was a barrier in her way, and she was not to be obstructed. How dare he, on the one evening they had together during this visit!

His panties, at night time, had long been a source of provocation to her. She expected unhindered access - enough of a reason for him to deny it. He was not willing to give in to her or even to indulge in explanations. He did not feel that such stupidity or clumsiness deserved explanations.

He did not wish to give her a lecture on eroticism or imaginative ways of making love. If a woman does not know, or is not capable of learning, by instinct, and by observation, he is not prepared to train her. He does not want to make love to a robot or a Coppélia (33), who is nothing but a product of his training and goes through mechanical motions which she does not feel.

She scolds: "Ah, you are wearing your bloody panties again. Take them off. I cannot understand why you always have to wear panties when you go to bed. One doesn't wear panties in bed. There is no need for them." ("Nor is there during the day," he thinks.)

She pulls at them, trying to get them off as quickly as possible. He resists, he makes himself deliberately heavy, he does not let her. Her complaint is enough to make him determined not to let go. By letting go, he would submit to her attitude towards sex which he so thoroughly despises. She continues to tug and pull.

He has known, and admired and loved, an otherwise wonderful woman for over 20 years (the tenderest and deepest relationship he has ever known), but refused steadfastly to go to bed with her (much to her disappointment!), simply because he disapproved of her intellectual and moral views (of a different kind) on sex, and ultimately this most wonderfully intimate relationship had to break up because no agreement could be reached, causing infinite suffering to him and even greater heartbreak to the woman, who was unable to transcend the religious prejudices inculcated into her during her youth.

Jean-Paul may be a businessman, as they say in French, but it is not simply pussy that he is after. On the contrary: A pussy without a brain, the right kind of brain, is not attractive to him.

As La Contessa sees it, when one makes love, one has to be nude, absolutely nude. Clothes are not necessary: on the contrary, they cover part of the body and are therefore a positive hindrance.

Making love is something that happens between two bodies, plain bodies, as God made them, without any accessories. God did not make clothes for sex. We will not be seduced by the poisonous concoctions of the sex and fashion magazines and of the film industry which are creating our fetishes. I am a spiritually superior being and do not follow the tastes of the undiscerning masses. We will have simple sex, natural sex, wholesome sex, homespun-linen sex: not nylon-and-Lycra sex. She relishes the natural behaviour of innocent children who play naked on the beach and thinks sex and its nudity is of the same kind.

Therefore one cannot start making love until one has undressed - in cold blood. There is a right time and a right order for everything. Football before 10, home after 10; clothes during the day, nudity during the night. Step 1: Clothes off; Step 2: Start to make love.

Jean-Paul is quite capable of making love when he and his partner are absolutely nude. But he objects to the attitude which makes this a condition of starting and ignores all the other possibilities. A woman who does this disqualifies herself. She is no longer a partner whom he can respect - not sexually anyway.

He is quite capable of making love while wearing a slippino. It can be removed at the last minute. He can make love and even penetrate while wearing it: there are three openings for that purpose. His sex can be touched and found through, and underneath, his panties. It can be taken out and be put back in again. The possibilities are endless.

His lusty demon lover from Jamaica used to play a tribadic game called "panty-fuck" with him. That game surely was not second-best.

There have been occasions when Jean-Paul, contrary to the wishes of his great namesake, has used his panties to deny penetration when La Comtesse (34) demanded it. Her pea-sized brain has drawn its razor-sharp conclusions: "Panties prevent penetration", therefore down with panties before we begin! She is determined to have her way - a sure way of not getting it. Jean-Paul is not desperate for a fuck, he is literate, he can always turn to a book or to Dr Faustus (35).

Women claim the right to refuse, to decide what they will and what they will not do. Jean-Paul sometimes exercises this right himself. Not every woman's gift is always in demand. Being a woman is not enough, he smiles acidly. Let her not overvalue what she has to offer.

His panties can be removed at the very last minute. The same applies to other garments.

Meanwhile La Contessa continues to tug and tear angrily at his slippino. It has to be removed. Now. It is her decision. Sex means contact of sexual organs. This is not possible with

barriers. Therefore these pointless coverings must go. These garments are not necessary, therefore why should he wear them, or I for that matter?

So her inexorable train of thought must have run.

The more she pulls, the more he resists. This is a matter of principle now. They are no longer talking about making love, they are not trying to pave the way towards mutual pleasuring. The new goal is winning, defeating the detested other or, at least, the enemy principle, the red rag. They are making war. A war born out of long suppressed hatred or contempt.

It is not only men, he notes, who can be unsubtle.

Why does it not occur to her that his slippino can be removed in the course of lovemaking? Why not simply start? Why does she instantly demand all? Why does she not access the 95% of his body surface which she can have? Does it have to be between his legs? Is that all she wants, and is that region all she thinks her body has to offer? She cannot be serious, he knows that. She is temporarily deluded.

He tells her, sarcastically, for he cannot bring himself to be friendly and genuinely informative, but his words convey the essence of his thoughts, they are exemplary: "Why do you have to touch my prick, why don't you touch my shoulders, which are bare, I like you to touch my shoulders, that is much nicer."

Instead of giving her a verbal lesson, he has merely given her a hint that there is a whole body, a whole naked body, available for touching.

THE GRAVY

After all, strangely enough, she is fighting over access to his body, she is not demanding that he caress her, which would be much more sensible, much more understandable.

While the Countess continues, cursing gently, to tug at his panties, which refuse to budge or tear, he stops listening and his mind wanders.

She is not demanding that he eat her (like the big bad wolf gobbled at lucky little Red Riding Hood), that he kiss her cunt. He does not like that, because she smells of urine.

Of course, she cannot know that for she is not a snake woman, has never been able to bury her nose in the folds between her legs. She knows what his cock smells like, she likes to kiss it, whereas he is reasonably indifferent to receiving these kisses - but it is nice, he does not mind. He does not know whether she kisses him more to please herself or to please him.

But tolerating the smell of his prick is not the same as tolerating the acid stench of her cunt. A prick is easier to wash than a cunt. A few glasses of water poured over it will do the job. It will be as clean as a whistle. His anatomy dictates that he could not even dream of wiping it; it has to be rinsed.

She has different standards of cleanliness. They are higher than his where her clothes or her flat are concerned (she regards garden soil in the house as dirt, he views it as nature or agricultural land), but much lower where the body is concerned. His religious education and a succession of girlfriends from cultures cleaner than Christianity and Europe have trained him.

Her clothes, unlike his, will always be meticulously clean, but from time to time, perhaps under the pressure of work and life and tiredness, atavistically, she reverts to the habits of King Louis Quatorze and his court and uses perfume as a powerful substitute for water. Jean-Paul finds the mixture of superannuated piss and perfume particularly distasteful. She may be able to deceive the visitors in her little sitting-room, but not a man who has been foolhardy enough to dive noselong between her legs.

The difference in their concept of body cleanliness is evident in their language. He "takes a shower" (which rinses the dirt away). She "takes a bath" (which means that she sits in her own shit) or she "washes herself" (which means that she wipes her genitals with a damp cloth). That cloth will never get into her most intimate recesses, but his nose will.

He dares not tell her this in so many words (he reserves his brutality for his writing) but he has thrown some hints, like suggesting that they, routinely, take a shower before going to bed.

She has not seen the point of this suggestion - she does not see its connection with making love, and anyway they do not make love every night and he does not attempt to kiss her pussy each time they make love. So, even if she understood the connection with his behaviour, she would find it pointless to shower every evening.

Murphy's law, however, dictates that on those few occasions when he attempts to kiss her she will not have showered, and that has taught him a lesson: he does not kiss her any more. Nor does he talk about it. Let her be filthy if that's how she wants it. He is not her mother.

She may be convinced of the wholesome nature of the human body in its natural state - one reason for her preference for sansculottes (36) at night. By contrast, he is much aware of the never ending unwholesome emanations of his own body, and does not want to offend those who come close to him - not only for their benefit, but simply because he would be embarrassed if they were

offended by his tastes and smells and because he does not want to lose them as friends.

He has learnt, and accepted, from Hindu and Buddhist scriptures which his girlfriends have brought him, that the body is nothing but a bag of bones, filled with blood, piss, and shit, continuously soiling itself from within, exuding bad breath, sweat, snot, and covering itself with stale blood, excrements and urine, and who but illusion-ridden and incorrigibly self-confident Europeans could deny it! Any car, any computer, any dish will remain clean after you have washed it. If it gets dirty, the dirt will have come from somewhere else and settled on it. But the human body, by its very nature, is a dirt-generating machine. To keep it clean (a hopeless task, we can only produce the illusion of cleanliness!, cover up the filth oozing out of all our pores) we have to wash it continuously (just as we have to remain at the pumps of a punctured boat day and night if we do not want it to sink). The civilised religions of this world therefore wisely make cleanliness of the body a religious duty.

Jean-Paul is grateful to his girlfriends from these cultures, who have taught him the most valuable lessons of his life.

Modern Western women find it intolerable that any part of the body should be considered unclean.

"Lady, love your cunt. Because nobody else is going to. Primitive man feared the vagina, as well he might, as the most magical of the magical orifices of the body... Most of the hassle for fellows trying to do the decent thing arises from the females' intransigent modesty about cunt. It looks bad. Shave it. Pluck it. Cover it with your hand, and pretend you dig touching yourself. It smells bad. Wash it. Scour it. Douche it. DEODORIZE IT. It tastes bad. Wash it some more. It's sloppy. Mop it. It's dry. Lubricate it." Thus spake Germaine Greer in 1987. (37)

After having bewailed the fact that men do not greedily lap up what is so generously on offer, Germaine concludes: "If all else fails, post it to us and we will kiss it for you." Mercifully she refrains from demanding that soup slurping is made compulsory by law. Why should Jean-Paul be forced to do what he doesn't like, or dragooned or bullied into it? Isn't that the very situation for which she insists on the right to say No - to sex in general, then why not to a certain type of sex, or part of sex?

If she wants men to do it, why does she not make sure that they enjoy it - seduce them into it instead of moaning about their underdeveloped taste buds. Why not stuff it with ice cream, cannabis, heroine or jam? A supermarket cannot blame its customers for not buying its products! Change the product, make the soap less sour or salty, and the chauvinist pigs will come flocking to the trough.

Jean-Paul finds Germaine's self-confidence amazing. If every cunt is clean, washed or not, then every prick and every arse is

clean, scraped or not. For a fleeting moment, Jean-Paul thinks of offering his own, filled with creamy shit to Germaine for sucking, but he thinks better of it: her tongue is too filthy.

Jean-Paul does not expect the Countess to play with, or stick her nose into, his arse. Nevertheless he is afraid that she may get, by sheer accident, a whiff of his shit and be put off by it, and therefore he rinses even his arse in such a way that this cannot possibly happen. People of other cultures do this every time they go to the toilet. Only Europeans and Americans are content with the filthy habit of wiping the shit around their arses and letting it dry. They do not understand why Turkish men flee in horror from Turkish baths in Turkey when a Western tourist enters.

The Countess, happy and contented in her superior upper-class French and European tradition, is not aware of these things.

In the morning she gets up and, with night-withered face and wearing her standard linen night shift, makes her coffee and sits down at her breakfast table to drink her coffee and eat her croissants or tartines (38). First breakfast, then bath: that is her ritual and the sequence appears important to her. She won't have it otherwise. Jean-Paul comes from a clean family, his great-grandfather was the world-famous, ophthalmic surgeon Professor Blumentrit. He is horrified: how can one dare to touch food, or even enter the kitchen, in that unwashed state? For her, dirt is soil on the carpet, for him, dirt is shit in the arse.

Jean-Paul hinted at an alternative sequence once, she did not pick up the point, she was too sure. Jean-Paul does not remonstrate, but, quite ostentatiously, he no longer has breakfast with her. He follows his own routine. He empties his bowels, he has his shower, he gets dressed - then he eats.

EROGENOUS SHOULDERS

Jean-Paul perceives the voice of the furious Contessa again. Oh yes, shoulders, he had invited her to caress his shoulders rather than his prick. He meant only to remind her that there is a whole body available for making love: why concentrate on the covering of his sexual organs?

She, stupid as she is (he would call her stupid even if she had a PhD in physics, meta or otherwise), takes this literally: "Why do I always have to do what you like? You say 'Caress my shoulder', and you expect me to caress your shoulder. Why should I do that when you don't do what I want, namely remove your panties?"

He remains silent like Jesus before Pilate but turns his inner eyes to an imaginary ceiling in utter despair at so much naivety. She turns over and sulks. He tries, in his mind, to re-capitulate what has happened - after all, he must not forget his evidence. This is a beautiful story, too good to be missing in his

collection, a story which will not only pillory the Countess and her ilk but also document what goes wrong in bad marriages, once the poison of prejudice and mutual disdain has built up.

The scene in bed may be bad, but the story must be remembered so that it can be written down as soon as possible. What were the arguments? What is at stake? What is she thinking? What is he thinking? He tries to explore it mentally.

THE ATTACK

Having done this, he goes on the attack. There is no point in remaining silent. He has to insult her, fling the truth of his feelings into her face. He must not allow her to think that she has been hard done by, that she is the injured party, that she has been hurt by accident due to his selfishness. He wants her to know that he knows very well what he is doing, why he is refusing; his actions are deliberate, they are directed against her and for a specific reason.

He tells her that her attitude to lovemaking is "primitive". He cannot be turned on and off like a water cock or like a lamp as she wants to do. She wants his panties off with the same simple directness with which one takes the lid off a saucepan. Just like that.

He accuses her of having no imagination. Can they not make love whether or not he is wearing his slippino?

"I cannot understand why you are so obsessed with your fucking panties." When she says "I cannot understand", she means "I disapprove".

He retorts: "I am not obsessed, I simply wear them, and I want them to remain where they are. It is you who is obsessed, you are obsessed with removing them, and you are incapable of doing anything until your demand has been satisfied. It is not your sexual desire that drives you and that is being frustrated by my refusal but your insistence on control and domination. I am prepared to play along with the first, but not the second. You know best, it is La Contessa against the rest of world. You despise organised religion because you have discovered the highest form of spirituality and can now happily look down on Christians, Hindus and atheists alike. But your stupid pseudo-spirituality does not even enable you to be happy and content and live in peace with the world as it is. You moan and complain from morning to night about everything around you. Je me fiche de ta spiritualité (39) - fuck your spirituality if it cannot make you happy! You have discovered organic food and healthy living and can therefore despise the way everybody else eats. You have inherited conservative aristocratic tastes and can therefore despise the way ordinary people dress. You have been to a boarding school in Versailles where you have studied a few anthologies of the French classics and memorised some quotations,

and now you consider yourself educated and superior. Educated? I call it 'trained like a pretty parrot': you have learnt to make the right noises, but you understand nothing, and still you are riding on your high horse, sitting in judgement on the rest of the world, so much so that even in bed you think you know the rules, you know and decide the one and only way, the proper way, in which things 'must' be done - comme il faut. Comme on fout, comme on baise, I say." (40)

"What is all this about," he thinks she thinks, "surely the point at issue is that he has a fixation on his shoulder and insists on my caressing it, and I don't feel like it. What on earth does that have to do with my spirituality and La Fontaine?"

He thinks, but does not say: "For you, removing my panties is not, as it could be, part of the act of making love, but simply a hygienic or practical measure." That's what he objects to.

He tells her that she behaves like a "boring old woman", worse than her own "grandmother". That she behaves as if she were the age of her grandmother.

In vain, he searches for a word which can encapsulate his contempt. His own parents and their generation promoted a stuffy, prudish, puritan Christian attitude towards sex. By contrast, his adult attitudes were formed by the swinging Sixties, the thundering Seventies, the roaring Eighties and the lusty Nineties.

He has in his mind the image of a certain type of woman, of a certain age, who deplores the joyful developments of those decades, who condemns the sexual liberties of the young, their lack of inhibition and their readiness to touch. "They copulate like dogs whenever they feel like it, sans amour, sans spiritualité et sans aucune conception de la force divine dans l'homme," (41) as the forceful Comtesse likes to put it - yes, "force divine" she says, for "Dieu" (42) is too common a word for her elevated level of spirituality.

Jean-Paul, by contrast, approves of all this and participates where he can. But in his mind he sees the old scarecrow, the pious hag who finds solace in dark churches in the arms of her saviour, the spoilsport whose envy does not want others to experience the pleasure which she, because of her mind or her indifferent body, could never have.

Some women, in his experience, are past it (or behave as if they were) when they are past fifty. He picks fifty because that appears to be old, unsexy and threatening to a young man in his sexual prime. When he himself approaches fifty, that generation will no longer appear parental to him. Some women are "old" when they are twenty-five or when they are thirty; some are born "old", like Father Time.

Jean-Paul is trying to insult his mistress by lumping her together with that kind of woman. He does not attack her age but her behaviour. He calls it "antisexual" in spite of her apparent sexual greediness. The worst word he can find, the most unsexual, most passion-killing concept, is that of "grandmother". A grandmother in that framework has never known the joys of sex in our modern sense or is definitely past it. That is the dagger he throws at her: her behaviour is that of a woman who does not understand sex or for whom sex is nothing but in-out and procreation. He might as well go and fuck the Virgin Mary and bless the world with another saviour.

When La Contessa comes to bed, she always wears that hideous night shift which she must have inherited from her great grandmother or from the wetnurse of Louis Quatorze (43), made of plain, rough, unbleached Irish linen, reaching down to her ankles, which is enough to kill the desire in even the most eager young stallion. How dare she wear this shapeless monstrosity in his presence and then complain if he doesn't perform! Why does she think he should be attracted by her pure unadorned dilapidated body! What vanity!

What, our love is between our souls? Arrant nonsense! Can't you even come to bed without a moral justification to protect you against the raised finger of your fucking spirituality? If our love is one between two souls (

Not: Mon âme aime ton âme, Mon corps aime ton âme, Mon âme aime ton corps (44), mais brutalement (45): Mon corps aime ton corps (46) - and fuck you, too!) and not between two bodies, then kiss my arse: let our souls look dotingly at each other but don't expect me to touch your withered body. If you are driven by lust, and I bloody well hope you are, then at least have the courage to be bloody honest about it without looking for excuses.

Every night she enters the bedroom in "that thing", his prick instantly declines, she takes it off, folds it neatly and lays it on a chair, she crawls into bed, and love can begin. That is the proper procedure.

Jean-Paul does not only find this unattractive in itself (with God's help, but only then!, he can make love, of sorts, even under those circumstances) but, more importantly, he resents the fact that this woman, in the twenty-first century, i.e. not living in the Middle Ages, does not know any better, has not learnt any better.

He suspects that this lack of knowledge or experience is not an accident of her life (for which she ought to be pitied) but is a conscious choice born out of her character. She has not wanted to learn when an opportunity offered itself, she has chosen for boyfriends only sexually underdeveloped religious bigots with whom she could practise the asexual excuse "Mon âme aime ton âme"; and she has chosen Jean-Paul only because she has detected that spiritual streak in him which could provide the spiritual

pretext she needed in order to be able to indulge in her suppressed lust. She thought he was, like her, a spiritually superior person. That is the very thing he does not want to be, and certainly not by designation.

Imagine a woman who is 50 years old, has never been married, but has had four boyfriends in her life, i.e. has spent many years without boyfriend: and that woman claims never to have masturbated. Jean-Paul does not believe it for a minute. Of course, she lies. Her inability to admit something that is so natural, necessary and accepted, in men and women, to a person with whom she goes to bed, in front of whom she has apparently no other sexual inhibitions, shows the degree of her remaining prudery, the primitivity of her assumptions about sex.

When Jean-Paul accuses her of antisexual attitudes, he accuses her also of anti-life attitudes, which are even more profound and comprehensive. This is the reason why he detests her, since for him life = sex, and sex = life. All honest encounters with life, with nature, with other people are, in his conception of the term, sexual. The boundaries between the sexual and the non-sexual are fuzzy. So he, who is so open towards all manifestations of life, including women, and who embraces them all without hesitation and embarrassment, feels that those who call him a "womaniser" quite misunderstand his behaviour and are classifying it on the basis of a bourgeois, patrilineal, ideology which he rejects outright. He is not a womaniser, he is a "lifer". Women are part of it.

Jean-Paul resists her, does not co-operate with her primitive sexual methods, in order to express his disapproval of her general attitude towards life. There is more at stake here than a pair of panties. The tiny piece of cloth which he wears, and he wished it were tinier, is just a symbol, a residue of what he calls "youth" and "modernity", acceptance of modern fashions, of today's lifestyles, including even its apocalyptic aberrations, against her dull Puritanism and moralism.

She, of course, would not agree that she is puritanical. She knows, and admits, for example, that she likes to fuck and does not hesitate to call a kiss a kiss. Et après ski? On baise. (47) She is quite capable of demanding what she wants (as we observe even tonight, except that she has hooked the claws of her willpower, not of her desire!, into a ridiculous triviality).

She knows that she is not afraid of nudity. She happily runs about naked in her flat. She also sits down without panties on her antique chairs, which surprises rather than disgusts Jean-Paul since he cannot see how she can avoid grinding her shit, slime and piss into her expensive fabrics.

She is happy that she can run around like this in front of him, and that she can use some of those prohibited words whose very existence was denied by her parents and is denied by her peers. With him she can be uninhibited, and she is happy about it. Those

prohibited words have often provoked a peel of laughter from her which one would never hear from people to whom these words do not appear as extraordinary and incongruous as they do to her.

Her relaxed attitude to nudity makes her think that she cannot possibly be a puritan, for in her mind puritans are fanatical about covering their bodies. In her perception it is Jean-Paul rather who is puritanical for, if he were not, why does he not remove those damned panties? She is quite bewildered. This perverse man is ridiculously inconsistent. Why on earth does he want to hide from her what she has seen and consumed and swallowed a hundred times before?

For Jean-Paul this dichotomy is an example of what he calls "a primitive way of thinking", primitive and unsubtle, the dualistic approach to life of which Christian and western civilisation is so proud, which likes to create mutually exclusive categories, which are useful in the design of binary computers but must grossly misrepresent the complexities of life, the overlappings and fuzzy boundaries, the inclusions and ultimate unity of God and the devil, of good and evil, of knowledge and ignorance, of existence and non-existence, of human psychology, of guilt and innocence, of free will and fate, of love and hate, of order and chaos, of masculine and feminine, and so on and on and on.

She is what she is, a child of her civilisation and of her class. Jean-Paul does not want to make her more subtle by discussing the fine features of eroticism with her. She is too old for such lessons, this is not worth his while. If she were 22 or 18, he might happily undertake to instruct her.

In that case he would not have to overcome that enormous load of ideological baggage, prejudice and conviction which she carries with her.

He has done that in the past with some young women, and "teaching" them was easy, they were inherently gifted and eager to learn. Like the glorious María Pilar from Teruel so many years ago. Jean-Paul will never forget the joy with which he received that open postcard with El Torico (48) on one side and on the other a message from María Pilar who invited him to come to Spain for three hot summer months: "I have such illusiones (49): I will teach you Spanish, and you will teach me fucking", she said clearly and simply. "That's the spirit", he thought, he was not far from Perpignon and departed the next day. When he returned after three months, he passed an advanced public examination in Spanish for which one normally prepares between three and five years. But he searched in vain for an examination in which she could demonstrate, perhaps together with him, her considerable skills, "im Wald und auf der Heiden" (50), as he used to joke in his great-grandfather Blumentrit's German. He had never before had a pupil like her; she was a natural talent.

With the Countess, however, he is not prepared to teach by words, explanations, by argument and theory. It is not worth his while.

The effort is too great for the benefit that could possibly result. He is not even likely to succeed as she is so packed with prejudice and pride in her attitudes, fixed opinions of a kind of which Jean-Paul strongly disapproves.

He gives her cues, for instance by refusing to remove his panties, but she will not take them, since she interprets everything she sees in accordance with her rigid outmoded ideology.

Apart from this, he is afraid that this unsubtle and naive soldier woman might pooh pooh and ridicule him. He is not going to risk that for a fool like her.

She dresses well, elegantly and tastefully. Not only her outer, but even her undergarments are attractive in their own conservative way. Hers is a conservative, aristocratic elegance. She has a horror of anything that she considers "vulgar". Jean-Paul's mother had exactly the same kind of elegance; you couldn't go wrong in society or at work if you followed her advice in matters of dress.

The Countess's underwear is invariably elegant and attractive. Strangely enough she does not make use of it for erotic purposes. She does not try to seduce him with it. Before she goes to bed, it has to come off. How can she be so stupid!

Starting with those standards, everything around her is vulgar. Vulgar is the eroticism which is pushed by modern photographers, by magazines and sex shops as a part of the continuing protest against the traditional suppression of sexual utterances.

Vulgar is what the masses respond to. Vulgar are McDo and Coca-Co, chewing gum and jeans, bright colours, plastic and whatever comes from America.

Panties are vulgar, to an extent, because, in their modern triangular form, they are the invention of a fashion and sex industry dominated by American libertinism, or so she thinks. That is another reason why they have to come off: the Comtesse wants "sex nature" (French pronunciation!), like she wants her "food nature", her "thé nature" (French pronunciation) (51), and her vegetables biologiques (52), of course. She does not want the sex created by the erotics-industry, she wants her sex with the innocence of children playing naked on the beach.

Jean-Paul likes paedophiles (or so he says), but he does not like children. They and their innocence turn him off. Before the police come and arrest him on suspicion, he makes himself clear: He does not like what paedophiles do, but he is sexually attracted by paedophiles. This is a completely novel perversion, not yet treated in any textbook of abnormal psychology, and probably he is the only person in the world who suffers from this particular neurosis. He is planning to write a massive book about the case. Gnoti seauton (53), he says. This is in a way the

perversion of a perversion, perversion squared or cubed - whichever. Perhaps it is the child hidden inside him that is trying to come out into the open. It is the bane of his life that no paedophile has ever yet shown the slightest interest in him, and now, alack, he is growing old!.

Jean-Paul's thoughts return to the Countess. Pornography and erotic literature are vulgar, plastic is vulgar, processed foods are vulgar, everything that is modern and that young people instinctively go for is vulgar.

The only things she accepts are things of a bygone age. By her notion of vulgarity, she puts herself above, and against, the rest of the world. When she selected Jean-Paul Calvin, she thought she had found a soul mate, someone to keep her company in her esoteric vacuum, someone together with whom she could look down on the rest of the world, someone to put an end to the desperate loneliness of God, factoris coeli et terrae (54). She had made the wrong choice. Jean-Paul looks down on her and is at a level with the rest of the world.

Jean-Paul Calvin, himself coming from venerable ancestry, can appreciate many of the old virtues and values. But he will not condemn the modern ones. Like Prometheus, he feels himself too close to them. He belongs to the modern world as well, he wants to enjoy it, he can enjoy it, and he is not ashamed of it. That's why he resists the Countess. That's what il slippino stands for.

They lie silent for a while. He thinks about the situation. She, presumably, is boiling with rage at his unreasonableness.

He wonders: why does he meet somebody, why is he even capable of making love to somebody, whose attitudes he detests so much.

She, presumably, asks herself the same question. As much as he detests her attitudes, surely she detests his. By tearing away at his panties, she wants to tear out his attitudes, purify him, make him into her own image, show her disapproval of what he stands for. Are their sexual organs the only thing that unites them? Her tearing away at his panties has nothing to do with love or with sex, but only with principle. That's why he resists. He will not submit to her principles.

Peut-être la maîtresse veut être maître? - Non, madame! (55)

Then, why do they still meet, why do they still go to bed together? In spite of all the mutual contempt, there must be benefits in the relationship, for both parties; they outweigh the hassle. Neither party can satisfy its needs more conveniently. In this respect, neither party can do any better. Otherwise one of them, or both, will seek their satisfaction elsewhere. Neither of them has to make the cost/benefit analysis for the other party. Each of them can do that for himself. The fact that they still meet demonstrates with sufficient clarity that there is a

benefit, even though not necessarily the overt emotional or sexual one.

She will, of course, deny that in human relationships there is such a thing as cost/benefit analysis; but it is there all the same, at least implicitly, and the true decisions are made on that basis and later dressed up in romantic terms. Everybody works on that basis, whether he denies it or not.

She will be well aware of what benefits Jean-Paul brings her (however dissatisfied and angry she may be with him); what remains still makes it worth her while. Otherwise she would have kicked him out long ago. In fact, that is exactly what she threatened to do when they parted the following day and she said, magisterially: "If you do not behave better (she meant, of course, *il slippino*) next time you come, you've had it, no more mistress in Vichy for you."

Jean-Paul says nothing and smiles inwardly. "Don't overplay your hand," he thinks. He is unrepentant. He is proud of his resistance. If she kicks him out, he will lose his benefits (whatever they may be), but he will also save himself a hell of a lot of annoyance. Perhaps he had better go soon and see if his petite Arlésienne is still there, she with the long auburn hair, the strong legs and the smell of sun and mountain herbs on her body. He will serenade her with a piece by Bizet (56) (she was convinced his real name was Baiser (57), and she did like the piece).

Jean-Paul's mind strays back to the cost/benefit analysis. It is simply a question of supply and demand, and it works like the market place. If she can do better, all things taken into consideration, she will turn towards somebody else. And so will he. At the moment, their marriage, like all marriages, is still one of convenience. They might as well be honest about it.

Most people are not honest about theirs. They cover up reality with romantic and sentimental notions. Even Jean-Paul and the Countess do this, since they do not discuss their cost/benefit considerations. And that might be just as well.

Not everything should be discussed or benefits from discussion. It is much more pleasant if one can lose oneself in sentiment and romanticism and refrain from analysing everything to its extremes. That can give a lot of real pleasure, even though it is based on an illusion. Jean-Paul accepts the reality of illusions. But if necessary, one can make that analysis, and it serves to explain and justify human behaviour. This knowledge can also give us a certain amount of contentment with the circumstances of life which is not perfect in every way.

Most of life, most human relationships, are a muddle. We try to regulate and simplify it by social arrangements, such as marriage. But the muddle remains and often reclaims the territory it had previously lost.

The social conventions (monogamy, fidelity, no sex outside marriage [as it used to be]) are only superimposed on that muddle (which continues to exist) like the lines of a geographical grid over the sea or a desert - but life underneath the grid goes on undisturbed and chaotic as before. Those who are closest to life and closest to reality, ignore the grid and joyfully (or painfully) carry on without it. Even those who try to observe the grid are sucked into the muddle. They will be happier if they do not grieve about the grid and accept the muddle as their mother. The muddle can be fun if we are prepared to wallow in it.

Last night La Contessa and Jean-Paul Calvin did not fuck. For him, his principles were stronger than his non-existent desire. The absence of desire put him into a strong position. His Non to her is his Oui to life. (58)

What will happen next time they meet? Will they, in spite of their mutual contempt, fall into bed again? Will there be another Non? Or will their mere bodies, with hearts hard as flint, one day spark off yet another explosive fuck?

^FOOTNOTES

1. Le Non, ou: La maîtresse veut être maître = The No, or: The mistress wants to be master. (French)
2. "... une histoire, messieurs, un peu piquante et salacieuse peut-être, mais oh là-là ..." = Gentlemen, a story which is perhaps a bit spicy and salacious, but oh la-la (French)
3. The case of the maid and the Mormon has also been described in: Christine Keeler and Robert Meadley: "Sex scandals", London 1985, p. 137 ff.
4. Whither shall I go...: Psalm 139: 7-8
5. St Petri ad Vincula: 1 August: St. Peter in Chains
6. le fils naturel du pape = natural son of the pope (i.e. illegitimate son of the pope) (French)
7. donc naturellement le fils du pape = therefore naturally the son of the pope (French)
8. geniti non facti, in vitro, consubstantiales Matri, per quam omnia fuckta sunt : engendered, not made, in the test tube, of one substance with the mother, by whom everything was made (facta) or fucked up (fuckta) (spoof-Latin)
9. Woytila: Pope John Paul II was born Karol Józef Wojtyła
10. Agobard (769-840 AD) was archbishop of Lyon, wrote anti-semitic tracts but argued against the witch hunts of his time.
11. Klaus Barbie (1913-1991), "the butcher of Lyons", was Head of the Gestapo in Lyon during the Nazi occupation and notorious for his cruelty.
12. Barbie Dolls
13. Klaus Barbie was born in Bad Godesberg, now part of Bonn.
14. Denim jeans are named after the French city of Nîmes because this type of textile was first produced there. The expression "serge de Nîmes" lead to the word "denim".
15. avec une Arlésienne = with a girl from Arles (French)
16. un homme d'affaires = a businessman, a man of affaires (French)

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17. Vichy water is a slightly salty mineral water.
 18. In the Hadron Collider at CERN, sub-atomic particles are smashed into each other.
 19. Ferney: A small French town near the Swiss border where anti-clerical sceptic philosopher Voltaire spend twenty years of his life.
 20. O felix culpa! = Oh fortunate sin! (Latin)
 21. Monsieur Teste: brainy character created by Paul Valéry:
"Paul Valéry: La soirée avec Monsieur Teste"
 22. Il slippino = the slip, brief (male underwear), gli slippini = the slips, briefs (Italian)
 23. Vivent les fétiches! = Long live the fetishes! (French)
 24. la petite différence délicieuse = the delicious little difference (French)
 25. Weltanschauung = view of the world, personal philosophy (German)
 26. was die Mode streng geteilt = what fashion has strictly divided; from Schiller's "Ode to Joy" (Freude, schöner Götterfunken) (German)
 27. mutandine = panties (Italian)
 28. petites culottes = panties (French)
 29. Contessa = Countess (Italian)
 30. the world accepted her not: Bible, New Testament, John 1:11: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."
 31. les enfants = the children (French)
 32. chômeurs = unemployed people (French)
 33. Coppélia: doll heroine of a ballet by Léo Delibes (Paris, 1870)
 34. Comtesse = countess (French)
 35. Dr Faustus: Hero of plays by Marlowe, Goethe, Valéry.
"Faust" = fist (German)
 36. sansculottes = French revolutionaries; literally:
"without trousers, without knickers" (French)

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37. Germaine Greer 1987: The quote comes from "Lady, love your cunt". In Germaine Greer: "The madwoman's underclothes: essays and occasional writings, 1968-85". Pan Books, London 1987, p 74-77. Originally published in: SUCK 1971.
 38. tartines = fried cakes (French)
 39. Je me fiche de ta spiritualité. = I don't give a fuck about your spirituality. (French)
 40. comme il faut. Comme on fout, comme on baise = as is right and proper, as one screws, as one fucks (French)
 41. sans amour, sans spiritualité et sans aucune conception de la force divine dans l'homme = without love, without spirituality and without any idea of the divine force in man (French)
 42. Dieu = God (French)
 43. Louis Quatorze = King Louis XIV (French)
 44. Mon âme aime ton âme (my soul loves your soul), Mon corps aime ton âme (my body loves your soul), Mon âme aime ton corps (my soul loves your body), (French)
 45. brutalement = brutally (French)
 46. Mon corps aime ton corps (My body loves your body) (French)
 47. Et après ski? On baise. = And after skiing? We fuck. (French)
 48. El Torico = the little bull (well-known statue of a tiny bull standing on a big pillar in Teruel. (Spanish)
 49. Tengo ilusiones. = I look forward to; ilusiones = anticipatory joy (Spanish)
 50. Im Wald und auf der Heiden = in the forest and on the heath (that's where I am looking for my pleasures). 19th century huntsmen's song (German)
 51. thé nature = tea without milk (French)
 52. biologique = organic (French)
 53. Gnoti seauton = Know yourself (Greek)
 54. factoris coeli et terrae = maker of heaven and earth (Latin)

55. Peut-être la maîtresse veut être maître? - Non, madame! =
Perhaps the mistress wants to be master? No, madam!
(French)
56. Bizet: composer of "Carmen" and of the "Arlesienne Suite"
(French)
57. baiser = to fuck (formerly: to kiss) (French)
Bizet : [bi 'ze]
baiser : [be 'ze]
58. His Non to her is his Oui to life. = His No to her is his
Yes to life.

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