SEXUALITY AND MADNESS
AS POLITICAL TOOLS IN QUILLS

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ABSTRACT

This article argues that sexuality and madness are power metaphors that can be used as political tools. Based on Michel Foucault’s concepts of normality, abnormality, power, sexuality and madness, it proves that in “Quills”, sexuality can be manipulated to criticize the authority, while madness can be used by the authority to oppress those who have such critical attitude. In the movie, the Marquis de Sade uses his stories about perverted sexual activities conducted by upper-class people to criticize the authority. Meanwhile, Napoleon and his associates use madness to oppress anybody who dares to rebel against their power.

Keyword: sexuality, madness, power, political tools

ABSTRAK

Artikel mengemukakan bahwa seksualitas serta kegilaan merupakan metafor kekuasaan yang dapat digunakan sebagai alat politik. Berdasarkan konsep Michel Foucault tentang normalitas, abnormalitas, kekuasaan, seksualitas, serta kegilaan, film “Quills” membuktikan bahwa seksualitas dapat dimanipulasi untuk mengkritik para penguasa, sementara kegilaan dapat digunakan oleh para penguasa untuk menekan mereka yang memiliki sikap kritis seperti itu. Dalam film ini Marquis de Sade menggunakan kisahnya tentang penyimpangan seksual masyarakat kelas atas untuk mengkritik para penguasa. Sementara itu, Napoleon dan para kroninya menggunakan kegilaan untuk menekan siapa pun yang berani menentang kekuasaan mereka.

Kata kunci: seksualitas, kegilaan, kekuasaan, alat politik
INTRODUCTION

What is sexuality? For centuries, matters related to sex have always attracted people’s interests. This fact explains why erotic books, magazines, movies, etc. are mushrooming all over the world. Sexuality is an understandable universal language. Every person will have no difficulties in understanding it because sexuality is something natural and more instinctive rather than cognitive.

What about madness? It is easy for us to claim any person mad if that person does not act according to the valid convention. It has always been easy for all of us to dislike what we have never known before. For example, if we lived in a world that only knew the color of black and white, red would be madness. When everybody uses black and white, a person who uses red must be a madman. However, the color of red is not mad. So, who are we judging which person is mad and which person is not? We do not know whether what we considered mad is truly mad, perhaps we just have not come to know it.

Sexuality and madness are two powerful tools, especially when we are talking about politics. Sexuality, as what have been mentioned above, is a universal language understandable for anybody and it means that it holds a great role in communication. Therefore, it is very likely to have a great political power because by controlling the communication one can control the society. Madness also holds a great political power since this predicate can alienate people from the society. Both of them can be used as political tools whether it is to criticize or to oppress opponents.

DISCUSSION

Michel Foucault’s Concepts

1. Normality and Abnormality

According to Lydia Alix Fillingham in her book Foucault for Beginners, Michel Foucault thinks that normality is something common and natural in most people’s eyes. We can say that something is normal if our surroundings also think it is. For example, we are used to eat with the help of our hands. We do that and all other people around us do that, so it is normal to eat with our hands. However, abnormality is the opposite of normality, something that is totally different and against the convention. If in the previous example it was mentioned about the people who eat with the help of their hands, the example of abnormality would be the people who eat with the help of their feet. Eating with your feet is considered abnormal because we rarely, or even never, see our
surroundings do that. We all use our hands if we eat but this kind of people use their feet. Their difference makes them considered abnormal.

“Kita tentu saja akan cenderung mendefinisikan abnormal sebagai sesuatu yang sangat berbeda dengan normal. Normal adalah istilah pokok, dan apa yang normal sepenuhnya harus jelas – semuanya ada di sekeliling kita. (Fillingham, 2000:15)"

“(We certainly would define abnormality as something totally different from normality. Normality is the main term and what is normal has to be perfectly clear – all are in our surroundings)”

Foucault also believes that the difference between normality and abnormality is very thin and changes from time to time. We may think that it is easy to differentiate normality and abnormality, but actually it is not. If we look at the history, we can see that certain behavior that is considered abnormal in one time can be considered normal in other time and vice versa. In “Foucault for Beginners”, Moshe Süsser illustrated the crucifixion of Jesus Christ as the example. What Jesus did in His time were considered abnormal because He did not act like most people did, He did not follow the convention, and it made Him crucified. However, nowadays, people think that what He did was magnificent, and we glorify Him for what He has done.

“Kita juga dapat menganggap bahwa perbedaan mudah dikatakan, dan cenderung sama sepanjang waktu (Fillingham, 2000:15).”

“(We can also think that the difference is easy to tell and tends to be the same all the time).”

“Akan tetapi, dengan melihat aneka ragam dokumen sejarah, Foucault menantang semua anggapan itu. Ia menunjukkan bahwa definisi-definisi kegilaan, kesakitan, kejahatan, dan seksualitas menyimpang sangat berubah dari waktu ke waktu. Perilaku yang membuat orang, pada suatu saat, terpasung di rumah atau terkungkung di rumah sakit, pada saat yang lain dipuji-puji (Fillingham, 2000:16).”

“(However, by looking at various documents of history, Foucault opposed all of those assumptions. He showed that the definitions of madness, pain, criminality, and perverted sexuality always change from time to time. The behavior that causes a person, in one time, strapped at home or locked up in a hospital, in the other time, is praised).”

Normals possess power over the abnormals simply because they have knowledge which Foucault addressed as power. He also mentioned that learning about abnormality is actually one of the ways of how the relationships of power are built in the society. So, normality and abnormality is actually a matter of decision or construction that is made by the people who have the power. Those people are the ones who decide who are normal and who are abnormal.

“Mempelajari abnormalitas adalah salah satu cara utama bagaimana hubungan kekuasaan dibangun dalam masyarakat. Ketika suatu abnormalitas dan yang
berkaitan dengan normanya didefinisikan, sedikit banyak orang normal selalu berkuasa atas orang abnormal...– apa yang mereka katakan telah dinilai tidak relevan, sebab menurut defini mereka tidak mempunyai pengetahuan (tetapi ini dasar untuk tidak menghendaki mereka berkuasa) (Fillingham, 2000:18).”

“(Learning about abnormality is one of the main ways of how the relationships of power built in the society. When an abnormality and those related to it is defined, normal people would usually have the power over the abnormals... – what they say is considered irrelevant because according to the definition they do not have knowledge (but this is just a reason used so that the abnormals would have no power)).”

2. Sexuality

Sexuality, like the definition taken from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2001) is “The things people do and feel that are connected with their desire or ability to have sex.” Desire is highly related to wanting something or somebody so bad. It is human to want something more than what we have right now. However, this desire to have is often opposed by other people’s desires. So, to satisfy this desire, one must dominate the others. This is the only way to get other people desire the same thing and not desire the things that oppose one’s desire.

When we are talking about domination, power is always the matter. Power is what separates the dominating and the dominated. The “dominating” can dominate the “dominated” because the “dominating” has the power over the “dominated”. Michel Foucault also thinks that the way the power works in sexuality is the same like the way the power works in the modern political power.

“...It is a matter of analyzing “sexuality”... in which the subject is objectified for himself and for others through certain specific procedures of “government.” (Foucault, 1984)”

Michel Foucault, then, adds that normal sexual behavior is nothing more than the abnormal sexual behavior in disguise. All sexual behaviors are actually the same, but some prefer to veil their behavior and claim that this is the normal sexual behavior and those who do not veil their behavior are claimed abnormal.

“...he argued that the study of “insane mentality” reveals the essence of rationality and that normal sexual behavior is a cloaked version of the “abnormal”... (Horus Publication on the Internet, 1998)”

3. Madness

Madness, which dictionary defined as very stupid behavior that could be dangerous or serious mental illness, is actually one form of abnormality. People can state that a person is mad because his/her behavior is not “normal”, unlike what most people in
the society do. So, if somebody acts “stupidly” (differently from the convention the society has constructed), that somebody will be pronounced mad.

Michel Foucault thinks that madness is highly related to casting away those unwanted from the society. Madness is a category that people constructed. The example given is three persons who have emotional problems. The first person is the one who beats the air, the second person is the one who says that the FBI has transplanted a radio receiver in his head and is controlling his mind, while the third person is the one who only sits, says nothing, and do nothing even though he is physically healthy. Let’s just assume that we do not believe them. What happens to them actually? If we do not know about the term of “madness”, we could not categorize them into one same category, the mad people. Those persons surely have emotional problems, but how come we claim them mad while we do not know what causes them to act that way? There is no basis for us to say that they are the opposite of us, sane-minded people.

“Ia mulai dari hipotesis bahwa kegilaan bersangkut paut dengan hal menyingkirkan beberapa orang dari masyarakat, terutama dengan mengurung mereka, dengan memasung mereka (Fillingham, 2000:32)”

“(He started from the hypothesis that madness is related to the matters of casting away some people from the society, especially by locking them up, by strapping them)”

4. Discourse – Knowledge – Power

Since the three of these terms can not be separated, I will explain them together. Fillingham also wrote in her book that Michel Foucault says that power is the strength to decide the truth, and to decide the truth, though he rejected the idea of absolute truth, people must have “knowledge”. So, the word “knowledge” that is used here will not refer to the knowledge in general, but more to Foucault’s concept of knowledge i.e.: something that is considered true by the powerful minority.

“Menurut Foucault, kekuatan merupakan tenaga untuk menentukan kebenaran, mungkin tidak berbeda jauh dari kekuatan dalam pengetahuan adalah kekuasaan. Baik kekuatan fisik maupun kekuatan mental, digunakan oleh suatu minoritas yang
Discourse is not just a way of speaking or writing, but the whole “mental set” or ideology which encloses the thinking of all members of a given society (Barry, 1995:176). Foucault believes that discourse constructs the topic (during the construction process, such element of language like metaphor is often used). Everything is created through the discourse. Outside the discourse, nothing has meaning, so discourse controls our knowledge. Knowledge as what has been mentioned earlier means power. Only those who are knowledgeable have the strength to decide the truth. Those who have power are the ones who can create and preserve the discourse. They control the people by controlling what people discuss because what we discuss decides who we are and what we know. Later on, what we know or our knowledge decides our power, then the power creates the discourse, and so on.

“Discourse, Foucault argues, constructs the topic. It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about [e.g. hysteria, sexuality, homosexuality, Romantic love in the late 19th century.] nothing which is meaningful exists outside discourse (Hall, 1997).”

“Discourse is created and perpetuated by those who have the power and means of communication. Those who are in control decide who we are by deciding what we discuss (Michigan State University Board of Trustees, 2003)”

Power Discourse Analysis

1. Normality, Abnormality, and Power in Quills

Michel Foucault’s concept of normality and abnormality is highly related to power, it is almost impossible if we are talking about normality and abnormality without talking about power. The division of normality and abnormality itself is already about power. Normality exists because there are certain people who wanted to have more power over the others. They construct the truth or the knowledge and claim themselves the most knowledgeable, and then they could claim themselves the normal people and others normals. If they could get the majority to believe them, they become truly “normal” and they have succeeded to make their “truth” true.

From the plot, characters, and settings, we understand that the normal people were Napoleon (the Monarchy), Dr. Royer-Collard (the Science), and Abbe de Coulmier (the Church). As what I have mentioned in chapter two, only the ones considered normal
have the knowledge and only those knowledgeable people hold the power. So, normal people must be powerful, at least more powerful than the abnormal ones. Napoleon was an extremely powerful emperor. He had the power to order that the Marquis’s novels entitled “Justine” be burned down. He also had the power to execute the Marquis though the intention was not carried out later on. He also had the power to shut down the Charenton Asylum if the Marquis was not to be silenced soon.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)
Seize every copy; we'll torch them all on the palace lawn, in full public view (Wright; 2000).

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)
As for the author...shoot him. (Wright, 2000)
ROYER-COLLARD
Unless we set Charenton on a straight and narrow course, she'll be shut down forever by order of the Emperor (Wright, 2000).

Dr. Royer-Collard was also powerful. It can be seen from the exposition when he was at Hotel Dieu. He held the highest power there. Just by giving a signal, he was able to determine his patients’ fate, whether the patient was going to be punished or not.

“...When ROYER-COLLARD gives the signal—an imperious nod—a POCKMARKED ATTENDANT—the DOCTOR’S footman, GAILLON—cranks the lever, and the LUNATIC flips backward into a “calming pool.”... (Wright, 2000)
ROYER-COLLARD gives the signal again. GAILLON raises the lever, and the GOON surges upright, his ribcage heaving (Wright, 2000).
Another nod, another crank, and—with a scream of protest—the LUNATIC is again lowered into the pool (Wright, 2000).”

The Doctor, once he got his feet on Charenton, got the power over the lunatics. He was the famous physician sent by the Emperor himself and no one should dare to disobey him. He got the authority to “cure” the Marquis in any way he required. He was able to order that the Marquis’s quills, ink, and paper be taken away. He also had the power to take away all of the Marquis’s furniture and clothing. He even applied the “calming chair” punishment to the Marquis, just like what he usually did at Hotel Dieu. Madeleine’s being whipped was the Doctor’s order also. He held the highest power over the asylum, higher than the Charenton’s Administrator, Abbe de Coulmier.

Royer-Collard had the power to shut down the theater, one of the Abbe’s therapies. It shows us that he was far more powerful than the Abbe. The Marquis’s punishments, even though were carried out by the Abbe, were ordered by the Doctor. So, Royer-Collard gave the order, and the Abbe executed it. Coulmier had no other choice than to obey the Doctor’s orders because if he did not, the Doctor would report the defiance to the Court and Charenton would soon be shut down for good.
ROYER-COLLARD
(cutting him off abruptly)
Do more. Otherwise, I'll be forced to report to the Ministry that the inmates are
indeed running the asylum (Wright, 2000).

Even the Marquis could see the fact. It was shown by his satiric words toward the
Abbe when the Abbe came to do what the Doctor had told him to. He said that the Doctor
cracked the whip and the Abbe danced. It means that the Doctor gave orders and the
Abbe just obeyed. Valcour’s statement can strengthen this fact. He knew from the start
that the Doctor was sent to Charenton to take the Abbe’s place.

THE MARQUIS
“So! The Doctor cracks the whip, and you dance!” (Wright, 2000)
VALCOUR
“They've got no right, sending someone to sit on your shoulder...” (Wright, 2000)

As a well-known physician, Dr. Royer-Collard should show his power, not only
in the asylum, but also in the society. The Court presented him a large chateau, which he
later on renovated luxuriously. A powerful man such as him should also be powerful
economically. He should be wealthy or at least looked like one. Having a luxurious
residence enabled him to show his power to everyone in the society and also to his wife,
Simone, who was only an orphan that had never seen so much luxury in her life. His own
marriage was also a matter of status. He married the girl not because of love, but because
having a wife would brighten his image more. He had his needs, but his status prevented
him to see whores. This can be seen from the way the Doctor had an intercourse with his
wife. It was more like a rape than a husband and wife love making because on the script it
was written “violated”.

SIMONE--terrified at what's to come--… SIMONE, even as she's violated by her
husband (Wright, 2000).

As a priest and Charenton’s Administrator, Abbe de Coulmier was powerful. He
represented the power of the church since he was a priest, and he also held the highest
power in Charenton, but of course only until the Doctor came. We can see his power over
his patients from the way he controlled them. Bouchon let Madeleine pass because the
Abbe told him to. He did not dare to defy the Abbe.

VOICE (O.S.)
Bouchon! (Wright, 2000)
He calls to the LUNATIC, sternly:

COULMIER
Remember your manners (Wright, 2000)
BOUCHON offers a shy smile, sans most of his teeth. Then--with great solemnity--
-he bows low for MADELEINE to pass.
She mouths "thank-you" to COULMIER, then scurries on (Wright, 2000)
He conducted many therapies that he thought would be able to cure the lunatics, such as water color exercises, playing balls, role-playing for the theater, and singing in a choir. The Abbe could not have done those things if he were not powerful. He was able to conduct these therapies because he was the authority there and if he was able to make the patients take part in them, his power over the lunatics should not be doubted anymore. The Charenton staffs were also under his command. They were to do what the Abbe told them to. We can see it from what Valcour said when he was informed that Dr. Royer-Collard was coming to the asylum. His words imply that before the Doctor came, he took orders from the Abbe.

VALCOUR
... I work for you; I won't take orders from a stranger.
(Wright, 2000)

The abnormals in this movie were the Marquis de Sade, Madeleine, and the wards. They were considered to have lost the knowledge and therefore they had no truth. The Marquis was revoked from his freedom that he could no longer live freely among other people. He was imprisoned in an asylum even though he was not mad. His wife was the one who put him in the asylum at the first place because for her asylum was better than the prison.

ROYER-COLLARD
Why is he in your care, and not a proper prison?
COULMIER
His wife's influence.
ROYER-COLLARD
His wife's?
COULMIER
Better to have an insane spouse than a criminal one (Wright, 2000)

Even though the Marquis did not have enough physical power to stand up against the normal people, he managed to keep his mental power to defy the authority. His expression, written in his erotic works, was actually his anger toward the nobles’ hypocrisy. He wanted to criticize the hypocrites, all of those noblemen who were considered honorable and dignified, but committed sinful acts. This criticism was expressed in the selves of his immoral characters in his erotic tales. A clear example of this was when he made “The Crimes of Love” to criticize the Doctor. The play, as we have learned from the previous analysis, resembled the marriage life of Dr. Royer-Collard and Simone. The way Libertine treated Ingenue was also similar to the way Royer-Collard treated Simone.

THE MARQUIS
Why, the hypocrite. It has all the makings of a farce, hasn't it? Run straightaway, and tell Franval to cancel rehearsal... (Wright, 2000)
On his PARCHMENT, in calligraphic script, the words "The Crimes of Love: A Play in Several Lascivious Acts..." (Wright, 2000)

From the whole plot, we can see how the Marquis went through many tortures just because of his writing. First they took his quills, ink, and paper, then his furniture, his clothing, and finally his own tongue. All were done by the authority to silence him because they knew that what the Marquis was writing was not only about sexuality but also about reality. He unveiled the nobles, exposing their flaws. He exposed the nobles’ behavior that did not differ much from the commoners actually; they both enjoyed what so called sex. He also wrote about how upper class people treated the lower class people. Noblemen, who thought that they were better people, treated the common people in any way they pleased. Dr. Royer-Collard, for example, was free to do anything he pleased to his wife and his patients who were common people. He violated his own wife and he could punish his patients with his own ways, such as the calming chair.

The authority did not want the common people to get the Marquis’s messages. Sexuality was a language understood by anyone, even those uneducated ones. So, the authority could not risk the danger of exposing the truth to the people otherwise, they would lose their power. In the Marquis’s erotic tales, there was always a dominating party in every intercourse and those people always came from upper class people. Their domination, very close with the case of “rape”, symbolizes the way the authority treated the common people. The authority had the power to force anything to the people and the commoners could only obey. For example, when the bishop “raped” Justine, the girl did not protest too much. She just accepted the bad treatment helplessly. When the authority “raped” the people at that time, people did not protest much either. They only accepted what they were given, considering it their unlucky fate. For instance, the way the Doctor, representing the authority, punished Madeleine, who represented the common people. He ordered that Madeleine be whipped in front of all Charenton’s residents, something that was done to please himself. While on the other hand, Madeleine had no power to fight the order. She could only accept the punishment. The punishment, though she did not desire it, was considered the Doctor’s authority, something that was one of the Doctor’s rights. So, she had no choice but to let herself be punished and without giving any further thought, she just claimed that it was a bad, unlucky day for her.

Madeleine, a poor chambermaid, certainly had no power over anyone else. She was to take orders from the authority and she was to do what she was told to. She was able, of course, to defy orders and defended the Marquis, but she got a quite severe punishment for that. Madeleine did not even have the right to choose her own entertainment. She liked the Marquis’s works to entertain her, but once it was discovered, the Abbe did not let her to do so anymore. She could not even reject to be transferred to another working place by the Abbe. She only could ask, but if the Abbe did not want to grant it, she had no choice but to obey.
Other wards, just like the Marquis, had lost their power and knowledge once they were put in the asylum. They had to do what the Abbe told them to. They could not do anything without the Abbe’s permission. If they disobeyed, the punishment would have already waited for them. Break the rules and be punished. Normal is only meant for the people in power, while abnormal is meant for those who defy the authority. However, even though it is the normal people who seem to hold the power, it is the abnormal people who manage to hold the real power because they can subvert people in power.

2. Sexuality as a Power Discourse in Quills

Sexuality, as Foucault once said, has the same mechanisms as the mechanisms of modern political power. That kind of sexuality is the one that I found in the movie “Quills”. Here, sexuality was not about sex at all, it was used as an illustration to describe how the people in power treated the common people. After the previous analysis, it is clear that the sexuality happened in the movie has the same pattern. In the sexual relationships, there were always two parties, the dominating party and the dominated party. The dominating always came from upper-class people (people in power) while the dominated always came from the lower-class people (common people). The dominators held power over the dominated. It had been the nature of the people in power that they always wanted to have more power over the others, in any context, including in sexual context.

The sexuality shall be divided into two major divisions, and then they shall be compared. The first division is the sexuality happened inside the movie “Quills”, which can be considered as the reality inside the movie. The examples of this division are the ones between Dr. Royer-Collard and Simone; and Abbe de Coulmier and Madeleine. The second division is the sexuality inside the Marquis’s tales within the movie “Quills”, which can be considered as the fictive world inside the movie. The examples of this division are the ones happened between the Bishop and Justine (in his novel, “Justine”); and Libertine and Ingenue (in his play, “The Crimes of Love”). The following explanation will show how the reverse considered abnormal was able to subvert using a tool such as sexuality.

The Doctor, as we have known, violated his own wife. It can be assured that Simone was far from pleasure, but since she had no power to reject her husband, she could not do anything about it. We know that she was unsatisfied with her marriage with the Doctor that she sought comfort elsewhere. She started her affair with Monsieur Prouix for she was depressed, and encouraged by the Marquis’s novel, “Justine”; she finally defied the Doctor by running away with her new-found partner.

Their relationship is a metaphor. The Doctor was the representation of the authority who dominated the common people and who had the rights to do whatever he wanted to do to the society. Simone was the representation of the common people who had no power (whether in form of status, wealth, knowledge, etc.) and had no other
choice but to obey the authority though they suffered because of it. However, the Marquis’s works encouraged Simone to finally defy her husband. This shows how powerful and how dangerous were the Marquis’s works for the authority’s continuity. People became braver by reading his works especially if they understood the message the Marquis had put there. It is true that his novels exposed violent erotic things, but actually the intercourses he described in his works were the metaphor of the relationship between the authority and the common people. He disguised his message in the form of sexuality since sexuality was the easiest language understood by anyone, including uneducated commoners.

Simone was not allowed to know much about sexuality by her husband also, she was to be pure and naïve, while on the other hand, the Doctor could enjoy sexual pleasures as he pleased. We can see this when Royer-Collard ordered Simone to go home before the Marquis’s play, “The Crimes of Love”, was over. She was not allowed to watch or to know the sexuality the Marquis’s had put in the play, but the Doctor watched it until the play was stopped because of the incident behind the stage. It is very possible that he did not want Simone to know that his sexual behavior was actually abnormal. That was why he was furious when he found out that Simone had read the Marquis’s works and ran away with another man. The Doctor knew that because of the Marquis’s novel, she finally discovered her husband dark secret and realized that she had been treated improperly by him.

The relationship between the Abbe and Madeleine is also a good illustration. The Abbe desired Madeleine sexually. His feeling was actually mutual. Madeleine desired him also, but when Madeleine showed him how she felt, he moved away. The Abbe and Madeleine desired the same thing. However, while Madeleine was being honest by showing him that she desired him also, the Abbe was not. He preferred to hide his feelings and desires from Madeleine. He only dared to satisfy his desires and lust with the girl in his own imagination where no one would know it.

The Abbe symbolizes the authority who actually desired the same thing like what the society desired. For example, the authority just like the common people had sexual desires. The difference was that the commoners were more open in expressing their desires. This did not look so courteous of course, but they were being honest not only to themselves but also to other people. While on the other hand, the authority, afraid that they might seem immoral and therefore dishonor themselves, chose to hide their desires in front of other people. However, this did not mean that they annihilated their desires. They would release their desires on their chosen objects in the way that was not far from dishonorable. Their mask of their normality was unveiled when they became “abnormal” in their sexual activities.

The Abbe, though he had sexual desires himself, did not let Madeleine had the same thing. He was not pleased when he knew that Madeleine had been reading the Marquis’s works. He even planned to move the chambermaid and her mother to another
place because he did not want Madeleine to be close to the Marquis who taught her about sexuality. His domination and his power over Madeleine were proven by deciding what Madeleine read or discuss, she was not to read or discuss about sex.

The bishop in “Justine” possessed the power of the church. He had the right to give forgiveness for every confession people made. He was regarded God’s messenger. However, what happened in “Justine” was totally different. The bishop misused his power to take advantage from innocent Justine. He raped Justine when the girl came for confession. The Marquis’s criticism was obvious here. The bishop was a servant of God. He was supposed to help people by using his power, one of which is giving forgiveness when they came for confession.

The authority, who considered themselves God’s chosen people to lead the country, did not differ much from the bishop. Just like the way the bishop mistreated Justine, the authority also mistreated the people. When people came to the authority to ask for the authority’s help, the authority would only misused their power to take every advantage from the people instead of doing what the people had come to ask for.

Compare this situation with the reality in the movie. When Renee Pelagie, the Marquis de Sade’s wife, came to Dr. Royer-Collard to cure her husband, what did she get? Did the Doctor cure the Marquis? No. The Doctor only asked the lady for some money, the money that he later on used to magnify his own residence, definitely not to cure the Marquis. The Doctor had misused his power as the asylum’s authority to gain personal interest which is additional money for the renovation of his chateau. So, that what happened if people asked for help to the authority. They would be used instead of being helped.

Libertine in “Crimes of Love” also had power. The character was a wealthy man, so of course, he had the power of money. He was absolutely deceitful. First he acted so nicely that people would think of him nothing else than a kind-hearted gentleman. That was why he was able to trick the convent to give him Ingenue to be made a wife. If he had gained trust and got what he desired, his real self would show up soon. When Ingenue arrived at Libertine’s place and when the nun delivering Ingenue had gone away, Libertine showed the girl what he wanted from her. He did not want a wife actually; he just wanted a woman that could be used as his object of lust. Ingenue, surprised and frightened, had no way out. Though she rejected, she could not do anything about it, she had been trapped.

The authority was as tricky as Libertine. They sold sweet dreams and promising talks to the people. They would act flawlessly in front of the people that they could be seen living like saints. However, be careful. Once the people believed them, they would show their real face, and by that time, there was nothing that the people could do about it since the authority had already gained the power. That is exactly what happened in the society even until now. Before general election, leaders of a democratic country will
compete to sit on the highest chair. They will promise anything to people as long as it can make them win the election, they will promise the people the whole universe if they have to. But after the election, what happened? Promises are just promises. They do not intend to keep their promises anyway. And what can the people do then? They have got what they desired, they have got the power. People cannot do anything because they have no power anymore; the power has been given to the authority. So, after gaining the power, the authority was authorized to do anything.

Sexuality was also the Marquis’s power. It was his weapon, his political tool in his fight against the authority. He used sexuality to “attack” the authority. With all the sexuality in his works (that we now understand as a metaphor), he kept discrediting the authority in the eyes of common people by the characterization he made for his upper-class characters, while on the same time criticizing the authorized who misused their power to pursue personal benefits and suffered the people eventually. This power was the one feared by the authority that they felt they had to “kill” the Marquis because through sexuality, the Marquis held the power of influencing the people who indulged in his stories, and as we have learned from the textual analysis, his readers were numerous. He could communicate with his readers and it was not impossible that his readers understood the message he conveyed in his erotic tales. If I may remind us all of what Foucault’s thinks of communication, he thinks that those who have the power and the means of communication were the ones who create and perpetuate the discourse (we all know how discourse is very determining in our knowledge and even in our being). So, sexuality here is the Marquis’s means of communication.

3. Madness as a Power Discourse in Quills

Madness is one form of abnormality. It is usually the predicate condemned by those in power who considered themselves normal. The Marquis was considered abnormal because of his eccentric ways in expressing sexuality. When we have stepped this far, we should have understood that the Marquis was actually not mad. He was only claimed mad because he did not follow the convention or the ways of the normal people. Due to his uncommon ways in expressing sexuality, his society (upper-class society) thought that he was immoral and it made them afraid of what the Marquis was able to do to harm their wives and daughters. His difference had made him look “dangerous”.

However, they did not know whether he was going to “attack” their wives and daughters. They only assumed that he might do so because they did not know what was actually wrong with him, they did not know why the Marquis acted differently, but they did not care about the Marquis’s true mentality anymore. They were too afraid to risk their families’ safety. They had to find a way to cast him away from the society so that he would no longer be dangerous for the society.

At first the accusation for the Marquis was crime, but since his wife would not let him be imprisoned, he was put in a madhouse with the reason of madness. From here it is
obvious that madness was just a predicate given to those who were considered abnormal and definitely to those who were unwanted in the society. We are supposed to doubt other lunatics’ mental statement also. If a man, well-educated, wealthy, and of noble birth, like the Marquis was able to be pronounced mad and locked up in a madhouse, think about what could be done to the commoners who came from lower-class families and economically weak. It is possible that the patients of Charenton were not mad, but they were claimed mad and their being locked up in a madhouse for a long period of time had caused a mental disturbance.

The background of Bouchon made us question the patients’ state of mentality once more. In the exposition, it was seen that he was the executioner who dropped the blade upon Mademoiselle Renard. If he could get a job, though not quite an honorable job, as an executioner, he must have been sane. He must have had an ordinary life just like other people in the society. He probably even had a family and he once lived a normal life. His job, however, had brought him some consequences. He dealt with execution everyday and it made him look scary in people’s eyes. This made him no longer “normal” in people’s eyes.

Just imagine that our neighbor was an executioner who cuts people’s heads off everyday and let’s just say that he was not a friendly man, he does not like to smile or greet other neighbors. Would you not be scared of him? Would you feel safe if you leave your children alone at home when you know that the executioner is also at home and his house is just next door? We must feel afraid, afraid of the harm he might cause us and also the society. We do not know his state of mentality, and people tend to be afraid of something they do not know. Because we all feel afraid, it is better that the executioner be put away, far away from the society so that the feeling of being safe will be back in the neighborhood. The easiest way to keep him away from the society is by claiming that he is mad. This is not an issue that people find it hard to believe since all other people are just like us, feeling unsafe and uncomfortable when he is around. However, is the executioner really a madman? No body knows, but one thing for sure, he was unwanted by the society.

Madness was the authority’s power to oppress such defiants like the Marquis. It was their weapon in their fight against the Marquis; it was also their political tools to perpetuate their power. Madness was used to break the Marquis criticism. Since the Marquis “attack” them with such criticism inside his erotic tales, the authority felt that they needed to protect themselves. The only thing that could make the Marquis’s criticism seemed cannot be trusted was by pronouncing him mad. If everyone believed that the Marquis was mad, no words from him that would be trusted even if what he said was true. When the predicate of a madman had been permanent on him, then the authority would not have anything to worry about anymore. The Marquis could say anything he wanted, he could criticize them in any way he liked, but not one word from him would be considered true. All his criticism and his defiance would make him look madder and madder than before.
CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, sexuality and madness are political tools used to criticize the authority and to oppress defiants. This conclusion is achieved through several reasons. Firstly, sexuality, as discussed in chapter three, was used by the Marquis’s as his political tool to criticize the authority. His erotic stories were only metaphor. Sexuality was his way to discredit the authority in front of the people, to show his disagreement with the way the authority treated the common people, and also to inform the people that they have been “raped” by the authority. Through his works, the Marquis was trying to inform the people that the authority was raping them (taking away their rights, treating them inappropriately). His works were also mirrors where the people holding power could see their reflections. He wanted them to realize how bad they had treated the common people and how they did not deserve to claim that they had higher civilized positions like what they had been claiming all this time. So, he did not write those erotic stories without any significant purpose.

The sexuality that the Marquis exposed in his tales lured the line between normality and abnormality. He always wrote about upper-class people, the people in power who claimed themselves normal but practiced perverted sexual activities behind other people's back. His writings would make the readers wonder if the normals were actually the abnormals in disguise and this was the “truth” that the authority was trying to silence.

Secondly, madness was what the authority used when they felt threatened by the Marquis’s works since those works were not only a joke made the Marquis to discredit them, but also a harsh criticism toward their usage of power. To defend themselves, they had to “fight” the Marquis and they had to defeat him if they wanted to secure their throne. Madness was what they used to corrupt the Marquis’s reputation and to cast him away from the society. When they had succeeded to ensure the people that the Marquis was a madman, they would be safe. The criticism from the Marquis was no longer dangerous because it had lost the power to affect people. What mattered was not the “real” truth, but what was believed as the truth. What the Marquis said, even though it was true, people would think that it was not, because the authority had claimed that he was mad and whatever he said was also mad. Therefore, whatever he said was not to be trusted. Who would listen to madman anyway? Besides, if somebody listened to what a madman said, he/she could be claimed mad also. So, it would be better for everybody to stay away from the Marquis.

The strategy of madness that the authority used to defeat the Marquis matches Foucault’s way of thinking about normality and abnormality, where both are not the things that have already existed, but they are constructed by those who hold the power. Those people are the ones who define normality and abnormality. They decide what or who is normal and what or who is abnormal. There is no real basis to divide normality...
and abnormality. The people in power create their own basis in order to perpetuate their power. The division of normality and abnormality is just the way the authority did to be in power forever. *Quills* has shown us that the Marquis created his works for certain purposes. It is the way to tell the audience that the makers of *Quills* also made the film for certain purposes. They wanted to show the audience how discourse of power is being applied: how everything (normal and abnormal, sane and mad, etc.) can be twisted depending on the will of the people in power.
REFERENCES


