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## A History of the Case Study

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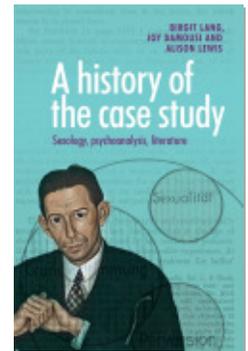
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# The shifting case of masochism: Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's *Venus im Pelz* (1870)

Birgit Lang

The literary, autobiographical and psychiatric case studies that accompany the making of masochism in the late nineteenth century reveal a fascinating history – that of the formation of a new language for human sexuality and love.<sup>1</sup> In a time of epistemological uncertainty, the case study genre became the central narrative form in a debate about the nature of masochism that included authors and their biographers, sexologists and their patients. The case remained a site of dialogue and reinterpretation for nearly thirty years, far exceeding the naming of masochism after Austrian writer Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1836–95) by sexologist and psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840–1902). The narrative of Sacher-Masoch as a masochist emerged only with the establishment of psychiatry and only after the transition within medical thought from the anatomical world of sex to that of sexual identity.<sup>2</sup> Generic similarities between Sacher-Masoch's novellas and the medical case study eased this transposition of ideas from the literary to the sexological realm for Krafft-Ebing's patients – and for a newly emerging sexual public that reinterpreted the original meaning of Sacher-Masoch's *Venus im Pelz* (*Venus in Furs*).

In current scholarship, the naming of masochism after Sacher-Masoch denotes the clash between the clinic and the literary world in an iconic manner. The contentious naming has a history considered at once simplistic and presumptuous; it is commonly represented as an oversimplification of the intricate relationship between Sacher-Masoch the author and his writing, and – by extension – between authors and their works in general.<sup>3</sup> This critique of the subjugation of literary discourse to the act of sexological classification seems particularly warranted in light of the immense academic and public success of the category of masochism – a category which, by the early twentieth century, had proven crucial to the understanding of the principles of sexual formation and human behaviour. Even the canonisation of *Venus im Pelz* as a classic text of erotic

literature can be understood as a direct result of the medicalisation of Sacher-Masoch's literature.

To analyse the 'caseness' of masochism reveals a more complex picture.<sup>4</sup> The outcome of the struggle for new ways to debate love and sex was a distinctive discourse of sexuality that became a central feature of individual identity, as Michel Foucault first observed.<sup>5</sup> By the turn of the nineteenth century, masochism had evolved into an established field of truth and falsehood.<sup>6</sup> Patients needed to recognise themselves in such a field, while the endeavour of sexologists was to recognise the truth and falsity of their patients' statements.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, literary and medical case studies contributed to the growing understanding of a new language of love and sex.

As first observed by Harry Oosterhuis in his biography of Krafft-Ebing, during the late nineteenth century, while sexology was in its foundational phase, patients actively contributed to the construction of sexological terminology.<sup>8</sup> Their life experience, including their interpretation of literary works, resonates clearly in these early medical works, and its impact on sexological methodology was greater than has hitherto been acknowledged. Specifically regarding masochism, literary knowledge preceded scientific knowledge and was reinterpreted by Krafft-Ebing's patients, who functioned as the translators between the world of sex and that of sexuality. A proliferation of cases accompanies the making of masochism. And henceforth the case study became a vehicle for the transformation of literary into scientific knowledge, and vice versa.

First published in 1870, Sacher-Masoch's Darwinian novella *Venus im Pelz* represents an innovative mode of genre writing, and was part of a larger exploration of nature that allowed the author to represent the crisis of love at the dawn of the scientific age. Sacher-Masoch was the first German writer to contend with Darwinian thought, and he had a unique stance on questions concerning love. His approach contrasted with that of the generation of Darwinian writers who succeeded him from the 1890s onwards; these authors highlighted the unity of man and nature. Sacher-Masoch's Darwinian novellas presented a new literary-scientific voice, and allowed him to open the pervasive genre of the novella – the most common contemporary form for the literary case study – to highly topical matters of intimacy and sexuality. His interest was not unlike that of Krafft-Ebing, who set out to investigate sexual perversions and pathologies: Sacher-Masoch problematised the role of love and sexuality in the human world and explored its 'dark sides'.<sup>9</sup>

As the above terminology suggests, Sacher-Masoch's novellas refer to a Darwinian rather than a sexological discourse. That is, the literary freedom he exercised to explore the subjectivity of 'supersensualism', a formation of identity related to that of masochism, was not embedded in a sexological framework of meaning. Sacher-Masoch's literary-scientific investigation explored ways in which humankind was able to resolve the tension between natural instincts and an ethical life. In this context,

*Venus im Pelz* functioned as a counter-example, while his novella *Marzella* (1870) contained the idealised solution to this dilemma. Changing attitudes towards *Venus im Pelz* in subsequent decades culminated in the identification of the author with his antihero Severin von Kusiemski, and paradigmatically represent the shift from an anatomical to a psychiatric style of reasoning.

A close reading of the cases and their shifting frameworks surrounding the reception of *Venus im Pelz* sheds light on the circulation of the case study as a discursive form and on the gradual acceptance of masochism as a highly specific category for sexual proclivity. Much of this encounter was shaped by the interdependence between psychiatry and literature at the very moment when German psychiatry was founded. This is not to say that the debate about *Venus im Pelz* was confined to the realm of the clinic. Just as psychiatry relied on patient confessions and cultural histories to construct knowledge, the multitude of (auto)biographical and literary cases in public discourse were at least partly modelled on medical case studies. After Sacher-Masoch's 'outing' by his biographer, and his subsequent pathologisation in the psychiatric realm, the debate surrounding Sacher-Masoch shifted from his work to his perceived sexual identity. This was followed by autobiographical and biographical case studies that referenced medical discourse.

To analyse Sacher-Masoch's work through the lens of the case study genre is to investigate the intricate question of the development of a language of sexuality. It shows that masochist identity formation was based at least partly on the reinterpretation of a literary case, and reveals important insights concerning the construction and currency of this new language of sexuality.

### **The sexological case: Krafft-Ebing and the merits of literature**

In his seminal work *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), Krafft-Ebing coined the key sexual pathologies of modernity: the homosexual, the fetishist, the sadist and the masochist. The concept of masochism became so popular that Sigmund Freud, in his 1924 study 'Das ökonomische Problem des Masochismus' ('The Economic Problem of Masochism'), declared 'it is unnecessary to quote cases to illustrate this; for the material is very uniform and is accessible to any observer, even to non-analysts'.<sup>10</sup> The naming of a sexual perversion after a well known author left a sour taste early on. Russian imperial prosecutor Dimitry Stefanowski, a competitor in the race to develop a sexual taxonomy, argued that Krafft-Ebing had 'covered the name of the novelist with ignominy'.<sup>11</sup> In his academic works, Stefanowski insisted on Sacher-Masoch's sexual normalcy, yet misinterpreted the intention of the original name-giving, which in fact paid tribute to Sacher-Masoch as an expert in the understanding of masochism. In these early years, Krafft-Ebing at no point implicated

the writer but justified the naming through the fact that ‘the well-known novelist Sacher-Masoch has made this sexual perversion the favourite subject of many of his novels, especially in the famous *Venus im Pelz*’.<sup>12</sup> As revealed by the fluctuating archive represented by successive editions of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, Krafft-Ebing’s tribute to Sacher-Masoch’s writing marked a methodological shift in his treatment of literature – an acceptance of literary texts as medical evidence. Krafft-Ebing owed this acceptance largely to his patients, since they referred to *Venus im Pelz* as the most accurate portrayal of their own desires. The sexologist’s appreciation of Sacher-Masoch waned only after 1901, when he first identified the author as a masochist and thus subjugated him to medical norms.<sup>13</sup>

Case studies form the backbone of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, which was first published in 1886 and quickly revised and enlarged. The importance of the case study genre for Krafft-Ebing can be explained by his professional context. During his lifetime the renowned sexologist published eleven editions; by 1924 the seventeenth edition had been released. Krafft-Ebing’s cases typically commence with a short physical description of the patient, and summarise the psychiatric family history. Reminiscent of the anatomo-clinical gaze dominant before the rise of sexology, the physical description could include genital anomalies.<sup>14</sup> The core of the case study consisted of the description of sexual behaviours – reported to Krafft-Ebing by the patient and rephrased by the sexologist. Over time, he relied on an increasing variety of testimonies. The first edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis* mainly comprises the collection of cases already published in the field, showing Krafft-Ebing to have been widely read in various languages.<sup>15</sup> In the 1890s, Krafft-Ebing sometimes privileged cases of individuals who had entered into correspondence with him, suffering from what they themselves perceived as deviant conditions and seeking an exchange with a medical expert in order to come to terms with their own feelings about their desires. Krafft-Ebing assumed that his correspondents agreed to the publication of their anonymised cases.<sup>16</sup> As with the collection on homosexuality, the number of masochist cases published increased considerably over the years.<sup>17</sup> His case correspondences concerning the more general field of neuropathology included letters from sufferers and their carers, case notes from colleagues, or other sources such as newspaper articles.<sup>18</sup> Comparable evidence from his masochist patients did not exist or has not survived. With his reputation on the rise, Krafft-Ebing’s access to clinical and judicial cases increased, and these form the almost exclusive source of new cases in the editions of *Psychopathia Sexualis* from the late 1890s onwards.

The sexological turn from patient bodies to patient narratives constituted a paradigm shift, and attracted medical critics. In the eyes of some members of the medical profession, the entanglement of patient narratives with doctor narratives in attempts to coin new sexual taxonomies threatened to subvert professional standards, through the creation and dissemination of speculative knowledge. Moreover, it potentially

undermined the steep imbalance of power between patients and the medical profession.<sup>19</sup> Such critique was heard from the wider medical profession, as exemplified in a comment printed in the *British Medical Journal* of 1902: 'Professor von Krafft-Ebing's book *Psychopathia Sexualis* is the largest, the most widely circulated, and we may as well at once say the most repulsive of a group of books of which it is the type'.<sup>20</sup> Since *Psychopathia Sexualis* proved extremely popular for an academic publication, others feared the detrimental effects upon lay readers. The American journal *Alienist and Neurologist* stated in a review of the work: 'a book to be read only by the sexually mature and psychically balanced. In its psychopathic effects it might prove dangerous in its influence over the neuropathically unstable. To the prurient curiosity of that morbid sexual element, which too extensively abounds in modern social life, its examples and personal histories would prove psychopathic poison.'<sup>21</sup> Krafft-Ebing's methodology was also scrutinised by his direct competitors in the field. Stefanowski's critique of the naming of masochism has already been mentioned, while in the context of homosexuality Krafft-Ebing was accused of trusting his patients too much – patients who, critics argued, were prone to lying because of the discrimination they faced and the double lives they were forced to lead.<sup>22</sup>

Krafft-Ebing's response to such criticism was differentiated, adhering to standards of academic credibility and bourgeois respectability; the latter had become entrenched by the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>23</sup> From the mid-1890s onwards, he used Latin for overtly explicit passages of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, in an attempt to rein in those critics who feared for the 'sanity' of his readership. This certainly made his work less accessible to the lower classes, and to women, who learned modern rather than classical languages at school. As the example of Stefanowski shows, Krafft-Ebing rebuffed academic debates within his professional publications, with direct ripostes often printed in the latest edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis*. When it came to the relationship with his patients, however, Krafft-Ebing would not open himself to scrutiny. Biographer Harry Oosterhuis has indicated that Krafft-Ebing was held in high regard by many of his patients and that his concern for patients often went beyond mere professional commitment.<sup>24</sup> Exactly how these relationships were structured and how Krafft-Ebing transposed his knowledge of patient 'confessions' into case studies remains difficult to reconstruct. Yet from his case vignettes it becomes clear that patients served as his 'informants'. Krafft-Ebing recognised their identificatory reading of *Venus im Pelz* – even if he did not necessarily agree with their interpretation.

Yet, and dissimilarly to comparable studies in England and France, fiction played only a minor role in the first four editions of *Psychopathia Sexualis*.<sup>25</sup> Krafft-Ebing considered literary works that might have met the criteria of respectability naive in the area of psychiatry. While attesting that literary writers possessed a deep understanding of the human psyche, he viewed their works as overtly idealising – a comment on the

strong strand of post-Darwinian pantheism in German literature that celebrated the unity of nature and man.<sup>26</sup> Introducing the first edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis* he argued:

For now poets are the better psychologists, rather than experts in psychology and philosophy. But they are emotionalists rather than rationalists and definitely biased in the depiction of their topic. This is because they only see the sunny and cozy side of the subject matter, and not its deep shadows.... To deal with the psychopathology of sexuality in an academic treatise means to be confronted with the dark side of human life and misery, in whose shadows the shining idol of the poet turns into a hideous grimace, and morality and aesthetics become insane in the face of the ‘image of God’.<sup>27</sup>

Only four years later, Krafft-Ebing’s approach to literature took a definite turn. In 1890 he published his *Neuere Forschungen auf dem Gebiet der Psychopathia Sexualis* (*Newer Research into Psychopathia Sexualis*). This can be described as a spin-off from *Psychopathia Sexualis* which presented cutting-edge research – and integrated literature methodologically into the chain of evidence. It was in this work that Krafft-Ebing first named masochism in obeisance to Sacher-Masoch, since so many of his patients referred to *Venus im Pelz* as fundamental for the understanding their own condition. The case study at the heart of *Neuere Forschungen* is that of Mr X from Berlin, a ‘highly cultured man’, according to Krafft-Ebing, and ‘the stimulus for this study’.<sup>28</sup> Of good social standing, Mr X showed profound insight into his own condition and provided his autobiography voluntarily. His eloquence implied that he had overcome the shame associated with his condition, at least to the extent of being able to write about it. Having attracted the attention of a medical specialist, he entrusted Krafft-Ebing with his autobiographical account. To have been quoted in the *Neuere Forschungen* must have given Mr X some satisfaction, since he is noted as having been keen to ‘serve science’.<sup>29</sup>

Krafft-Ebing’s fascination with his Berlin correspondent is written all over the *Neuere Forschungen* volume. He does not claim Mr X as the author of the term ‘masochism’, as Oosterhuis has suggested.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, Krafft-Ebing’s new notion of literature is intimately linked to the case of Mr X. Directly before presenting Mr X’s autobiographical account, Krafft-Ebing outlines his new taxonomy of textual evidence, one that differentiates between patient statements, autobiographical accounts and literary works. Patient statements rank highest, since these have been established in a medical context and can be verified by medical authority. Autobiographies such as *Les Confessions* (1782) by Jean Jacques Rousseau rate second – even as this text is pronounced a ‘superb example of good self-observation’.<sup>31</sup> Works of fiction are positioned last. They merit inclusion if they depict the shadowy aspects of love, exploring taboo subjects otherwise inaccessible to the medical practitioner, such as female sadism, of which Krafft-Ebing writes: ‘it is of great interest if such occurrences

appear in literary works. Even though they cannot be of the same value as case histories [Krafft-Ebing's term for medical case studies], they are of psychological interest since the author must have drawn from his own experience or at least must have felt in such a way'.<sup>32</sup>

Krafft-Ebing then introduces the case study of Mr X and describes his patient's appreciation of autobiographical and literary texts. Mr X reveals

I was looking for connections with my preferred fantasies in all kinds of literature. Rousseau's *Confessions*, which fell to me, were a great revelation. I found experiences portrayed which at crucial points were similar to my own. I felt even more surprised when I realised how my ideas agreed with the literary works of Sacher-Masoch. I devoured them all with desire, despite the fact that many of the bloodthirsty scenes far exceeded my own fantasies.<sup>33</sup>

Mr X's account also offers insight into a masochist subculture in which Sacher-Masoch's text plays an important role.

In Vienna a man of exceptional standing has undertaken trips to the Prater, dressed as a servant, on the coach box of his mistress. This was probably a deliberate imitation of *Venus im Pelz*. In general it seems to me that the works of Sacher-Masoch have contributed much to the development of this perversion in people disposed to it.<sup>34</sup>

The same notion is emphasised by the subject of Case 10, who 'believes he could only be attracted to women who resembled the heroines in Sacher-Masoch's novels'.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, in the second edition of *Neuere Forschungen* Krafft-Ebing concludes: 'as becomes clear from the above observations, many individuals afflicted with this perversion explicitly refer to Sacher-Masoch's works as typical representations of their own psychological condition'.<sup>36</sup>

The concept of masochism underwent marked conceptual and editorial shifts in the 1890s; as early as the second edition of the *Neuere Forschungen*, the case of Mr X begins to recede into the background.<sup>37</sup> Krafft-Ebing shortens the autobiographical account, removing passages that point towards a more general nervous disorder, and editing the case to fit more obviously into his suggested disease pattern.<sup>38</sup> Any reference to original correspondence with Mr X is omitted, and Krafft-Ebing quotes as his own the cultural history of masochism previously provided by his informant.<sup>39</sup> While it stands to reason that Mr X felt some disappointment at this loss of importance, such modifications were common in the practices of sexological and medical writing, and were not considered unethical in these professional contexts. Krafft-Ebing's revised concept of the role of authors, however, would remain unaltered for the remainder of his career, with literary works continuing to function as a useful means of gaining insight into taboo subjects. He explored in passing the pathologies of writers like de Sade and Rousseau, and even the canonical German writer

Heinrich von Kleist.<sup>40</sup> While Krafft-Ebing clearly stated that certain authors were afflicted with sexual pathologies – as Anna Katharina Schaffner has pointed out – in his view, to have convincingly portrayed certain psychological conditions in literary works did not necessarily make an author a ‘psychopath’.<sup>41</sup>

In the case of Sacher-Masoch, Krafft-Ebing never made any explicit reference to the author’s pathology. To base a key sexological category on a writer who had not made his desires public in a confessional, autobiographical text would have been counterproductive to the success of Krafft-Ebing’s project, undermining his professional credibility and possibly resulting in a defamation court case. Krafft-Ebing was nonetheless persuaded to name masochism after ‘the first portrayer of masochism’, because his patients were able to recognise themselves in Sacher-Masoch’s literary cases. Therefore the act of naming expressed appreciation for the creator of a literary work who encouraged Krafft-Ebing’s patients to reflect on their own condition. Should Krafft-Ebing have entertained any methodological doubts about the influence of literary cases on his patients, these were dispelled by the number of individuals referring to *Venus im Pelz*. Krafft-Ebing had identified an irregular phenomenon and was aiming to define its laws.

### **A case of ‘self-intensification’: early masochists**

Reading Krafft-Ebing’s masochist case studies, it becomes obvious that writing about sex was no easy matter. The ways in which the sexologist presents his patients, their statements and his consideration of their predicament is defined by two central elements: the interpretation of *Venus im Pelz* as an erotic text, and the moment of recognition masochist readers experienced during their perusal of Sacher-Masoch’s work. Arousal and acknowledgement were likewise central to Krafft-Ebing’s understanding of pathology. The former represented the symptom; the latter was the prerequisite for the treatment that some of Krafft-Ebing’s patients so earnestly sought.<sup>42</sup> It is impossible to say what other issues his patients might have raised in their conversations with him, but clearly their knowledge of arousal and acknowledgement had been shaped by the literary text that many of them referred to as the foremost representation of their unruly desires. *Venus im Pelz* tells the story of the antihero Severin, who does not manage to establish an emancipated relationship with his partner. The confession of his submissive desires to his lover Wanda von Dunajew, and several explicit and brutal scenes that depict Severin’s emotional and physical humiliation, are features of the novella. Although critical in many respects, Sacher-Masoch’s relatively sympathetic and intimate portrayal of Severin, as well as the story’s confessional tone, encouraged Krafft-Ebing’s masochist patients to interpret *Venus im Pelz* as an expression of their own sexual identity.

Krafft-Ebing's patients undoubtedly read Sacher-Masoch's infamous novella as an erotic text. In the second edition of *Neuere Forschungen* (1891), Case 4 reports that, on reading *Venus im Pelz*, his 'semen just comes out'.<sup>43</sup> The subject of Case 4 was the only patient to admit so explicitly to physical arousal through his reading experience; by far the most common interpretation mentioned in the case studies was that of promoting self-awareness. Acknowledgement rather than arousal dominates descriptions of the effects of reading, a fact that might well have been imposed by Krafft-Ebing's careful editing. Hence Case 3 states:

A most remarkable, even amazing fact is that there is an author who exposes such passions to the public at large, namely in the forms of novellas and novels, rather than others, who keep their passions to themselves in their innermost soul. In *Venus im Pelz* we find the same familiar feelings expressed, word for word, line for line, feelings which until now we believed were our own most unique experiences.<sup>44</sup>

In absence of other forms of acknowledgement, this first recognition of desire in a twenty-year-old literary text must have been powerful. In her long essay on the uses of literature, Rita Felski points to the power of texts through 'self-intensification': 'recognising aspects of ourselves in the description of others, seeing our perceptions and behaviours echoed in a work of fiction, we become aware of our accumulated experiences as distinctive yet far from unique'.<sup>45</sup> Such close identification, often sidelined in literary criticism, is not necessarily overpowering, nor must it produce an utterly uncritical reader.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, several of Krafft-Ebing's case narratives show subjects distancing themselves from what they perceived as the overtly pronounced, even shocking depiction of brutality in *Venus im Pelz*, a depiction which certainly surpassed their own desires. This was seen above in the response of Mr X, and is again evident in Case 3, where the patient remarks on the consequences of the unexpected transposition of fantasies from the private to the public sphere.

Hence, maybe exactly because such secrets are dragged into the limelight, reading this book has repulsive, and hence sobering and healing effects also upon masochists. It is something different to imagine things with closed eyes in solitude and to read those same things printed in a novel. The reader can never completely suppress the critic, and hence it must seem outrageous to present such nonsense to an audience of which only a minimal part consists of masochists. It is sufficient to point to the fact that all characters involved continuously wear fur while in hot Florence, even when they are inside.<sup>47</sup>

For Krafft-Ebing such a critical stance towards Sacher-Masoch's text might have intimated a new consciousness on the part of the patient, a potential distancing that could lead to recovery, since the patient's acknowledgement of his own condition was central to the exchange between doctor and patient.<sup>48</sup> For many of Krafft-Ebing's masochist

patients, it can be said that *Venus im Pelz* served, rather, as a ‘coming out’ novel, powerfully portraying a new sort of sexual sensibility, or one previously unmapped in medical terms. All evidence indicates that this was not the author’s main intention. Within the cycle of novellas of which it was part, *Venus im Pelz* was supposed to be the author’s key representation of the struggling dilettante of love who subjects himself to the forceful powers of nature – personified by his sexually domineering female lover. Sacher-Masoch envisaged the portrayal of an emerging modern subjectivity, a symptom of the crisis of modernity: a sensitive man gifted with the capacity for aesthetic pleasure, but lacking the powers to constructively convert his gifts into living an ethical and productive life.

*Venus im Pelz* was not the first literary text to embrace the sexual preference or the sensibility of masochists. Earlier erotic novels had likewise engaged with the sexual practices represented by Sacher-Masoch. Rousseau’s *Confessions* had painstakingly and painfully described the burden of the author’s sexual preferences in his own life, while Ivan Turgenev, in *Dnevnik Lishnego Cheloveka* (*Diary of a Superfluous Man*, 1850), gave an influential description of the mindset of an outsider whose explorations in the realms of love remain stunted and unsatisfactory.

When compared with erotic texts portraying similar deeds, *Venus im Pelz* was a more respectable text, written by a prized author in a key fictional form favoured by the German middle class, the novella. Having constituted the exemplary ‘case’ in German literature since the late eighteenth century, novellas were a popular genre, published in most middle-class journals. Their focus on one character, and their frequently expressed aspiration of unpredictability, novelty and truth, made them the key genre for the description of peculiar and remarkable people or events.<sup>49</sup> Different from Rousseau’s *Confessions*, or from Turgenev’s hero, who dies at the end of his story, *Venus im Pelz* characterises Severin as a somewhat deluded man who, through the ‘inversion’ of his desires, eventually finds a more commonly accepted place in society, as a misogynist. The main difference between *Venus im Pelz* and its literary predecessors lies in the relatively positive characterisation of Severin, and in its confessional power – that is, in the detail and richness of its description, which fostered the sense of acknowledgement emphasised by Krafft-Ebing’s patients.

A comparison between Turgenev’s *Dnevnik Lishnego Cheloveka* and *Venus im Pelz* highlights the positive thrust of Sacher-Masoch’s work, and is of particular relevance since Sacher-Masoch makes several allusions to Turgenev’s novella. The latter reveals the torments of the hero Chulkaturin, a social outsider. Diagnosed with a terminal illness, Chulkaturin retells the only meaningful event of his life, that of having been rejected by his beloved Elizaveta Kirillovna.<sup>50</sup> The parallels between *Dnevnik Lishnego Cheloveka* and *Venus im Pelz* are notable, as is Sacher-Masoch’s remarkable inversion of Turgenev’s plot structure. Chulkaturin is presented as a sufferer, an outsider who is rejected by the woman he loves, who fails to

make sense of his life, and who is 'incompatible with the lives being led around him'.<sup>51</sup> Of Chulkaturin the reader knows remarkably little; nor are his sexual preferences unveiled. Chulkaturin's diary reveals a hero who pities himself and portrays a painfully conflicted self to the reader. Turgenev's achievement lay in establishing the motif of the 'superfluous man' as a key theme of Russian literature in the nineteenth century.<sup>52</sup> He exposes his main character to the reader without giving the latter any interpretive point of reference outside the world of the narrative. As a consequence, Chulkaturin's confession seems incomplete and unreliable, refusing to provide the reader with an interpretive framework.

Severin's diary, on the other hand, presents the reader with a detailed biography of its antihero, including a coming-of-age scene that details physical punishment inflicted by his aunt, and conversations with Wanda, his lover, during their tête-à-têtes. Sacher-Masoch provides the reader with narrative certainty through the overarching frame of his cycle of novellas, a device that delineates *Venus im Pelz* as the 'problem' novella. The author also furnishes rich background about his main character, providing Severin with the sexual biography of a 'supersensualist'. This includes an evocation of Severin's childhood, his feelings of being an outsider from the very beginning – an odd child, rejecting the milk of his wet nurse, born with a love of fur and an innate shyness around women.<sup>53</sup> *Venus im Pelz* describes his first sexual encounter, including the realisation of his sexual fantasies through his aunt, Countess Sobol, who has him purposefully tied up for disrespect he has shown towards her: 'what a supersensual lunatic I was! My taste for women was awakened by the blows of a beautiful and voluptuous creature in a fur jacket who looked like an angry queen. From that day on my aunt became the most desirable woman on God's earth'.<sup>54</sup>

Anchored in the certainty of biography, in the midst of Severin's confession to his lover, the erotic element comes into play. The above scene echoes Rousseau's description of his sexual awakening in the first book of his *Confessions*: the author's arousal during a beating by his governess, Miss Lambercier. He describes his loss of innocence as the unplanned result of punishment at the hands of a female authority figure, and laments its impact on his adult sex life.<sup>55</sup> Importantly, however, *Venus im Pelz* portrays a minor's subjection to sexual violence as a conscious act of cruelty. In the novella, the retelling of this act of violence turns the story of Severin's childhood and coming of age into a tale of seduction. Like masochist readers twenty years later, Wanda returns aroused; the next night she dresses as a 'Venus in Furs' and asks Severin to her room: 'your stories have disturbed me so much that I have not been able to sleep a wink'.<sup>56</sup> Severin's narration has served as a form of initiation and represents the beginning of an educational process – Wanda's transformation into his cruel mistress. The escalating scenarios of humiliation and violence that follow do not, however, depict a conventional sexual encounter. Instead they convey a sense of strong suppression of the

sexual, perpetuating Severin's inhibited existence. In the end, Severin returns home, cured after a beating at the hands of Wanda's new lover Alexander, and he is shown able to become a productive if peculiar member of society.

This tale provided masochist readers with moments of 'self-intensification' that satisfied the human needs for recognition and the representation of erotic desire. Its confessional style and abundant detail about the life of Severin gave the novella a strong resemblance to later psychiatric case studies. The fact that Severin recovers from his 'perverse' desires might also have held some appeal in this context. At the same time, the need for identification made Krafft-Ebing's patients overlook or sideline key aspects of the story. Most seem to have been oblivious, for example, to the critical tone of the novella, expressed through its overarching narrative, and oblivious to the irony and ridicule at the heart of *Venus im Pelz* and the cascade of humiliation to which Severin is exposed. Rather, the subjects of Krafft-Ebing's case studies express bewilderment at the cruelty conveyed in the story – a response that encapsulates the deep ambivalence felt by many patients of sexology towards their own afflictions.

### A Darwinian novella: Severin, the dilettante in love

In the late 1860s, Sacher-Masoch embarked on the largest literary project of his career, a multi-volume 'natural history of humankind' collectively titled *Das Vermächtnis Kains (The Legacy of Cain)*. This ambitious collection – a series of six volumes of six novellas each – was to circle around the themes of love, property, the state, war, work and death. Ultimately, Sacher-Masoch would complete only the first two volumes of the projected six. Shortly before the publication of the first volume, *Die Liebe (Love)*, in 1870, Sacher-Masoch resigned from his position as a lecturer in history at the University of Graz in order to follow his literary calling. He had already published two novels, several novellas and two well received plays before first achieving wider recognition throughout Europe with the publication of *Don Juan von Kolomea* (1868).<sup>57</sup> This story, together with *Venus im Pelz* and the four other novellas, formed *Die Liebe*, which was published in two parts. *Die Liebe* also proved to be a literary success – two editions were published in close succession, and a third in 1878 – and the work was considered paramount in Sacher-Masoch's literary oeuvre.

*Das Vermächtnis Kains* signified Sacher-Masoch's unique attempt to find a new language for discussing key areas of human life, especially the realms of love and sexuality. In this context *Venus im Pelz* constitutes the key example of love 'gone wrong'. Sacher-Masoch exemplifies in Severin the struggles of a sensitive and idle man. Rather than embracing the Darwinian struggles of modern love-life – seeking to negotiate the tension between the recreational needs of humankind and a more egalitarian

relationship between the sexes – he lets himself be ruled by his submissive desires alone, and fails in his love for Wanda. The first author in German literature to engage extensively with Darwinism, Sacher-Masoch reflected on the meaning of humanity's animal origins, while developing his ideas concerning a more just society. As a mode of enquiry, literature allowed him to investigate new phenomena quickly – much more quickly than medicine; after all, Krafft-Ebing was obliged to become aware of the phenomenon of masochism, find patients and steadily write up their cases.

Sacher-Masoch trusted his intellectual insights and used cutting-edge scientific and philosophical discourses to refine his aesthetic perception. In a letter to Otto von Kapf, who later became his private secretary for a time, Sacher-Masoch explained that despite his own privileged life he was a pessimist by nature and could not close his mind to the truth: 'I am not able to paint human beings in an idealised fashion..., for the very reason that I do not go by my *subjective sentiments* [Sacher-Masoch's emphasis], but only by my knowledge [Erkenntnis]'.<sup>58</sup> This search for truth – nowadays perhaps best described as anthropological – was shaped by Darwinian thought, contemporary moral philosophy and key works of European literature. Sacher-Masoch's critique represents a turn against idealism (especially prevalent in German literature at this period), as well as a turn towards scientific thought, specifically Darwinian method. Both strategies permitted him to see the world differently from many of his contemporaries. This was a time when writers in Germany anticipated and strived for German unification, and were inclined to aestheticise and idealise bourgeois life.<sup>59</sup> Inspired by Charles Darwin and philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, among others, Sacher-Masoch was critical of such romantic tendencies within German culture.<sup>60</sup> Like other German writers from the Habsburg lands, Sacher-Masoch instead situated himself within a broader European literary context; his work was strongly influenced by Russian and French literature.<sup>61</sup> His cosmopolitan outlook was also reflected in the reception of his work: in the preamble to *Die Liebe*, well known literary critic Ferdinand Kürnberger praised Sacher-Masoch as a German Turgenev.<sup>62</sup> Sacher-Masoch certainly shared Turgenev's love for Eastern Europe, but where the latter focused on Russia as the setting for his novels, Sacher-Masoch focused mainly on the far east region of the Habsburg Empire.<sup>63</sup>

With hindsight, Sacher-Masoch's Darwinian sympathies are not surprising, since in Austrian literature Darwinism became strongly associated with liberal attitudes.<sup>64</sup> Political liberalism had been thwarted in 1848, and the debate about Darwinism became an *Ersatz*, a means for members of the middle class to express their beliefs – through science rather than religion.<sup>65</sup> Yet Sacher-Masoch differed from more conservative social Darwinians, in that he was critical of a reductionist application of Darwinian thought to human history. This can be seen from a review of contemporary cultural histories written for *Auf der Höhe*, an internationally oriented German

journal he founded and edited: ‘how can we separate cultural history from the history of arts and science, without being at risk of giving an inadequate, shallow and superficial account of the historical development of humanity?’<sup>66</sup> The question was prompted by the contemporaneous study *Kulturgeschichte in ihrer natürlichen Entwicklung bis zur Gegenwart* (*Cultural History and Its Natural Development up to the Present*), first published in 1876, and written by Friedrich von Hellwald, an ardent social and racial Darwinian who was popular among the German bourgeoisie. Hellwald argued that the struggle for existence ruled over moral considerations in natural as well as in human history.<sup>67</sup> With respect to these topical discourses, Sacher-Masoch aimed to combine natural and cultural history in an exploration of relationships between nature and nurture; between the Darwinian struggle for existence – without accepting biological determinism – and a new ethics that acknowledged the biological nature of human beings.<sup>68</sup> Applied to the realms of love, Darwinism allowed him to see lucidly the force of humanity’s reproductive drive, even as he strove to imagine a more equal and just society.

Sacher-Masoch’s literary response to Darwin coalesced at a point when Darwin had published *On the Origin of Species* (1859) but not yet *The Descent of Man, And Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871).<sup>69</sup> As such, Sacher-Masoch enjoyed a unique freedom to pursue his own ideas and to develop the new form of the Darwinian novella. This particular literary case made use of Darwinian ideas and integrated new biological understanding of human nature with insights from cultural history and contemporary ethical thought. A year before Darwin first published *The Descent of Man*, Sacher-Masoch pre-empted the English naturalist’s famous statement on the relevance of evolutionary theory for understanding the origin of man and his history.<sup>70</sup> Sacher-Masoch’s answer to the questions raised through Darwin’s works was a literary anthropology of Galicia that he envisaged would stand alongside scientific discussions.<sup>71</sup> For Sacher-Masoch the role of literature was to ‘communicate knowledge and truths ... by coining the dead gold barrels of scientific knowledge for the masses’. When it came to the ‘lives and hearts of human beings’, as he stressed on several occasions, literature was quite capable of ‘explor[ing] new truths itself’, since ‘the real poet will always particularly like to make the passions and follies of humans the concern of his literary works’.<sup>72</sup> For him, the obligation of literature lay in reflecting on the human condition and in making society conscious of its feelings. Like many intellectuals in the nineteenth century, he was invested in the depiction of the world surrounding him.

Sacher-Masoch’s worldview is succinctly encapsulated in the fable-like story that serves as the Prologue to *Das Vermächtnis Kains*, printed as front-matter in Part One of *Die Liebe*. While hunting in the Galician woods, the narrator, Leopold, encounters an ascetic wanderer, a member of a Russian Orthodox sect – Schopenhauer’s Brahmane Other personified and transposed into Sacher-Masoch’s Slavophilic world. Leopold orders

his gamekeeper to shoot an eagle; the wanderer then steps in and accuses Leopold of having murdered, like Cain, his (feathered) brother. In the ensuing dialogue the wanderer's pessimistic outlook becomes apparent. He argues that men neither are innately good nor possess a natural sense of morality; all longing for pleasure is in vain.<sup>73</sup> Programmatically, the curse of Cain is apparent in the different topics of Sacher-Masoch's projected natural history of humankind: love, property, the state, war, work and death. The Prologue's wanderer is concerned specifically with the realm of love, and he elaborates the underlying reason for the inevitable battle of the sexes, arguing that natural instincts force human beings to reproduce, this being the only motive for passion between men and women.<sup>74</sup> He considers society's attempt to stabilise the relationship between the sexes through marriage futile, since it contradicts human nature, a topic explored fully in Part One of *Die Liebe*.<sup>75</sup> The wanderer admits to having played a dominant, patriarchal role as the master of women; also to having been a slave to women – bound, through their attractiveness, to work for them and their children – only to be betrayed. All these topics are explored in Part Two of *Die Liebe*.<sup>76</sup> For the wanderer, work for its own sake exemplifies the Darwinian view of the 'manly and bold struggle for existence'; work constitutes the only path to happiness, to the abolition of slavery and misery, gluttony and indulgence.<sup>77</sup> The question pivotal to the contents of *Die Liebe* becomes manifest in the Prologue at the moment of the narrator's spiritual enlightenment, when he hears nature declare, 'I am truth and life' – a selective biblical reference to John 14:6, in which Jesus states, 'I am the way, the truth and the life'.<sup>78</sup> Not by chance Sacher-Masoch omits the religious notion of 'the way', since from his scientific perspective the course of human action was guided by the challenge of how to lead an ethical life.<sup>79</sup>

Together, the two parts of *Die Liebe* present the reader with five progressively deteriorating examples of gender relations, only to resolve the conflict between the sexes in the final novella. These six Darwinian novellas are linked by their imagery of Galicia, the landscape of Sacher-Masoch's youth, and by the first-person narrator named Leopold, also Sacher-Masoch's first name. Part One of *Die Liebe* (which consists of three novellas) introduces the readers to Galicia and problematises matrimonial gender relations. Sacher-Masoch's formal innovations, such as the telegram style and the stimulating descriptions of life in Galicia, were praised by his contemporaries.<sup>80</sup> *Don Juan von Kolomea* (*Don Juan of Kolomea*) discusses the detrimental impact of children on married life and the main character's womanising – a situation that results in both partners finding themselves trapped in a loveless marriage. *Der Kapitulant* (*The Capitulation*) illustrates the price paid by a woman who marries for money and social standing rather than love. The man identified as her true love surrenders to what he perceives to be the nature of women, namely to women's instinct for placing the socio-economic status of a husband above genuine love. The third story, *Mondnacht* (*Moonlit Night*), portrays

female infidelity and estrangement between married estate owners. This alienation is depicted as a consequence of women's exclusion from the male sphere of work.

Part Two of *Die Liebe* concentrates on more problematic areas of gender relations, as well as the suggested solution. In a letter to his publishing house, Cotta – one of few surviving personal documents – Sacher-Masoch outlines the structure of this part: its three novellas respectively symbolise intellectual love, sensual love and the happiness of moral matrimony.<sup>81</sup> Accordingly, *Die Liebe des Plato* (*The Love of Plato*) narrates the views of an advocate of platonic love who falls for the 'brother' of his fiancé and finally leaves the country. This represents the first articulation of 'homosexuality' *avant la lettre* and, as argued elsewhere, reflects emerging discourses about male same-sex love and desire.<sup>82</sup> The penultimate novella is *Venus im Pelz*, which deals with the confusion of Severin, who explains his misogynistic behaviour in the present in terms of his past masochistic experiences. *Marzella oder Das Märchen vom Glück* (*Marzella or The Fairy Tale of Love*) is the last of the three.

*Venus im Pelz* and *Marzella* form opposites: as is typical for cycles of novellas, the penultimate story is the so-called 'problem' novella, while the last story presents the envisaged solution. Unlike the rest of the cycle, these two novellas are bound together by the first-person narrator and by the figure of Severin. That is, the unfortunate hero of *Venus im Pelz* is introduced as a close childhood friend of Alexander, the hero of *Marzella*. This last novella focuses on Alexander's marriage to Marzella. With their respective partners, Alexander and Severin plainly represent Sacher-Masoch's ideas on 'the good' and 'the bad' of gender relations. Alexander is sensual, while Severin is supersensual, desirous not of sexual intimacy but of punishment. A seducer of women in his pre-marital life, Alexander is now happily married to the fiery daughter of his wet nurse, whom he has educated to become a (relatively) equal partner. Alexander is down-to-earth and level-headed, possessed of the moral fibre and the wealth to resolve the gender troubles of his times in the ambit of his feudal estate. Alexander is better adapted to his immediate and local environment, and signifies the survival of the fittest. For Sacher-Masoch, a strong marriage was based on mutual sensual attraction and the same cast of mind, as well as shared work. While Alexander and Marzella run their estate together, Severin educates Wanda to become a tyrant. Even after his idle adventure with Wanda in Florence and his subsequent embrace of working life, Severin dominates his new girlfriend, having only inverted his servile desires rather than overcome them. The imaginative Severin falls prey to his own mind and, for him, 'woman, as Nature created her and as man up to now has educated her, is man's enemy; she can be his slave or his despot, but never his companion. This she can only be when she has the same rights as he and is his equal in education and work'.<sup>83</sup>

Sacher-Masoch's contrasting portrayal of Alexander and Severin has distinct Darwinian features, in which procreation and the human struggle

for existence function as the benchmarks for success. Simultaneously, because of the human subjects at their centre, his Darwinian novellas engage with a moral, emancipatory discourse. This can be seen in *Venus im Pelz*, where the intellectual inspiration for Severin's character is found in the writing of British moral philosopher John Stuart Mill – material which is then directly referenced in *Marzella*.<sup>84</sup> Mill's *On Liberty* (1859) famously espoused the right of humans to pursue particular tastes and activities, even if these are deemed immoral by society.<sup>85</sup> In keeping with this outlook, Sacher-Masoch has the protagonist of *Marzella* marry outside his own class: Alexander educates the daughter of his wet nurse to become his wife. Alexander's approach epitomises Mill's liberty of the individual and any number of individuals 'to regulate by mutual agreement such things as regard them jointly, and regard no persons but themselves'.<sup>86</sup> This choice coincides with Darwinian principles of adding new blood to the aristocratic family tree. In Alexander's view, the aristocratic family line is otherwise doomed, as he points out in a discussion with his friend Leopold.<sup>87</sup> Conversely, Severin exemplifies the very limits of such freedom, which Mill sees represented in the voluntary enslavement of man:

In this and most other civilised countries, for example, an engagement by which a person should sell himself, or allow himself to be sold, as a slave, would be null and void; neither enforced by law nor by opinion. The ground for thus limiting his power of voluntarily disposing his own lot in life is apparent, and is very clearly seen in this extreme case.... The principle of freedom cannot require that he should be free not to be free. It is not freedom, to be allowed to alienate freedom.<sup>88</sup>

The example of Severin in *Venus im Pelz* represents the fate of such a 'slave' in the realm of love, and the detrimental consequences for both partners of such an unequal relationship.

In his novellas, Sacher-Masoch combined Darwinian notions of procreation and moral philosophy to challenge notions of love and sexuality for the modern era. He considered such a literary anthropology an important contribution to wider knowledge on these matters. The impact of his work was not what he expected, yet his more open-minded and liberal approach to questions of sexual deviance irrevocably challenged literary and public discourse. Twenty years before some of his readers approached Krafft-Ebing in search of legitimisation, Sacher-Masoch drew on Darwinism to depict the nether sides of love, self-consciously linking these themes to contemporary questions concerning freedom and the social position of women. Through *Venus im Pelz*, the 'problem' novella in *Die Liebe*, he showed Severin embodying the very crisis of a responsible use of freedom. Instead of pursuing an emancipated love relationship, and lifting his partner to the ethical height of man, Severin exemplifies a man's self-abasement to the ethical and intellectual level of women in their presumed equivalence to nature.

### Between sex and sexuality

From the moment the first volume was published in 1870 the German response to *Die Liebe* was conflicted. Krafft-Ebing's masochist patients proved neither the first nor the last to assume Sacher-Masoch's eccentricity in sexual matters. Indeed, the reception of *Die Liebe* illuminates changing public perceptions of sexuality, and of Sacher-Masoch. In private letters the author remarked on this phenomenon with ironic bemusement. Six years after Sacher-Masoch's death, his biographer and former private secretary, Carl Felix von Schlichtegroll, had the last word. In a biography projected also as a contribution to contemporary sexological debate, Schlichtegroll confirmed the suspicion widely held among Sacher-Masoch's readers that the author of *Venus im Pelz* was a masochist. Schlichtegroll's foray into sexological discourse from the perspective of the cultural history of cruelty would enrich the genre of biography; at the same time, it compromised the reputation and image of Sacher-Masoch, helping to obscure the significance of his oeuvre and overshadowing his development of the Darwinian novella.

Part One of *Die Liebe* had been glowingly received in 1870. Yet, to the author's intense surprise, a substantial number of German literary critics took offence when Part Two appeared in the same year, particularly to the fourth and fifth novellas, that is, to *Die Liebe des Plato* and, above all, to *Venus im Pelz*. These two novellas led critics to express outright disgust at what they perceived to be obscene content. In 1870 A. von Schweiger wrote: 'one is ashamed to meet a woman on the street and to think that Sacher-Masoch's novel is a reflection of our time!'<sup>89</sup> The same year, in a damning review for the respectable liberal newspaper *Neue Freie Presse*, Karl von Thaler had attested that Sacher-Masoch was not alone in his proclivities: 'the sensuality of our time is sick; it is not satisfied in a harmless way, it cannot get rid of its awareness of sin.... This disease is widespread, and the best of our contemporaries are not always free of it. However, no one has caught the disease as severely as Sacher-Masoch.'<sup>90</sup> Those openly appreciative of the writing likewise criticised his portrayal of the shadowy side of love as far too crass, 'even for non-prudes'.<sup>91</sup> For these respondents, Sacher-Masoch was exceeding bourgeois respectability and with it the very boundaries of representation. Such criticism was also voiced by Rudolf von Gottschall, a stern supporter of the author, who contended that certain problems – although worth considering from a philosophical viewpoint – do not lend themselves to literary portrayal. He warned that 'in the realms of aesthetics both the psychological and the pathological involve danger': in his view such materials were both aesthetically objectionable and altogether revolting, their depiction invoking repulsion and disgust.<sup>92</sup>

Twentieth-century literary scholars have tended to interpret the emotive response of these literary critics in light of modern sensibilities, reading their reaction as an aversion to masochism.<sup>93</sup> However, the moral

outrage expressed in the various contemporary reviews masks any detailed critique of what exactly was at stake. In 1878, in a rare exchange of letters with his publishers on the occasion of the third, revised edition of *Die Liebe*, Sacher-Masoch reflected on this criticism and offered a different perspective. According to his statement, the German critics had not based their rejection of *Venus im Pelz* 'on the theme of sensual love and the affinity between cruelty and sensuality ... [and] just as little on the content of the tale and the hero's love madness that makes him the slave of the beloved woman'. In Sacher-Masoch's eyes the problem lay not in Severin's 'supersensualism' but in the fact that 'the hero literally forces the heroine to mistreat him' and educates her to be his tyrant.<sup>94</sup>

German readers were certainly familiar with lovesick heroes on a path to self-destruction – Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's international bestseller of 1774, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (*The Sorrows of Young Werther*) is probably the most famous example of such a narrative. Sacher-Masoch's suggestion that the character of Wanda was the decisive trigger for the critics' condemnation does seem plausible, particularly considering the importance of the education of women for the self-image of the German middle class. Literature had traditionally functioned to affirm the lifestyle of middle-class readers; as Jürgen Habermas has argued, it simultaneously served as entertainment and a preparation for real life.<sup>95</sup> Changes to middle-class households at the beginning of the nineteenth century had produced a shift in family size and had redirected female identity towards a new concept of domesticity and the virtues of modesty. In this context, the family became a place of education, one in which women could broaden their horizons under male guidance. While women were thenceforth watching over family morals, engagement with society became a joint project for both spouses and an integral part of middle-class female identity.<sup>96</sup> Sacher-Masoch reflected these social developments in the novellas of *Die Liebe*. In *Marzella*, he strongly advocates the education of Alexander's spouse, Marzella, while *Venus im Pelz* functions as a cautionary tale, when Severin educates Wanda to become cruel towards him. Nonetheless, German criticism was still resolutely concerned with the world of sex rather than sexuality, to the extent that Severin's condition was interpreted as physical in nature: the underlying problem structuring *Venus im Pelz* was the antihero's incapacity to perform the sexual act. Severin's impotence was thus presumed to be the basis for his distracted state of mind, and his educational and sexual aberrations were presumed to be a substitute for his suppressed sexual longings.

Sacher-Masoch clearly understood the criticism levelled at him and reacted accordingly. His response to his critics was more differentiated than commonly assumed. Firstly, he launched a belligerent counter-attack on German literary criticism in 1873. The short book *Ueber den Werth der Kritik* (*On the Worth of Criticism*) argues that personal and financial interests define the views expressed in contemporary newspapers and journals. Confidently taking the reception of his own work as the

starting point, Sacher-Masoch further decries the entrenched conservative character of the criticism of his novellas, maintaining that critics apply only established literary norms, which are inevitably inadequate to works that engage with a new aesthetic.<sup>97</sup> Secondly, on several occasions Sacher-Masoch ineffectively pushed his publisher, Cotta, to release separate editions of the novellas from *Die Liebe*, especially *Marzella*.<sup>98</sup> The relevant correspondence does not reveal the author's motivation for pursuing this separate publication, but financial need could not have been the sole reason. Ultimately, Cotta did not comply with Sacher-Masoch's wishes, and the author had 171 copies of *Marzella* printed at his own expense.<sup>99</sup> Thus it seems likely that he wanted to emphasise the moral direction of his work, and rebuff his critics by disseminating copies of the novella that outlined the ethical and moral commitments of his writing. Thirdly, Sacher-Masoch's exchange of letters with Cotta in connection with the third edition of *Das Vermächtnis Kains* reveals a further strategy for dealing with contemporary criticism. In 1878 Cotta approached the author regarding a somewhat delicate matter. All copies of the second edition of *Die Liebe* had been sold and the publisher wished to launch a third edition – but only on the proviso that *Venus im Pelz* be omitted, or exchanged for another novella. Cotta justified this change of heart by revealing that the original novella had not been read by their literary adviser before publication; the positive reference had been based on the other novellas in the volume.<sup>100</sup> Replying to Cotta, Sacher-Masoch rejected the idea of a third edition of *Die Liebe* with the omission of *Venus im Pelz*; however, he proposed to rewrite the latter work. He indicated that he had been toying with this idea for at least two years. Cotta agreed to the rewrite on the condition that the new version be subject to 'in house' approval.<sup>101</sup> Three months later Sacher-Masoch reported on his progress, emphasising the effort necessary to rearrange his novella: many scenes had to be cut; the character of Wanda changed to an 'innately hedonistic, despotic and cruel woman'; the whip converted from a tantalising stimulus to a mere means of corporal punishment.<sup>102</sup> The third edition was duly published in 1878 and Sacher-Masoch's strategy of appeasement seems to have achieved its purpose. In a review of the new edition, Rudolf von Gottschall at least argued that the once offensive scenes seemed decisively toned down.<sup>103</sup>

But were Sacher-Masoch's Darwinian novellas steeped in the world of sex or sexuality? And is it important to consider him a *masochist*, a man whose sexual desires were pathological from the perspective of his historical time and place? These questions need to be addressed because of persistent and ongoing interest in Sacher-Masoch's sexual life and the irrefutable impact of such interest on the reception of his work. During Sacher-Masoch's lifetime, two groups had an intrinsic investment in speculating about the author's sexual desire and proclivities. On more than one occasion, critical voices, notably from the political right, accused Sacher-Masoch of writing 'degenerate' literature and of being

afflicted with a pathology.<sup>104</sup> Probably this assumption was also made by some of Krafft-Ebing's patients, and by Sacher-Masoch's similarly inclined followers in Germany and Austria. Sacher-Masoch had claimed in 1873 that 'every aesthetic prophet, as well as any religious one, finds odd enthusiastic followers, who in their excitement and in their ardor exaggerate and outdo the master'.<sup>105</sup> Such followers sought contact with the author and flocked to his home in Lindheim, as evidenced in a private letter written in 1895 by his widow and second wife, Hulda von Meister: 'over and over again new enquiries regarding [new books such as] *Venus im Pelz* arrived, as if he were a factory. All those people, however, did not get in touch after his death; none of them, rich factory owners, officers, lawyers was able to express their thanks through a gift.'<sup>106</sup>

After his death, Sacher-Masoch's two long-term spouses attested that he was different from masochists of his time. Hulda von Meister was insistent:

If my husband had such a 'perverse inclination', I can only [wish] every woman to have a man of such inclinations; she has heaven on earth. If my husband was driven more and more [in this direction, it was] so firstly because of his first wife and secondly because of the audience [for *Venus im Pelz*]. How beautiful and divine was this passion in my husband, how common in others.<sup>107</sup>

True, Wanda von Sacher-Masoch, the author's first wife, complained in her autobiography that she had been forced to wear fur coats when writing her novels at home. However, she explicitly defended her former husband against sexologists and masochists alike, accusing the former of having created a masochist fad during Sacher-Masoch's lifetime.<sup>108</sup> Meanwhile, masochists only 'inflare their passions through cruel fantasies', but Sacher-Masoch had shown a physiological commitment to experience his own subjugation: 'what he longed for in torture and cruelties from women, he longed for in reality – and he endured it'.<sup>109</sup> For Wanda von Sacher-Masoch, masochists remained 'cowardly, insipid and mentally dull'. Her criticisms seem unsurprising considering the continuing attentions she received due to the notoriety of *Venus im Pelz*. These attentions were exemplified by the letters of a Prague masochist, which she eventually forwarded to Krafft-Ebing.<sup>110</sup> Both Sacher-Masoch's first wife and second wife led relatively impoverished lives, Hulda von Meister because of limited copyright laws that would otherwise have protected her income. Both women were required to make a living as single mothers, while protecting their respective reputations. Despite this motivating context for the women's defence of Sacher-Masoch, it becomes clear that the writer's place was not among those perceived or defined as masochists by his contemporaries.

Nor did Sacher-Masoch perceive his own sexual proclivities as deviant. A letter to Otto von Kapf in 1876 includes the statement: 'it has always amused me, if one has accused me of frivolity or even susceptibility [to

perversion], because I portray human beings the way they really are. I lead a life to which even the most rigorous Northern German or Englishman could apply their moral standards'. He points to the happiness of his marriage, the luck of having three healthy and intelligent children, and the comfort in which he and his family live.<sup>111</sup> He makes no reference to a desire for cruel women or comparable topics in his autobiography, which is, rather, about his fascination with science.<sup>112</sup> His self-image was that of a virile man and an intellectual, and the facts that he was sexually active and fathered six children made him an unlikely candidate for the nineteenth-century category of the masochist.

The most useful key to understanding Sacher-Masoch's legacy lies in the wide scope of his literary ambitions. In Pierre Bourdieu's study of Gustave Flaubert's 1869 novel *L'Éducation sentimentale* (*Sentimental Education*), the French sociologist and philosopher suggests that Flaubert separates himself from his main character, Frédéric, in an attempt to 'perceive an enterprise of *objectification of the self*'.<sup>113</sup> This is a plausible interpretation through which to reflect in sociological terms on the relationship between Sacher-Masoch's life and work. Furthermore, both the year in which Flaubert's novel was first published and Sacher-Masoch's avowed admiration for Flaubert allow speculation regarding the direct influence of *L'Éducation sentimentale* on *Venus im Pelz*. Sacher-Masoch saw in Flaubert a fellow searcher for truth.<sup>114</sup> According to Bourdieu, Flaubert 'objectified the structure of the relationship that tied him, as a writer, to the political field', presenting only a subjective viewpoint comparable to that of Turgenev's *Dnevnik Lishnego Cheloveka*, a perspective which refused his readers an 'absolute conviction'.<sup>115</sup> Yet even as he admired Flaubert, Sacher-Masoch's interests lay in a distinctly different field. If Flaubert insisted on the autonomy of art and taunted his readers, Sacher-Masoch's focus was on literature as a reasoned method for the description of human behaviour. For him, literature served a scientific purpose and his literary cases remained firmly embedded in their Darwinian framework. Sacher-Masoch thus abandoned the autonomy of art, erasing the difference between fact and fiction on the pretext of finding an objective, arguable truth. His contract with his early lover Fanny von Pistor, often quoted as a proof of his masochist predisposition, succinctly outlines the difference between Severin and Sacher-Masoch.<sup>116</sup> Like Severin, Sacher-Masoch asks to be enslaved by his lover, but the author explicitly stipulates a need for six hours of writing time each day.<sup>117</sup> Severin was unable to formulate a coherent narrative of his past adventure, but Sacher-Masoch was able to document a self-conscious experiment in his own subjection to the forces of nature.<sup>118</sup> This experience would then inform his vivid description of Severin, his own feelings rendered unimportant as he tackled the task of writing in the self-appointed role of the scientist. If he enjoyed instigating his own sexual subjection, he conceptualised this practice by literary means through a Darwinian worldview – not a sexological one.

After Sacher-Masoch's death in 1895, and with the increasing acceptance of sexology as a field of study and investigation, the debate surrounding the author took a decisively new turn. That is, in 1901, six years after his death, and thirty-one years after the first publication of *Venus im Pelz*, Felix von Schlichtegroll published the first biography of Sacher-Masoch, titled *Sacher-Masoch und der Masochismus (Sacher-Masoch and Masochism)*. Schlichtegroll was Sacher-Masoch's former secretary, an author and a cultural historian of cruelty; in this biography he outed his favourite author as a masochist. Schlichtegroll revealed details of Sacher-Masoch's private life, certainly awaited with curiosity by many of the latter's readers. The biography's merits as well as its parochialism are defined by the intellectual commitments of its author: Schlichtegroll's interests were centred on sexuality. He had known the man Sacher-Masoch; Sacher-Masoch's widow had permitted him access to the writer's diaries; Schlichtegroll had also edited (possibly co-authored) Sacher-Masoch's novel *Afrikas Semiramis (Africa's Semiramis)* and the highly successful *Hinterlassene Novellen (Bequeathed Novellas)* of 1907.<sup>119</sup> *Sacher-Masoch und der Masochismus* became the first notable success in a career that would focus predominantly on issues of masochism and sadism. This focus is obvious in Schlichtegroll's series of novels collectively titled *Die Venuspeitsche (The Whip of Venus)*.<sup>120</sup> Other works followed, among them a scathing biography of Sacher-Masoch's first wife, Wanda; a historical study titled *Die Bestie im Weibe: Beiträge zur Geschichte menschlicher Verirrung und Grausamkeit (The Beast in Women: Contribution to the History of Human Aberration and Cruelty)*, published in 1903; and a history of flagellation (*Geschichte des Flagellantismus*, 1913).<sup>121</sup> Writing Sacher-Masoch's biography allowed Schlichtegroll to offer insights into the life of the admired author and helped to open the genre of biography to matters of sexuality. Schlichtegroll also put forward his own views on the cultural history of masochism, although he preferred the Greek-derived term *algolagnia*.<sup>122</sup> Consequently, *Sacher-Masoch und der Masochismus* encompasses biographical information, several chapters on sexological discourse concerning masochism, and a survey of the depiction of masochist themes in literature and art.

Schlichtegroll's biographical description contains several key points that, by the early twentieth century, had become standard in the sexological description of masochism. He notes that Sacher-Masoch was fascinated by bloodthirsty stories; as a youth Sacher-Masoch frequently dreamed and fantasised about being controlled by a dominant woman, often a sultana who tortured him with pleasure. Moreover, Sacher-Masoch supposedly grasped the nature of these dreams after reading Rousseau's *Confessions*.<sup>123</sup> Schlichtegroll also provides his reader with a coming-of-age scene: apparently the young Sacher-Masoch witnessed his paternal aunt's love affair with an admirer who kissed her ermine slippers (and more). In Schlichtegroll's telling, when Sacher-Masoch's uncle discovered this and rushed into the room, he was punched by his wife, who whipped both lover and husband out of her sight.<sup>124</sup> Schlichtegroll's discussion of

Sacher-Masoch's life unfolds chronologically, with reference to the writer's publications, on the basis that 'the best comment [to] be made concerning Sacher-Masoch's life is that it [his oeuvre] describes the course of his life'.<sup>125</sup> When Schlichtegroll unveils Sacher-Masoch's long-standing affair with Anna Kottowitz, he uses Sacher-Masoch's description of Wanda von Dunajew, that is, the character Wanda in *Venus im Pelz*. The biographer suggests that Sacher-Masoch gave Kottowitz *Manon Lescaut* to read, just as Severin gives the French novel to Wanda.<sup>126</sup> Schlichtegroll has Kottowitz become aroused and inspired after reading *Venus im Pelz*.<sup>127</sup> In other words, for his biographer, Sacher-Masoch's literary works represented romans-à-clef, and were to be taken as both factual and autobiographical.

The obvious and important difference between a biography and *Venus im Pelz* – the critical distance with which Sacher-Masoch portrays Severin, his characterisation of the male protagonist as an exemplary dilettante in matters of love, and not a sophisticated writer – remains lost in Schlichtegroll's account. To structure and narrate Sacher-Masoch's biography through his works was to overstate Sacher-Masoch's consideration of the content of *Venus im Pelz* in a severely distorting manner. Since the literary estate of Sacher-Masoch was destroyed, and the surviving fragments are not readily accessible, Schlichtegroll's text has remained the key source for Sacher-Masoch's life. It is also possible that Schlichtegroll's slippage between fact and fiction affected the alleged diary entries in *Sacher-Masoch und der Masochismus*. At the time of its publication, Wanda von Sacher-Masoch insisted that the diary entries quoted by Schlichtegroll were forged.<sup>128</sup> Another scenario is plausible: in his will to methodically establish Sacher-Masoch as a masochist, Schlichtegroll may have interpreted or misappropriated as diary entries Sacher-Masoch's notes for *Venus im Pelz*. In independently surviving pages of his diary, Sacher-Masoch uses the first-person perspective to present his voice, while supposed 'diary' quotations are all presented in the form of dialogues – similar to those printed in *Venus im Pelz*.<sup>129</sup>

Whatever the factual bases of Schlichtegroll's biography, *Sacher-Masoch und der Masochismus* prompted a number of sexologists to step forward and re-evaluate images of Sacher-Masoch, and Krafft-Ebing was chief among these. For the first time, his eleventh edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1901) pointed out Sacher-Masoch's masochism in a footnote. Krafft-Ebing's comment is written in a slightly defensive tone, but he also indirectly distances himself from the 'outing':

In the last years I have, by the way, received proof that Sacher-Masoch was not only the poet of masochism but was himself suffering from this anomaly. Although this proof was given to me without any reservations, I refrain from publishing it. I have to repudiate the rebuke I have been given by some admirers of the poet and by certain critics of my book because I combined the name of a well-respected writer with a perversion of sexual life. As a human being Sacher-Masoch will surely not be less highly regarded in the eyes of any educated person just because of the fact that

he – not through his fault – was suffering from an anomaly in his sexual life. However, as a writer he has suffered severe damages to his creative work and its reception, because he was a very talented writer – as long and as far as he did not touch on his perversion – and he would have achieved great things, if he had been a human being who felt in a sexually normal way.<sup>130</sup>

Reviewing Schlichtegroll's biography in 1901, Albert Eulenburg, a key figure in sexological research, retrospectively adjusted his own interpretation of Sacher-Masoch's first novel, *Der letzte König der Magyaren* (*The Last King of the Magyars*), published in 1867: 'I did not yet guess how closely the account was connected to the personal characteristics of his writer'.<sup>131</sup> The same review of *Sacher-Masoch und der Masochismus* also describes *Venus im Pelz* as one of Sacher-Masoch's best and most mature novellas, while implying that this work might have profited from the closeness of the writer to his 'model', Severin.<sup>132</sup> A year later Eulenburg published his study *Sadismus und Masochismus* (*Sadism and Masochism*) in which a chapter is dedicated to Sacher-Masoch's person. After quoting various sources, Eulenburg describes Sacher-Masoch as a weak but lovable and charming character, whose lifestyle would eventually lead to personal downfall and result in the 'unmistakably inferior quality of his late literary works'.<sup>133</sup> Eulenburg did not consider at all the financial strife faced by many professional writers at the time and its impact on the quality of literary production.

Emphasising the concurrence of Sacher-Masoch's alleged sexual preferences and his central literary themes, Schlichtegroll's new interpretation helped sexology to close the uncomfortable gap between Sacher-Masoch's lived life and his work; his biography was to have a profound and lasting impact on the reception of Sacher-Masoch's writing. *Sacher-Masoch und der Masochismus* also began what can only be described as a sudden fashion for masochist cultural materials: the German public was engulfed by a plethora of books, articles and illustrations in newspapers – a fact remarked upon by Freud in his elaborations on masochism quoted above. *Venus im Pelz* became a code phrase with a currency far beyond its masochist counter-public, as modernist writers such as Robert Musil and Franz Kafka turned to masochism and channelled the concept into the realms of high culture in works such as *Die Verwirrungen des Zöglings Törleß* (*The Confusions of Young Törless*) of 1906, *Die Verwandlung* (*Metamorphosis*) of 1915 and *Der Prozess* (*The Trial*), eventually published in 1925. As discussed in Chapter 5, writer and medical doctor Alfred Döblin did likewise, in works that seamlessly integrated Darwinian and scientific thought.

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In the years following its publication, Sacher-Masoch's daring exploration of modern subjectivity from the perspective of Darwinism had garnered a group of followers who closely identified with Severin. In turn, these

followers inspired Krafft-Ebing to name masochism after the author of *Venus im Pelz*. By the first years of the twentieth century the vivid content of Sacher-Masoch's problem novella, the penultimate of the six collected in *Die Liebe*, had come to haunt the author and his reputation. In a poignant and sarcastic comment, Viennese cultural critic Karl Kraus (1874–1936) noted that Krafft-Ebing owed his world fame 'to the interest in the content of novels by overheated readers, followers of his doctrine of sexual perversions', implying that only those primarily interested in sexual perversions would read Sacher-Masoch's novels.<sup>134</sup> Kraus preempted Foucault's critique of the sexologist–patient relationship, and pointed out the underlying tautology in Krafft-Ebing's methodology. When he called masochism 'a silly novel-medical term', ridiculing the fictional basis of the medical expression, he might have summarised the situation more aptly than he wished.<sup>135</sup> It seems unlikely that Krafft-Ebing would have included literary works in *Psychopathia Sexualis* if not for the insistence of his patients that *Venus im Pelz* described their experience so well.

The reception of *Venus im Pelz* paradigmatically depicts the shift between the worlds of sex and sexuality. Sacher-Masoch's Darwinian novella opened a new trajectory that ultimately failed to find the audience he had hoped for. Instead, the anthropological impetus behind Sacher-Masoch's Darwinian novellas made them particularly easy to reinterpret as psychiatric case studies. After his former private secretary 'outed' him as a masochist and equated literary with biographical knowledge, sexology willingly confirmed Sacher-Masoch's belonging to the world of sexuality. Sacher-Masoch became an involuntary pioneer in this respect as well. During the decade following his outing, sexological and psychoanalytic interest in pathographies of intellectuals boomed, and writers and musicians in particular found themselves at the centre of scientific debate. In the early 1900s, alongside distinct ideas about creativity, new styles of reasoning were emerging in the fields of sexology and psychoanalysis that would significantly reshape the biographical case for the twentieth century.

## Notes

- 1 A short remark regarding the use of the term 'masochism' in this chapter: where not otherwise indicated, 'masochism' and related terms designate a current understanding of a sexual practice widely spread throughout the history of human sexuality – the receiving of predominantly sexual pleasure from acts involving the reception of pain or humiliation. Masochism does not play a central role in twenty-first-century psychiatric debate. Nevertheless, in the World Health Organization's *International Classification of Diseases* (ICD), the related term 'sadosomasochism' (F65.5) is still listed under F65, 'Disorders of sexual preference' ([www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/](http://www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/) 13/7/2011). The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) published by the American Psychiatric Association lists the term under the category paraphilia. The manual's latest edition

- (DSM-IV-TR) requires that, to be diagnosed as a paraphilia, the activity must be the sole means of sexual gratification for a period of six months, and either cause 'clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning' or involve a violation of consent. See Russell B. Hilliard and Robert L. Spitzer, 'Letter to the Editor: Change in Criterion of Paraphilias in DSM-IV-TR', *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 157:7 (2002), p. 1249, <http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/article.aspx?Volume=159&page=1249&journalID=13>, accessed 31 August 2012.
- 2 Arnold I. Davidson, 'Sex and the Emergence of Sexuality', *Critical Inquiry*, 14:1 (1987), pp. 16–48, p. 22.
  - 3 This formulaic accusation features in many works of secondary literature and is especially pronounced in works that aim to investigate Sacher-Masoch's work as an expression of masochism. These tend to conflate the naming of masochism after the author with the legal criminalisation of masochism from the nineteenth century onwards. Key examples include John K. Noyes, *The Mastery of Submission: Inventions of Masochism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Michael Gratzke, *Liebesschmerz und Textlust. Figuren der Liebe und des Masochismus in der Literatur* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1997).
  - 4 Laura Doan raises the issue of 'caseness' in her book *Disturbing Practices: History, Sexuality and Women's Experience of Modern War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
  - 5 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, vol. I: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990).
  - 6 Compare Ian Hacking, 'Language, Truth, and Reason', in *Historical Ontology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 159–77.
  - 7 Paolo Savoia, 'Sexual Science and Self-narrative: Epistemology and Narrative Technologies of the Self between Krafft-Ebing and Freud', *History of the Human Sciences*, 23:5 (2010), pp. 17–41, p. 29.
  - 8 Harry Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature: Krafft-Ebing, Psychiatry, and the Making of Sexual Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 12.
  - 9 Birgit Lang, 'Translation as Transposition. Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, Darwinian Thought, and the Concept of Love in German Sexual Modernity', in Heike Bauer (ed.), *Sexology and Translation: Cultural and Scientific Encounters* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2015), pp. 19–35.
  - 10 Sigmund Freud, 'The Economic Problem of Masochism', in James Strachey (ed.), with Anna Freud, Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works by Sigmund Freud*, vol. XIX (London: Hogarth Press and Institute for Psychoanalysis, 1978), pp. 157–70, p. 162.
  - 11 Dimitry Stefanowski, 'Passivism – A Variety of Sexual Perversion', *Alienist and Neurologist: A Quarterly Journal of Scientific, Clinical and Forensic Psychiatry and Neurology*, 13 (1892), pp. 650–7, p. 655.
  - 12 Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen auf dem Gebiet der Psychopathia Sexualis*, 1st edition (Stuttgart: Enke, 1890), p. 2. The German original reads: 'Diese im folgenden zu besprechenden Perversionen der Vita Sexualis mögen Masochismus genannt werden, da der bekannte Romanschriftsteller Sacher Masoch in zahlreichen seiner Romane, ganz besonders in seinem bekanntesten "Die Venus im Pelz", diese eigene Art der sexuellen Perversion zum Lieblingsgegenstand seiner Schriften gemacht hat. Dieser Masochismus stellt das Gegenstück einer nach dem Vorgang der Franzosen 'Sadismus' genannten Form sexueller Perversion dar, deren berühmtester Vertreter der monströse Marquis de Sade war.' If not otherwise noted, all translations are by the author of this chapter.
  - 13 Sacher-Masoch's first biographer, Carl Felix von Schlichtegroll, also underlines the fact that Krafft-Ebing named masochism in honour of Sacher-Masoch's depiction of Severin; see Schlichtegroll, the chapter titled 'Sacher-Masoch und der Masochismus', in his *Sacher-Masoch: enthaltend Sacher-Masoch und der*

- Masochismus sowie 'Wanda' ohne Maske und Pelz nebst einem Dossier*, ed. Lisbeth Exner and Michael Farin (Munich: Belleville, 2003), p. 34.
- 14 Davidson, 'Sex and the Emergence of Sexuality', p. 22.
- 15 Renate Hauser, 'Einleitung', in Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Eine Studienreise durch Südeuropa 1869/70*, ed. Renate Hauser (Graz: Leykam, 2000), pp. 10–19, p. 11.
- 16 This happened to the British Renaissance scholar John Addington Symonds; see Seán Brady, *John Addington Symonds (1840–1893) and Homosexuality: A Critical Edition of Sources* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 24.
- 17 Robert Beachy, 'The German Invention of Homosexuality', *Journal of Modern History*, 82:4 (2010), pp. 801–38, p. 816.
- 18 Wellcome Library, London, Richard von Krafft-Ebing Papers, Case Notes 1877–1902, MSS PP/KEB/A/4: Box 1.
- 19 Paul Weindling, 'Bourgeois Values, Doctors and the State', in David Blackbourn and Richard J. Evans (eds), *The German Bourgeoisie* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 198–223, p. 198.
- 20 'Sexual Psychology and Pathology. Review', *British Medical Journal*, i:2145 (1902), p. 339.
- 21 'Review of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, English Translation of 7th Edition', *Alienist and Neurologist: A Quarterly Journal of Scientific, Clinical and Forensic Psychiatry and Neurology*, 14 (1893), pp. 526–7.
- 22 Ivan Crozier, 'Pillow Talk: Credibility, Trust and the Sexological Case History', *History of Science*, 46:4 (2008), pp. 375–404, p. 388. Crozier refers to Charles Féréz, *The Evolution and Dissolution of the Sexual Instinct* (Paris: Charles Carrington, 1904), pp. 190–1, and Marc Raffalovich, 'Uranism, Congenital Sexual Inversion: Observations and Recommendation', *Journal of Comparative Neurology*, 5 (1895), pp. 33–65, p. 38.
- 23 George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Europe* (New York: Fertig, 1985), p. 8.
- 24 Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature*, p. 199.
- 25 In late nineteenth-century England, key theorists of the study of sex often lacked a scientific background; relevant studies reflected aesthetic sensibilities, which did not necessarily make their discourse more inclusive. See Heike Bauer, *English Literary Sexology: Translations of Inversion, 1860–1930* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 79–80. The French erotic imagination, too, was shaped by an exchange between medical and lay cultures: based on his self-assessment, writers like Gustave Flaubert were regarded as neurotic. See Vernon A. Rosario, *The Erotic Imagination: French Histories of Perversity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 10, p. 82. Anna Katharina Schaffner's recent study traces the interdependence between medical and literary debates on perversion; however, for her, Krafft-Ebing's work is still based in the framework of pathology. She perceives Sacher-Masoch as having been horrified by the naming of masochism. See Schaffner, *Modernism and Perversion: Sexual Deviance in Sexology and Literature, 1850–1930* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 54.
- 26 Peter Sprengel, *Darwin in der Poesie. Spuren der Evolutionslehre in der deutschsprachigen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1998), pp. 49–50.
- 27 'Vorläufig dürften die Dichter bessere Psychologen sein, als die Psychologen und Philosophen von Fach, aber sie sind Gefühls- und nicht Verstandesmenschen und mindestens einseitig in der Betrachtung ihres Gegenstands. Sehen sie doch über dem Licht der sonnigen Wärme des Stoffes, von dem sie Nahrung ziehen, nicht die tiefen Schatten. Mögen auch die Erzeugnisse der Dichtkunst aller Zeiten und Völker dem Monographen einer "Psychologie der Liebe" unerschöpflichen Stoff bieten, so kann die grosse Aufgabe doch nur gelöst werden unter Mithilfe

- [sic] der Naturwissenschaft und speciell [sic] der Medicin [sic], welche den psychologischen Stoff an seiner anatomisch-physiologischen Quelle erforscht und ihm allseitig gerecht wird.... Wer die Psychopathologie des sexualen Lebens zum Gegenstand einer wissenschaftlichen Abhandlung macht, sieht sich einer Nachtseite menschlichen Lebens und Elends gegenübergestellt, in deren Schatten das glänzende Götterbild des Dichters zur scheusslichen [sic] Fratze wird und die Moral und Ästhetik an dem "Ebenbild Gottes" irre werden möchte.' Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 1st edition, 1886, pp. iv–v.
- 28 Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, pp. 25, 13.
- 29 'Ich schliesse [sic] meine Zeilen mit dem Wunsche, dass sie der Wissenschaft dienen mögen.' Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, p. 28.
- 30 Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature*, p. 174f. Oosterhuis interprets the following quote from Mr X's autobiography to ascribe the authorship of the term 'masochism' to Mr X: 'I believe to have proven that what we want to call masochism is an independent occurrence'. The German original reads, 'Ich glaube somit dargethan [sic] zu haben, dass das, was wir Masochismus nennen wollen, als eine selbstständige Erscheinung existirt [sic]'. Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, p. 25. In this context the use of 'we', however, does not imply a *pluralis modestiae*, but rather expresses familiarity between the two correspondents.
- 31 Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, p. 6. At this point Krafft-Ebing also begins to reflect on the differences between the imagined and the actual wish to be caned. He would refer to the former phenomenon as 'ideational masochism'.
- 32 'Von grossem [sic] Interesse ist es, dass derlei in dichterischen Werken vorkommt. Wenn auch solche nicht den Werth von Krankengeschichten haben können, so haben sie doch mindestens psychologisches Interesse, insofern der Autor aus seiner Erfahrung geschöpft oder wenigstens derlei empfunden haben muss.' Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, p. 29.
- 33 'In allerlei Lektüren suchte ich Beziehungen zu meinen Lieblingsvorstellungen. Rousseaus confessions [sic], die mir damals in die Hände fielen, boten mir eine grosse [sic] Entdeckung. Ich fand einen Zustand geschildert, der in wesentlichen Punkten dem meinigen glich. Noch mehr erstaunte ich über die Uebereinstimmung [sic] mit meinen Ideen, als ich Sacher-Masoch's Schriften kennen lernte. Ich verschlang sie alle mit Begierde, obwohl die blutrünstigen Scenen [sic] oft weit über meine Phantasien hinausgingen.' Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, p. 17.
- 34 'Ein Mann in hervorragender Stellung in Wien hat, als Bedienter gekleidet, auf dem Kutschbock des Wagens seiner Maitresse Fahrten in den Prater mitgemacht. Hier dürfte eine bewusste Nachahmung der 'Venus im Pelz' vorliegen. Überhaupt scheint mir, dass die Schriften des Sacher-Masoch viel zur Entwicklung dieser Perversion bei Disponirten [sic] beigetragen hat.' Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, p. 26.
- 35 'Er meint, es könnte ihn nur ein Weib reizen, das den Heldinnen in den Romanen von Sacher-Masoch gleiche.' Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, p. 23.
- 36 'Auf Sacher-Masoch's Schriften berufen sich viele von dieser Perversion Ergriffene, wie aus den obigen Beobachtungen ersichtlich, ausdrücklich als auf typische Darstellungen ihres eigenen psychischen Zustands.' Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 2nd edition, 1891, p. 37.
- 37 In the sixth edition of his *Psychopathia Sexualis*, published in 1891, Krafft-Ebing differentiates the masochistic taxonomy by distinguishing between: 'maltreatment and humiliation for the purpose of sexual satisfaction – masochism'; 'disgusting acts for the purpose of humiliation and sexual satisfaction – masked masochism'; 'feet and shoe fetishists'; and 'female masochism' (already known). This greater

- differentiation between masochism and masked masochism served two purposes. Firstly, Krafft-Ebing was able to unpair masochism and flagellation. For quite some time his writings had been haunted by an awareness that some people used flagellation only for sexual stimulus, while others used it as a substitute for intercourse. As of 1891, flagellation literally belonged to another chapter of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, while masochism had found a new opposite. Secondly, Krafft-Ebing was now able to integrate fetishism into his taxonomy, mentioned until this point in the context of masochism, but not properly classified.
- 38 Krafft-Ebing shortens part of the history of nervous disorders within the family, the strict education through his parents, and the fact that he changed his career twice without escaping general boredom and melancholia. Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, pp. 15, 16, 18–22; *Neuere Forschungen*, 2nd edition, 1891, pp. 2–9.
- 39 Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 1st edition, 1890, pp. 26–7; Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 2nd edition, 1891, pp. 33–4.
- 40 In the fifth edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, published in 1890, Kleist's *Käthchen von Heilbronn* had been presented as an example of female masochism, but only a year later Krafft-Ebing judged Kleist 'undoubtedly not mentally normal'. Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 6th edition, 1891, p. 75. Krafft-Ebing does not name a reason for his change of heart, and the awkward phrasing in the German original remains puzzling. Krafft-Ebing presumably bases his assumption on Kleist's suicide. The first book-length study of Kleist's pathology was undertaken by psychoanalyst Isidor Sadger in 1909, as discussed in the following chapter of the present study.
- 41 Schaffner, *Modernism and Perversion*, pp. 48–9.
- 42 Ooisterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature*, p. 195.
- 43 The German original reads: 'dass der Same nur so von ihm läuft'. Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 2nd edition, 1891, p. 29.
- 44 'Eine höchst bemerkenswerthe [*sic*], ja sogar staunenerregende Thatsache [*sic*] ist es, dass es einen Autor gibt, der den Inhalt seiner derartigen Schwärmereien, anstatt dieselben, wie Andere, im tieferstinnersten Gemüthe zu bewahren, der Allgemeinheit preisgibt und zwar in Form von Novellen und Romane. In der *Venus im Pelz* finden wir gleichempfindend Wort für Wort, Zeile für Zeile die uns so vertrauten Vorstellungen, von denen wir freilich bisher glaubten, sie seien unsere urreigensten Erfahrungen.' Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 2nd edition, 1891, p. 18.
- 45 Rita Felski, *Uses of Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), p. 39.
- 46 Felski, *Uses of Literature*, p. 33.
- 47 'Daher wirkt, vielleicht gerade wegen dieser Hervorzerrung geheim zu haltender Dinge an das Tageslicht, die Lektüre dieses Buches auch auf Masochisten abtossend [*sic*], und daher ernüchternd und heilend! Ein Anderes ist es, bei geschlossenen Augen, in der Einsamkeit sich Dinge vorzustellen, und dieselben in Romanform gedruckt zu lesen. Der Leser kann den Kritiker niemals ganz unterdrücken, und da muss es empörend erscheinen, einem Publikum, das doch nur zum verschwindend geringen Teil aus Masochisten besteht, einen derartigen Unsinn vorzusetzen. Es genüge hiefür, darauf hinzuweisen, dass die betheiligte [*sic*] Personen in dem heissen [*sic*] Florenze unausgesetzt, auch im Zimmer, Pelz zu tragen.' Krafft-Ebing, *Neuere Forschungen*, 2nd edition, 1891, p. 18.
- 48 However, Case 3 is the only one in which such an argument prevails.
- 49 Hugo Aust, *Novelle* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1990), p. 11.
- 50 Ivan Sergeevich Turgenev, 'The Superfluous Man', in *The Essential Turgenev*, ed. Elizabeth Cheresch Allen (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1994), pp. 104–51, p. 117. The timid Chulkaturin befriends Elizaveta and her family, but she falls in love with Prince N-. To his own surprise, Chulkaturin survives and defeats his rival in a duel. Little does the odious hero realise at the time that

- this triggers Elizaveta's hatred. After the prince has left her, she consequently marries Bizmenkov, a minor official from the town of O— and a former servant of her lover.
- 51 Steven Brett Shaklan, "'So Many Foreign and Useless Words!'" Ivan Turgenev's Poetics of Negation', in Robert Reid and Joe Andrew (eds), *Turgenev: Art, Ideology and Legacy* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), pp. 41–60, p. 45.
- 52 For a general discussion of the theme in Russian literature, see Ellen Chances, 'The Superfluous Man in Russian Literature', in Neil Cornwell (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2001), pp. 111–22.
- 53 Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, *Venus in Furs*, in Gilles Deleuze and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty, and Venus in Furs*, trans. Jean McNeil (New York: Zone Books, 1991), pp. 143–271, pp. 173–4.
- 54 Sacher-Masoch, *Venus in Furs*, p. 175.
- 55 'In this way, then, in spite of an ardent, lascivious, and very precocious temperament, not only did I pass beyond the age of puberty without desiring, without knowing, any sensual pleasure beyond those to which Mlle de Lamercier had quite innocently introduced me; but also, when at last the passing years had made me a man, it was again the case that what should have ruined me preserved me. The taste that I had acquired as a child, instead of disappearing, became so identified with that other pleasure that I was never able to dissociate it from the desires aroused through the senses; and this vagary, in conjunction with my natural timidity, has always inhibited me in my approaches to women, because I dare not tell them everything, but nor am I able to perform everything.' Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions*, trans. Angela Scholar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 16.
- 56 Sacher-Masoch, *Venus in Furs*, p. 177.
- 57 The story's importance is confirmed by its inclusion in the twenty-four-volume collection of short stories *Deutscher Novellenschatz*, edited by Paul Heyse and Hermann Kurz; the collection was published in Munich between 1871 and 1876 by R. Oldenbourg. Heyse was an acclaimed author of novels and novellas and won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1910. Sacher-Masoch's *Don Juan von Kolomea* was republished as part of this series in 1876 and indeed formed the series' final novella. An exchange of letters between Heyse and German poet Theodor Storm, leading up to this reprint, demonstrates the rumours surrounding Sacher-Masoch. In a letter of 23 March 1870, Storm suggests that Sacher-Masoch had participated in the 1848 Revolution – Sacher-Masoch would have been only twelve years of age at the time. In a letter of March 1875, Heyse comments on Sacher-Masoch's literary capacity, pointing out that beyond the 'revolting goulash of lewdness and thirst for blood' Sacher-Masoch was not a talented writer. See *Theodor Storm–Paul Heyse. Briefwechsel. Kritische Ausgabe. Erster Band: 1853–1875* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1969), pp. 33, 89.
- 58 '[Ich] vermag ... die Menschen nicht ideal zu schildern, weil ich mich nicht ... von meinen subjektiven Empfindungen, sondern ganz nur von meiner Erkenntniß [sic] leiten laße [sic].' Wellcome Library, London, Western MS 6909, Sacher-Masoch to Otto von Kapf, 6 March 1876, folio 2 of 6.
- 59 Larissa Polubojarinowa, 'Österreichischer Realismus als ein Problem der Literaturgeschichte (Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, Maria von Ebner-Eschenbach)', in Werner Wiesinger (ed.), *Akten des X. Internationalen Germanistenkongresses Wien 2000. Epochenbegriffe. Grenzen und Möglichkeiten* (Bern: Lang, 2002), pp. 477–82, pp. 479–80.
- 60 Werner Michler, *Darwinismus in der Literatur. Naturwissenschaftliche und literarische Intelligenz in Österreich, 1859–1914* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1999), p. 130.
- 61 Polubojarinowa, 'Österreichischer Realismus als ein Problem der Literaturgeschichte', p. 478.
- 62 Ferdinand Kürnberger, 'Vorrede zum Don Juan', in Leopold von Sacher-Masoch,

- Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Erster Band* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1870), p. 49.
- 63 If Turgenev belonged to those Russian writers open to Western influences, especially from Germany, Sacher-Masoch revealed Austrian Galicia to his German-speaking readership. Sacher-Masoch also shared with Turgenev a persuasion that writers needed to reproduce ‘the reality of life accurately and powerfully’, even if this did not correspond with the author’s sympathies. See Hermann Menkes, ‘Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1890)’, in Michael Farin (ed.), *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch. Materialien zu Leben und Werk* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1987), pp. 121–7, p. 127; Ivan Turgenev, ‘Apropos of Fathers and Sons’, in *Fathers and Sons*, trans. Michael R. Katz (New York: Norton, 1989), pp. 167–73, p. 171. It remains unclear whether Turgenev and Sacher-Masoch corresponded. However, a letter between German writer Theodor Storm and Ivan Turgenev indicates that the latter knew Sacher-Masoch’s novella *Mondnacht in Galizien*: see Karl Ernst Laage, *Theodor Storm und Iwan Turgenjew* (Heide in Holstein: Westholst-Verlag, 1967), pp. 104–5. In a letter to the German painter, writer and art critic Ludwig Pietsch, Turgenev disparagingly mentions Sacher-Masoch’s penchant for the depiction of aristocratic women. Ivan Turgenev, *Iwan Turgenjew: Briefe an Ludwig Pietsch* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1968), p. 84.
- 64 Michler, *Darwinismus und Literatur*, p. 12.
- 65 Alfred Kelly, *The Descent of Darwin: The Popularization of Darwinism in Germany, 1860–1914* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), p. 5.
- 66 ‘Wie kann man die “Culturgeschichte” von der “Geschichte der Künste und Wissenschaftentrennen”, ohne sich der Gefahr auszusetzen, eine mangelhafte, flache und oberflächliche Auffassung von der historischen Entwicklung der Menschheit zu geben?’ Jenny Marr, ‘Darwinismus und Kulturhistorik’, *Auf der Höhe. Internationale Revue* (ed. Leopold von Sacher-Masoch), 2:8 (1883), pp. 462–4, p. 463. Two years later, Oswald Zimmermann and Marr, Sacher-Masoch’s former lover, were instrumental in denouncing the journal as anti-German and philo-Semitic. Financial difficulties forced Sacher-Masoch to close down the journal, despite winning a libel case against Zimmermann in May 1886 – see Lisbeth Exner, *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2003), p. 109.
- 67 Richard Weikart, *From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics, and Racism in Germany* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 169.
- 68 Michler, *Darwinismus und Literatur*, p. 22.
- 69 *On The Origin of Species* – and other works – were translated into German by palaeontologist H. G. Bronn soon after first being published in English. On the politics of this translation see Sander Gliboff, *H. G. Bronn, Ernst Haeckel, and the Origins of German Darwinism: A Study in Translation and Transformation* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008).
- 70 Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex, Vol. II* (London: John Murray, 1871), p. 385.
- 71 In 1870, seven years before the showdown between Ernst Haeckel and his former professor Rudolf Virchow at the Fiftieth Congress of the Association German Scientists and Physicians in Munich, Sacher-Masoch aimed to popularise Darwinian ideas in an area about which Darwin had said little; *The Descent of Man* would be more forthcoming in that respect. Kelly, *The Descent of Darwin*, p. 58.
- 72 ‘Die Poesie soll eine bilderreiche “Naturgeschichte des Menschen” sein, wo sie dies nicht ist, wo sie abstrakte Phantome oder ideale Phantasiegebilde bietet, erfüllt sie ihre sittliche Aufgabe nicht.... Der echte Dichter wird immer mit Vorliebe die Leidenschaften und Thorheiten der Menschen zum Gegenstande seiner Dichtung machen.’ Sacher-Masoch, *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Erster Band*, p. 32.

- 73 Sacher-Masoch, *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Erster Band*, pp. 12–13.
- 74 Sacher-Masoch, *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Erster Band*, pp. 16–17.
- 75 Sacher-Masoch, *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Erster Band*, pp. 16–17.
- 76 Sacher-Masoch *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Erster Band*, p. 10.
- 77 Sacher-Masoch, *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Erster Band*, p. 22.
- 78 Sacher-Masoch, *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Erster Band*, p. 29.
- 79 In the final (unwritten) novella of the planned cycle, Jesus was to function as a symbol of overcoming egoism. Sprengel, *Darwin in der Poesie*, p. 58.
- 80 Fritz Lemmermeyer, 'Leopold von Sacher-Masoch', in Farin (ed.), *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch*, pp. 127–37, p. 136.
- 81 Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Cotta Br. (letters to the Cotta publishing house), Sacher-Masoch to J.-G. Cottasche Buchhandlung, 7 March 1870.
- 82 Birgit Lang, 'Translation as Transposition', pp. 42–4. Sacher-Masoch tells the story of the first marriage of Count St–, who had served as a model for *Die Liebe des Plato*. When he first meets his wife he tells her that he 'would be quite capable of falling head over heels in love if only she were a man'. Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, *Die Messalinen Wiens. Geschichten aus der guten Gesellschaft* (Leipzig: Ernst Julius Günther, 1873), p. 139.
- 83 Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Zweiter Band* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1870), p. 367. The translation here is by Birgit Lang. The standard English translation deviates from the original and reads 'woman, as Nature created her and as man up to now has found her attractive, is man's enemy; she can be his slave or his mistress, but never his companion. This she can only be when she has the same rights as he and is his equal in education and work'. Sacher-Masoch, *Venus in Furs*, p. 271.
- 84 Sacher-Masoch, *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Zweiter Band*, p. 516.
- 85 John Stuart Mill, 'On Liberty', *Essays on Politics and Society. Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, vol. XVIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), pp. 213–310, p. 261.
- 86 Mill, 'On Liberty', p. 299.
- 87 Sacher-Masoch, *Das Vermächtnis Kains. Novellen. Erster Theil. Die Liebe. Zweiter Band*, p. 511.
- 88 Mill, 'On Liberty', pp. 299–300.
- 89 'Man schämt sich auf der Gasse einem Weibe zu begegnen, denkt man, daß Sacher-Masoch seinen Roman einen Spiegel der Zeit nennt!' A. von Schweiger, 'Literarische Streifzüge. Sacher-Masoch', in Farin (ed.), *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch*, pp. 40–3, p. 43.
- 90 'Die Sinnlichkeit der Gegenwart ist krank; sie freut sich nicht harmlos, sie kann das Bewußtsein der Sünde nicht loswerden.... Die Krankheit ist allgemein, und die Besten unter unseren Zeitgenossen sind nicht immer frei davon. So arg aber wie Sacher-Masoch hat sie noch Keinen erfaßt.' Karl von Thaler, 'Nihilismus in Deutschland', in Farin (ed.), *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch*, pp. 43–50, p. 44.
- 91 Lemmermeyer, 'Leopold von Sacher-Masoch', p. 136.
- 92 Rudolf von Gottschall, 'Sacher-Masoch als Novellist (1878)', in Farin (ed.), *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch*, pp. 114–21, p. 115.
- 93 The same can be argued for the case of the *Die Liebe des Plato* with regard to homosexuality: see Birgit Lang, 'Translation as Transposition', pp. 37–52, pp. 43–4, 48–9.

- 94 ‘Nicht an dem Thema der sinnlichen Liebe und der Verwandtschaft von Wollust und Grausamkeit hat man Anstoß genommen, ebensowenig an der Fabel, an dem Liebeswahnsinn des Helden, der ihn zum Sklaven der Geliebten macht.... Man war nur von der Entwicklung und Motivierung peinlich berührt, es widerte an, daß die Heldin von dem Helden förmlich gezwungen wurde ihn zu mißhandeln.’ Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Cotta Br., Sacher-Masoch to J.-G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 2 July 1878.
- 95 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), pp. 50–1.
- 96 Rebekka Habermas, *Frauen und Männer des Bürgertums. Eine Familiengeschichte (1750–1850)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000), pp. 399–400.
- 97 Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, *Ueber den Werth der Kritik. Erfahrungen und Bemerkungen* (Leipzig: Ernst Julius Günther, 1873), pp. 6–7.
- 98 Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Cotta Br., Sacher-Masoch to J.-G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 12 April 1878.
- 99 Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Cotta Br., Sacher-Masoch to J.-G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 16 October 1878.
- 100 Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Copierbuch IX (handwritten copies of letters from the Cotta publishing house, in chronological order), J.-G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung to Sacher-Masoch, 30 March 1878.
- 101 Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Copierbuch IX, J.-G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung to Sacher-Masoch, 8 April 1878.
- 102 ‘von Haus aus eine genußsüchtige und despotische grausame Frau.’ Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Cotta Br., Sacher-Masoch to J.-G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 2 July 1878.
- 103 Gottschall, ‘Sacher-Masoch als Novellist (1878)’, p. 120.
- 104 For example, Oswald Zimmermann, ‘Ein Pamphlet. Sacher-Masoch's *Auf der Höhe*’, in Farin (ed.), *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch*, pp. 342–56.
- 105 ‘Bald findet aber der ästhetische Prophet, eben so gut wie der religiöse, einzelne schwärmerische Jünger, welche in ihrer Begeisterung und ihrem Feuereifer über die Schnur hauen, den Meister überbieten, den “Tyranen übertyrannisieren” um mit Shakespeare zu sprechen....’ Sacher-Masoch, *Ueber den Werth der Kritik*, p. 27.
- 106 ‘Immer wieder von neuem kamen Anfragen an ihn wegen einer Venus im Pelz als ob er eine Fabrik davon hätte, diese alle haben sich aber nicht gemeldet bei seinem Tode, diese alle, reiche Fabrikanten, Offiziere, Rechtsanwälte, können nicht ihre Dankbarkeit durch ein Geschenk beweisen.’ Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Hulda von Sacher-Masoch to Anton Lampa, 5 April 1895.
- 107 ‘Wenn mein Mann diese “perverse” Neigung gehabt hat, so ich jeder Frau einen mit diesen Neigungen behafteten Mann, sie hat dann den Himmel auf Erden: Wenn mein Mann aber immermehr hineingehetzt worden ist, so ist erstens seine erste Frau, zweitens das Publikum Schuld.... Wie schön und göttlich war diese Passion bei meinem Mann und wie gemein trat sie bei Anderen auf.’ Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Hulda von Sacher-Masoch to Anton Lampa, 5 April 1895.
- 108 Wanda von Sacher-Masoch, ‘Masochismus und Masochisten’, in *Lebensbeichte. Meine Lebensbeichte. Memoiren (1905) sowie Masochismus und Masochisten. Nachtrag zur Lebensbeichte (1908). Mit einem Dossier*, ed. Lisbeth Exner and Michael Farin (Munich: Belleville, 2003), pp. 315–47, p. 336.
- 109 ‘[W]as er sich an Qualen und Grausamkeiten vom Weib erträumte, sehnte er sich in der Wirklichkeit auch zu erdulden – und erduldet es.’ Wanda von Sacher-Masoch, ‘Masochismus und Masochisten’, p. 336.
- 110 Wanda von Sacher-Masoch, ‘Masochismus und Masochisten’, pp. 337–43.
- 111 ‘Es ist mir stets erheiternd, wenn man mir Frivolität oder gar Anfälligkeit vorwirft, weil ich die Menschen so schildere[,] wie Sie in der That [*sic*] sind, ich

- selbst habe ein Leben an das selbst der rigoroseste Norddeutsche oder Engländer seinen moralischen Maßstab legen könnte.' Wellcome Library, London, Western MS 6909, Sacher-Masoch to Otto von Kapf, 6 March 1876, folio 1 of 4.
- 112 Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, 'Eine Autobiographie', *Deutsche Monatsblätter. Centralorgan für das literarische Leben der Gegenwart*, 2:3 (1879), pp. 259–69.
- 113 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 25; Bourdieu's emphasis.
- 114 On the other hand, according to Sacher-Masoch, Émile Zola had only replaced the idealisation of beauty with that of ugliness. See Gottschall, 'Sacher-Masoch als Novellist (1878)', p. 127.
- 115 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. Randal Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), p. 207, p. 210.
- 116 In contemporary scholarship, Albrecht Koschorke's detailed biography similarly presupposes Sacher-Masoch's masochism and consequently falls short in the assessment of Sacher-Masoch's literary works. See Albrecht Koschorke, *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch. Die Inszenierung einer Perversion* (Munich: Piper, 1988). This view is also expressed in Exner, *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch*, p. 64.
- 117 'Contract between Mrs Fanny von Pistor and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch', as reprinted in Deleuze and Sacher-Masoch, *Masochism*, p. 277.
- 118 This is further underlined by the fact that the homodiegetic narrator, Leopold, who befriends Severin, explores his successful entanglement with Venus in the introduction to the novella. Sacher-Masoch, *Venus in Furs*, p. 144.
- 119 Exner, *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch*, pp. 128f.
- 120 The series was published by the Dresden-based publishing house Dohrn between 1901 and 1906. It encompassed the following volumes: *Die Hexe von Klewan* (1901); *Satans Töchter* (1905); *Die Wölfin* (1906).
- 121 The most extensive bibliography of Schlichtegroll's oeuvre can be found in Schlichtegroll, *Sacher-Masoch*, pp. 409–11.
- 122 On the larger debate around the naming of the category masochism and contemporary alternatives, see Ivan Crozier, 'Philosophy in the English Boudoir: Havelock Ellis, Love and Pain, and Sexological Discourses on Allogophilia', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 13:3 (2004), 275–305.
- 123 Schlichtegroll, 'Sacher-Masoch und die Masochisten', p. 25.
- 124 Schlichtegroll, 'Sacher-Masoch und die Masochisten', p. 26.
- 125 Schlichtegroll, 'Sacher-Masoch und die Masochisten', p. 86.
- 126 The short French novel by Abbé Prévost was first published in 1731. It is set in France and Louisiana, and tells the story of the Chevalier Des Grieux and his lover, Manon Lescaut. The chevalier forfeits his family wealth in order to be with his young and hedonistic lover. Her taste for extravagance bankrupts him on several occasions. The pair settle in Louisiana; however, when the Governor's nephew discovers that they are not married he woos Manon. The chevalier challenges him to a duel and flees with Manon after he believes he has killed the man. Manon dies during the flight and the chevalier returns to France to join an abbey. The novel was controversial at the time, and a toned-down version was reprinted in 1754. The text is referenced in many key works of nineteenth-century literature, for example in Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1830); in *La Dame aux camélias* (1848) by Alexandre Dumas and perhaps most famously in Oscar Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890).
- 127 Schlichtegroll, 'Sacher-Masoch und die Masochisten', p. 100.
- 128 Wanda von Sacher-Masoch argued that Sacher-Masoch had written her a letter in which he threatened to publish a diary that would 'destroy' her if she did not do as he pleased. Wanda von Sacher-Masoch, 'Masochismus und Masochisten', p. 321.
- 129 Seven pages relating to the death of Sacher-Masoch's son Alexander from 7 May to 27 December 1877 survived in London: Wellcome Library, London, Western

- MS 6909, folio 75. Two further diary pages, from 1869, presented by Exner, are also written in the first person. Exner considers these proof of Sacher-Masoch's masochist predisposition – see Exner, *Leopold von Sacher-Masoch*, pp. 62–4.
- 130 'In den letzten Jahren wurden mir übrigens Beweise dafür beigebracht, dass S.-Masoch nicht bloss der Dichter des Masochismus gewesen, sondern auch selbst mit der in Rede stehenden Anomalie behaftet gewesen sei. Obwohl jene mir ohne Vorbehalt zukamen, nehme ich gleichwohl Abstand, sie zu veröffentlichen. Den Tadel, den einzelne Verehrer des Dichters und gewisse Kritiker meines Buches mir dafür zu Theil werden liesen [*sic*], dass ich den Namen eines geachteten Schriftstellers mit einer Perversion des Sexuallebens verquickte, muss ich zurückweisen. Als Mensch verliert S.-Masoch doch sicher nichts in den Augen jedes Gebildeten durch die Thatsache [*sic*], dass er mit einer Anomalie seines sexuellen Lebens schuldlos behaftet war. Als Autor hat er aber dadurch in seinem Wirken und Schaffen schwere Schädigung erfahren, denn er war, solange und soweit er sich nicht auf dem Boden seiner Perversion bewegte, ein sehr begabter Schriftsteller und hätte gewiss Bedeutendes geleistet, wenn er ein sexuell normal fühlender Mensch gewesen wäre.' Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 11th edition, 1901, pp. 95f. Mr Z, Case 78 in the 11th edition, allowed Krafft-Ebing access to his private correspondence with Sacher-Masoch, from which Krafft-Ebing quotes as part of the case notes. According to Krafft-Ebing, Sacher-Masoch argued that the 'passion to play the slave' was widespread in Germany and Russia. Sacher-Masoch had also conveyed to Mr Z the story of a Danish woman who insisted that her lovers lick her feet and her anus, and Krafft-Ebing used Latin to reproduce this passage. If the lovers did not obey, they were chained and whipped until they did so. The passage fascinated Krafft-Ebing, especially for its mention of a man in chains who was forced to watch his rival make love to the woman. Krafft-Ebing points out that if what was said was true – 'which cannot be readily assumed of the poet of masochism' – this would constitute a remarkable example of female sadism. *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 11th edition, 1901, p. 138. The 12th edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1906), which was continued in Krafft-Ebing's name after his death in 1902, additionally refers to Eulenburg's study, without changing the argument; the same holds true for further editions.
- 131 '[I]ch ahnte noch nicht, in wie engem Zusammenhang diese Schilderung mit der persönlichen Eigenart ihres Autors standen.' Albert Eulenburg, 'Sacher-Masoch', *Die Zukunft*, 3 (1901), pp. 197–201, p. 199.
- 132 Eulenburg, 'Sacher-Masoch', p. 200.
- 133 '[D]ie unverkennbare Minderwerthigkeit [*sic*] seines späteren, literarischen Schaffens.' Albert Eulenburg, *Sadismus und Masochismus* (Wiesbaden: Bergmann, 1902), p. 50.
- 134 '[D]em stofflichen Interesse ... das überhitzte Romanleser seiner Lehre von den sexuellen Perversitäten abgewannen.' Karl Kraus, 'Irrenhaus Österreich', *Die Fackel*, 6:166 (1904), pp. 1–21, p. 5.
- 135 '[E]in alberne[s] Roman-Medizinerwort.' Karl Kraus, 'Die Büchse der Pandora', *Die Fackel*, 7:182 (1905), pp. 1–18, p. 6.