Introduction: Submitting to liberty

She burnt, she lov'd the tyranny.
– John Keats, "Lamia", (1820)[1]

In 1933 Mario Praz argued that the literature of the nineteenth century was characterized by a fascination with "the mysterious bond between pleasure and suffering." Indeed, *The Romantic Agony* treats the peculiar "erotic sensibility" of nineteenth-century literature as its most salient feature. Seventy years later, the canon of British Romantic literature looks rather different, but the "sexual idiosyncrasies" Praz described still figure prominently in it.[2] Not only do critics speak of a masochistic impulse in the lives and works of figures such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and John Keats,[3] but many of the protagonists of the literature of the period seem to enjoy submission and suffering. Thus in William Hazlitt's *Liber Amoris* (1823), H asks his adored S, "How can I escape from you, when every new occasion, even your cruelty and scorn, brings out some new charm. Nay, your rejection of me, by the way in which you do it, is only a new link added to my chain."[4] Charlotte Smith, in her *Elegiac Sonnets* (1784), writes an ode in which the speaker "woo[s]" Despair by promising him "a willing victim, / Who seeks thine iron sway – and calls thee kind!"[5] The desire of these

[1] John Keats, "Lamia," in Keats, *Complete Poems*, ed. Jack Stillinger (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), 353; Part II, l. 81.

[2] Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, 2nd edn, trans. Angus Davidson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), xxi, xv, xv.

[3] W. Jackson Bate describes Coleridge's tendency, throughout his life, toward "apologetic self-abasement" (*Coleridge* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987], 2), and Richard Holmes, Coleridge's most recent biographer, speaks of "masochistic displacement" as typical of Coleridge (*Coleridge: Darker Reflections, 1804–1834* [New York: Pantheon, 1998], 40). Lionel Trilling remarks that "Keats's mind was profoundly engaged by the paradox of the literary genre of tragedy, which must always puzzle us because it seems to propose to the self a gratification in regarding its own extinction" (*Freud and the Crisis of Our Culture* [Boston: Beacon Press, 1955], 25).

[4] William Hazlitt, *Liber Amoris or The New Pygmalion*, intro. Michael Neve (London: Hogarth Press, 1985), 12–13.

[5] Charlotte Smith, "Ode to Despair," from Smith's novel *Emmeline* (1788), and reprinted in *Elegiac Sonnets* (*The Poems of Charlotte Smith*, ed. Stuart Curran [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993], 79). The logic

heroes and heroines of Romantic literature would seem to be precisely for the painful nonsatisfaction of desire: they are attracted most to those people who keep them in suspense, dominate them, and even humiliate them. Their lovers are *belles dames sans merci* and "Barbarous, unfeeling, unpitying" men whom they nevertheless not only find irresistible but actively idealize.[6]

Praz's study, which is largely descriptive, takes for granted the attractions of such "perversities."[7] Viewed historically, however, Praz's thesis raises a pressing question: how is it that a body of literature renowned for its articulation of new ideologies of equality could also be characterized by a fascination with willing submission? Why is it that a canonical touchstone such as William Wordsworth's "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads* (1802), which opens with an argument for the dignity of the common man, goes on to speak so longingly of the value of "real and substantial action and *suffering*"?[8] What attracted writers devoted to the idea of social progress and even revolution to representations of suspense and delay? Why should poets and novelists who highly valued artistic originality and social change also be drawn to medieval literary forms and the fixed hierarchies they embodied?

This book will show that it was precisely the failed advent of modernity – with its promise of increased economic and political power for everyone – that gave rise to these ambivalences and apparent contradictions. I argue that the Romantic agony turns on the aesthetic management of what one historian has called the "revolutions in rising frustrations."[9] On the one hand, industrialization made power and comfort in the form of commodities more available than ever before. On the other, the necessary limitations of personal means relative to such large-scale production taught that living in

of the poem is that despair is at least less painful than hope, but the poem's *frisson* arises from the speaker's active courtship of what she acknowledges as a "fatal power."

[6] The first phrase is of course a reference to Keats's poem; the second is from Mary Hays's *The Memoirs of Emma Courtney*, ed. Eleanor Ty (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 126.

[7] The word is Frank Kermode's, from his foreword to *The Romantic Agony*. He sums up Praz's work as a study of "the perversities of pleasure and pain" (Praz, *Romantic Agony*, v).

[8] William Wordsworth, "Preface," in Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads*, ed. R. L. Brett and A. R. Jones (New York: Methuen, 1963), 256, emphasis mine. While Wordsworth's primary concern is to distinguish the merely imitative passions of the poet from the lived experience of the subjects he treats, it is nevertheless striking that he so readily assumes that suffering – not only a painful but also a passive state – can be linked to "freedom and power" (256). In Wordsworth's poetics the suffering of another is the object of the poet's envy, the object of his desire. His aim is to "bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes" (256), and even to question the feasibility of this project would be to give way to "unmanly despair" (257).

[9] Colin Campbell, *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 38. Further references will be given parenthetically in the text.

an economy of abundance meant learning how *not* to have all that advertisers, merchants, and trendsetters proclaimed was essential for happiness. Rather than urge an ascetic renunciation of the allure of consumer culture, much of the writing of the early nineteenth century imagines a roundabout way to appreciate the pleasures this culture promised to all, but would fail to deliver to most: it showed that one could enjoy the idealization of objects of desire even while suffering from their unattainability or their ephemerality. Indeed, it showed that one could indulge in such idealization even while conscious of the essential mundanity of its object. Just as merchants urged consumers to titillate themselves with the thought of what they could not have, so many Romantic-era writers taught that wanting was its own reward, and should persist in spite of disappointment.

The attitude of these writers to consumerism proper was often ambivalent and sometimes even hostile; their aim was not to support the consumer economy but simply to provide affective paradigms that were appropriate to their times. Thus, for example, even though Joanna Baillie explicitly argues against the overvaluation of consumer goods, she unselfconsciously develops a theory of desire that makes use of current assumptions regarding consumer habits.[10] In the chapters that follow, each of the writers I examine engages the relation between desire and consumption in her or his own way: while Keats celebrates the pains of consumption, Lord Byron mocks his aristocratic contemporaries for their readiness to submit to the "rack of pleasures."[11] But in the writings of both, the dangers of desire are not only treated as a fact of life but are used as an opportunity for self-discovery and self-expression. In essence, much Romantic-era writing aestheticizes one of the primary contradictions of industrial culture, recasting it in the form of a thrilling, if also painful, private psychodrama. It turns imaginative idealization in the face of personal dissatisfaction into something interesting and compelling.

This response to the consumer revolution served other ends as well. For the complications surrounding economic power in a burgeoning industrial society were recapitulated at the theoretical level, in the domain of political ideology. Talk of reform and the rights of individuals, inspired by the French example, was marked by the same tension between promise and performance. From the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau to those of Hazlitt

[10] See Chapter 3.

[11] For a discussion of Keatsian consumption, see Chapter 5; Byron's phrase is from *Don Juan*, Canto XIV: "high life is oft a dreary void, / A rack of pleasures, where we must invent / A something wherewithal to be annoy'd" (Jerome McGann, ed., *Byron* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986], 813, ll. 625–7).

and later John Stuart Mill, liberal political theory would turn on the difficulty of providing for personal power and freedom – the rights of man – in collective forms of organization. It comes as little surprise that conservative writers, who feared that legal restraint might prove inadequate to the task of controlling the ambitions of Jacobinical individuals, espoused an ideology of self-imposed limitation on personal power; thus John Bowles argued that preventing luxury would make the English "orderly, tractable, and easily governed. Having such powerful restraints within, they will require fewer restraints from without."[12] But even radical writers argued that self-restraint was essential to effective government – they eliminated real kings only to internalize their function: "Emperor and King are but the lord lieutenants of conquered Souls – secondaries and vicegerents who govern not with their own right but with power delegated to them by our Avarice and appetites! Let us exert over our own hearts a virtuous despotism, and lead our own Passions in triumph, and then we shall want neither Monarch nor General."[13] Even when not framed in religious terms, reformist political theory at the turn of the century suggested that effective democratic governance could only be founded on the individual's willing internal renunciation of personal satisfaction in the name of ostensibly universal ideals. Thus for Hazlitt individuals were capable of altruism by virtue of their capacity to regard the future wellbeing of others as formally interchangeable with their own future wellbeing. In this way submission of the self to an internalized vision of the public welfare could serve as the purest form of power and liberty. Here again the aesthetic of pleasurable renunciation is brought into play: the characters of early nineteenth-century literature learn to enjoy and even exult in the internalization of conflict, and they learn to make self-subordination an occasion for personal development. At the same time, fictions of submission provided readers an opportunity to think through the costs and benefits of power hierarchies more generally.

By casting this frustrated, submissive desire in erotic terms, Romantic-era literature rendered the pleasure-in-pain aesthetic it espoused, if not "reasonable," at least comprehensible. There was, after all, literary precedent for the idea of suffering from love and even taking pleasure in that suffering. "Romantic," as I use the term in this book, is to be understood as a period

[12] John Bowles, *Thoughts on the Late General Election. As Demonstrative of the Progress of Jacobinism*, 2nd edn (London: 6. Woodfall, 1802), 33.

[13] S. T. Coleridge, *Six Lectures on Revealed Religion*, in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, 16 vols., vol. I, ed. Lewis Patton and Peter Mann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 228–9.

designation only, a name for the literature produced between the 1790s and the 1830s. But this study does suggest that the association of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century literature with the chivalrous eroticism of medieval romance is not simply a tired convention. For the name "Romantic" speaks not just to the continuities of literary history but also to the fact that much of the literature of the turn of the century effected the reinstatement of traditional social hierarchy as private erotic fantasy. Romantic-era literature turned a nostalgic eye to a set of literary conventions that rendered self-sacrifice and self-abasement significant, and used them to give meaning to the frustrations of desire that characterized so much of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century social life. Medieval romance provided a highly suitable template for representing and rendering aesthetic the affective challenges of modern society. Flamboyantly anachronistic, "Romantic" desire makes a spectacle, at once beautiful and absurd, of the deferral of the promises of modernization, promises posed by the enchanted world of consumerism and the discourses of political reform. During the twentieth century, much of the debate surrounding Romanticism centered on whether Romantic-era writers were culpably self-indulgent or laudably self-transcendent.[14] I would argue that "Romanticism" is precisely a technique for making self-sacrifice feel like self-indulgence.

Indeed, these fictions of self-sacrifice were so compelling that they often fared better in the early nineteenth-century art and literature market than the optimistic fictions of mastery that set themselves in deliberate competition with them. The latter, which embodied the promises of a modern political economy in a more or less straightforward fashion, were governed by an aesthetic logic of control and unlimited consumption, and rendered the fantasy of direct self-gratification in an ostensibly rational and reliable form. Thus the picturesque of the 1790s and its later, urban incarnation in the gardenesque deliberately set their face against the suspenseful, sublime pleasures of self-abnegation. But as we will see, even those writers who most strenuously supported fictions of mastery typically found themselves waging a losing battle: thus Baillie's play on the dangers of submissive eroticism met with a popular success never rivaled by her pendant piece on the virtues of the masterful and reliable pleasures of "picturesque" eroticism.

So popular were these accounts of eroticized submission that they can be found in all varieties of Romantic-era writing, whether by highbrow or popular authors, fiction or nonfiction writers, novelists or poets, women

[14] For examples of the former, consider the work of Irving Babbit and T. E. Hulme; for examples of the latter, Herbert Read, M. H. Abrams, and Harold Bloom.

or men. Letitia Elizabeth Landon explores the dynamics of erotic suffering with as much care as Keats; Caroline Lamb is as fascinated by the link between political and sexual submission as is Byron. Moreover, these concerns influenced all the major artistic modes of the period: they are at work not only in literature but also in painting, landscaping, and architecture. Thinkers as different as dramatist and dramatic theorist Baillie, essayist Charles Lamb, and painter John Constable explored the attractions of painful desire in both explicit and subtle ways. Some Romantic artists, as we will see, take desire and its relationship to political and economic ideologies and practices as their explicit subject. Thus, for instance, Baillie develops a theory of human desire that takes the popular fascination with consumer goods as its starting point, and Hazlitt has the narrator of his *Liber Amoris* delight in the radical political implications of his willing submission to a lower-class woman. But the political and economic bearings of submissive desire are just as often left implicit; Keats describes the exquisite pains of melancholy using metaphors of consumption rather than discussing the paradoxes of modern consumption practices outright.

Indeed, as we will see, the problem of the management of desire is not only of historical interest but is intimately bound up with the aesthetics of Romanticism itself. Techniques for managing desire played a central role in shaping the formal features of Romantic art, so that conceptions of art and desire became mutually sustaining. Thus Edmund Burke's sublime and Uvedale Price's picturesque both, in their different ways, understand aesthetic attractiveness in terms of a power struggle between the subject and his or her object of (aesthetic) desire. Similarly, in his late poetry Coleridge embraces allegory, which he regards as an artificial and disjunctive representational mode, as the best vehicle for describing the pains of suspenseful, unsatisfied desire. This book is an exploration of the political and economic origins and repercussions of the Romantic fascination with individual desire, but it is also a study of the varied and striking aesthetic forms to which this fascination gave rise.

1 DEFINITIONS AND DISCRIMINATIONS

As frequently as suspenseful, idealizing, and self-abnegating desire appears in Romantic literature, it is not treated in a systematic way or referred to by a single name. Frances Burney calls it "perverseness of spirit," Keats, "perplexed delight"; for Byron it is the "rack of pleasures," while for Hazlitt it

is simply "love."[15] It is important, then, to begin with an account of the typical features of this form of desire. First, it invokes the paradox of pleasure in pain; Romantic-era fictions of eroticized power relations not only presume the high cost of pleasure but also take for granted that the keenest pleasures are allied to pain.[16] This is not to say, however, that any and all pain is considered valuable. Pain becomes meaningful in the context of desire: it is the pain of unsatisfied desire that brings pleasure. This pain arises not simply from the absence of straightforward satisfaction but from the frustration and humiliation attendant upon nongratification. It is therefore felt most keenly in cases where gratification should have been possible. Although idealized by their adorers, Romantic-era objects of desire are usually, according to conventional standards, attainable: thus the protagonist of *Liber Amoris* longs for a girl who works as his servant, and the aristocratic hero of *The Wanderer* (1814) pines for a woman who appears to have neither money nor family connections. Like a commodity behind a pane of glass, the Romantic object of desire simultaneously makes a display of its availability and of its separateness. The mortification of finding oneself unable to possess it is a pain peculiar to a culture of abundance, a culture in which disappointment is common largely because expectations are high.

In many Romantic writings the humiliation attendant upon the failure to attain the object of desire is further heightened by suspense. The capacity of deferral to inflame desire is of course a common theme in love literature generally, but Romantic-era writers often take deferral to an extreme, so that it produces not only feelings of impatience but intense anxiety. As we will see, this anxiety and suspense are central to Romantic-era representations of love: lovers as different as the main couple in Burney's novel of manners *Camilla* (1796) and Baillie's love-tragedy *Count Basil* (1798) experience desire as indistinguishable from anxiety and suspense.[17]

[15] Frances Burney, in *Camilla*, in which she describes the perverseness of spirit that grafts desire on what is denied (*Camilla*, ed. Edward and Lillian Bloom [New York: Oxford University Press, 1983], 7); John Keats, in "Lamia," in which the central couple experience "unperplex'd delight" for only a short time (*Poems*, 349); Byron, in an account of the perversities of "high life" in *Don Juan* (*Byron* 813); William Hazlitt, in *Liber Amoris*, where the self-abasing character of the protagonist's affection is presented as the sign of his sincere devotion.

[16] This paradox is of course central to the classic psychoanalytic concept of masochism; thus Jean Laplanche describes "the pleasure of unpleasure," a situation in which, as Freud explains, "physical pain and feelings of distress" cease to be signals of danger and become "ends in themselves" (Jean Laplanche, *Life and Death in Psychoanalysis*, trans. Jeffrey Mehlman [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976], 103; Sigmund Freud, "The Economic Problem in Masochism," in *General Psychological Theory*, ed. Philip Rieff [New York: Macmillan, 1963], 190). The eroticized submission that fascinated Romantic-era artists focuses on emotional rather than physical pain.

[17] It is worth noting that suspense is also crucial in the novels of Sacher-Masoch: Gilles Deleuze contrasts the "quantitative reiteration" typical of de Sade's work with the "qualitative suspense" found in

The deferral of gratification is both the result of and the enabling condition for the lover's idealization of the object of desire. In Romantic-era writing desired people are often described in terms at once inflated and abstract: these "ideal objects" are perfect, one-of-a-kind, even divine, and allied with or represented as angels, fairies, goddesses or gods, and allegorical abstractions. At the same time, these women and men are also represented as something less than divine: in more or less realistic narratives, secondary characters remark on their imperfections; in fantastic narratives, there is something grossly sensual or even evil in the immortal, powerful, and beautiful beloved – the fairy is a snake from the waist down. This doubleness serves to highlight the fact that the idealization of the beloved is a deliberate, imaginative act on the part of the lover. The Romantic-era lover understands his or her frustration as an act of willing subordination to an ideal. This idealization of the beloved makes consummation impractical if not impossible. It also stimulates an ever-increasing self-abasement in the lover: as H tells S in *Liber Amoris*, since she is "divine," he is her "creature," her "slave."[18] To the true lover, maintaining the ideal status of the beloved is more important than ameliorating his or her own self-conception; indeed, the lover typically revels in the nonrequital of affection precisely because it can be read as further proof of the superiority of the beloved. Thus Burney's Camilla, painfully in love with Edgar Mandelbert, finds herself "honouring even his coldness" towards her.[19]

Given the importance of idealization in Romantic-era representations of desire, it is not surprising that imagination should also figure largely in those representations. Not only is much Romantic-era writing preoccupied with imagination *per se* but it also selfconsciously explores the relation between desire and that other product of imagination which is art.[20] Within their

Sacher-Masoch (Gilles Deleuze, "Coldness and Cruelty," in Deleuze, *Masochism* [New York: Zone Books, 1989], 134).

[18] Hazlitt, *Liber Amoris*, 8. [19] Burney, *Camilla*, 542.

[20] Interestingly, late nineteenth-century sexologist R. von Krafft-Ebing noted the importance of imagination for the masochists he studied, arguing that "the whole thing chiefly belongs to the realm of imagination" (*Psychopathia Sexualis*, trans. F. J. Rebman from the 12th German edn [New York: Physicians and Surgeons Book Company, 1926], 144). Krafft-Ebing argues that the "main root" of masochism is "the tendency of sexually hyperaesthetic natures to assimilate all impressions coming from the beloved person" (208) – a form of hypersensitivity that in the late eighteenth century would simply have been termed "sensibility." Of course, the psychoanalytic term itself has its roots in the aesthetic; Krafft-Ebing, who derived it from the name Sacher-Masoch, called that writer "the poet of Masochism" (132). Although his sense of disgust at the phenomenon often leads Krafft-Ebing to describe masochism as "unaesthetic," his awareness that it has its own aesthetic logic often reveals itself, as when he argues that "the 'poetry' of the symbolic act of subjection is not reached" in female masochism because quotidian exertions of male power are concerned with "solid advantages" rather than "display" (196). For Krafft-Ebing, and for most of his psychoanalytic

works Romantic-era writers often analogize the beloved and the art object, likening adored people to figures from romances, masques, poems, paintings, and statues. This analogy provides an opportunity for writers to comment upon the proper posture of both writer and reader before the artwork. Often, indeed, writers and readers are represented in Romantic-era writing as literally enthralled by art, an art perceived not as a craft but as a quasi-divine power, one that masters not only its consumer but also its producer. Thus Smith opens her *Elegiac Sonnets* with an ambivalent poem of thanks, in which the gift of the "partial Muse" is accompanied by pain: poetry is beautiful but it also "point[s] every pang" in the poet's melancholy heart.[21] Similarly, the speaker of Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" asks to be lifted and borne along by that "Spirit fierce" so as to produce a tone "Sweet though in sadness."[22] For all their idealizations, these are works that never forget the cost to the self of idealizing or submitting to another.

The logic of desire I have described here, with its emphasis on the painful, anxious deferral of gratification and the abasement of the self in the service of imaginative idealization, has, of course, important historical and literary precedents. As noted already, early nineteenth-century art draws on a rich literary tradition, from the romances of the seventeenth century back through Renaissance and medieval texts that celebrated an ideal

successors, "true" masochism is symbolic or representative; it is the world of power relations reproduced as poetry or drama. Deleuze notes that scenes in Sacher-Masoch's work replicate works of art or duplicate themselves in mirrors, and that the despotic lover is likened to statues and paintings (Deleuze, "Coldness and Cruelty," 33). These points of similarity between the late nineteenth-century paradigm of masochism and early nineteenth-century Romantic art speak both to the influence of Romanticism and to the common social pressures to which they were responding.

Working from a different angle, recent accounts of masochism by literary critics have often linked its "shattering of the human subject" to the experience of art generally (Leo Bersani, *The Freudian Body* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1986], 107). Thus Bersani ponders what it would mean to "speak of the esthetic as a perpetuation and elaboration of masochistic sexual tensions" (107), and Linda Williams considers the implications of reading in the manner of erotogenic masochism, in which one "offer[s] up oneself as a slave to the text" ("Reading and Submission: Feminine Masochism and Feminist Criticism," *New Formations* 7 [1989], 10). Paul Mann suggests that it is not the reader *per se* but the critic who is masochistic, her or his work being always derivative: "Whatever semblance of mastery one manages to project, and whatever critical distance one arrogates to oneself, writing entails orders of submission that cannot be reduced to operational, ideological, or linguistic protocols alone. The Something else to which one's discourse is always subjected, and which one seeks to control through myriad proxies, is in the end the master that can never be mastered" (*Masocriticism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), 24). For Mann, the only solution to this impasse is to embrace "masocriticism": to write essays that deliberately unravel in an effort to bring about the death of criticism itself.

[21] Smith, *Elegiac Sonnets*, 13.

[22] Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*, ed. Donald Reiman and Sharon Powers (New York: Norton, 1977), 223.

of service and self-sacrifice. There are, however, important distinctions – both formal and substantial – to be drawn between those older practices and Romantic-era representations of desire. Medieval mysticism, for instance, shares with early nineteenth-century fictions of submission a reliance on the conjunction of pleasure and pain. Thus the female mystics described so vividly by Caroline Walker Bynum deliberately heightened their own experience of the body – in forms both painful and pleasurable – as a way of consolidating their connection with the incarnate Christ.[23] They were thereby able to make the association of the female with the fleshly a source of spiritual authority. But whereas the pain they suffered was a form of *imitatio Christi*, the self-imposed suffering of Romantic heroes and heroines, as we will see, typically does not aim at an imitation of its idealized object but uses self-abasement as a way of articulating the individuality of the desiring subject. For the Romantic-era protagonist, moreover, it is the power and not the pathos of the object of desire that makes it compelling.

Medieval asceticism, too, provides a model for Romantic-era fictions of submission, though asceticism differs from them in fundamental ways. Unlike the Romantic lover, the ascetic aims to control or expunge desire rather than inflate it: "asceticism makes explicit its violence against desire *and* satisfaction. This violence extends beyond the *desire* to take in the *desirable* as well."[24] For this reason, as Karmen MacKendrick notes, "asceticism, of all the counterpleasures, is most spectacularly ill-suited to consumer culture," whereas, as we shall see, the eroticized submission of the Romantic era tends to mimic that culture.[25] The pains of asceticism, furthermore, are also usually self-inflicted, and the response to those pains is different for the ascetic and the Romantic:

> Though it often produces vivid images – one need only think of St. Teresa, virgin and sculptural inspiration – asceticism is not essentially imagistic in Masoch's frozen sense. That is, it does not set up and recur to scenes by moving from real to phantastic. Though certain ascetic *behaviors* are fetishistically repeated, they are repeated on the same plane, as acts. The ascetic is closer to Sade's proud sovereign, who embraces even his own pain without bending, than to Masoch's submissive protagonist, who demands to be humiliated and delights in flinching before the whip – even though humility is a constant quest for the religious ascetic.[26]

[23] See Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) and *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1992), especially chapters 4, 5, and 6.
[24] Karmen MacKendrick, *Counterpleasures* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), 78. [25] *Ibid.*, 71.
[26] *Ibid.*, 74.