One Hundred Years of Masochism

In 2008, a special issue of the interdisciplinary journal *New German Critique* focused on the question of masochism and its role in contemporary German culture. This issue included essays by leading scholars in the field, such as Thomas J. DuBois, who argued that masochism is a crucial concept for understanding the cultural and political dynamics of empire, particularly in the context of the construction of a German film narrative. DuBois noted that the ideological and psychological dynamics of empire, particularly its reorganization of class identities at the colonial periphery, depended on figurations of masochism. Drawing on recent psychoanalytic theory to define masochism in terms of the concept of the "naive masochist," DuBois argued that the masochistic dynamics of empire are characterized by a form of submission that is both passive and active, involving both the acceptance of domination and the active participation in the construction of a masochistic subject.

This issue also included essays by other leading scholars, such as Albrecht Becker, who argued that masochism is a key concept for understanding the cultural and political dynamics of empire, particularly in the context of the construction of a German film narrative. Becker noted that the ideological and psychological dynamics of empire, particularly its reorganization of class identities at the colonial periphery, depended on figurations of masochism. Drawing on recent psychoanalytic theory to define masochism in terms of the concept of the "naive masochist," Becker argued that the masochistic dynamics of empire are characterized by a form of submission that is both passive and active, involving both the acceptance of domination and the active participation in the construction of a masochistic subject.

In conclusion, the special issue of *New German Critique* on masochism and contemporary German culture demonstrated that masochism is a crucial concept for understanding the cultural and political dynamics of empire, particularly in the context of the construction of a German film narrative. The essays by DuBois and Becker, among others, demonstrated that the ideological and psychological dynamics of empire, particularly its reorganization of class identities at the colonial periphery, depended on figurations of masochism. Drawing on recent psychoanalytic theory to define masochism in terms of the concept of the "naive masochist," DuBois and Becker argued that the masochistic dynamics of empire are characterized by a form of submission that is both passive and active, involving both the acceptance of domination and the active participation in the construction of a masochistic subject.