

## Abstract

This bachelor thesis is a theoretical analysis of the TV series *Hannibal*, which was broadcasted on American television NBC from 2013 to 2015. *Hannibal* has gained a dedicated fandom coming up with various interpretations and theories, but it also got the attention of academic scholars from various disciplines. It has become popular for its queer-coded characters, including the main characters Hannibal and Will, despite the fact, that their relationship had never been explicitly depicted as romantic or sexual. Later in the story, the respected psychiatrist Hannibal Lecter is revealed as a serial killer and a cannibal. Hannibal could be considered a stereotypical sadistic psychopath, who only sees his victims as pigs. Nevertheless, I will analyse his relationship with Will through the prism of the masochistic world, and I will argue why.

The aim of this paper is not creating a psychological profile either of Hannibal or Will, nor answering the question whether one of them is a sadist or a masochist. Instead, I am focusing on the development of the relationship dynamics between Will and Hannibal, while framing it within masochistic narrative and formal structure and queer theories. My primary starting point will be Deleuze's critique of complementary vision of sadomasochism by psychoanalysis and his extensive identification of masochistic aesthetics in Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's oeuvre. For queer reading of masochism, I will turn to articles which revised masochism using latter work of Deleuze and Guattari. The TV series inspired many scholars from various academic fields, who contributed to the discussion with their interesting articles. However, as far as my knowledge, *Hannibal* has not been read through masochism yet. This path has the potential to unfold new nuances of the dynamics between the main characters.

By confronting this theory with an audiovisual work, I will also attempt to revise the theory. The aim of my thesis will be to answer the question of whether masochistic dynamics can function in the *Hannibal* series on their own, outside the sadomasochistic unity, and how the series can deal with the heteronormativity of the narrative and formal structure of masochism.