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## Kraepelin and the ‘urnings’: male homosexuality in psychiatric discourse

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*The discourse on male homosexuality – whether it deserved punishment or possible therapies for homosexuals – was significantly shaped by the physician Magnus Hirschfeld between 1900 and 1933. He fought passionately against §175 of the Penal Code (Reichsstrafgesetzbuch), which made homosexual acts between men punishable by law. Initially, Emil Kraepelin, the doyen of German psychiatry, and his students did not join in this discourse and only gradually developed their own ideas about homosexuality. The radicalization of German physicians in World War I led to a complete break between Hirschfeld and Kraepelinian psychiatry. But instead of developing his own theoretical model, Kraepelin adopted the arguments of his rival Alfred Hoche, who regarded homosexuality as a disease contracted through ‘seduction’. Consequently, Kraepelin contributed to what, like the Nazis, he called ‘popular sentiment’, but neither he nor his followers influenced research on the aetiology and spread of homosexuality, and Kraepelin left no legacy in this field.*

**Keywords:** *Emil Kraepelin; homosexuality; Magnus Hirschfeld; National Socialism; racial hygiene*

### **The eclipse of sexology in Kraepelin’s research**

On 29 January 1918, Emil Kraepelin (1856–1926) published an essay on ‘sexual confusions’ in the *Münchener medizinische Wochenschrift*. His research had been conducted under the auspices of the Munich Physicians’ Association and its Commission on the Preservation and Enhancement of National Vigour (Kraepelin, 1918a). The essay dealt mainly with male homosexuality, discussing the studies of Berlin’s pioneer campaigner for homosexual emancipation Magnus Hirschfeld (1868–1935) and drawing important and

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far-reaching conclusions. Kraepelin argued that homosexuality had to be fought prophylactically and the age of consent raised to protect young people from homosexuals (Kraepelin, 1918*a*: 120).

The struggle against sexual confusions will have to work primarily against masturbation, including and especially mutual masturbation. This can be achieved through education, a hardening and toughening of the will through gymnastics, checks on premature sexual stimulation, avoiding seduction, and careful sex education at the right time. Containing homosexuality thus serves not only to foster comradely relations between the two sexes and to promote early marriage, but also to keep the seduction of young people at bay and to eradicate male prostitution.

Kraepelin called for a ban on every form of information about homosexual intercourse that did not condemn it.

This implied nothing less than radical censorship and a rejection of the movement for homosexual emancipation. Kraepelin's aim was to enhance the growth of the German population, and his article indicates a radical attempt to draw a clear line between 'German psychiatry' and the 'homosexual emancipation movement'. Although Kraepelin's utopian vision should be seen in the context of intellectual currents and conditions of the time, we can safely assume that the doyen of German psychiatry had reason to distance himself especially strongly from Hirschfeld and his ideas. In fact, Kraepelin's statements of January 1918 represent a complete change in the views he held before World War I.

### **When and why the debate began**

Until about 1900, the discourse on homosexuality was dominated by forensic doctors and psychiatrists who were completely convinced of the pathological character of 'contrary sexual feeling' (Krafft-Ebing, 1901*a*: 309). The aetiology and therapeutic possibilities remained unclear. In their differentiation between healthy heterosexuals and 'pathological contrary sexuals', researchers referred to the studies of the jurist Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825–95), who made no secret of his own homosexual disposition and who published a number of works, from the 1860s onwards (Ulrichs, 1994). Ulrichs gave homosexuals the name 'urnings', referring to the god Uranus of ancient Greek mythology (Numantius, Numa [Ulrichs], 1864: 1, 4–5).<sup>1</sup> The writer Karl Maria Kertbeny (1824–82) coined the term homosexuality in 1869, but it did not enter medical discourse until 1900 (Lautmann, 1993: 15).

The debate was transformed by the work of the Berlin physician Hirschfeld. In 1897, with like-minded advocates, he founded the 'scientific-humanitarian committee' which sought to amend the part of the Penal Code dealing with sexual matters, in particular the part (§175) that criminalized homosexual intercourse. Hirschfeld hoped that scientific arguments would change how

physicians, the public and lawmakers viewed homosexuality. Psychiatrists and criminologists initially rejected his ideas. But this prejudice soon made way for a deeper examination of Hirschfeld's research, which involved extensive observations on the development of homosexuality. Unlike his colleagues, Hirschfeld did not examine patients in insane asylums or individuals who defined themselves as being 'sick'. Instead, he carried out broad surveys using a standardized 'psychobiological questionnaire' (*psychobiologischer Fragebogen*) among students and metal-workers in Berlin (Hirschfeld, 1899). He argued that male homosexuals should be regarded as 'sexual intermediate stages' as they had physiological and psychological traits recognizably characteristic of the opposite sex (Herzer, 2001: 105–7). Hirschfeld asserted that homosexuality was congenital, and that its punishment was therefore unjustifiable. At the turn of the century, his broad and – by the standards of the time – scientifically objective studies enabled him to convince the two psychiatrists most interested in sexual psychology, Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840–1902) and Paul Näcke (1851–1913); see Krafft-Ebing (1901*b*: 5); Näcke (1903/04: 312).

Friends and students of Kraepelin soon addressed Hirschfeld's theses. First, Gustav Aschaffenburg (1866–1944), one of Kraepelin's assistants and a key figure in the newly emerging field of criminal psychology, published an article in the first volume of *Monatsschrift für Kriminalpsychologie und Strafrechtsreform* (Aschaffenburg, 1904), a journal that he had founded. Aschaffenburg did not so much dispute Hirschfeld's figures as question his positing a constitutional disposition for homosexuality; at the same time, he conceded that Hirschfeld's methods were scientific (Aschaffenburg, 1904: 124). Kraepelin's assistants Karl Wilmanns (1873–1946) and Robert Gaupp (1870–1953) even signed Hirschfeld's petition to abolish §175 – probably reflecting the views of their more reticent teacher (Herzer, 2005: 30, 44). A series of debates, often involving Kraepelin's favourite student of eugenics, Ernst Rüdin (1874–1952), took place in the journal *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie*. For example, Rüdin (1904: 106–8) declared that Hirschfeld's attempts to depathologize homosexuality were unscientific and even said that homosexuals always damaged their 'race', whether by refusing to reproduce or, if they did, by passing on their sexual disposition to their children. But at the same time, Rüdin (p. 108) explained: 'We are in complete agreement with them when they demand the abolition of §175. It is useless and cruel and breeds blackmail.'

But even in this period (up to 1914), the same journal also published theories about homosexuality that, after 1918, would be adopted by Kraepelin. Otto Ammon (1879–1942), a doctor and self-appointed specialist in race anthropology, asserted that homosexuality was the product of modern urban life and masturbation. He added that it could be prevented by sports, 'respect for modesty' and natural living (Ammon, 1909: 651–3).

### Psychiatry and sexology

As early as 1883 Kraepelin had briefly commented on 'contrary sexual feeling', classifying it as an expression of a degeneration (Kraepelin, 1883: 127). In the 6th edition of *Psychiatrie*, he thought homosexuality was a disease (Kraepelin, 1899: 223). And by the 8th edition, he had come to view homosexuality as a 'disturbance' based on 'degeneration' (Kraepelin, 1908: 403). In his remarks on the excesses of human sexual life, Kraepelin (1908: 154) emphasized the role of masturbation and the value of some psychoanalytic assessments. He found support for his views in the work of the neurologist Leopold Löwenfeld (1847–1924), whom Hirschfeld's adherents also admired (Bloch, 1908: 107; Burgmair, 2000: 141). Apparently, Kraepelin did not think male homosexuals should be punished. But adopting the terminology of Carl Westphal (1833–90), he always spoke of 'contrary sexual feeling', whereas his students generally used the term 'homosexuality', thus accepting the discursive norm laid down by Hirschfeld. There was only one personal encounter between Hirschfeld and Kraepelin: in 1906 they met coincidentally at an anti-alcoholism conference in Berlin (Burgmair, Engstrom and Weber, 2006: 69).

Thus, until World War I, several members of Kraepelin's school of German psychiatry took the view that homosexuality was a sign of degeneration and possibly a morbid condition, but also that it posed so little danger and was so unimportant that neither punishment nor a deeper analysis of its aetiology seemed necessary. At the same time, 'homosexual coitus' was deployed as an argument in debates on penal code reform, in an attempt to introduce the concept of 'diminished responsibility'. This was an important demand that united sexual reformers and clinically experienced criminal psychologists (Engstrom, 2000: 84; see also Weygandt, 1910: 146).

However, some of those involved in German psychiatry took a very different stance. Kraepelin's strongest critic, Alfred Hoche (1865–1943), and especially Hoche's student, Oswald Bumke (1877–1950), held more radical views. In 1896 Hoche had already spoken out against the decriminalization of homosexuality, which in his view was caused by seduction and masturbation (Hoche, 1896: 61). He emphasized the danger inherent, for example, in dormitories in boarding schools; he was probably remembering his own youth (Hoche, 1934*b*: 69, 77).<sup>2</sup> Bumke also took part in the debates on homosexuality, and in 1904, just as the first discussions in the *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie* appeared, he wrote:

Every alcoholic, every morphinist tries to excuse his lack of resistance by accusing as high a percentage as possible of his acquaintances of the same weakness, thereby merely using the same principle of extenuation that is familiar to every child caught at mischief. (Bumke, 1904: 2333)

Bumke also noted that a homosexual disposition alone did not incline one to practise 'pederasty', which instead involved a degree of 'aesthetic and

ethical numbing'. He also called for Hirschfeld's exclusion from the medical discussion.

The question must therefore be asked: what lasting effects did World War I have on Kraepelin – effects that made him distance himself so completely from his own students who were open to emancipated ideas, and instead adopt the views of his antagonists, Hoche and Bumke? Advocates of racial hygiene initially welcomed the outbreak of World War I. Much earlier, Wilhelm Schallmayer (1857–1919), for example, had hoped that a call to arms would eliminate inferior elements of the German populace (Schallmayer, 1908). But Schallmayer and his colleagues had expected a short war, not the slaughter of trench warfare that was occurring on all fronts by 1915.

### **The consequences of trench warfare**

The tremendous losses of soldiers on the Western front (Ypers) led to the first change in Kraepelin's mood. In 1915 he wrote in the 8th edition of *Psychiatrie* that homosexuals were emotionally degenerate, barely amenable to therapy, and a serious danger to the German people (Kraepelin, 1915: 1961, 1965). To distinguish between heterosexuals and homosexuals, however, Kraepelin used Hirschfeld's language of 'intermediate stages' (p. 1939). He went on to say that the seduction of urban youth had to be prevented; the most one should accord to homosexuals was pity (p. 1971).

With these remarks, Kraepelin anticipated the volte-face in his and his followers' views on the classification of homosexuals. Nevertheless, the influence of Hirschfeld's work was obvious. Even his antagonists had to use the terms he chose when they wanted to confront him on his own grounds. Kraepelin sharpened his tone and stance towards homosexuals after the German defeat in the autumn of 1918: 'For Kraepelin, a whole sociocultural and political world collapsed with the German defeat in 1918 and the end of the monarchy. His science could not remain untouched by this.' (Engstrom, 2000: 85).

The same was true for many of Kraepelin's students and friends. In 1918 Schallmayer compared the situation in Germany with the decline of Ancient Greece and blamed homosexuality for the decay of both (Schallmayer, 1918: 216). And, he argued that because homosexuality played such a decisive role in the internal breakdown of the body politic, the punishment of homosexuality must be made more severe (p. 359). Kraepelin's former employee Mathilde von Kemnitz (1877–1966) warned against 'seduction', which invariably led to 'aberrations of the sex drive'. (Kemnitz, 1923: 117–19). Both Max Isserlin (1879–1941) and Robert Gaupp feared the 'organized perversion' of German youth by sexual-reform concepts (Gaupp, 1919: 7; Isserlin, 1920). Kraepelin, in contrast, concentrated on refuting Hirschfeld. After Hirschfeld appeared in the film *Anders als die Andern* (Different from the Others) in 1919, stressing the harmlessness of homosexuality and

calling for its depathologization, Kraepelin accused Hirschfeld of behaviour unworthy of his profession (Weber and Burgmair, 1997: 12). When the Physicians Disciplinary Committee of the province of Brandenburg and the City District of Berlin commissioned Kraepelin to analyse the film in 1921, he judged it to be 'dishonest' and 'shameless', and it cast homosexuality in much too positive a light (Weber and Burgmair, 1997: 13–15; see also Steakley, 1996). At the same time, Kraepelin collaborated with the Bavarian Ministry of Culture, lecturing educators and physicians about the dangers posed by homosexuals (Weber and Burgmair, 1997: 17).

Kraepelin now adopted the position that, before World War I, had been advocated by Hoche and Bumke. Instead of arguing scientifically, he expressed prejudices taken from the repertoire of popular sentiment. This radicalization of his views was a consequence not just of the war, but also of Hirschfeld's apparent triumph in the debate. Hirschfeld (1918) made only a brief attempt to reconcile his views and Kraepelin's. He must have recognized the hopelessness of the attempt, as German psychiatrists were now hostile towards him. While most of the psychiatrists who taught at universities were drifting further to the right on the political spectrum, Hirschfeld was evolving into a pioneer of socialist sexual reform. And the arguments he advanced on the congenitality of homosexuality also seemed to be gaining ground. For example, the director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Biology, Richard B. Goldschmidt (1878–1958), thought his experiments with animals in 1916 had proved that the aetiology of homosexuality was a product of congenital intermediate disposition (Goldschmidt, 1916/18: 8). And a little later, after extensive animal experiments, the Austrian physiologist Eugen Steinach (1861–1944) claimed that he could correct the endogenous disposition to homosexuality by a testicle transplant (Steinach, 1920).<sup>3</sup> Hirschfeld seized upon these ideas with enthusiasm, and felt he was triumphing over his psychiatric detractors, but this euphoria was short-lived. Just a year later, the new theories were subjected to massive criticism which would finally – in 1925–26 – culminate in the refutation of the so-called 'Steinach-Hirschfeld doctrine' (Bab, 1920: 9).<sup>4</sup> As a consequence, Kraepelin seems to have lost interest in any further engagement with Hirschfeld's ideas. Instead, he traced Hirschfeld's concept of homosexual desire back to his Jewish religion and 'race':

A preponderant influence of the Jewish spirit on German science, as is unfortunately wielded ever more intensely, appeared to me to be a very serious danger that should be countered above all by a deliberate fostering of the outstanding gifts of the German race. (Kraepelin, 2000: 43)<sup>5</sup>

This dream of fostering German science came to fruition in the development of the Deutsche Forschungsanstalt für Psychiatrie (DFA; German Research Institute for Psychiatry) in Munich (Kraepelin, 1918*b*). But soon, and in spite of the considerable influence of the DFA, almost nothing of Kraepelin's views on homosexuality infused contemporary psychiatric research.

### Kraepelin's heirs and homosexuality

In the 9th edition of Kraepelin's *Psychiatrie*, revised by Kraepelin's last assistant Johannes Lange (1891–1938), homosexuality was discussed only in passing. The book asserted that this sex drive begins early, but results from seduction (Lange, 1927: 564). Lange, who assumed Kraepelin's legacy in the DFA, found himself confronted with the fact that the term his mentor used, 'degeneration', was undergoing an increasing revival in the 1920s. Consequently, an extensive discussion of same-sex sexuality that arose on the foundations of a vaguely defined theory of 'degeneration' seemed counterproductive. At the same time, Lange had his own ideas on the aetiology of homosexuality. He conducted research on twins in order to explore the endogeneity of psychopathologies. In his influential study *Verbrechen als Schicksal*, he called homosexuality an exacerbating expression of criminal disposition (Lange, 1929: 67, 75). The contribution of seduction played no role here. And as early as 1923 Rüdin, Kraepelin's heir in the field of racial hygiene, had concluded from the work of Goldschmidt that homosexuality was congenital (Rüdin, 1923: 472).

Both Lange and Rüdin wanted to legalize the prophylactic sterilization of both dangerous and mentally ill individuals. The possibility of adults seducing children ran counter to this goal. For if seduction were really a possible cause of homosexuality, and as frequent as Kraepelin and Bumke asserted, then even a broad sterilization campaign could not change this. Lange rejected outright the suggestion that prophylactic castration could be used to destroy the sex drive – a view that he believed was unproven and unfounded.<sup>6</sup> But by rejecting or ignoring Hirschfeld's sexual reform movement, Kraepelin's heirs remained faithful to their teacher. Their lack of interest in the complex themes of homosexuality in the 1920s was probably due to the fact that, during the 1920s, they only gradually and reluctantly came to accept the ideas of Ernst Kretschmer (1888–1964). In his book *Körperbau und Charakter*, first published in 1921, Kretschmer (1940: v) construed a differential diagnosis between manic depression (endomorphs) and schizophrenia (ectomorphs and aesthenics) on the basis of physical constitution. He posited an affinity between homosexuality and schizophrenia and associated them with a tendency to the aesthenic body type: 'We often find among them and their kin homosexual tendencies and, in addition, even without a stronger sexual drive, a contrary-sex disposition in emotional life, men-women and womanish men.' (p. 94). Kretschmer came to this conclusion after finding a correlation between schizophrenia, the aesthenic (ectomorphic) body type and malfunctions of the gonads (p. 93). In his view, this corresponded with 'infantile emotional attitudes' and an 'emotional fixation on the mother' (p. 95). Kretschmer thereby skilfully combined biological and psychological patterns of categorization that, overall, implied the endogeneity of homosexuality and made the seduction



hypothesis unlikely. A broader discussion of the potentially negative role of mothers aroused little interest among racial hygienists. During the 1920s, Kretschmer's ideas captured the imaginations of forensic biologists, physicians, anthropologists and philosophers. His popularity quickly surpassed that of the Kraepelinians, who showed little inclination to welcome Kretschmer into their fold. In 1923 he had delivered a paper to the *Ärztliche Gesellschaft für Sexualwissenschaft und Eugenik* – an organization dominated by Hirschfeld – stressing the similarities between his and Hirschfeld's oeuvre (Hirschfeld, 1923: 5; Kretschmer, 1921). It was not until the 1930 debates on reforming the criminal code that Kraepelin's followers and antagonists again took a public stand on homosexuality.

### **The debate on homosexuality in 1930**

At the request of the penologist and Reichstag delegate Otto Kahl, several prominent psychiatrists stated their views on homosexuality in the *Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift* in 1930. A reform bill was to be discussed by the Reichstag's Penal Code Committee; it was proposed that simple homosexuality between adults should be decriminalized, but provisions on the 'protection of minors' should be tightened up. The Berlin professor Karl Bonhoeffer (1868–1948) initially rejected the hypothesis of homosexuality's endogeneity, claiming that homosexuals were psychopaths who became homosexual due to 'some kind of psychological constellative situations or other' (Bonhoeffer, 1930). He said that §175 was not particularly effective, but useful as a deterrent, and that protecting minors should take precedence (Bonhoeffer, 1930). Gaupp (1930: 87) wrote that he did not want to see private sexual matters included in the Penal Code, but agreed that protecting children must be given top priority. Like other contributors, he explicitly refuted Hirschfeld's views (Gaupp, 1930: 88). Hoche rejected the homosexuals' 'mushy apologetic literature', but favoured some liberalization of the Penal Code (Hoche, 1930). Bumke (1930a) followed his mentor Hoche in completely rejecting Hirschfeld, but like Hoche conceded that the existing law was not sensible. Bumke hoped in particular that a reform would impose a harsher penalty for 'seduction'. In another article, he stressed that he would not treat homosexuals who wanted to be cured (Bumke, 1930b: 50). Two years later, Bumke identified homosexuality as 'one of the gravest signs of degeneration ... that we encounter with great regularity among the symptoms of a declining culture'.<sup>7</sup>

If Kraepelin had still been alive at this time, he would have interpreted these statements as confirmation of his own work. Homosexuality had been the only area in which he and his opponents (Hoche, Bumke) had worked together, although their agreement was based more on prejudice than on the results of scientific research – a fact that neither Kraepelin nor his admirers and opponents realized.

German university psychiatrists were unwarranted in their fear that the Coalition Government – whose parties quarrelled among themselves – could, in a last burst of strength, pass a reform of the Penal Code on sexual matters. For in the final stages of the Weimar Republic, in an era of emergency government and rule by decree, such ideas were no longer on the parliamentary agenda.

### **National Socialism, homosexuality and Kraepelin's legacy**

After the National Socialists came to power in 1933, the law on homosexuals was revised, but now as a crackdown intended to prevent the 'seduction of minors'. The revision saw the principles formulated by Kraepelin after 1915–18, and by his disciplinary adversaries, adopted into the Penal Code. Fortunately, as explained below, the National Socialists were too arrogant to accept that their understanding of homosexual life had been developed by 'researchers' other than themselves, so Kraepelin's legacy was adopted by the National Socialist government without recognizing him by name. It was easy to ignore Kraepelin because his supporters did not emphasize this aspect of his work; also the spectre of Germany's youth being 'seduced' had been common currency among anti-Semites and 'youth protectors' since the second half of the nineteenth century.

Although the impact of the German scientific community on law enforcement took on strong eugenic overtones, the case of homosexuality was something of an exception. Being homosexual was no reason for sterilization, as mentioned in the law on preventing congenitally ill offspring (*Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses* or *GVN*), passed in 1933. Hermann F. Hoffmann (1891–1944), a psychiatrist teaching in Tübingen and an admirer of Kraepelin, justified this by claiming that insufficient research had been done on the relationship between homosexuality and heredity, and without a clear understanding of the aetiology of homosexuality, sterilization might be useless (Hoffmann, 1934: 205). Overall, Kraepelin's supporters believed that the *GVN* posthumously crowned his life's work. Gaupp (1941: 257) wrote that the 'Kraepelinian form groups' (*Kraepelinsche Formenkreise*) of mental illnesses were the foundation of the new legislation.

The law against habitual criminality also mentioned castrating only recidivist paedophiles, not homosexuals. But in 1935 provision was made for homosexuals to be 'voluntarily castrated' if they were deemed to be aware of their condition and in control of their sexuality. This established a legal distinction between homosexual men and 'youth-endangering' paedophiles – a distinction that contradicted Kraepelin's ideas and hopes after 1918.

The general view that homosexuals were seducers of young people was articulated outside scientific discourse by, among others, the all-powerful SS Leader and police chief, Heinrich Himmler. He strongly promoted the seduction hypothesis, not only in his 'secret speech' in Bad Tölz in June 1937

(Smith and Peterson, 1974: 93–104), but also on the radio.<sup>8</sup> Himmler wanted to resocialize minors who had been seduced – he called them ‘streetwalking lads’ – and at the same time to conduct a campaign against what he regarded as an overly intense, homoerotic ‘maleness’ within the SS (Smith and Peterson, 1974: 99, 103). It would seem that, whatever other influence Kraepelin’s work had on psychiatry as practised in National Socialist Germany, at least his views on homosexuality were not directly put into political practice. For those who went to salvage Kraepelin’s legacy, in this case his ‘non-legacy’ will likely prove more useful than his outright legacy.

Kraepelin’s views on homosexuality had little impact on the practice of psychiatric research. There was apparently a gap between his public pronouncements and pseudo-scientific prejudice against homosexuals on the one hand, and his research on homosexuality on the other. After Kraepelin died, his research was quickly overtaken and his students strayed from their mentor’s line. Aschaffenburg and Lange willingly contributed to the *Handbuch der gerichtlichen Psychiatrie* (Handbook of Forensic Psychiatry), compiled by Hoche. Aschaffenburg (1934: 87–8) mentions seduction only briefly and considers the endogeneity or exogeneity of homosexuality to be of secondary importance, although this issue had been highly significant in the dispute with Hirschfeld (who had long since been driven into exile). Hoche (1934a: 338) used the term ‘contrary sexual feeling’, thus shifting the discourse back to Hirschfeld’s time. Disposition seemed to him merely an expression of deeper psychopathology, and he no longer spoke of seduction as a prominent reason to prosecute. In his own textbook on psychiatry, Lange accorded only indirect recognition to Kraepelin and his ideas about homosexuality. Lange (1936: 237) maintained that every person was fundamentally bisexual, a view that echoed Hirschfeld’s theories. Lange also used the term ‘homosexuality’ rather than Hoche’s formulation ‘contrary sexual feeling’. He mostly evaded the question of homosexuality’s endogeneity or exogeneity, but stressed the existence of ‘dispositionally same-sex-oriented men’ (p. 238). He thought such men displayed physiological similarities to women and concluded that they threatened to seduce young people:

The fight against homosexuality is initially a prophylactic *fight*; in particular, the seduction of young people must be combated by all means. In addition, the onanistic tendencies of psychopaths with unclear aims must be guided, precisely because all sorts of abnormal drives can take root in masturbatory fantasies. (p. 238; original italics)

After Lange died in Breslau on 11 August 1938, Bumke’s favourite student August Bostroem (1886–1944) became the editor of Lange’s extremely successful textbook on psychiatry. Bostroem did not alter Lange’s basic assessments, but did extend the discussion of homosexuality, remarking on

issues of diminished responsibility in court proceedings and the possibility of therapeutic castration (Bostroem, 1941: 244–5). After 1933, Rüdin's student Theobald Lang (1898–1957) was a prominent researcher on aetiology. He openly professed his agreement with Goldschmidt's ideas on homosexuality, which Hirschfeld had previously used as confirmation of his own work (Lang, 1936: 713). As a result, Lang assumed the endogeneity of homosexuality; in his studies, seduction played no part. Instead, after years of investigation he arrived at conclusions diametrically opposed to Rüdin's and Kraepelin's. He believed that the persecution of homosexuals effectively forced them into deleterious marriages that were racially unhygienic: 'Perhaps a humane approach to pitiable abnormals here would bring a certain reward in the racial-hygienic area' (Lang, 1939: 412).

Nor did Lange's colleagues, Rudolf Lemke (1906–57) and Hans Bürger-Prinz (1904–78), enter into the seduction debate to the extent that Kraepelin had demanded. Such discussions remained the province of forensic biology, located between jurisprudence and medicine, where experts were constrained by the Penal Code and hoped to support their elucidations with psychiatric diagnoses (Mildenberger, 2002: 260–5). But the forensic biologists themselves had to concede that their judgements, based as they were on 'objective scientific methods', were wrong in about 25% of the cases (Schiedt, 1936: 68). In addition, the staff of bioforensic research facilities preferred to use Kretschmer's body-type teaching, rather than Kraepelin's complicated 'form groups' (Mildenberger, 2002: 262–3). Only one academic racial hygienist took Schallmayer's ideas about the degeneration of the German nation and the analogous decay of the ancient Hellenic world seriously, and he also picked up on Kraepelin's ideas about seduction: Lothar Gottlieb Tiralá (1886–1974), who worked in Munich from 1933 to 1936. He had obtained his position solely through political cronyism and would lose it again in 1936 because of his incompetence. But in his book *Rasse, Geist und Seele* (Tiralá, 1935: 62–3), he reiterated Schallmayer's and Kraepelin's assessments, without characterizing them as such. Instead, he presented Kraepelin's ideas as his own. Initially he mixed these ideas with a crude anti-Semitism by attributing the role of seducer to the Jews. He was probably thinking of Hirschfeld, whom the Nazi party periodicals sometimes presented as a prime example of a seducer (Rodenfels, 1939: 19). However, his remarks were criticized; for example, Julius Bauer (1887–1979), the critic of National Socialist racial hygiene who taught in Vienna, wrote: 'The racial doctrines of people such as H. Günther<sup>9</sup> or L. Tiralá cannot in any way claim to be scientifically grounded.' (Bauer, 1935: 634). When Tiralá's university career ended in 1936, the ideas he professed were thoroughly discredited and so, indirectly, Kraepelin's ideas were dropped from the medical debate on homosexuality.

### **No way back for Kraepelin in sexology**

After 1945, when Bürger-Prinz and his colleague Hans Giese (1920–70) set out to inaugurate a new sexual reform movement, they avoided any direct reference to Kraepelin. Even after the psychiatrist Detlev von Zerssen (1965, 1966) banished Ernst Kretschmer's body-type theory from scientific discourse in the mid-1960s, a reorientation of sex research towards Kraepelin's ideas was no longer possible. His research, which had evolved in confrontation with Hirschfeld (whose views had likewise long since been abandoned) was regarded as outmoded and too ideological. It remained for historical research at the end of the twentieth century to identify and explain the different concepts of these physicians in their contemporary context (Weber and Burgmair, 1997).

We note in conclusion that until 1914–15 Kraepelin's assessment of homosexuality was remarkably progressive and that, together with his students, he was contributing to a reformulation of the Penal Code and of psychiatric research in order to provide a better explanation for sexuality. His pessimistic re-orientation after the war and his subsequent move to negative eugenics brought this development to an end. If Kraepelin had brought the objective scientific methodology that he always demanded of himself and others to bear on his own psychosexual studies, he might have achieved lasting significance in this field as well as in clinical psychiatry. Instead, within his own lifetime he found himself on the defensive and his name disappeared from the discourse on homosexuality soon after his death. The legacy of Kraepelin's theories on homosexuality remained a blank slate.

### **Acknowledgement**

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### **Notes**

1. For more information on Ulrichs, see: Kennedy, 2001; Sigusch, 2000.
2. For further details, see Mildenerger, 2005*b*.
3. On the history and consequences of this research, see Sengoopta, 1998: 461–5.
4. On the history of the Steinach debate, see Mildenerger, 2002.
5. Kraepelin wrote this in 1921, but it was not published until 2000.
6. On this point, see the the life and work of Gustav Boeters: Mildenerger, 2005*a*. Boeter's eugenic phantasies were articulated in: Boeters, 1926; Lange, 1934.
7. Oswald Bumke to Julius Lehmanns, 15 Oct. 1932, cited in Bumke, 1952: 165.
8. Radio address on the work of the German police, given by Himmler at the time of the 'Tages der deutschen Polizei 1937' on 15 January 1937; see Volz, 1938: 238.
9. Professor Hans F. K. Günther, who used methods similar to Tirala's.

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