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Beyond Caligula. The reflection on adding pornographic scenes to nonpornographic films in post-production

Introduction

The representations of the sexuality in pornography have been legitimized as academic studies¹ that focus on the influence of the genre on other cultural forms, the aesthetics of the chosen productions, its history and significance for the viewers². Feona Attwood and Clarissa Smith, the editors of *Porn Studies* journal, observe that the interest in sexually explicit works among the historians and art researchers arose around the 1960s³. However, it was no sooner than the 1990s when the ‘porn debate’ was introduced to the academic discourse by Linda Williams. In her book *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the ‘Frenzy of the Visible’*⁴ pornography was studied not through the lenses of its harmfulness, but as one of the factors changing the culture⁵. As Williams indicated: “a wide range of contemporary examples show [...] how new forms of pornography have become part of the fabric of everyday life.”⁶

As the researchers observe, the definition of pornography constantly evolves and the debate (as well as the critique of the explicit films) changes, depending on the historical, social and political factors. For example, Robert Jensen points out that the diversity of the pornography films, the critique (mostly from the feminist movement)

1 Williams, Linda. “Porn Studies: Proliferating Pornographies. On/Scene: An Introduction.” *Porn Studies*. Ed. Eadem. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004, pp. 2–3.

2 Attwood, Feona, Clarissa Smith. “Porn Studies: an introduction.” *Porn Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1–2, 2014, p. 1.

3 Ibidem.

4 See: Williams, Linda. *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the ‘Frenzy of the Visible.’* Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1989.

5 Attwood, Feona, Clarissa Smith., op. cit., p. 1.

6 Williams, Linda., “Porn Studies...,” p. 6.

and the constraints introduced by the political sides leads to “dodges and distortions,”⁷ which prevent from giving one definition⁸. However, he agrees that “what is pornographic” is subjective and depends on the cultural background and point of view of the observer⁹. Jensen argues that there are two main definitions of pornography: it can be perceived as “the material sold in pornography shops for the purpose of producing sexual arousal for most male consumers” or as, taken from the feminist analysis, “a specific kind of sexual material that mediates and helps maintain the sexual subordination of women.”¹⁰ On the contrary, a philosopher Slavoj Žižek defines pornography as something that “goes too far.”¹¹ Creating the definition out of the comparison with the nonpornographic films, he writes:

[...] in a “normal,” nonpornographic film, a love scene is always built around a certain insurmountable limit; “all cannot be shown.” At a certain point the image is blurred, the camera moves off, the scene is interrupted, we never directly see “that” (the penetration of sexual organs, etc.). In contrast to this limit of representability defining the “normal” love story or melodrama, pornography goes beyond, it “shows everything.”¹²

When searching for the representations of transgressive sexuality in film, it should be mentioned that the pornographic scenes also appear in the nonpornographic films (for example thrillers). To describe this phenomenon, Linda Williams coined the term ‘on/scenity,’ what is described as “the gesture by which a culture brings on to its public arena the very organs, acts, bodies, and pleasures that have heretofore been designated ob/scene and kept literally off-scene.”¹³ Through the cinema history, there can be pointed out several examples of such films, and the release of almost every one of them was accompanied by the controversies, censorship’s actions, and public disturbance. It is enough to mention the films of Nagisa Oshima (e.g., *In the Realm of the Senses*, 1976), Shūji Terayama (e.g., *Emperor Tomato Ketchup*, 1971) or, on the Amer-

7 Jensen, Robert. “Pornographic Dodges and Distortions.” *Pornography: The Production and Consumption of Inequality*. Ed. Gail Dines, Robert Jensen and Ann Russo. New York and London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 1–8.

8 Ibidem, p. 2. The author observes: “The three common dodges – definitional, constitutional, and causal – often derail conversations and crowd out analysis of the production, content, and use of pornography with diversionary arguments.”

9 Ibidem.

10 Ibidem, p. 3.

11 Žižek, Slavoj. *Looking Awry. An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*. Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1991, pp. 110.

12 Ibidem.

13 Williams, Linda., op. cit., p. 3.

ican ground, *Cruising* (1980) by William Friedkin¹⁴. The pornographic scenes were cut out from the mentioned pictures in postproduction, or they were entirely banned in some countries. However, there also exists a group of films in which the pornographic scenes were added in postproduction – what reverses the regular practice.

The aim of this article is to show, on the chosen examples of the films that later on were labeled as ‘cult productions,’ how and why the directors, such as Bo Arne Vibenius or Tinto Brass, decided to add pornographic scenes to their films. The main concern of the authors of this paper will be the implications of the directors’ decisions and the ways they reversed the meaning of changing the film in post-production. Starting from the analysis of the emergence of the dark legend of Luis Buñuel’s *The Age of Gold* (*L’âge d’or*, 1930), the authors aim at summarizing the history of adding the pornographic content to the nonpornographic films, what is observed through the lenses (and methodologies) of production studies. The films mentioned in this article come from different cinematographies, periods and genres. However, the common feature that allows to analyze those titles as representatives of the described phenomenon is that their popularity bases on their critical success. The “cult status” they gained was tightly connected to the controversies the directors ignited by adding extra scenes (Vibenius and Brass) or the gossips about such (the case of Buñuel).

Imagined pornography – the case of *The Age of Gold*

When searching for the first cases of diffusion of the pornographic content from the peripheries of the film culture to the nonpornographic films, the controversies around *The Age of Gold* should be analyzed. After the successful performance of *An Andalusian Dog* (*Un chien andalou*, 1929), Buñuel¹⁵ was eager to continue working with Salvador Dalí – a co-author of the picture. Their new project, initially entitled *The Andalusian Beast* (*La bête andalouse*), was designed with the help of Viscount Charles de Noailles and his wife, the wealthy patrons¹⁶, who even allowed to shot the significant part of the film in their mansion and made a financial backing for the project¹⁷.

14 Williams, Linda R., *The Erotic Thriller in Contemporary Cinema*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005, p. 135.

15 Luis Buñuel (1900–1983) was a Spanish filmmaker who greatly contributed to the development of Surrealism (the movement) and surreal film aesthetics. In his films, Buñuel combined the plethora of genres (e.g. documentary, drama, satire or audiovisual experiment) with the wide range of socially and politically actual subjects. More about the director’s style and the history of his films can be found, for example, in Raymond Durnat’s publication. See: Durnat, Raymond. *Luis Bunuel*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977, pp. 6–21.

16 Edwards, Gwynne. *A Companion to Luis Buñuel*. Rochester: Tamesis, 2005, pp. 29–30.

17 *Ibidem*, p. 35.

However, Buñuel discarded Dalí's ideas of adding pornographic scenes¹⁸ and even changed the title for the one known today. It is worth underlining that the decisions the director made deprived the film of explicit sexual intercourses and the pictures of genitalia – what Dalí perceived significant to the plot.

The picture revolves around the critique of the traditional norms and denudes the hypocrisy of the bourgeois aristocracy. Here also appears the critique of the Catholic church. However, as Buñuel pointed out in later commentaries, he focused on showing “the violence of love when that passion was impregnated with the splendor of Roman Catholic myth.”¹⁹ For the purposes of this article, having in mind the plethora of interpretations of the symbolic scenes concerning political and religious subjects, we will focus on the lovers and their interactions. As Gwynne Edwards observes:

Oblivious to all social and moral impediments, the two young people live for each other. When they are set upon by the enraged onlookers and dragged away, their physical separation cannot obliterate their thoughts of or feelings for each other²⁰.

The lovers appear in the second part of the film – in the scene of laying the foundation rock for the Golden Age by the Majorcan Bishops, who won the war with the guerrillas²¹. The couple disturbs the ceremony, as they squirm in the paroxysms of ecstasy in the mud – in front of the crowd gathered on the spot. However, it should be pointed out that they are fully dressed, and the pretended sexual intercourse is perceived by the people around as the attack on the social norms. The lovers are quickly torn apart by the citizens and appear again in the next part of the film – in the “Imperial Rome.”²² They meet again during the party in the mansion house, belonging to the woman's parents. After the lovers sneak out to the garden, they want to make violent love, starting from biting each other fingers. Edwards notices that “[...] in the behaviour of the lovers there is, then, a ferocity that ignores the narrow-minded propriety demanded by the society in which they live. They exist only for the fulfillment of their sexual longing for each other.”²³ Nonetheless, they are disturbed by the other quests and external factors – during the first kiss the man spots the white, marble feet of the nearby statue,

18 Ibidem, p. 30; Gibson, Ian. *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí*. London: Faber & Faber, 1997, pp. 245–249. For example, in his letters Dalí suggested that the famous love scene in the garden should be more drastic and sexualized. In the final Buñuel's version, the lovers suck each other's fingers and the woman licks the toe of the marble sculpture. Dalí wanted to show the man ripping the woman's toe nail with his teeth and then the next shot was to show the dissolve of the female protagonist's lips into vagina.

19 Durnat, Raymond., op. cit., p. 45.

20 Edwards, Gwynne., op. cit., p. 32.

21 Durnat, Raymond., op. cit., pp. 38–39.

22 Ibidem, p. 39–40.

23 Edwards, Gwynne., op. cit., p. 32.

and the woman, focusing on the same, starts kissing the exposed, cold toes. The sexual anxiety, as Edwards further observes, is defeated by the social norms and restraints²⁴. The passion is never consumed and, contrary to what Dalí wanted to show in the mentioned scene, the intercourse remains symbolic. The last part of the film also revolves around crossing the sexual norms. The place of action changes from the “Imperial Rome” into the medieval castle and the subtitles explain that in the premises there happened the 120-days orgy – what is an allusion to Marquis de Sade’s *The 120 Days of Sodom*²⁵. However, what is most significant in the context of searching for the reasons of adding pornographic scenes to the films – the orgy does not appear on the screen. The director’s attention is focused on the symbolic meaning of the murder committed by one of the orgiasts, Duc de Blangis, who bears a resemblance to Jesus Christ²⁶. The sexual transgression remains only in the form of written words, and it depends entirely on the viewer how he will imagine the orgy happening behind the closed door.

Instead of the actual content of the film, the picture was banned by the censorship. It is significant that after the first viewing (around 29 September 1930), *The Age of Gold* was given a visa and allowed to be screened²⁷. Though, as Paul Hammond finds out analyzing the resume²⁸ presented to Buñuel by the Commission, the censors did not watch the film. After the first public screening, organized by Noailles on 22nd October, the aristocrats, outraged by the critique of their social group presented on the screen, took actions to ban the picture. The following screenings were accompanied by the protests and demonstrations, what led to the withdrawn of the granted visa²⁹. However, explaining the reasons for banning the picture, the Commission de Censure did not point out the political critique presented in the film. Instead, the censors lied that “since their first viewing certain ‘pornographic’ scenes had been added.”³⁰ The Commission did not precise what scenes they meant and what was considered to be obscure. Therefore, it can be assumed, that they lied about the last part of the film and “the orgy” described before the action, as after the protests they demanded to cut off the last scene immediately³¹. The controversies around the supposed pornographic content in *The Age of Gold* led to creating the dark legend, spread mostly by those who

24 Ibidem, p. 33.

25 Durnat, Raymond., op. cit., p. 45.

26 Ibidem. The fake Jesus murders a woman, who tries to escape from the orgy. She is, perhaps, one of the lovers appearing in the previous parts of the film.

27 Hammond, Paul. “L’âge d’or.” *British Film Institute. Film Classics*. Vol. 1. Ed. Edward Buscombe and Rob White. London, New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, p. 131.

28 Ibidem.

29 Ibidem, pp. 131–132.

30 Ibidem, p. 132.

31 Ibidem.

have not actually seen the film³². However, Buñuel's picture was "dead and buried"³³ – there left only seven copies, which were distributed further by the private collectors³⁴.

Analyzing the history of the controversies around *The Age of Gold* in the context of the appearance of the pornographic scenes that "were not there," it is worth mentioning the project entitled *Deep Gold* (2013), directed by Julian Rosefeldt. In this film, released over eighty years after Buñuel's picture, the author refers to the dark legend of the 'imagined' sex scenes. Rosefeldt's picture is the part of the anthology film *The Scorpion's Sting* (2013–2014), designed by the artists focused on the reinterpretations of *The Age of Gold*³⁵. The filmmaker shows the interest in the last part of the picture and depicts his vision of the infamous orgy. He reinterprets the epilogue as the feminist manifesto, so "his version shows a world full of lust and desire, in which a weak male protagonist becomes overwhelmed by omnipresent female sexuality."³⁶ The orgy has a place in the burlesque club called Deep Gold. Furthermore, the author mixes the aesthetics known from the Buñuel's film (e.g., the fragmented narration or the mysterious atmosphere of the black and white shots) with the moral standards known from the modern times. The world he presents had its sexual revolution, and the pornography is easily accessible³⁷. In this case, the author substitute the anti-bourgeoisie character of the original picture with the open critique of the pornographization of the cultural industry and the shape of the modern society, in which obscenity is a part of daily routine. The director juxtaposes this picture with the sexuality in Buñuel's film to underline the moral changes, brought, in his optics, by the traumatic events of the two world wars. As Linda Williams observes, Buñuel in his film was "questioning of society and [showed] illusory unity of the social body [...] through the disruptive force of erotic desire"³⁸ – what can also be said in the context of Rosefeldt's work. However, it is worth mentioning that in the film from 2013, the author presents the pornographic scenes in a grotesque manner – the protagonists wear the costumes resembling naked bodies with enormously enlarged genitalia. The costumes that pretend to be the real bodies relate to the manner in which Buñuel presented sexuality and violence in his film. As Williams notes, the director, for the most of his picture, does not present them explicitly – even though the plot revolves around the trans-

32 Ibidem, pp. 131–132. Hammond observes that around the 1930s the film was seen by no more than three hundred viewers.

33 Ibidem, p. 133.

34 Ibidem, pp. 133–134.

35 Galería. Helga de Alvear. "Julian Rosefeldt. Deep Gold." *Galería. Helga de Alvear*. 16 Feb. 2017. Web. 10. Feb. 2018.

36 Ibidem.

37 Ibidem.

38 Williams, Linda. *Figures of Desire: A Theory and Analysis of Surrealist Film*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981, p. 109.

gression from one (violence) to another (sexual desire)³⁹. The same happens in Rosefeldt's film – the enlarged genitalia refer to the surrealist depictions of the figures of desire as symbols not fully revealed on the screen.

Rape and revenge: Swedish style

Thriller – a cruel picture (*Thriller – en grym film*, 1973) is one of the films with pornographic content intentionally added during the post-production process by its director – Bo Arne Vibenius. However, what is also significant while analyzing the impact of this act on the further history of the picture, is the fact that the director transgressed the determinants of rape and revenge subgenre. He depicted the rape as the action that can sexually stimulate the viewer, what, after adding extra scenes showing it, changed the meaning of the protagonist's suffering.

It is worth underlining that the decision about adding pornographic content in post-production was related to the director's need of improving the financial situation. His previous production, a family picture entitled *How Marie met Fredrik?* (*Hur Marie träffade Fredrik*, 1969), caused Vibenius's bankruptcy. The unfortunate course of events made the director search for the means of expression that, as he believed, will bring the audience to the cinema – transgression, perversion and explicit sexuality⁴⁰. It is worth pointing out that *Thriller* was released two years after the removal of the abolition of obscenity clause from the Swedish constitution⁴¹. One of the results of that change was an expansion of nudity and pornography – from that moment it could be legally produced, watched or bought by every Swedish citizen above 15 years old⁴². Although the 1960s and 1970s were the decades of liberalization⁴³, pornographic scenes of sexual intercourse, with the penetration portrayed explicitly, were not allowed. Soon, legalization of pornography showed that adult content might be very profitable, as it was observed in Denmark – a Scandinavian pioneer in removing obscenity clauses from the law⁴⁴. Bo Arne Vibenius was aware of the fact that in the

39 Ibidem, p. 142.

40 Heller-Nicholas, Alexandra. *Rape-Revenge Films. A Critical Study*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2011, p. 40.

41 Hedling, Edwin. "Breaking the Swedish Sex Barrier: Painful Lustfulness in Ingmar Bergman's *The Silence*." *Film International*, vol.6, no.6, 2008, p. 17.

42 Paasonen, Susanna. "Smutty Swedes: Sex films, pornography and good sex." *Tainted Love: Screening Sexual Perversities*. Ed. Darren Kerr, Donna Peberdy. London: I.B. Tauris, 2015, p. 5.

43 Larsson, Mariah. "The Death of Porn? An Autopsy of 'Scandinavian Sin' in the Twenty-first Century." *A Companion to Nordic Cinema*. Ed. Mette Hjort, Ursula Lindqvist. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2016, p. 568.

44 Stevenson, Jack. *Scandinavian Blue: The Erotic Cinema of Sweden and Denmark in the 1960s and 1970s*. Jefferson: McFarland, 2010, p. 116.

Northern Europe nudity was at the pick of its popularity, so he even advertised his picture as “the first film banned in the history of Swedish cinema.”⁴⁵

Thriller tells the story of a girl raped in childhood by a perpetrator never convicted of his assault due to the mental illness. Madeleine⁴⁶, who has post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and remains mute since the attack, lives with her parents on a family farm, where she works. Once, while she is waiting for the bus that goes to the closest town, the girl is interrupted by a handsome car driver, who offers her a lift in his sports vehicle. The girl agrees and decides to eat dinner with newly met character, who gives her poisoned wine. While Madeleine sleeps for three days, the culprit injects her drugs. Addicted from heroine, she is forced to become a prostitute. Vibenius creates typical *rape and revenge* plot, where the raped girl tries to run away from the antagonist. However, when she discovers that her parents committed suicide after reading hateful letters sent under extortion, she starts seeking for vengeance.

The dark legend and controversies around the film have been growing since its premiere in Cannes in 1973⁴⁷. The Swedish film contains pornographic inserts in the form of multiple close-ups depicting vaginal and anal penetration. Through adding pornographic content, Vibenius tried to increase marketing value of his film and improve his financial situation. Later on, in an interview conducted by Jan Bruun, the director admitted that his picture was not of great value⁴⁸. Making efforts to increase interest in the film, Vibenius hired Christina Lindberg, who was well-known for her role in *Maid in Sweden* (1971). Before, the young starlet played in several sexploitation films, which, despite highly titillating scenes, did not offer pictures of sexual intercourses⁴⁹. The explicit sex scenes with a famous actress, added to *Thriller* in post-production, were supposed to be attractive enough to interest fans of her lighter, soft-core erotic pictures. It is noteworthy that Lindberg did not participate in scenes of sexual intercourses and, according to information given by the actress, hardcore scenes were played by a performing couple, who used nicknames “Romeo and Juliet.”⁵⁰

Bo Arne Vibenius, in an interview conducted by Jan Bruun, exposed that his second picture was produced with the aim to become “the most commercial film ever made.”⁵¹ However, the Swedish filmmaker has violated one of the most fundamental

45 That statement was a marketing gimmick, as *Witchcraft Through the Ages* (*Häxan*, 1922) was first banned Swedish film in history. See: Stevenson, Jack. *Witchcraft Through the Ages: The Story of Häxan, the World's Strangest Film & the Man Who Made It*. Farleigh: FAB Press, 2006, pp. 117–118.

46 In dubbed film version this character is named Frida.

47 Larsson, Maria. “Ingmar Bergman...,” op. cit., p. 55.

48 Heller-Nicholas, Alexandra., op. cit., p. 40.

49 Ibidem, p. 41.

50 Larsson, Maria. “Ingmar Bergman...,” op. cit., p. 55.

51 Heller-Nicholas, Alexandra., op. cit., p. 40.

rules of *rape and revenge* subgenre. According to Alexandra Heller-Nicholas, by adding hardcore scenes, Bo Arne Vibenius intended to make rape sexually titillating⁵². Pornographic excerpts appear during sexual intercours between the protagonist and her clients, who are brought by the kidnapper. Moreover, the visitors do not hesitate to use the violence against abused Madeleine. In one of the interviews, Christina Lindberg revealed that she did not know about adding explicit scenes in post-production, but she admitted that she was not surprised. She commented on the situation: “this was typical Vibenius to add even more,”⁵³ what indicates that since the beginning, the director’s primary purpose was to include anything that could increase the commercial value of the production.

Hardcore inserts, which were supposed to arouse the viewers, differs *Thriller* from rest of the most significant *rape and revenge* pictures because of their meaning for the film. For example, Meir Zarchi, the director of infamous *I Spit on Your Grave* (1978), also presented extended rape scene, which lasts for over 30 minutes. However, according to the words of the producers, the sexual violence was supposed to terrify a viewer not to attract and arouse him⁵⁴. After the premiere, the film has quickly gained a notorious reputation, but Zarchi tried to stand for his project during screenings and interviews. The director underlined that in *I Spit on Your Grave* he condemned sexual violence against women and he tried to make the film undertaking critical social issues. Zarchi truly believed that “he was making a feminist film and an anti-rape film.”⁵⁵ On the contrary, Vibenius used the adult content without discussing the social implications of the protagonist’s trauma. Instead, the added scenes aim at showing the variety of possible sexual intercours with someone under oppression. The case of *Thriller* – the picture changed by the pornographic scenes added to entertain the viewers, strongly reminds the case of *Caligula* (1979), described in the following part of the article. In both projects, the leading actors were not aware of producers’ hidden intentions and the plans to add pornographic content during the post-production process.

52 Ibidem.

53 Carlsson, Ronny. “Visiting Christina Lindberg.” *Film Bizarro*, 2009. Web. 10 March 2018. <http://www.filmbizarro.com/christinalindberg.php>.

54 Ebert, Roger. “I Spit on Your Grave.” *Rogerebert.com*. 17.07.1980. Web. 17 Feb 2018. <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/i-spit-on-your-grave-1980>. The film was inspired by the event the director experienced. During a walk, Zarchi saw a woman covered with blood, who was walking naked around park. He noticed that the girl was attacked and raped, so he instantly called the police and tried to help the victim and was one of witnesses in court.

55 Crowds, Gary. “Cult Films Commentary Tracks and Censorious Critics an Interview with John Bloom.” *Black and White Photographs*, vol. 28, no. 32–34, 2003, p. 33.

Deep throat of Caligula

While writing about the controversies that arose around the production of Tinto Brass's⁵⁶ film, it should be mentioned that the producers managed to hire such well-known actors as Hellen Mirren, John Gielgud, or Malcolm McDowell (in the titular role). The film was financed by *Penthouse* – widely known as the producer of adult magazines and videos. Despite that, it was possible to gather respectable actors on the *Caligula's* set mostly because *Penthouse* group had been already involved in film production before. The American company has co-financed three different feature films⁵⁷, which received a lot of significant awards (e. g., Oscars nominations), as well as did well in box-office. Therefore, *Caligula* was the company's first attempt at financing film production without cooperating with any other subjects⁵⁸. The experience as co-producer of Oscar films in the past helped Bob Guccione⁵⁹ – the leading producer – to attract big stars and talented crew. He agreed on Gore Vidal, with whom he co-worked on *Ben Hur* (1959) script, to write a screenplay of the story inspired by the vivid character known from the history of the Roman Empire. The producers have spent a splurge budget that finally rose from 17 to 22 millions of USD, as they aimed to increase the artistic values of their project⁶⁰.

Nowadays, Tinto Brass' film is mostly recognized as a big-budget porn production. It is significant that during the shooting the actors had no clues about the final shape of *Caligula*. After the final shot on the set, Bob Guccione and his assistant took over film reels and rented a studio, where they recorded additional six minutes of pornographic hardcore material. New scenes were edited and included in the film, despite the disapproval of Tinto Brass, who demanded the removal of his name from credits⁶¹. The scenes shot without the involvement of Italian director had strictly pornographic character and did not have any direct impact on film's plot, yet caused controversies. Additional footage presented not only vaginal penetration but also depictions of ejaculation.

Adding hardcore sex scenes caused distribution problems of Brass's film. At first, Guccione refused to send the copy of the picture to the American board responsible for assigning ratings – Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA). The produc-

56 Tinto Brass – known as a director of erotic and soft-core films, such as *Salon Kitty* (1976).

57 Here should be mentioned the films such as *Chinatown* (1974), or *The Day of The Locust* (1975).

58 Volkman, Ernest. "Bob Guccione Caligula Interview from Penthouse May 1980." *Penthouse*, Vol. 5. 1980. Ed. Bob Guccione. Web. 19 Feb 2018. <https://web.archive.org/web/20140808055043/http://www.malcolminterviews.com/lu.com/guccione80.html>.

59 Bob Guccione – The founder and editor of *Penthouse* magazine, which offered more extreme erotic content than, for example, Hugh Hefner's *Playboy*.

60 Hawes, William. *Caligula and the Fight for Artistic Freedom: The Making, Marketing and Impact of the Bob Guccione Film*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2009, p. 83.

61 Volkman, Ernest., op. cit.

er claimed that the MPAA would have given this film “X” rating, which, according to him, would be “unfair,” considering the effort put to create such monumental picture. Instead, he decided to rate *Caligula* as suitable for the mature audience only – what could have helped to avoid censoring the material⁶². It is significant that MPAA’s “X” category would increase problems with promotion and distribution, as in the 1970s many pornographic productions used the same rating to attract the potential viewers, promising the adult content. According to Guccione, this rating would be unfair, as *Caligula*, despite explicit sex scenes, should not be classified as porn production. He defined pornography as “a work of bad art, as opposed to good art”⁶³ – what, in his optics, did not describe his film at all. To avoid connotations with adult cinema, the producer had even decided to book the particular cinemas, specializing in foreign and art films, to screen *Caligula* for the selected audience⁶⁴.

According to William Hawes, despite the fact that box-office results indicated that the audience preferred the unrated version of the film⁶⁵, the producers decided to release alternative versions of the picture, due to problems with distribution. Because Guccione decided not to send film copy to MPAA, it was almost impossible to screen uncensored production and, as a result, gain financial profits from *Caligula*. In this case, in October 1981, the producers finally decided to release the “R” rated version that featured many alternate angles and was cut from 156 to 105 minutes⁶⁶. Despite the fact that notorious reputation caused financial problems during theatrical release, the film quickly gained cult status, what was related to the critical success it gained. The audience, lured by the dark legend of the “big-budget porn production,” strived to obtain the copy of the picture from the video market – on which the MPAA had not significant influence..

It is worth mentioning that the pornographic scenes added to *Caligula* in post-production stimulated the imagination of the other directors – mostly related to the porn business. The further versions of the possible sexual intercourses of the Emperor (and his court) have appeared in other costume porn productions since the 1980s. Among them, the film by Joe D’Amato, entitled *Caligula: The Deviant Emperor* (1997) and its sequel *The Emperor Caligula: The Untold Story* (1982), seems to gain the most considerable interest of the publicity⁶⁷.

62 Ibidem.

63 Ibidem.

64 Price, Stephen. *A New Pot of Gold: Hollywood Under the Electronic Rainbow, 1980 – 1989*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, p. 349.

65 Hawes, William., op. cit., p. 188.

66 “Caligula (1979). Alternate Versions.” *IMDb*. Web. 15 March 2018. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0080491/alternateversions>.

67 See: “Caligola: Follia del potere (1997).” *IMDb*. Web. 14 March 2018. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0167068/> and “Caligula (1982).” *IMDb*. Web. 15 March 2018. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0082133/>. According to the commentaries on IMDb website, as well as *Porn Hub* portal, D’Amato’s films have

Conclusion

The films presented above state the vivid examples of the productions transgressing the popular practices of the directors, who decide to depict human sexuality on the screen. As it can be observed from the analysis of the chosen cases, adding pornographic content in postproduction causes controversies and problems with distribution. However, while the dark legend of *The Age of Gold* arose because of the actions that were taken by the censorship, as a result of the transgressive potential of the film and the public disturbance it caused, *Caligula* and *Thriller* were edited on purpose. By using pornographic content, Bo Arne Vibenius aimed at creating the ultimate product that was supposed to gain him profits, while Bob Guccione tried to create an “explicit adult film within a feature film narrative with high production values.”⁶⁸ The presented pictures are the exceptions in the film history, as the explicit scenes were (and still are) often cut out in the postproduction process.

Aforementioned examples show that the tendency to exploit sex themes and explicit depictions of sexual intercourses appeared mostly in the 1970s. Regardless the transgressive potential of the earlier examples, as *The Golden Age*, adding pornographic scenes to nonpornographic films on purpose remains the domain of the directors and producers of the times after sexual revolution. Cultural changes in Europe and the United States caused sex to become one of the most popular (and well-selling) subjects in cinema. The presented analysis can be the starting point to further research on using sex as a factor increasing the commercial potential of the film.

the community of fans and are in the top searching results (source: *Porn Hub*) among other productions concerning the character of Caligula.

68 *The Encyclopedia of Epic Films*. Ed. Constantine Santas, James M. Wilson, Maria Colavito, et. al. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014, p. 115.

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Summary

The presented article analyses the reasons and results of adding pornographic scenes to nonpornographic films by the chosen Western directors. The authors, starting from the case of the of the dark legend of Luis Buñuel's *The Age of Gold* (*L'âge d'or*, 1930), summarize the history of the phenomenon and observe it using the methodologies of production studies. Furthermore, concerning on the films by Bo Arne Vibenius or Tinto Brass, the authors research on the implications of the directors' decisions and the ways they reversed the meaning of changing the film in post-production. The examples of the films mentioned in this article come from different cinematographies, periods and genres, what underlines the unique character of the chosen cases.