



THE PHENOMENON OF BREAKING SEXUALITY TABOOS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL NORMS

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the notion of taboo in the context of a social phenomenon identified with a strong exclusion that simultaneously binds nature and culture. Trying to define it, you can say that taboos are not just what cannot be named, what cannot be done, but also what cannot be thought of. This term is connected with a strong ban and fear. Sexual life, along with all its forms, ranging from debauchery to restraint, from promiscuity to asceticism, from what falls within a norm to pathology, connected with such topics as eroticism and procreation, is an ambiguous, shameful and hidden area of human experience. Sexuality is the source of elementary human shame. It is sometimes impure because it is related to the lower half of the body, it is sometimes violent, it may cause disorder, fighting, jealousy. On the other hand, however, it is perceived in terms of procreation as a lofty act of giving life. All manifestations of sexuality have become a taboo. This paper discusses potential breaking of sexuality taboos in the social context.

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Taboo is a cultural phenomenon that covers everything that is socially prohibited. These are behaviours that should not be practiced, and topics that should not be discussed in a given community because they are considered shameful, dangerous and controversial, unpleasant or immoral. The concept of taboo, whose name was borrowed from Tonga language from the Polynesian Friendly Islands, was included in the European discourse thanks to Captain James Cook. Initially, everything that was loaded with magical powers was considered a taboo. In the 18th century a taboo was identified with a cult ban, which referred to what was untouchable, inedible, originally banned, sexually unacceptable, sacred, cursed. The word taboo encountered by a traveller on various islands of Oceania has become one of the earliest discoveries of Europeans exploring the exotics. Cook succeeded in implanting the concept on European soil, but in modified form (Wasilewski, 2010).¹

¹ Cook was brutally murdered by the natives during the third expedition. The reason why he was killed was that he broke the taboo respected by the Hawaiians. The explorer died in a ritual killing.

This term was quickly absorbed into the puritan society of Victorian England. The exotically sounding word was devoid of the religious context of the primitive cultures and transposed into the contemporary world. It was adapted to describe the standards of conduct and the system of bans of a bourgeois society. The combination of Protestantism, colonialism, and bourgeoisie produced a term meaningfully different from the original. Only in this form could the word be settled in 19th century England and spread to other European countries from there. Taboo refers to simple cultures and is connected with the magical vision of the world, and in this sense it is associated with a magical ban. This concept belongs to the world of emotions. The basic feeling that occurs when a taboo is broken is fear, and its consequence is often death. Jerzy S. Wasilewski (2010) in his book *Tabu* ventures a claim that nowadays nothing is a taboo, even the very concept. Moreover, he is of the opinion that the enigmatic nature of this term determines its usefulness. Taboo is understood as a regulator of behaviour, a determinant of the forms of conduct, and finally represents a conscience of the collective. Prohibitions exist in every culture. Their function is to maintain its existence by classifying certain acts such as incest or paedophilia as taboo.

Taboo is a strong exclusion, it ties nature and culture. Trying to define it, you can say that taboos are not just what cannot be named, what cannot be done, but also what cannot even be thought. This term is fortified with a strong ban and fear. Ambivalence, confusion, and uncertainty are often connected with this word. After all, taboo covers both the sacred and the profane. As a product of primitive thought taboo does not yet distinguish holiness from impurity.

Freud (1993) points out at a number of difficulties in understanding this notion because of the lack of an idea that this term expresses. Freud (1993) says that "the word taboo has two opposing meanings. On the one hand, it defines something sacred, consecrated and on the other - something amazing, dangerous, forbidden and impure" (p. 23). The opposite of taboo is something ordinary, universal, expressing itself mostly in prohibitions and restrictions that cannot be reduced to divine commandments and moral prohibitions that form a system. According to Freud (1993), taboo is older than the gods, and derives from the pre-religious era. Like Wundt before him, Freud calls taboo the oldest unspoken legal code of humanity. It was a series of constraints self-imposed by primitive peoples who surrendered themselves to these limitations in the belief that their rejection would be punished strictly. Taboo covers people, places, objects, temporary states. It also means what is sacred, what is different from the ordinary, and what is also dangerous, impure and amazing.

Taboo can be understood to be multithreaded. Jerzy S. Wasilewski (2010), author of a book on taboo reviewing the fundamental issues of anthropology of myth, ritual and symbol, cites a multitude of insights on taboo ranging from those connecting taboo with sex and gender, death and fear of the dead, unknown and surprising phenomena, to saints and sins. The anthropologist (2010) points to the impossibility of naming this phenomenon accurately because taboo "is intriguing, disturbing, deceiving [...]. It cannot be defined explicitly and provokes theoretical questioning of its legitimacy [...]. If it continues to exist and command respect, it is only because of its uncompromisingness - the reasons why it makes us stay within certain limits cannot be easily and convincingly justified, but the irrationality is the guarantee of its permanence: we are afraid of violating a mechanism that cannot be explained" (p. 9).

According to Wasilewski's theory, the term taboo defines a classical ethnological category. It was recognized and described already at the birth of this discipline in the eighties and nineties of the nineteenth century. Over the years of research, it was extended and made more specific from an increasing number of points of view. Research on taboo was conducted by the most prominent representatives of world ethnology.² Its scope was understood broadly, referred to prohibitions of all kinds, and also narrowed down to the notion of prohibitions in particular areas of culture, such as murder and incest, or in connection with other laws and norms. However, it always meant respect for socially important values and was even considered a key moment in the transition of the human species from the state of nature to the state of culture. According to Michał Buchowski (1993), a Polish social anthropologist, philosopher and cultural scientist, the term taboo refers to: "extraordinary, abnormal things, intermediate forms between two states of a Universum suitably classified by men, sharing the characteristics of two distinct categories (sacred and profane, supernatural and earthly), species, forms, as well as unnamed, disorderly and mixed up things" (p. 89).

James Georg Frazer, a social anthropologist, author of *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, perceives magic as the original form of religion, and taboo as part of magic. Frazer divides magic into positive and negative, where the earlier equals sorcery to him. Taboo for Frazer is negative magic. The scholar differs from most theoreticians of the notion of taboo, conceiving the phenomenon in terms of a primitive understanding of the world and detaching taboo from religion.

James Frazer's views have been at odds with Emile Durkheim's theories, for whom religion was a basis on which thinking and social life developed. According to Durkheim, beliefs are a system of religious prohibitions that separate the realm of the sacred from the profane. These religious prohibitions are nothing more than taboos. Durkheim does not run away from magic. For him, magic is a part of religion, its imitation, and taboo acts as a religious ban.

Julia Kristeva, in turn, sees a modernised version of taboos in the theory of abjection, which reveals what is hidden beneath the surface, which, after appearing, causes disgust and revulsion, which intrigues and raises suspicion, but attracts at the same time and makes it impossible to go away indifferently.

Taboos are the ancient prohibitions imposed on primitive peoples. The bans involved activities that evoked strong emotions and the original pleasure derived from doing things that were forbidden. According to Freud (1993), the oldest and most important taboos are the ban on the killing of a totemic animal and the ban on sexual relations within a totemic clan. The basis of taboo, in Freud's view, is a forbidden activity to which we are strongly inclined in our unconsciousness. Freud (1993) argues that "taboo is an ancient ban imposed from the outside (by some authority) and directed against the strongest desires of man. The desire to go beyond this ban stays in the unconscious; people who obey taboos have an ambivalent attitude toward what taboos concern. The magical power attributed to taboos is reduced to leading man to temptation. The forbidden lust is pushed into the unconscious and transferred

² At this point the names of the most famous scholars who made a significant contribution to the study of a cultural phenomenon of taboo should be mentioned after Wasilewski: James G. Frazer, Sigmund Freud, Mircea Eliade, Émile Durkheim, Mary Douglas, Claude Lévi-Strauss.

onto something else. Repentance for breaking a taboo - fulfilled by renunciation - proves that renunciation is the basis of adherence to taboo" (p.38). Limitations arising from taboos are bans themselves. They cannot be included in a particular system and yet these prohibitions are necessary to maintain social order.

In *Totem and taboo* Freud (1993) attempts to explain the beginning of religion. The author emphasizes the neurotic theme and its relation to the archaic aspect of the human psyche. Freud concludes that the prohibitions stemming from totem and taboo are the first moral bans, the first standards of behaviour, and also the first neurosis generating prohibitions. The psychoanalyst connects the functioning of taboo with neurosis. When a neurotic feels forbidden desire, ambivalence of feelings develops so strongly that the duality of feelings seems unbearable. The ban intensifies the tension. Taboo is also based on a prohibited activity to which we are strongly inclined in our unconsciousness. Like in the case of neurotic behaviour, this phenomenon also has a dual nature because a taboo defines on the one hand what is pure and sacred, and what is impure at the same time. The philosopher dates back the emergence of taboo to the moment of imposing a ban arousing strong emotions because it concerned activities that were the object of strong desire on a certain generation of primitive people. Ritual acts are a form of giving vent to the frustration caused by the ban in the case of taboos and obsessional neurosis. In modern times, the function of ritual channelling and unloading tension created by taboos has been taken over by art. That is why taboo topics are often the object of art.

Karin Seibel (1990), author of the monograph *Zum Begriff des Tabus: eine Soziologische Perspektive*, sees the concept of taboo also as two-sided. On the one hand, this term refers to everyday life, becoming a quasi-taboo. On the other hand, there is also religious taboo, which to Seibel is the real taboo. The boundaries between the two types are fluid, and the two taboos permeate each other. Religious taboo exists in primitive cultures. Quasi-taboo is a borrowed concept, reserved for everyday activities which should be subjected to a certain prohibition. Is it due to the process of modernization, or the increasing degree of civilization combined with the individualization of the individual and secularization, that everyday life taboo is constantly transformed. Seibel claims that taboo is a phenomenon that has appeared in every society over the centuries. This term starts with belief systems that form the basis of religious taboos. Quasi-taboo, although it stems from religious taboo, has become over time a collection of rules of behaviour rather than a term that borders on the sacred. Everyday taboo is a mirror in which the society of a given time can be viewed. It shows all the flaws, delusions, hidden lusts, wishes expelled from consciousness, because they are classified as incompliant with the standards of behaviour. In time, when changes occur in a given society, the scope of quasi-taboo is also changing. What used to cause outrage will no longer be found shocking after some time. The boundaries between breaking a taboo and lack of tact and behaviour contrary to the rules in force are therefore fluid.

Religious taboo is not dependent on the passage of time or the changing society. It is not known who created it or who it came from. The society does not have the slightest influence on it. According to Seibel, real taboo is to defend basic social structures. It is not a scarecrow in conflicts between members of a specific group,

as is the case with quasi-taboo. Religious taboo includes sexual taboo, food taboo and body taboo.

With regard to taboo, Lévi-Strauss (1998) distinguishes between culture and nature, where nature means spontaneity and certain universality while culture is a set of norms. While religious taboo is based on a clear distinction between the sacred and the profane, or looking from another perspective on the difference between nature and culture, quasi-taboo is the product of the process of modernization and progressive individualization.

Sexual life, with all its forms, ranging from debauchery to restraint, from promiscuity to asceticism, from what falls within a norm to pathology, connected with such topics as eroticism and procreation, is an ambiguous, shameful and hidden area of human experience. Sexuality is the source of elementary human shame. It is sometimes impure because it is related to the lower half of the body, it is sometimes violent, it may cause disorder, fighting, jealousy. On the other hand, however, it is perceived in terms of procreation as a lofty act of giving life. All manifestations of sexuality have become a taboo. There is a norm of sexual behaviour, which is the sexual intercourse of spouses aimed at procreation.

At various points in history, sexuality was attributed various characteristics. It was treated as a specific value, placed at different levels in the hierarchy, and assigned various functions (Doerrzapf, 1997). Historical sources indicate that in ancient Egyptian and Sumerian cultures sexuality was manifested in the cult of fertility, which permeated the beliefs and customs of the people of the time. Phallus sculptures were very important ritual requisites. The inscriptions on papyrus, vessels, rocks, remnants of ancient cities contain many erotic symbols that give sexual acts sacred features. Greek culture did not have any major inhibitions with regard to sexuality and treated it as a sphere being part of the sacrum in the generally practiced morality (Doerrzapf, 1997). For the society in general, sex was an overt form of social life, which can be seen in decorative motifs on fabrics, vessels and tableware. The marriage institution was so neglected by the Greeks that men had to be reminded of marriage obligations at least three times a month. They spent most of their time with hetaerae or young boys. In ancient Greece, men enjoyed full sexual freedom as long as they did not sleep with the wives of Greek citizens. They could have as much sex as they wanted with slaves, prostitutes, and hetaerae (men's companions). Monogamy was considered by the Greeks as a manifestation of a higher level of development of their culture. So they looked down on the polygamous peoples, for example those in which women were common property. Monogamy meant the obligation of sexual fidelity for a woman, while a man had a wife at home, and other women (and also young men) outside home. In Greece besides free women, who were citizens, there were also flutists, dancers and slaves with whom men could have relations without restrictions on the part of the wife. There were also cult prostitutes (hierodules), who were very expensive, and secular prostitutes (hetaerae, or playmates). Wives provided men with children, hetaerae provided them with companionship and slaves provided them with delight. Infidelity in Greece was considered to be a relationship with a married woman because it violated the property of another man. Men satisfied their erotic needs outside the marital bed with boys, concubines and courtesans.

In turn, the position of women in the Roman culture was influenced by their situation in Etruscan culture. Roman women were quite emancipated, their dignity was respected highly, and the law required that they be shown respect (Doerrzapf, 1997). Never before was there such great real equality between men and women. In Rome, concubinage existed besides monogamous marriage as another form of legal sexual relationship between a man and a woman. Lovers were high-born women provided for by wealthy citizens. The responsibilities of wives in ancient Rome did not, as in Greece, include giving birth to offspring, because the practice of adoption was widespread. For this reason a Roman woman was also expected to provide sexual pleasure to her husband, and when she did not succeed, the man used the services of a prostitute. In this context, prostitution was treated as a kind of safety vent for maintaining marriage. The Romans treated sexual desire as something natural, which should not be unnecessarily restricted as this view concerned both men and women. The Roman ideal of beauty was not, as in the case of Greeks, spiritual beauty. In their case, the body was to be primarily a sex instrument.

The breakthrough associated with complete separation from body, corporeality and sex occurred in the Middle Ages. This was due to the increasing participation of the Roman Catholic clergy in the Roman culture, and in particular their overwhelming control over the cultural content. In the times of total ban on sex and complete control over it, any attempt to publicly display sexual conduct was punished severely. As a result, ideology condemning sex in general was born, which limited sex to marital contacts and only for reproductive purposes, expanding the hermeneutics of desire. Not only extramarital sex or homosexuality became morally discriminated and condemned, but any pleasure in general. In upper class marriages sex was treated as a pure fulfilment of duty. The spouses kept an emotional distance from each other, and any tenderness between them was mocked. There was no space for passion in marriage. It was manifested, lyrically idealized and heavily exaggerated only in courtly love poetry, the subject of which were married, unattainable women. The court despised marital fidelity. There were numerous manifestations of sexual freedom, orgies and extramarital bodily pleasures.

The seventeenth century and successive centuries introduced a repressive attitude towards sex and human sexuality. There was a transfer of sexuality from the public to the private sphere, and sex was reduced to the role of procreation. According to Foucault (Foucault, 2010), the history of sexuality cannot be explained by referring exclusively to repressive systems. A phenomenon of administration of sex occurred. People feel the compulsion to talk about sex in a decent way. In spite of personal aversion and repulsive picture, you should speak of sex in the name of higher goals. You should make it function according to a pre-defined corset. The natural discoveries of the 17th and 18th century influenced the change of human conception and, consequently, the approach to human sexuality, which became rational. Faith in human capacities, reason and ability to interpret the laws of nature caused the mysteriousness of sex to begin to disappear, and it began to be treated as a natural manifestation of life. The consequence of this was instrumentalisation of sex. Such an approach dominated in the 18th century. Alongside this trend, a trend of naturalistic sexuality developed, propagating the slogan of returning to nature.

At the turn of the 18th century pornography appeared, which contributed to the vulgarization of sex life. There are many examples of such works. These are mainly old iconographs, drawings, acts presenting sexual intercourse. This distorted sensuality concerned men, the sexual experience of women was of no interest to anyone.

In the 19th century, new attempts at discursivisation of sex can be noticed (Doerrzapf, 1997). Sex becomes the cause of all sorts of mental illnesses and disorders. Numerous scientific studies devoted to the harmfulness of sex are created, which see sex as the cause of mental disability, among others. Harmful masturbation allegedly led to blindness, consumption and death, and rejection of procreation was said to be the cause of sexual deviation. Almost until the beginning of the 19th century, human sexuality was subject to three laws: canon law, Christian-pastoral law and secular legislation.

Taboo of sexuality largely refers to the prohibition of sexual relations of relatives. With the modernization and civilization of societies, understanding of the degree of kinship was changing. Today, sexual taboos primarily refer to incestuous relationships. The concept of taboos also covers sexual relationships with people with disabilities, mentally ill, deceased and animals. Until recently, bodily affection between the persons of the same sex aroused great outrage and was severely punished. Any difference beyond the usual standards oscillates around the taboo. According to Foucault, the standards in question appeared in the European culture in the Victorian era. At that time sexuality was imprisoned and limited by certain rules of conduct whose violation meant breaking a taboo. According to Foucault (2010), "sexuality became locked. It moved into the apartment. It was confiscated by a bourgeois family. And it was employed to serve the serious purpose of reproduction" (p. 13). Dating back the appearance of repression of sexuality to the 17th century, Foucault indicates a convergence with the development of capitalism and the bourgeois system. Sex will be subdued because it negatively affects the workforce and its performance. Starting from the 18th century, sexuality that has emerged from hiding begins to exist in discourse. Talking about sex has been institutionalized. The discursivity of sexuality began in the Middle Ages according to Foucault. However, the discourse was confined to the confession of sins, to confession. In recent centuries, the discourse on sexuality has been shaped by demography, biology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, morality, pedagogy, politics. Sexual discourse has identified sexual norms, characterized perversions, and directed sexuality to procreation. On the other hand, since the 19th century, the concept of sexuality has been differentiated. Its various forms and perversions were brought to light. Contemporary times have discovered sexual differences. By introducing a scientific approach to sexual life, the weight of the sexuality taboo has been weakened in some way. Perversion and degeneration started to be analysed in terms of scientific discourse, no longer moral, judging.

Until the end of the 18th century, sexuality was governed by canon law, Christian-pastoral law and secular legislation (Foucault, 2010). These three codes focused on matrimonial relationships. Marital sex has been subjected to rules and regulations. After the 18th century, when bodily aberrations were discovered, the sexuality of children, madmen, criminals and homosexuals was investigated. Peripheral sexuality drew the attention of researchers. The present society, according

to Foucault (2010), has become a society of growing and exploding perversion. It is truly and directly perverse.

Foucault also draws attention to the fact that the civilization of the West through the production of sexual discourse creates a kind of *scientia sexualis*, a science, a certain denomination, a discussion that weakens the taboo. The East, on the other hand, is based on pleasure, which has become the object of cognition itself. It generates a sexual discourse that gives pleasure, intensifies it and prolongs it.

Foucault is far from describing sexuality as a drive. He sees sexuality as a place of convergence of power relations between men and women, young and old, parents and offspring, teachers and students, clergymen and laypeople, administration workers and the population.³

The 17th century brought the first bans, recognition of only marital sexuality as valuable, treatment of the body as unimportant, and moral norms for both actions and words. These norms have laid the foundations for treating sexuality with extreme caution, and treating every betrayal of norms as breaking the taboo of sexuality. Christianity saw evil, sin, fall, and death in the sexual act. Antiquity, however, saw positive values in the body. While Christianity insists on monogamous relationships aimed at procreation, excluding homosexual relationships, Greek or Roman societies had a different approach. By contrast, in modern times and in the present time, object of desire has shifted from the figure of a young beloved boy to the female figures, lovers. Foucault (2010) is of the opinion that the nearness of pleasure experienced during sexual intercourse to evil, the requirement of monogamous fidelity, and the order to give up sex partners of the same sex have formed sexual morality, which is the basis for passing judgments on breaking sexual taboos. While the Greeks did not create a code of sexual behaviour, Christianity has imposed a range of norms on corporeality and thus fuelled anxiety over sexual pleasure. It was in the 19th century that the mechanisms of repression were alleviated due to the development of scientific sexual discourse. This science has tamed in some way the taboo of carnality.

Sexuality for Foucault is undeniably associated with illness and evil, and all its manifestations with something prohibited, covered by taboo. According to Foucault, "sexual activity resembles illness and evil because of its form and effects, but in itself, substantially, it is not evil. It finds its natural and rational fulfilment in marriage, although it is not considered to be a formal and indispensable condition not allowing exceptions for the sexual activity to cease to be seen as evil" (p. 440).

According to Foucault, sexuality in Greece was free and could develop freely. Christianity introduced the first ban on non-monogamous sex, non-reproductive sex, and a ban on deriving pleasure from sex in history. The bourgeoisie deepened these prohibitions from the 16th century and introduce even stricter discipline. The 19th and 20th century social and political movements and scientific theories, Freud's among others, are seen as liberators, breaking the negative connotations associated with the body introduced by Christianity. In capitalism there is a norm of marital sexuality aimed at reproduction, which is the truth of sex. Any illegal

³ According to Foucault (2010), "sexuality should be described as a recalcitrant drive, strange by nature, disobedient to power out of necessity, which, in turn, tries to harness it, which is not always possible. Sexuality is rather a particularly intense place of convergence of power relations [...] In power relationships, sexuality is not the most resistant element, it is rather perceived as one of the most instrumental factors: it proves useful in most manoeuvres, it can be useful as a point of reference and a link to various strategies." (p. 73).

manifestations of sexuality are thrown into the sphere of profit and production. Christianity has laid the foundations for repression of sex, and the bourgeois society has strengthened them. In this way, economically useful sexuality was created.

Thanks to Freud's achievements in the field of psychoanalysis, a revolutionary discourse of free sex began. Freud (1997) characterized the purpose of psychoanalysis in the following way: "A society sees as the greatest threat to culture a liberation from sexual drive and its return to primitive goals. Therefore a society does not like this sensitive side of its origins to be emphasised, it does not care about the power of sexual drives being recognized and their meaning becoming clear and distinct to everyone" (p. 56).

Western culture, according to Foucault (2010), was affected by overknowledge, overdeveloped sexual discourse, theory and science of sexuality. By introducing the concept of sin, confession and penance, Christianity "forced sex to speak." In this way the sexual act was gradually deprived of secrecy. The 18th century brings even greater overproduction of knowledge about sexuality, no longer in terms of morality, but rationality. The confession that was connected with the Christian practice of confession, in the course of the development of psychology, pedagogy and psychiatry, changed its nature and became a study, an interview, a diagnosis, and a procedure of producing the truth about human sexuality.⁴ Sexual discourse in the West takes the form of science that produces overknowledge on sex. The scientific quality with which sex is treated by particular fields of study does not tame the intimate sphere enough to cope with sexuality taboos. Carnality is still an embarrassing sphere, which is subject to many limitations of moral and social nature. The subject of sexual taboos continues to exist in culture. Catholic spoken confession used imprecise terms that suggested only "what, with whom, how many times" and leaving the sphere of actual sensations unexpressed, mute in some way. What is unnamed and existing, is subject to taboo anyway. Contemporary scientific discourse, visual culture, visual literalness combined with a lack of natural, common terminology (excluding medical terminology or even multifunctional vulgar words that fail to name anything), again push the actual experience into the area of the unnamed, i.e. the taboo.

Joanna Bator (1997), a cultural anthropologist dealing with gender and mass culture issues, sees pornography as a cultural violation of taboo. Pornography breaks taboos, concentrating on maintaining the tension between life and death, by constantly touching what divides them. According to Bator, the use of violence in pornography results from the need to break the finiteness of the body, which according to the author is the hidden sense of all eroticism. Life means finiteness, imprisonment in limited existence. Death brings the non-diversification we long for. Bator's thesis resembles Bataille's discussion of the continuity of being, which man can experience so intensely only in eroticism. The author interprets the phenomenon of pornography from the angle of psychoanalysis. She refers to Lacan's philosophy and the linguistic approach to the phenomenon of pornography. In Lacan's paradigm male authority is associated with the phallic structure of language (Žižek, 2008). The woman is a "lack" and "mystery". As non-existent and excluded from language, she is a threat

⁴ Through the development of science investigating sexuality, through the production of sex overknowledge and the confessional nature of such fields of science as psychiatry and psychology, man loses his freedom. Psychoanalysis also dominates the individual, becomes a technology of power through knowledge gained in the course of therapy. As a result of external interference, sexuality becomes a controlled behavioral system.

of disintegration for men, implied by the absence of a phallus. Female genital organs, also in traditional psychoanalysis, are perceived in terms of fear of castration and non-existence. Bator believes that pornography was created by men to discover the invisibility of female genitals. It is an attempt to have a voyeuristic look at the mystery of femininity. A male look that spots and fetishes.

In the context of the analysis of pornography in psychoanalytic terms Joanna Bator points to the childhood experiences, the moment of ego formation, separation from the Phallic Mother.⁵ and simultaneous shift under the care of the Other. Brutalizing sex in pornography is conducive to repeating the act of rejection of the Phallic Mother. The most brutal destruction and degrading exposure of a female body does not release from the mother figure. Her body marked with a lack is reduced in pornographic discourse to sex features. The body of the Phallic Mother becomes passive and submissive. However, this trick brings only illusory freedom. Bator is of the opinion that "the Phallic Mother, as the ultimate object of desire, the memory of lost paradise, and at the same time a menacing power capable of destroying the identity (separateness) of a man becomes in pornography a 'bad girl', a seducer with whom sex is risky" (p.136).

Both in the pornographic movies and literature, female figures, slaves of love, are often presented as submissive and subordinate to the power of stronger men, and male figures are presented as oppressors and aggressors. Sexual violence appearing in pornography is a ritualized erotic element combining male domination with sexual subordination of women. Joanna Bator, on the basis of Lacan's psychoanalysis, advances a daring thesis that pornography results from fears of the mystery of femininity and longing for return to the Phallic Mother rooted in male unconsciousness with simultaneous fulfilment of the need to reconcile with the full force of strong figure of the Other, with the Father. Remaining in the oedipal triad also influences later male-female relations. In the psychoanalysis of Freud or Lacan, the subject of desire is a man who looks. Power over the look requires constant confirmation. Bator suggests that it is impossible to understand the mystery of the overwhelming force that makes a man inclined toward a woman, and the mystery of knowing that a woman could make a man turn into nothingness. Paradoxically, it is pornography, which breaks the taboo of sexuality, that is close to answering this intriguing question.

Certainly, taboos in social terms refer to phenomena, the extent of which in some sense is shrinking, but the taboo itself does not cease to exist. It should be stressed that the taboo itself, in particular the taboo of sexuality discussed in this paper, cannot be broken, especially since its breaking would be extremely difficult to revise and prove. In the context of breaking sexuality taboos, it is important to emphasise the fact that no norms are eternal. Variability of taboo is an inevitable process.

⁵ Melanie Klein has shifted the burden of fear of the castrating father to the fear of the Phallic Mother, who is attributed with possession of a phallus by the child. The Phallic Mother is also a castrating mother. This imagery refers to the earliest phase of a child's development that has sadistic fantasies with regard to its mother, projects aggressive feelings onto her, and begins to fear her. Klein uses the category of bad breast that is associated with the penis. Klein's theory was discussed in the early works of Jacques Lacan, where the category of a Devouring Mother appears. A child suffering from the weaning complex, for whom access to unconditional and continuous satisfaction of their oral drive was restricted, projects its aggression onto the mother, imagining that she wants to devour it. Paweł Dybel claims that "the phantasm of the Phallic Mother and her (impossible) castration is, according to Lacan, as fundamental as the phantasm of murder of the Father that was not real. This results from the fact that what this phantasm hides: the separation of the subject from the Mother as the Thing and the experience of her as the 'second sex' stigmatized by lack, is equally embedded in the structure of symbolic order (Other-language) as the experience of separation from the Other-Father" (p. 204).

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