LUMEN 2014

Postmodernism and Surrealist Pornography

Aura-Elena Schussler

*Corresponding author. Tel.: + 004-0762-453388
E-mail address: aursch2005@yahoo.com; aura.schussler@ubbcluj.ro.

Abstract

The purpose of the present research is the argument that postmodernism has put forward in the arts, in favour of pornography, starting from the latter's presence in surrealist art and continuing with the consideration of the role of the gaze and censorship in the development of pornography. We will achieve this by using the psychoanalytic theory of scopophilia and anamorphosis, as well as Hays' code and the impact of money shot practices in cinematography. The method of operation used is that of argumentation and philosophical criticism of postmodern culture and surrealist art. In our argumentative and critical approach, we’re using the concepts of Jean Baudrillard, Susan Sontag, Theodor Adorno and Dominique Maingueneau. The aim is to demonstrate, on the one hand, the assumption of surrealist overtones in pornography (Susan Sontag – the theory of ‘pornographic imagination’) and, on the other hand, to deconstruct Theodor Adorno’s argument through the theory of intertextuality – the inability to classify a pornographic text in literature – as well as the importance of scopophilia in the pornographic apparatus’ postmodern game.

© 2014 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license
(http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/).
Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of LUMEN 2014.

Keywords: pornography; eroticism; postmodernism; surrealism; scopophilia; gaze; ‘pornographic imagination’.

1. Introduction

Our paper starts with an analysis of surrealism and its influences in postmodern culture, of pornography, continuing with an analysis of the role of the gaze and censorship in pornography, ending with a Baudrillardian critique on postmodernism in the arts, especially in cinematography. We will base our demonstrative arguments on
the psychoanalytic theory of scopophilia and anamorphosis, as well as Hays’ code and the impact of money shots’ practice in cinematography. Our research starts from the surrealist theories involving the exaltation of the mind, the subconscious and female gender, considered a source of inspiration and creation for the male artist. We add this hypothesis to the postmodern current of pop art, where the female gender represents a fetish model for artistic creation, and where the stake is, just as in surrealism, diverting the female gender from its conceiving nature and embedding it in a symbolic sense of body objectification. The starting point in our analysis, argument and criticism, brought to the heterogeneity pornography holds in postmodernism, is the series of works *Tantric Pop Art*, by Julian Murphy. From here we try to bring arguments sustaining the hypothesis of surrealist overtones in pornography which we support with Susan Sontag’s (2009) concept of ‘pornographic imagination’, the practical application of which can be found in the literature. ‘Pornographic imagination’ is a concept used by Susan Sontag (2009, pp. 35-74) in her book, *Style of Radical Will*. According to her, ‘pornographic imagination’ results from pornographic works distorting reality and imagination by the manner in which they are presented, and through the fact that ‘pornographic imagination’ prefers ready-mades, character convention and action, making pornography into something other than person “theater”. On this background, we shall insert Theodor Adorno’s (Sontag, 2009, p. 39) vision on pornographic texts. According to Sontag’s (2009, pp. 39-40) interpretation of his vision, pornographic texts do not fall within the parameters of literature, as they lack the basic structure of a literary text. We shall deconstruct the linguistic argument denying pornography’s classification in literature, from the perspective of Sontag’s (2009) critique of such theories, using ‘pornographic imagination’ and the theory of intertextuality. The scopophilia resulting from this polymorphic voyeurism results, in the case of Andy Warhol’s creations (*The Kiss, Blow Job*), not only in a process of educating the individual’s sexual orientation and fantasies, but also in an effect of their manipulation, by creating an affective anamorphic effect within which the other’s body deconstructs under the auspices of organic anagrams. In these conditions, it is the gaze, and not the senses, which is responsible for what the hypothesis of a surrealist pornography offers us. Guilty of dissolving intersubjectivity, of the “other”, or of the concept of person, but the ‘pornographic imagination’, where the germination process of subconscious or dream libidinal repressions takes place.

2. **Surrealist Erogenity and Pornographic Heterogeneity**

Further on, we shall see if we can speak of a surrealist erogeneity and a pornographic heterogeneity. Therefore, ‘pornographic imagination’ represents the environment where surrealist erogeneity takes place, as pornography’s heterogeneous mass allows the transgressing of limits and the unveiling of an eroticism which no longer benefits from specific sensuality and innocence, but which wears pornography’s obscene fetish and fantasy violence given by the exaltation of the repressed residues of the unconscious. Surrealists have been interested by questions about eroticism, love, dreams, madness, art and the unconscious. Their intention has been to analyze each and every aspect of sexual desire, seen as a manner in which to transgress the bourgeoisie’s traditional-cultural values, as well as lawful motherhood and sexuality within marriage (Mahon, 2005). This is the reason why they tried to see beyond the woman-life partner or the woman-mother, but only from the perspective of artistic creation, of dreaming, and of the male imagination (Mahon, 2005). They tried to turn the woman into a muse, a chimera to save the male thoughts, through its grace, delicacy, sensuality and mysterious innocence.

“Your most erogenous zone is your mind!” (Murphy, 2000, p.78) states Julian Murphy, motivating his creations with a strong fetishist flavour, mixed together with pornographic overtones, which is observed from the erotic-sexual objectification of the female body, or from the simulation of penetrations and sexual organs (ex: *Secateurs, Love Triangle, Venice-1*). Yes, it is true that our most erogenous zone is our mind. The place where the mix between dream and fantasy, real and ‘hyperreal’ takes place, to what we could call surrealism and postmodernism. Within these parameters, pornography uses the ingredients offered by both currents, and creates a cultural heterogeneity, where the capitalization of sexual instinct, together with the exaltation of imagination, creates a sort of altered reality, where the purpose is not inciting organs, but creating a schizophrenic delirium, where irony plays the part of the curator (Baudrillard, 2005 p.20). Murphy’s artistic collection entitled *Tantric pop art*, completes Allen Jones’ erotic pop art (which represents Murphy’s main source of inspiration) through the postmodern method, namely, by supporting artistic creation with a discourse. The fact that his works – which are rather more pop art – are supported by the slogan “Your most erogenous zone is your mind!”, (Murphy, 2000, p.78) lead us, from the point of view of
the contents of the idea, to surrealist principles, where the mind, the madness, the dream and the unconscious are the ones to be capitalized. Murphy’s art is essentially a pop art, due to the fact that it follows the lines of pop art, by using mass culture, advertising and daily objects (like Allen Jones), but at the same time, it has surrealist overtones, due to the exaltation of the mind and to the capitalization of the female gender in creation. For surrealists, the female gender was most often symbolized and identified with vegetal elements, preferably flowers. In Murphy’s works, the female gender is depicted by daily objects such as the knife (Swiss Army Knives), the vacuum cleaner (Fetish Slave Vacuum, Fetish Maid Vacuum), the stiletto shoe (Fetish High Heeled Shoe), the clothespin (Fetish Clothes Pin) or the cheese grater (Grater Protection) and which, from the perspective of the playful, pamphleteer, humorous and ironic manner, classifies its creations as postmodern art. The surrealist overtones result from the ideology he places behind his creations, aiming to stimulate the mind and the senses at a cerebral level. As the artist himself states – “My works are intended to stimulate the senses and not the genitals, as does some kind of erotic art!” (Murphy, 2000, p.78). However, this freedom of expression, mixed with the perversity of a schizophrenic delirium, are the elements that pornography needs to build the heterogeneity to penetrate the public’s mind, from the perspective of ‘hyperreality’. Pornographic heterogeneity is reflected in particular in the genre’s artistic area, where we find fields such as politics, economics, religion or technology coming together. Although arbitrary at first glance, this annexation is aimed at provoking and inciting mental activity, while triggering an ergonocity, not only at the physical level, but also in the unconscious, giving its surrealist overtones.

3. Surrealism and Pornographic Literature

If we are to discuss the literature of this genre, namely pornographic literature, we must first see if we can classify pornographic texts within literary parameters. Therefore – by comparison to the erotic texts, which are effortlessly classified within literature – the pornographic text has raised a series of questions and suspicions regarding its cultural status and its affiliation to literature. According to Theodor Adorno, as Sontag (2009, p.39) emphasizes, pornographic text does not fit literature’s parameters, because, first, this type of text lacks the basic structure of a literary text, which is constructed in terms of an introduction, a body and a conclusion. In a pornographic text, Adorno states, the introduction and conclusion are absent, as it is constricted more like an excuse for a nonexistent introduction, stemming in a series of events that cannot find any finality – other than a series of pornographic text, but also a specificity of the literature of this genre, otherwise indicating the intertextual nature of pornographic writings. For example, Story of O by Pauline Réage (1981), easily fits the characteristics of literature, because, besides the fact the novel has an introduction, a body and a conclusion, the main character, O, is very well depicted, with her psychical feelings and erotic emotions (Sontag, 2009, p.40). However, these arguments against classifying pornographic text as literature are annihilated by arguments supporting a pornographic literature. These demonstrate that there are pornographic texts which meet the three main sections of a literary text (introduction, body and conclusion) and also depict the psychical emotions of the characters, even if in terms of sexual activities taken to an extreme, together with the use of obscene language (Sontag, 2009). In fact this method of exposure and the rendering of deviant sexual activities, supported by the trivia of licentious language and expressions, is not only a characteristic specific to the pornographic text, but also a specificity of the literature of this genre, otherwise indicating the intertextual nature of pornographic writings. For example, Story of O by Pauline Réage (1981), easily fits the characteristics of literature, because, besides the fact the novel has an introduction, a body and a conclusion, the main character, O, is very well depicted, with her psychical feelings and erotic emotions (Sontag, 2009, p.40). Besides this aspect, intertextuality is also present in Réage’s creation. The novel is a parody of de Sade’s creation, The 120 Days of Sodom (2009) – an aspect indicating the postmodern nature of the creation, allowing it to be classified as what we might call ‘new literature’, where parody, pastiche or irony constitute the reality the reader discovers beyond the rules imposed by the cultural-historic tradition. The same thing is demonstrated by Story of the Eye (Bataille, 2001) or My Mother.
Madame Edwarda, The Dead Man (Bataille, 2012). Strewn with surreal overtones, the texts of these works also render clearly and with a lucidity pertaining to the principles of literature, the feelings, fantasies, actions and orgies of the characters. In these cases, intertextuality is also present. The works make reference to both de Sade’s creations, as well as the work of Leopold von Sacher–Masoch Venus in Furs (2013). Reading these works induces in the reader a series of psychic feelings, which test and push human limits to the extreme. Basically, the reader lives with his characters in terms of their sexual experiences, both erotic and sadomasochistic, from the stance of both the voyeur and the narrator-witness. Therefore, from this point of view, where a pornographic text depicts a side of the human emotions which the author transmits to the reader, who, in turn, lives them by participating actively or passively to the events, includes a pornographic text in literature and art – especially if the works are supported by a series of paintings, as with the novel La Belle Captive by Alain Robbe-Grillet (1996).

However, in literature, the terms erotic and pornographic were used alternatively, in order to distort the differences between the explicit descriptions of sexual acts or organs and the suggestive allusions or sexual parodies, as we find in The Indiscreet Jewels by Denis Diderot (1993), or in Henry Miller’s trilogy (2004) – The Rosy Crucifixion: Sexus, Plexus, Nexus. Therefore, according to Dominique Maingueneau (2007), we can talk about a fusion or a symbiosis between the two styles of text, which forces us to differentiate between pornographic works and the pornographic sequences from a text. This type of differentiation, according to him, is necessary to establish inside pornographic productions, a division between “the pornographic apparatus” - pertaining to semiotic practices: etching, drawing, photography, film, magazines, etc. – and the pornographic text reserved for representations of verbal signs related to the text. The conclusion is there are erotic texts (or works) with pornographic sequences and pornographic texts with erotic sequences. By isolating a pornographic sequence, we could get to a singular and linear reading of the text, which is also valid in case of pornographic works, where the isolation of erotic and sensual passages allows reading the text within the limits of pornography. Through the mechanism of isolating sequences (erotic/pornographic) we can classify the work within a genre or the other (Maingueneau, 2007). However, this differentiation mechanism between the two is not arbitrary. Firstly, the basic element allowing their separation is language. Language in a pornographic text is primarily pretty meager in terms of figures of speech. From the beginning, by using the first person, it wants to be a direct language in the idea (Maingueneau, 2007, p.71). Nevertheless, we can also find plenty of pornographic works written in the third person. The process, according to Dominique Maingueneau (2007, p.74), usually follows the mechanism of an “invisible” narrator, who depicts the acts of the characters involved in a story told in the third person, with using past simple or imperfect verbs. In this case, it is no longer about the direct expression of erotic fantasies, as is found in first person stories. The advantage in this type of depiction consists in allowing the reader to go from an outside point of view, to the point of view of any participant in the text. In pornographic works, the main attempt is to bring forth trivial words and expressions, which, according to moral norms, are excluded or minimized as much as possible in current language. The censorship of such language by society is an advantage that pornography uses to prove its power and transgressive nature once more. If however this type of language could be, used in daily speech, it would lose some of its transgressive nature and its power of sexual stimulation, as it would become normal, regular (Maingueneau, 2007, p.78). Thus, the pornographic empowerment at this level results in an approximation of the relationship between text and reader, due to the fact that the communicative act at this level is focused on the relationship between the two, which allows for an evolution of the field (Maingueneau, 2007, p.82). According to the theory of communication, in each act of communication, between the emitter and the receiver, there must be a certain degree of cognitive reciprocity, so that the transmitted message can be deciphered and understood. This is the reason why a pornographic work with surrealist influence, such as Story of the Eye, has to turn to intertextuality, just as with the work of Alain Robbe-Grillet (1996), La Belle Captive. Therefore, on this level, we cannot omit the intertextual nature of pornographic texts. The hypothesis is important due to the fact that, from the point of view of a surrealist influence in pornography, intertextuality is a quality pertaining to both literature and communication, and its study could be based on intertextual disposition and, at the same time, on interaction between text and reader. This is why in literary movements such as surrealism, where there is an alternation and a modification of literary and extra-literary surfaces, it is necessary to identify all the communication channels used, in order to establish the influence the text has on the reader. This is why, in the case of Robbe-Grillet’s work, besides the surrealist overtones we can identify in the text, we also have the visual support of René Magritte’s creation (77 of them), which Alain introduced as a comment on Magritte’s art. Robbe-Grillete uses the intertextual practice in his work, starting with
Magritte’s paintings, which he applies to this new literary order, where he seeks to create a relationship between the reader/observer of the image and the links between the two texts. The written text reflects a visual one, and vice versa. The observer is encouraged to interact with this intertext, seeking pleasure and finding signification, from undermining narrative conventions or cultural myths to sexual transgression and the eternal feminine. The text is otherwise not a pornographic one. It has pornographic sequences, but the surrealist overtones are very well captured at this level. The thing we can find within the text, as a trait of the pornographic genre, but excluding pornography (according to Adorno) in the literary area, is the fact that the novel has a circular structure, without a plot and without well defined characters – characteristics defining metafiction as a genre and, in consequence, deconstructing Adorno’s argument according to which the lack of a classical literary structure (introduction, body and conclusion), together with defining the characters, excludes pornographic text from literature. On the contrary, this type of pornographic text is one specific to postmodernism, and the surrealist influence on this type of literature does not disqualify it from being literature as art, but rather qualifies it within.

4. Postmodernism and the Capitalization of the Gaze, under the sign of Pornography

In pornography, the gaze is the one aspect that helps to establish a relationship between subject and object, between the one who looks, usually identified by the consumer, and the image he looks upon, rendered by the body/bodies captured by the camera in various positions invoking sex or sexuality. The credit of pornography in this entire postmodern spectacle is that, although it gives the impression that it exposes a sexual reality taken to the extreme, it more likely seeks to fool reality, to fuel the simulacra, and to distort the viewer’s perception. In this context, the phenomenon of the gaze can easily be identified in the examples of two painters from Ancient Greece, Zeuxis and Parrhasios. Both of them created works deceiving the gaze by the simple fact that they are so close to reality that they come to be confused with it. Thus, Zeuxis’ eyes have been deceived by the veil painted by Parrhasios, just as the eyes of the birds have been deceived by the grapes painted by Zeuxis. This example emphasizes the difference between eye/gaze, as well as the separation between perception and reality. According to a Lacanian interpretation (Lacan, 1998, pp. 67-123), while the eye is captured by the visible, by what it can perceive, the gaze is deceived with what could exist behind the apparent surface, which in this case is represented by the grapes and the veil painted on the wall. Basically, what the artist is constructing while exposing an image before the eyes of a subject, is instituting a dialogue with what is behind the image, the gaze, the object and the real. In other words, the gaze is the one sense signifying the stakes between representation and the real, where the real represents that which cannot be translated into symbols, and which remains unconscious even beyond the most perfect illusion. Basically, the relationship between eye and gaze is similar to the structure of anamorphosis. Lacan (1998) identifies this optical procedure in Hans Holbein’s painting, The Ambassadors (1533), where he contests the predominance of a central-subject in the creation, or that of a geometric point of view. Thus, it is not just the subject who looks at the object; the object also looks at the subject, creating the sensation of watching and being watched at the same time. The resulting image-screen, mediates sight-object for the subject, but at the same time it protects the subject from the sight-object. The unconscious sight is represented by the desire for the other. Thus, an individual’s inner world and his outer world, together with individual perceptions and projections, are mutually linked, not only in a mutual psycho-dynamic relationship, but also in a power involving social relationships, where art becomes “the other”, the reason for which it can become the object of “desire”. It constitutes the limit where the obscene has the capacity to manifest itself, as well as surprise. However, postmodernism exploits the awareness of this mechanism when it makes pornography an absolute environment, where the individual allows himself to be manipulated by a sexual ‘hyperreality’ (Baudrillard, 1994) which not only transgresses the interdicts, but also makes this procedure a purpose in itself.

Thus, for film, the gaze adopts an attitude of scopophilia. This is because the world of films allows the viewer not only the act of looking upon a static body, but also upon a body in movement, thus raising the interest in terms of a dynamic between the gaze and imagination (Bazin, 2005). The attitude of scopophilia in cinemas is important for the pornographic apparatus, because it fuels the pleasure of the act of viewing, present ever since childhood, which can now be manifested freely, under the intimate auspices of the movie theater. Here, the viewer-consumer has the possibility to be led by the voyeuristic instinct without giving the slightest impression of a perverse imagination.
(Bazin, 2005). However, this protective bubble is just a simulacrum created by postmodernism. Censorship is the one to occur to disturb the comfortable feel of the act of scopophilia. It is the one offering a sight of what it is allowed to assimilate. The sin of watching was materialized in movie theaters during World War II as what we now know as the Motion Picture Production Code or the Hays Code. Basically, the Hays Code tried to implement a cleansing of the gaze, an extirpation of scopic tendencies projected on everything which tends to return the individual to the repressed lands of libido and subconscious (Williams, 2005). This panoptic mechanism of gaze control, that led to the emergence of cultural clichés and tautologies, of a neo-bourgeois hypocrisy inspired by the fear of transgression, that postmodernism later used as an excess mechanism, but this time in the opposite direction, represented the favourable environment for the pornographic apparatus, to what it would mean starting with the Hippie movement, the end of the Hays Code, and the capitalization of sight.

As an example of what contributed to the release of cinematography from the hysteria of restrictions, we could name Andy Warhol, who, in the 60’s, reintroduced in cinematography exactly the thing the Hays Code had been trying to eradicate for more than three decades. Thus, if one of the Hays Code’s strong points was limiting kissing to approximately three seconds, Warhol brings before us the movie The Kiss, where, for about an hour, the spectator’s scopic craving is satisfied by successively viewing kisses not only between men and women, but also between women or between men (Williams, 2008, pp. 25-68). Thus, Warhol not only transgressed the moral barrier that the code had imposed for some time, but also touched a nerve of the moral-pathological conscience, namely with regard to homosexuality and lesbianism. What Warhol accomplished with this movie was not only a transgression of the limits of censorship, but also a parody of his own transgression. Because it’s not enough to perceive the message the artist is exposing, starting with the title, sustained then by the first sequences of the movie which reiterate the fact that it’s about kissing, but we are determined to persist in the frenzy and rhythm of the thirty couples kissing, and whose act of kissing, a trivial act, reach the proportions of a voyeuristic obsession that the artist transmits by insisting on the same act.

The exclusively postmodern position Warhol offers us with his movie allows the gaze, censored until now, of the joy of voyeurism and the scopic satisfaction (Williams, 2008, pp. 25-68). From here to the pornographic allure we can deduce in Warhol’s creation, there is just one more step. But the fact that Warhol relies in his film on not only capturing an erotic act, such as kissing, which he dissolves to its most sensitive underlying layers, by touching the states of inversion between the couples, is not reason enough to classify this creation as pornographic, but rather to view it as erotic. The pornographic allure comes rather from the redundancy of the images of kissing, from the tautology of the act, and from the downtime that the camera captures in the mutual penetration and exploration of the mouth by the partners. Just as in pornography, the camera is focused on an act of penetration and on the penetrated orifice. The supersaturation of the act of kissing which the movie induces at some point in the viewer, is similar to the supersaturation of the coupleings that pornography exploits in its creation. Another example in this direction is Warhol’s well-known creation, Blow Job. The movie offers us thirty-five minutes of sexual ecstasy on the part of a man, on whose face we can see the sexual satisfaction, while the act of fellatio is suggested to the spectator. The movie tends towards the pornographic area, because this time imagination guides the viewer in this direction. The act of fellatio itself is not explicitly captured, but the mimic and facial expressions the movie’s protagonist exposes to the camera allows the viewer to interpret this continuous voluptuousness as a consequence of sexual stimulation. But, at the same time, this act of fellatio can be replaced by an act of masturbation. Either our protagonist is erotically pleasing himself, or this act is performed by someone else. This is where ‘pornographic imagination’ has a place, leaving the consumer the freedom to choose one of the options. If they are valid and it is true that the message on the actor’s face is based on a sexual act, then the involvement of pornography is that much more ingenious, as it does not have to manifest its entire artillery of sexual excess, because the simple presence of simulating sexual voluptuousness is enough. This context gives not only the power of manipulation that the pornographic apparatus has on the consumer’s consciousness during the visual impact, but also the message it transmits, in this situation, even from the title, Blow Job. But, in contrast to hard-core pornography where the act of fellatio is captured in detail, in the case of Warhol’s creation, it is not only that the oral sex proposed by the title appears off-frame, but also that the frenzy of the orgasm is rendered rather late and ambiguously. We can realize the presence of orgasm after the final act of smoking a cigarette, an act which is, otherwise, a cinematic cliché. The state of scopic tension the movie exercises on the viewer is given by the mechanism in which the movie deprives the consumer of the image of fellatio he’s expecting, after being enticed by the title. Therefore, the movie has two
shortcomings. One is of the actual fellatio, and one is of the orgasm, suggested, as said before, by the smoked cigarette. Basically, the entire movie is constructed of a series of symbols and non-verbal codes, inciting the viewer’s imagination to pornography. The evidence of a pornographic reality is also missing in this case, but its manipulative effect leads to an intensification of the act of scopophilia, through the libidinal tension it generates, and through the absence of the two essential points (fellatio, orgasm). If the two missing elements had been present in Warhol’s movie, than it could be classified as a pornographic production. But the effect of the simulacrum the artist is playing with, touches pornography, but does not completely comprise it. This perverse game the artist is playing touches items common to the pornographic apparatus, such as voyeurism and downtime.

But, regardless of the images, the movie’s title directs the consumer’s imagination towards the sphere of pornography. Independent of the title, the images satisfy to some degree the scopic activity of a ‘pornographic imagination’. Together they form a pornographic framework by satirizing a sexual act which isn’t even captured in reality, but whose presence through absence fuels the postmodern simulacrum of a pornographic conscience, such that censorship only made it stronger rather than weakening it (Williams, 2008). But regardless of these variants, the fact remains that Warhol relies on the scopic potential that the two movies can have on the viewer, and on the message hidden behind the pleasure of watching. And the message, in both cases, is in the first instance sexual-erotic, and only in the second instance pornographic. Why aren’t we speaking about an eminently pornographic message? The postmodern context of Warhol’s work marks the necessity of metaphors, along with the presence of minimalism through motion through the tautology of a single act. And furthermore, by simulating the imagination that these images do to the viewer, the imaginary and apparent character that pornography confers is once more underlined. Also, the capitalization of the gaze appears when the consumer is lured to pay for a movie because of only one scene that is the high point of the movie and costs the producer most, in that it actually represents the whole purpose for which the movie was made. This process is known as money shots and was taken over by the pornographic apparatus that uses it as slang (also known as cum shots), usually in hard core pornography, to fetishise the phallicility and visibility of the male orgasm. This is the method that the pornographic apparatus has generated to satisfy the consumers’ voyeurism and the activity of scopophilia. In this context, the capitalization of the gaze could appear as a lawful variant of the scopophilia act, because the pleasure of watching someone else, while the consumer’s watching reduces him to the status of an object, is validated through transgressing censorship and sexual interdictions. This is the reason why the viewer (consumer) remains frustrated because his expectations were not satisfied by the title while watching a Blow Job. Here, the pornographic apparatus capitalizes the consumer’s sight by the fetishisation of the seminal fluid, and by transforming the female gender in the object destined to assimilate and wear it. The seminal fluid’s meaning takes, besides a financial value, through its cashing a symbolic value, that of power. This is why the scopophilia activity of the consumer transforms itself in the activity of the male code – where the message of objectifying the female partner, that of the symbolic value of this objectification activity takes at the time of the capitalization of the gaze, given by the pleasure of the viewing act, but also by the possibility of the consumer paying for what satisfies his scopophilia activity, is fueled by the cinematography’s imagery – through which the pornographic apparatus manipulates in the name of the male public’s pleasure, the watching of this panoptic game of submission and taming.

5. Conclusions

As a mechanism of action, pornography has taken over some surreal accents (imagination, dream, unconscious and woman), which is why some surreal creations can be classified as being pornographic. Why this reversible path between the two? Because at the common point where they meet – a point defined by the female-eroticism relationship – they merge at the ‘pornographic imagination’ level, which is actually the result of the border deletion that art has created, in the demarche of introducing pornography in its field. Thus, we can state that by merging them, surreal art grants pornographic obscenity the status of art, and pornography frees surrealism of the taboos imposed by cultural tradition and the moral rules imposed by it. Pornography tests our limits and resistance. It tests our gaze and triggers our scopophilia process, slipping towards our libidinal needs, which it manipulates in the name of a sort of ‘hyper reality’ where the reference codes are depicted on the watched model’s body (actor/actress). The
capitalization of the gaze results from this simulacrum triggered at the level of perception and reality, starting with
the lawful transgression of sexual interdicts, social taboos and, not least, the prevention of censorship.

References

Bataille, G. (2001). *Story of the Eye*. USA: City Lights Publishers.
Bataille, G. (2012). *My Mother, Madame Edwarda, The Dead Man*. USA: Penguin Classics.
Baudrillard, J. (2005). *The Conspiracy of Art*. New York: Semiotext(e).
Baudrillard, J. (1994). *Simulacra and Simulation*. USA: University of Michigan Press.
Bazin, A. (2005). *What Is Cinema?*, Vol. 2. USA: University of California Press.
Diderot, D. (1993). *The Indiscreet Jewels*. New York: Marsilio Pub.
Grillet, A. R. (1996). *La Belle Captive*. USA: University of California Press.
Murphy, J. (2000). *Singular Art of Julian Murphy*. USA: Erotic Print Society.
Maingenuenau, D. (2007). *La littérature pornographique*. Paris: Arman Colin.
Mahon, A. (2005). *Surrealism and the Politics of Eros, 1938-1968*. USA: Oxford University Press.
Miller, H. (2004). *The Rosy Crucifixion: Sexus, Plexus, Nexus*. USA: olympiapress.com.
Lacan, J. (1998). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI: The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis, Of the Gaze as Objet Petit a*. New York: Norton & Company.
Masoch, L. S. (2013). *Venus in Furs*. USA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
Reage, P. (1981). *Story of O*. New York: Ballantine Books.
Sade, M. (2009). *The 120 Days of Sodom*. USA: Wilder Publications.
Sontag, S. (2009). *Styles of Radical Will*. London: Penguin Books.
Williams, L. (2005). *The Erotic Thriller in Contemporary Cinema*. USA: Indiana University Press.
Williams, L. (2008). *Screening Sex*. Durham & London: Duke University Press Books.