

Viktoriia Slynchuk  
Matriculation number: 11928724

# **SEXUALITY AND SELF-IDENTIFICATION**

Written component of the artistic thesis

Supervisor: Associate Professorin Mag. phil.,  
Lachmayer-Felderer, Brigitte

Target academic title: Master of Arts

Field of study  
Social Design Arts as Urban Innovation Master  
Arts and Society - Social Design  
University of Applied Arts Vienna

Summer semester 2021

# OVERVIEW

## RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC

The World Association for Sexual Health

Legal situation in Ukraine

Artistic self-experiment

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW DURING THE 1920s

A short period of sexual liberation

Aaron Zalkind

"The Twelve Sexual Commandments  
of Revolutionary Proletariat"

## STATE OF THE 'ART': RELATED ART PROJECTS

## RESEARCH QUESTION

## METHODOLOGY

Abstract

Full explanation of the video

## REFLECTION

## REFERENCE LIST

# RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC

## The World Association for Sexual Health

The World Association's for Sexual Health (WAS) "Declaration of Sexual Rights" was originally proclaimed in 1997 [1], while the WAS "Declaration on Sexual Pleasure" has been proclaimed only in 2019 [2]. So, the legislative discourse on sexual pleasure is still in the process of evolving. The WAS "Sexual Health for the Millennium. A Declaration and Technical Document" (Millennium Declaration) [3] was released in 2008, where the WAS explains that promoting sexual health must play a key role in the new millennium. In its Chapter #8 "Achieve Recognition of Sexual Pleasure as a Component of Well-being" the WAS focus on the importance of sexual pleasure and provide examples from science, such as from the work "The Neurobiology of Love. Neuroendocrinology Letters" by Professor of Medicine Tobias Esch, and Doctor of Philosophy George B Stefano.

***"In the context of adaptive behavior and its necessity in evolution, it would appear that the pleasure generated by sexual stimulation, orgasm or intercourse would be selected-for evolutionarily. Consequently, pleasure can be seen as an effective and important adaptive mechanism, the function of which is to ensure the procreation and survival of the species" (Esch & Stefano, 2005, p. 182).***

***"To the extent that a society is concerned with the well-being and stability of families generally, and couples specifically, it is in the interests of policy makers to recognize the importance of sexual pleasure and to implement sexual health promotion programs that address sexual pleasure as fundamental to individual and couple health and wellbeing" (The WAS Millennium Declaration, 2008, p. 138).***

The WAS Millennium Declaration states in the part of the document for "Necessary Actions" to be taken (p. 142) that there is a need for international agreements and priority setting documents to articulate clearly both negative (e.g., freedom from STI/HIV, sexual violence and abuse) and positive (e.g., the right to sexual pleasure and satisfaction) sexual rights. That for now, community, national and international consensus is focused too much on negative sexual rights.

## Legal situation and morality in Ukraine

For the reasons of my research, I started to explore what is the legislative situation in Ukraine regarding recommendations of the WAS. I do neither hold any degrees in law, nor would I have any other legal education, even though I worked as a Senior Specialist of the International Agreements Division in the International Relations Department at the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine. In that function I had been involved in coordination, translation and preparation of drafts of international agreements, where I had a chance to understand how the basics of law function, however, I can't give the ultimate opinion on the situation. So, the research I did for my project now was done from a very personal position as a young woman and citizen of Ukraine. I have found no official documents which would articulate positive sexual rights, or would touch the topic of sexual pleasure. From my prospective it looks as Ukrainian national law is focused only on negative sexual rights (preventing sexual violence, abuse etc.). As far as I understood, the national legislation does not articulate clear restrictions or any regulations. For example, there is no article about sex in the public place. But although this eventuality is not legally controlled I am not aware of sexual encounters in public spaces. Obviously, no law is needed since a mutual moral understanding seems to be

much stronger to prevent sex in the public realm. So, I decided to check if there is any opinion on the topic of sex in public space online by experts. The Ukrainian law company (attorneys and lawyers) "Donets & Partners" JSC [4,] explains that there is a punishment for sex in a public place in Ukraine. However, it very much depends on the intentions, and they give examples: 1) if sex happened between a couple who indulged in an outburst of passion somewhere in a place hidden from prying eyes in a park and they were caught by a policeman, then it will be under Article 173 "Petty Hooliganism", Chapter 14 "Administrative Offenses that Encroach on Public Order and Public Safety" of "The Administrative Law Enforcement Code of Ukraine"[5], or perhaps just a verbal warning; 2) while if couple purposefully and consciously have sex on the street, in front of passers-by, thus protesting public morality - here they can get criminal liability under Article 296 "Hooliganism", Section XII "Criminal Offenses Against Public Order and Morality" of "The Criminal Code of Ukraine" [6]. Also "Donets & Partners" specify that as long as sex is usually involving at least two people, this is a crime committed by a group of people for which this couple can be punished by imprisonment for up to 4 years. However, the register of court decisions is not very rich in this category of cases.

***"Public morality - is a system of ethical norms, rules of conduct that have developed in society on the basis of traditional spiritual and cultural values, ideas of goodness, honor, dignity, public duty, conscience, justice" (Article 1, Law of Ukraine "On Protection of Public Morality", 2004) [translation from Ukrainian by V.S.]***

I personally find it very interesting that in both cases that provided "Donets & Partners" a person is identified as a hooligan, and especially this identification is interesting toward the first case when sexual intercourse was conducted under an outburst of passion, I personally think that there is a need for more carefully chosen words toward someone's passion. However, the two cases are not regulated by clearly articulated law against sex in public/community space, but are quite vaguely described as offenses against morality and against public order. As for me this is a very uncertain variable, to know for a person when she/he is acting against implicit moral rules and when not. For example nowadays there is no moral taboo on uncovered female breasts on public beaches, and it is a common practice among women to sunbathe topless, not only at the nude Kyiv's beach. My travel experience showed that being topless on a public beach is not common practice at all. For example, my friend asked me "you aren't in Europe, please wear a bra under your dress, everyone is staring at you" when we were traveling around Utah. And let's imagine in a while something changes in public morality in Kyiv, or to Kyiv would move in a group of people with other perception of morality, and some person would find it unacceptable that women would sunbathe topless in Kyiv, then they would be likely punished for offenses against someone's morality. I gave this example, so that you (reader of this paper) could get a clue why public morality has weight, and why, as an individual of Ukrainian society, in which there seems to be no obvious prohibitions under the law, I have absorbed a certain worldview and I am under the influence of a given morality and what people think, which I will discuss later in this paper.

Michael Foucault in his book "The use of Pleasure", which is second volume out of four-volume study "History of Sexuality", explains the focus of morality since Greek antiquity when it appeared as self-techniques to exercise a better version of yourself, where an individual identifies him- or herself with a social group and follows their rules. This process slowly developed into a more complex discourse of sexual morality.

***"... the ethical concern with regard to sexual behavior is not always, in its intensity or in its forms, in direct relation with the system of prohibitions; it often happens that the moral concern is strong precisely, where there is no obligation or prohibition. In short, prohibition is one thing, moral problematization is another." (Michael Foucault, 1984, p. 16) [translation from French by V.S.]***

## **Artistic self-experiment**

When I was in secondary school I felt there was too much attention on sexuality and too many taboos, already when using the word sex one did not really feel comfortable with that.

When I started my project I wanted to gather different perspectives of people of different generations about sexual morality. Firstly, I thought to concentrate on a small sub-group of Kyiv's women who I am close with, because it would be the only group of people who would most probably openly share their experiences and thoughts. I also started to interview my family with relatives of different generations. Some of my friends got so involved in my research that they started to ask their relatives questions to share with me. However, the influence of morality, social stigmas, and other types of societal factors on sexual pleasure has many aspects. The information I gathered with many interviews and conversations remained rather superficial, and did not reveal insights of the relation between the social environment we grew up in and our abilities to experience sexual pleasure as heterosexual women. Nevertheless, one theme was repeating from what I got to hear from older generations, which grew up during times of "deep" USSR: Many told that "sex was happening often, but unlike your new generation for us it was happening naturally!". By "naturally", as they explained, they meant that it was the logical consequence of friendship and long nights of studying together, or being members in different sports group activities, or also other activities, where there are common interests and it would be enough time to get to know each other. This repeating answer triggered something inside me. I could exactly see the values taught in my own family on how things between a couple should happen, I immediately remembered a secondary school discourse, and what I saw in Soviet movies in my childhood – of course without any sex scene, because the movies I've watched showed only romantic love. Since childhood I've felt an inner protest to such a rigid presentation, and tried to overcome the stereotypes and in the end the morals which were imposed on me.

So I decided to start with a personal self-reflection towards the sexual morality. This process allowed me to dig much deeper into the correlation of morality and sexual pleasure. I took my personal sexual biography as a study case and made a retrospective of my experiences and conditions they happened at. I structured my sexual experiences along categories, components and details, marking the ones that gave me special sexual pleasure. I analysed what characterized the relationships with my sex partners, and who these men were for me. I did the same with places and conditions under which all was happening, included as many aspects as possible, ranking from the professional status or a partner, up to the circumstances of a certain space. In other words: I tried to reconstruct my experience in all possible details. For my research I used a method similar to Gestalt therapy or the so-called "empty chair method", which I will explain more in detail in the chapter "Methodology" in regard to my art work where I was recording myself talking out loud, so to say speaking with myself, which helped me to draw things from my subconscious, which I have already forgotten, or which I would not consider as related, or to notice connections, which I haven't noticed before.

The most interesting thing I found during this self-research was the feeling of friendship, of common interests and views which obviously played a role in my most pleasant sexual experiences. At first it surprised me, since in my memory, the sexual encounters had only to do with sex and passion. This reflection brought me back to the values of morality and social stigmas I was growing up with. I retrospectively fought all the moral stigmas I've fought inside myself, to achieve new levels of sexual freedom. However it became obvious that some of them are inbuilt so deeply, that despite conscious efforts to follow other paths, they keep manipulating what I feel.

I was born in the last years of the existence of the Soviet Union. I can claim that I grew up in a family mostly formed by the Soviet society. But the "Iron Curtain" had already weakened before the collapse of the Soviet Union, and a little bit more information from the West began to arrive in the territory of the Soviet Union, unlike before that point the Soviet society lived mostly isolated from the influence of Western countries.

As a next step I tried to remember Soviet films and cartoons that I had watched in my childhood with my parents, and life values of which we were discussing as positive ones. Such stories filmed at different times of USSR suggested me that girls and boys are first of all comrades (word largely used in USSR defining persons with common interests or to address a fellow socialist or communist), that female and male are equal elements of society, and that friendship and common values between them are very important, and then love may arise. Homosexuality was not discussed at all.

Since I was researching in what way such predetermination would have influenced my sex life and my ability to experience sexual pleasure I also encountered the work of some experts/academics who worked on ideas of predetermination of life. So, I also became familiar with the theory of Canadian-born psychiatrist Eric Bern. Which for me being "the object of this art experiment" becoming familiar with Bern's writings seems ironique. Some of his books were on my family's bookshelf. In a way this fact seems to prove his theory that I have been pre-programmed since an early age indirectly by the readings of my parents and directly by reading his texts myself at a later point in my life.

Erik Bern in his work "Sex in Human Loving" (written in 1970) states that a person is very compliant and programmed to obey. He states that unlike animals which only can be trained to perform a stunt here and there, humans spend their whole life performing stunts for their masters. By masters Bern means parents, then teachers and later whoever can grab his or her attention. "Man is programmed to obey, obey, obey, obey the obedient, or obey the civil or uncivil disobedients" (Eric Bern "Sex in Human Loving", "Parental Programming" chapter, 1970 p. 144). A person can join any social movement or any ideology, but this is already pre-programmed.

***"From earliest months, the child is taught not only what to do, but also what to see, hear, touch, think, and feel. And beyond that, he is also told whether to be a winner or a loser and how his life will end. All these instructions are programmed into his mind and his brain just as firmly as though they were punch cards put into the bank of a computer. In later years, what he thinks of as his independence or his autonomy is merely his freedom to select certain cards, but for the most part the same old punch holes stay there that were put there at the beginning. Some people get an exhilarating sense of freedom by rebelling, which usually means one of two things: either they pull out a bunch of cards punched in early childhood which they have never used before..." (Eric Bern "Sex in Human Loving", "Parental Programming" chapter, 1970, p. 145)***

If what I feel is pre-programmed, then it would be necessary to dig to the origins of this notion, which formed a certain sexual discourse for me, my parents and my grandparents. So I decided to follow somehow the example of Foucault's, which he describes in "The Use of Pleasure", the 2nd volume of his "The History of Sexuality". There he deconstructs how the focus of morality on sexuality has started and developed through history since ancient times. So I started to look at how morals of sexuality appeared and changed in the USSR. I identified a point in history when the Tsarist system was overthrown, and a sexual revolution and liberation has happened during the 1920s, which even nowadays seems very liberal in some parts, and which then was replaced by a new conservative morality formulated by Aaron

Zalkind who was the leader of the pedagogical movement in the USSR. I still see the reflection of that moral manifesto in the way how my grandmother was raised, how my parents and how I was raised and educated.

## **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW DURING THE 1920s**

### **A short period of sexual liberation**

At the times of the Russian Empire relationships between women and men were controlled by the Christian-orthodox church and by the Tsaristic administration. The historical point I started to explore was the year 1917, when the monarchy system was overthrown. The change in the social formation and political regime in Russia led to a transformation between state power and religious organizations. The issue of the formation of an atheistic worldview was considered as the central task of the ideological work of the Communist Party and the Soviet government, and the release from the influence of religion of all spheres of society and the individual consciousness of its members. (Ufimtseva E.I. 2018). Public figure of the Russian emigration Trushnovich A.R. recalls *"In 1922, I attended several performances of "Doloy Styd" society. Completely naked, adorned only with a ribbon with the inscription "Doloy Styd", an orator in Krasnodar Square shouted from the rostrum: "Get out Meshchanstvo (title of a privileged citizen)! Get out with the priest's deception! We communards do not need clothes that cover the beauty of the body! We are children of the sun and air!"* [translation from Russian by V. S.] [8]

Here are the main events I gathered in regard to the societal conditions of sexuality before a new morality was modeled by the new state in the person of Aaron Zalkind.

- 1917 (December 18). The All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic issued a Decree "On Civil Marriage, on Children and on Keeping Books of Acts of State". This Decree stated that only a civil marriage is recognized and has legal consequences. [9]
- 1917 (December 19). The Decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic "On Divorce" was issued. According to this document, divorce cases were removed from the jurisdiction of the courts of spiritual consistories and transferred to the jurisdiction of local courts. [9]
- 1917. The October Revolution of 1917 led to the abolition of all Tsaristic laws. And although the attitude of the communists towards homosexuality was ambiguous, the new criminal laws based on secular and scientific ideas did not provide for punishment for same-sex relationships. But for men, criminal liability was reintroduced in 1934. (Article 154-a of "The Criminal Code of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic) [10]
- 1920. Resolution of the People's Commissariat of Health and the People's Commissariat of Justice "On Artificial Termination of Pregnancy" was issued.
- 1919. Kollontai founded "The Zhenotdel", which worked to improve the status of women in the Soviet Union. She was a champion of women's liberation and an advocate of free love, and later came to be recognized as a key figure in Marxist feminism.

Sexual freedom became part of the anti-bourgeois propaganda. I started to search how such free views, which even in the 21st century are valid, began to roll back to taboos. Aaron Zalkind appeared to be a key figure of that time, engaged in the biopolitics of the masses and their sexuality.

### **Aaron Zalkind**

Aaron Zalkind (1888–1936) was a Soviet doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, psychoanalyst and leader of the pedological movement in the USSR. He was the first one to bring psychoanalysis to the territory of Russia.

Zalkind himself explains pedology as the science of developing human personality, of the growing human being under the conditions of his or her environment. For the USSR, this is the science of the *Novogo Massovogo Cheloveka*, embracing women and men, in an emerging, socialist society, which also makes such a development possible. He states that discussions about the qualities of the new environment, about the qualities of the *Novogo Massovogo Cheloveka* and about the possibilities of upbringing, re-education, reorganization in relation to the socialist goals of the new system were concentrated in pedology and completely merged into it. Zalkind's focus was the development of the *Novogo Massovogo Cheloveka* through the impact of a Socialist society. He states that childhood is the crucial period in one's life, because during this period the environment turns out to be the most powerful, decisive factor that creates the main attitudes of development, determines all the main perspectives of the future life of a person (Zalkind A. B. "Pedology in the USSR", 1929, p. 5-6).

**"He had another path of direct immersion in the social environment - through pedology, the tasks of which in the 20s and 30s were defined as the tasks of the science of the child, - to form, train, educate a new person. The originality of A. Zalkind's approach was that he saw sex education as the most important component of general education, which is at the center of theoretical research and practical applications." (Pruzhnina A. A., "Aron Zalkind. Manifest of Sexual Revolution" , 2010, p. 48) [translation from Russian by V.S.]**

According to unverified information, he died in July 1936 on the street from a heart attack after a meeting at which his scientific and administrative activities as one of the leaders of the pedological movement in the USSR were criticized.

Associate Professor of the Department of Philosophy at Tver State University Korsakov Sergey Nikolaevich explains in his work "New Facts About A. B. Zalkind" that Zalkind's works on pedology and psychoanalysis were withdrawn from libraries, articles were torn out of magazine files, the name of the scientist was covered with mud after his death. He also states "The name of A.B. Zalkind was simply forbidden to be mentioned". (Korsakov S. N., 2010, p. 51). Zalkind's name only returned to the academical realm after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Aaron Zalkind's "The Twelve Sexual Commandments of Revolutionary Proletariat" was published in 1924, and devoted to the issues of streamlining the personal life of men and women in the USSR. It consists of twelve Commandments, which, having firmly forgotten about their author, Soviet society steadily followed for more than half a century. His theory of sex education was implemented in all levels of human life in USSR, where internal sexual tension is relieved by redirecting energy to achieve socially acceptable goals. This Commandments are coming into my art work only to the extent of my personal self-reflection on them, so that in the story are presented only the Commandments which I felt were representing the ideas of how I was raised by my family and a secondary school, and other factors of my surrounding in 90th as Soviet movies on TV or moral opinion of others in my

environment. They are used as a method to represent the stigmas, which I feel as an individual, have been still present in the society even after the collapse of the USSR.

## **TWELVE SEXUAL COMMANDMENTS OF REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAT**

### **Commandment #1**

#### **"There should not be an unnecessarily early development of sexual activity in the proletariat environment"**

*The Communist Children's Movement, aimed to capture the interests of all children from an early age, to create the best conditions for the development of independence in children, for childhood physical wellbeing, for the growth of curious, social, adventurous and heroic aspirations, to engage the attention of all children and prevent the appearance of the parasitic spider of early sexuality.*

*There's physical education, exposure to combat, bright class ideology, and early equal companionship between genders. Premature sexual development has no space to grow in these conditions. So the first aim of the proletariat was to limit the opportunities for sexual development from an early age. In order to do that, it was necessary to orient parents and schools towards the correct approach to social and biological development in children, to promote this approach in every possible way and to use up all available resources to organize a mass communist children's movement, and introduce this movement to these children's lives, schools and families. Improving sexual understanding in childhood would make future struggles with sexual confusion unnecessary in adulthood.*

### **Commandment #2**

#### **"It is necessary to abstain from sexual activity before marriage: marriage is to be had only when social and biological maturity is reached (20-25 y.o.)"**

*What is the harm in sexual activity before marriage? The harm is in the fact that such sexual activity is disorganized, often accidental, unregulated by strong feelings between partners, subject to the most superficial forms of excitement, and essentially characterized by the features that, as we'll discuss later, must be unconditionally and mercilessly exterminated by the proletariat. Such a chaotically developed sexual state is never limited to the narrow sphere of one's sexual life, but invades all other areas of human creativity, robbing them without regulation. Is this acceptable from the point of view of revolutionary expediency?*

### **Commandments #3**

#### **"Sexual connection is only a final stage of deep multi-faceted sympathy and attachment to the object of sexual love"**

*Purely physical sexual desire is unacceptable from a revolutionary proletariat point of view. Humans differ from other animals in the fact that their mental and social faculties have control over their physiological ones. Sexual attraction to someone who is averse to society, morally compromised, and dishonorable is the same perversion as being sexually attracted to a crocodile or an orangutan. The sexual attraction of a well-developed, cultured person is the product of all the elements of their surroundings that have become inseparable parts of them. If attracted to sexual intercourse, this should mean that the subject of this attraction must have a variety of attractive features, not just the width of their shoulders or hips.*

*In fact, what would happen if one's sexual partner turned out to be completely dissimilar in social standing and ideology? Firstly, it would, of course, be an unorganized, extramarital relationship, as the relationship would be based primarily on superficial sexual arousal (only people who are oriented towards a long life together, that is, people who consider themselves to be compatible with each other in all respects, enter into marriage). Secondly, it would be sexual desire in its crudest form, not tempered by feelings of affection or tenderness, nor regulated by social aspects. Such an attraction would have very little mental involvement and regulation. Thirdly, a child could potentially appear despite all preventive measures. This child would have parents who are incompatible with each other, causing the child confusion and a split mentality from an early age. Fourthly, this type of connection would be a distraction from creativity. Since this type of relationship would be built purely on sensual lust, it would be subject to random, disorganized events, small fluctuations in mood, and be satisfied without any creative effort. This would greatly devalue the very significance of creative effort; it would take away a major source of creativity, not to mention the fact that a high frequency of sexual intercourse in such a relationship would significantly deplete the mental energy that should instead be used for the benefit of public, scientific and other creative sectors.*

*Such sexual behavior, of course, would not lead to revolutionary expediency.*

#### **Commandments #4**

#### **"Sexual intercourse must only be a final link in the chain of deep and complicated issues which connect the lovers during the current moment"**

*Sexual intercourse should not just be the result of physical attraction between two people. Firstly, a threshold of complete closeness, deep ideological and moral cohesion, and compatibility must be met before committing to the final stage of sexual intercourse. Society and class must always be prioritized over the animal, not vice versa.*

*The establishment of this social, moral, psychological prerequisite for sexual intercourse will result in the following. Firstly, sexual intercourse would become much rarer, which would not only increase its import, but would also leave a significant amount of unused energy for other creative purposes. Secondly, such sexual acts would not cause separation, as frequent sexual closeness often leads to detachment even to the point of disgust between partners (Tolstoy gives quite a brilliant and realistic illustration of this in his "Kreutzer Sonata"), but would bring partners closer together, make them stronger as a couple. Thirdly, such sexual acts would not impede the creative process, but would quite harmoniously coexist with it, both feeding on it and feeding it (frequent sexual intercourse steals from a person's creative reserve, is uses up their emotional material, all of their "passion", resulting in a devastation of their "creative imagination", relating to both the chemistry and mechanics of creativity).*

#### **Commandment #7**

#### **"Love must be monogamous, monandric (one wife, one husband)"**

*This is clearly evident from the information highlighted above, but this point must be illustrated separately in order to avoid misunderstandings.*

*One might make the argument that it is possible to comply with all the above rules with two wives or two husbands. "Ideological closeness, infrequent sexual intercourse and other directives are compatible even with a polygamous relationship." "Well, if one wife (or husband) makes up what is ideologically and sexually lacking in the other, then it is simply impossible to find in one person the full embodiment of ideal love." Such considerations are too obvious a stretch. A love life with two women (or two men) is extremely complicated, it would take up too much energy, time, interest, and would require too many adaptations. This sort of relationship would also probably increase the*

number of sexual acts, resulting in an even greater loss of creativity. The amount of effort put into maintaining such a complicated sexual life, no matter how enjoyable, will lead to a significant depletion in one's creative capabilities. Creativity always loses out in these situations. Additionally, this creativity is lost not only quantitatively, but also in terms of quality, since it will be continuously burdened with an excessive, sexual "love" life.

### **Commandment #8**

**"With each sexual intercourse, it is necessary to always remember of possible birth of a child - basically remember about offspring"**

Not a single preventive measure, except for extremely harmful ones (abortion is extremely harmful for women), can completely eliminate the possibility of pregnancy. Therefore, sexual intercourse must only take place if both partners are in a state of complete biological and moral well-being, since any issues in even one parent will result in complications for the child. The same consideration, of course, would prohibit prostitution, since the possibility of contracting a venereal disease is the most terrible threat to both the biological wellbeing of the offspring and the health of the mother.

### **Commandment #10**

**"There should be no jealousy. Sexual love life, built on mutual respect, on equality, on deep ideological closeness, on mutual trust, does not allow lies, suspicion, jealousy."**

Jealousy is the by-product of several contemptible characteristics. Jealousy is, on the one hand, the result of distrust in a loved one, a fear of them hiding the truth. On the other hand, jealousy is a product of distrust in oneself (a state of self-loathing). For example, a jealous person could think "I'm such a terrible person that she (he) doesn't need me, and she (he) could easily cheat on me". Furthermore, it is often the jealous person who lies the most frequently. Often the people who shouldn't be trusted are the ones who have trouble being trusting in a relationship; since they lie frequently themselves, they assume that their partner is also prone to lying. Worst of all, jealousy usually leads to extreme possessiveness. A possessive partner could think, "I don't want to give her (him) up to anyone," which is completely unacceptable from the proletariat point of view. If one's love life, and life in general, belongs to society, if one's sexual behavior should take place only within the framework of social expediency, then obviously one's choice of a sexual partner, like others' choice of them as a sexual partner, should be considered with social practicality in the foreground. If someone left their partner in order to strengthen their social power, if he (she) replaced their partner with someone else, someone more valuable in society, any jealous protests from the partner's side would be a clear act against society. However, it may be difficult for the one to judge who is better between them or their replacement. But, if after considering the opinions of one's comrades and social surroundings, it is found that this assessment is not in their favor, one must simply reconcile with this fact. If one has been replaced by an inferior person, they still have the right to fight for their partner, or in case of failure, scorn him (her) and consider them socially unrestrained. But this is not jealousy.

When a person is jealous, they are in constant fear of lies, both someone else's as well as their own. Jealousy heightens one's awareness of their own insignificance and powerlessness, resulting in animalistic possessiveness, traits that a revolutionary proletariat must never present. [translation from Russian has been commissioned and revised by V.S.]

## STATE OF THE 'ART': RELATED ART PROJECTS

The symposium "Pornotopia Revised - Art and Porn on the Intersection of Resistance and Subversion In Vienna" happened via Zoom on 23.04.2021 and was supported by Akademie of Fine Arts in Vienna and Kunsthalle Exnergasse (KEX). There International artists discussed pornography as an artistic and activist tool. Artist Anna Ehrenstein was presenting her work there, which triggered many questions. One of the questions opened up a discussion about red lips, as a sexy attribute of women. In his question the discussant stated that his grandmother was always saying that any time she would like to please her husband, she would just put red lipstick on. What raised my attention was Anna Ehrenstein's answer, where she explained to him that the intentions of his grandmother most likely were not only to please her husband, but to please also herself by seeing her husband being turned on. Ehrenstein also explained the difference between contemporary contexts regarding the topic be it Germany, where she grew up or be it Albania where she is born. She tried to clarify that cultural settings would have an influence of what pleases a person and what not. The discussion somehow matched my thoughts on sexual differences between Vienna, where I live now, and Kyiv, where I have lived most of my life.

Another participant, the afro-sudaka\* activist Fannie Sosa explained the tradition of "Twerking" in her artistic work "Cosmic Ass". "Twerking", which originally were the tribal dance which women would dance to lower chances of getting pregnant, by shaking the body, at least it was the belief before. She stated that despite criticism by European feminists on Twerking, saying that this dance only pleases men, Sosa claims that this dance expresses female power. It's important to her to show that often people think of the dance as the one which converts women into objects of pleasure, only because of the ignorance on the topic. This contrast of opinions on one topic added up to my personal reflections that depending on where we grew up, how we grew up and what we absorbed from the environment constitutes views of what sexuality and sexual pleasure are, and though they seem to be highly individual they are closely connected to a societal context.

American (USA) artist Sophia Wallace, whom I found by chance, presented her project "Cliteracy", which is predominantly text-based. The art work spreads the knowledge about the female clitoris, as an organ which was historically ignored for a long time and still is. "Freedom in society can be measured by the distribution of orgasm." [11] is one of the statements she makes in her text based artwork, which led me to think about the correlation of biopolitics and sexual pleasure in my origine country and the country I reside at the moment.

None of the projects presented at that symposium dealt with sexuality in a post-Soviet context. Also, I became even more interested to explore how biopolitics influence people's sexual pleasure on a very personal level and how to raise the question about the possibility to alter/unlearn the set of opinions, societal stigmas on an individual desire, by untying the factors of an environmental context on sexual pleasure imposed on one's life.

\*Sudaka Fest celebrates Latin American music and culture, and is a space to reflect on the diverse roots of people who attend.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

What are inner and external triggers and anti triggers for sexual pleasure for me as an object of the research? How does my pleasure depend from morality?

By external triggers I mean: the environment an individual grew up in, the environment an individual lives in; political situation and legislation, societal stigmas, opinions of important people for the individual; storytellings from movies and books, conditions in which sexual intercourse happens; lexicon, vocabulary used in regards of topic of sex, sexual organs, sexuality, and sexual pleasure etc.

By inner triggers I mean: subconscious, feelings, personal worldview, personal philosophy.

## METHODOLOGY

The decision to do a video came due to the particularity of material: the dialogue I developed while I was researching, which can be represented in the best manner when there is an original Russian speaking voice articulating it, so that viewer immediately identify person with one of a post-Soviet country and and it was important to show a method of "empty chair", which led to the development of the dialogue, which can be best explained, only when demonstrated. This method I am explaining below in "The full explanation of the video". The choice of blur over the video image was made in order for my character to be not personalized, so that it could be any post Soviet woman sitting there, who is related to the morality of the USSR. I decided to choose black and white color for my video to support the age of the Commandments, so it traces viewers into early Soviet times. Sound of the birds should remind the viewers that behind all the cultural layers there is still the natural instinct of having sex.

### Abstract

The project "Sexuality and Self-identification" shows a small video story, which is presented in the form of a self-analysis of one person changing between two chairs. On the left chair the character talks about her problems in her sexual life, and when she sits on the right chair she becomes "rational" and asks a question to herself to try to figure out what was the problem with her sexual experiences since Covid-19 has arrived. It starts along simple stories about her sexual experiences told in a style as she would tell them to a friend. Through the dialogue with herself she starts to realize the patterns. In the dialogue with herself she digs into the reasons why her sexual experiences with some people are brighter than with others. She sees the origins leading to the still existing morals as proclaimed by Aron Zalkind in his work "The Twelve Sexual Commandments of the Revolutionary Proletariat", which were published in 1924, to put an end to a short period of sexual liberation after the Revolution.

### Full explanation of the video

From the very beginning, the viewer is confronted with a scene of a person engaged in introspection using a method similar to Gestalt therapy or the so-called "empty chair method", where in classical Gestalt therapy the client is asked to imagine that some important person (or her/himself) is sitting next to her/him on an empty chair, and starts talking to her/him (to her/himself) loudly. So in the video, the character sits alternately on two chairs and is engaged in self-reflection. In one chair, she tells emotional stories from her past, and in the other chair,

she becomes an outsider who asks driving questions. In this way I show viewers that the character is very determined to understand herself and her sexuality.

The character subconsciously stresses in her first story that a good friend of hers is a scientist, which implies that it makes her absorb valuable elements from her communication with him for her own self-development. By telling that "it was a good friend of mine", she stresses that her relationship with him was not an unorganized and superficial sensory-sexual arousal, but moderated by feelings of sympathy and social connection. This feeling of friendship is kept in the storyline of all of her sexual stories.

In the last story of the current Covid situation analysis, when she already discovered patterns like that of the third person indirectly involved in her sexual context, we can see that she already tries to call her present sex partner not a friend, but just a sex partner, however we also see that they have common friends, which immediately brings us back to a relation of friendship between them. It's the comment when she realizes that her stories have "friendship" in common. And she starts to see the relationships between how she was raised, what makes her feel good about her sexual partners and that it linked to the morality developed in "The Twelve Sexual Commandments of Revolutionary Proletariat" written by Aaron Zalkind in 1925, that she read just the day before yesterday for the first time.

She realises that somehow she absorbed through the environment (family, school, Soviet movies, society) the values behind Commandment #3 ("Sexual connection is only a final stage of deep multi-faceted sympathy and attachment to the object of sexual love") and Commandment #4 ("Sexual intercourse must only be a final link in the chain of deep and complicated issues which connect the lovers during the current moment"), or at least to the extent to which these ideas survived and transformed in society till nowadays, which traced her to talk out loudly how her grandmother was raising her and what she was telling her. The character since childhood has not been excited about the USSR. But the fact that she admired her grandmother, who made a successful career in the Soviet time, made the character listen to what the grandmother says.

After introducing Commandment #1 ("There should not be an unnecessarily early development of sexual activity in the proletarian environment") in the video the character tells about her childhood. Her family put her in different children's extracurricular activities, such as dancing, music classes, and her grandmother trained her physically when she took her on long distance hiking trails, where she competed with other kids through different physical competitions. No one mentioned Zalkind's Commandments, but they keep living in the way families raise their children. These Commandments still formulate public opinions on how things should be done. The tendency to perceive the opposite sex as somebody with common interest, as she learned in various extracurricular activities and on a hike. Viewers have observed such common interests already in the beginning of her sexual stories when she mentions that common activities such as sharing the view of an event going on downstairs or climbing rocks together were exciting her in her sexual affairs and turning her on.

This dialogue leads the viewer to the fact that the character was really determined also to go to university to make a career, because it was important to her to know whom she wants to become before starting to live a sexual life. As she explains that after the Commandment #8 ("With each sexual intercourse, it is necessary to always remember of possible birth of a child -- basically remember about offspring") could be read in the video. She has always tried to choose partners with common interests, so that if a pregnancy occurs she would at least know that the father of her child isn't a total alien person to her and a child won't be split mentally between two socially different parents. The fear of early sex is supported in her story

of memories from the past in the part where she talks about Commandment #2 (*It is necessary to abstain from sexual activity before marriage; marriage is to be had only when social and biological maturity is reached (20-25 y.o.)*). She tells about her neighbor who got pregnant when she was 13, she witnessed her life disintegrate after that. That fact obviously suggests that most likely she was following the Commandment #2, because of the fear of spoiling her life.

After the appearance of the Commandment #7 (*Love must be monogamous, monandric (one wife, one husband)*) we can see that throughout her life she has been doubting some social stigmas in her environment, and changed her mind toward how relationships should be between couples. In the video it's revealed, when she says that she considers the format of open relationships, to the contrary of what Commandment #7 suggests. The "rational" she on the right chair sees that such possibility of altering the social view was likely predetermined in childhood. She suggests that it might be due to the reason of not knowing who her family was before 1917. That fact potentially opened up for her a window of thoughts if she really identifies herself with the Soviet working class, or if it was imposed on her family by the totalitarian regime of the USSR.

The development of looking more critically on stigmas, where she is altering Soviet ideas on sexuality into suitable ones for her lifestyle is coming also after introduction of Commandment #10 (*There should be no jealousy. Sexual love life built on mutual respect, on equality, on deep ideological closeness, on mutual trust, does not allow lies, suspicion, jealousy.*). Here we see that the character is highly absorbed by the Soviet discourse about the jealousy between couples. However, we can also see that she altered it to the concept of open relationships.

This story describes a drama in a way, because viewers can see that despite her efforts to free herself from the stigmas of her society, her sexual pleasure is very determined by biopolitics as it is by a certain morality. Moreover, she started to ask herself with quite a philosophical question if she actually has any power on her sexual pleasure, or whatever she thinks could be new levels of her sexual freedom, was pre-programmed into her. That is why the dialogue ends with the open question "if the sexual pleasure we experience is predetermined by biopolitics and the society we live in, is it truly possible to change anything? Or do we only think we're changing something?" This last conclusion to which the character is arriving by herself along the analytical process, is linked to the well known Canadian-born psychiatrist Eric Bern and his work "Sex in Human Loving" where he states that a life's script of any person is ending at a very early age, and that any possibility to change ideas, or being rebellious, or switching to opposite scenarios of what a family is telling, all that has been pre-programmed already. *"In any case, each person obediently ends up at the age of five or six - yes, ends up at five or six - with a script or life plan largely dictated by his parents."* (Eric Bern "Sex in Human Loving", 1970, "Parental Programming" chapter, p. 145,)

## REFLECTION

I rather expect my audience to be a very small group of people who know and are interested in psychology and methods of introspection, and whom my artistic story could help to self-reflect on their own lives. Also I expect that post-Soviet audience might be more interested in the content of that video, at least the feedback I was getting from the friends of mine from Kyiv showed much more interest in what I do than from other countries. That happened most likely due to the common discourse on sexuality.

## REFERENCE LIST

- Alekseev P.V. Zalkind, (2002), "Aron Borisovich", "Philosophers of Russia XIX-XX centuries. Biographies, ideas, works" (Алексеев П. В. "Залкинд, Арон Борисович, Философы России XIX-XX столетий. Биографии, идеи, труды" — 4-е изд., перераб. и доп. — М.: Академический проект)
- Alexandre Avdeev, Alain Blum, and Irina Troitskaya., (1995), article "The History of Abortion Statistics in Russia and the USSR from 1900 to 1991."
- Eric Bern, (1970), "Sex in Human Loving", published by Penguin Books
- Esch, T. & Stefano, G.B., (2005), "The Neurobiology of Love. Neuroendocrinology Letters"
- Michel Foucault, (1984), "L' usage des plaisirs", Éditions Gallimard
- Ufimtseva E. I., (2018), article "The Practice of Atheistic Socialization in the Context of the Formation of a Conscientious Society" (Уфимцева Е. И., 2018, статья "Практики атеистической социализации в контексте формирования советского общества")
- Plato, (c. 375 BC), "Republic", published by Cambridge texts in the history of political thoughts
- Plato, (c. 370BC), "Phaedrus", published by Penguin Classics
- Pruzhnina A. A., (2010), "Aron Zalkind. Manifest of Sexual Revolution", "Philosophical Sciences", (Пружнина А. А. "Арон Залкинд. Манифест сексуальной революции", "Философские науки" — М.: Гуманитарий, 2010. — № 4.)
- Korsakov S.N., (2010), "New facts about A.B. Zalkind", "Philosophical Sciences" (Корсаков С. Н., "Новые факты о А.Б. Залкинде", "Философские науки" — М.: Гуманитарий, 2010. — № 4.)
- Zalkind A.B., (1929), "Pedology in the USSR". (Залкинд А. Б., 1929, "Педология в СССР")
- Zalkind A.B., (1924) "The Twelve sexual Commandments of Revolutionary Proletariat" (Залкинд А. Б. "Двенадцать половых заповедей революционного пролетариата", "Философия любви". В 2-х т. Т. 2. М., Политиздат, 1990. С. 224-255)
- Zbigniew Lev-Starovich, (1987), "Sex in the World's Cultures", (Лев-Старович Збигнев, 1987 "Секс в культурах мира", Издательство Мысль, 1991")
- online resources:**
- [1] Official website of WAS, "The Declaration on Sexual Rights". (date of usage 06.19.2021) URL: <https://worldsexualhealth.net/resources/declaration-of-sexual-rights/>
- [2] Official website of WAS, "The Declaration on Sexual Pleasure". (date of usage 06.19.2021) URL: <https://worldsexualhealth.net/resources/declaration-on-sexual-pleasure/>
- [3] Official website of WAS, "Sexual Health for the Millennium. A Declaration and Technical Document". (date of usage 06.19.2021) URL: <https://worldsexualhealth.net/resources/millennium-declaration/>

[4] Web site of the Ukrainian law firm. Online article, dated 27.01.2020 URL:  
<https://donets.partners/seks-v-publiclnom-meste-vsglyad-yurista/>

[5] "The Administrative Law Enforcement Code of Ukraine" (date of usage 06.19.2021). URL:  
<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/80731-10#Text>

[6] "The Criminal Code of Ukraine" (date of usage 06.19.2021) URL:  
<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2341-14#Text>

[7] Law of Ukraine "On Protection of Public Morality" (date of usage 06.19.2021) URL:  
<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1296-15#Text>

[8] Trushnovich A.R., "Memoirs of a Kornilovite (1914-1934)". Part 3. "In Soviet Russia"  
(Трушнович А.Р. "Воспоминания корниловца (1914-1934)". Часть 3. "В России советской")  
URL: [http://www.dk1868.ru/history/zap\\_korn.htm](http://www.dk1868.ru/history/zap_korn.htm) (date of usage 06.19.2021)

[9] Official website of Administration of St. Petersburg, dated 28 november 2017. URL:  
<https://www.gov.spb.ru/gov/otrasl/zags/100-let-organam-zapisi-aktov-grazhdanskogo-sostoyaniya-rf/>

[10] Electronic fund of legal, regulatory and technical documents. "The Criminal Code of the  
Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic" (date of usage 06.19.2021)  
URL: <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/901757374>

[11] Cliteracy | Sophia Wallace | TEDxSalford. (date of usage 06.19.2021) URL:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dg2RoARuAHM>