

FOUCAULT: SUBJECTIVITY AND TRUTH IN THE LIGHT OF CARE OF SELF

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ABSTRACT. In this article, we situate the notional set of the relation with oneself (*rapport à soi*) in the construction of the category of subjectivity in Michel Foucault's later thought. We show how that relation is attached to the relation with the Other, and we propose the possibility of inscribing psychoanalysis in the history of the care of the self. Our primary material is the transcription of the lectures the philosopher gave in early 1982, the book *L'herméneutique du sujet* (Foucault, 2001), and our main basis for analysis is the 1980 conferences, *L'origine de l'herméneutique de soi*, and the book *Foucault*, by Deleuze (2005). As a result, we present the capacity for self-affection afforded by the relation with oneself, we demonstrate the way in which the Other's position influences the production of the subject's truth, and we concur with the need to think about practices such as psychoanalysis from the perspective of the arrangement left by the history of techniques of the self.

Keywords: Foucault; the care of the self; psychoanalysis.

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RESUMO. Buscamos, no presente artigo, situar o conjunto nocional da relação consigo (*rapport à soi*) na construção da categoria de subjetividade do pensamento tardio de Michel Foucault. Atrémos a ele a questão da relação com o Outro e propomos a possibilidade de inscrever a psicanálise na história do cuidado de si. Nosso material primário é a transcrição das aulas ministradas pelo filósofo no começo de 1982 e o livro *L'herméneutique du sujet* (Foucault, 2001); e nosso suporte principal para análise são as conferências de 1980, *L'origine de l'herméneutique de soi*, e o livro *Foucault*, de Deleuze (2005). Como resultado, apresentamos a capacidade de afecção de si por si proporcionada pela relação consigo, demonstramos o modo como a posição do Outro influencia a produção da verdade do sujeito, e reforçamos a necessidade de se pensar práticas como a da psicanálise a partir do arranjo deixado pela história das técnicas de si.

Palavras-chave: Foucault; cuidado de si; psicanálise.

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RESUMEN. En el artículo, buscamos identificar el conjunto nocional de la relación con usted (*rapport à soi*) en la construcción de la categoría de subjetividad del pensamiento

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posterior de Michel Foucault. Le atribuimos la cuestión de la relación con el Otro y proponemos la posibilidad de inscribir el psicoanálisis en la historia del cuidado de sí. Nuestro material principal es la transcripción de las clases impartidas por el filósofo a principios del 1982, el libro *L'herméneutique du sujet* (Foucault, 2001) y nuestro principal apoyo para el análisis son las conferencias del 1980, *L'origine de l'herméneutique de soi* y el libro *Foucault*, de Deleuze (2005). Como resultado, presentamos la capacidad de autoafecto (de ti para ti) proporcionada por la relación con usted, demostramos la manera en que la posición del Otro influye en la producción de la verdad del sujeto, y reforzamos la necesidad de pensar sobre las prácticas como de la psicoanálisis desde el arreglo dejado por la historia de las técnicas de sí.

Palabras clave: Foucault; cuídate; psicoanálisis.

Introduction

The main purpose of this article is to present the notional set of the relation with oneself (*rapport à soi*) as a fundamental part of the category of subjectivity that Foucault outlines in the 1980s. Based on this, we intend to subsequently show how the relation with the Other is attached to the formation of the relation with oneself, and how this discussion can resound on a historical problematization of psychoanalysis.

We begin by contextualizing Foucault's new undertaking since the lectures collected in *L'origine de l'herméneutique de soi* (Foucault, 2013). Then we schematize the discussion about the dynamic superposition between the principles of care of the self (*epimelēia heautoû*) and knowledge of the self (*gnôthi seautón*), as Foucault (2001) expounded it in *L'herméneutique du sujet* in early 1982, in order to contextualize the problematization from which comes the core of this article.

To approach the notional set of the relation with oneself, we start from the idea of conversion to oneself, which is one of the guiding elements of the Greco-Roman care of the self and a fundamental point in the 1982 prelections. In this approach, we expound the way in which Foucault begins to perceive the capacity for an affection of self by self in Greco-Roman thought. His perception of this capacity results in his defining the process of subjectivation as a fold, a device we analyze by resorting to Deleuze's (2005) view of Foucault's thought.

Based on this, we will show how the question of the relation with the Other is addressed, in 1982, along with the relation with oneself. In founding the notion of the latter relation, he examines texts that expatiate on the dialogical relationship existing in the exercise of Epicurean and Stoic philosophy. The Other refers specifically to the philosopher's position as he exercises philosophy in its therapeutic function – a position that varies according to the philosophical schools. This charge is what makes the presence of the master one of the necessary conditions to form the relation with oneself that is comprehended in the care of the self.

The relation with oneself in combination with the relation with the Other leads us to ask, based on Foucault's (2001) own suggestions, about the possibility of inscribing psychoanalysis in the historical movement founded on the care of the self. When the *epimelēia heautoû* is predominant, it constitutes what Foucault calls spirituality, which is precisely philosophy at work in the transformation of subjects, a heritage in which psychoanalysis may perhaps be placed. In this reflection, we start not only from openings in the 1982 course, but also from Ayouch's (2015, 2016) work.

Historical enunciation of the truth

Starting in the 1980s, Michel Foucault shifts the course of his work. To the core areas of his thought, i.e., knowledge and power, a new component is added which is the question of the subject. Some of the foundations that were laid for this new work are systematized in the collection of conferences and interviews he gave from October to November 1980 in the United States, which was published with the title *L'origine de l'herméneutique de soi* (Foucault, 2013). We use this text to guide the points we draw from what Foucault develops in early 1982 at the Collège de France, in the course published with the title *L'herméneutique du Sujet* (Foucault, 2001), which constitutes our primary bibliography. Our undertaking is guided by what the philosopher calls a “[...] genealogy of the modern subject”⁴ (Foucault, 2013, p. 33). This genealogy is concerned with how the occidental subject's experience was historically formed by means of the dynamic superposition of two ancient philosophical precepts, the *epimeléia heautoû* (care of the self) and the *gnôthi seautón* (knowledge of the self), and with how ideas of salvation and healing were attached, in this process, to the obligation to tell the truth about ourselves.

Before the 1980s, Foucault (2013) was working with three types of human techniques, namely techniques of production, transformation and manipulation of things; techniques which allow individuals to use the systems of signs; and techniques which allow the domination of individuals by individuals. After 1976, the history of sexuality leads the philosopher to look into what he calls the techniques of the self, a dimension arising from the subject acting upon himself. These are operations whose purpose, in his view, is transformation towards some type of improvement of the self.

To make this genealogy of the modern subject, Foucault (2013) breaks loose from the techniques of power and turns to the interaction between these same techniques and the techniques of the self. We might say that, methodologically, the philosopher proceeds with his genealogical plan to disentangle from the negative conception of power (Foucault, 2004; 1998), and he adds to this plan the viewpoint that subjects are no longer just the effect of a productive power. The point here is to outline the notional set of the relation with oneself (*rapport à soi*). Analyzing the techniques of the self which are implied in the relation with oneself is different from a ‘psychologizing’ approach that tries to establish how the subject introjects the law – which Foucault (2013, p. 39) calls a “[...] more or less Freudian [...]” scheme. Thus, the philosopher not only plans to build a theory for subjectivation starting from the relation with oneself, but he also moves historically to a context that is not the juridical-discursive context of modernity – in which the reference to the Law stands out, as explained in *The History of Sexuality I*.

In the 1980 conferences in the United States, Foucault (2013) reconstructs the emergence of the hermeneutics of the self – defined by the idea that the truth is hidden in the subject within a structure that is his own yet obscure, and that it can be found by means of knowledge. This genealogy spans from the Delphic principle ‘know yourself’ to the moment in Christianity when it became an obligation to tell to an Other – the spiritual guide involved in the confession – the truth of our thoughts and desires. Before getting to Christianity, already in these conferences, Foucault (2013) starts his analyses about the ethical practices of the Epicurean and Stoic schools.

It is on these that the philosopher dwells in 1982 – as will be seen in the course of the article, his brief references to Platonism and Christianity are used rather to stress the

⁴ TN: The quotations in English of original French works were all translated from Portuguese, i.e., from what was translated from French into Portuguese by the authors of this paper.

outline of the predominant subject, which is the Greco-Roman care of the self, than to describe them in detail. This main approach is what allows Foucault to start putting together a dimension of subjectivity based on a period whose moral is oriented towards ethics, a period he calls a culture of the self (Foucault, 2001) and which greatly differs from the predominance of a moral oriented towards coded rules. Both in *L'origine de l'herméneutique de soi* (Foucault, 2013) and in *L'herméneutique du sujet* (Foucault, 2001), the philosopher refers to a cleavage between the techniques of the self that are guided by the importance of style [*forma*] and the techniques guided by the rule [*regula*].

By way of introduction into the category of relation with oneself, it is worth summarizing the discussion of the precepts *epimeléia heatoû* and *gnôthi seautón*, which the philosopher worked on in 1982. Both principles determine different conceptions of truth and of relation with oneself, as well as different modes of self-Other connection that ultimately and specifically define subjectivity and its mode of connection with the truth. In the 1982 prelections, the philosopher views Plato's texts as the matrix both of care of the self and of knowledge of the self, a moment when they are not yet fully imbricated, with the care of the self guiding and leading the knowledge of the self.

From this matrix, in a movement of historical superpositions, the care of the self predominated in the transition from the Hellenistic period to the Roman period. Then, this principle went into social decline with the advent of Christianity, and was eventually all but erased in the 17th century, which Foucault considers as the beginning of modernity. Between the *epimeléia heatoû* and the *gnôthi seautón* there is always, according to the philosopher, a "[...] reciprocal appeal" (Foucault, 2001, p. 67). From this angle, it is not as if our look is directed only to the description of each precept regarding its exclusive predominance. What interests us most is precisely the arrangement left, in a given historical moment, by this game of superpositions.

Also in a summarized manner, we might say that the thought guided mainly by the *gnôthi seautón* (knowledge of the self) determines that the truth lies in the individual, though hidden due to a double ignorance. This is founded on the Platonic notion that, first, we ignore our own essence and, second, we ignore our own ignorance (Foucault, 2001). The truth can only be reached by means of a hermeneutic movement that would depend on a relinquishment and a submission of oneself to the Other – who is, in sum, a figure of totalized knowledge and of a more direct connection with God. In this mode of relation, the subject would reunite with the truth by means of an act of knowledge that consists in the reminiscence of the divine in subject himself (Foucault, 2001).

Very different is the spectrum of predominance of the *epimeléia heatoû*, where the truth is conceived as a tool that must be built in the present by means of a range of elaborate practices and of experiences. This tool, *paraskeuê*, "[...] true discourses" (Foucault, 2001, p. 233), must be forged as an armor that protects subjects from events that may threaten them. Further, from Seneca onwards, Foucault (2013) states that the truth is like a force implied in the good use of moral precepts. Thus, the truth is not connected with a reminiscence or with theoretical learning, but with a set of specific exercises that necessarily transform the subject into something he never was – this is what defines philosophy as spirituality (Foucault, 2001; Hardot, 1999). The relationship between master and disciple takes place so that the latter might build autonomy in the constitution of the self and in transmitting his truth. Memory comes into play, however, in the form of actualization of principles learned and in the style of one's speech.

One of the reasons why Foucault elects this historical context of sovereignty of the care of the self is to refute the "[...] classic prejudice" (Hadot, 1999, p. 140) of the

hegemonic group in philosophy teaching in France. Such prejudice consolidates an idealized example of culture that values strictly one part of Greek thought, and condemns the Hellenistic and Roman periods because it considers them corrupted by their contact with the East and philosophically individualist due to the fall of democracy and of the philosopher's role. Foucault demystifies this perspective and presents a new approach in which the care of the self is restored in the center of historical and philosophical practice

The value that the culture of the self acquires in the eyes of Foucault (2001) can also be related to the dissemination of the arts of existence – “[...] *tékhnē tou biou*” (Foucault, 2001, p. 84) which eventually took over the whole spectrum unfolded by the *epimelēia heautoû* in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. For the Greco-Romans, the constitution of the self might be viewed from the perspective of a strategic game that aims to create a relation with oneself. The objective of these arts is to drive the subject to exert a force upon himself that is more determinant than external forces. To demonstrate this, Foucault (2001) describes a series of activities that appear in Greco-Roman texts and represent a kind of fold of the subject. The main descriptive category, which guides all the elements involved in the notion of relation with oneself, is that of conversion to oneself.

Relation with oneself: the conversion to oneself and the fold

Within this history of the care of the self, a reflection about the context of the arts of existence can be important for analyzing the conception of subjectivity that Foucault starts to build in the 1980s and which will provide foundations for the famous ethical-aesthetic prism of his thought. This context is better explored from the class of February 10, 1982 onwards, when the topic of conversion appears with predominance. The importance of conversion in the West is more related to its “[...] practical scheme [...]” character (Foucault, 2001, p. 199) than to its status as a concept. For this work, Foucault extracts from ancient thought – from Plato to Christianity – a kind of central thematic core which he will denominate “[...] *un ensemble d'images*” (Foucault, 2001, p. 198). In our view, *ensemble* can be translated as ‘set’ or ‘group’, but it can be understood here as ‘arrangement’, due to its aesthetic content. This arrangement is close to what Hardot (1999) calls a system, which can be used to distinguish Epicurean and Stoic knowledge from the notion of concept. A system necessarily involves the transformation of those who relate to it, while a concept constitutes a certain tone of contemplation of the strict capacity of knowledge.

The central core we refer to is the image of the conversion broken down by Foucault from the Senecan term *se convertere ad se*, of the Platonic conversion, encompassed by the *epistrophé*, and of the Christian/modern conversion, which coincides with the notion of *metánoia*. The conversion to oneself as a trait of Greco-Roman culture was brought into the philosophical debate through the development that Pierre Hardot's work had in Michel Foucault's thought. Hardot (2018) postulates, in 1953, that the *epistrophé* and the *metánoia* were predominant in the West's formation. Therefore, it is by way of a historical counterpoint that Foucault highlights the importance of a different notion of conversion from those two – precisely the *se convertere ad se*. Let us compare them.

Foucault reads the conversion in Plato under the term *epistrophé*. Its movement can be described as that of one who begins the care of the self, then steers it to knowledge. It consists in the action of the look that must escape appearances and mundane and obscure objects to face being in its light. This look eventually moves the whole body and acquires ontological tones, as it founds the subject primarily on the discovery of his own ignorance. This discovery leads to reminiscence, i.e., to reunion with the forgotten

essence. By opposing the living world to the other desired world and splitting the “[...] body-prison” (Foucault, 2001, p. 201) of the soul, *epistrophé* leads back to the “[...] ontological motherland” (Foucault, 2001, p. 201). In sum, reminiscence, a form of knowledge, intends to connect the subject to the truth and to set him free.

In Christianity, Foucault (2001) situates the conversion around the notion of *metánoia*, which was used around the 3rd and 4th centuries CE. The philosopher examines two of its meanings. It designates both “[...] penitence [...]” and “[...] radical change” (Foucault, 2001, p. 203). Although it arises from a preparatory path, the moment of its realization must be a “[...] meta-historical” (Foucault, 2001, p. 203), sudden event which would totally separate the new subject from the old one. It is the almost literal representation of the death of a being and the resurrection of another. Its practice starts by searching within oneself for traces of lust and temptation lodged in thoughts and in the soul. This conversion founds an exploration of the inner secrets, a hermeneutics of the self that must be consummated through the “[...] renouncement of the self” (Foucault, 2001, p. 203) precisely for the benefit of God and of the Scriptures.

The conversion to oneself – *se convertere ad se*, as found in Seneca – is almost opposite to the Platonic and Christian conversions. It does not unfold from the opposition between two worlds, one that is ideal and one that is illusory and corrupted. It stands on the immanence of our living terrain. It is a matter of making our course from that which does not depend on us towards that which does, a direction considered by Epictetus as the “[...] absolute compass” (Foucault, 2001, p. 216). It consists in liberation from that which we are not masters of, to achieve that which we can be masters of (*maîtres*). This notion of mastery is a good expression of the type of relation with one’s own body that is advocated in the conversion to oneself. Instead of dominance over one’s desires and, as in the *epistrophé*, of the splitting of the body, the conversion to oneself aims to create a relation of oneself with oneself that is satisfactory, appropriate, involving mastery. The means to achieve its goal is no longer an act of knowledge, but asceticism (*áskesis*), i.e., the set of practices and training we engage in.

Thus, the conversion to oneself also advocates some degree of rupture, however, regarding the subject’s surroundings. Foucault says: “It is around the I, so that the I might no longer be a slave, dependent and restrained, that this rupture must take place” (Foucault, 2001, p. 204). All movements of rupture taking place in the conversion to oneself are strictly for the benefit of the I, and never within the I – as with Platonism and Christianity. This spectrum is well demonstrated in an expression found in Seneca, in letter 8 to Lucilius. It is the *pirouette* metaphor, as remembered by Foucault (2001), which consists in a movement different from that of a spinning top, which spins due to external impulse. This spinning is a gesture that would get its impulse, according to Stoicism, from philosophy, though it is performed by the subject, who spins around himself. During that period, the ritual of spinning around oneself would only happen when, juridically, a slave obtained his liberation.

Another important group of images in the conversion to oneself is that the being as a whole must move towards the I, as if the I was a place, a destination to be reached. This notion in particular provides the great figure of the “[...] return to oneself” (Foucault, 2001, p. 205), a figure through which the care of the self loses the elementary characteristic of being an act of the look and of attention. The new content of the precept becomes evident through the existence, in Greco-Roman texts, of metaphors that equal the I to a city that is recovered by an army, or to a port, a place we depart from and to which we come for shelter (Foucault, 2001). The fundamental difference between this Greco-Roman

movement of return to oneself and the Platonic movement of reminiscence lies in the means that is used to reach the I. For the former, it is a strenuous course of training and of experimentation of techniques whose field of deployment is the body in relation to the world. For the latter, it is a way of overcoming ignorance, of obtaining a form of knowledge strictly based on memory as the source of the truth.

Because this dimension of return engages the whole being in a dynamic of search, it can be described as an endless path, which goes from oneself to oneself. Foucault (2001) brings into the arrangement of this image the metaphor, also common to Greco-Roman texts, of sailing. Firstly, the association is established inasmuch as it refers to a movement from one point to another. Secondly, because it refers to a journey with a specific goal, which is to reach a safe port, a course described as a long adventure in which the risks are inevitable – particularly because of its close relation with death. Another prominent trait of sailing is the fact that it implies a specific technique, which Foucault (2001, p. 239) calls “[...] conjectural knowledge”. Because it is attached to practical situations, such as the effective handling of unpredictable events, this type of knowledge is close to the care of the self and to the art of piloting.

Curiously, piloting is also used by the ancient as a description for three other techniques that embody important aspects of the care of the self. Piloting is, according to Foucault (2001), very frequently used to refer to medicine, politics and the government of the self. The most evident similarity between sailing and these techniques is the need, in all of them, to create a *tékhnē*, which Foucault (2001) defines as an art that is conceived and elaborated on generalizing principles. The *tékhnē*, in this case, should be theoretical and practical, and should provide healing for the body and the soul, as well as balance for political relations. The philosopher equates art with technique all the time, so we can conceive the oneself-oneseif interstice as an art whose limit has no frames, like sailing on an impossible course, in that its unfolding consists in a movement of incessant transformation, and not in a path towards an actually reachable interior. In Foucault’s (2001, p. 238) words: “What does it mean to return to oneself? What circle is that, what circle, what fold is that which we must operate regarding something that, however, is not given to us, at best only promised in the end of our lives?”. To which we would add: how is the relation with oneself configured from this fold? What dimensions does it take on?

To answer these questions, the Deleuze an reading of Foucault is of the utmost importance. Deleuze (1992, 2005) characterizes Foucault’s work on Greco-Roman techniques as a discovery that rests precisely upon the notion of fold (*repli*), or also of lining (*doublure*) (Deleuze, 2005), which could only be conceived by starting from the ethical configuration left by the *epimelēia heautoû*. For Deleuze (2005), the sketching of a dimension that is at once inside and outside accompanies Foucault throughout his work. This dimension is, in 1982, contained in the Foucauldian effort to outline the relation with oneself. In our view, the aspect of style (*forma*) and the a priori factor of the relation with oneself in the Greco-Roman care of the self is what allows the subject to be dimensionally doubled by a fold. Deleuze (2005) defines this very well:

The obligatory rules of power must be doubled by means of the facultative rules for the free man who exercises them. Given the moral codes that execute the diagram here or there (in the city, in the family, in courts, in games, etc.), a ‘subject’ must detach himself from them, must come loose from them, must no longer depend on the code within himself (Deleuze, 2005, p. 108, author’s emphasis).

On the one hand, the idea of power as relations of force configures points of tension between different bodies. The thought, however, when acting upon itself, is a “[...] non-relation” (Deleuze, 2005, p. 103), as it consists in oneself affecting oneself, and not in a

body affecting another. The discovery of Greco-Roman ethic is this affective potential of the subject, which bends the force upon itself and constitutes an important layer of the subjectivation. Along with this process, a dimension is inscribed in the subject as a part of him which, however, remains invisible to him, and which does not arise only from the forces of power. In addition to being invisible, it is not restricted to oneself, and, as said earlier, it is never completed in an interiority. It is as if the affection of self by self opened a field of connection between the inside and the outside, a space of passage that attaches the body and the world and is always there, in the very middle of this relation with oneself.

The Greco-Roman originality comes from the game of truth established between the subjects who practice occupation with oneself, a game that stipulates the need for a government of the self that precedes the relation with others and with the world. Thus, the ethic of Epicurean and Stoic spirituality seems to give the relation with oneself predominance in the formation of the subject. Along with the generalization of the care of the self, there is a completion of self in self. The occupation with oneself is done, according to Foucault (2001) in such a way that “[...] the relation with others is deduced from and implied in the relation of self with oneself that we establish” (Foucault, 2001, p. 198). However, in this respect, *L’herméneutique du sujet* develops a paradox, as entry in the exercise of care of the self will depend heavily on an action by the Other, as we will see below.

Part of this history outlined by Foucault in the 1980s can represent a field of inscription of the practices that involve a dialogical function in the formation of subjectivity. We are interested in two possible openings, which unfold from the core topic of the relation with oneself. The first concerns the description of technical elements found in *L’herméneutique du sujet* about the dialogical function, which we denominate the oneself-Other relation. The second regards the opening, based on Foucault’s (2001) own indication, to think about psychoanalysis within the outline of spirituality.

The relation with the Other: its necessity, its modalities

It does not seem to us that Foucault’s interest, in 1982, was to define exactly a theory of modalities of the one self-Other relation, considering that his course is presented as directed to the practices of the self. Nevertheless, this reflection stands out when we correlate the content of *L’herméneutique du sujet* with an interview the philosopher gave in 1983 in Berkeley. One can see that the philosopher deliberately highlights the culture of the self for the centrality of its “[...] healing and therapeutic function” (Foucault, 2017, p. 79), and it is precisely here that oneself cannot be the only starting point. Now, *L’herméneutique du sujet* demonstrates that the Greco-Roman care of the self is exercised with a view to a salvation of the self that surpasses the Platonic aim at the government of others. It is the very idea of salvation that creates a paradox, as the Other appears, according to Foucault (2001, p. 123), as the indispensable “[...] mediator [...]” between the need for salvation and the content of salvation during this period. In other words, the state that the care of the self at once requires and produces, which brings the subject to the point of establishing the relation with oneself as an a priori relation, will only be awakened by the Other, as no individual can achieve the *epiméleia heautoû* by himself (Foucault, 2001).

Before we look further into the question, it is worth defining this Other we refer to. In Foucault’s 1982 text, the Other is not equated with just any other, such as another person or the world, but specifically with the philosopher and his position as he exercises

philosophy. This is why we refer to a technique of the dialogical function, since the dialogue to be established is not just any dialogue.

The Greco-Roman salvation is a philosophical notion in the proper sense, with its own extension and body. This philosophical configuration is the result of a slow process of changes in the attitude and role of the master. We can see Foucault (2001) outlining this movement since the appearance of the figure of Socrates in Plato's *Alcibiades*. The text shows that the pedagogical deficits of the Greek young man were commonly complemented with the exercise and the learning of his education's shortcomings. However, when Alcibiades is approached by Socrates, the master's response regarding the young man's flaw is a response that intends to launch him into another plain of action. Socrates does not teach Alcibiades new skills, such as how to dominate enemies, how to rule, etc. Socrates' goal is to lead Alcibiades to take care of himself. Therefore, with this response, a misalignment is established between learning and the care of the self. A separation thus occurs between pedagogy and the education of oneself. This dissimilarity seems to precipitate a type of problematization that, in Foucault's (2001) view, determines the whole game of forces between the modalities of thought in the West.

Based on the context of the Socratic-Platonic dialogues, Foucault (2001) schematizes three types of mastery that appear in the figures of the relations of guidance. The first is mastery through example, in which the Other is a behavioral model. It is carried by tradition and conveyed through the epics. It is also related to the master who is in love, and it makes reference to the great sages in the city. In this case, the Other unfolds as an example to be copied. The second mastery is that of competence, through which there is strictly the transmission of knowledge and skills, which are passed on from the master to the young. In this type, the Other is in a pedagogical position.

Finally, the third mastery is the Socratic one, i.e., "[...] mastery of embarrassment" (Foucault, 2001, p. 124), which is practiced through the dialogical game. It consists in leading the subject to realize his own ignorance and the fact that knowledge exists in himself. The Socratic Other does not transmit exactly knowledge, for although he puts knowledge into play, he locates it in the subject himself. Thus, Socrates represents the opening of possibility for the position of the Greco-Roman Other. All the first three masteries are carried out by means of a game between ignorance and memory, where the youth needs to leave the cloudy state he is in, and the means to that is the master's memory, the city's memory or his own memory. Anyway, the Other is already indispensable because the ignorant subject does not move by himself. The curious thing about the figure of Socrates is the demonstration that knowledge comes from not knowing, but only when it is catalyzed by somebody.

Starting from this Greek matrix, the Greco-Roman mastery carries a new characteristic, which is the need to educate a subject in spite of the vices already ingrained in the individual. This mode of being, aimed at by Epicureanism and Stoicism, is different from the ignorant subject's reunion with his own knowledge, which is forgotten, though it is innate in him. To the contrary, the will for a moral action, according to the pagan conception, is not given by nature, but created a posteriori as a result of philosophy.

The Greco-Roman notion of *epimeléia heautoû* is therefore configured according to a few attributes which differ from the care of the self that is found in classic Greek thought. This principle now brings philosophy close to 'healing' practices. Foucault (2001) identifies this element in texts like Epicurus's *Letter to Menoeceus*, which exhorts one to take care in order to achieve happiness and salvation; Musonius Rufus' *On the control of rage*, where care appears associated with a therapeutic image; and Seneca's treatise *Of peace of*

mind, containing one of the earliest associations between the philosopher and the “[...] physician of the soul” (Foucault, 2001, p. 86). The greater closeness between the care of the self and therapeutics is equally identified in the expression found in Philo of Alexandria, *epiméleia tês psychês*, which requires the care of the self oriented to the soul. It is also worth mentioning, as Foucault (2001, p. 96) stresses, the idea of Epictetus that “[...] a philosophy school is an *iatreîon* (a dispensary) [...]” to the soul, where one’s stay would only be coherent if it occurs out of one’s own will or out of need for treatment.

Therefore, the figure of the Other, in the Foucauldian Epicureanism and Stoicism, holds the place of transmission of philosophy in its therapeutic function. The Other acts with the purpose of endowing subjects with such precepts as to allow them to go through life’s setbacks without losing mastery of themselves, without dissolving in events – this, coupled with liberation from vices, is what defines cure.

The technical tool of the Greco-Roman Other consists in the *parrhesía* (Foucault, 2001, p. 232). It concerns the master’s use of enunciation in order to cause the best effect of transformation on disciples; it also concerns the technique that is used in the relationship between physician and patient – as in Galen, a philosopher and physician. The Greco-Roman partnership established by the *parrhesía* also aims to endow the guided subject with the necessary autonomy to later dispense with guidance and interventions. It is a kind of freedom to play (Foucault, 2001) which selects from “[...] true knowledge [...]” the elements that are useful as instruments for the healing and transformation of the self. The mode of speech is detached from the need of concordance of meaning and brings it close, in Epicurus, to a prophetic (*khresmodoteîn*), oracular modality that would rather be uncomprehended and cause effects of prescription and truth than to be simply transmitted within the coherence of the crafts of language.

For Foucault (2001), this specific position of the Greco-Roman master and the means through which he leads the subject to take care of himself do not characterize him as a master of memory or a master of pedagogy, but as a master who uses both elements when it suits him. This Other, in the philosopher’s words, “[...] is no longer the one who, knowing what the other does not know, transmits that to him. He is not even the one who, knowing what the other does not know, knows how to show him how, in fact, he knows what he does not know. This is a game the master no longer inscribes himself in” (Foucault, 2010, p. 117). Therefore, this Other inscribes himself as a facilitator of the subject’s prominence in producing his truth, in creating the necessary tools for his healing, and in maintaining his status as a free subject. This status is much more characterized by ‘self-subjection’ than by the relation of obedience between master and disciple.

Psychoanalysis and *epimeléia heautoû*: an open question

Would it be possible to direct the Foucauldian discussion around the practices of the self towards Western techniques associated with the dialogical function that are still today constructed around the need for healing? Could we inscribe some of these dialogical techniques in the history of the care of the self? In order to advance in the formulation of this type of problem, we use as our basis the opening provided by Foucault himself in his 1982 course, which promotes reflection about psychoanalysis’ place in the heritage of spirituality. In *L’hermeneutique du sujet*, Foucault (2001) takes a position regarding psychoanalysis so as to open a question and to leave it open, considering that he does not provide many indications, nor does he go further into them. This query appears in the second hour of the class of January 6, as follows:

[...] could we, in the terms of psychoanalysis itself, that is, of effects of knowledge, pose the question of the relationship between subject and truth, which – from the viewpoint, anyway, of spirituality and of the *epimeléia heautoû* – cannot, by definition, be posed in the terms of knowledge? (Foucault, 2001, p. 31-32).

The answer that begins to be outlined is that we can find, within psychoanalysis, notions that pertain to the principle of care of the self, but what prevents psychoanalysis from being a mode of spirituality in the proper sense is its social forms. The psychoanalytical schools ended up mainly developing in conditions of institutional belonging and of psychoanalytical knowledge building, thus subsuming the problems of the relationship between subject and truth. However, for Foucault (2001), Lacan's work represents an exception, as the French psychoanalyst builds his thought with the question of the cost and the effect, for the subject, of speaking the truth. Apart from this indication, the question is not addressed in the 1982 course nor, to the best of our knowledge, in any of Foucault's subsequent works. In line with Naldinho's (2018) argument, we do not take the absence of an answer by Foucault as indifference, but rather as initial reservations left undeveloped due to the philosopher's death two years later, in 1984, when his creative process was at full swing. The fact that Foucault enunciated this possible relationship between psychoanalysis and the care of the self amid an intense historical discussion with no direct relation to psychoanalysis shows, to the contrary, a profound interest in the matter.

An initial point for analyzing this question lies in the cost of the truth for the subject. Around the act of speaking the truth, in spirituality, intense discussions proliferated about the price of this action. This price concerns that which the subject must abstain from to be an ethical subject; the range of practices and relations he must submit to; the indispensable transformations in his way of being; and the risk he takes for speaking the truth. Now, in order to work, psychoanalysis also involves the cost of speech. First, this is seen straight away in the issue of money, which comes into play when an analysis session is established; second, it only works when the transference relationship is established with the analyst; third, it depends on occupation with oneself on the part of the patient; fourth, it starts from a certain strategic use of speech on the part of the analyst; and, finally, this price can also be charged in the sphere of the positions taken by the subject, in that a transformation of the self is promised within this practice – and this is the main cost, as it refers to the subject in his 'very being' (Foucault, 2001), as Foucault says regarding the goal of the practices of the self.

With regard to money, a veiled allusion is made, in *L'herméneutique du sujet*, to psychoanalysis. It is found amid Lucian's critique, in the text *Hermotimus*, of the "[...] market of modes of living" (Foucault, 2001, p. 89). The analogy seems to inquire on the relationship of dependence that may be established in a psychoanalytical relationship. In this text, a scene is narrated in which Hermotimus, in a dialogue with Licinius, says he has been for twenty years under the guidance of a master who charges him a fortune for such guidance. Almost bankrupt, but still certain that this practice is necessary, Hermotimus affirms he still needs some twenty more years to conclude it – in other words, the whole process would take over half his lifetime. The provocative motivation in this reference is confirmed when we see the matter reappear in the conference the philosopher gave in Berkeley, in April 1983, in the United States. Foucault observes:

I am sure none of you is a modern Hermotimus, but I bet most of you have met at least one of those people who, nowadays, frequent this type of master, who charges them money to teach them how to take care of themselves. However, and fortunately, I forget, whether in 'French', in 'English' or in

'German', the name of these modern masters. In antiquity, they were called philosophers (Foucault, 2017, p. 69, emphasis added).

We can think that the reference to the three languages very likely corresponds to Lacan, the English school and Freud. Anyway, this provocation does not represent a refusal, as Foucault draws, in the same conference, a closeness between Lacan and spirituality, in acquiescence to the practice of psychoanalysis.

Ayouch's (2015, 2016) works allow discussing this tension. For Ayouch, when Foucault calls into question the act of speaking the truth, he places himself in an episteme that is open by psychoanalysis. It is part of Freudian knowledge to analyze the process of production of the truth and the conditions in which the truth is conveyed. Because it questions "[...] all knowledge as founded on drives" (Ayouch, 2015, p. 106), psychoanalysis, just like Foucault, is an ally of a "[...] non-cognitive episteme" (Ayouch, 2016, p. 173). In the same way that, in Foucauldian spirituality, it is not the enunciated that must match the subject's truth, but enunciation attached to practice, Psychoanalysis stands on the misalignment between "[...] the subject of the enunciated, who is conscious, and the subject of enunciation, who is unconscious" (Ayouch, 2015, p. 112) – the subject of the unconscious who interferes precisely in people's 'practical life'.

If Foucault (2017, p. 95) was able to say that "[...] psychoanalysis is much more an ethical technique than a science [...]", it is because there is a crucial resonance between the practice of psychoanalysis and the Greco-Roman practices of the self. It consists in the fact that the conveyance of speech has an effect of subjective constitution. And this effect, both for the culture of the self and for psychoanalysis, cannot come only from a hermeneutics of the self, through which the truth hides in the content of speech and in the remembrance of representations.

The insufficiency of a remembrance technique must be overcome, in psychoanalysis, by means of what Ayouch (2016) calls *perlaboration*, which concerns analytical processing, that which comes closest to an idea of 'cure'. The center of this crucial resonance is the fact that processing also consists in a form of affection of self by self. As Ayouch writes:

It is a particular incidence of speech that performs an act: it is the act of processing. This process essentially consists in an affective rearrangement: in general terms, it is neither a matter of acquisition of complete knowledge nor one of remembrance of the repressed representations, but a matter of true work of transformation of the affect (Ayouch, 2016, p. 175).

This psychoanalytical affection of self by self occurs within a circuit established by transference, which is the form of link between analyst and patient. In other words: just as among Greco-Romans, this processing (*perlaboration*) also requires an Other, understood here as the position of the analyst. Within the dialogical game of the care of the self, the enunciated contents, *lógoi*, that are capable of transformation within the relation with oneself are inscribed in a plain that necessarily requires the Other. The possibility for these enunciated contents to be effectively transmitted depends on the master's action, i.e., on the use he makes of the truth upon seeing the *kairós* (Foucault, 2001), the propitious time, of the disciple. It is precisely in commenting the *kairós* found in the Greek, and compared with Lacan, that Foucault (2017) brings psychoanalysis closer to the spiritual techniques. The coherence of this closeness can be found in the fact that the analyst must also watch for a kind of sensitive moment to perform any intervention in the patient.

Indeed, it is not appropriate to superpose psychoanalysis to the Greco-Roman techniques of the self. However, one can see between them a historical correspondence which was pointed out by Foucault himself and which still requires clarification.

Final considerations

When Foucault's later thought turns to the problematization of our experience as subjects (Foucault, 2001), it seeks to formulate the relation with oneself as a determinant factor of this process. We can see, in his historical undertaking, the existence of two millenary forms of reflexivity acting on the intersection of this relation with oneself, which are the forms determined by the precepts of care of the self and of knowledge of the self. The consistency of the link between the ideas of subject and of truth implied in these precepts is determined now by the close relation with the world and its flow of forces, now by the individualization of the subject through his disengagement from the world, respectively

In contrast with the predominance of the knowledge of the self in Western society, Foucault (2001) seeks to value what remains alive of that which the tradition of the care of the self bequeathed to us. Creating a oneself in the spirituality developed by Foucault's 1982 prelections seems to imply the potential of a self-affection, the non-coincidence with the place of an internalized I, as demonstrated by the passage channel created by the fold and, at the same time, by the impossibility of renouncing to oneself and to the world.

The place of the Other, an indispensable term for the relation with oneself, is also specifically characterized in the exercise of spirituality. It is inscribed in the scope of the Latin verb *educere*, as opposed to the pedagogical *educare*, and it represents the act of extending a hand to a subject who needs transformation and healing (Foucault, 2001). From the relationship between oneself and the Other, we can also think about the position the Other takes in the field of truth. We discern two modalities. In the first, the truth is produced, directly or indirectly, always in the place of the Other, even when it is the truth about the subject, since the subject is doubly ignorant. In the second, the truth can only be produced in the place of oneself, as it refers to the subject's singular relation with life, and the Other appears as the facilitator of the subject's autonomy in this production.

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