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The Greek Care of the Self in Foucault and the Athenian Democracy[1]



Gürkan ERGİN[2]

Keywords: Michel Foucault, Athenian democracy, care of the self, subject, homosexuality

For a few centuries in Classical Greece, Michel Foucault claimed, people were able to shape their lives according to the principles of beauty, and to "constitute" themselves instead of "discovering" themselves. They achieved this through specific practices conducted by the self on the self to attain a state of happiness, wisdom and moderation. The thinker largely ignores, however, the close relationship between this care of the self and the Athenian democratic mechanism, focusing instead only the process itself. He also argues that these practices were only confined to the future potential leaders of Athens and that they were in essence an aristocratic occupation. This paper aims to prove the opposite, that these "technologies of the self" were encouraged by speeches and several democratic developments in order to make them more accessible to the general population, and to highlight their organic connection with the Athenian democratic practices, which Foucault barely discusses.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Michel Foucault, Atina demokrasisi, kendilik kaygısı, özne, eşcinsellik

Michel Foucault son dönemlerinde özellikle antik Yunanistan'dan başlayarak öznenin kendisini inşa sürecini ele almış ve Yunanistan'da "kendini bilmek", "kendine özen göstermek" ifadeleriyle tanımlanabilecek bu süreçte kişinin belirli bir mutluluk, bilgelik, ölçülülük durumuna erişmesi için kullandığı ilkeleri de "kendilik pratikleri/teknolojileri" olarak tanımlamıştır. Foucault kendilik teknolojilerinin antik Yunan'da oynadığı rolü öznenin kuruluşu çerçevesinde detaylı olarak incelemiş olmasına karşın, bunların Atina demokratik pratikleri içinde ne anlama geldiğine ve aralarında fiilen nasıl bir ilişki olduğuna neredeyse hiç değinmediği gibi, kendilik teknolojilerinin aslen sadece toplum liderliğine aday aristokratik bir çevreye hitap ettiğini öne sürmüştür. Ne var ki düşünür diğer çalışmalarında görüldüğü üzere burada da bazı çelişkiler sergiler. Bu makale Foucault'nun iddia ettiğinin aksine, kendilik kaygısının Atinalı devlet adamlarının söylevlerinde ve çeşitli demokratik düzenlemelerde tüm Atina vatandaşlarına aşılanmak istenen bir hedef olduğunu göstermeyi, aynı zamanda Foucault'nun nerdeyse hiç değinmediği Atina'nın demokratik uygulamaları ve kendilik pratikleri arasındaki ilişkiyi somut bir şekilde vurgulamayı amaçlamaktadır.

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Introduction

In his later years, Michel Foucault pointed out to a recurring theme in his research, namely that the subject is not a given and static form, and hence must be studied historically. This genealogy of the subject as a historical reality appears in a number of areas, which Foucault was unable to collect under one theme. Two of them[1] is crucial to the aims of the present article, that is, the relationship between the constitution of the subject and Athenian democracy: One is a parallel history of a subjectivity that both governs itself and is governed by others. Here Foucault delves into how the relationship between ethics and politics was problematized in different ways through antiquity. He attempts to take account "the contact point, where the individuals are driven and known by others, is tied to the way they conduct themselves and know themselves." If one considers it an ethical activity to guide or attempt to set right one's own freedom (government of self) and a political activity to guide or attempt to set right the freedom of others (government of others), it becomes clear that Foucault's studies of antiquity includes an inquiry into how the ethical government of the self has become incorporated into and confronted with government of others. Lastly, he examines how the subject has become committed to various ways of telling truth about itself. Foucault identifies a shift from antiquity to early Christianity. The famous Greek dictum "know thyself" (*gnothi seauton*) was in the golden age of antiquity subordinate to the lesser known "care of the self" (*epimeleia heautou*) for the benefit of actual living. This changed in early Christianity, when knowledge of the self eventually became integrated into confession, as the individual admitted the most intimate details about sinful thoughts and actions to a spiritual guide (Raffnsøe – Gudmand-Høyer – Thaning 2016: 337-338).

Although Michel Foucault wrote extensively on ancient world, his ideas are yet to be utilized fully in modern classical scholarship. Foucault's interest in the technologies of the self is related to his abandonment of antihumanist perspective in favour of a liberating subjectivity, whose examples he found in Classical Greece[2]. In the constitution of

[1] The first is a geneaology of sexual ethics and a history of "desiring man." Here Foucault examines how "western man had been brought to recognize himself as a subject of desire" and how "individuals were led to practice on themselves and on others, a hermeneutics of desire." In other words, he studies how the antique problematization of sexual behaviour in early Christianity was reinterpreted into a problematization of sexual desire, Raffnsøe – Gudmand-Høyer – Thaning 2016: 336.

[2] Although care of the self is a process of constituting the subject, Greeks lacked a word for the subject though they discussed its ontology, for example in Plato: "[The self] involves drawing the dividing line within a spoken action that will make it possible to isolate and distinguish the subject of the action from the set of elements (words, sounds etc.) that constitute the action itself and enable it to be carried out. In short it involves, if you like, making the subject appear in its irreducibility" (encapsulated by Foucault 2005a 54-55). Even though Plato claimed that the soul was eternal, he nevertheless advocated practices of the self, since the soul had forgotten what it should naturally know.

the subject[3], care of the self ensures the transformation of individuals through a series of self-conducted actions on their bodies, souls, thoughts, gestures and modes of existence with or without the help of others, and thus reaching a state of happiness, wisdom, perfection or immortality. These practices are a part of the "art of living", which rest on one's shaping of his own existence to achieve special and acceptable ontology. The practitioner of this *tekhne* does not have any concern to universalize the rule that his acts are based on. On the contrary, he makes himself a moral subject by individualizing his acts, reshaping them, and providing a rational and reflective mould for them; giving them a unique grandeur. This is the process Foucault calls "ethics", but whereas a modern ethics is a matter of rules or principles for actions that can be labelled as "right" or "good", in Foucault it is "the kind of relationship you ought to have with yourself, which determines how the individual is supposed to constitute himself as a moral subject of his own actions" (Foucault 1990: 251; 1997: 263).

The Greek technologies of the self were a guide to existence rather than a number of advices to be followed by intellectuals. It taught the Greeks to exist, not what to do. They did not organize behaviour patterns or a series of acts, but enabled the individuals to change and reshape their existence. The traits attained by them were qualities related to existence, which Foucault named as "modes of existence", peacefulness, moderation and happiness being the most popular. Practices of the self changed the people through three methods: *mathesis* (wisdom), involving the relationship between the self and the others; *melete* (contemplation) between the self and the truth; *askesis* (exercise) between oneself and self. Claiming that these were well-established and systematic principles, Foucault named them "technologies of the self".

In this context, it must be noted that Foucault makes a delicate distinction between the "man creating himself" and the "man searching his own truth". The former is an open-ended attempt that promises freedom and beauty, while the latter assumes that one's own "real self" is predetermined and knowable. In "secular subjectivity" of the Severan age and "deep subjectivity" of Augustinus, subject was expected to recognize and manifest a "truth" about himself, which came from the outside in the former and from inside in the latter (Foucault 2014: 114-161; Paras 2016:157-160, 183). But for a few centuries in

[3] From the outset, Foucault's works include a criticism against the constitution of subject as solipsist, ahistorical, self-built, and a consciousness with absolute freedom. Foucault attempts an analysis that can explain the constitution of the subject historically. His aim is to put forward a form of history without the subject that explains the establishment of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, where "an empty identity wanders through the history." Foucault never denied that the subject exists, but believed that it is "historically variable", claiming that the subject is not the elementary foundation, but has a birth and a development process, hence a history. The subject constitutes itself in different forms at different times through the use of varied practices, but always distinguishing itself from the body that engages in those practices, Kelly 2013: 513. For an alternative view see Cornelius Castoriadis, who uses a psychoanalytical explanation of the intersubjective processes to not only provide an account of individual subjectivity, but also pose an original notion of agency, Tovar - Restrepo 2012: 133-141.

Classical Greece, Foucault claimed, people were able to shape their lives according to the principles of beauty, able to "constitute" themselves instead of "discovering" themselves" (Paras 2016: 183-184). Creation of the self is what makes Athenian democracy a unique regime, a historically important node in history, because it emerged from the individuals creating themselves, not from any extrinsic power relation (see below). In Foucault, this "self-constitution of the subject" through the care of the self is the one of the main driving forces behind the Athenian politics, because the care of the self was an answer to the question of how should one live and how should "we live together."[4] Foucault thought that modern philosophy forgot that the (ancient) philosophy was an art, a way of life, and transformed this tradition to almost a theoretical discourse (Paras 2016: 172-178,182-186). Greek philosophy, on the other hand, was concerned precisely with this question, which, in the end, perhaps inevitably, linked to the problem of governing people.

Foucault's views faced criticisms from Classical scholars. For example, in his article titled "Foucault's Antiquity", James I. Porter claims that Foucault's view of the Greeks was as aestheticized and ideal as that of the Enlightenment and points out his inconsistent line of thought (Porter 2006). Foucault himself was aware of alleged contradiction in his works, but saw it inevitable[5]. True, his interest in the care of the self, i.e. writing the history of humanity's being based not on its conditions and constraints but on art and style, meant severing all his ties with his past views. But even here, he maintained his unchanging approach: to analyse historical facts in terms of their conditions of possibility (*épistémè*)[6]. Another fact that Porter ignores is that Foucault himself says that the practices of the self is not peculiar to Greeks but can also be found in other cultures (Foucault 2005a: 317). In Greece, however, this governing of the self was a prerequisite for governing the others, but Porter never investigates that aspect of the process, discussing instead Greek sexuality and the subject. Wolfgang Detel, too, deals only with this specific problem, limiting himself mostly to the 4th century BC, though his book's title *Foucault and Classical Antiquity* promises a more thorough analysis of Foucault's reflections on antiquity in general (Sellars 2005; Goldhill 2006).

[4] Hadot believes that in his discussion of philosophy as a therapy, Foucault ignored the fact that its first and foremost aim was to provide a state of peace for the soul, to relieve it from the anxieties of life, even from the worries caused by the mysteries of the human existence, Hadot 2012: 256.

[5] "The main interest in life and work is to become someone else that you were not in the beginning. If you knew when you began a book what you would say at the end, do you think that you would have the courage to write it? What is true for writing and for a love relationship is true also for life. The game is worthwhile insofar as we don't know what will be the end. My field is the history of thought. Man is a thinking being", Foucault 2005b2: 99; see also Paras 2006: 203-206.

[6] Paras 2016: 168. An *épistémè* is something like a way of understanding the world which is specific to a time and place - a set of understandings which enable sense to be made of the world, Kendall – Wickham 20032: 67; a common cognitive horizon, which binds the various discursive formations together, Raffnsøe – Gudmand-Høyer – Thaning 2016: 162.

In addition to the limited interest in Classical scholarship towards Foucault's views, there is also one remarkable problem in Foucault's own analysis of care of the self that must be noted, which sets it apart from his other works on clinic or prison. While the latter presents a more balanced narrative of discourse[7] and practice, the former fails to keep that tone. There is simply too much discourse and not enough practice. This is also evident in the parts of *The History of Sexuality* dealing with ancient Greece, which can be read at best as intellectual histories of various classical sources with a few accompanying examples of practice (Poster 1986: 208). Similarly, while Foucault makes extensive use of the sources on care of the self, he limits his theme with one's ways to achieve the truth, largely ignoring the socio-political developments of the period, which are closely related to the discourses shaped around the subject. One reason for this might be his reluctance to get into a field he is not very familiar with. Foucault shows how in the ancient world the care of the self from civic activity to a personal one until the care of the self was ultimately suppressed by Christianity, but only superficially explores the correlation between this change of practices of the self and the change of political regimes (i.e. from Athenian democracy to Roman monarchy).

Lastly, Foucault's analysis of the Greek care of the self does not indicate his admiration of everything Greek. Contrary to Porter's claims (Porter 2006: 175-176), his criticism was clear and concise in his interviews: "– *These Greeks, did you find them admirable*? – No. – *Neither exemplary nor admirable*? – No. – *What did you think of them*? – Not very much"[8]. Foucault goes on to say that the Greeks arrived at a contradictory point in morality of antiquity: On the one hand, they conducted a relentless research aimed at a certain style of existence, and they tried to make it available to all on the other. For Foucault the mode of existence attained through the care of the self was linked to a virile society, which operates through dissymmetry and exclusion of the other, and which is linked to an obsession with sexual penetration (as an important element in Greek masculinity and politics; Foucault 2005b[2]: 199-200).

[7] In Foucault "discourse" has several components: objects (the things studied or produced), operations (the methods and techniques or 'ways of treating' these objects), concepts (terms and ideas which are routinely found in the discipline and which may constitute its unique language) and theoretical options (those different assumptions, theories and perhaps even hypotheses available within the discipline, and which might oblige physicists, say, to 'decide' between relativity theory and quantum mechanics), McHoul – Grace 2002: 44.

[8] Foucault 1988: 244. Despite Porter's implications (Porter 2006: 170, 172), Foucault was not a "theorist" either. In the study of sexuality for instance, his was an effort "to dislodge and to thwart the effects of already established theories— theories that attempt to tell us the truth about sexuality, to produce true accounts of its nature, to specify what sexuality really is, to inquire into sexuality as a positive thing that has a truth that can be told, and to ground authoritative forms of expertise in an objective knowledge of sexuality", Halperin 2002: 41.

Athenian Democracy and the Care of the Self

Greek equivalent of the care of the self (*epimelesthai sautou* or *tekhne tou biou*), include certain practices: one imposes on oneself a style with the aid of a guide or *parrhesiastes*, and in doing so he aims at a certain degree of completeness and perfection through self-sacrifices, denials and abstentions[9]. The truth about and the mastery over oneself to govern the others are achieved by various exercises. One of them is purification rituals: If one does not purify oneself, then he cannot be in touch with the gods via dreams or oracles to understand the truths they tell. Another one is concentrating the soul: The soul is something mobile, something that can be disturbed. It is important, therefore, to keep it intact and to unite it in itself since it is vulnerable to external threats. The technique of withdrawal is detaching yourself and breaking contact with the external world, so that you can directly look at your soul i.e. "take your soul in your hands." The techniques of testing involve one's organization of a tempting situation and test his ability to resist it: After lengthy and tiring exercises, which give you appetite, you should be able to resist delicious and attractive food brought before you (Foucault 2005a: 46-49).

These are essential for the art of governing, because one should first command his soul and body in order to participate the affairs for the state. Thus, the body and the soul reveal themselves as the infinite source of politics, because to a Greek citizen, the state as a separate institution does not have a meaning. Foucault observes that the technologies[10] of the self first emerged in antiquity and divides them into three types: a) Platonic philosophy, in which one must take care of the self in order to be able to take care of the others and govern the others; b) Cynic and Stoic philosophy, which considers the care of the self as an end in itself; c) Christian principles, which does not consider care of the self as a means of governing the others, but aims to overcome the self to attain salvation. Through these lines Foucault shows how, in the course of time, the care of the self shifted from being primarily a civic activity to primarily personal. In Socratic context, this civic activity is linked

[9] One's account of his life is "a demonstration of whether you are able to show that there is a relation between rational discourse, the *logos*, you are able to use, and the way you live." Socrates is inquiring into the way the *logos* that gives form to a person's life; for he is interested in discovering whether there is a harmonic relation between the two. Foucault explains that Socrates's role is to determine "the degree of accord between a person's life and its principle of intelligibility or *logos*", and as a result in such an examination, "one becomes willing to care for the manner in which he lives the rest of his life, wanting now to live in the best possible way; and this willingness takes the form of a zeal to learn and to educate oneself no matter what one's age is" (Foucault 1986: 45-67; Foucault 2001: 13, 23, 96-97).

[10] "Technologies" as *tekhne*, the art of living or the know-how. Socrates demonstrates to Alcibiades that he does not have the *tekhne* to enable him to govern the *polis*. This *tekhne* is a "body of rules to which one had to submit from start to finish, minute by minute, at very moment, if there were not precisely this freedom of the subject making use of his *tekhne* according to his objective, desire, and will to make a beautiful wok, then there would be no perfection of life, Foucault 2005b2: 35, 424.

with a small circle of young aristocrats[11], whose status makes them leading figures in the city and exercise power on their fellow citizens. The question is whether the status and authority given to these young men by birth make them govern properly, and the answer is the care of the self for the creation of a proper political subject. In this context, the earliest and most important text for Foucault is *Alcibiades*, which he thoroughly discusses[12]. Alcibiades wants to govern people, and Socrates approaches him to give advice. For Socrates, not only Alcibiades's education is inferior to those of the Persians and Spartans, but also his lovers are after him for bodily pleasures rather than to encourage him to care for himself (Pl. *Alc*. 121e-122a, 131cff.). This is why Socrates tells him to follow the principle "know thyself" inscribed on the Temple of Apollon at Delphi if he is to transform his privileged position into a conduct over others and claim superiority over his rivals. But how can one know oneself? By looking to the soul, Socrates claims, since self is the soul[13]. And because there is not more divine part of the soul than the one where wisdom and logic reside, one knows oneself only by looking at there or similar divine things. The moment the soul makes contact with the divine on, it is equipped with wisdom, which helps the soul to know right from wrong, hence to govern itself. And when one knows how to govern oneself, he can govern the city (Foucault 2005a: 71).

What is the role of the care of the self in governing a democratic city, then, when Foucault says that it is first and foremost restricted to the elite, even though the masses are now the active players in politics? Why are the ordinary citizens not as qualified as the aristocrats, now that they, as voters and policy makers, are dominant force in Athenian politics? In fact, Foucault does emphasize that the care of the self is not restricted to aristocratic circles: It is not just the wealthiest, the economically, socially, and politically privileged who practice the care of the self" (Foucault 2005a: 113). He also says that "in the most disadvantaged classes there are practices of the self that generally are strongly linked

[11] In theory, the practices of the self are accessible to every person, but only a few really achieves it due to the lack of courage, will and faith, and to being incapable of comprehend the importance of the task. Thus, philosophers like Socrates insistently point to it to draw attention. It demands free time, a luxury which can only be afforded by the elite. Even though it is not restricted to a specific social class, it is still dependent on definite organizations or networks of friendship, Foucault 2005a: 113-115, 118-119.

[12] Apart from the Socratic dialogues there are other sources on the subject. In Xenophon, having completed his conquests, Cyrus' wish is to take care of himself. Ruling an empire is good, but what is more important is maintaining it, which requires restraint, moderation and infinite care from the individual (Xen. *Cyr*. 7.5.76).

[13] In Frogs, Aristophanes likens Alcibiades to a lion, Aristoph. *Ran*. 1432-1433; cf. Plut. *Alc*. 2.2-3. This is the animal Plato uses as an allegorical component of human soul, which is composed of a human head (*logos*), a lion's torso (spirit) and a multiheaded beast representing nether parts (desires). Unjust individuals feed the lion and the beast while starving the human, i.e. *logos* (Pl. *Rep*. 588c-d). Lion is an animal arousing admiration, but also a fierce figure belonging to nature rather than civilization, Bell – Nass 2015: 1-2. But the Alcibiades the lion did not come from the nature: he was reared in the city. He is a part of the city, just as of the human soul. Entrusting the polis to the lion, or tyrant, whom it is often associated with, is equivalent to letting the spirit (i.e. lion part of the body) to rule the *logos*. The unjust soul is the lack of care of the self and governance, Bell 2015: 124-125.

with dearly institutionalized religious groups organized around definite cults and often with ritualized procedures." He then contrasts this with the "sophisticated, worked out, and cultivated practices of the self which are obviously much more linked to personal choice, to the life of cultivated free time and theoretical research... In Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman culture, care of the self always took shape within quite distinct practices, institutions, and groups which were often dosed to each other, and which usually involved exclusion from all the others. Care of the self is linked to practices or organizations of fraternity, brotherhood, school, and sect" (Foucault 2005a: 112-114). There is also a second limitation to Foucault's generalization: "Meaning and aim of taking care of oneself is to distinguish the individual who takes care of himself from the crowd, from the majority, from the *hoi polloi*, who are precisely the people absorbed in everyday life" (Foucault 2005a: 75). Yet, the principles of the care of the self is given to all, but few can hear and this forms the division among the citizens (Foucault 2005a: 119):

It is no longer the individual's status that, in advance and by birth, defines the difference that sets him apart from the mass and the others. What will determine the division between the few and the many is the individual's relationship to the self, the modality and type of his relationship to the self, the way in which he will actually be fashioned by himself as the object of his own care. The appeal has to be made to everyone because only a few will really be able to take care of themselves.

But what does this mean in a democratic city? After all, the care of the self is not exclusive to Athenian aristocrats nor is it a privilege of democracy: It is also practiced by the Spartans in a militaristic regime, where they leave agricultural labour to helots to take care of themselves (Plut. *Mor*. 217a). And having completed his conquests, it is Cyrus' wish to take care of himself: ruling an empire is good, but what is more important is maintaining it, which requires restraint, moderation and infinite care from the individual (Xen. *Cyr*. 7.5.76). In these cases, the care of the self is a *result* of Spartans' and Cyrus' positions in power, while in the *Alcibiades* dialogue, it is a *prerequisite* for governing fellow Athenian citizens; the foundation for political action (Foucault 2005a: 31). Governing others is not seen as a separate action apart from governing oneself. But for Spartans and Cyrus, care of the self comes *after* political and military dominance. Even in Plato, where democracy as a regime and way of life is questioned, the fact that freedom of the individuals, understood as mastery they are capable of exercising over themselves, is crucial for the existence of the state is never a matter of debate. Thus, the leader of the city is expected to exert full control over himself, to be able to restraint himself when necessary, to command his appetites and desires. This is the leader profile we know from Greek literature, and his exact opposite is the tyrant[14], who cannot curb his passions, his bodily desires, and is prone to abuse

[14] Foucault recognizes two tyrants: A vicious tyrant, "incapable of mastering his own passions and ... therefore always prone to abuse his power and to do violence to his subjects," and the "positive image of the leader who was capable of exercising a strict control over himself in the authority he exercised over others", Foucault 1990: 81.

his power[15]. The problem with Foucault's take on the Greek care of the self is its lack of a comprehensive analysis and integration of socio-political aspects of the Greek society to the matter, which could have put it in a better perspective, and to which I will now turn for a brief survey.

The Greek democratic *polis* is not a state, since in it the explicit power belongs to the citizens (Castoriadis 1991: 157). Therefore, the political organization of democracy and its conception among the Greeks is closely related to the care of the self. Greece was a convenient place for this kind of regime to flourish, since it was outside the influence of great empires, especially the powerful and divinely blessed Near Eastern monarchies. What characterizes these empires is the earthly state structure that reflects its heavenly counterpart. The resulting space is not homogenous, but pyramidal, which we also find in the "political" space of Olympus, where the ruler, i.e. Zeus, resides at the top and the old gods, i.e. Titans, at the bottom. Contrary to this arrangement of the heavens, the world of men is organised according to the notion of *isonomia*, which can be conceptualized as a circle at the centre with men at an equal distance to it. The centre of this empty circular space is now the sovereign and there is a competition among the citizens to fill it (Vernant 2006: 213, 244; 2013²: 111-). Who deserves to fill that space among the citizens? The ones that can take care of themselves, that can control themselves in order to control the others. This is a reflexive power relation, free from the external power relations.

In this city, contrary to Near East, the influence of gods over the administration and justice was weaker. Solon's approach to justice as a more abstract and private matter effectively excluded the divine from the political and judicial domain. There is also the perception in Homer and Hesiod that it is the men that are responsible for the misfortunes that befall themselves (Hom. *Od*. 1.28-43; Hes. *Op*. 215ff ; Irwin 2005: 226-227). Gods are not after inflicting damage on the *polis*, but citizens do that because of their cruelty. Therefore, in the 5th century, Protagoras, who, remarkably was a friend of Pericles (Plut. *Per*. 36.3), defined his profession dealing with questions of how the individual ideally "conducts himself" and his *oikos*, how he regulates his civic duties and how he should contribute the affairs of the state both verbally and efficaciously, in other words, with the concepts like "art of governing" (*politike tekhne*) and "being a good citizen" (Pl. *Prot*. 318e-319a). These went hand in hand with weak political leadership, which depended on one's private resources and personal qualities. Political leaders had limited means at their disposal of controlling the masses (Arist. *Pol*. 1326b 3-7). In the absence of mass

[15] Here we may note that in a number of occasions the overthrow of tyrants is associated with their sexual excesses, Arist. *Pol*. 5.1311a-1312a gives a list. What brings their demise is their lust for young boys or girls, since a tyrant is a ruler, who is incapable of governing others due to his incapacity to master his own bodily desires and pleasures of life. Tyranny disrupts Athenian leaders' power relations with themselves, the power of the subject folding onto itself as an object. Socrates claims that "tyranny develops out of no other constitution than democracy- from the height of liberty, I take it, the fiercest extreme of servitude", Pl. *Rep*. 564a.

communication or any form of media, Athenian leaders had to resort personal communication with the citizens and this led to a direct control over them. In a political medium, where the leaders could be easily influenced, the care of the self as a prerequisite for the care of the others was an essential principle both for the ruler and the ruled. And since the Greek political practice was direct, unmediated and participatory, the emphasis was on self-control and self-help instead of governmental interference. Thus "know thyself" or care of the self should have had powerful political implications; it was a metaphor of personal self-discipline among the politically decentralized Greeks, operating in the total or partial absence of an institutionalized executive body. This weakness was compensated by a constant emphasis on the inherent value of personal self-rule as well as citizen autonomy. In addition, Vernant notes that all the knowledge and intellectual techniques previously held by prominent families were now publicly revealed, and that the truth "was no longer derived from mysterious revelation. Doctrines were made public, submitted to criticism and controversy, and subjected to a form of reasoned argument" (Vernant 1996[3]: 91-92)[16].

Given the nature of the Athenian democracy, did Foucault underestimate the role of the practices of the self in an ordinary, perhaps underprivileged lower-class Athenian citizen's life? Was the care of the self really considered an elite occupation? Should we really dismiss a common interest in or an encouragement of it just because "free time" is associated with the aristocracy? It seems to me that Foucault's rather ambiguous analysis I have quoted above actually presupposes that even though the practices of the self appeal to everyone, in the end, those who will hear it will be the privileged and wealthy ones that can afford free time, i.e. *skhole* or *otium*. But as I have shown above and will detail below, Athenian society created a medium and language to make care of the self appealing to everyone.

First of all, we should remember that, despite Foucault's association of the Socratic care of the self with the Greek aristocracy, the Socrates himself was a figure that could criticize any form of government. This kind of criticism was possible only in a democracy. Socrates spent most of his life under the Athenian democracy believing that the demonstration of incapability and hollowness of certain political leaders was his duty. Karl Popper emphasizes that his intellectualism was egalitarian as was his notion of justice. As for his conception of wisdom, it was one's comprehension of how little he knows, since he questioned every type of wisdom be it sophistic, philosophical or occupational. This educational mission he believed to be also a political mission. He felt that the way to improve the political life of the city was to educate the citizens to self-criticism (Popper 1947[2]: 111-115).

[16] This is also evident in *Oidipus Rex* (or in *Ion*) where Foucault explores the rituals related to the revelation of the truth, in other words the "regimes of truth." Although the truth about Oidipus is revealed by Teirisias, the chorus and the hero do not believe it since he is not a witness, but only an oracle of Apollo, a human susceptible to errors speaking without concrete evidence. The words of Apollo, the divine prophecy itself is not enough: the truth should be investigated like a criminal case and should include witnesses, Foucault 2014: 22-40.

We will see that the Greek literature of the 5th century BC and archaeological evidence suggest the utilization of aristocratic homosexual discourse -an important constituent of the care of the self- by the Athenian leaders as a rhetorical device, and adoption of it among the Athenian citizens and by the leaders. Leaving that aside for now, let us focus on another aspect of the care of the self: *oikos*. Foucault claims that in Greek thought "we can speak of a diagram of power, which extends across all qualified forms of knowledge: governing oneself, managing one's estate and participating in the administration of the city were three practices of the same type. Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* shows the continuity and isomorphism between these three 'arts', as well as the chronological sequence by which they were to be practiced in the life of an individual. Having declared that he is now capable of ruling himself, the young Critobulos feels that it is time to marry, and Xenophon points out that his governing of himself and of his household, when given the right amount of dedication, a remarkable physical and moral training, will eventually bestow him leadership functions... Generally speaking, anything that would contribute to the political education of a man as a citizen would also contribute to his training in virtue; and conversely, the two endeavours went hand in hand" (Foucault 1990: 75-76).

Oikos was, of course, the foundation of the Athenian social organization and in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, with its relationship to the care of the self, it obviously does not refer to an aristocratic household. Its significance for the state depended on the arable land it possessed (*kleros*). The *oikoi* and their lands were the agricultural basis, on which all the *poleis* rose. The importance attested to the *oikos* is evident in Solonian reforms and later legal arrangements, and the primary observance of the Greek political philosophy was that it was the smallest unit that formed the *polis*. Naturally the state was at pains to protect it and the most conspicuous indication of this rigorous supervision was that all the legal matters concerning the *oikos* was regarded within the boundaries of public law, not the private. There are other well-known numerous examples that I will not consider here (Arist. *Pol.* 1252b; Detel 2005: 140-142; Skinner 2005: 113), but we also need to remember that the city-oriented presentations of Athenian legal institutions in modern works tend to obscure the fact that the state intervention was effectual in the distant rural households, which were in constant contact with the administrative institutions of the *asty* (Jones 2004: 51-52). Therefore, in this decentralised political geography, one's care of oneself does not only relate to his household, but also extend to the *oikos'* political aspect related to the *polis*. In contrast, Socrates' discussion on Cyrus' agricultural and political *oikonomikos* reveals how the king uses rhetoric to conceal the inequality in the Persian Empire. To Cyrus, the care he gives to his garden is a form exercise like military training, whereas for Greeks it is a virtue that cannot be measured in terms of physical training and military strength. Household activities and management reflect the morality of the city-state, not the measure of physical and material success as in the case of Cyrus (Kronenberg 2009: 43-45).

Another aspect we should note in this regard is the hoplite warfare. A hoplite was expected to be as morally inviolable as they are physically. To achieve this physical and moral integrity, self-control was necessary, since for the Greeks the contrast between hoplite and *kinaidos* was at the same time the contrast between the masculine and feminine man (Echeverría 2012: 304-305). Despite the social, intellectual, financial or political rivalry between the aristocracy, the well-to-do that provided the bulk of the hoplites, and the ordinary citizens, they had to support each other in the battle. That the hoplite phalanx was a selective representation of a Greek *polis* has long been recognized with its social patterns, religion, age ranking etc (Connor 1988: 26-27). While it is true that the denial of the lowest economic class, *thetes*, in this stylised hoplite *polis* actually reflects its status in civic life[17], other classes without aristocratic lineage were represented, and we may safely assume that the practices of the self also appeal to this segment of the population. And we should remember, of course, that although *thetes* were not admitted to the council and the magistracies, in the second half of the 4th century their exclusion was practically ignored and following the naval successes of Athens, where they were recruited, they received praise for their efforts. A good indicator of their importance is evident in Thucydides narrative of the disastrous Sicilian expedition, where the *thetes* assume the central role, while the hoplites and cavalry are suspiciously absent from or subsidiary in this massive undertaking (Steiner 2005: 409-411). Elsewhere the Athenian navy and the *thetes* seems to have been rarely praised or given importance, but Hanson pointed out the repeating trend in Athenian society to encourage the citizens of lower status to identify themselves with the hoplites through festivals and monuments (Hanson 1996: 306).[18] In addition, Detel's claim that "at the same time a great degree of self-control was demanded not just of the rulers, but of the ruled too, for this was the only way of securing rational acceptance of their subordinate social position since they had no chance of influencing the rulers" (Detel 2005: 222) is unconvincing, since there are various examples against it[19].

We need not to understand the hoplite-*kinaidos* dichotomy strictly in militaristic

[17] Attic war memorials are testimonies of their lower status, as their names on them are either absent or an afterthought, Connor 1988: 26.

[18] See also Osborne 1987: 103-104 for the identification of the Athenian citizens as a whole with the young aristocratic warrior.

[19] The *demos* had already acted on its own initiative in 508/507 BC, when Kleisthenes' rival Isagoras had objected his reforms and sought the help of Kleomenes. The two had invaded the acropolis with a small force, but the Athenians had besieged the hill and ended the occupation, remarkably without the guidance of a leader. This was the moment the *demos* emerged as a collective agent in the history, Hdt. 5.66-73.1; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 20-22.1; Ober 2007: 86. Since then, even Pericles, who in his most influential times needed the public approval, did not possess such a power. His legislative proposals were consecutively brought to and discussed in the Assembly for weeks. The people's awareness of a need for leadership was not accompanied by handing the decision making over the leader, Thuc. 1.140.1. This was true even for the Archaic Period: despite his aristocratic roots and wealth, Peisistratos had appealed the people to provide him bodyguards, Hdt. 1.59.4; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 14.1.

terms. The conception of *kinaidos* "was of a man *socially* deviant in his entire being principally observable in behaviour that flagrantly violated or contravened the dominant social definition of masculinity" (my italics). The care one should take for himself does not apply only to hoplite Athenian citizens, but to *all* free Athenian males, since in Greek belief system masculinity is a difficult accomplishment that requires constant struggle against inner and outer enemies. This is a matter concerning whole free Athenian male population, not only the upper classes, since losing one's masculine gender status and being reduced to the social ranks of women is a universal possibility for all men (Halperin 2002: 29-30).

In *Gorgias*, right to govern the people in Athenian democracy is not associated with the care of the self, but with rhetoric: Callicles belongs to the group of men that claim to govern the city by virtue of their status, birth and wealth, but he faces the Athenian law which aims to give the same status for everybody, preventing anyone prevailing over the others. Callicles wants to play the aristocratic game of the best in a system, which has become egalitarian, but his wealth and traditional status cannot earn him the superior governing position among the best and being among the best does not give him any real authority in a democracy (Pl. *Gorg*. 483a-e; Foucault 2010: 368-369). The only way to achieve this status in Athenian democracy is rhetoric (Pl. *Gorg*. 454d), which supposedly will help him prevail his political rivals and persuade the others (*hoi polloi*) by presenting himself to them, and which, according to Socrates, is of no use. The dialogue seems to indicate indirectly that the care of the self is not relevant anymore. Instead of practices of the self or rhetoric, Socrates offers a third alternative, namely the test of one soul by another: The soul (Callicles') will be tested against the one that is a touchstone or *basanos* (Socrates') to reach an agreement (*homologia)* between the two, which will be achieved through the revelation of the true nature of the soul tested, hence whether it is just or not, or whether it has the capacity and right to govern (Pl. *Gorg*. 486d-488b). "It is a discursive game between two souls, the test of the soul's reality-truth through natural affinity and manifestation of authenticity." In this relationship, the criterion of truth of one's actions or words is provided when there is *homologia*, which means that what is said by one can be said by the other (Foucault 2010: 371). In this *homologia*, there are three agencies of truth: 1) *Parrhesia*, the bond through which the *logos* of one can act on the soul of the other and lead it to the truth; courage to say all that one thinks despite rules, laws, and customs; 2) *Eunoia*, a feeling of benevolence for each other which comes from friendship, that is, to speak only out of benevolence for the other 3) *Episteme*, to say what one thinks is true. Now, in the Periclean model, Foucault claims (Foucault 2010: 372-373),

[It is] possible to bind the plurality of the others around the person in command within "the unity of the city", whereas in Socrates' model the truth is not to be sought in the internal connection between the person who thinks and what is thought, but through the identity of the discourse between two persons... The Periclean model made it possible to bind the plurality of the others around the person in command within the unity of the city— will now bind master

and disciple to each other. And, binding them to each other, [it will] no longer bind both of them to the unity of the city, but to the unity of knowledge, which is the unity of the Idea, the unity of Being itself. Socrates' philosophical parrhesia *binds the other, the two others, master and disciple, in the unity of Being, unlike the Periclean type of* parrhesia *which bound the plurality of citizens brought together in the city to the unity of command of the person who assumes ascendancy over them.*

Foucault makes a distinction between political (Periclean) and philosophical (Socratic) *parrhesia*, commenting that "In contrast, philosophical *parrhesia*, which in this dialogue operates between master and disciple, leads not to rhetoric, but to an erotics" (Foucault 2010: 374)

Political *Eros* and the Care of the Self

Foucault's approach to sexuality is from the perspective of history of discourses, as an element in a larger political-discursive technology. He treats sexuality not as a positive thing but an instrumental effect, not as a physical or psychological reality, but as a social and political device. He does not describe what sexuality is but attempts to clarify what it does and how it works in discursive and institution. It is rather an effort to denaturalize, dematerialize, and derealize sexuality so as to prevent it from serving as the positive grounding for a theory of sexuality, to prevent it from answering to "the functional requirements of a discourse that must produce its truth" (Halperin 2002: 41-42).

Greek homosexuality is, of course, a well-trodden ground, which I am not going to investigate, but a few things can be said about its role in the constitution of the subject through self-care and its political aspect. According to Socrates, one of the main reasons of Alcibiades' shortcomings was that his suitors only desired his body and none of them was interested in encouraging the young man to care for himself (Foucault 2005a: 37). In *The History of Sexuality*, where Foucault traces how the modern individual transforms him/herself into subject, whose truth is his/her own sexuality, pederasty presents a fundamental and problematic moral dilemma, since it brings Greek way of life into question. For an adult Greek male, anybody could be an object of love, but in a homosexual relationship he should take the active role, because it was the position appropriate to his own freedom and welfare of the state. The moral question emerging from this was the risk that the young members of the ruling class could be inclined to take the passive role hence jeopardise the freedom of the *polis*. Thus, whereas sexual desire was not considered a moral problem in Greek society, homosexuality became an ethical and political one. In this respect, the care of the self served to the constitution of the individual as a political subject rather than an instrument in revealing a transcendent and concealed truth about oneself, the form it would take in Christianity (Foucault 2014: 114-161; Paras 2016: 157-160). Alcibiades'

ambiguous sexual tendencies[20], therefore, targets the free and egalitarian Athenian people, the masculinity of the male citizens and their sexual and political autonomy.

Foucault's interest in the relationship between the care of the self, homosexual discourse and contemporary Athenian politics is limited. I have already noted that he regards the care of the self as an exclusively aristocratic occupation, and homosexuality or political *eros*[21] is discussed within this framework. Detel believes that "Foucault's interpretation, while not inappropriate, often tends to overestimate the cultural implications of the evidence he relies on", and that political and rhetorical texts "only apply to a small circle of elites" and probably tell us little about the actual social practices (Detel 2005: 123-124). Contrary to Foucault's suggestion that only men who can exercise self-control will meet the approval that they need for a successful political career, Detel claims that Plato assumes that only men who have the right approach to their *eros*[22], one that aims the production of the good are suitable to assume political responsibility. Plato's well-known suspicions about democracy is mainly directed at "the democratic mechanisms of control of the rulers by the people in the popular assembly and the courts", since the people knew little about the matters of politics and this reacted irrationally. For Detel, Plato's views on the role of political *eros* as care of the self is comprehensible in this specific context. "When external democratic control of the rulers fails, then all that remains is to erect a consistent anti-democratic *politeia* in which external control of the rulers from below must be

[20] Tendencies that render Alcibiades a tyrant, a perverse, and a feminine figure in the eyes of the Athenians, a *paranomia*, Wohl 1999: 366-369. One of the interpretations of the figure of Alcibiades is through the lens of Foucault's "perverse implantation", the idea that power does not prohibit, but in fact incites and proliferates perversions as objects, surfaces of operation, and hence supports for its ever more penetrating and wide-reaching control (Wohl 1999: 353). In Foucault's words, "it is through the isolation, intensification, and consolidation of peripheral sexualities that the relations of power to sex and pleasure branched out and multiplied, measured the body, and penetrated modes of conduct", Foucault 1978: 39-49.

[21] The political aspect of *eros* is not a concept exclusive to Plato. There is an interesting passage in *Deipnosophistae*, where it is told that Zeno "took Eros to be the god of love and freedom, and even the provider of concord, but nothing else. This is why he said in his Republic that Eros was the god who contributed to the safety of the city", Athen. 561C. Although it is remarkable that Zeno did not choose Zeus, Athena or a more intellectual patron for his ideal city, it is equally understandable, since the internal harmony of the city must be dependent on the love that citizens have for each other. Eros is called the god of freedom because it is the love, the pedological relationship between an adult man and a youth, that frees the city and the individual. This is, of course, Hesiod's cosmological Eros, but the one that was stripped off his association with unreason, Boys-Stones 1998: 170-171.

[22] Like Erinys, Eros too is an entity that transcends one's will. In Plato's philosophy love operates beyond individuals: on every level of the spiritual and material world, life is founded on one's desire to seek the other, who possesses what he/she yearns for. Therefore, all beings are in constant need and this deficiency gives rise to the struggle for the better, ensuring the continuation of life. It permeates everything from artist's effort to create and from teacher to statesman and lover. A love relationship between the Athenian male citizens, in which the partners complete each other and the care of the self can thrive, is, then, in the hands of a force beyond lovers' will. Eros' task is to lead the future rulers or statesmen to proper love objects. On the way they are instructed, befriended and guided, mostly by philosophers, who in every case actually embody one single archetype: Eros, Dihle 1982: 52-53; Osborne 2002: 90-93.

replaced by the rulers' self-control." The educational programme for the political elite suggest in the *Republic* intends to ensure the self-control that the elite should possess in order to be good and stable rulers (Detel 2005: 220-222).

I think Detel overlooks the aim and impact of rhetoric and speeches, where one can find an attempt to define the connection between the citizens and Athens/democracy with sexual terms and connotations. In his funerary oration for the dead in the first year of the Peloponnesian War, for instance, Pericles says (Thuc. 2.43.1):

Such was the end of these men; they were worthy of Athens, and the living need not desire to have a more heroic spirit, although they may pray for a less fatal issue. The value of such a spirit is not to be expressed in words. Anyone can discourse to you for ever about the advantages of a brave defence, which you know already. but instead of listening to him I would have you day by day fix your eyes upon the greatness of Athens, until you become filled with the love of her; and when you are impressed by the spectacle of her glory.

The word "mature lover" (*erastes*) retained its homosexual meaning in Periclean Athens and was a metaphor an ordinary citizen could associate with: no matter how poor or of low status the male listener is, it transforms him into a manly and honourable subject that can reflect his patriotism on his ideal ego (Skinner 2005: 122). But Pericles' oration goes beyond this: the *demos* is introduced as an aristocratic body; the democratic subject is constituted within an aristocratic system (Wohl 2002: 30-41). The speech implies that the aristocratic connotations of the care of the self, which Foucault noted, are now considered as public ideals. Thus, the term, reminiscent of erotic literature, places the citizen in the role of *erastes*, who encourages the *eromenos* -Athens in this case- to care for oneself. Manifestation of the subject that produces power relations and is produced by them are clearly observed in these metaphors. The expressions like "lover of city/people" is repeated by Pericles' successor Kleon, this time with a greater emphasis on this connection: Kleon declares himself as the "lover of the people", and, just like in the courtship between the *erastes* and the *eromenos*, he tries to seduce the them with political gifts. To this we may add that by the 5th century, Harmodios and Aristogeiton, who had become the symbols of opposition to tyranny as well as courage and dedication fed by homosexual *eros* among the elite, were listed among the founders of the Athenian political system (Dem. 19.280; Hyp. 6.39). And theirs was not an elite affair: Thucydides hints at a class difference, emphasizing the middling social status of Aristogeiton against the aristocratic background of young and illustrious Harmodios (Thuc. 6.54.2)[23]. As a *mesos politês*, an average Athenian, Aristogeiton becomes a figure whom all citizens regardless of their status can identify. Since Thucydides remarked earlier that the people knew that "the tyranny had been put down at last, not by themselves, but by Lacedaeominans" (Thuc. 6.53.3), portrayal

[23] Herodotus makes them the members of the elite clan of Gephyraioi (Hdt. 5.57), but only Thucydides points to Aristogeiton's lower status.

of Aristogeiton as a middling citizen provided an easy way for the ordinary Athenians to identify themselves with one of the imaginative founders of the democracy. Therefore, every Athenian could now be an Aristogeiton, imagining themselves as both an erotic and a political elite (Wohl 1999: 358-359). The duo's homosexual love became a part of the sexual ideology of democracy (Skinner: 2005: 118). These nicely correspond with the above-mentioned tendency to "aristocratize" the Athenians as a whole and create a convenient symbolic medium, where the practices of the self might become more intelligible and common through this sexual discourse.

Visibility of the Care of the Self: Two Examples

Foucault's archaeological method explores the networks of what is said, and what can be seen in a set of social arrangements. Applying the archaeological approach, one finds out something about the visible in "opening up" statements and something about the statement in "opening up visibilities"[24]. For example, just as in *Discipline and Punish* Foucault's central task is to show how the prison as a form of visibility (a visible thing) produces statements about criminality, while statements about criminality produce forms of visibility which reinforce prison[25], so the care of the self makes itself visible in the plan of the *oikos* (Pl. *Ti*. 69d-71a):

[The gods] planted the mortal kind apart therefrom in another chamber of the body, building an isthmus and boundary for the head and chest by setting between them the neck, to the end that they might remain apart. And within the chest—or "thorax," as it is called—they fastened the mortal kind of soul. And inasmuch as one part thereof is better, and one worse, they built a division within the cavity of the thorax ***as if to fence off two separate chambers, for men and for women****—by placing the midriff between them as a screen. That part of the soul, then, which partakes of courage and spirit, since it is a lover of victory, they planted more near to the head, between the midriff and the neck, in order that it might hearken to the reason, and,*

[24] The fields that archaeological method investigates are listed under seven groups by Kendall – Wickham, which are explained by the example of school. For our purpose, it is convenient to detail only the first group: It is an attempt "to understand the relation between the sayable and the visible focusing on those sets of statements and arrangements that make up the school - instructions to principals and teachers, instructions from them to pupils, statements about the curriculum, the school buildings involved, the timetabling arrangements, and so on. Knowledge is composed of the sayable and the visible, or words and things. In our example of schooling, we need to attend to both what is said (theories of learning, theories of discipline, etc.) and what is visible (buildings, blackboards, instruments of punishment, etc.). The crucial point here is that Foucault draws our attention to the dynamic, mutually conditioning relationship between words and things", Kendall – Wickham 20032: 25-28; see also Gutting 2005: 32-42.

[25] What makes this form visible in practice is the "constant division between the normal and the abnormal to which every individual is subjected... the existence of a whole set of techniques and institutions for measuring, supervising and correcting the abnormal brings into play the disciplinary mechanisms... and Bentham's Panopticon is the architectural figure of this composition...", Foucault 19952: 199-203. Same things can be said about classrooms and factories, Kendall – Wickham 20032: 125-126.

in conjunction therewith, might forcibly subdue the tribe of the desires whensoever they should utterly refuse to yield willing obedience to the word of command from the citadel of reason.

Practices of the care for the self such as moderation, rationality and abstinence are associated with the superior part of the soul, being between the midriff and the neck, near the brain. The equivalent of this moderation and rationality in the *oikos* plan is the *andron*. The separate positions of superior and inferior parts are expressed by the difference between the *andron* and *gynaikonitis*. The passage as a whole is related to the partition of the body and the soul, distribution of the parts of the soul among the various areas and organs of the body and their functions, which is also closely related to the city-soul analogy (Blössner 2009). It is worth noting in this regard that we see a gradual partition of space in Greek houses from the 8th century BC on, pointing to the increasing complexity of the social relations. Although architectural features aimed to control the circulation in the houses had already begun to take shape, it is not until Pericles set the framework of citizenship based on parentage in the 5th century that we observe a change in the house plans, which seems to have focused on controlling the interaction between the wife and the non-kin men to ensure the legitimacy of patriarch's offspring (Nevett 2010: 62)[26].

The human condition, in the terms of finitude, plays an important in the care of the self: if you are afraid of death, then you cannot abuse your power over others; the fear of death is at the centre of the care of self. Foucault claims that this is where the Christianity, by presenting salvation, disturbs the balance of the care of the self. In order to attain salvation, one should take care of the self. Among the Greeks, however, one takes care of oneself in one's own life, since unlike that of Christianity, afterlife in Greek thought is a vague concept. The reputation one leaves behind, therefore, is the only afterlife one can expect and it can be achieved through the care of the self which will be beneficial to others (Foucault 1997: 289; Castoriadis 1991:103). This can be observed in the Greek perceptions of afterlife and in the funerary art. Already in the 8th century, there had been a change in these attitudes, which demonstrate a greater fear of death, an individual and anxious reaction to the end of one's personal identity (Sourvinou-Inwood 1996: 299-300). Sometime in the first half of the 6th century, the journey to underworld was elaborated, guided by entities of higher status, Hermes, and then Charon in the 5th century. Hence, the borders of the two worlds were updated and became more secure, and contrary to the practice in Homer, the soul could now enter Hades before the burial (Sourvinou-Inwood

[26] This contrast was also established between the regimes: "When he [Diogenes] was returning from Lacedaemon to Athens; and on someone asking, 'Whither and whence?' he replied, 'From the men's apartments to the women's'", Diog. Laert. 6.59.8. Separation of soul into the rational and the irrational actually goes back to Homer. Mental and emotional reactions or actions like fear, hope, thinking and desire were attributed to body parts that made them somewhat visible: Fear is in the legs, because we run when we are scared; anger is in the chest and breath because when we are enraged we breathe rapidly etc., Stocking 2007: 62. Today we still use similar metaphors associating love and courage with the heart, for example, Dihle 1982: 25.

1996: 309-314). Articulation of the obscure and frightening realm of the dead in concrete terms demonstrates this fear of death in Greek conception, which is also reflected in the scenes with Charon on the white-ground *lekythoi*, where a desire to diminish the distance between the world of the living and the world of the dead is discerned (Sourvinou-Inwood 1996: 336). There is also a remarkable absence of the term *khairo* in the post-Archaic grave monuments and funerary ideology, only exception being the Athenian war dead, whose death in battlefield was now considered a positive event. But even in that case, this perception was due to the state ideology, an official behaviour (Sourvinou-Inwood 1996: 180-200). Archaic grave markers such as stelae and statues now reflect self-oriented perceptions rather than the public images of the 8th century, which indicate an anxiety about death undetectable in the previous centuries (Sourvinou-Inwood 1996: 277-279).

Conclusion

For Foucault, the point is not to get rid of all forms of power and recover a pristine state of freedom. All human relationships and social institutions are forms of power. Freedom is not achieved simply by liberating ourselves from the oppression of dictators or kings. What is more important than transition to democracy is its consolidation, which can only be achieved if people learn how to practice it, otherwise it would merely be a transition to another form of oppression. The crucial point is, then, how one can exercise power and practice freedom to create a better society (Foucault 1997: 282-285). One way to practice liberty or democracy is to care for the self. For the Greeks, construction of the "free subject" was the aim of the practices of the self. The care of the self was the mode in which individual freedom or civic liberty was reflected as an ethics and insofar as freedom for the Greeks signifies non-slavery, the problem is inherently political in that non-slavery to others is a condition: a slave has no ethics. It is also a political model insofar as being free means not being a slave to oneself and one's appetites, which means that with respect to oneself one establishes a certain relationship of domination, of mastery, which was called *arkhe*, or power, command" (Foucault 1997: 284, 286-288).

This was the single practice essential in Classical Greek thought for one to constitute oneself as a moral subject. Being the master of the self and the master of others were simultaneous processes. The power has not a subject or an object. The Greeks' power relations were such an invention that the power formed a rule bearing qualities peculiar to free human by originating from itself, not by a relation with another power. The freedom the Greeks defended was a freedom, in which power operated on itself in full and positive way, but only possible through the government of the others (Deleuze 1988: 100-105).

Here the main question should be the availability of the practices of the self to the lower classes: How many of them were aware of Socrates' musings on the matter? Did they ever hear of these practices? Did they really know the meaning of "taking care of the self"? Detel claims that the authorities that were consulted in cultural questions were not

Socrates, Plato or Aristotle, but rather Homer, Hesiod, Tyrtaeus, Solon, Sophocles and Euripides (Detel 2005: 124). In addition to what I have said above, we may bring several general objections forward about this assumption. First of all, contrary to Egyptian and Mesopotamia, literacy was not restricted to scribes or elites, which might have caused a static intellectual life, but was widespread, providing, by participation, a more vivid and fertile ground for philosophical debates. Secondly and most importantly, ridicules of serious scientific, literary and philosophical works in several comedies would have been incomprehensible to the general Athenian audience had they not known what they were about. And given the competitive nature of the Greeks, systematic education was almost a social necessity. Thirdly, the absence of the author necessitates a greater precision in expression, a more logical exposition and use of a clearer language to a much more conscious level (Burns 1981: 385-387). And there is evidence from the fifth century BC that even the small rural settlements could maintain a schoolmaster (Harris 1989: 65-66). Perhaps most importantly, Foucault himself contradictorily hints at the public aspect of the practices of the self when he says that "...while steadfastly refusing to go to the Assembly and address the people, Socrates speaks the *everyday language of everyone* in the streets of Athens. Why does he employ this *common everyday language*? So as to be able to look after himself by visibly and manifestly refusing the injustices that may be done to him, but also by encouraging others, questioning them causally so as to take care of them by showing them that, knowing nothing, they really should take care of themselves" (my italics; Foucault 2010: 351).

Greeks' crowning achievement, however, according to Foucault, was the detachment or "double unhooking" of the exercises that enabled one to govern oneself from power as a relation between forces, i.e. between the gods, rulers, institutions or people, and from knowledge as a stratified form (Deleuze 1988: 99-100). The Greek care of the self is a new type of power relation, in which power folds onto itself, operates on itself in order to govern the others. It has nothing to do with the particular power that requires a ruler and subjects in the traditional sense. Power does not spread over others, but folds onto itself (Akay 2016[4] 159). "It is as if the relations of the outside folded back to create a doubling, allow a relation to oneself to emerge, and constitute an inside which is hollowed out and develops its own unique dimension" (Deleuze 1988:100). This is an act peculiar to the free Athenian citizen not subjected to an external power such as a god, a sacred scripture or a pastor.

We take it for granted that all forms of government in all societies are primarily concerned with the problem of "life." Having compared modern government with that of ancient Greece, Foucault was able to demonstrate that in Greek society the various forms of political organisation were in no way charged with responsibility over the biological needs of the citizenry, and nor did they conceive of the population as a living species-body. He argued that the government of biological needs in both its individual and composite forms is the defining feature of modern society (Foucault 1978: 143-144). It might seem

to us that the care of the self fundamentally does the same thing through one's examination of his own body, diet and physical exercises. This perception is mostly due to the later Christian practices, however, which were reinterpreted and recontextualised by the late antique Christian writers. As we have seen above Greek approaches to body, homosexuality, access to wisdom and the problem of governing people in the context of the care of the self is something entirely different. The goal of Greek ethics, i.e. the relation the self to itself was neither a rigid moral code like that of early Christianity nor a set of laws for state intervention into the proper conduct of bodily pleasures and moral excesses (Seitz 2012: 549-551). Rather it was loose and general recommendations, which "stylised" one's way of life, turned it into a work of art. But life as a work of art was not some sort of dandyism, arrogance or elitism as we moderns believe. The best rulers, therefore, were those who had the best aesthetics for living and who avoided tyranny by imposing moderation on their sexual conduct (Foucault 1990: 80-81). The source of this connection was not morality by legislation but ethics. The most important constituent of ancient ethics was *enkratia*, that is the attitude of mastery. Contrary to the Christian practice, which operated through external moral codes (that is, the Bible), the Greek care of the self focused on the attitude to the self. There was always a danger of succumbing into our immodest desires, but contrary to the Christian care of the self, which was designed to eliminate all immoralities, the Greek counterpart usually sought to reach a permanent state of moderation (McHoul – Grace 2002: 99-101).

Today it might seem paradoxical to imagine a freedom won by self-restraint or moderation (*sophrosyne*[27]) but for the Greeks, the mutual relationship between the self and the city meant that the city should be free from conquest by its neighbouring states, but every citizen should also be free from the enemies within. Here we do not see a "free will" in the existentialist sense, since true freedom cannot be obtained unless the above-mentioned conditions are fully realized. Next to this negative aspect of Greek freedom, its positive aspect was that it was a power in its own right as mentioned above. The control of sexual passion was linked indelibly to civic government. The Greek obsession with the question of who should be the ruler was answered by the natural condition of the ruler: The ruler is in fact the ruled, because the power relationship in the Greek care of the self, as already noted, is power of the self operating on itself. He ruled himself before ruling the others. With the advance of Christianity, the Graeco-Roman techniques of the self had to be broken down in order to make the individual submit to external power relationships of pastor, the Church, scriptures etc. It was because of this unique relation of power, this new spirit, that Athenian democracy held a unique place in ancient political milieu.

[27] Originally, the term defines the man who behaves according to the commandment of Apollo and who is always aware of his own deficiency. Already before philosophical texts, it was understood as the knowledge oneself and one's shortcomings, rational control of desires, temperance, awareness of one's specific duties, see Dihle 1982: 48-49 for its various meanings.

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