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Foucault's Freudian debt: Foucault, Freud and Lacan

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Summary

The aim of this thesis is to discuss the relation between care of the self and cynicism in Michel Foucault’s late lectures from early 1980’s and its connection to Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis as we see a great deal of similarities. Even though Foucault never openly referred neither to Freud nor to Lacan some staggering similarities can be found between them. Cynicism in Foucault’s late lectures and the other life that it leads to are both similar and bound to same vicious circle as Lacanian desire and jouissance. Nevertheless Foucault never comes to talk about it or even more evidently obvious application of Freud’s ideas in modern society that embody so much of what Foucault was criticizing.

Main terms: cynicism, care of self, discourse, jouissance, Parrhesia, psychoanalysis, other life.
Santrauka


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Introduction

If we talk about Michel Foucault (1926-84), Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) is definitely not the first association that we make. We easily can call both of them the intellectual pillars of the 20th century, the best in their fields. Comparing both as similar, though is entirely different thing that may call many to frown.

Freud, best known as the father of psychoanalysis, and his followers, like Jacques Lacan (1901-81), that continued his work were concentrated on the subject. More specifically its consciousness and unconsciousness and practical treatments that could help those with ill mental states. Meanwhile Foucault is the one that “killed the subject” or at least the one who announced the death (this will be explained in more detail on this later). So we take a peek at these two thinkers and they do not look remotely alike, but when we get to closer inspect and compare some of their key ideas we get an entirely different picture.

Michel Foucault educated in École Normale Supérieure where he spent five years starting in 1946 and found that his interest lie with philosophy and history of science. Studying under Louis Althusser was influenced to join French Communist Party in 1950, but left the party in 1953 being appalled by homophobia and anti-Semitism.

Michel Foucault applied for a positions in Collège de France with a subject that he called History of Systems of Thought and covered a variety of topics, many of which were about institutions of power. Such institutions are disciplinary or control mechanisms of society. Foucault uses his concept of power to name everything from ideologies and religions to schools, prisons and hospitals. What Foucault also talked about in Collège de France was the courage of speech. Now, from the first look at it these two topics have an obvious relation of explaining the society of power, or society of control and not being afraid to recognize this, become conscious and become vocal about it, but it is not that simple and it is not the angle that we will be looking at.

What we will address in this thesis is how developing of his theorization of courage of truth Foucault gave examples from ancient Greek and Roman philosophers but avoided more present examples. Namely, those of Freud and Lacan. Foucault was using the Greek term parrhesia, so Greek philosophers did make sense, but the general points that he was making were very closely to those made by Lacan. Without a doubt, Foucault was familiar with the
concepts and the theories of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan and other psychoanalysts, but he hardly ever mentions them. Of course it cannot be assumed that the knowledge of the theory of psychoanalysis implies the awareness of the similarities between his ideas and those of psychoanalytics so we make it our task to find how clear these similarities were and how likely it is that he was aware of them.

Freud organized the knowledge about hysteria, psychosis and therapy that was already there into a unified, solidified, monolith theory that he called psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis became complex and holistic theory focusing on all the tics and quirks that people have. Nevertheless it became widely popular exactly because of the reason that it could explain everything from dreams and habits to hysteric and psychotic behavior. Knowing this full well Foucault did not make any references to Freud in his late lectures. When advertising industry came to use psychoanalysis to design adverts to boost the sales by appealing to people’s subconsciousness this marked a new era for brainwashing of the masses. People could easily be conditioned to consume more or only certain products, it later escalated to conditioning of political beliefs, making a candidate more appealing and more likely to be elected to the position he is running for. Foucault did not address this either, although it was a new level of power over people just withdrawn to, what seemed like, ethical field and talked about cynicism.

We will see that it was not mere ethics that Foucault was discussing in his late lecture courses, the ideas discussed there were still deeply political and this makes it even more peculiar for him not to engage in the application of psychoanalysis in the advertising and political propaganda. All of this will be talked about these issues in several main sections as different authors and ideas have to be introduced and then compared.

First we will introduce the timeline of events, where Foucault, Freud and Lacan are to be introduced and a chronological context on main ideas and works given, delimiting Foucault’s analysis to his late lectures from 1981-1984 where he focused on parrhesia and cynicism. The next section analysis Foucault’s main points on care of self, parrhesia and its connection to cynicism, providing an understanding, which will be required moving on to next section where Lacan’s notions of desire and jouissance are introduced and immediately surface and analysis may begin. Following this some modern examples of Foucaultian repressive powers and their application of Freudian psychoanalysis are given and the relevance of these powers in Foucault’s
late lectures explained while once again emphasizing the close connection between Foucault and Freud, which Foucault so persistently avoided.

The aims of this thesis are to:

1) Analyze Foucault’s late ideas and compare them to earlier ideas of Freud and Lacan.

2) To prove conduits between Foucault’s late lectures and Freud and Lacan exist and reading of these lectures, while bearing in mind this connection, may be interesting and rewarding as it does shed some new light on it.

3) Draw conclusions on what are the benefits of reading Foucault through Freudian and Lacanian perspective, as well as speculating why Foucault avoided so persistently talking about it himself.

The methods employed in thesis are comparative analysis of textual sources as well as some analysis of video material.

The significance of this work can be explained in two ways: 1) it provides a new reading of Foucault and reveals him in a new, little discussed light; 2) it is that Foucault’s theory of cynicism has never been as relevant as it is today with the internet and technologization of monitoring and tracking of people.
The timeline

In 1885 Sigmund Freud went to Paris to study with Jean-Martin Charcot who, at the time was studying hypnosis and hysteria, often in a public domain. In 1886 he took on the knowledge acquired by his friend and colleague Josef Breuer who was using hypnosis in his therapeutic sessions in order to talk with hysterical patients about their memories and symptoms of hysteria they were experiencing while under the hypnosis. Freud called this “free association”, but in 1896 he dropped the need for hypnosis as he realized that such talks can be had without hypnotizing a patient. Freud called his method psychoanalysis.

With his newly developed method Freud found that therapy or self-analysis leads to early childhood memories that are often unpleasant, dreadful and overbearing. He called them traumatizing and believed that such memories are repressed and locked away deep in our minds, inaccessible to conscious thought, thus they are unconscious and cannot be access by reasoning, self-reflection or deduction. Nevertheless these unconscious memories or thoughts still have a way of getting out to the surface through our dreams, slips of the tongue, habits and other non-conscious behavior. They manifest in our behavior, but being unconscious they do so by accident, we inadvertently allow them pop up when the conscious guard is down. This is so because of the nature of the subconscious, which is primal, it is not only traumatic memories that reside in unconsciousness, but also the pure desire, which people living in a society are forced to hide and deny because of cultural, religious or political norms that form, what some call, a discourse. Discourse requires people to live up to the expectations of laws and socially acceptable conduct, which, if disobeyed, puts one at risk of social exclusion or legal sanctions. Thus, one is faced with a conundrum of granting his own or the desire of society, a conundrum that cause even more frustration. As the unconscious pops up people wish to hide it, but psychoanalysis allows them to talk about them and just a chance of admitting the true nature, that one would normally would deny, help to find some comfort.

In his early lectures Michel Foucault was concerned with discourses of power and biopolitics, he focused on the subject of powers that control society and constantly watch over each individual in order to main the order that it imposes. These are the same discourses, of course, that bounds one deny the unconscious.
In October 1980 Foucault delivered a lecture on Truth and Subjectivity at UC Berkeley where he already attracted a crowd so big that lecture required a supervision of police in order to maintain order in the crowd that was no longer fitting in 2000-seat hall. This lecture was said to be sort of a shift point of his focus point and from the 1980 onwards all of Foucault’s topics were concerned with ethics of the subject.

It is difficult to say why Foucault decided to make such a change in his philosophical ideas and concern himself with this seemingly completely different topic, but we may speculate and guess. One of the reasons could be his quickly demising health, faced with incurable, at that time, even undiagnosed disease, he could have begun retrospecting on his life and wished he could have lived different life, a life where he would be able to speak fearlessly about his sexual orientation among other things, since in his life he has seen a lot of homophobia.

A better guess, in our opinion, is that this was not a change of philosophy, but rather an extension of it. We will concern ourselves with these latter lectures of Foucault, where he is said to no longer address the discourses of power and control, in hopes of revealing that they are not just ethical, but still social and political, as were his early lectures. Foucault did not jump the ship and did not change his philosophical interests, he decided to explain them from a different angle, from the point of view not of narrator, but of an individual living under the thumb of discursive power. The ethical extension of the previous political narrative of Foucault is finally a practical solution of living.

In 1983-1984 Foucault held a lecture course in Collège de France called *Courage of Truth*. He continued the theme of the previous year’s lectures and further explored the notion of parrhesia, which was translated as “truth-telling” in politics, to establish a number of ethically irreducible conditions based on courage and conviction. In this course he discusses the genealogy of the study of parrhesia, the usage of parrhesia by ancient Greek philosophers, Cynics and its role in New Testament. Truth-telling is not only a philosophical stance, but also a method that Foucault uses. Foucault saw that the struggle of being honest, staying true to one’s self was a problem that people were faces for as long as society existed and as early ancient Greek there were some, who had ways to fight it.

A parallel can already be seen here between Foucault’s topic and the ideas of Freud – to some extent both were concerned with the fate, with which every man is faced for living in a society, the endless tearing up of human’s nature. This could well be compared to the now
popular psychological distinction between nature and nurture, which predates to Aristotle or even earlier. The debate on nature versus nurture is a debate on whether humans are already born with the ideas or whether they learn and develop them. Which one of these is true, is not the question we are asking here, but nurture, the learnt ideas of society, law and the required behavior wins every time in the sense that we must obey these learn concepts and deny any inherited attributes if they disagree with the sociopolitical norms.

Jacques Lacan has reformed Freud’s ideas by interpreting them as linguistic. Sean Homer explains how massive of a role linguistics plays in Lacan’s theory: “we cannot escape language and language inscribes us in a certain position within the symbolic.”¹ Symbolic is one of three orders that Lacan talked about; symbolic order is the realm of social interaction, it is where other is most relevant because it refers to language and other forms of communication (symbols, body language). Should Foucault have operated in same terms the ultimate symbol in this realm would have been power that signifies any sort of ruling entity or repressive actions. Often the language creates misunderstanding and the subject is alienated: “<...> alienation is destiny. No speaking subject can avoid alienation. It is a destiny tied to speech.”² Same applies to Foucault, when he was talking about power he used the broadest, most general concept he could to cover the spectrum of powers he meant, but still for each listener or reader it meant something else, something they can relate to, some particular controlling, rules imposing force, entity, facility or institution that is relevant to them. It is the same every time in every social interaction as this interaction can never leave the symbolic order.

Lacan also believed that language entirely operates within ambiguity and most of the time you know absolutely nothing about what we are saying. This raises interesting question: how does this relate to main the method used of free association, used in psychoanalysis? Since Freud psychoanalytic method was often called “the talking cure”, analysand³ talks, analyst listens and the analysand finds comfort in not being judged for his deepest, darkest thoughts. But

³ Analysand is what patient in psychoanalytic session is called. Even though it signifies same thing whether we call one a patient or an analysand it meant to reduce the alienation of analysand by not using the term patient, which carries the presumption of illness and ascribes it to signified.
if we do not know what we are talking about it points not only to the psychoanalytic analysis, where the therapist interprets the free association, but also to the fact that the patient does not know the value of his words, even more so this could and should also mean that the analyst does not know what he means when he finally utters his diagnosis. Hence neither the analysand, nor the analyst understand what is meant by the words said and this is normal course of events.

Lacan rephrased and reinterpreted Freud’s ideas, forcing psychoanalysis to a new era. His explanation of desire and mirror stage will prove to be closely related to and relevant in understanding the ideas of Foucault.

**Foucault’s parrhesia and care of self**

The lecture course that Foucault started to teach in 1983-84 was named *Courage of Truth* and was his last one as he passed away in 1984. In this course he focused on the care of the self, its routes in ancient Greece and its connection to parrhesia and cynicism. As mentioned already, Greek word *parrhesia* translates to *truth-telling* and what it means is a deeply philosophical stance of honest living, which at first could seem as simple enough thing to explain, but Foucault provides a profound and explicit explanation of it, leading to clear understanding of it, but rather ambiguous end point. Where he is going with it can, arguably, be misconstrued in numerous ways. Foucault provided three points of parrhesia that seem to depict that, which parrhesia stands for in the modern time:

1) “Parrhesia now appears, not as a right possessed by a subject, but as a practice whose privileged correlate, its first point of application, is not the city or body of citizens which has to be persuaded and led by it, but something which is both a partner to which it is addressed and a domain in which it is effective.”

More than anything this requires context, which is simply to say that Foucault held to his earlier ideas of society and power. Here we can make a distinction and call them the society of power and the society of people. In this context Foucault says that it

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5 This would refer to society as the body of people, a multitude of individuals that unite and merge into monolithic metaphorical body – *socium*, or society as an opposing force of the controlling institutions. Foucault does not intend to refer to any rebellion or resistance to authoritative institutions, but it could be an example of the society that
is not the body of citizens, but its partner, namely parrhesia, and the realm of its effect that he will focus on. Surprisingly, the domain of parrhesia’s effect an ethical one. To compare we may take an example from Subjectivity and Truth where Foucault sarcastically ask: “How should one "govern oneself” by performing actions in which one is oneself the objective of those actions, the domain in which they are brought to bear, the instrument they employ, and the subject that acts?”6 This does not yet have any hint of parrhesia, but Foucault was already building a foundation for it since he wished to get to it shortly. Here he already talks about the actions that focus on the subject as the one who acts and all that acts, one is the entire domain of his action and the only instrument employed. This secludes the subject from any society, distances Foucault a little further from his earlier ideas and brings us to a second point on parrhesia.

2) “The objective of truth-telling is therefore less the city’s salvation than the individual’s ethos.”7 With this Foucault makes the ultimate move away from political and towards ethical, which, for many, was an unexpected move, since Foucault was always very focused on political critique of institutions of repression and although already in 1982 with the start of his lectures on Government of Self and Other and in 1981 with lectures on The Hermeneutics of the Subject he stepped away from the political critique, the move towards ethos was an undisputed shift of his philosophy. It moved not only from institutions of repression, it also moved from self and other to a solitude of oneself. Care of self without any other. One still remained a part of the social body, but the ethical aspect was now the main focus of his lectures and analysis. This had significant distance from political critique as the political can only exist in society, but ethical can be maintained in solitude, as in Foucault did associated it with something that cannot be shared with other, psukhe - the soul; or as he vaguely referred in The Hermeneutics of the Subject - a form of reflexivity that constitute subject as such: “Consequently, we should not constitute a continuous history of the gnothi seauton whose explicit or implicit postulate would be a general

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and universal theory of the subject, but should, I think, begin with an analytics of the forms of reflexivity, inasmuch as it is the forms of reflexivity that constitute the subject as such.” And just as a soul the reflexivity cannot be shared with others, hence the solitude. It may be argued if the ethical domain is more lonely than political one, but this is what Foucault believed: “This cultivation of the self-comprised a set of practices designated by the general team askesis.” Foucault talks about a series of different practices performed in solitude by stoics and epicureans. These practices were performed in order to make the subject think and live as if one is about to die, thus showing his every action “in terms of its own value”, which was also talked about by existentialists that said that one’s true nature is revealed at the moment of death, when one knows he is about to die he has no reason to hide his true nature. This is a brief moment of authenticity is what Foucault sought to achieve by reflexivity and self-knowledge, this is the care of self, where one without any fear speaks his mind and not only tells the truth, but lives it as well. Here the third feature of parrhesia becomes relevant.

3) “<...> double determination of the psukhe as correlate of truth-telling, and of ethos as the objective of parrhesiastic practice, means that parrhesia, while being organized around the principle of truth-telling, now takes shape in a set of operations which enable veridiction to induce transformations in the soul.” This third part of the parrhesia refers to duality and the ability to transform soul. Duality derives from psukhe and ethos, where the ethos is also the objective of psukhe. Psukhe transforms, which, because of the duality, changes the ethos as well. This transformation allows one to live other life, or, how Foucault called it vie autre. “The fundamental principle of Christian asceticism is that renunciation of the self is the essential moment of what enables us to gain access to the other life, to the light, to truth and salvation.”

This example was given by Foucault in February 1982 and even though Foucault again and again

10 Ibid. P. 105.
emphasized the importance of asceticism and some sort of transformation into a life so radically other that he did not say what it would be.

In later years, during the lectures on care of the self, Foucault explained the transformation towards the other life is through another example, this time taken from ancient Greek philosophy - cynicism, which did clear things up a bit. “Foucault introduces here the important theme of otherness (altérité) with the distinction and interplay between: an other life (une vie autre), in the sense of the mode of existence of the true life in this world, which is radically other than common or traditional forms of existence; the other world (l’autre monde), in the sense of the transcendent.”\(^{13}\) This remark by editor Gross Frederic explains how deeply Foucault’s term other life penetrates and exploits its otherness, it is a radical other, which is able to transcend the world, l’autre monde, which translates as the next world or afterlife. At best it is a metaphorical afterlife, thus the translation “next world” suits it better as it carries the meaning of the life after this one, but not necessarily an afterlife in the religious sense as understood by Christians or ancient Greeks. It is more of a life started anew, better one in comparison to the previous.

What Foucault intended to say is that we can achieve the other life, a life superior to the one we have now and this can be done through cynicism. And what is so special about cynicism? In Foucault’s mind the cynicism allowed an indifferent view, uninterested in the powers that be, thus simply defying it with a childish ignorance and indifference towards them. This indifference allowed for a complete ignoring of the existing rules and measurements of normalization as if the cynic is not playing the game that everybody else is playing. On the contrary from a mad person who could act the same way due to his madness, a cynic is not mad, a cynic is acting while fully aware of his actions and the results that they may have for him or others. Cynic is not following the rules, not respecting the authorities and authoritative figures, cynic does not care about the things that everybody else are concerned about and because of this Foucault calls cynicism the real, the true way of life. “Cynicism is in fact this movement by which life changes as a result of being really and truly, in actual fact, stamped with the effigy of philosophy.”\(^{14}\) This philosophy is


\(^{14}\) Ibid. P. 245.
that of authentic living, all the values that cynic would have (should he have any) are his own, not given to him by society, by his political leaders, he himself has found and developed them.

We have emphasized that by moving towards *ethos* Foucault moves away from political domain, but with the way this *ethos* acts Foucault establishes it very firmly into political domain as defying authorities is civil disobedience, a strongly political move. Some even say that with *parrhesia* Foucault enters political field even stronger than with his early lectures on discourses. “The idea of parrhesia <...> is particularly important and it is more conducive for a dialogue with traditions in political theory compared to his earlier works.”\(^{15}\) It is easy to see why this is so. It is no longer a critique of political power, but action against it words put to work in order to show a practical way of addressing the political powers.

Foucault also added that “<...> the Cynics were not the first, and certainly not alone in linking the theme of monarchy as political sovereignty to that of the philosophical life as sovereignty of self over self.”\(^{16}\) Foucault does admit that cynics were not the only example for *parrhesia* versus politics, but he, probably, felt that they were one of most radical ones. He did not want take chances with less radical approach of Socrates for example. Even though Socrates would have made a fine example of parrhesiastic living cynicism is more radical and therefore more convincing argument on *parrhesia*.

Moreover cynicism transcends the field of civil disobedience, it would rather be outside of anything civil and have nothing to do with civilization. Socrates tried to change how people argued and used elenctic method, with which he still operated in the social domain, while the cynics distanced themselves from society, lived in solitude ignoring others. Thus the solitude and askesis, thus the transcendence of the civil, social field and addressing the political only by defying its authoritative power. Most importantly, thus the *other* life, uninterested and uninfluenced by norms and rules set by society.

This *other* life is life in truth, Foucault believed that “first, Cynic sovereignty founds a blessed mode of life for whoever exercises it. Second, this Cynic sovereignty founds a practice


of the manifested truth, of truth to be manifested.”¹⁷ The blessed mode of living is achieved by having a clean conscience as one is not governed by others, he himself is ruler of how he lives. The manifestation of truth is more complex idea.

Foucault means to say that cynic had not only to speak truth, live it. He has to be completely familiar with himself, through self preservation and constant reflection one must come to terms with himself and see himself for what the truly, honestly is. This is an action of solitude, but cynic also “must watch what others do, what they think, and he must be in a position of constant inspection with regard to them.”¹⁸ With this Foucault brings back the social element, but now a different light is shed on it. It is new social interaction that transcends the old one, because the cynic transcended to a new life, other life. A parallel to this is Lacan’s commentary on the Purloined letter: “Which is why we have decided to illustrate for you today the truth which may be drawn from that moment in Freud's thought under study - namely, that it is the symbolic order which is constitutive for the subject - by demonstrating in a story the decisive orientation which the subject receives from the itinerary of a signifier.”¹⁹ Let us now address the Edgar Allan Poe’s short story Lacan commentary on in.

Cynicism and parrhesia

Having been show a picture and told that this is you, this is how you look like does not necessarily convince, one can doubt this and remain cynical about it. Foucault believed this as well and therefore he linked the truth, the parrhesiastic living with the cynicism. Already in 1981 in his lecture course on Subjectivity and Truth he raised a question of what one is to do with himself in. “In short, it is a matter of placing the imperative to 'know oneself' - which to us appears so characteristic of our civilization-back in the much broader interrogation that serves as its explicit or implicit context: What should one do with oneself? What work should be carried

¹⁸ Ibid. P. 311.
out on the self?" This question of care of self has become a basis for his analysis of *parrhesia* and cynicism.

In his last lectures in 1983-84 Foucault focuses not just on the *parrhesia*, but also on the classical cynicism, moreover the connection between *parrhesia* and cynicism. He does not provide a straightforward definition of and takes some knowledge for granted, but Peter Sloterdijk defines the cynicism as a repression of our true beliefs, he says “Modern cynicism presents itself as that state of consciousness that follows after naive ideologies and their enlightenment.” What this means is that people participate in social, political or cultural activities that they themselves do not believe in or understand, they do it because everyone else does it and Sloterdijk defines this hypocrisy as cynicism. And we can see how this would fit with Foucault, the fear of the true, honest behavior provokes Foucault to speak about cynicism and *parrhesia*, moreover that he only started to talk about this in his late lectures 1983-84 when his health was already demising.

Cynicism, which takes a huge part in Foucault’s explicit elaboration of *parrhesia* is well described in Davis Mazella’s *The Making of Modern Cynicism*, he says “The Cynics used these images of failure and fraudulence as a form of ascetic self-regulation, to ensure their own discipline and to harness the considerable collective energies of public scandal on behalf of its philosophic mission” and this exact feature of cynicism was what Foucault tried to show. The collective energy of the society as an oppositional power of resistance to the powers of

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22 Although now we may have in a completely opposite situation - people openly expressing the things that they do not believe in. Internet possibly was the main factor allowing this to happen, the over-expression of one’s non-believes became the new trend, people not believing in everything from God to self-help, to Big Bang theory, to the moon landing. Yet they do go to church at least twice a year and when in a life crisis they turn to prayers and hit every self-help book they can lay their hands on. When not in crisis they research information to prove that moon landing, or 9/11 or that dinosaurs never existed. And whether it is out of fear of deception or having too much time on one’s hands it extreme cynicism, borderline paranoia even; but because a negative cannot be proven people will still participate in the things they do not believe, because they secretly believe them.

repression. Through the example of “true living”, which Foucault called the “other life”, leading to the “other world” is shown a life of a man without the fear of powers, who is not afraid to see, admit what he sees and speak of it, bear witness. “This style of existence specific to revolutionary militantism, and ensuring that one’s life bears witness, breaks, and has to break with the conventions, habits, and values of society”\textsuperscript{24}. By breaking these social chains one supposedly breaks free and lives the true life, “other life”. This is a life that does not give in to the discourse of any kind, it refuses to recognize the authorities of power and lives the true life. Foucault makes it seem that this true life is the life the people were meant to live, but through by the effort of power and through the discourses that it bears, it was hidden and even the idea of somehow living it seems radical. To live this true life is to be a cynic to all that is given, the ideas of social, religious and political. Even though one is provided with choices of which religion or political discourse to have, whether to take this or other, these choices still are in the same grand discourse, thus the true life is radically other as next to these choices there is an “open box”, one may write his own discourse. “It is radically other because it breaks totally and on every point with the traditional forms of existence, with the philosophical existence that philosophers were accustomed to accepting, with their habits and conventions.”\textsuperscript{25} And yes, even written not by the powers, but by the subject the discourse is still a discourse, it is bound to become a controlling power or clash with other discourses. Whatever happens with it in the end is not important since at best the subject is right at the same place where he has started, just now he has gained the power and does not obey any other discourse, but his own. But he does obey a discourse, his own discourse. It could also be speculated that if there would be more like minded cynics like him they could gather into society, create their mutual discourse, which is likely, it is in human nature to seek others that are similar to him, to look for social affiliation.

So if we accept the cynicism as the explained by Sloterdijk and read Foucault then the regular and the other lives are both conscious decisions or choices made by individual and this would hardly go with Foucault because it means that we live in the repressions of the power by our own choice thus making it not negative and not forced, but willingly taken in by a conscious


\textsuperscript{25} Ibid. P. 245
individual. It goes without saying that Foucault could never accept such definition, if anything he would provide a completely opposite one, since he did believe that cynicism breaks an individual free from, to put it in Sloterdijk’s words, “naive ideologies and their enlightenments”.

Another, probably closer to Foucault’s ideas, understanding of cynicism is provided by Paolo Virno in the *A Grammar of the Multitude*. He explains cynicism as second of the two emotional tonalities (the first one is opportunism). He says that “cynicism is one of the possible ways of reacting to the general intellect”\(^26\), connected to chronic instability of life, which reveals the rules governing the society. This, clearly, is closer to Foucault’s thinking about resistance to power and also to seeing and understanding the restrictive society and its norms that are imposed on everyone from the moment of their birth. Virno even says that “at the base of contemporary cynicism lies the fact that men and women first of all experience rules, far more often than "facts," and far earlier than they experience concrete events.”\(^27\) These rules provide the men and women with their social roles, their place in society as well as the boundaries of their actions limited the given set of rules they are meant to live by.

Furthermore coming back to the theme of the other life, which Foucault described as radically other and reachable only through cynicism, work well with Virno as well. Cynicisms connection with chronic instability of life reveals the rules, the boundaries of the social, thus revealing the beyondness of it and allowing a critical mind to start wondering what life awaits beyond those rules. Foucault’s answer is true life, Virno might find a different name for it, but obviously it is the same life, as the same road leads to it in both cases.

Even the second emotional tonality that Virno talks about can be worked into Foucault other life in order to show the radicality of the otherness. Opportunists, as described by Virno “are those who confront a flow of ever-interchangeable possibilities, making themselves available to the greater number of these, yielding to the nearest one, and then quickly swerving from one to another.”\(^28\) So the opportunist is not attached to any of the rules of the world, but he follows them if he can get something out of it, some personal benefit. He swerves from one


\(^{27}\) Ibid. P. 87

\(^{28}\) Ibid. P. 86.
option to another, from one place to another, pretending to care, follow, believe when it is beneficial, he sells his care, pride, his freedom, yet he never really cares about anything, aside from himself, but this moving and secretly not genuine caring does not provide him with the understanding of rules, does not lead to the radically other life. Only the open cynicism, the being fearless admitting one’s carelessness divulge the invisible repressive rules.

The problem that arises from this Foucault’s and Virno’s relation is that Virno explains cynicism as an emotional tonality meaning that it is not rational and a person that is not a cynic cannot come to be a cynic through reason. On the contrary Sloterdijk provides the conscientious choice of cynical life as that of Diogenes of Sinope, who, says Sloterdijk, “shows contempt for fame, ridicules the architecture, refuses respect, parodies the stories of gods and heroes, eats raw meat and vegetables, lies in the sun, fools around with the whores and says to Alexander the Great that he should get out of his sun.”

A true fearless speech and an exemplary show of fearless living. For Foucault cynicism works as a conduit between care of self, which his lectures are focused on, and parrhesia. “What is this “me,” this “self,” we must care about?” Foucault asks, is it just a multiplicity of the imposed social, cultural and political restrictions? No, there has to be more, a true “me”, a “true life”, other life.

Sloterdijk takes a similar position with kynicism saying “Kynicism is a first reply to Athenian hegemonic idealism that goes beyond theoretical repudiation. It does not speak against idealism, it lives against it.” And although kynicism should be just a more traditional translation of Greek cynicism and in his The Sublime Object of Ideology Slavoj Zizek notices that Sloterdijk’s usage of this term is very different from the traditional cynicism: “Kynicism represents the popular, plebeian rejection of the official culture by means of irony and sarcasm: the classical kynical procedure is to confront the pathetic phrases of the ruling official ideology - its solemn, grave tonality - with everyday banality and to hold them up to ridicule, thus exposing behind the sublime noblesse of the ideological phrases the egotistical interests, the violence, the

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brutal claims to power.”\textsuperscript{32} But kynicism, likely, serves better in describing foucaultian meaning cynicism and life of Diogenes, the exemplary model of other life because of the deeper involvement in its values and ideas it represent, thus becoming more ethnically proclaimed by living out, practicing their believes in every (or at least more than cynics) field of everyday life.

In the same book Zizek rightly describes Foucault’s late lectures as an articulation of “different modes by which individuals assume their subject-positions.”\textsuperscript{33} These positions are precisely the life that individual chooses, it is this or the other life, but what are the modes by which one chooses them? Well one of the modes is the parrhesiastic living, fearless speech. These are obviously the modes that Foucault talks about most, but in fact here he admits that there are more than one mode possible for assuming the subject-position; and from here we can assume that psychoanalytic method is another mode, which can allow the subject to its position. Yet Foucault once again does not engage in this parallel either.

Another example of other life is found by Sloterdijk, it is about Willy Hochkeppel who “sketched the parallels between ancient kynicism and the modern hippie and alternative movement.”\textsuperscript{34} Hippie movement was another lifestyle philosophy that lead to other life disregarding boundaries and following one’s desires. Although they had rules of their own like pacifism, their principles were similar to those of classical kynicism with its way value of traveling and being cosmopolitical, which traditional cynicism also valued.

Foucault’s philosophy was not aimed at providing us with truths, “but for the freedom of withholding judgment of philosophical dogma, and so of acquiring relief from the restrictions they induce into our lives and thoughts.”\textsuperscript{35} From here a term free speech and from it fearless speech comes to be, and the free speech is a form of resistance, which has been important Foucault throughout all of his carrier. Aurelia Armstrong notices that on the one hand Foucault maintains an idea that where the power lies there lies resistance, as two opposite sides of same thing, while on the other hand he does say that subject is neither “oppressed or repressed, but

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\textsuperscript{33} Ibid. P. 197.
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brought into being as an effect of subjection to disciplinary institutions and norms.”36 From this dual explanation, which is does seem rather divided and could hardly work in one theory, Zizek draws inspiration to his critique.

In The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology Slavoj Zizek attacks Foucault for not providing a unified, monolith explanation of some concepts and locking himself in a vicious circle of power versus resistance, creating a new power, creating a new resistance *ad infinitum*, which could have, according to Zizek, easily been avoided if not for Foucault’s anti-Hegelianism. Zizek says “what seems to be missing in Foucault, the anti-dialectician *par excellence*, is precisely the properly Hegelian self-referential turn in the relationship between sexuality and its disciplinary control:

not only does confessional self-probing unearth new forms of sexuality - *the confessional activity itself becomes sexualized, gives rise to a satisfaction of its own* <...>”37 Meaning that the subject cannot create a different outcome resulting in a different world, instead the subjects is bound to resist indefinitely, even if the power will fall a new one will rise and resistance will as well, the game will restart.

Zizek suggested that Hegel approach was superior to Foucault’s: “The advantage of Hegel's account of disciplinary practices over Foucault's is that Hegel, as it were, provides the transcendental genesis of discipline by answering the question: how and why does (that which will become) the subject (the Althusserian 'individual') willingly subject itself to the formative discipline of Power?”38 According to Zizek Hegel would answer that is because of fear of death that we allow ourselves to entail in this formative discipline of power, but it is the body that dies and the body that desires, thus by negating the body one sets himself free. After this Zizek continues on further, now to bring Lacan, to show further where Foucault wen wrong and where he should have went instead: “what Hegel already hints at, and Lacan elaborates, is how this renunciation of the body, of bodily pleasures, produces a pleasure of its own - which is precisely

38 Ibid. P. 106.
what Lacan calls surplus-enjoyment.” This enjoyment rises from those pleasures that normally would be repressed by law or others, so the surplus-enjoyment is enjoyment felt when one breaks free from the binding chains of law. This could be called illegal pleasures in many cases, but Foucault would call it a life of cynic.

In *Cynicism from Diogenes to Dilbert* Ian Cutler described cynicism through its original meaning of lifestyle of a dog living in the streets. “Stray dogs (unlike well-groomed poodles) recognize no masters and no boundaries.” A dog without a home and without a master knows no territory and feels no respect, it can go wherever it wishes to go and do whatever it wishes to do. This here reveals how cosmopolite the cynics can be despising rules of certain land, they follow the rules of their own, or the rules of the world. Similar to how hippies would see themselves the children of the world or of nature, not bound in any way to any country, the cynics also have disdain for institutions of the state (including borders, laws, currencies, armies and slavery) and finds eloquent expression in their proclamation of cosmopolitanism, citizenship of the world.

However, Slavoj Zizek criticized Foucault, because he was not convinced that the path Foucault chose to take would allow him to leave the vicious circle of the power versus resistance struggle. Zizek said that “Foucault's description of the Self in pre-Christian Antiquity is the necessary Romantic-naive supplement to his cynical description of power relations after the Fall, where power and resistance overlap.” To resist power is already a pleasure for Lacan, already a cynical ethos for Foucault.

“Rather than take the dialectical path which would have allowed him to break out of the vicious cycle of power and resistance by positing resistance as an effect which can outgrow its cause and

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40 In Greek word κυνικός (kynikos) meaning “dog-like”. The name ascribed to cynics for their lifestyle representing a dog. Cutler says that is not just any dog, but a stray dog, with no place to live and no masters to take care of him, thus the dog has to take care of itself.


overturn it, Foucault remains uncomfortably trapped within this cycle." The vicious circle that we will see Lacan is also in, bounds Foucault as well and it cannot be any other way since they both are explaining thing so alike. The life that breaks free from current norms and laws, but no effort is done to change the nature of people and ontologically the people, even if they will all be cynics or will all pursue the pleasures that are now forbidden, will make new rules, rules of cynicism, norms of enjoyment.

Jacques Lacan and The purloined letter

Hiding something in plain sight is proverb that everyone is familiar with. The story by Edgar Allan Poe *The Purloined Letter*, which is a story about a letter of great importance is hidden in plain sight and thorough policemen using all of their wit to search the place where the letter is supposed to be, but can never find it. But then an individual that knows the person who hid the letter, find it without any effort. We can draw a parallel between this story and psychoanalysis and Foucault in the sense that if one knows Foucault and knows psychoanalysis will be able to connect the dots and see the relations between these two and see how Foucault was talking about and criticizing Freud, Lacan, but never really mentioned Freud nor Lacan. What better place to hide something then in plain sight and what is more in the plain sight than the language itself? We argue that even though Foucault seemingly turned away from criticizing psychiatry and other institutions of power and turned to ethical topic of care of self, Freud and Lacan remained as a silence leitmotif, hidden in his lectures. Never to be mentioned or referenced, but always relevant and present in his texts.

Lacan had an interpretation of *The Purloined Letter*, and he distinguishes three types of seeing or glancing, how he called it, at that, which is hidden. First there is a glance that sees nothing, then a glance which sees the fact that the first glance sees nothing and the third glance which sees all - the first glance that cannot see, the second glance that sees that first one cannot

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see and uses the opportunity to use his knowledge of other’s ignorance and claim what have been missed by other\textsuperscript{44}.

In the story of \textit{The Purloined Letter} these glances are directed at a letter belong to a monarch (supposedly a Queen) and containing information that could jeopardize Queen’s safety and honor should it be revealed to the King. During some sort of a ball or a celebration the Queen decides to hide this letter in a plain sight, supposing that nobody will notice it, supposing that everyone has the glance that sees nothing. Her plan works and everyone has no idea that letter of such importance is just laying in a plain sight. Unfortunately the Queen’s restlessness about her bold move reveals to that whose glance sees that others are missing something. And this glance belongs to a character who is just named Minister D. Minister D possesses two glances according to Lacan because he not only sees the letter missed by others, but also manages to steal it for blackmail and to replace it with a letter of his own. This crime is again missed by all, but one person – the Queen. She asks police inspector to discretely return her purloined letter without alarming the minister. Police performs a thorough, but vain search and the inspector goes for help to a person named Dupin. Now, Dupin is a clever man that is supposed to be genius with riddles and his glance, according to Lacan, is also able to see what is missed by others. He manages to find and take the letter once again hidden in a plain sight without alarming the minister, he even replaces the letter with a different one that only has a taunting message for the minister who was it that outwitted him, but the taunting message is not received before the letter is returned and minister loses his leverage over the Queen.

And these glances can also be seen in psychoanalysis when the analysand comes to psychotherapist to get help in seeing what problems he misses, hence he possess the first type on glance, but wishes to achieve the third one. The analyst sees the problem, but never engages, never steps out of the second type of glance, his only goal is to force the patient to the third type of glance, to make him see the exposed (and possibly hide better) which was left hidden by the first two glances. Similarly Foucault’s astute lectures require a sharper glance for the freudian and lacanian ideas to be seen in it. And not only a deeper glance, but a familiarity with their ideas is mandatory also.

When the ideas are not familiar they are rendered by unconscious. “<...> the unconscious is the discourse of the Other”⁴⁵, says Lacan. For example Dupin does not know where Minister D hid the letter, but he unconsciously know where to look for it - in the plain sight and this allows him to make preparations to replace a letter with a replica and trick Minister D and taunt him further when he finds out he was deceived.

In a way this game of Dupin and Minister D is a game of two cynics that play it outside the of “conscious”, standardized police procedures, police inspector is left crippled by such peculiar ways, which eludes his best efforts to find the letter. As a representation or signifier of the monarch, the Queen’s hand over the people police force is left powerless by the unorthodox methods that both Dupin and Minister operate in. For Lacan this means that they operate in symbolic order, but can the real better than others.

Some of the most important concepts in Lacan were the imaginary, symbolic and the real. Imaginary describes the identification during the “mirror stage” when ego is born. The symbolic covers all the social constructs like language and symbols that people communicate with. Finally, the real is that, which eludes the symbolic field, it is everything that cannot be explained, expressed or shown by social constructs. As said before, Lacan believed that people communicate in ambiguity and the real was meant to be said, what was meant to be explained, showed, signified, but was not comprehended.

The real, being that, which escapes the symbolic, is no different from the truth that Foucault is talking about. The unconscious desire to know the truth is always present and never ending, even if cynic is living the manifestation of truth he cannot escape the symbolic realm and there still remains truth beyond even cynic, something that always elude him.

Therefore we state that in Foucault lectures on *Courage of Truth* Foucault, intentionally or not, did have Freudian and Lacanian ideas hidden in plain sight. Even if that was not his intention, it could still be beneficial to read analyze Foucault’s lectures in this context.

**Lacan versus Foucault: desire and *jouissance***

Jacques Lacan’s theory of desire distinguishes between object petit and object A. The former is our uttered desires which we seek to grant on a daily basis. The latter is our ultimate

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desire, which we cannot even know, let alone achieve; it transcends us and remains desired forever. The inability to grant the desire, which Lacan argues for, is what makes him unique even his own field, the field of psychoanalysis.

When the object petit of desire is gained and the desire is granted we experience, what Lacan called, *jouissance*. *Jouissance* is a feeling of satisfaction and loss at the same time, it is a pleasure and misery, the happy in the mournful. We are elated to have our desire granted, but also devastated by the purposelessness it brings, by the lack of desire. *Jouissance* pushes us to desire something new and thus we can never stop desiring or rather we can never get what we want, because as soon as we get it, we no longer want it. “The subject will realize that his desire is merely a vain detour with the aim of catching the *jouissance* of the other — in so far as the other intervenes, he will realize that there is a *jouissance* beyond the pleasure principle.”46 This creates a vicious circle of desiring that can never be over and it is truly vicious with all the ruthlessness and discontent that Lacan ascribed to *jouissance*: “<...> if we continue to follow Freud in a text such as *Civilization and Its Discontents*, we cannot avoid the formula that *jouissance* is evil.”47 To support this Lacan follows up with a quotation from the *Civilization and Its Discontents*: “Man tries to satisfy his need for aggression at the expense of his neighbor, to exploit his work without compensation, to use him sexually without his consent, to appropriate his goods, to humiliate him, to inflict suffering on him, to torture and kill him.”48 The granting of desire brings *jouissance* and it is greedy, sexual and murderous, but to fight it we have the desire. As long as the desire is not granted the *jouissance* is kept at bay.

Desire is resistance to *jouissance*, desire prevents the misery, the lack and the evil that *jouissance* inevitably brings. And this resistance describes Foucault’s philosophy, it is what Foucault was talking about. Foucault was moving against the terror of power, the perversions of the prison, the school, the mental hospital. Little to none alternative was offered for these


institutions as there will be immediate lack of a certain institution. Where to put the prisoners, the mad, the sick, etc.? But the desire of a better way was Foucault’s drive as any desire is a drive to any person. Even if the abolishment of the above mentioned institutions is to fight the evil, it does bring new evil into the picture, the evil of jouissance. And his theory was not only driven by desire, the theory itself was an example of Lacanian theory of desire and jouissance. Maybe Foucault was avoiding the jouissance that the success of his theory would have resulted in. Maybe Foucault understood this as his failure to explain the discourses of power or providing the necessary tools work against it and that is why he began his lecture courses on care of the self and cynicism.

**Courage of Truth and truth-telling**

Foucault was not interested in historical accuracy, he merely took significant points in history to better understand the present, where it derives from, how it came to be and also where is it headed. This gave not only a sense of direction, which shows not a nostalgic memory of what have happened, but rather what could have happened, should we have chosen a different path, a different regime, a different rule etc. Also one could argue that with the sense of direction it gave, a better understanding of what is to come, was achieved as well, and with it a possibility to change the future became more real. Foucault’s approach to history shown evolution of power and with this, possibly, the means to counter it. “We do not start from the present in order to simulate the future: we give ourselves the entire future in order to simulate it as present.”

We may become the future and we may do it now.

In *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, Foucault has said that what his course was on was, what he called, parrhesia, which is aimed at living the example, showing “not how sex was kept in check but how that long history began which, in our societies, binds together sex and the subject”\(^\text{50}\). This already shows a direct link to psychoanalytic theory, which deepest concert was with sexuality forming the subject. The psychoanalytic theory was based on curing the fixations that all humans have endured at some point of their early childhood, these fixations differ from


person to person, but the childhood was broken down to certain sexual stages that generalize the fixations to one of three types based on what developmental age the child is in. These stages were oral, anal and phallic with latter already meaning the realization of one’s gender and sexuality. Deducing, which stage the fixations were suffered in, helps identifying the problem that person has and, thus, eventually, overcoming it.

Foucault’s term of *parrhesia* is translated as fearless speech or truth-telling and he also associated it the care of self-emerging from sexual acts. Despite this similarity with psychoanalysis Foucault chose a rather unusual path to explain it, he did it with giving numerous examples of Euripides and others ancient Greek philosophers. This, as mentioned before, was widely seen as a change in Foucault’s philosophy, likely, to a more positive one as he distanced himself from critique of totalitarian structures of governmental powers and took interest in ethical field of self-preservation. While it was not a total change of course it was a change nevertheless and with it Foucault was able to indirectly address subject’s power to go outside the totalitarian structures of power and control, which he was addressing in *Discipline and Punish, the Birth of the Prison* and *History of Sexuality*.

In a book called *Wrong-Doing Truth-Telling: The Function of Avowal in Justice* Foucault’s lectures read in Catholic University of Louvain in 1981 were only recently published and until the publication were relatively little known. In these lectures Foucault talked about truth-telling in the context of avowal, the admission of misconducts done by subject. While in ethical context of Foucault it does seem like an inspired detalization of achieving the moral high ground, Brion and Harcourt talk about it more in the context of earlier Foucault ideas.

The avowal of one’s guilt, mental or physical or medical state works like the admission of guilt, which allows the incarceration in the applicable institution. Foucault uses an example of a certain psychiatry case from 1840 publicized by doctor Lauret. Doctor used a ice cold shower on the patient to convince or rather to get him to admit that he is mad. Doctor Lauret claimed that the treatment was successful, but from the show excerpt provided by Foucault we can only see the patient admitting to the state of insanity only under circumstances of being forced and tortured. Moreover the patient uses rational arguments to make his case and prove to the doctor that he is not mad, but the very situation he is in, the unjustifiability of the his current position is
madness. The point of this, so called, treatment was not to convince, but to get to admit, to make an avowal. Admission of madness by the patient himself allows now further quarrel about the mental state of the patient. Nobody may question or argue the legitimacy of the institutionalization of him and the legitimacy of the doctor’s, along with the institution he represent, treatment and them a having complete power over the patient.

And this was nothing uncommon for the early XIX century psychiatry although it may now sound bold, harsh and gruesome only because of the reason that ever since the psychoanalysis came along, the same is done much more quietly and in more sophisticated manner. Analysand, the patient in psychoanalysis is not strong-armed into saying he or she is mad, at least not with physical torture. He is rather asked to look inside of himself, to knit pick his childhood memories and say what is wrong with him. Patients are not asked the avowal of madness, they are asked for the reasons behind their madness, immediately, yet silently imposing that they are mad.

“One cannot simultaneously be mad and conscious of the fact that one is mad; perceiving the truth drives away the delirium” says Foucault, but it may be argued that the state of madness is not permanent or constant. One may say “I was mad, but now I am better”, or “my sanity comes and goes, thus I am mad, but not at this very moment, now I feel fine, aware of what is real and what is not, in control of my action as the voices in my head are silent”. Madness does not necessarily strike instantly, it may come gradually and also the awareness of one’s madness may be talked into the patient, by his doctors. If he genuinely believes (even if he was convinced of that my brutal torture) he is aware of his own madness despite of the means and ways he came to have that belief or should we rather say knowledge. This may be just a simple confusion for someone to genuinely believe or to be convinced that they are mad, but if someone is truly insane and is convinced or just believes to be insane the perception of truth can only drive the delirium so far. In state of complete madness one might lose the last ray of light in their mind and no longer recognize his madness.

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52 Ibid. P 12
In fact if Foucault would be right he would make a point for the doctor Lauret as getting the patient to admit his madness could lead to him believing in it, and thus reaching the state of awareness of his madness, in which both Foucault sees as being impossible to be mad. But again Foucault was more interested in the act of avowal. What is important to Foucault here is that by accepting the other’s suggested diagnosis or by constituting his own statement and making the avowal the patient accepts or generates a discourse about himself. “To ground his practice, establish his therapeutic intervention, and open up the possibility of healing, the doctor needed the patient to formulate a discourse of truth about himself.” This truth about oneself is nothing short of a discourse, which was created in a perfectly controlled environment and was uttered by the patient himself.

From here Foucault moves on to mentioning Freud, but only in a simple, almost casual manner, placing him next to Lauret in an example: “From Leuret not only to Freud but also to a whole set of practices, it is easy to recognize the vast development which remains with us to this day.” And although Freud is known to have used drugs (cocaine) and hypnosis during his practice, Foucault still chooses Leuret for his example. In fact, if a patient is convinced he is mad whilst under hypnosis it would make the distinction between madness and awareness of one’s madness much clearer as under hypnosis the patient may not be aware of his actions even after the hypnosis session is over. But Foucault chooses not to linger on Freud for any longer and does not give him any more attention at this time.

Although he does mention Freud in another lecture later on, but this time even further trivializing Freud’s contributions to modern science. “The examination of oneself did not take the form of memorization, but rather the form of a permanent control, the form of a sort of vertical relationship of self to self that allowed one to watch over oneself and to see, to verify, to test everything that entered into one’s conscience at a given moment. In other words, one was one’s own censor. And you may recall that we had found this image of the censure that was, in Cassian’s writings, so strikingly similar to what Freud, in another dimension, would describe later.” We can see that Foucault just throws out an idea that Freud copied St John Cassian (360-

54 Ibid. P. 14.
55 Ibid. P 164.
435 AD), a Christian monk that Foucault talked more about in lecture series called On the Government of the Living\textsuperscript{56}. He does not build an argument of it, since there are no proof that Freud read this medieval Christian mysticist, but he does plant this idea that Freud could have just taken Cassian’s ideas for building his own theory.

However unlikely this sounded, it did also made a direct connection between his Courage of Truth which was dedicated to ancient Greek philosophers, but the criticism of psychoanalysis could be read in between the lines. From the very start of his lectures he says that “studying these practices of self as the historical framework in which the injunction “one should tell the truth about oneself” developed”\textsuperscript{57}, meaning that this is not only an ethical imperative, but also something that must be followed in order for the subject to be at peace with himself, this is the way to live. “Socratic parrhesia as freedom to say what he likes is marked, authenticated by the sound of Socrates’ life”\textsuperscript{58}. So Foucault accepts and applauds Socratic life teaching as Socrates himself was following the advices he gave to others, he made his life an example for others. But his teachings, his way of saying things was asking questions, directing his dialectic opponent to his own discourse by using the opponent’s words against him. His method was to ask the particular questions until the person answering gets answers that prove the point that Socrates is trying to make:

“That is not what I am asking, but what person who has knowledge of the laws to begin with?—these jurymen, Socrates.

How do you mean, Meletus? Are these able to educate the young and improve them?—certainly.

All of them, or some but not others?—All of them.

Very good, by Hera. You mention a great abundance of benefactors. But what about the audience? Do they improve the young or not? — they do, too.
What about the members of Council?—The Councillors, also.

\textsuperscript{56} Foucault seemed interested in the distinction between body and flesh: the flesh is a prison of a free body, one’s power over himself is taken away or never given by God, said Cassian, but through the struggle against the flesh the body can be freed.

\textsuperscript{57} Foucault, Michel. The Courage of Truth (Michel Foucault, Lectures at the Collège de France). 2008. P. 4.

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid. P. 148
But, Meletus, what about the assembly? Do members of the assembly corrupt the young, or do they all improve them? — they improve them”\(^{59}\).

Not only that, but the truth-telling does also force the truth on that person disregarding completely whether the person wants to know the truth or not. So Socrates did not have a choice, if he lived in truth-telling, he imposed the truth on others as well, and since being honest he could not have hidden the truth. The same can be seen in modern days in psychoanalysis whereas patients are encouraged to solve their problems by gradually realizing and accepting their subconscious desires, fixations and traumas. “What is in question is in often some experience which the patient dislikes discussing; but principally because genuinely unable recollect it and often has no suspicion of the causal connection between the participating event and the pathological phenomenon”\(^{60}\).

The similarity of these methods is just a start of what can be found in the point that Foucault is building in *Courage of Truth*: while quoting Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* he chooses a quotation that juxtaposes desire and happiness: “Prodicus recounted that at a certain point Heracles found himself at the parting of two ways: the hard and difficult road of austerity, but which finally leads to true and stable happiness; the easy road of debauchery and constant pleasures on which one can never arrive at a stable and definitive happiness because incessant pleasures disappear, are mixed with suffering, and have to be renewed.”\(^{61}\) Here he refers to complex situation that Lacan had a perfect notion for - *jouissance*. Foucault uses the word “pleasure” and although Lacan, while explaining *jouissance* much preferred use of the word “desire”, he described it to be beyond the pleasure principle. And this may cause some confusion, but actually they both are talking about the same thing. In both cases the subject is faced with a choice to follow the life of desire, just pursue the small things in life, do nothing of great significance, low risk for low reward; or go for the life of pleasure, which would provide knowing, but result in *jouissance* for Lacan or disappointment for Foucault, as Foucault is also

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locked in vicious circle. Like small pleasures disappear and have to be renewed, so do the great ones. The other life that he spoke of is radically different, but the man living it is still a man, hence he still needs to desire, even if some truth becomes known to him, he can rejoice, but he will need to follow a new craving, another desire, as the old one gone. This man still will not be able to desire what he already has and, thus it means that he will lose his desire for knowing what he now knows and because of this he will suffer the terrible fate of jouissance.

In the quoted lecture Foucault tried to establish an ethical basis for alternative understanding of history and philosophy, alternative teaching and most of all philosophical living. “Philosophical heroism, philosophical ethics will no longer find a place in the practice of philosophy as a teaching profession, but in that other, displaced and transformed form of philosophical life in the political field: the revolutionary life”62. This have little to do with psychoanalysis in general, but the examples used might have been better accepted with comparison to modern intellectuals like Freud and Lacan. The similarities start to build up a little, hence we just as well might go on further and see what other connections we may find.

In relation to the distinction of pleasure and desire a piece from 1966 can help us to show how similar Foucault ideas were to Lacan’s. In Utopian Body Foucault talks about mirror stage: “It is the mirror and it is the corpse that assign a space to the profoundly and originally utopian experience of the body.”63 Arguably here was where Foucault made his clearest distinction about the body and the corpse, whereas body is our sensible part, it is the “I” who feels, loves, hates, etc. and the corpse is the flesh64, in which this I is held. To see oneself in the mirror you can only see the corpse, the flesh which bound you, the real you to the physical world. Although it would be interesting to compare this to Lacan’s imaginary and the real, as the imaginary is where the

62 Foucault, Michel. The Courage of Truth (Michel Foucault, Lectures at the Collège de France). 2008 P. 211.
64 Coming back to John Cassian he talked about one’s fight against the flesh, the carnal lusts caused by it that bounds one to sin, the viceful body is to blame for the weakness of man, who is the spirit. There is a parallel here between Foucault’s notion of body and Cassian’s notion of the soul and Foucault’s notion of the corpse in relation to the Cassian’s notion of the flesh. Ironically this is very similar to Cassian’s ideas and the irony is similarities that come from Cassian are only present in Foucault’s perspective, not Lacan’s or Freud’s.
mirror stage happens, but this is Foucault’s text from 1966. Yet mirror stage similarities Lacan’s ideas (which he discussed in early 1950’s) are evident in Foucault’s text about the utopian body.

“It suffices to understand the mirror stage in this context as an identification, in the full sense analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes [assume] an image—an image that is seemingly predestined to have an effect at this phase, as witnessed by the use in analytic theory of antiquity's term, "imago"."\(^{65}\) This image that one sees and assumes to be oneself is the equivalent of the body that Foucault speaks of. Surely, the same applies to any theory of self-identification, but here we find a more precise match since both Foucault and Lacan describes the process of self-identification not through rational deduction or empirical senses, but through seeing oneself in the mirror and realizing that the mirror image is the image of oneself and not someone else. This not only includes both senses and minor deduction skills, but also a particular object, namely, a mirror, which has a very specific attribute of reflecting, which is vital to the process of self-identification. And self-identification is a process, it is not always already given to the subject it has to achieved like the truth. Simon O’Sullivan notices that Foucault’s understanding of truth is very similar to Alain Badiou in the sense that the knowledge we have is not necessarily true, if we know something it may not be truth, we may hold some false knowledge and, thus, what we know would be a lie; “we might say that it is a turn from the subject of knowledge to a subject of truth.”\(^ {66}\).

Hence, when one identifies with image in the mirror only then the truth about oneself is acquired and until that moment one may have falsely know how he looks like. Seeing oneself in a picture is not the same, a conclusion that it is me in this picture may not be drawn as lightly as from seeing one's image in the mirror, immediately copying every move, returning every glance and frowning back the moment one frowns.

**John Nada**

John Carpenter’s 1988 movie *They Live* tells a story about a drifter named John Nada who, during his scavengings stumbles upon a box full of sunglasses. When he tries them on all


the colours disappear and he sees the reality for what it is. All the advertising and magazines no longer have beautifully coloured pictures and stories about celebrities they just say “OBEY”, no more commercials offering you the new and improved, the top of the line things that you cannot live without, they just say “BUY”. Money no longer have Benjamin Franklin and Ulysses S. Grant, instead they say “THIS IS YOUR GOD”.

John Nada immediately understands that he was living in world of deception and he tries to make his friend Frank to put on the sunglasses and show him the truth. Frank refuses John’s offer and they end up fiercely fighting it out until Frank finally has to be physically forced to put on the glasses.

Although in the movie the reality is controlled by aliens that have put the humanity under their illusion the resistance to put on the glasses works as a subconscious defence, a fear to see that you have been deceived and your reality never existed, you are just a puppet of the powers that be. There is either no desire to know the truth or there is fear of knowing it, a fear of replacing your comforting colourful illusion with a dreadful, black and white reality. Jouissance is to follow this revelation which grants the knowing, but takes away one’s entire world. The evil illusions are destroyed and they are no longer fooling you, but along with them the reality is destroyed as well. The world of course is still there, but the reality is gone, the life, should one decide to continue living, has to start anew and this could be called the other life that Foucault spoke about. Although it was not achieved by self preservation and self knowledge it was knowledge acquired by the subject and this knowledge made him realize the truth. The problem with this is that John Nada was caught with this of guard. Although as a drifter he was living rather ascetic life of solitude, as a true cynic he defied the social standards of living and just wandered around like true Diogenes, he never expected or desired for any truth to be given to him, it just was.

There is another problem with this, the problem of getting the sunglasses that can achieve this. That is to say, how is one to know that he is living in a illusion, it is the same as for a fish to know that it lives in the water. It is the element of its world, the entirety of its surrounding, the only thing it knows to be still there tomorrow. The only way for it to realize that not everything is water, is to surface, may it be jumping out of it, jumping on the shore and suffocating momentarily. The suffocating jouissance after the desire of knowledge is granted did not reach John Nada, but he has suffered nevertheless. The suffering that he experienced was having his
realized that the entire world was being fooled by brainwashing and advertising, that lies are showed down their throats constantly and that their happy lives are just a fabrication of this illusory show played by aliens. John Nada could of course go on and reveal this grand deception, he even had a whole box full of glasses to prove everything. But he went through a heavy beating and a lot of convincing until he managed to prove it to his best friend, and even then he had to force his friend to put on the glasses.

Such actions are what earn a person the title of mad, the powers that work in the world look for such deviant behavior and capture rebels of a free thought and try to “fix” or to “cure” them, but first they must be isolated from others so that their ideas would not be caught by other like a common cold. Epidemic of this disease of revelation is the very worst that could happen to the power, but he saw how difficult it is to make a difference and to cause any significant impact on the well-established network of control. Thus he turned to those that have already given an example of alternative mode of living with their philosophical ideas and, more importantly, their lifestyles. He turned to ancient Greek philosophers, more specifically cynics and Diogenes of Sinope.

**Foucault on the Psychiatry: control and dehumanization**

Even with the topic of classical cynicism it was peculiar for Foucault not to make any references to modern times, not only Freud or Lacan, but the application of their ideas. Foucault did not address psychological brainwashing of masses which entered modern business during his time.

With this being said it may be claimed that Foucault had no implication to speak about Freud or psychoanalysis, but that would be short sighted, since Foucault’s early critique of the psychology, medical and mental institutions were a critique of dehumanization via medical gaze. Freud was a superstar of this science. Whilst Foucault charmed millions in France and Europe with his lectures and ideas, Freud was already known and studied worldwide, psychoanalysis was becoming a tool of comprehending and manipulating the human mind outside the psychiatric field. In 1920’s Edward Bernays launched a social campaign called “Torches of Freedom”, in which he fought a social taboo of woman smoking in public. He asked a group of
good looking woman to walk in a group in the streets of New York all carrying cigarettes to light all of them up at the same time. This was one of the first social conditionings in modern times.

Talking about the power and control this was already escalating to the level outside chains of mental institution, incarceration and panopticon; it was dehumanization, crowd control not by teargas, but by mind games, brainwashing at its finest.

Coming back to the point made awhile back that Foucault’s goal was to reveal the governmental powers for the heinous acts that they are, it would have made a perfect sense to address psychoanalysis, but Foucault did not. And as he began to talk about care of self and ethos of subject this became more relevant than ever.

On 2016 03 23rd The Guardian posted an article about the practice of mental health care called pasung in Indonesia, where it has been banned since 1977\(^\text{67}\). During this practice mental patients are incarcerated and shackled. This medieval practice is said to have been applied to 57 000 people across the country at some point of their life and it was estimated that nearly 19 000 people are currently still in chains under this practice today. There numbers are very rough as the practice of pasung is executed not only in mental institutions, but by the families of the schizophrenics, people with clinical depression, epilepsy, dementia and other behavioral disturbances.

Pasung is similar, but more excessive than the example Foucault gave about doctor Lauret. Doctor Lauret, or any other doctor, are representing the institution they are employed by. When such practices are used by the people they are no longer limited to helping and rehabilitating the patient, their sole purpose is to isolate the mad and protect the sane from the madness; purpose arising from the supernatural superstitions, a believe system or just out of fear.

The pasung is not only a barbaric practice of psychiatry, but Indonesia does not even have any records on how many people have been “rehabilitated” under this “treatment”. It is difficult for a third world country like Indonesia to provide a high level treatment. One has to bear in mind that it is a country with 250 million people living in it yet only having about 800 licensed psychiatrists and 48 mental hospitals centralizing four out 34 provinces. And this is what makes the pasung not a top priority issue. The brutal practice has had an outcry, it became

an illegal practice decades ago, but because of little possibility of better mental health care of their loved ones, people a turn to hospitals in their reach or just apply the treatment themselves.

With this they themselves become the power imposers, the distinction between who is power and who is the people is nullified. Foucault suggests that we may not speak about power if we wish to construct an analysis of power, rather we must talk about homogenous powers, a multiplicity, in order to localize them in historic and geographic way. And this may be possible in a different situation, but when in daily life the brutal practices are used by family members of delusional villagers in provinces of a third world country.

This shows how people living outside the reach of the psychiatry are leaning towards radical practices like pasung and provides an argument that people always lean towards controlling others. This shows another level of power. Power to call another person mad and do with him what one chooses. This brutality sometime lasts for decades.

The other side of such situations is also seen by Foucault. He ask what can this be replaced with? He asked, but nobody replied. And this does raised a question what Foucault means by saying that we have to fight the power, to oppose it. Is it just to create anarchy and defy the powers that be? Or is there a goal, a finish line at the end of this fight? Whatever the outcome might be it does lead to jouissance and the lack which is to be replaced with a new purpose, a new desire. Or does it not? With the example that Foucault finally gave in his late lectures, the care of the self and a new life of cynicism does lead to jouissance.

**Psychoanalysis of the masses**

Let us now address another practice of psychology applied outside the clinic. In 1950’s Freud’s nephew and daughter Edward Bernays and Anna Freud, working for those in power, the big businesses, applied psychoanalytic theory to improve commercials and boost consumption for those businesses, who could afford their services. This practice soon proved to be incredibly successful in giving people what they wanted, by satisfying their conscious and even subconscious desires.

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69 Ibid. 2012.
In 2002 Adam Curtis made a documentary\textsuperscript{70} about this, he spoke with those involved or relatives of those involved in these activities. What this documentary shows is Foucault’s worse nightmare, a conditioned culture of irrational thought succumbing to powers that force this conditioning on them. The conditioning is shoved down people’s throats by medias chanting and billboards announcing the slogans of what life could and should be. A massive brainwashing of people to make them predictable, submissive and easily manipulated into buying whatever needs to be sold.

Of course this began as a boost for consumerism, an economical business catalyzation, but the success of it was so great it was not long until it escalated to conditioning not only consumption of various products, but also the public opinions and behavior. E. Bernays “the innovator, the leader, the special pleader for new ideas, has through necessity developed a new technique - the psychology of public persuasion. Through the application of this new psychology he is able to bring about changes in public opinion that will make for the acceptance of new doctrines, beliefs, and habits”\textsuperscript{71}. In Foucault’s words we could say this is an ability for powers to impose whatever discourses they choose without people noticing it or fighting against it. The brainwashing and convincing people in mental asylums that they are mad or convincing prisoners that they are inadequate human beings and their behavior and mindset has to be altered, that they must be rehabilitated before they can rejoin the society; it is exactly such brainwashing that Foucault was criticizing, but it had moved outside the governmental institutions to the society. It sprung out of control and was (and still is today) directed to everybody inside or outside of the prison, school, hospital, etc. There is no inside or outside these are now relative terms meaning nothing beyond the text, a signifier without a signified. There is nobody outside the system, a baby is born and is registered, his name, his healthiness (weight, height, medical conditions) are put on hospital records.

This was not new, Foucault’s records were also in hospital records when he was born, but the techniques that Bernays brought did make the control of society much easier. It had now came to be so easy that every business uses it. It even moved beyond the consumerist agendas to


agendas of any sort. With the development of Myspace, Facebook, Twitter and other social applications people began to speak their mind, their desires freely by hiding behind the thin veil pseudonyms on the world wide web, they tell where they were, what they eat, they upload photos of themselves and do silly tests where they answer honestly the questions about their likes, dislikes and so on. They are bombarded by advertisements on the internet and they can just turn them off, but if you want to turn off an advertisement on Facebook you have to state your reasons, give information what you would rather buy.

Determining whether people like advertisements or not, or whether they are appropriate or not, or even the level of inappropriateness that people would take or enjoy, can be determined from those questions. Future ads, apps, deals, offers that prompt your screen and google searches will be determined by your previous actions online. If you are politically active you might get a lot of random, embarrassing facts about one or other presidential candidate, if you like technologies you must have this new iPhone or “Beats by Dre” or the newest Virtual Reality (VR) devices; just get it and you can forget about the world outside your window, you won’t even need to care if you have a window.

Although Bernays did not criticize the propaganda shaping the public opinion he did say that “he who seeks to manipulate public opinion must always heed it.” It is possible that Bernays did believe that this is a tool to be used, but never abused, one must tread lightly while manipulating other simply because it could turn around and hurt the manipulator, but this is naive belief that there will not be those willing to use this technique for their selfish desires. A man with deep understanding and practice with science of psychoanalysis should know better than to believe in human’s desire to make the world a better place.

Yet again Foucault never talked about this, he rather chose a profound criticism of psychoanalysis and modern psychiatry through ancient Greek philosophers. His entire course on truth-telling was focusing on Euripides’, Plato’s, Aristotle's and other philosophers’ fearless political stances.

Another psychoanalytic William Reich had ideas very close to Foucault, he wanted to find a way for people to rid themselves of ideas implanted by society, the discourse of any kind gone from their thinking, and they could be born anew. Reich never got to witness any actual

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attempt to do this, but his colleagues, after his death, did establish a place based on Reich’s ideas. It was called Esalen Institute and the psychoanalysts working there were applying different methods for giving the patients or rather those who would come to them for some kind of help, more power over themselves. They were working towards unleashing a version of an individual that Adam Curtis in his documentary called, powerful enough to overthrow the old order. But what was this power?

The participants were encouraged to indulge in their frustrations, in their inner fixations in front of a group, making their deviant behavior seem normal and adequate. This gave them sense of empowerment, they felt good and for once in their life they did not want to normalize and be, do or act like society tells them to be, do or act. This sounds precisely what Foucault would appreciate, a quasi-mental facility that instead of trying to normalize someone, tries to individuate them. But Foucault never speaks of it, he refuses to engage directly with psychoanalysis even though he uses some of its ideas and completely rejects others.

**Foucault relation to psychoanalysis**

Foucault quoted Freud in 1954 the last time (text on Dora). Foucault only engaged psychoanalysis on a level of *doxa*, he only criticized what he considered to be Freud true meaning of words, he attacked that the points that he considered Freud made, without ever actually mentioning the actual things Freud said or even referring to Freud.

And yet Foucault was interested in archeology of knowledge, the discourse behind an individual, which dictates how he behaves, reacts and overall lives his life. Moreover he was intrigued by the question of how to negate these discourses and make a man pure, unspoiled by this predetermined and invisible influence. But again the problem here is the knowledge of the discourses, the inability to realize them as they make up so much, they are the element of our world and we cannot just put on a pair of sunglasses and see clearly.

“In every epoch, the way in which people think, write, judge, speak (even in their most everyday conversation and writing) and even the way in which people experience thing, the way in which their sensibility reacts, the entirety of their conducts is commanded by a theoretical
structure, a system, which varies with era and the society.” In Victorian era, in which Freud was creating the psychoanalysis there was a lot of repression whilst talking about sexuality and the shellshock, the post-traumatic stress disorders created by horrors of war led him to develop the “talking cure”. The talk free association of talking of these repressions revealed fears and terrible bearing of people from their childhood to adolescence. This shown the consciousness it its darkest form, the subconscious desires of ego and the violent, lusty, craving id repressed by superego and societies norms and rules. Foucault wanted to find a light in which he could describe subconsciousness in a more positive light, an alternative which would not mean that everyone is ruined by society and their parents.

Despite this he did agree that society and the system dictates, commands out human behavior thus he not only engaged psychoanalysis in a polemic discussion, he also agreed to some of its points and worked from the grounds build by Freud. In a way he even admits this in the Order of Things where he says “Whereas all the human sciences advance towards the unconscious only with their back to it, waiting for it to unveil itself as fast as consciousness is analyzed, as it were backwards, psychoanalysis, on the other hand, points directly towards it, with a deliberate purpose – not towards that which must be rendered gradually more explicit by the progressive illumination of the implicit, but towards what is there and yet is hidden, towards what exists with the mute solidity of a thing, of a text closed in upon itself, or of a blank space in a visible text, and uses that quality to defend itself.” And hiding between the the blank spaces of visible lines of our behavior, between our normal behavior the lines are the slips of the tongue revealing our true desires and Foucault’s words here are not critique of what exists under the veil of socially adequate. It is a percipient critique of the method of psychoanalysis and the medical gaze of the analyst looking at the analysand as a subconsciousness that has to be revealed by reducing the patient to his subconscious desires.

Psychoanalysis alienates the analysand, makes him speak about himself as other, as someone else, as an object or the other, makes one see oneself as somebody else. This is because

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73 Gifford, Paul and Gratton, Johnnie. Subject Matters: Subject and Self in French Literature from Descartes to the Present. Atlanta, Amsterdam: Rodopi. 2000. P. 185

one has to say not what He wants, why He is there, not to confess, but to say whatever comes to his mind without engaging in any emotions or thinking. Although the conversation is still about one’s mind, it is impersonal in the sense that it is talked about from a third person’s view. It is the position that the analysand is put in, he becomes just a spectator or an announcer of his own thoughts, without admitting or denying or even having any emotional baggage towards them. Denying the “I”, the subject factor from a story makes one become an observer or a storyteller at best. One may be telling the story about oneself, but he does it inadvertently and not as himself. This raises a question who is he at that moment? A patient? An observer? A storyteller? These are still roles that may be taken up by a subject in a particular situation, one can be a storyteller and the protagonist, and one can find himself to be an observer of his life when retrospectively inspecting his life.

It could be argued that this new role that one takes when he is not engaging in his emotions and thoughts is the role himself silencing his ego and superego, that it is the role of pure id. But psychoanalysis denies the possibility that id could be accessed in a conscious state or make even a semi-rational sentences. Unleashing id even for a brief moment would have devastating, destructive consequences. This role has to be that of the subject in something of a preconscious state, which normally would mean that he can still access his consciousness and the things that are on the tip of his tongue, almost forgotten. However what this also does is lowers the defenses and forces slips of the tongue and other manifestations of the subconscious.

The fact that Foucault admits that humans are conditioned by the system, the society they live in, shows how close to Freudian psychoanalysis his theory was steering to. Whether you call it discourses or repressions the distinction how it is different from psychoanalysis is very vague. It is still the same conditioning of human behavior by parents and society acting in a certain time, certain ideological or cultural or religious discourses. These, once again, are, to say In Zizek’s words, Foucault’s main points of his late work, articulations of different modes by which individuals assume their subject-positions.75 This also points out to a number of possible other lives, not necessarily one ultimate life, but multiple ones. The multiple possibilities of other lives show us the extent of parrhesia and cynicism. Foucault saw other life in a general sense, a life

that lies outside the power and control, but it is not limited to changing the discourse. When the new discourse is created a critical, cynical standpoint is kept and a new struggle begins.

All of Foucault’s lectures were in one way or another focused on power and the struggle against it. It was the main topic of his early lectures, but it also penetrated his late works, arguably in the late lectures it has reached the apex, blossoming to its full potential. In 1982 Dreyfus and Rabinow wrote that “[Foucault] has systematically criticized the self-proclaimed master of truth and justice, the intellectual who claimed to speak truth to power and thereby to resist power's supposed repressive effect.” Clearly this was a reference to his earlier lectures, since it was in 1982, but it does apply much better to his lectures in 1983-84, the lectures on parrhesia.

Simon O’Sullivan draws a connection between Foucault and Lacan by emphasizing that “for Foucault too there is a sense that the subject can access the unknown through work on the self and specifically, as with Spinoza, through a life of temperance.” Although O’Sullivan here is concerned with the connection between Foucault and Spinoza, the relation that can be seen here is not only with Spinoza, but also with Lacan’s psychoanalysis. This can be seen again through Spinoza’s help: “Ultimately, the aim of such an ethical code is less to be “good” (or indeed bad) in whosever’s eyes, than simply to increase our capacity to be. In Spinoza’s terms it is to express more and more of our essence, resulting, paradoxically, in becoming more of what we already are.” This means that both Foucault and Lacan are concerned with same thing - truth; and even more so, they are similar in how they pursue it. They pursue the truth through self care and ethics, both realizing that the truth will not be simple handed to the subject, but has to be learned.

Although end point of this is rather opposite, since Lacan understands better the vicious circle that we are all bound to, “his writing is an attempt to force the reader to confront the limits of meaning and understanding and to acknowledge the profoundly disturbing prospect that

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78 Ibid. P. 72.
behind all meaning lies non-meaning, and behind all sense lies nonsense.” In other words there is no grand truth that would end the loop of desire and *jouissance* and even if there is such truth it is meaningless as the *jouissance* would probably kill us.

**Cutting of the kings head**

Foucault rejected psychoanalysis in general as a repressive science and his fight was exactly against the repressions.

Cutting of the head of the king has the same meaning as a saying cutting of the head of the snake. It is to kill the judgement making ability, to devastate the metaphorical body by taking away the metaphorical head the body; all falls into chaos, every limb, every muscle, every fiber is now making its own decision and the body crumbles under the weight of its own havoc.

“Cutting the kings head” This rebellious statement against the authoritative power is the fundamental principle of psychoanalysis, the ego’s struggle against superego, a boy’s oedipal complex, the fight against boundaries imposing father, the king. But there is no outside of power, but it does not have an interior either. Therefore it cannot be totalized and the question of how power can be replaced is replaced by a question of how power operates.

Society could work together toward this common goal, but the power makes the social a non-whole, something that cannot be delimited. “Power consists, as prohibition, law, the act of saying no, and above all, the figure or expression: “You must not.” Power is essentially those who say, “You must not.” This power has myriad of heads so how can they be cut off?

Even more, how can the power be stopped when all the enforcing institutions obey to the juridical power. “The reform of criminal law must be read as a strategy for the rearrangement of the power to punish, according to modalities that render it more regular, more effective, more constant and more detailed in its effects”. It is the juridical power that enforces the punishment and, at times, death.

And to cut off the king’s head is exactly what Foucault was trying to do with his late work while concerning himself with the *parrhesia* and cynicism. He was trying to finally present

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some sort of ethical stance, in which would we would be able to face the powers he talked about in his early works.
Conclusion

In his movie *Pervert's Guide to Ideology* Slavoj Zizek concludes with dramatic questions: “How come it is easier for us to imagine the end of all life on Earth, an asteroid hitting the planet than a modest change in our economic order”\(^{82}\). Even though capitalism is only working for itself Zizek defined it as the sole ideological revolution force in the past several decades, hence the change in economic order means a change in ideology in our discourse. And truly, how is it that we are so hindered to find any possibility of a significant change in our society? Foucault confronted by this question changed his course of investigation and moved to ethical field, hoping that he will find a solution in cynicism and he saw other life as a solution.

Many have criticized this idea like Zizek saying that it is an idea in a loop, in a vicious cycle and that he would have benefited from Hegel. He would also benefited from Lacan and from Freud if he would have acknowledged that his theory is closely related to theirs. And also that it could have helped him to provide a better version of other world, which would not be bound to repeat itself again and again *ad infinitum*.

Sadly Foucault also did not addressed the issues of modern application of Foucault’s theory in advertising and the massive brainwashing and reckless application of psychology in general. Maybe Foucault would have been able to be out glasses that would help us see through the deceptive tools of advertising and control, but instead Foucault chose not to do this. At least not directly, it could be said that he took the high road and did not attack those, who he disagreed with. Although it is difficult to believe this as his ignoring of Freud and Lacan while discussing the ethical stance of cynicism and the other life achieved through the care of self, the self-knowledge and other life, which, as we discussed, is so similar to some of Lacan’s ideas, all of this seems rather ironic. The irony in it is that Foucault seem as if he intentionally does not mention psychoanalytics in his late lectures, either to hide their critique from a direct retaliation or to taunt with them as Dupin did to Minister D. He made it seem obvious what is going on, but he made it so in a way that no one could do anything about it without staining the name of the authoritative figures of Lacan and of Freud, by saying that Foucault is criticizing them by giving examples on Diogenes and his truth-telling and being happy with the little that he has.

But the connection was there and possibly it could be further investigated by taking into account more of Lacan’s and Freud’s ideas, which here we discuss so few of and possibly also looking into other lectures of Foucault. This, of course, is more that could be fit in here, but it would be an interesting extension of this work, possibly a one where Freud’s and Lacan’s influence to Foucault’s ideas could be discussed in detail as we intentionally did not address that question here.
List of reference


23) Plato. *Apology*.


