Variations on the Care of the Soul
– A Model for a Philosophical Life –

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Keywords: *epimeleia heauton*, *gnóthi seauton*, Socratic model, crisis, role of the intellectual, genealogy of subjectivity, technologies of the self, philosophical life

Abstract: The notion of the care of the soul, one of the central topics of antique philosophy re-emerges in the 20th century as the point where the interests of two seemingly very different thinkers meet. It is both interesting and puzzling how the thoughts of Jan Patočka and Michel Foucault coincide, not just in their emphasis, or even over-emphasis on the importance of the care of the soul, but also in their reinterpretation of the notion that aims to it revive and reveal its actuality. This paper discusses the shifts of accent from the Platonic formulation of the care of the soul (that of the *First Alcibiades*, the *Apology* and the *Phaedo*), to the two 20th century revivals, with special attention on how and where these leave behind their source of inspiration. What remains constant through these shifts of emphasis is not some specific or essential content of the notion, but only an abstract principle which, however, offers a frame and an invitation to fill out this frame upon every new reading, thus applying it to the historical present. The frame includes a warning about the problematic nature of some 'present' state of affairs, and an appeal for a philosophical attitude of resistance. Thus it becomes a model for a philosophical life with both negative and positive aspects: the warning comes through as a critique of its present (the notion always gets filled with content in opposition to something), the appeal requires resistance and change of attitude, while they both point into the direction of a positive solution to overcome some critical state or crisis.

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Some people study the antique texts in order to find out more about antiquity, but some study antiquity in order to get a better grasp of

one text or even one notion, and to discover implications and possibilities for the present. The question of this paper will belong to the second approach, since it will ask how the ancient advice and principle of the care of the soul can still represent a guiding model for a philosophical life, if we admit and take seriously our basic historicity and finitude.

The notion of the care of the soul, one of the central topics of antique philosophy re-emerges in the 20th century as the point where the interests of two seemingly very different thinkers meet. It is both interesting and puzzling how the thoughts of Jan Patočka and Michel Foucault coincide, not just in their emphasis, or even over-emphasis on the importance of the care of the soul, but also in their reinterpretation of the notion that aims to it revive and reveal its actuality. Both Patočka and Foucault arrived at this ancient notion through their projects of understanding their present, and they both studied antique texts with the specific purpose to enable themselves not only to understand the original meaning of the care of the soul, but most importantly, to discover its full set of implications and reveal this principle as crucial for contemporary self-understanding too. As one might suspect, since the approach of antiquity has such a specific aim for them, their interpretation will focus more on the potential, rather than the actual meanings. That is, they will obviously lack some of the 'virtues' of antiquity experts, or may even be suspected of forcing the note on some interpretative issues; nevertheless, one must keep in mind that their contribution is never meant to be to the study of antiquity, but to philosophy in general.

Of course, no interpretation can or should escape the point of view of the interpreter's present, but since both these philosophers explicitly state that their primary concern is not to be as true as possible to the object of their interpretation, it makes perfect sense to try and evaluate just how far they reach and how far they get from the original meanings.

To be able to do this, our task should be a complete reconstruction of the original meanings and implications of the notion and then a critical comparison with Patočka's and Foucault's notions. But since this would exceed the limits of this paper and surpass the capabilities of its writer, the attempt to answer the initial question will be mainly focused on the specific shifts of accent from the Platonic formulation of the care of the soul (that of the *First Alcibiades*, the *Apology* and the *Phaedo*), to the two 20th century revivals, with special attention on how and where these leave behind their source of inspiration.

The Socratic-Platonic[1] moment: emphasis on the SOUL

In the *Apology* Socrates considers it his major and divine task to convince everyone he encounters to care for their souls rather than their fame and fortune, in these terms: "Dear friend, you are an Athenian, citizen of the greatest city, more famous than any other for its knowledge and might, yet are you not ashamed for devoting your care to increasing your wealth, reputation and honours while not caring for or even considering your reason, truth and the constant improvement of your soul?" (*Apology* 29d)

The *First Alcibiades*, regardless of the controversies surrounding its origin or date, can be read to demonstrate, support and detail the line of thoughts of the Apology. This dialogue is generally considered the first philosophical expression and explication of the principle of the care of the soul. Socrates approaches Alcibiades, who is at a critical age, just about to take full advantage of his social, economic and physical privileges and enter politics. Alcibiades is blinded by ambition, unable to see and reflect on his situation. In a truly Socratic matter, he is taken through several steps of recognizing that what he considers to be his advantages (wealth, education, beauty) are nothing but illusions, but most importantly, he doesn't even possess the one thing that would still compensate for all these inferiorities: he doesn't know how to be a leader, since he doesn't know what is best for the state, what is justice and injustice, good or bad and so on. These demonstrations lead up to that specific Socratic effect: Alcibiades despairs and seems crushed by the weight of his many forms of lacking.

But Socrates in quick to come up with the consolation: it is better to realize one's ignorance when still young, since the possibility of remedy is still at hand:[2] caring for oneself (*epimeleia heauton*). From this emergence of the principle and requirement (*First Alcibiades* 127e), the second part of the dialogue is devoted to the question of what it means to care for the self, and naturally evolves in two directions: 'What is this self that one should care for?' and 'What does the care consist in?'.

Socrates' questions lead Alcibiades to differentiating between the agent of an action and the action itself, the user and the used within

[1] By using this expression I am consciously tying to avoid dealing with the issues of separation between Socrates and Plato, but still suggesting that there is a legitimate question of difference in all interpretations.

[2] Compare with the *Apology*, where Socrates claims that his task was to convince young and old alike to care for their souls, so there is not a certain age when it would already be late to do this.

an action. Further more, they come to recognize, that in performing different actions the user doesn't just use the specific instruments and tools of that specific *techné*, he also uses his own body. So who exactly is using the body? Socrates argues like this: "But since neither the body nor the combination of the two [*body and soul – L.C.*] is man, we are reduced, I suppose, to this: either man is nothing at all, or if something, he turns out to be nothing else than soul." (*First Alcibiades* 130c) Thus, since the self cannot be the body, or the combination of body and soul, it can only be the soul. So it is the soul that is the real agent or subject of actions, the real self that must be benefited and cared for.

After swiftly moving from the self to the soul, the discussion proceeds to reveal what the activity of care should consist in. We find that it quite simply consists in knowing oneself (*gnóthi seauton*), the famous Delphic principle, which, translated to the previous identification, means: knowing the soul. To show how this is possible, the analogy of the eye comes to help, and as it is further developed (we see the eye best in others' eye since the identical nature of the eyes provides the best reflecting surface in which the act of vision and the source of vision coincide), we come to realize, that the soul can only discover itself in something that has the same nature as the soul and, at the same time, is the source of the soul's specific nature consisting in the capacity of thought and knowledge. This is, of course, a divine element, and the mirror of the soul will be called the god.[1]

To sum up, an active and conscious moral and political life requires that one cares for his self. This is discussed in terms of a practical activity (*techné*), distinguished only by the fact that it has the soul as both its subject and its object. The way to perform this activity is getting to know the soul (like every time, the *know how* has to be preceded by the *know-what*), that is, keeping it in contact with the divine source of wisdom, to come to reveal and fulfil its divine capability of thinking: distinguishing just from unjust, good from bad, true from false.

Both in the *Apology* and in the *First Alcibiades* the care of the soul is put forward as the most important guiding principle of any type of life. Within the practical context of Socratic thought the care of the soul occupies a special place, as the precondition for any activity that men perform. Moreover, from the formulation and the examples of the *First*

[1] Even where there is acknowledgement of the authenticity of the *First Alcibiades*, this last section is strongly suspected to have been added later on, in the Neo-Platonist or Christian tradition.

Alcibiades it becomes obvious that the care of the soul is considered a *techné*, a *know how* that, however, incorporates a *know what* in itself.

To give an account for the special place of the principle within Socratic-Platonic thought, it helps to examine the meanings of the terms encompassed in it. The term translated as care is '*epimeleia*', which literary means being careful, attentive, and anxious about something, but is etymologically related to '*meleté*', a technical term of rhetoric that meant preparing a discourse by practicing, trying to anticipate the real situation of speech, thinking over useful terms and arguments. So it is a practice, an activity performed with a special purpose. The reflexive pronoun '*heautou*' (meaning himself, herself, and itself) appears when the notion is introduced in the *First Alcibiades* and only to show that the true self is the soul.

The final term used in the expression is '*psyche*', which encompasses a number of complex connotations in ancient Greek.[1] First, there is the conception of breath-soul (as it appears in the Homeric texts) which is worthless without the body and lacks any connection with thought or emotions. Second, there is the soul of mystery religions, the ghost soul that can be summoned back by the living for vengeance or help; it is divine and capable of a blessed after-life if some necessary rites and ceremonies have been fulfilled. Third, it can mean courage – of a good psyche means brave. Fourth, it is also the bare life in mostly pejorative expressions like to cling to one's *psyche*, to cling to life cowardly. Fifth, in the Orphic and Ionian tradition the psyche is the part of air (*aither*) enclosed in the body that joins the *aither* again after death, in this sense it is material but divine and associated with the ability of thinking. Sixth, in a moral context, psyche designates the character of a man, and finally, it is sometimes a synonym of what we now call person.[2]

When reading either of the dialogues in which the principle is stated, we are inclined to believe that it is not the *epimeleia* or the *heautou*, but the soul that establishes a special place for the principle, more specifically, its importance is acquired by referring to the soul as a divine element.

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[1] See W.K.C. Guthrie, *Socrates*, Cambridge University Press, 1971, pp. 147–149.

[2] It will be useful to remember and take into consideration all of these possible meanings to come to understand the reinterpretations of Patočka and Foucault not as arbitrary and accidental violations of ancient notions, but merely as selecting and emphasizing certain features and thus moving the accents from one possibility to others.

Indeed, the *psyche* has a number of complex meanings, but it would be both difficult and forced to disregard its religious, metaphysical connotations within the Socratic-Platonic context, since one can suspect that the divine nature of the soul supports Socrates' (or Plato's) claim that the care of the soul should be the main focus of everyone's life.

To show this, we must go back to the texts. In the *First Alcibiades*, once the self is identified with the soul, the aim is to get to know the soul, and this implies the classical Socratic question: what is the virtue of the soul, what is its purpose? It is stated as obvious that the virtue of the soul is its concern with knowledge, wisdom, and this claimed followed immediately by the other one: in this matter the soul is divine, resembles God, thus God as a mirror will reflect most clearly the soul's real nature (*First Alcibiades* 133c). Combining this with the *Apology*, where Socrates says his task is divine, and his life directed by divine signs, one can easily conclude that the care of the soul is an expression of a religious belief. Nevertheless, in both dialogues, there is ambivalence.

As Guthrie points out, in the 5th century BC there was a more general tendency in natural philosophy and among thinking men to use 'the god', 'the gods' or 'the divine' indifferently, neutrally (meaning: not religiously) to refer to reason and intellect. In this sense, the classical connection between human and universal soul emphasized the intellectual rather than the divine character of both, and it was considered the source of order on the personal and cosmic level. Indeed, the divinity of the soul stated in the *First Alcibiades* doesn't make any reference to personal immortality, so it seems plausible to refer simply to the divine faculty of reason considered as the true self and the highest form of life.[1] Even the *Apology* offers a possible though questionable agnostic interpretation of the attitude towards death, since it considers a quite simple alternative (*Apology* 40c): it is either a dreamless sleep or a migration of the soul to a different place (depicted with much hope and humour). Needless to say, both alternatives are presented as equally good and, in the end, it is said that only God knows which one is actually true.

Even if we disregard the *Phaedo*'s sophisticated metaphysical arguments for the divinity and immortality of the soul as clearly Platonic, one cannot suppose that Plato – when describing his mentor's last hours of life – would attribute to him a belief of such major importance if

[1] *Socrates*, p. 157.

Socrates weren't himself a believer.[1] Comparing the simplicity and modesty of the claims of the *Apology* and the elaborate set of metaphysical arguments of the *Phaedo*, it seems more plausible to read the latter as Plato supporting Socrates' simple faith and reconciling it with reason.

Either way, removing the metaphysical (religious or intellectual) aspect from the understanding of what it means to care for the soul in the Socratic-Platonic context, would probably rob its central role within that context.

To come back to the *First Alcibiades*, what we know of the later development of Alcibiades' political career seems to suggest that Socrates failed to convince him of the major importance of the care of the soul. Moreover, Socrates' own fate shows his more general failure in promoting the principle. Nevertheless, he managed to convince – among others – two fairly distant thinkers, in both time and concerns: Patočka and Foucault. Despite their apparently different philosophical and existential backgrounds and aims, they both come to consider the care of the soul as one of the central notions of their philosophical projects, and most importantly, a lasting principle that would guide the lives of those willing to listen to it.

Patočka: emphasis on the CARE

Patočka's diagnosis of the European crisis as the crisis of reason (with nihilism and scepticism as its major symptoms) is not new, nor original. What is original is his claim that Europe is founded on the insight of the care of the soul, and thus, that reconsidering the heritage of European thought and its future fate are strongly connected with the reconsideration of this notion. He devotes a series of private seminars to the project of showing how an entire tradition of thought is grounded in the care of the soul and how the principle can still fulfil its role in the so-called post-metaphysical age, since it doesn't necessarily involve metaphysical assumptions.[2] His starting point is that the essence of the care for the soul is not at all metaphysical. This is probably too strong to claim, but taking into consideration the above listed meanings of the

[1] Both Patočka and Foucault make serious efforts to read the *Apology* as expressing agnosticism, and Foucault an even more questionable effort to reinterpret Socrates' famous last words in the *Phaedo* as expressing 'healing' or liberation from false belief.

[2] Jan Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, Stanford University Press, 2002.

Borbála Varga: Washing the Floor

'soul', one can easily concede that it offers a non-metaphysical interpretative possibility too.

Patočka's analysis of the care of the soul is focused on three aspects.[1] The first one considers the soul in connection with the entire structure of being (with references to the *Timaeus*) and offers a general layout of the relationship between being and existence.[2] The second deals with political and moral issues of the care of the soul (reconsidering the *Apology* and the *Republic*), with special emphasis on the decline of a traditional order (translated into the decline of Europe) and the role of the intellectual within such conditions. The third brings out the inner implications of the care of the soul, its relationship to the body and to death (based on a reinterpretation of the *Phaedo*).

Patočka considers it necessary to keep the interpretation within the frame of the possibility opened by Socratic questioning, since it seems obvious to him that Plato teaches metaphysics in all three directions. So within all of these interpretative directions Patočka draws a radical but questionable line between the Socratic way of philosophizing as a symbol of philosophy in motion,[3] and Plato's grand metaphysical schema, considered as the beginning and greatest example of dogmatic, systematic metaphysics.

In an effort to apply the method of non-metaphysical reading to metaphysical systems,[4] Patočka reconsiders both terms of the principle of

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[1] For alternative formulations of these aspects see *Plato and Europe*, pp. 86, 97, 109–110, 180.

[2] In this sense, to care for the soul is to care for something to which the world manifests itself, which is related to the general layout of being. The soul is at the center of the ontological-cosmological schema; it brings itself into motion (through understanding) and becomes the source of all motions in the world. This is the soul as movement within the general ontology of movement of being. *Plato and Europe*, p. 127.

[3] Philosophy in motion means recognized limitations as constant drives for questioning, rejection of any positive or objective grounds for truth, an activity that affects the whole of human activity while examining it, an internal process of self-formation and transformation in the course of seeking knowledge and freedom.

[4] Jan Patočka, *Negatív platonizmus* (Negative Platonism), In: *Mi a cseh?* (What is the Czech?) Pozsony, Kalligram, 1996. Patočka develops his method by putting emphasis on the '*chorismos*', the absolute separation of the realm of ideas from the actual world and on the claim that even though this constitutes an unsurpassable limit, it still reveals something deep about our tendency to move and think 'on the limit', but without crossing over to some 'other side'.

care of the soul. First he interprets the care in the light of Heideggerian *Sorge* as the existential mode of being in the world. In this sense, to care for something means, first of all, to recognize a special interest in being sensitive and paying attention to its problematic nature, an interest that makes us relate to the object of our care not from the outside as mere spectators, but from within the question that has us at stake. Second, the care directed intentionally at something aims to discover and to learn to face all the possibilities and problems revealed through the process of care. It is obvious that Patočka's claims reach very far from the practical context of the Socratic activity, the meaning of the care is much more general: the existence cares for the whole of being, since the existence's being is at stake.

Regarding the soul, Patočka's main concern is to avoid any metaphysical residues of the concept, so he treats it as a symbol and refers it back to what he considers the ontological principle of being: movement. It is the constant movement and development of thought, with several possibilities, revealed and opened by the constant movement of the 'soul' within the care for its being. As our ability of understanding and truth, the soul will be the 'place' where existence relates to its being. This ability is not a ready-made, given characteristic, but a task. Thus what Patočka emphasizes from the possible meanings of the soul is that, first of all, it is something in us that relates us to the whole of being, so he ends up almost collapsing the notion of the soul in that of the care.

The care of the soul as Patočka understands it has both an objective side (directed to attaining knowledge about the world) and a subjective one (as the relationship of existence and being). In his view the instrumental, objective side that regards the care of the soul as the source of knowledge about the world has gradually become dominant throughout the history of European rationality, and the subjective side of self-transformation gradually forgotten. This point links Patočka to Foucault's interpretation.

Foucault: emphasis on the SELF

In the 1980s Michel Foucault's interest turned to the relationship of subject and truth. As a result of his previous genealogies it was clear to him that the subject is not a unity, but is not a fiction either, although it is not metaphysically free, it is no 'puppet' either.[1] If power is

[1] See Alexander Nehamas, *The Art of Living*, University of California Press, 1998, p. 177.

productive and it produces subjects, then subjects are themselves forms of power and thus able to produce themselves. This is the larger context in which Foucault's attention turns to the notion of the care of the soul, considering it the principle, attitude and practice that constitutes the core of the genealogy of subjectivity. And since his question is how the human being transforms and turns himself into a subject, his focus in reinterpreting the care of the soul will be on the *heauton* and on the practices that aim to constitute subjectivity. Just as Patočka, he relies on Socrates (with the same questionable consequences of separating him from Plato), but rather than the openness of his thought, he appreciates Socrates' practical way of thinking, considering him the main example of practicing the 'technologies of the self'.

Given Foucault's shift of accent on the self (the expression is almost exclusively stated as caring for the self, not for the soul), it is understandable that his starting point will be the *First Alcibiades*, and his interpretative efforts directed at two major points: the identification of the self with the soul and the connection of the care for the self/soul with the Delphic principle of knowing oneself.

Foucault claims that the *First Alcibiades* is different from other Platonic dialogues, since it primarily isolates and distinguishes the self as the agent of every action and activity (this is what Foucault calls the discovery of the subject), and reveals it as irreducible before identifying it with the soul and moving to 'know' its nature in the divine. Thus the soul that we arrive at here is very different from the *Phaedo*'s prisoner of the body, the *Phaedrus*' pair of winged horses or the hierarchically structured soul of the *Republic*, since it is "not at all the soul-substance he discovers, but rather the soul-subject"[1] or "the subject's singular, transcendent position."[2] This is precisely the reason why Foucault considers *epimeleia heautou* "the founding expression of the question of the relations between the subject and truth"[3], "an event in thought"[4], and since he is fully aware of how arbitrary his claim might seem, so he makes significant interpretative efforts to clarify the relations between this apparently marginal notion and the famously acknowledged *gnóthi seauton* (know yourself).

[1] Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Picador, New York, 2005, p. 57.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Moving from this 'discovery of the subject' to its link to the question of truth and knowledge, Foucault draws attention to the fact that, whatever the original Delphic meaning of *gnóthi seauton* was, when it appeared in philosophy it was "around the character of Socrates" and most often coupled with *epimeleia heautou*. He argues that what he calls the 'technologies of the self'[1] go back well beyond Plato or even Socrates, but when entering philosophy, they acquired a profound reorganization "somewhere between Socrates and Plato."[2] It is precisely this moment between Socrates and Plato that Foucault is really interested in. In the shift from the discovery of the subject in its practical context, through the interrelatedness with the principle of self-knowledge that gives access to truth in general, to the claim that the contemplation of the soul in the divine is the access to truth. This is what Foucault calls the 'double game of Platonism': repeatedly raising the questions of spiritual conditions in access to the truth, but also, collapsing spirituality in the movement of knowledge alone.[3]

The principle of self-knowledge comes up three times in the *First Alcibiades*, reflecting different aspects. The first occurrence is introductory, as Socrates encourages Alcibiades to turn to himself and realize his inferiorities. The second time it appears as an almost methodological question referring to the necessity of getting to know what exactly the self is. Third, it is stated that the care of the soul consists in knowing oneself/the soul – and this is the full meaning of the notion, but also, Foucault interprets it as the first moment of "a forced takeover by the *gnóthi seauton* in the space opened up by the care of the self", only to be further accentuated in the future of European thought. But he also draws attention to the fact that in the *First Alcibiades*, there is still a dynamical reciprocity of the two notions, a dialectical interrelatedness through the techniques in which both are carried out.

Thus, in Foucault's reading the principle of care of the self has several aspects:[4] it is a general attitude towards the self, others and the world, a certain form of attention directed inward and a set of activities aiming to purify, change, transform and take responsibility for oneself. In this sense, the care of the self comes close to what Foucault calls

[1] For details about Foucault's list of the 'technologies' that humans use to understand themselves, see: *Technologies of the Self* (ed. L.H.Martin, H.Gutman, P.H.Hutton), University of Massachusetts Press, 1988, pp. 17–19.
[2] *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, p. 51.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 77–78.
[4] *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, pp. 10–11.

spirituality: "the search, practice and experience through which the subject carries out the necessary transformations on himself in order to have access to the truth",[1] and tries to show that these are "not for knowledge but for the subject, for the subject's very being, the price to be paid for access to the truth."[2]

What he tries to suggest by the term spirituality is that the self does not posses a certain structure of subjectivity that enables him for truth, so it must be transformed to open up the possibility of truth, precisely through the care for the self. This comes to show that the knowledge the self is only a particular application or a consequence of the general rule of responsible self-transformation. However, just as Patočka, Foucault comes to recognize that the gradual overshadowing of the care of the self by the Delphic principle caused a separation of philosophy and spirituality and thus the crisis of European thinking. And just as it was concluded in Patočka's case, Foucault's reading too reaches far from the Socratic-Platonic moment, where the so-called discovery of the subject, even if it did happen, goes on unnoticed, and nothing seems to support the subjection of the Delphic principle to that of the care of the self.

To conclude, both Patočka and Foucault read openness and absence of a metaphysical dimension into the care of the soul, based on a Socratic model that they consider to be essentially different from the Platonic one. Given the metaphysical overtone of the principle as expressed in the Platonic dialogues, this seems questionable and forced. Furthermore, it doesn't seem at all necessary to support their reading by the claim that Socrates keeps the openness and practical aspect of the care of the soul while Plato turns it into a metaphysical principle. To see why, we must ask ourselves the question: what is left constant through these shifts of accents within the notion discussed?

As it turns out, it is not the content of the notion, but only an abstract principle which, however, turns out to provide a model for a philosophical life. How is that possible? If we read it like an abstract principle, void of any content, it seems banal and useless to keep repeating it. What could account for the revivals is that this abstract principle offers a frame and an invitation to fill out this frame upon every new reading, thus applying it to the historical present. The frame includes

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[2] *Ibid.*

a warning about the problematic nature of some 'present' state of affairs, an appeal for a philosophical attitude of resistance, and thus a model for a philosophical life. So, it has both negative and positive aspects: the warning comes through as a critique (the notion always gets filled with content in opposition to something), the appeal requires resistance and change, while they both point into the direction of a positive solution to overcome the critical state. And through this, the place and role of the philosopher is also determined.

As it was shown, the revivals of the care of the soul do not reveal some essential meaning of the notion, but its basic historicity and complexity that allow for it to occupy centre stage in philosophical discourse, regardless of the specific reasons and contents. The Socrates of the Platonic dialogues is constantly warning the Athenians that their way of living and thinking is lacking, thus exemplifying a philosophical attitude of resisting this common way of life and thought and turning to the care of the soul (the core of a philosophical life). It is the critique of the Athenian society and morality that leads to a depiction of the role of the philosopher as the one who, by caring for his soul, comes in connection with the divine, acquires knowledge, thus coming to benefit not only himself, but his society too. There are also warnings, about the crisis of reason and about misunderstood subjectivity, at the heart of Patočka's and Foucault's critique, while the care of the soul as existential relating to the world as whole, respectively the care of the self as a technique of producing ourselves are the positive directions needed to overcome the decline of reason and the powerlessness of the subject. In every case, the role of the philosopher is to exemplify the specific instantiations of the care of the soul with the specific contents.