IT IS NECESSARY TO DEFEND SOCIETY IN THE PRESENT: REFLECTIONS BASED ON MICHEL FOUCAULT’S 1976 COURSE AT COLLÈGE DE FRANCE

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This is collaborative investigation, conducted in 2023. From the outset of this collective inquiry, the research addresses fundamental questions including defending society from what threat; defend it from whom; how to do it, among others.

Theoretical framework: Based on Michel Foucault’s 1976 Course, this study focuses on the enduring relevance of the discussions and concerns articulated by the philosopher 47 years ago, particularly in the context of a country positioned on the periphery of the global system, with a specific focus on its implications for the field of education.

Methodology: Methodologically, the research encompasses both textual and discursive analysis and careful listening to the questions that emerged from/in the meetings, held on the first Saturday afternoon of each month from February to October 2023.

Results and conclusion: As a result, there is the possibility to share the influences and implications of the readings on a diverse group of scholars and undergraduate and postgraduate students, mentored by the professors, who are active researchers and members of Research Groups in one of the three higher education institutions involved, thereby facilitating a multifaceted exploration of the impact of Foucault’s ideas.

Implications of the research: The research contributes with the reflections carried out by the participants-authors during the meetings on how to share teaching and learning. Quality Education, with the use of technical and technological devices since the context of the Pandemic.

Originality/value: It serves as an opportunity to critically examine the nature and consequences of remote teaching and learning methods, such as videoconferencing, without traditional face-to-face interactions. Furthermore, it

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It is Necessary to Defend Society in the Present: Reflections Based on Michel Foucault’s 1976 Course at Collège de France

 raisers questions about the intersection of power, knowledge, and subjection/subjectivity, particularly in the context of research conducted in France.

**Keywords**: Michel Foucault, Present, Power, Knowledge, Ethics.

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### É PRECISO DEFENDER A SOCIEDADE NO PRESENTE: REFLEXÕES A PARTIR DO CURSO DE 1976 DE FOUCAULT NO COLLÈGE DE FRANCE

**RESUMO**

**Objetivo**: Trata-se de uma investigação coletiva realizada em 2023. Questões fundamentais são examinadas desde o início desse percurso, como: defender a sociedade de qual ameaça; defendê-la de quem; como fazê-lo, entre outras.

**Referencial teórico**: A partir da leitura das aulas do Curso de 1976 de Michel Foucault, com vistas aos efeitos dessas discussões e inquietações expressas por esse filósofo há 47 anos, que podem problematizar o presente em um país da periferia do sistema global e, em especial, na Educação.

**Método**: Como metodologia, foram empregadas a análise textual e discursiva e a escuta atenta das questões que emergiram dos encontros das tardes do primeiro sábado de cada mês, entre fevereiro e outubro de 2023.

**Resultados e conclusão**: Como resultados, têm-se a possibilidade de compartilhar os impactos dos efeitos provocados pela leitura em diversos pesquisadores e alunos de programas de pós-graduação e de graduação, todos em orientação pelos professores de cada uma das três instituições envolvidas, representadas por formadores em atividade e por membros de Grupos de Pesquisas de cada uma dessas instituições.

**Implicações da pesquisa**: A pesquisa contribui a partir de reflexões realizadas pelos participantes-autores a partir dos encontros sobre como compartilhar formação, Educação de Qualidade, com o emprego de instrumentos técnicos e tecnológicos advindos do contexto da Pandemia.

**Originalidade/valor**: Problematizar a natureza e os efeitos de uma formação compartilhada, promovida por meio de recursos tecnológicos (videoconferência) sem que os participantes se encontrem, efetiva e presencialmente, a propósito de investigações realizadas na França e que envolvem poder, saber e sujeição/assujeitamento.

**Palavras-chave**: Michel Foucault, Atualidade, Poder, Saber, Ética.

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

Michel Foucault taught at Collège de France between December 2, 1970 and June 25, 1984, the dates of his Inaugural Class - on L’Ordre du Discours - and his disappearance due to complications of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

In those years, with the exception of 1976-1977 (sabbatical year), in every winter, from January to March, he offered a course lasting approximately 12 weeks, always on Wednesdays, in an amphitheater packed with listeners. Interested people who traveled to Paris, from the most varied European locations, to listen to him, to see him, even through a big screen installed in another amphitheater of the same institution.

In a time far from videoconferences, which became popular during the pandemic period (2019-2022…) due to compulsory lockdown, the Collège de France, an institution created by a king in 1530, and public in the broadest sense, provided additional space for these late afternoon sessions, transferred to the mornings from 1982 onwards, in an attempt to reduce the large
audience. It is important to note that the lack of face-to-face meetings, during the pandemic period in view of the risk of contagion, provided other possibilities, inventions or fabrications of means of maintaining dialogue and, at the same time, greatly expanded contacts and dialogues. The listening - now more concentrated - with the use of these technical mechanisms, these technological artifacts require a certain Ethics, a certain protocol.

In Foucault's courses, the way in which men establish knowledge and power relations among themselves is constantly problematized. The 1976 Course (Foucault 1997a; 2010), taught between January 7th and March 17th - approximately one hundred days, the central theme is War, as an analysis of power, or rather, power-knowledge relations, in which the permanent tension concerns the forms of submission of one to another, forms of subjection, modes of objectification/subjectification, subjection, government, power. Under the title Society Must Be Defended or, as in the Portuguese translation, Em Defesa da Sociedade - it seems that the emphasis on the temporality, the urgency, the immediacy of this action is softened or, in another direction, it is made permanent - as an attitude of constant surveillance. According to the author, it is necessary to rediscover war, but why? Well, because this ancient war is a permanent war: “we must, in fact, be the scholars of battles, because the war is not over, the decisive battles are still being prepared, the decisive battle itself, we must win it.” (Foucault, 2010, p. 60).

It is good to circumscribe the offer of this Course, with its theme revolving around European History and French History, based on forms of sovereignty, invasions, resistance, especially because such a theme seems, at first glance, naturally opposed to the moment of Foucault's journey. As the European academic year runs between September and June, it was the sixth Course and the last of a first stage in the journey of this contemporary thinker in this French research institution, whose form of accountability, on the part of its researchers, took place at the beginning of a year and a Seminar each year, open to the public. In this chronology, it is important to return to the titles of these series of face-to-face meetings (Courses)\(^9\) that take place at the beginning, of the second semester of this academic year which is different from the Brazilian one, also observing the (dis)chronological order of such publications, between 1997 and 2020:

**Board 1** - Courses of Michel Foucault (1971-1976) published in France and Brazil (1st ed.)\(^{10}\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ano</th>
<th>France: EHESS, Gallimard, Threshold Title</th>
<th>Paris Ano publi</th>
<th>N. Pages.</th>
<th>Brazil: Martins Fontes Title</th>
<th>S. Paul Ano publi _</th>
<th>N. Pages.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td><em>Leçons sur la volonté de savoir - Savoir d’Oedipe</em></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>A Vontade de Saber</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td><em>Théories et Institutions pénales</em></td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>Teorias e Instituições Penais</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td><em>La société punitive</em></td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>A Sociedade Punitiva(^11)</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^9\) The Summaries were about three months after the end of each by Michel Foucault himself for the Yearbook of the Collège de France. Unfortunately, this was not possible for the 1982 and 1983 Courses.


\(^{11}\) Course object of a PPGEN-UTFPR Dissertation and Training in the form of an Extension Course offered by a master’s student within the scope of the actions of the Public Policy Observatory Research Group (GPOPP) – UTFPR-CP.
This last one, from 1976, is precisely what precedes a break in this trajectory through a sabbatical year, the seventh at the institution, without courses or seminars. Foucault returns in 1977-1978, precisely with the sequence that would mark the end of his career (1978-1984). The courses in this second stage deepen the relationships between knowledge and power, but invade another field that had not been prioritized until then: Ethics, through the implications of these forms or manifestations of knowledge and power on subjects, effects on their behavior, their conduct, self-government.

In 1976, the writing of *Discipline and Punish*, released the previous year, and the (ongoing) publication of volume I of the *The History of Sexuality* occupied the time of this philosopher and also engaged intellectual. When dealing with War in French and European societies, a state of permanent and omnipresent conflict, Foucault approaches with extreme sensitivity traces of History, of the societal constitution in which he lives, which he problematizes and in which he is engaged. He participated in the creation of the *Groupe des Informations sur les Prisons* (GIP) a few years earlier, with other French intellectuals and public figures (Caillat, 2014).

Certainly, this incursion brings powerful triggers to the rescue of this desire for continuous surveillance in his mind and in his investigative practice, with emphasis on the manufacture of devices such as the Panopticon, by Jeremy Bentham, widely used in American prison systems an architectural form of a permanent surveillance of those confined through a play of light and shadows (Foucault, 1999). It is worth mentioning that this surveillance device was not restricted to the prison system, nor to the United States. It is observed, for example, in old schools in Brazil, where there is a central courtyard, to which the classroom windows overlook, where the student inspector used to be and whose presence was intended to regulate school conduct. students and teachers’ behaviours.

Interestingly, this same committed philosopher will be concerned with the way in which sexuality becomes an object of surveillance, of concern, for a modern society that worships progress, science and these new technical artifacts. In this set of volumes, whose publication of volume IV only took place in February 2018, at Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BnF), the dive into Classical Greco-Roman Culture remained distant from his readers until a few days before his disappearance, in 1984, when volumes II and III were finally published.

Contrary to what the introduction to each of the volumes published posthumously about the Courses states, there is a close link between the classes given by Michel Foucault at Collège de France and a series of written manifestations, articles, prefaces, books, but which, due to a certain temporal mismatch between production and publication, as is the case with volumes II and III of the *The History of Sexuality*, but also observable between in volume IV - unfinished -, the Courses taught in 1980-1981 and the course taught in Louvain - Belgium, in May 1981 – *Wrong-Doing, True Telling* (Foucault, 2014). It is worth remembering, as pointed out by Ball (2013), that, in Foucault, what we read and/or hear refers to a trajectory in development, that is, “[...] building, moving, changing, over time, with distinctive points of transition, although some lines of thought were abandoned, and dead ends reached.” (Ball, 2013, p. 16).

It is important to mention that they were Classes of a Course, everyday, that were not intended for publication and that, due to his abrupt death, acquired an inestimable value, since they had been recorded through the use of technical devices, such as recorders and K7 tapes.
technologies used in the 1970s and 1980s. It was ongoing research, thinking in movement, opportunities for dialogue (although small due to the crowd present) and, on this, Foucault always alerted the audience, as he did in the conferences given 50 years ago at PUC-RJ, in 1973, and published under the title \textit{The truth and Juridical forms}: 

What I would like to tell you in these conferences are possibly inaccurate, false, erroneous things, which I will present as a working hypothesis; working hypothesis for future work. To this end, I would ask for your indulgence and, more than that, your wickedness. That is, I would like you, at the end of each conference, to ask me questions, criticisms and objections so that, as far as possible and as long as my spirit is not yet too rigid, I can little by little adapt to them; and that we can, at the end of these five conferences, have jointly done some work or possibly some progress (Foucault, 2013, p. 17). 

An enormous effort of listening, integration, editing and contextualization in the form of Course Situations, in addition to the \textit{Course Summaries} written by Foucault approximately three months after the conclusion of each one, due to the requirement of publication in the institutional Yearbook, made it possible to rescue this memory, these traces of a fascinating, unsettling and challenging intellectual trajectory. Information about this second period of Foucault’s Courses at Collège de France can be seen in the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Offer year</th>
<th>France: EHESS, Gallimard, Seuil Title</th>
<th>Paris Ano publ</th>
<th>N. Pages.</th>
<th>Brazil: Martins Fontes Title</th>
<th>S. Paul Ano publ</th>
<th>N. Pages.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Naissance de la biopolitique</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>Nascimento da Biopolítica</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>494</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Du Gouvernement des vivants</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>Governo dos Vivos</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>376</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Subjectivité et vérité</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>Subjetividade e Verdade</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>316</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Le Gouvernement de soi et des autres</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>O Governo de Si e dos Outros</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>384</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Le courage de la vérité</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>A Coragem da Verdade</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>360</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Sources}: Websites of the mentioned publishers.

Thus, with a focus on rescuing this intellectual and teaching path, the 2023 meetings, aiming at a sharing of readings and comments through videoconferences, held on the first Saturday of each month, between February and December, enabled thought-provoking, 

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institutional moments of exchange and, mainly, exercises of deep listening to the perceptions, readings and questions of students, professors, participants, visitors and a whole set of continuous or punctual participations, carried out thanks to the technical and technological means available in this third decade of the 21st century, 47 years after the completion of this Course in 1976 - *Society Must Be Defended* 13. This listening-reflection-interlocution provided by remote meetings on Saturdays is aligned with Ball's (2013) reminder that Foucault must be read on his own terms, as his sayings and writings are:

(...) an invitation to participate in the thinking about a problem, to engage in the co-production of ideas. He leaves open points of entry for the reader to bring meaning to bear but never makes things easy. He is always trying out ideas, going off tangents (Ball, 2013, p. 12).

Another important issue raised by Ball (2013) and taken into consideration in our meetings concerns the various “Foucaults”, as different authors say. Eribon, one of his biographers, draws attention to the fact that: “[...] different Foucaults were raised in different cultural and intellectual traditions in different places. Furthermore, Foucault became different over time and we read him differently now than we did before” (Ball, 2013, p. 24). There are, therefore, some possibilities and also impossibilities of “doing Foucault”, of finding, in Foucault's toolbox, points from which to start, reminding us that “[...] Foucault was not, in his own terms, a theorist, nor did he seek to develop a general social theory [...] rather he was engaged in developing ‘strategic knowledge’ brick by brick” (Ball, 2013, p. 32).

Thus, this collaborative investigation conducted in 2023. From the outset of this collective inquiry, the research addresses fundamental questions including defending society from what threat; defend it from whom; how to do it, among others. Based on Michel Foucault’s 1976 Course, this study focuses on the enduring relevance of the discussions and concerns articulated by the philosopher 47 years ago, particularly in the context of a country positioned on the periphery of the global system, with a specific focus on its implications for the field education.

Methodologically, the research encompasses both textual and discursive analysis and careful listening to the questions that emerged from/in the meetings, held on the first Saturday afternoon of each month from February to October 2023, with two other meetings scheduled, from November and December. In the context of the “pandemic period” (2019-2022…) and “Liquid Post-Modernity”, other efforts have already been made in relation to the concern with Quality Education, especially such as those by Araújo *et. al.* (2023) and de Oliveira, Cavalcanti & Alberton (2021), both published in this journal.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: DEFENDING SOCIETY

Who from? What from? Why? What for? Defending society from whom, in 1976 and in the present? What are these threats or this state of continuous belligerence that imprisons, emasculates and trains minds and ways of acting? How to do it?

Such questions accompanied our Saturday afternoons, because as Foucault (1997b, p. 71) warns, in the course summary “[...] it is necessary to seek to know how relations of subjection can manufacture subjects”. After all, according to the author, a historical-political discourse was formed, different from that philosophical-political of sovereignty one, which “[...] makes war the permanent background of all institutions of power” (Foucault, 1997b, p. 73). And among the questions proposed by the philosopher, in the course summary, we highlight the following: “How was war perceived in the filigree of peace? Who sought, in the

13 In French: “Il faut défendre la société”.

noisy confusion of war, in the mud of battles, the principle of intelligibility of order, of institutions, of history? Who first thought that politics was war continued by other means? (Foucault, 1997b, p. 72).

The answers, still in dotted lines, emerge along the classes through new questions, new forms of problematization, in Michel Foucault's style. In the penultimate class, for example, wars or internal struggles within society are mentioned as “means of defending society, from its own body” (Foucault, 2005, p. 258).

It is necessary to defend society, original title, emphasizes the urgency of the moment (mid-1970s) regarding the analysis of the present. In the penultimate class of the 1976 Course, the professor at Collège de France mentions the function of analyzing the present: “to start from the present, from the full present, to reveal the elements and processes of the past… [and, therefore] … we must do - the genesis of this totalization” (Foucault, 2005, p. 279).

This statement echoes, at the time of reading and, certainly, in the encounter of the various interpretations made possible by the meeting mediated by videoconferencing devices, not only about this distant present referred to by Foucault, but, and fundamentally, about the meaning of the present in our days, moment of a fundamental choice - to be “together” using these devices, to think and build projects in common using these tools, this fabrication of a common time divorced from space, distant from each other.

During the COVID 19 pandemic, compulsory lockdown produced and still produces effects: on perceptions, desires, dispositions, readings, meetings, undoubtedly different from those shared in the same time-space, something that Milton Santos (2007) highlighted in The Nature of Space, regarding his idea of convergence of moments.

In this direction, sharing experiences such as those developed since this pandemic period, with the use of technological instruments that enabled, among other actions, the holding of synchronous meetings through videoconferences, brought together participants from numerous states of the federation, notably from the South, Southeast and Midwestern regions of Brazil on these Saturday afternoons, something that would be difficult to take place in person for several reasons.

3 METHODOLOGY: TEXTUAL AND DISCURSIVE ANALYSIS, ACTIVE LISTENING

We begin our analysis by highlighting that this is a text, like so many others by Foucault, that does not present itself as a classic lesson, despite the French tradition, but that continually tensions, provokes thought, worries, raises hypotheses, returns, finds others paths, leaves dotted lines or, in the words of the author himself, in an interview with Roger Pol-Droit, it functions as a toolbox. And, “if people really want to open them, use that phrase, that idea, that analysis like a screwdriver, or a wrench, to produce a short circuit, disqualify, break the systems of power […] well, so much the better” (Foucault, 2006, p. 52). Or, the author considers himself a pyrotechnician and understands his books as “[...] mines, packages of explosives” (Foucault, 2006, p. 79).

Regarding Foucault's classes taught, despite having been given in another socio-historical-ideological context (Fontana & Bertani, 2014), in another geographic part of the world, his words still resonate and echo:

as always, sharp, brilliant, provocative words; as always, the style is refined but unaffected; as always, the profusion of details, but without the staleness of empty erudition; as always, the arguments were complex, but woven with clear threads of clear, direct and fluent speech. As we read each class, what Nogueira (2010) called the “Foucault Professor” emerges before us, very different from that “other Foucault” [...] a Foucault who presents himself to us in the middle of the process of creation and
who appears to be talking to his listeners as he elaborates on his ideas. This is done in such a way that when we read each class, we get the clear impression that we are listening to the philosopher... (Veiga-Neto, 2011, p. 13).

According to Koerner (2016, p. 1), “the way in which Foucault thought about the relations between discourse and power at that time” was problematized by the organizers of the Pléiade through the lessons belonging to Course on *The Will to Know*. This text, according to this review, was supplemented by two monographs by the philosopher himself - namely - “one on Nietzsche and the other on the knowledge of Oedipus” (Koerner, 2016, p. 1).

Foucault's speech and his readers' speech about what he said was recorded, after his death, as a publication of this 1976 course (Foucault 1997a; 2010). Such a plurality of echoes of the pronounced word occupies the dotted lines mentioned by this same author, right in the opening class (Foucault, 1976, p. 4), also in the form of problematizations.

This speech, recorded by listeners in 1976, was edited after the author’s death to circulate as one of those that enabled (see boards 1 and 2) so many to have contact with his thinking, with his way of investigating, with his peculiar form to problematize and disturb, even 47 years later, his readers.

A way of listening and speaking that challenges dialogue with others, which presents itself as an exercise of a desire to minimize distance and to rescue elements of an encounter that is not possible in two aspects, the encounter with the author and the physical encounter among the meeting participants.

In the midst of the questions that mark Michel Foucault's intellectual path, Kant's influence is remarkable: what is our current situation? What is happening around us? What is our present? Fundamental questions, timeless questions that allow us to continue: Who governs us? How and why do we allow them to do so? Why do we renounce self-government, thinking for ourselves, conducting our own conduct? (Foucault, 2018). These are questions proposed as a backdrop to a journey, of a philosophical trajectory (Dreyfus & Rabinov, 2013).

This task of Philosophy, according to Foucault, is asking (and not answering) who we are today. It is, in fact, a certain way of problematizing current affairs, the present, what is happening to us, or, as Meyer & Paraíso (2014, p. 19) point out, zigzagging:

> We move zigzagging in the space between our objects of investigation and what has already been produced about them, [in the case of this article, in what Foucault told us about it], to find them strange, to question, to distrust. Zigzagging between this object and the thoughts that move us and mobilize us to experiment, to express our struggles, to invent.

With Foucault, we share “[...] the process of formulating other questions and inventing different modes of description and analysis” (Meyer & Paraíso, 2014, p. 19), as we inhabit a world, in a time that demands “[...] not only the understanding of the world in which we live, but above all, the creation of moments of suspension of the meanings already created and the opening of possibilities for their resignification” (Meyer & Paraíso, 2014, p. 23).

This is what, unpretentiously, our virtual meetings have been, zigzagging moments, of collective construction of questions, betting on the possibilities of (re)inventions of ourselves, of others and of the world around us.

Listening to questions, problematizations, a set of ways of interrogating oneself, interrogating one's teaching practices, the way one chooses to be with others in the classroom, among others, were opportunities created in the meetings, as reported below, of four participants and also co-authors of this article, among the 80 participants registered for this activity offered as University Extension course, precisely to enable the full participation of non-
students of the offering institution (which is originally linked to the activity, in order to certify those involved in these dialogues). This is a small sample of the power of active listening and the sharing of impressions and interpretations in a free and horizontal way, provided by remote meetings.

Participant 1 and Co-author 5: “the experiences of Michel Foucault's Reading Study Group, in terms of developing programs for reading and discussing texts, provided opportunities to open paths for reflection in different areas of thought and at different times in our culture, also not only to seek for the application, but also for the development and updating of the author's problematizations to establish a reciprocal determination between the participant’s experience and thoughts. In the group, we explored the developments of his theoretical analyses, in terms of proposing a historical-critical look attentive to historical ruptures and discontinuities, centered on events and focused on an analysis of games of truth and enunciation, of relations of force and games of power, which ultimately gives visibility to the effects of subjectivity resulting from these knowledge-power practices. In this sense, Foucauldian thoughts not only serves as a methodological tool for studying phenomena from this perspective, but also enables a critique of what we are, instrumentalizing micropolitical resistance to the modes of objectification and subjectification characteristic of our societies. Therefore, we understand that it is essential to delve deeper into current developments in the author's thoughts, which justifies our activity in accepting proposals and instrumentalizing concrete practices of resistance and freedom.”

Participant 2 and Co-author 6: “being engaged in a research group that focuses on Michel Foucault's thought has been instructive and important for me, both in my experience as a researcher and as an educator. The plurality of voices and interpretations that emerge from these encounters intensifies my understanding of Foucault's contributions to the discourse on power, knowledge and truth and how this relates to education. The space provided by the group is receptive and encourages intellectual collaboration, which goes beyond a conventional academic/training dialogue, recurrently in the format of banking education (Freire, 2018)”. The interactions in these encounters are aligned with Foucault's concept of "care of the self", as he proposed in his 1984 course. These reflective practices not only inform me as a researcher, but have a significant impact on my educational practice. The diversity in the way different participants approach and present the same text makes the meetings particularly rich, becoming even more enriching when we consider the impact of such presentations on the way we think and interact. The interdisciplinary nature of the group is another element that I strongly value. The range of perspectives, academic and professional experiences offered serves to broaden the scope and application of Foucault's thoughts in different fields of study. In essence, my association with this group is not limited to an isolated intellectual exercise; it is a transformative journey that is reshaping my understanding of myself and my place within broader social contexts. This academic exchange therefore functions as a catalyst for both social change and individual growth, in line with Paulo Freire’s educational philosophies (2018).”

Participant 3 and Co-author 7: “participation in the meetings provided above all the search for care for the self and care for others, something constituted in Foucault's thought. Listing doubts, asking questions about society, life and ways of power brought an effect of self-reflection on how to act in the classroom, how to listen to others and let others be perceived as well. The meetings, themselves, brought significant discussions and an intense exchange of information and sharing of knowledge and experiences, increasing not only reflection on Foucault's thinking, but ensuring a greater scope in my performance as an individual and my performance in the classroom.”

Participant 4 and Co-author 8: “participating in the research group and having access to different studies and readings by Michel Foucault allowed me to acquire a different perspective on the various issues that involve caring for oneself and others, directly influencing my
pedagogical practice. The exchange of ideas and experiences that the meetings provided became rewarding, above all, in seeking to understand how different forms of power interfere in society.”

This exercise, of listening to others and self-listening through the words spoken in the synchronous study and discussion sessions on the 1976 Course, enabled an exercise of extraordinary, collaborative and authentic thinking, such as those expressed above.

This way, such perceptions about the meetings show that silence can be an option for those who participate if the conduction of the sessions effectively allows such a choice and that the invitation to dialogue is made without impositions or demands in order obtain presence and/or certification, for example.

4 RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: CONTRIBUTIONS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

How to be with others in the classroom? How to be with each other on a meeting via videoconference? How to welcome and how to provide effective conditions for manifestation, speech, attentive and deep listening that mobilizes ideas, that updates problematizations, taking as a contribution the 1976 Course, which deals with remote times in European and French History, without incurring an uncritical reception of the relations of knowledge and power implicit in this form of discourse, in this Eurocentric narrative? These were some of the questions that guided our meetings and that we sought to take to our off-screen meetings, with each other, with the school, with the world.

Constant references were made regarding decolonial readings, which teach the search for another way of understanding History, the History of Latin America, the History of colonized, subjugated peoples, dominated by Europeans themselves. It is in this sense that the emergence of an indigenous literature, contextualized and committed to local and regional purposes, as well as the principle of self-determination of peoples, is associated with the principle of Quality Education, one of UNESCO’s goals for 2030, which involve also and fundamentally the consolidation of another way of counting these warlike relationships, these invasions and multiple manifestations of violence. On the other hand, there is a present and subliminal domination that takes place through these distance communication platforms themselves, as they require access to certain devices constituted by foreign private companies, curiously based in the global Northern Hemisphere.

Among other issues discussed at the meetings, attention is drawn to the connections between the Conferences of May 1973, given at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio) on Truth and Juridical Forms14; this 1976 Course, taught at Collège de France in Paris, between January and April 1976 and the set of Conferences and interviews carried out by Michel Foucault, in May 1981, in Louvain, Belgium, at the invitation of the Faculty of Law, about Wrong-Doing, True Telling, which relates to the practice of Confession in the Christian environment of the first centuries. In some way, Foucault seeks the roots of a state of permanent belligerence in society, of conduct, of continuous subjection/subjection (Foucault, 1981).

In the 1976 Course Summary, it is stated that regarding the study of power: “it is necessary to know how relations of subjection can manufacture subjects (Foucault, 1997a, p. 361; 1997b, p. 71; 2005, p. 219; 2017, p. 124).” In this regard, Ewald (2014, p. 205) stated that: “Foucault offers a new perspective on all his work on the notions of experience and

14 These conferences were, in parallel, revisited and discussed in meetings of the Research Group Study Group Discourse and Subjectivity in Professional and Technological Education (GEDS-EPT-CEFET-MG), coordinated by the second author of this article, in 2023.2.
problematization; the second [text relating to the transcription of the second interview that accompanied the publication of this Course], with Jean François and John de Witt, more focused on the issue of Law”. Experience and Problematization are frequent terms in these three Foucauldian interventions, 1973, 1976 and 1981.

Ewald (2014) mentions that: “there is a whole dimension of Michel Foucault’s work that remains practically unexplored: the dimension of the Philosophy of Law”, and, in this direction, “and about a Philosophy of War” or a permanence of War as a synonym for Politics. In this sense, in the lesson of April 22, 1981, in Vincennes, Michel Foucault (apud Ewald, 2014, p. 206) explains his project: “word of truth and word of justice, veridiction and jurisdiction: I believe they are both fundamental forms of the activity of speaking […] whose relationships [...] have been one of the most difficult, most enigmatic problems that the human species and societies have had to deal with”.

This movement, guided by prior reading and listening to all participants, based on an initial speech (rotating, that is, at each meeting one or two members shared their impressions of the class read), allowed precious interventions and relationships, equally disturbing/disturbed with the present, with each peer person’s experiences - students and professors, but also teacher-students and student-teachers, in these meetings.

As a contribution to Quality Education and a sustainable commitment based on relationships between humans, it is considered that these sharing and listening channels enable renewal, like this text, and invigorating and necessary sharing.

As a result, this research not only shares the influences and implications of the readings on a diverse group of scholars and students but also serves as an opportunity to critically examine the nature and consequences of remote teaching and learning methods, such as videoconferencing, without traditional face-to-face interactions. Furthermore, it raises questions about the intersection of power, knowledge, and subjection/subjectivity, particularly in the context of research conducted in France.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Sharing questions, concerns, essays about the present, the way we are subjectivized/subjected and how we subject others, not answers and/or solutions. In this process, another perspective of common formation is sought, more autonomous, freer, less scholarly, less guided by an encounter between one who knows, the Professor, one who does not know, the student, but between human beings who construct possibilities interpretative and plural forms of meaning in a horizontal and collaborative way.

Problematisation, in this sense, is the filling in of dotted lines (Foucault, 2005) and the creation of others, but together. This is fundamental. And, what was/is the intention with all of this?

Not for sure, to tell the truth to everyone, to tell them where to find it and what to do with it. But, to share, perhaps more questions than possible answers. In fact, making each attempt at affirmation a gestation of new possibilities for questions. Each answer, constructed by us, would therefore, in this sense, be pregnant with new questions (Mosquera, Stobäus & Timm, 2009, p. 47).

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It is Necessary to Defend Society in the Present: Reflections Based on Michel Foucault’s 1976 Course at Collège de France


