

RELIGIÃO E SEXUALIDADE NO BRASIL: TECNOLOGIAS DE SI E DO EU NA HISTORICIDADE DISCURSIVA DA CONSTRUÇÃO DO SUJEITO BRASILEIRO

RELIGIÓN Y SEXUALIDAD EN BRASIL: TECHNOLOGIES DE UNO MISMO Y DE UNO MISMO EN LA HISTORICIDAD DISCURSIVA DE LA CONSTRUCCION DEL SUJETO BRASILEÑO

RELIGION AND SEXUALITY IN BRAZIL: TECHNOLOGIES OF SI AND ME IN THE DISCURSIVE HISTORICITY OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BRAZILIAN SUBJECT

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RESUMO: Objetiva-se refletir o tema da sexualidade a partir da construção discursiva/histórica de seus mecanismos de controle pelas instituições, especialmente a religiosa. De forma linear, destaca-se a história da sexualidade a partir da Antiguidade: de um lado, o Oriente, onde a sexualidade era percebida como iluminação espiritual, de outro, o Ocidente, em especial a filosofia clássica greco-romana, que a aceitava, sem uma imposição moralista, porém o prazer devia ter regramento. Já na Idade Média, a partir do cristianismo, a sexualidade passa a ser compreendida e discursivizada como pecado. Neste período destaca-se a influência da visão de mundo medieval de forma definitiva em nossa moral sexual. Por fim, na história do Brasil, a religião tem influência na moralidade sexual já a partir da colonização e doutrinação jesuítica até as posições oficiais das religiões atuais sobre a sexualidade, sobretudo a posição da Igreja Católica, com o papa Bento XVI. A partir desse olhar na historicidade discursiva, pretende-se também investigar em que medida é possível desenvolver uma compreensão teológica que tenha como pressuposto a abordagem sobre as técnicas de si e

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as tecnologias do eu empreendidas por Michel Foucault em sua última fase, principalmente em sua obra *A hermenêutica do sujeito*.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Religião. Sexualidade. História. Técnicas de Si. Tecnologias do Eu.

RESUMEN: *El objetivo es reflejar el tema de la sexualidad a partir de la construcción discursiva/histórica de sus mecanismos de control por parte de las instituciones, especialmente de los religiosos. De manera lineal, destacamos la historia de la sexualidad desde la antigüedad: Por un lado, Oriente, donde la sexualidad era percibida como iluminación espiritual, por otro, Occidente, en particular la filosofía grecorromana clásica, que la aceptaba, sin una imposición Moralista, pero el placer debe tener reglas. En la Edad Media, desde el cristianismo, la sexualidad se entiende y discursiviza como un pecado. En este período destaca la influencia de la cosmovisión medieval definitivamente en nuestra moral sexual. Finalmente, en la historia de Brasil, la religión tiene una influencia en la moral sexual ya desde la colonización y el adoctrinamiento jesuita a las posiciones oficiales de las religiones actuales sobre la sexualidad, especialmente la posición de la Iglesia Católica, con el Papa Benedicto XVI. Desde esta perspectiva en la historicidad discursiva, también se pretende investigar hasta qué punto es posible desarrollar un entendimiento teológico que asuma el enfoque sobre las técnicas de sí mismo y las tecnologías de la UE emprendidas por Michel Foucault en su última fase, principalmente en su trabajo la hermenéutica del sujeto.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: Religión. Sexualidad. Historia. Técnicas Si. Tecnologías de la Ue.

ABSTRACT: *The objective is to reflect the theme of sexuality from the discursive/historical construction of its control mechanisms by institutions, especially religious ones. In a linear way, the history of sexuality from antiquity stands out: on the one hand, the East, where sexuality was perceived as spiritual enlightenment, on the other, the West, especially the classical Greco-Roman philosophy, which accepted it, without a moralistic imposition, but pleasure should be ruled. In the Middle Ages, from Christianity, sexuality becomes understood and discursivized as a sin. In this period stands out the influence of the medieval worldview definitively on our sexual morals. Finally, in the history of Brazil, religion has an influence on sexual morality already from the colonization and Jesuit indoctrination to the official positions of the current religions on sexuality, especially the position of the Catholic Church, with Pope Benedict XVI. From this look at discursive historicity, it is also intended to investigate to what extent it is possible to develop a theological understanding that has as its presupposition the approach on the techniques of himself and the technologies of the self undertaken by Michel Foucault in his last phase, especially in his work A hermeneutics of the subject.*

KEYWORDS: Religion. Sexuality. Story. Techniques of Si. Technologies of me.

Introduction

This reflection starts from a Foucaultian historical perspective, that is, an analysis perspective that seeks to obliterate "idealisms" such as "reason", "sex", "power" or "contradiction". On the contrary, we seek to question the immutability of traditional historical categories, bringing to the focus of analysis the conditions of production, the situational character of historical knowledge, whose character is reflected in the construction of what we become today.

Religiosity is of significant importance to humans. Whatever your religion, we cannot fail to recognize that it had/has a strong influence on behavior and therefore on human sexuality. It is very useful and primordial to know the notions of sexuality from the religious point of view, in a historical perspective and in its historicity, in order to provoke an awareness of their values, difficulties, fears, conflicts, among others. In a disparate way, while still presenting itself as a hotbed of intense elaboration, sexuality is a matter of interest to religions and an important issue of ethical concerns debated by theologians. Moreover, religion has been a determining factor in human sexuality throughout history, sometimes imposing strict rules, sometimes seeking to guide the human being in this very important dimension of life. At the same time, the school as a whole and as one of the obligations of the state must also think and act in the field of sexuality at all possible levels of action, since most of the time of students, teachers and other staff is within the school and, therefore, sexuality directly and indirectly is present there. However, almost always this field is reduced to biologizing discussions and in a very technical way. This is true, for example, with regard to contraception: only the use of contraceptive methods as a single bias to prevent early or "unwanted" pregnancy is emphasized.

Thus, it is assumed that at school there is a suitable, appropriate and important space for opening discussion, debate among and with young people about taboos, prejudice and sexuality in general. In this space, it is desirable to broaden knowledge about sexual life, about sexuality from various angles, especially from the historical point of view, because this historical process as we put above helped to delineate what we are today. Thus, one can broaden the spectrum on the subject and in some way make it more critical and contextualized.

The theoretical orientation was based on the critical judgment of the authorities on the subject who already have scientific notoriety on the theme. With regard to religion, Peter Berguer (1985), for example, analyzes the sociology of religion as an important contribution to the theme since Max Weber's "Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism". He presents how to clarify the ironic relationship between religion and society several times. Emile Durkheim

(1996) also seeks to elaborate a general theory of religion based on the simplest and most primitive religious institutions. The author analyzes the clan system and the totemism of certain tribes. He masters a theory of the essence of religion and proposes a sociological interpretation of the forms of human thought. Alphonse Dupront (1976), in turn, takes an anthropological approach to religion, stating that religious anthropology is erected as a science of religious man and that the latter is in search of the almighty in religion. Mircea Eliade (2001) describes a work as a general introduction to the phenomenological and historical study of religious facts; He studies the situation of man in a world saturated with religious values. It gives an introduction to the history of religions and a balance of our knowledge in this area. These authors were important for a sociological, anthropological and historical understanding of religion. With regard to sexuality at school, for Foucault (2001), the excess of information that is often transmitted is based on the fragmentation of knowledge.

Therefore, sexuality is treated superficially and immune to reflection. However, the school "approaches" sexuality even when it does not want it, sometimes crudely, either in architecture, in the classroom, in the arrangement of playgrounds, or in the regulations designed for student surveillance. However, there is a historical moment in which this way the school deals with sexuality has to be made explicit. However, in the present period it is no longer meaningful to deal with sexuality in a veiled way; if we want a more mature and enlightened world, we cannot give preference to the implicit over the explicitness of sexuality issues (PINTO, 1999).

With regard to religion and sexuality, object of study, it is important to search in history a sequence of the theme from ancient times to the present day, in general history or in Brazil. In this regard, Peter Brown (1990) works on building the black power of the Catholic Church in its so-called early church phase, from pagan society to Christianized society. The author addresses as main axis the discussions within the early Church on sexuality and spirituality, namely sexual continence, fasting, pilgrimages, messianism, celibacy and virginity. St. Augustine (1995), in his book "Consecrated Virginity" describes the theme of religion and sexuality: its content has added something new to the dominant view of sexuality in the ecclesial environment. In this book, he addresses the issue of virginity, chastity of fornication, and marriage in early Christianity.

The Reformation brought great news to the understanding of sexuality in the Middle Ages, restoring the original meaning of the practice of chastity and virginity and, therefore, the appreciation and admission of marriage to both lay and clergy was one of the most important changes that Reformation brought in medieval life.

Ronaldo Vainfas (1992), who led a worrisome reflection on themes that contributed to the construction of sexual morality in the West, from early Christianity until the late Middle Ages, reconstructs the main characteristics of morality and sexuality in Brazil (1989). He skillfully describes in detail how our ancestors fornicated their marriages and youth, their homosexual practices and sexual repression. Also in Brazil, Laura de Mello Souza (1986) conducted a study on witchcraft in colonial times. A true archeology of popular religiosity, based on the chroniclers of the time, ecclesiastical debauchery and the processes of the Inquisition.

Religion and sexuality: a relation of forces and contours in history and philosophy

Religion, in relation to sexuality, being an ideological and political-social instrument, oriented individuals towards morality, denying their sexuality most of the time. The main exception comes from the Orientals, who were guided by religious orientations of Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, which are related to sexuality without the repressive force of the Christian churches. Eastern society was freer and more natural than Western society. Eastern religions and philosophies are based on the balance and complementarity between opposing principles, symbolized primarily by the "feminine" (yin) and the "masculine" (yang). Women are presented with an infinite supply of Yin, while men demonstrate a limited amount of Yang. It is believed, according to the Orientals, that this can be compensated for by the sexual act: by delaying the orgasm the man gives the woman maximum pleasure in multiple orgasms, absorbing much of his mate's Yin energy. Over 2000 years ago, in China, Japan, and India, philosophers indicated that sexuality bestowed spiritual illumination. This sex sought not only pleasure but also the transcendence of human mortality.

The Chinese discovered balance in nature and applied it in all areas of their lives, including sexuality. "Since the 1st Chinese Dynasty (1750 BC), there has been an expression for sex: "Clouds and rain". This metaphor represents the heavens and the earth making love." (Sex in the eastern world). The Greeks and Romans seem to be quite liberal. In Pompeii, graphics and paintings dealing with sexual activity are expressed in a more natural and less inhibiting way than today. The penis is personified as god Facinus, considered as a symbol of fertility and abundance. It has been carved in various sizes and materials, excluded from any obscene connotations and has been found in both private dwellings and public buildings.

In Greece, the mythology and the leaves of the Greeks are impregnable of sexual relations. Zeus is like one of the most notable gods in this area. Numerous gods and demigods

in dust, but with a force of male fertilization, due to the symbols of sexuality: 'He can see the thought of Dionysus, the death of life and wine. Festivals and rites in the vicinity of Greece and Rome, responsible for these happy gods, orgies and fertilizers. It is also interesting to think that the Bacchantes - Roman Bacchus preconditions, identifications with Dionysus - in sex prisons with an animal point: one of the two, plus the shed blood, as well as the magical and religious rituals (LUNA, 2008).

The Greeks are seen as more liberal: at least this is the view that the majority of the West has about this people. "Sex was natural, divine, and always performed as a form of worship. It was not discriminated against and the sense of shame did not exist because there was no "non-divine" in Greek sexuality" (CROWLEY; LIGVORI, 2008). This freedom is associated with something natural and not necessarily libertine, as they considered it "sexual activity, so deeply anchored in nature and so natural that it could not be - and Ephesus Ruffles will remind you - considered evil" (FOUCAULT, 2001).

The Greeks accepted sexuality without moralistic imposition, but pleasure had to be ruled, as Aristotle says, "The faculty of desire must obey reason as a child to its master's commandments" (FOUCAULT, 2001).

Among the Greeks also appears the idea of sex associated with procreation, and this presents the spiritual dimension of sexuality associated with polis. Plato insists that: "Both husband and wife must keep in mind (*dianoisthai*) that they must give the city 'the most beautiful and best children possible'. They must think of this task intensely on the principle that men succeed in what they undertake "when they reflect and apply their spirit to what they do", while failing "if they do not apply their spirit or do not possess it" (FOUCAULT, 2001). In relation to the same idea one can remember what is found in the problems of the pseudo-Aristotle: "If it happens so often that the children of humans do not look like their parents, it is that they - at the moment of sexual intercourse - have the agitated soul of various ways instead of just thinking about what they are doing right now" (FOUCAULT, 2001). The Stoic philosophy that greatly influenced Christianity, and which represents the decay phase of ancient philosophy, works with the idea of rationally controlling emotional behavior. The quality of the wise is indifference, and the purpose of its existence is apathy, which is born of the suppression of desire.

The Stoic sage, in his sexual relations, must be stripped of any emotion, because it is a physical and instinctive act, so rationally understood. Marriage itself is questioned by the question of carnal pleasure in the conjugal act. One of the strongest consequences of this was the appreciation of celibacy. Another current of thought that had a major influence on Christian

morality was Gnosticism. He preached that the evil world as it was could only come from the devil; that a God could only have created the soul. The only solution, said the Gnostics, was to remain chaste. Although in many ways Christianity has resisted Gnostic pessimism, it widely embraces the idealization of chastity as closer to God. In the Middle Ages sexuality was constantly addressed. However, according to Foucault, sexuality continues to play an important role in social habits, changing only its connotation: we now talk about the repression of sexuality.

Christianity arises from the syncretism of Jewish and Neoplatonic traditions. It becomes the official religion of the Roman state in the fourth century AD, and remains so for ten centuries, during which time the slave regime of the ancient world becomes the regime of vassalage or servitude of the feudal world. At this time, the (Christian) religion becomes synonymous with ethical doctrine, the moral guide that gives unity to the various communities (feuds). Ethics is based on the following metaphysical conception: Creator God, the truth is revealed (God's plan); God's Commandments; disobedience equals sin; sinful man must seek salvation; the supernatural has primacy over the natural. The theocentric view makes religious values pervade ethical conceptions, and the criteria of good or evil are linked to faith and depend on the hope of the afterlife. In religious perspectives, values are considered transcendent because they result from divine bestowal. One then identifies the moral man as a God-fearing man. The consequence of this is the regulation of moral behavior in the material world (atonement for the guilt of original sin) to be rewarded (happiness, freedom) in the immaterial world after physical death. Since sexuality is in the material realm, it is therefore a source of sin, and one must stay away from its "temptations." It is necessary to lead a simple life away from pleasures and desires.

The problem with the new faith was in relation to marriage: how can one maintain one of the accepted basic principles of Christianity in the form of "grow and multiply" without considering sexual attraction or pleasure? "After warning harshly against sexual immorality in the second part of chapter 6 of the epistle (verses 12-20), the apostle Paul speaks in chapter 7 of the duties of marriage, where he extols marital fidelity between husband and wife. It deals with those who choose celibacy to devote themselves more to ecclesiastical activities, but recommends that those who do not have the vocation for a life of chastity should marry" (WIKIPEDIA, 2019). The apostle recognizes that marriage was not a sin, but there was much virtue in renouncing it, for it was based on the premise that Eve was sexual, and the fruit of the tree of knowledge was carnal knowledge.

Sex should now be limited to the spread of the species and should not be done for pleasure. According to St. Augustine, in paradise there was no tension between the impulse and the sexual act.

It was from the damnation of our early parents that this misfortune began. It seemed to her that marriage, intercourse, and Paradise were as incompatible as Paradise and Death. Thus, sexuality remained the indicator of man's fall, of his sad decline from the previous angelic situation, causing him to slide downward into physical nature and from this into the grave. It is true that couples should be concerned about childbearing, but should be aware that they are committing an act of demotion. It was something necessary, but humiliating, to be practiced under the chords of intense melancholy (BROWN, 1990).⁵

Still according to St. Augustine, because of original sin, Adam would have violated his original innocence by having sex with Eve. Sex turned into a shameful, guilt-ridden lust. In the meeting of two bodies and penetration through genital contact, Augustine found the explanation for the way in which original sin was transmitted to us. Thus, for Augustine “sexual intercourse, or more precisely sexual pleasure, is what continually conveys original sin from generation to generation” (HEINEMANN, 1995, p. 90 *apud* BIRTH).

In this perspective, the process of incarnation and redemption of Jesus is also seen from the perspective of sexuality. Jesus came into the world through a holy and miraculous exception, which made Mary's womb a sacred habitat uncontaminated by the semen of Adam's descendants. Therefore, Jesus is also the Redeemer of our humanity, for He would be free in His Being to have been contaminated by original sin, since it is transmitted by the sexual act, in which Mary did not participate.

The Catholic Church, around the 14th and 15th centuries, builds another mythical feminine identity: the Virgin Mary - Mother of Christ, Mother of the Church, Mother of the poor and unfortunate of the planet, who can be acquitted of original sin, provided convert to the norms of the Church. Women will achieve salvation by embracing Mary's ideal of femininity, which presupposes a destitution of sexuality and pleasure, maintaining only the function of procreating - the place of motherhood, the place of the Virgin Mary (LOPES, 2008).⁶

⁵ Foi a partir da danação dos nossos pais primeiros que essa desgraça começou. Parecia-lhe que o casamento, a relação sexual e o Paraíso eram tão incompatíveis como o Paraíso e a Morte. Desse modo, a sexualidade permanecia como o indicador da queda do homem, do seu triste declínio da anterior situação angelical, fazendo com que deslizesse para baixo, para a natureza física, e desta para a sepultura. Está certo que os casais deveriam preocupar-se em gerar filhos, mas que o fizessem conscientes de que estavam cometendo um ato de rebaixamento. Era algo necessário, mas humilhante, que deveria ser praticado sob os acordes de uma intensa melancolia. (BROWN, 1990).

⁶ A Igreja católica, por volta do século XIV e XV, constrói uma outra identidade feminina mítica: a Virgem Maria – Mãe de Cristo, Mãe da Igreja, Mãe dos pobres e infelizes do planeta, que podem ser absolvidos do pecado original, desde que se convertam às normas da Igreja. As mulheres irão alcançar a salvação ao acatar o ideal de

The belief in original sin, which led St. Augustine to the following reflection: If the child, at birth, already carries the original sin, it must be concluded that the sexual act engenders not only the body but the soul as well. It's from the soul. The notion of original sin is so essential to the Church that Jesus had to be conceived as a virgin mother, impregnated by the Holy Spirit. But, as the condemnation of the sexual act led to a deadlock, because the prohibition of coitus would determine the end of the human species, the way out was to bless him by marriage and eliminate sin by baptism.

St. Thomas, without any intention of revising Augustine's position, will affirm that "man becomes bestial in copulation, because he cannot reasonably moderate the pleasure of coitus and the power of lust" (BENETTI, 1998 p. 297, *apud* BIRTH). From Christianity, therefore, sexuality comes to be seen as sin and only admitted in the marital sphere, exclusively for procreation. Copulation should serve only to give birth. In this way, monogamy and virginity for women are valued as symbols of virtue. If contraception was considered a serious sin, homosexuality was a much greater crime and, in addition to being a danger to the church and a repudiation of Christian morality, was also considered a danger to the state. "Baptism was refused to the homosexual, as was instruction in the faith, until he had renounced his evil habits" (TANNAHILL, 1980).

Carnal pleasure should be avoided, and any pursuit of pleasure would be reprehensible, even between spouses. This is what St. Augustine said: "Marriage was despicable only as long as it sought to pursue carnal pleasure. But if destined for procreation, marriage constituted a good. Augustine, like his Christian contemporaries, did not find a way to articulate the possibility of sexual pleasure being part of and enriching the relationship between husband and wife" (BROWN, 1990). In the Middle Ages the Church admits marriage, but with less value than celibacy and virginity, continues to deny sexual pleasure even within marriage, setting rules regarding sexual positions and limiting the frequency of sexual intercourse: with theologians recommending abstention on Thursdays in memory of Christ's arrest; on Fridays in memory of his death; on Saturdays, in honor of the Virgin Mary; on Sundays in honor of the resurrection and on Mondays commemorating the dead" (TANNAHILL, 1980).

Sexual positions were also controlled by the Catholic Church, allowing only that in which man is in a superior position: theologians recognized this position as the only "natural", all other being "unnatural" because they shaped man to animal, reversed the (hierarchical) nature of men and women, and also because other positions were suspected of preventing

feminilidade de Maria, o que pressupõe uma destituição da sexualidade e do prazer, mantendo apenas a função de procriar – o lugar da maternidade, o lugar da Virgem Maria. (LOPES, 2008).

conception and therefore contradicting the nature of marriage, with contraception being one of the greatest sins of sex (TANNAHILL, 1980).

Foucault (2004) argues that we are heirs of Christianity: our subjectivity has been built throughout history under the aegis of sexual conduct, on the injunction/coercion of having to be told, confessed, as well as the truth to be deciphered, a hidden truth. Adds to this defense the argument that Christianity appropriated the classic techniques of self, in which the self-practicing individuals had as their main objective the transformation of themselves into an autonomous subjectivity, the man transformed into a work of art based on truth, found and worked by himself.

However, Christianity appropriates the technologies of the self making them “technologies of the self”, the truth now to be found is hidden, the care of the self is shifted here by the care of others. Therefore, in this care for others begins a game of truth production, particularly the truth about sex, through, for example, confession, so this truth to be unraveled includes unknowing. This whole historical process of seeking to know the truth about/of oneself, to know/be able to govern oneself and others, engenders, from the medieval worldview, Christian morals, discussions about sexuality and the theses of the Holy Augustine, which are decisive for a sexual morality that has significant influence even in Brazil.

Sex, sexuality and religion in Brazil

The Catholic Church, as an institution and official religion of the Portuguese State, arrived in Brazil in 1500 with Pedro Álvares Cabral. He acted as co-convenor with the State of the task of organizing the colonization of Brazil.

At the head of the Luso-Christian expansion project were the Portuguese monarchs to whom, since the mid-fifteenth century, the popes had granted visiting rights. By virtue of this right, the Holy See entrusted to the kings of Portugal the mission of evangelizing the new lands by establishing the ecclesiastical institution [...]. Explorer and colonizer, the Portuguese considered themselves both men of faith. But it was a faith imbued with the spirit of the crusade, according to which the cross and the sword were to walk together in the extension of the kingdom of God (AZZI, 2001).⁷

⁷ À frente do projeto de expansão luso-cristã estavam os monarcas portugueses a quem, desde meados do século XV, os papas haviam concedido direitos de visita. Em virtude deste direito, a Santa Sé confiou aos reis de Portugal a missão de evangelizar as novas terras estabelecendo a instituição eclesiástica [...]. Explorador e colonizador, os portugueses se consideravam ambos homens de fé. Mas foi uma fé imbuída do espírito da cruzada, segundo a qual a cruz e a espada deveriam caminhar juntas na extensão do reino de Deus. (AZZI, 2001).

The power established in the colonial period promoted a model of Catholicism called Christianity. This church was an institution subordinate to the state and the official religion functioned as an instrument of social, political and cultural domination. Religion undoubtedly has an influence on Brazilian sexual morality. In this colonial era, the Church regarded sexuality as the object of its jurisdiction, elevating conjugal sex to procreation into a sacred category and throwing everything else into the diabolical realm. The first Jesuit priests who come to the colony discuss the issue of native nudity, for example, as something sinful, because "the Portuguese, when they arrived in Brazil, were horrified to see the naked Indians and see how they treated sexuality". Jesuit religious works with technologies of the self in the sense that they must lead the "good savages" to salvation, since they were in paradise lost and had not yet experienced the "fruit of sin", that is, had not yet held the knowledge, therefore, had to be indoctrinated into the Christian way of thinking, as well as its values to be instilled and respected. This conduction of naive and pure souls was necessary for the salvation of sin, often linked to the questions of flesh and sex.

From the outset, the situation was worrying because Manuel da Nóbrega, one of the first on a newly discovered Jesuit mission in Brazil, "begs the king to send white women immediately to comfort the Portuguese with the sacrament of marriage. And that was the urgency that would even accept women's discredit" (VAINFAS, 1998). From the medieval point of view of the world, the Church imposed on Brazil a sexual morality of condemning indigenous customs and imposing rigid behaviors, limiting sexuality. It is true that, in any case, the ecclesiastical agents of colonization tried by all means to make Brazil a legitimate part of Roman Christendom, which meant, among other things, spreading the model of Christian marriage: sacramental unions, marital family, continence and austerity.

They tried with the Indians and then with the Africans. Coming here for adventure, however, they were frustrated by the commercial interests of colonization, slavery, the cultural hybridity that the Brazilian colony had by vocation (VAINFAS, 1998). Jesuit priests have always endeavored to exercise catechesis, the local sexual culture opposing Christian customs. "Sexual frenzy was first among the Indians: always naked, polygamous, incestuous" (VAINFAS, 1998).

The female natives, then the slaves, fed the thirst for debauchery that plagues the tropics. According to the Church, this mockery occurred through bigamy, adultery, sodomy, zoophilia. Therefore, it was the Church's obligation to end such a situation. The Holy Office has imposed sexual behavior condemning homosexuality, the marriage of priests, contraception, and sexual

pleasure in general, especially among women, and imposes rules that prohibit discussion of certain topics with which it is not agreed.

Several cases involving homosexuality in colonial Brazil have been reported. Nefando's notebooks included cases of sodomy. And he explains that the most feared thing was not to spill sperm on the so-called "forbidden ship", but that the sexual alternative should be eradicated because it favored the destruction of marriage, preached free pleasure, prevented procreation (OLIVEIRA, 2008).⁸

Professor Ronaldo Vainfas (1998) reports that the harmful acts of the lower classes were of little concern, with spiritual salvation having little or no importance. Even fewer were the trials involving clergy and white women. The religious, sinners or not, were very useful in the process of colonization and, for the few women, could not lack men, because they were necessary for marriage and concubinage, for the colonization of the land. "Recognition and appreciation of sex and marital life were completely different for blacks, whites and indigenous. Among blacks and indigenous, fertility was encouraged, non-legalized unions were accepted and families were often reduced to women and men. Among whites, marriage should follow the pattern of legal and monogamous unions in which they value, especially the virginity and faithfulness of women" (DEL PRIORE, 2001).

Brazil was a land of Indians and blacks, with a shortage of white women for marriage. The colony thus became a paradise for people seeking sexual satisfaction, which were strongly repressed in Portugal. Arriving at the colony, the Portuguese soon tried to communicate publicly with several indigenous people, because it was a common procedure for those who arrived here. And during the hours devoted to the creed, they asked God for forgiveness to attack the indigenous that, half-naked and available, were on their way (OLIVEIRA, 2008). From the early Jesuits to the work of the Holy Office, the Catholic Church sought to discuss, condemn, and control sexual practices. It was discussed and codified if the act denounced was a mistake, a sin or a crime; the degree of punishment - for example, death by fire, castration, confiscation of property, degradation; and the extent of the act - if there was sperm discharge, if there were only spills on the genitals, if they were just men with good manners and clothes, if it was a relationship between women. That crime or sin is not sodomy, a name given to the vast list of sexual acts excluding anal or vaginal penetration, such as masturbation, oral sex, and sexual deviance (RIBEIRO, 2008).

⁸ Vários casos envolvendo a homossexualidade no Brasil colonial foram relatados. Os cadernos de Nefando incluíam casos de sodomia. E ele explica que o mais temido não era derramar esperma no chamado "navio proibido", mas que a alternativa sexual deveria ser erradicada porque favorecia a destruição do casamento, pregava o livre prazer, impedia a procriação (OLIVEIRA, 2008).

The 16th and 17th Century Colony was highly erotic, of extreme sexual freedom, but the Church imposed a sexual morality from a medieval worldview, acting with the power to investigate any denunciation that implied noncompliance with the laws and norms of the Catholic Church related to the daily life of the population. The Brazilian state during the imperial period took over the patronage regime and Brazil was a confessional country of official Catholic religion, and thus the church was clearly tied to the state. “The Roman Apostolic Catholic Religion will continue to be the Religion of the Empire. All other religions will be permitted with their domestic or private worship in designated houses, without any exterior form of time” (Art. 5 Constitution of 1824). The moral imposed by the church in the colonial era is also the time, later, in a moment of important debate on the model of society, aware of the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment, but with the possibilities of a new cultural climate, however, here in Brazil, with the proclamation of the republic, the separation of church and state occurred. The Church in the region thus reconnects the Catholic Church and other churches and gives them the right to organize and carry out their mission.

Regarding morals, the Church continued to enforce its norms, preventing discussions about anything it did not agree with. Thus, the normalization of sexuality remained under its control. The Church has definitely influenced our sexual morality. A moral that was established from the Council of Trent, but that the Church rigidly maintained its positions to the present day. Today the essence of this model is strongly advocated by the Church, which continues to try to establish sexual values, concerned with shaping and controlling human behavior, but this paradigm is in crisis as laws tend to adapt to new habits and new behaviors due to the economic, political, social and technological transformations that the Church can no longer contain.

Positions of some religions regarding sexuality

It is well known that the way religions deal with the theme of sexuality in society happens differently. Since doctrinal and cosmological perspectives are at stake, in addition to their religious traditions, the ways of seeing, feeling and telling about the truth surrounding sexuality and sex. All this has social and political consequences. The challenge here is the impasse regarding reconciling different beliefs with current social responsibilities. It gives an overview of religious positions on sexuality.

Professor Ronaldo Vainfas (1998) reports that there was not much concern about the nefarious acts of the lower and colored classes, since their spiritual salvation was of little or no

importance. Even rarer were lawsuits involving clergy and white women. The religious, sinners or not, were very useful in the colonization process, and as for the few women, they could not lack men, since they were necessary for marriage and concubinage, in favor of the settlement of the land.

The recognition and appreciation of sexual and marital life were completely different for blacks, whites or indigenous. Among blacks and indigenous, fertility was stimulated, non-legalized unions were accepted, and families that often came down to women and children. Among whites, marriage was to follow the pattern of legal and monogamous unions in which they valued, especially the virginity and faithfulness of women. (DEL PRIORE, 2001).⁹

Thus, the positions of religions on the theme sexuality and sex determine the ways of seeing, thinking, feeling and acting in spite of the theme. Each subject linked to a particular religion is constituted from the values, myths, narratives of self and others that form the basis of that religion. Therefore, all the imaginary and symbolic of this subject is affected to a greater or lesser extent in the position that his religion has on this subject.

Allied to the position of religions in relation to the theme, we have from the doctrinal framework of each religion technologies of the self or technologies of me, which are used as a form of “self-care” for the emancipation of the individual, and/or as “care by others”, which aims at subjecting the individual to patterns of conduct beyond the will of the individuals.

Interestingly, too, this "caring for others" is almost always set in a tenuous place with the appearance of "self-care". Commonly, for example, the subject becomes worked on in a game of truth, which does not lead him to think about himself in this relation of himself to the truth: “the truth” can be constructed, for example, by likelihood, as the simple use of a certain color to determine male/female.

By way of considerations: religion and the techniques of the self

Thought itself is a task to be undertaken by the subject as an exegesis of himself. For the Hellenists, the exercises, such as the ones of time decomposition, aimed to elaborate a notion of temporality in which the present is taken as an opportunity for the individual to guarantee his freedom in relation to his surroundings. Things must be seen in their diversity and

⁹ O reconhecimento e a valorização da vida sexual e matrimonial eram completamente diferentes para negros, brancos ou índios. Entre negros e índios a fecundidade era estimulada, aceitavam-se uniões não legalizadas e famílias que muitas vezes se resumiam a mulher e filhos. Entre os brancos, o casamento devia seguir o padrão das uniões legais e monogâmicas, em que se valorizavam, sobretudo a virgindade e a fidelidade das mulheres. (DEL PRIORE, 2001).

discontinuity as a dispersion, not in their unity. This principle must be applied to all life, including itself, after all the subject also has a way of being marked by discontinuity. The only element of identity fixation of the subject is virtue, which is seen as a cohesive force of the soul, as a false unity. The only unity that we are capable of and that can be grounded in what we are, the subject identity that we can and should be in relation to ourselves, is only that which we are as a reasonable subject, that is, nothing but the presiding reason of the world. Consequently, if we look below ourselves, or rather if we look ourselves from top to bottom, we are nothing more than a series of elements distinct from each other: material elements, discontinuous moments. But if we try to apprehend ourselves as a reasonable and rational principle, then we realize that we are nothing but part of something that is the reason presiding over the whole world. The spiritual exercises were intended both for the dissolution of individuality and to establish the identity of the subject. The meaning was to apply the spirit to oneself and this did not mean establishing knowledge about the subject's interiority, but rather providing a mobilization of knowledge that caused the subject to shift to a high point where he could perceive himself, to enable this subject grasping things in their reality and value, which enabled the subject to grasp himself in his own reality.

Foucault, (2001) "The subject must perceive himself in the truth of his being". This knowledge allows the subject not only to find his freedom, but also to be free to find the happiness and perfection for which he is capable. This knowledge of spirituality has gradually been erased to make room for knowledge in modernity. "From this knowledge of knowledge, the subject can expect nothing for its transfiguration". But this knowledge of spirituality will completely disappear with the Enlightenment. For Foucault (2001), he focuses on the analysis of self-practice, the action that is implied in this self-conversion, of Hellenistic philosophy, which has to do with the acquisition of virtue. This action is linked to a practical knowledge, which is the result of effort, of training, as an art of oneself: *askesis*. It is a way of linking the subject to the truth as a practice of truth that makes it possible to discover "the extent to which knowing the truth, telling the truth, practicing and exercising the truth can allow the subject to only to act, but to be as it should be and as it wants to be". What is involved in Hellenistic asceticism is the "constitution of knowledge about the world as the spiritual experience of the subject", the "constitution of the subject as the ultimate end for himself through and the exercise of truth". This differs from the proposal of modernity that demands an objectifying knowledge that imposes on the subject a knowledge and the subject's subjection to an order.

The history of subjectivity involves a process of slow transformation in which this transition from the spirituality of knowledge and the practice of truth to the state of knowledge

domain by the subject and subjection to a law took place. The *áskesis* was at first this spirituality of knowing as well as this practice and exercise of truth. This ascesis (*áskese*) also differs from Christian asceticism, based on self-denial, as it was aimed at a "constitution of a full, finished, and complete relationship from oneself to himself". It is about providing the subject with what he does not have and preparing him for the unforeseen events of the future. "In ancient spirituality, especially stoicism, ascetic practice and its different techniques of self aim at the subjectivation of true utterances through the transformation in the way of being of the listener, the writer and the directed".

It is possible to draw a comparison between the wise and the athlete in a way that both need to be prepared only for what they will come across. In Christianity, however, this preparation aims at a progressive path towards holiness, an overcoming of oneself to the point of renouncing oneself. As an athlete, the Christian has an enemy of his own, with whom he will face dangers such as sin, its fallen nature, and diabolical onslaught, unlike ancient spirituality, which also involved a struggle, but against events. from the outside world. "The old athlete is an athlete of the event. The Christian is an athlete of himself". This preparation of the individual - a *paraskué* - consists, therefore, in: a learning of some movements necessary for an art of living, a discursive activity that aims to endow the subject with the ability to say true from the acquisition of phrases (*logói*) based on reason, that is, acceptable principles of behavior as if these sentences speak for him, to a way of being constituted by this persuasive discourse that integrates with the individual and commands his action.

What is involved in this preparation is the transformation of true discourses into principles of behavior, the transformation of *logos* into *êthos*, so that asceticism is understood as what makes true saying become the subject's way of being. "To constitute oneself by an exercise in which true saying becomes the subject's way of being." Foucault (2001) makes it clear that the purpose of the philosophical asceticism of the Hellenistic period is: to place the subject as the ultimate end of his own existence, to equip the subject to face the possible events of life, and to link the subject with the truth. This differs from everything we have today for asceticism, especially for the influence of Christian asceticism. This pagan philosophical asceticism is what enables, on the one hand, to acquire the true discourses, which are needed in all circumstances, events, and adventures of life, in order to establish a proper, full, and finished relationship with oneself; on the other hand, and at the same time, asceticism is what allows one to make oneself the subject of these true discourses, one that enables one to make oneself the subject that tells the truth and which, through this statement of truth, transfigured, and transfigured precisely by telling the truth.

The *ascese* of self-practice has for function what Foucault calls the subjectification of true discourse, which makes the individual the subject of true discourse. Christian asceticism, however, proposes something other than this, which is self-denial, by emphasizing a moment when one can see an objectification of oneself in a discourse of truth, which is the moment of confession. The subjectivation procedures of true discourse aim at the subject to apprehend the discourses received as truths that are his own to the point of becoming the subject of the enunciation of true discourse. They involve listening, reading, writing and speaking practices that support this mode of asceticism. Listening is the first moment of this practice of self in which the truth is grasped by the subject and thus constituted as his *êthos*. It is an exercise that involves ambiguity as it involves the sense of hearing and the perception of *lógos*, a relationship between a passive attitude of reception that cannot be dissociated from a rationally articulated activity such as speech. “Therefore, the fundamental ambiguity of hearing: *pathetikós* and *logikós*”.

This ambiguous scheme makes listening risky, as it is always subject to misunderstanding and lack of attention. As the asceticism of listening is what gives access to the truth, it is necessary to make use of a certain art, an acquired skill and an assiduous practice that enables the reflection and purification of listening. We need to observe silence: we must first listen without intervening. Fixed attention must be developed as an immobility of the body that can guarantee the quality of attention. This immobility of the body has a moral function of revealing a certain mastery of itself. A commitment must be made, a willingness to sustain the true discourse. It is, therefore, an ethic of listening that aims to make the subject apprehend what he heard, make an examination of himself and take a look at himself. The listening soul must watch itself. Paying due attention to what she hears, she pays attention, in what she hears, to the significance of the crises that theology faces in postmodernity.

What emerges from Foucault's provocations is that the crises facing theology today are due to the discourses of autonomy engendered in Western culture, that is, they are consequences of modernity, since it was built from Christian interference on western culture. Another question that remains open is whether Michel Foucault is a good interlocutor for theology. Since it develops a critique of the historical circumstances in which the subject and object relationship took place, Foucault's analysis becomes indispensable for the comprehension of this time and the way knowledge is constructed in view of the legitimation of a truth. Although his criticism is blunt and points to a rejection of the Christian experience and morality that has been built around religion, its provocations are unsettling and demand from theology an answer that must always be updated.

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