From psychic to somatic: notes on the reframing of the contemporary self

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Abstract

This exploration of the shift from a psychological understanding of the self to a somatic/cerebral one centers on the duality between the Enlightened, rationalist worldview and the so-called Romantic worldview, characteristic of modern Western culture. The discussion seeks to show how physicalism draws support from a reframing of what L.F. Duarte has called a "relentless tension" between these two worldviews. It finds basis in examples where biotechnological interventions are linked to heavy affective, emotional investment in bodily experiences and puts forward the notion of a contemporary "vitalism," where the category "life" is understood as something that, while anchored in biological materialism, moves beyond it, meshing with fluid categories like happiness and well-being or with feelings and emotions that resist objective definition.

Keywords: psyculture; self; cerebral subject; physicalism; vitalism.

The current success of the biological or cerebral interpretation of mental disorders (and even of the human being) poses important questions for the study of the production and diffusion of what we are calling the psy cultures here. Are neurotransmitters substituting repressed desires? Is Prozac replacing the couch?

These questions take me to the shift from a psychological concept of self to a somatic one, a shift that began during the final twenty or thirty years of the twentieth century and continued into the early twenty-first.[1]

To address this shift, we must understand how the psy culture gained form in certain countries of the so-called Western world. I begin my discussion by examining the role played by psychoanalysis in the production and diffusion of this culture and by trying to comprehend psychoanalysis's success as a *Weltanschauung* in the last century, drawing from Luiz Fernando Dias Duarte's proposal that an "unwavering tension" between Romanticism and Enlightenment characterizes the universe of Western values.

By way of conclusion, I discuss how the contemporary "somatic self" can be understood as part of the reframing of that tension.

The diffusion of psychoanalysis: the rise and fall of a psychoanalytic culture

In Brazil as in other countries of the Western world, a psy culture basically emerged from the diffusion of psychoanalysis.

As we know, the twentieth century witnessed the broad dissemination of psychoanalysis, especially in the more developed countries of Europe and North America but also in less developed South American countries, representing a phenomenon that remains a challenge to scholars of contemporary values. Despite what Freud himself had to say about the scientific establishment's resistance to the new doctrine, psychoanalysis took root among Europeans and Americans at an amazing speed.

Psychoanalysis was a great success not only in everyday life, the best examples being the US and France, each with their own characteristics and timing, and, in Latin America, Brazil and Argentina;[2] it also made its way into the healthcare professions, above all psychiatry and psychology.

We know that the process of diffusion is a two-way street. Psychoanalysis offered a certain cosmology that successfully penetrated the social milieu where it was planted and echoed back, generating a substantial number of clients for its practitioners' offices. But it also extended and expanded psychoanalytic practice beyond the couch. The popular teachings that feed newspaper and magazine advice columns, offering people guidance on their sex lives, love lives, marriage, child rearing, and so on, formed part of this expansion of the practice.[3] This includes the social workers who assist the justice system, the psychiatrists who found therapeutic communities, and the psychologists who work at schools, among others.

The firm hegemony enjoyed by psychoanalysis both as a modern *Weltanschauung* and as the cornerstone of clinical psychology, psychiatry, and other caring professions, was severally shaken during the closing decades of the twentieth century, as behavioral and cultural transformations swept the post-World War II era.

These transformations, which involved behavior, beliefs, and values related to family, sexuality, and subjective life in general, both impacted the psychoanalytic culture then in expansion and were impacted by it. On the one hand, these transformations were somewhat influenced by the psychoanalytic *Weltanschauung* in that they decried sexual repression and advocated a quest for authenticity; on the other, since they criticized all forms of asymmetry and power and thus traditional authority, they challenged psychoanalysis as the representative of the psy establishment. Deemed too orthodox, too conservative, and, moreover, too "cerebral," intellectualized, and elitist, psychoanalysis, in the imaginations of the new vanguards of behavior, was replaced by so-called alternative therapies, which focus their work on the body and the direct expression of emotions. The proponents of these alternatives put their trust in the abandonment of the bodily restraints and asceticism associated with labor in capitalist societies, espousing liberation of the body and freedom of sexuality. Many of these therapies trace their roots to Reichian theory and its various re-interpretations.[4]

Other criticisms came from within the field of psychiatry, especially in North America. Although the US was not the only proponent, it was the center of the "psychoanalyzation of psychiatry." In the 1970s and 1980s, psychoanalysis came under twofold attack, from more socially and politically engaged psychiatrists who accused psychoanalysis of psychologizing social problems and from those concerned that psychiatry grounded in psychoanalytic precepts was not scientific enough.[5] The latter stream of thought, known as biological psychiatry, dominated the psychiatric scenario after the 1980s, first in the US but soon influencing psychiatry worldwide. It reached its zenith in 1980, when the American Psychiatric Association published the third edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, or DSM-III, described as "atheoretical" and therefore objective, because it discarded psychoanalytic diagnoses and interpretations based on an underlying etiology (such as neurosis or psychosis) and grounded in inner psychological conflicts. Considered a purely descriptive and theoretically neutral manual, the DSM-III radically transformed the terminology used to classify mental disorders. This abandonment of an underlying psychological etiology camouflaged an affinity with a physicalist view of mental disturbances. The "empirical" objectivity of signs and symptoms – no longer deemed to reflect underlying processes inferred by a doctor but grounded instead in rigorous, quantifiable empirical observation – seems to correspond quite ideally to the empirical objectivity of the physical substrate.[6] Representing the hegemony of the neo-Kraepelinian[7]current of thought in US psychiatry, the publication and widespread diffusion of the new version of the manual were accompanied by the gradual adoption of a predominantly biological view of psychiatric illnesses, which came to be seen as primarily somatic, the product of neurochemical imbalances and treatable by pharmaceuticals. It was inevitable that there would be an encounter with discoveries in the neurosciences, which were thriving around the same time.

Emerging in opposition to psychoanalytic hegemony, these two movements – that is, on the one hand, the alternative therapies that mingled with a gamut of esoteric practices and, on the other, biological psychiatry aligned with neuroscience, which sought legitimacy through reliance on the positivist paradigm of the hard sciences – are actually quite disparate. Yet they seem to follow a similar path, a bodily rather than psychological

one. Both emphasize the body as the core of "self-work." The foundations of this self-work obviously differ greatly, as do the intended results. I will return to this question later.

Before addressing the shift from psychological to bodily/somatic, I believe a brief discussion of the cosmological or cultural foundations of the production and diffusion of a psychoanalytic culture is in order.

Psychoanalysis as a Romantic *Weltanschauung*?

The subject of the historical and cultural foundations of the diffusion of psychoanalysis takes us to the process of individualization/interiorization as a distinct feature of Western civilization.

There is a duality to this process that very much calls to mind the double face of psychoanalysis (which I addressed in an earlier paper): bureaucracy and charisma.[8] On the one hand, the equality and rationality of law means everyone is subjected to the same rule; on the other, absolute individuality – the unique quality that makes a subject inimitable – distinguishes the subject from all around him. In the case of the unique individual, the realm of subjective experience and emotion opposes the triumph of reason, stressing the incomparability and uniqueness of each individual.[9]

In a series of papers, Luiz Fernando Dias Duarte (2004, 2006, 2013) discusses what he sees as a key feature of Western culture: the counterpoint between universalist rationalism (represented by the Enlightenment) and the Romantic movement. The latter counters rationalism with an emphasis on emotion, feelings, and lived experience and the quest for a totalizing, vitalist outlook that can confront the devitalizing, atomizing mechanism of modern science. The counterpoint to which Duarte refers has been part of our set of values since at least the late eighteenth century. It is also explored by Charles Taylor (1997, p.532) in *Sources of the self*, where the author connects two constellations of formative ideas from the universe of modern thought to divergent senses of nature:

> one joins a lively sense of our powers of disengaged reason to an instrumental reading of nature; the other focusses on our powers of creative imagination and links these to a sense of nature as an inner moral source. These forms stand as rival, and the tension between them is one of the dominant features of modern culture.[10]

The sense of nature as an "inner moral source" can be found in German *Naturphilosophie* from the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, where botanical morphogenesis and the theory of colors proposed by Goethe provide the finest examples (Duarte, 2006, p.19). In the 1920s, German-speaking neurobiologists and psychologists rejected positivist epistemology and mechanistic modernity and turned to biological vitalism and holistic philosophy. This current of "holistic biology," whose proponents were Kurt Goldstein, Constatin von Monakow, and Jakob von Uexküll, found its most successful expression in Gestalt psychology (Porter, 1993, p.258-259).

Was psychoanalysis one of the products, and perhaps the most successful one, of this counterpoint, affording a glimpse of the hidden face of the Romantic subject?

Even the most "bureaucratic"[11] currents of psychoanalysis far from represent a brand of knowledge based solely on universalizing rationalism. To the contrary, its Romantic side can be found in its practice focused on the uniqueness of every patient and in the valorization of impulses and subconscious logic, which stand in precise challenge to the subject of reason. I believe this Romantic face can account for the success and diffusion of the psychoanalytic cosmology.

It is often said that the "decentered subject" proposed by psychoanalytic theory struck a lethal narcissistic blow to the subject of reason. Yet it can be argued that it had been some time since this subject had reigned undaunted. I remember that in *História da loucura* (1987), Foucault tells of the emergence of a diagnosis of "monomania" in early nineteenth-century psychiatry, which led to the notion of "reasoning madness." As he saw it, the great divide in madness that characterized the Classic Age through the late eighteenth century gave way to a proximity, always lost but always regained, between man and his truth. On the Pinelian revolution in psychiatry, Foucault (p.522)[12] states: "If it freed the madman from the inhumanity of his chains, it also chained the mad to man and his truth. From that day on, men had access to themselves as true beings; but true being was only given to them in the form of alienation." Gradually, reason and unreason were no longer opposite, irreconcilable poles, lending support to the idea of a man potentially alienated from himself.

It seems to me that the psychoanalytic cosmology was a response to a longing to achieve comprehension, broughton by the sense of a fleeting, enigmatic self. It did not fall to this cosmology to destroy an illusion but rather to lend logic and systematization to what appeared to be illogical and asystematic. When psychoanalysis spoke of a torn and divided self, it was translating into words – that is, rendering intelligible – what had previously been an unspeakable sense of unease. And even if there were no promise of a cure, the mere comprehension of this sense of unease, the mere act of assigning rationality and systematizing it, could make it more tolerable. Here I am reminded of Georg Simmel, an author who is of great help when addressing the rationalism/Romanticism counterpoint, when he speaks of the duality between subjective and objective culture or the opposition of social forms and inner needs. As Simmel (1971a, 1971b) saw it, the flow of life is always trapped in social forms, where all of its vitality ebbs away but where it still exerts a steady pressure on established forms, challenging and breaking with them to establish new forms.

Psychoanalysis, in its most clearly "adaptive" or pragmatic versions and in its most radically Romantic ones, seems to fit with the alternation and subtle balance between vital needs and social forms of which Simmel writes. I therefore think it can be understood as a cosmovision that is an alternative to universalizing rationalism *tout court*.

I believe, however, that its limits are revealed in its emphasis on psychism (or the mental) to the detriment of the biological (or bodily). When psychoanalysis presents itself as a science of the spirit or the mental, its diverse expressions become the target of strong criticism and opposition both from more radically neo-Romantic models, with their insistence on a totalizing view of humans and nature, and from physicalist models of a rationalist persuasion. Both models, each in its own way, reject mind-body dualism, the former because of its totalizing conception of self, the latter because of a hierarchy where the body subsumes what had previously been deemed mental.

It seems to me that both the bodily shift of alternative therapies as well as psychiatry's biological/cerebral shift are the products of a major reshaping of the "relentless tension" explored by Duarte (2004, p.17).

This reshaping has been addressed by a number of scholars, including Collin Campbell (1997), for whom the West has been witnessing a shift in theodicy since the mid-twentieth century. In terms of the counterpoint mentioned by Duarte, it is as if the Romantic pole had discarded its habitual position, hidden or subsumed by the progressivist, "Enlightened" face of science, and taken up the dominant modes of action and thought. This shift, Campbell argues, is apparent in the clearly neo-Romantic, neo-vitalist counterculture movements of the 1960s and 1970s, which embraced a re-enchantment of nature, and is also manifested in the blossoming of alternative therapies and related phenomena, like "new age" and more radical ecology.[13] All are underpinned by a rejection of mind-body dualism that blends with anti-intellectualism and a sharp preference for emotions and their expression (the bodily entails feelings rather than intellect). Self-work, which psychoanalysis had cast as psychological, becomes bodily.

The somatic shift

I believe that the tension characteristic of the modern individual was reframed at the turn of the last century, with the emergence of the concept of "somatic self" or "cerebral subject."[14]

Our contemporary world is indeed witnessing the rise of the brain and physicalist explanations (hormonal, for example) for a wide array of human conditions that were previously deemed mental, as it is likewise witnessing a sweeping diffusion of these explanations among the lay public, through written media, television, cinema, literature, and the Internet, similar to the diffusion of the psychoanalytic *Weltanschauung*.[15] Some authors, such as Nikolas Rose (2013), even speak of a "somatic individuality."

This flourishing of a cerebral or physicalist conceptualization of self coincides with the shift in theodicy described by Campbell (1997). In the case of the somatic self, can we say that the Romantic pole of the Enlightenment/Romanticism counterpoint has discarded its habitually hidden or subsumed position to take up the dominant modes of action and thought, as stated earlier? What is the meaning of the emergence, flourishing, and diffusion of the conceptualization of a cerebral subject and a somatic individuality from the perspective of the "relentless tension" proposed by Duarte?

In the case of so-called alternative therapies and their associated life styles, the Romantic pole very clearly dominates, and the emphasis on bodily experience co-exists alongside "spiritual" ways of understanding the world and reality. This kind of alternative somatism, whose spiritual content may be important, seems to distance itself greatly from the biotechnological or cerebral somatism of the neurosciences and/or of biological psychiatry.

However, I would like to suggest possibilities and frames where the two modes of somatic dominance communicate with each other and often interlink.

In a paper written some years back (Russo, Ponciano, 2002), Edna Ponciano and I analyzed a current of the neurosciences represented by the work of Francisco Varela, Humberto Maturana, and Gerald Edelman. We encountered an "alternative" neuroscience, whose blatant proximity

to Buddhist psychology was openly admitted by Varela. In the case that we studied, the hyper-naturalizing conceptualization of the human and his brain and body did not imply reductionist physicalism, an accusation common to the neurosciences in general. The rejection of any dualism led to a totalizing conception of the human that not only undid the subject/object tension, in that the "world outside" and the organism are mutually co-produced, but also undid the man/nature (or nature/culture) divide, in that reference was made to any living being. Abandonment of the traditional separation of human being (as a being endowed with reason and consciousness) from the rest of the animal kingdom engenders a kind of re-enchantment of nature, typical of the Romantic worldview. In the 2002 article, we used the term "materialist *Lebensphilosophie*" (Russo, Ponciano, 2002, p.366).[16]

A similar observation can be drawn from Nikolas Rose's *A política da própria vida* (2013), where the emergence of a "somatic self" is one of the matters that he discusses. A reading of Rose leads us to the conclusion that the uncertainty formerly elicited by a fleeting, unknown self tends increasingly to characterize itself as biological in nature: our health and our bodies are always endangered and must be the object of constant attention and control. At the same time, the idea of constant biological risk (or somatic uncertainty) cannot be separated out from the fundamental value assigned to life. Within what Rose (2013, p.46)[17] defines as "ethopolitical concerns" (a somatic ethics), we find a kind of vitalism rife with clashes over the value attributed to life: "quality of life," "the right to life," "the right to choose" (abortion, euthanasia), and, ultimately, the right to modify life (gene therapy, human cloning).[18]

It is not a simple matter to speak of "vitalism" when referring to biotechnology, whose emergence and refinement presupposes reliance on scientific theories and technological practices of undeniable positivist and mechanistic underpinnings, and therefore in opposition to vitalist conceptions. However, as I stated earlier, and as shown in the case of "alternative neuroscience," communication and linkages are possible.[19]

If we take this possibility into account, then the biotechnological interventions cited by Rose (like gene therapy or human cloning), which are most often apprehended from a mechanistic perspective as interventions to an "objectified" body, can be seen, by the subjects submitted to them, as part of bodily vitality and embodied experience. In this sense we could use the term "vitalism" (so to speak) to designate the contemporary valorization of the category "life," understood as something that, while anchored in biological materialism somehow surpasses it, meshing with fluid categories that are hard to objectify, like happiness and well-being or feelings and emotions that likewise resist objective definition.

A few examples involving biotechnology applied to reproduction may be instructive. The work of Lilian Chazan (2007) on fetal ultrasounds at clinics in Rio de Janeiro shows how a technological device, and its technicians, produce a "baby" in the belly of the mother-to-be, a baby that is then assigned feelings and intentions and becomes a person with whom parents begin relating well before it gains an external, social existence. Three-dimensional ultrasounds inaugurate the baby album, delivering the "first photo," while the DVD of the ultrasound is shown to family and friends as "a video of the baby." At the same time, the existence of a baby furnished by technology fuels the so-called pro-life movements that oppose abortion.

Further in the field of reproductive technology, the work of Naara Luna (2007) reveals another aspect of a possible entanglement of biotechnology and vitalism. I am talking about assisted reproductive technology that uses advanced technological manipulation of bodies and parts of bodies to produce a unique bodily experience heavily infused with emotion: pregnancy. We note here the valorization not only of the bodily experience of pregnancy per se but also of the "biological child," running parallel to heavy investments in technological development, which results in increasingly sophisticated in vitro fertilization techniques and the phenomenon of surrogate mothers. As I see it, this insistence on having a biological child and/or having the experience of conceiving and carrying it shows both the incarnation and biologization of "life" and the way in which the parent-child bond must be duplicated and mirrored by the material, biological bond. Materialism and biotechnology on the one hand, emotion and embodied experience on the other, appear to interlink in the experience of the subjects involved.

Following birth, the intense valorization of breastfeeding – cast as the only suitable nourishment for the first six months, perhaps extending rather indefinitely – also shows the entanglement of arguments of a "reductionist" biological nature (the building of antibodies and gut flora, resistance to infections, proper dentition, and so on) and those of an affective-vitalist nature: the influence of the mother-child bond on the future happiness, well-being, and mental health of both, with bonding transpiring through the "embodied" contact of breastfeeding.[20]

It is no accident that these examples refer to maternity, gestation, and birth, phenomena that are particularly sensitive to emotional investment and naturally prone to a linkage of the physical and the moral. In the specific case of childbirth and breastfeeding, the hormone oxytocin, traditionally used during medicalized childbirth to accelerate contractions, appears as a fundamental agent in the establishment of the mother-child bond. Research conducted in compliance with the most traditional (and devitalized) scientific standards are cited as unassailable (because scientific) proof that this is the "hormone of love."[21] Thus it is believed that oxytocin – like other substances present (or missing) in the body, such as testosterone, estrogen, serotonin, and adrenaline – has the power to produce a broad array of feelings, emotions, and ways of being. As much as these substances have (or should have) a concrete material existence and can be defined from this angle, they appear to carry within them something that goes beyond this narrow definition. They are substances that hold within them the power to trigger emotions, ties of love, and feelings of pleasure and to foster power and vitality.[22] This kind of molecular vitalism is another example of the entanglement that I spoke of earlier, which serves to show how the somatic/bodily experience has been imbued with great moral and affective value and, most importantly, how life (or more life) is increasingly produced through biotechnology.

My argument is that the somatic subject, which underpins the current blossoming of biological psychiatry and the neurosciences, is not necessarily fruit of the triumph of a narrow reductionist physicalism, although it is obviously associated with it; it can also be linked to the neo-Romantic vogue that underlies alternative therapies and practices in general.

In the case of the cerebral subject, I believe that the current emphasis on the concept of brain plasticity – of a brain that is an integral part of the body and in constant transformation

and communication with its environment – tends to move away from strict physicalism in the direction of a more totalizing experience. The traditional idea of the brain as an organ closed inside its own functioning is being replaced with the idea of a group of neural networks in a process of steady mutation, given their interaction with the environment and therefore with the experiences of the subject. Instead of a mind that commands the subject and its body, the plastic brain is necessarily embodied in a totality, the subject and its environment, and can only be apprehended from this conjunction.

Final considerations

My goal in these pages has been to examine the shift from a psychological understanding of self to a somatic/cerebral one. My discussion has centered on the duality that, as some scholars hold, characterizes modern Western culture: the duality between an Enlightened, rationalist worldview and another one, generally subordinated (or subsumed, according to Duarte), which tends to characterize certain realms of our cultural universe, like the world of arts or human sciences, viewed as more contaminated by subjectivity and thus less liable to rationalist and scientificizing objectification (ergo its subordination). I have tried to apprehend how the "relentless tension between these two force-ideas of our culture, which has characterized them since their inception," in the words of Duarte (2004, p.17),[23] was reframed in the closing decades of the twentieth century, leading to a "reincarnation" of the spirit and the concomitant abandonment of the mind-body dualism that was a key feature of the production of a psy culture in the twentieth century.

I have argued that what we today call "somatic individuality," whose most well-known manifestation is the "cerebral subject," can be seen as a product of this reframing and that the materialism characterizing these phenomena is a kind of re-enchanted materialism, in which the value "life" plays a crucial role. Drawing from examples where biotechnological interventions are linked to heavy affective and emotional investment in bodily experiences and where the latter, although grounded in an objectifying, mechanistic manipulation of the body, produce a totalizing experience in the subjects who are submitted to them, I have argued that the exacerbated physicalism and scientificism that characterize biotechnological production today cannot be understood without taking into consideration their link to subjects' experience. And this, it seems to me, lies a good distance from the mechanistic atomism that characterizes radical physicalism. To the contrary, the work of Chazan and Luna, among others, brings to light totalizing experiences (a baby in the belly, "biological" pregnancy) that, from my viewpoint, are underpinned by the Romantic current, as a constituent counterpoint of our cultural universe.

It thus seems to me that the materialism or physicalism that tends to characterize the concept of self in our contemporary world is based on a reframing of Duarte's "relentless tension," which at an earlier moment had underpinned the production and flourishing of a psyculture. This leads me to a fundamental question: Can we still speak of a "psy culture"? Does the reframing to which I referred earlier mean it has spent itself? Or its own reframing? The answers to these questions are not simple, and this paper intends only to fuel them.

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NOTES

[1] This shift did not touch all corners of the world, and in the countries where it did transpire, it did so differently in different contexts. In this sense, while my discussion is quite abstract and general in tone, it will focus on known experiences from so-called countries of the center, like the US and those in Europe, and from some Latin American countries, especially Brazil and Argentina, in the latter cases involving experiences that affect specific sectors of these societies.

[2] On this topic, see Russo (2002a, 2002b); Figueiredo (1986); Plotkin (2001); Turkle (1979); Figueira (1985); and Zaretsky (2005).

[3] On the diffusion of psychoanalysis in women's magazines in Brazil, see, for example, Coelho dos Santos (1986, 1990).

[4] As we know, Reich was a psychoanalyst who broke with Freudian orthodoxy in its early days. Robert Castel (1981) has called alternative therapies (in large part derived from Reichian theory) the "bastard heirs" of psychoanalysis. For a history of this movement in Brazil, see Russo (1993).

[5] According to Kutchins and Kirk (1999), precisely when the DSM-III was being prepared, marking the heyday of biological psychiatry in the field, the boards of the American Psychiatric Association were progressive and socially engaged.

[6] One of the main changes in the structure of the manual was the abandonment of the hierarchy between organic and non-organic disorders, a basic division announced in DSM-I. This hierarchy was relativized in DSM-III and completely dropped in DSM-IV, when the group "organic mental disorders" ceased to be, under the justification that using this term left the erroneous impression that there was no biological basis for other mental disorders in the manual. See Russo and Venancio (2006).

[7] This is a reference to German psychiatrist Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926), chief representative of the organic theory of mental disorders in the late nineteenth century.

[8] See Russo (2008). This duality links with another, likewise fundamental, which surrounds discussions of the scientificity of psychoanalysis.

[9] See Simmel (1950) and Russo (1997).

[10] Citations in English from Taylor (1997) were sourced from Charles Taylor, *Sources of the self: the making of the modern identity*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992. This citation is from p.319.

[11] I am referring to the kind of training advocated by the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) and its branches, which presumes the learning of theory through traditional courses, including a standardized number of hours of supervision and bureaucratic forms of access to the institution's internal hierarchy. This type of arrangement contrasts starkly with Lacanian and post-Lacanian societies, based on a more "charismatic" form of training, grounded not in the traditional school model, as seems to be the approach of societies with ties to the IPA, but in transferential relationships forged inside the institution and with Freud's writings themselves.

[12] Citations in English from Foucault (1987) were sourced from Michel Foucault, *History of madness*, London, Routledge, 2006. This citation is from p.529.

[13] Campbell (1997) states that this transformation, which he calls the Easternization of the West, was in no way imported but comes instead from inside Western culture itself, from the Romantic, anti-rationalist current of thought that has been present down through our history, though in a subordinated fashion. For Campbell's discussion on the Romantic viewpoint as part of Western culture, see Campbell (1987).

[14] See Rose (2003, 2013); Vidal (2009); Ehrenberg (2004); Zorzanelli, Ortega (2011); Zorzanelli (2013); and Ortega, Vidal (2011).

[15] For examples of research on the topic, see Lisboa, Zorzanelli (2014) and Ortega, Vidal (2013).

[16] *Lebensphilosophie* (philosophy of life) emerged in Germany at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century through the work of Wilhelm Dilthey, Georg Simmel, Max Scheler, Karl Jaspers, and Henri Bergson

(the last of these in France). It was a movement for revitalization grounded in a critique of mechanistic materialism, extreme individualism, and scientific rationalism. Life was its supreme value and it stressed experience and intuition over empiricism and reason.

[17] Citations in English from Rose (2013) were sourced from Nikolas Rose, *The politics of life itself: biomedicine, power, and subjectivity in the twenty-first century*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2006. This citation is from p.27.

[18] Referring to what he called "biocapital," Rose (2013, p.357) states: "For only where life itself has achieved such ethical importance, where the technologies for maintaining and improving it can represent themselves as more than merely the corrupt pursuit of profit and personal gain, can place themselves in the service of health and life, would it be possible for biocapital to achieve such a hold on our economies of hope, of imagination, and of profit" (English sourced from Rose, 2006, p.258).

[19] These communications and linkages are not exactly a novelty; on this, see the earlier paragraph about the 1920s holistic biology of von Uexküll, Kurt Goldstein, and von Monakow. The opposition between reductionist and mechanistic materialism and a totalizing, vitalist viewpoint has an important history in the biological sciences. However, I believe that the hegemonic view of a somatic self, along with the heavy acceptance of (and quest for) a material transformation of what we currently call "life," is unique to our contemporary world.

[20] On the reliance on scientific arguments to underpin the vitalist or "neo-Romantic" practices advocated by proponents of humanized childbirth and "mammiferous motherhood," see Alzuguir, Nucci (2015) and Mendonça (2015).

[21] See Odent (2000) and, for a critical view, Fillod (2014).

[22] The media's popularization of these molecules (the love molecule, the neurochemistry of pleasure, the hormone of sex, etc.) coincides with increasingly heavier reliance on drugs and other substances as a form of enhancement and path to greater (physical and mental) well-being and, consequently, an improved "quality of life."

[23] In this and other citations of texts from non-English languages, a free translation has been provided.

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