# Care of the self in the age of algorithms: Early thoughts from a Foucauldian perspective

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Care of the self, according to Michel Foucault, is the practice of coming back to one's soul and construct the truth of self. While in ancient times, people cared for themselves by writing in *hupomnemata*, in our modern times, we use social network sites (SNSs) or social media. These digital platforms have provided users with many technological advantages to conduct the online care of self. Sharing a post, posting a status, tweeting a photo or video, replying to a friend's comments, or revising stories stored in their virtual timeline is one of many self-care acts in a virtual space. However, these advantages of digital technologies accompany with the challenges of losing freedom or being supervized by algorithms whenever individuals engage in social media. This paper tries to answer the question that how modern practices of *hupomnemata* and care for self, are supported and manipulated by social media's algorithms. The paper is expected to contribute a new understanding of the self and care for the self in contemporary social media engagement.

## 1. Introduction

Michel Foucault died at the age of 57 in June 1984, when the early form of the Internet was limited to a mere twenty-five networks with a few hundred primary computers (Castells, 2011, p. 375). Soon after Foucault's death, the Internet began extending its reach and impact, especially after the birth of the World Wide Web in the 1990s. This growth, considered by many as the fourth revolution in communication and information technologies, has significantly altered people's lives worldwide (Castells, 2011; Macnamara, 2010).

Before the appearance of the Word Wide Web, Goffman (1983) argued that face-to-face interaction is at the core of 'the interaction order' because only in such mode can interactants feel the co-presence of other people in full including 'emotions, mood, cognitions, bodily orientation, and muscular efforts' (p. 5). However, the evolution of information and communication technologies in many forms including Internet broadband connections with high-speed Internet access, popular Internet-connected devices (e.g., smartphones or laptops), and a diversity of platforms for online social interaction, has witnessed a large number of people constructing their virtual accounts as if they are growing their identities. This situation has transformed not solely modes of interaction (Jenkins, 2010; Rettie, 2009) but also modes of self-formation.

Social network sites (SNSs) have been perceived as a 'global phenomenon' (Vasalou, Joinson, & Courvoisier, 2010, p. 719) not just because they have attracted a billion of users from

around the globe but also they allow these users to connect with each other. Technically speaking, SNSs refer to the applications that allow users to manage and maintain their social networks by creating online profiles (D. M. boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 211). These users can access a variety of platforms of their interests such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tiktok, and YouTube, to name a few. Each of these platforms is set up with different goals, designs, and functions but all allow users to build a full potential image of their selves and link them with others'. Signing up for these platforms has gradually brought about a new 'life' and eventually ended up in shaping new daily routines. It can be witnessed from every corner of modern life a person who wakes up with his/her eyes immediately looking for daily news from their Facebook's *New Feeds*, posts simultaneously a status capturing a fleeting feeling that has just come across his/her mind, expresses his/her love during a family/friend online video call,  shares a selfie of a special moment, joins in a Twitter trend with his/her thought accompanying special hashtags, or makes new friends by just sending/ accepting 'be friends' requests. These routines seem to become as fundamental to users as eating, sleeping, or exercising in their day-to-day physical lives.

To make sense of those new routines, this paper draws on Michel Foucault's theory of the care of the self (Foucault, 1977, 1997a, 1997c, 1997d, 1997e). There is a wide range of Foucauldian concepts that have been applied to communication studies such as power and self-writing (Moore, 2017; Röhle, 2005), governmentality in traditional media platforms such as television (Ouellette & Hay, 2008; Palmer, 2003) and new media such as blogs (Haider, 2016), and the technology of self (Royse, Lee, Undrahbuyan, Hopson, & Consalvo, 2007; Sauter, 2014). SNSs such as Facebook has offered its users various tools for self-formation in 'the context of techno-social hybrid western societies' (Sauter, 2014, p. 835). Using these tools, users could practice curation in the same way as the use of *hupomnemata* in the ancient Greek that Foucault has explored (Weisgerber & Butler, 2016). The curatorial practices, seen in the forms of status updates, blog posts, and online reflections, show the nature of *hupomnemata* as these acts include collecting information from what ones have read and heard from the digital environment, using their perspective to update and revise the content they have got, sharing their curations with others through online conversations, and internalizing what they have learned from those conversations. Routinization of these online acts does not just help store one's writing and create new content but also cultivate one's soul in their offline environment (Weisgerber & Butler, 2016, p. 14). In other words, nowadays individuals use their online self-writing and curation to care for their selves (Weisgerber & Butler, 2016).

If this thesis holds, are there any challenges to this online practice of self-care? Although participating in new media brings about many benefits, some studies have warned that individuals, especially their data can be manipulated without knowing by a new power of algorithms that activates under each SNS platform (Bossewitch & Sinnreich, 2013; Bucher, 2012; Elmer, 2003). In this paper, I would like to argue that while caring for the self has been facilitated by the online form of self-writing, risks are arising from algorithms of technologies embedded in social media.

This paper first introduces the Foucauldian concepts of 'the care of the self', 'technologies of self', and 'self-writing' to outline his theory. It then analyses pieces of evidence from recent studies to see how the practice of care for self has been enacted in everyday life through social media's technologies of the self. Third, it discusses how modern algorithms of SNSs could challenge and shape the care-for-self project in contemporary communication.

## 2. Care of the self, technologies of self and *hupomnemata*

In his final years, one of the main themes of Michel Foucault's works was to focus on subjectivation by analyzing ancient philosophy. One of three historical ways of ethical

subjectivation he applied (see more from Iftode, 2013) was to readdress the Greek and Roman philosophical care of the self. By rediscovering the ancient philosophers such as Plato, Socrates, he turned to the topics of 'way of life', 'art of living', 'technology of self'. This trajectory was regarded as part of the movement of the French postmodernism in the 1980s-1990s led by Pierre Hadot (Bandol, 2015, p. 68). In doing so, Foucault presented 'the care of the self' in new lights.

The self, according to Foucault, must be understood as the 'identity' residing in the soul as opposed to the body (Foucault, 1997d, p. 230). In other words, it needs to distinguish between the two spaces: the body and the soul. While the body possesses and carries whatsoever is physically attached to it, the soul is the 'home' to the self. In Foucault's own words: 'the self is not clothing, tools, or possessions; it is to be found in the principle that uses these tools, a principle not of the body but of the soul' (Foucault, 1997d, p. 230). The 'self' therefore is understood to be a kind of spiritual, virtual albeit lively presence, a 'manager' that stays in its executive office–the soul–and manages the body and its possessions. To ensure the healthiness of the body, one must eat and drink food and water, practice physical exercises, have health checks, or take medicine. Likewise, to keep the soul strong, one also ought to do the required activities (Foucault, 1986, p. 51). These activities are for 'the care of the self' or the 'cultivation of the self' (Foucault, 1997d, p. 234). To cultivate the 'self' then, one must clean up and strengthen its home, namely, the soul. However, the soul is virtual; it cannot be seen as a 'substance' or an entity with a material or physical manifestation. Rather, one should look at the soul as its 'activities' (Foucault, 1997d, pp. 230-231). According to Foucault, the care of the self in ancient Greek culture was regarded as the dominant principle of 'the art of existence'. Applying this idea into the modern time, Foucault champions for the idea that our self should be the object of our work of art:

> What strikes me is the fact that, in our society, art has become something that is related only to objects and not to individuals or life. That art is specialized or done by experts who are artists. But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art? Why should the lamp or the house be an art object but not our life? (Foucault, 1997b, p. 261)

> In other words, the project of care of the self is a practice of turning our life into a work of art. So, the care of the self should now be considered as 'self-creation or self-fashioning' (Iftode, 2013, p. 78) or self-stylization (Rabinow, 1997, p. 30).

In sum, for Foucault, by cultivating the soul in the right way, one can obtain 'a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality' (Foucault, 1997d, p. 225). Reaching these states is identified by Foucault to be the most important object of life itself.

To obtain a state of happiness and purity, Foucault believes that one must develop 'self-knowledge' (Foucault, 1997a, p. 93; Foucault, 1997d). Self-knowledge is a reflexive process in which one considers oneself as an independent object of a comprehensive study. One's self is, thus, treated as an 'object of knowledge and a field of action' (Foucault, 1986, p. 42), or 'the object of the quest of concern for the self' (Foucault, 1997d, p. 231). So, for Foucault, the self is a subject that is 'objectified' so that it becomes the object for its quest of truth (Bandol, 2015, p. 70). Although this quest is to come back at himself, the subject is 'not the solitary narcissistic individual, but the human being capable of regarding his life as a raw material that has to be shaped by rules of conduct' (Iftode, 2013, p. 78).

It can be seen that in Foucault's work, the subjectivity must be considered with 'truth' and 'power' (Bandol, 2015; Iftode, 2013). Foucault (1997d) argues, '[to] care for self is to fit one's self out with' two types or groups of truths: the truths of the individual's self – the 'inside' truths – and the truths 'of a certain number of rules of conduct or of principles' – the 'outside' truths.

The former truth is 'subjective', the latter is 'objective'.

Both 'subjective' and 'objective' truths need to be revealed or obtained through employing specific techniques, often called 'technologies of the self' by Foucault. On this point, he has also addressed that '[no] technique, no professional skill can be acquired without exercise; neither can one learn the art of living' (Foucault, 1997b, p. 273). As such, the 'technologies of self' is a set of exercises or trainings that helps one to obtain profound insights about oneself and skills to better handle one's 'self' or identity. In this process, the connection between 'subject and truth' is established (Bandol, 2015, p. 74).

According to Foucault, there are four major techniques relating to technologies of the self: self-writing, self-examination of conscience, *askesis*, and the interpretations of dreams (Foucault, 1997d, pp. 224-225). Of these four techniques, this article focuses only on the first, self-writing, which plays a considerable role in the comprehension of the self. The activity of self-writing requires one to observe himself or herself closely and to record and write down what one has done and been through daily. This activity might include a variety of tasks, such as 'taking notes on oneself to be reread, writing treatises and letters to friends, and keeping notebooks to reactivate for oneself the truths one needs' (Foucault, 1997d, p. 232). It can be seen that self-writing focuses on illuminating the first object of consideration, i.e., oneself. This self-action sees the 'self' as 'something to write about, a 'theme', or 'object' of writing' (Foucault, 1997d, p. 232). Nevertheless, self-writing is not all about oneself. In addition to establishing a conversation with oneself, self-writing also engages others, sharing with them ones' treaties or letters. This sharing helps one to understand better one's truth.

Regarding the practice of self-writing, Foucault has mentioned one device called *'hupomnemata'* which is of importance to our discussion. The *hupomnemata* can be seen as 'a selecting of heterogeneous elements' or a disparate collection of mundane or trivial details of one's daily life (Foucault, 1997c, p. 213). Hence, the *hupomnemata* should not be viewed as a treatise which must be developed as a systematic and comprehensive work. Rather, they remain incomplete drafts. While one does not always have time to complete a big project like a treatise, one does have many chances to produce many *hupomenemata* throughout a typical day. In composing the *hupomnemata* themselves, one does not seek to unveil something profound or previously hidden, but only to re-visit what one has experienced (i.e., read, heard, sensed, thought, smelled or touched) to make sense of oneself through them. The *hupomnemata*, could be in the form of 'account books, public registers, or individual notebooks' (Foucault, 1997c, p. 210), allowing an individual to immediately capture any emerging and immediate thoughts, ideas or observations often resulting from direct contacts with a certain phenomenon. Thus, this device can function as a 'memory aid' to set up a dialectical cycle between reading, rereading, and writing – thoughtfully making connections among gathered data. In doing so, one can facilitate conversations with oneself and with others. Therefore, although the *hupomenemata* often appears as a collection of seemingly unrelated facts and evidence, once connected, they would help one fully describe one's past, explain the shape of one's present, and perhaps, indicate as to the future.

### 3. Care for the self in contemporary social media

In real life, although people exist physically and their interactions with others are enacted in bodily co-presence, their identities are rather imagined in their own and others' minds. People's lives portrayed in the SNSs are virtual but their identities are seen to be more real due to the technical advances given by modern information and communication technologies. In cyberspace, a virtual 'profile' reflects one's identity and there is a vast array of means for building up this profile.

In the sphere of SNSs such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn, users can include many types of information on their public or semi-public profile (Beer, 2009, p. 996; D. M. boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 211; Dabner, 2012, p. 70). Generally speaking, each user can set up a profile which contains many fields including (i) the account user name; (ii) the profile picture; (iii) a cover photo; (iv) a short introduction about oneself; (v) basic demographic information that may include the birthday, gender, sexual orientation, living location, and languages spoken; (vi) contact information including mobile phone numbers and email addresses; (vii) details of employment; (viii) education; (ix) hobbies (including music, movies, TV shows); (x) personal networks (including family, relatives, friends, colleagues, associations); and (xi) widgets, applications and others. To fill these fields, one does not simply record one's ascribed details – the characteristics are given to one at birth such as birthday, name and sex, but must elaborately self-examine what or who one actually is, what one desires or needs, which picture best represents one's self-image, or which kind of music or movie best shows one's taste. Therefore, the process of personalizing one's online profile can at the same time be understood as an attempt to find one's true self, and also to experience what one has not known about oneself before. This process can be seen as the act of confession – one of the most respected techniques for 'producing truth' in Western societies (Foucault, 1990, p. 59). In the confession, 'one admits to oneself, in pleasure and pain, things it would be impossible to tell anyone else, the things people write books about' (Foucault, 1990, p.59). If one truly wants to disclose what has been hidden 'in the soul' (Foucault, 1990, p. 59) by sharing on SNSs, this form of identity construction could lead to the truth of oneself since one needs to practice self-knowledge. This act requires one to consider himself or herself as an object for study. One must search and accumulate knowledge to the point that helps her or him arrive at a better understanding of the nature of her/himself; based on this understanding, he or she confesses to their virtual friends.

The construction of one's identity in virtual life is closely associated with the establishment and operation of two paralleling spaces: the conventional 'physical community' and the 'virtual community' or the 'cyber space' (Castells, 2011; Jones, 2006; Kollock & Smith, 2002; Reich, 2010; Rheingold, 1993; Smith & Kollock, 1999; Turkle, 1996). That is to say, each individual nowadays has more than one space to live and express him/herself: one is physical, another is virtual. They are separate but mutually connected and coordinated by the individual herself/himself. Goffman's dramaturgical lens on social interaction (1959) is relevant to this discussion as this theorist viewed each individual as a performer on her/his frontstage. But contemporizing his viewpoint to today, the individual has more than one frontstage to display the kind of person she/he wants to be. That is to say, once the individual joins a social network site or both, s/he has a virtual frontstage. Logging on to Facebook or opening Twitter, the individual immediately jumps in other stages that have been waiting for her/him. She or he can choose on which stage (physical or virtual) they would feel most comfortable. This has become part of taking care of the self.

Self-disclosure in cyberspace is strongly linked with the trust between individuals and their networks. It is understandable that while some SNSs users have the preference for rendering their 'true selves' within the virtual community rather than in the physical sphere (Bargh, McKenna, & Fitzsimons, 2002), others tend to hide their truer selves from the virtual space. Covering the true selves is relating to the fact the users cannot control the audience who might read them (Brake, 2012, p. 1058). Furthermore, participants in SNSs might not see online "friends' as their true friends in real life, leading to less self-disclosure (D. boyd, 2006; Park, Jin, & Annie Jin, 2011). Another reason why social trust in online identities might be not high is that some users tend to

invent and portray their selves as "positive, attractive and even profitable', or control what should be disclosed and what should be hidden (Boon & Sinclair, 2009, p. 17; Lampe, Ellison, & Steinfield, 2007; Nosko, Wood, & Molema, 2010). In other words, the identities presented in virtual space can be fake or not true-to-life. This feature gives us a warning that while mediated interactions can create many opportunities for individuals to take care of themselves, there are risks of self-hiding or self-deceiving which would be contrary to the principles of concern about oneself proposed by Foucault several decades ago.

Most, if not all, platforms of SNSs, include a function to help users express their emerging feelings or record any events of daily life. Each platform seeks to inspire people to log their status. For instance, Facebook asks 'What is on your mind?', Twitter 'What's happening', Google+ 'What's new with you', and LinkedIn 'Share an article, photo, video or idea update'. These encouragements motivate users to type in personal content, often tightly formatted and limited to a few sentences or paragraphs, that they would like to share among their network. A study by Murthy (2012, pp. 1062-1063) proposes that the act of regularly tweeting is indeed self-construction by representing 'the meaningful parts' of their selves, declaring the existence of oneself in the context of digital space. It should also be emphasized that even when one writes something trivial, the trivialities are still significant since one puts into those pieces of writing one's thoughts, feelings, and memories of day-to-day activities, observed events, and experiences. These statuses and tweets, based on the technologies called the 'timeline', do not vanish but are kept for one to reread, to re-think through, to reassess, or to re-grasp one's self in the future. As time passes – say after several months or years - one can review what she or he has written, that is to listen again to one's inner voice, to get a clearer image of who one is, concerning both others of the network and oneself across the 'timeline'. This aspect of caring for the self is confirmed by the qualitative study of 23 Facebook users by who concludes that the act of scrolling through one's Facebook *Timeline* reflects one's reflexive project of the self (Lincoln & Robards, 2017). For these research participants, the *Timeline* offers them the chances of building their biography as the information about their own lives as well as their friend's lives are logged and orderly stored. These participants were seen to use the *Timeline* actively to take care of three aspects of their lives including polishing their profiles for the sake of employment, managing, and building up family ties and also romantic relationships. Studying Facebook and LinkedIn, Dijck (Van Dijck, 2013) also confirms that these platforms provide users with technologies to self-promote and self-express. Nevertheless, according to Van Djjck (2013), what is noteworthy is that each user has their strategies in using each platform to build up different aspects of their online identities. For instance, some could present one 'social' self on Facebook and 'professional' self on LinkedIn, but others could try to make a consistent presentation of 'social-professional image' (Van Dijck, 2013, p. 211). This evidence shows that nowadays individuals have been active in using technologies of self-provided by SNSs to care for themselves.

## 4. Algorithms as challenges to care of the self

It is no doubt from the above discussion that the use of SNSs with the support of other technologies such as smartphones, laptops, and the Internet, helps the individual grow her or his abilities to care for themselves in Michel Foucault's sense. They have many technologies of self to express, construct, and maintain selves. However, no lunch comes free. Participation in the SNSs also poses a great threat to the individual and her/his project of care for self because the technologies that help cultivate one's self could also control this process.

Towards the end of his career, Michael Foucault noticed the rising role of computers in changing the way *hupomnemata* could be created. In *On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of*

*Work in Progress*, Foucault asserts that the use of a 'notebook'- a past form of *hupomnemata* that was very common in Plato's time for 'personal and administrative use' - had been influenced by 'the introduction of computers (popularly termed notebooks) into private life today' (Foucault, 1997b, p. 272). This leads to the situation where 'the question of writing and the self must [now] be posed in terms of the technical and material framework - computers' (Foucault, 1997b, p. 272). In addition to this warning, Foucault also notices the risk of technologies in manipulating power relations. In his own words:

> Now, the relations between the growth of capabilities and the growth of autonomy are not as simple as the eighteenth century may have believed. And we have been able to see what forms of power relations were conveyed by various technologies (whether we are speaking of productions with economic aims or institutions whose goal is social regulation, or of techniques of communication) …What is at stake, then, is this: how can the growth of capabilities [capacites] be disconnected from the intensification of power relations? (Foucault, 1997f, p. 317)

The warning of Foucault on the threat of technologies in manipulating power is similar to the idea Lash (2007) raises. According to Lash (2007, p. 71), the algorithms created by computer scientists in the age of 'pervasive media and ubiquitous coding' are 'generative rules' which are very much different from the rules we humans have known before. These new rules are:

> …virtual that generate a whole variety of actuals. They are compressed and hidden and we do not encounter them in the way that we encounter constitutive and regulative rules. Yet this third type of generative rule is more and more pervasive in our social and cultural life of the post-hegemonic order. They do not merely open up opportunities for invention, however. They are also pathways through which capitalist power works. (Lash, 2007, p. 71)

On one hand, the new technologies offered by SNSs have allowed ones to be creatively build up their virtual identity and care for their selves; on the other hand, these new technologies could act as mechanisms to supervize and control what ones should be or what contents or information present in one's awareness.

Algorithms work automatically and invisibly to assemble options (tastes and preferences) for such construction. The hobbies, the list of songs, the collection of artists, and so forth available to users' choices can be seen as the result of algorithms (Beer, 2009, p. 997). In choosing from the list of options provided, users have given the power to the algorithms which constitute the individuals' self (Beer, 2009, p. 997). A study by Gerlitz and Helmond (2013) reveals that indeed Facebook has employed the Graph Rank, an algorithm to give priority to certain contacts and stories based on the calculation of likes, comments, and shares that users have done through their online activities. Thus, hitting one like could result in the appearance of top contacts or stories in one's futuristic timeline. In other words, as a result of their online activities (liking, commenting, sharing), one could contribute to establishing a system of recommendation which gives them preferences of the contacts or stories that they want to see in the future. Exploring the same issue, Karakayali, Kostem, and Galip (2018) see that the recommender systems activating on computational algorithms can be a new form of technologies of self in Foucault's sense. These systems can both help shape and control one's self-care practices. In the latter sense, the algorithmic power is to produce 'a state of dependency' as users become desired for 'more recommendations' (Karakayali et al., 2018, p. 19). We would ask: Can someone's care for the self be authentic even though algorithms orient our perception of ourselves, the people and the world around us?

The power of algorithms can be problematic in other ways. Whenever individuals enter the virtual space, they left their 'digital traces' (Reigeluth, 2014), and their involvement in social media is supervized. In early 2018 there was an event called the Facebook-Cambridge Analytica data scandal uncovering that Cambridge Analytica, a British political consulting firm has used data of millions of Facebook users without their permission and awareness. It was revealed later that Facebook's algorithms automatically recorded and restored data of millions of users containing their personal information such as pages' likes, hobbies.

The threat posed by algorithms reminds us of the discussion of Foucault on surveillance and its prime example, Panopticon. Foucault considers Panopticon as, 'a generalizable model of functioning; a way of defining power in terms of the everyday life of men' (Foucault, 1977, p. 205). Panopticon is a type of 'architecture' in the form of surveillance which allows 'to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power' (Foucault, 1977, p. 201). Recent studies have shown that with the advances of technologies, algorithms have included many capacities such as face recognition (Introna & Wood, 2004) which gives SNSs bigger capacities to supervize individuals. In this sense, algorithms created by SNSs can be regarded as a form of surveillance that supervizes and controls users.

However, different from Panopticon, the contemporary algorithms of SNSs initiate the threat of invisibility (Bucher, 2012). As Bucher criticizes (2012, p. 1177) Foucault's idea of 'permanent visibility' does not reflect the nature of the digital algorithms where visibility is 'not permanent but temporary, not equally imposed on everyone, and oscillating between appearing and disappearing'. Bucher's (2012) study shows that individuals are far from freedom when participating in the virtual sphere. Indeed, they face the threat of invisibility created by Facebook's *EdgeRank*, the automated and predetermined algorithm controlling the flow of information and communication on Facebook's *News Feed*. This mechanism decides what is brought about on users' Top News (status update, uploaded picture) by executing many factors including affinity – the relationship between the viewing user and the item's creator, weight – the popularity and importance of the news, and time decay – the time of the news (Bucher, 2012, p. 1167). By this way of calculation, the Facebook algorithm gives more chance of visibility to those who make more engagement in its environment than those who involve less (Bucher, 2012, p. 1174). From the perspective of users as an actor of caring for herself or himself, they cannot control what information they consume every day. How can they care for themselves properly if they cannot control that?

## 5. Conclusion

It is seen that the practices of care for the self in the digital age have changed in comparison with the previous eras of communication. The diversity of social media platforms and their supporting technologies bring about many possibilities for individuals to express and construct themselves. Individuals are allowed to enter the virtual sphere and build up their project of care for the self through vast social media functions such as tweeting, posting a status, constructing virtual identities, as well as connecting with the audience. Foucault would see these daily practices of joining social media as new techniques of constituting the subject to build his life as a work of art. However, this project is also challenged by the new generative rules (Lash, 2007) that govern virtual identity and interaction. One of the prominent problems is that individuals must cope with the increasing power of algorithms which automatically and invisibly control and manipulate their online self. The care for the self in the digital age, therefore, must be negotiated through the interaction between the individual as the actor and algorithms as the mediator. In sum, this article contributes to the understanding of Foucault's theoretical concepts of 'care of the self' and

'technology of self' as well as giving new insights in explaining the practices of engaging social network sites in the modern era. It does, however, warn that this project of the subject should be challenged by the rise of algorithms and artificial intelligence.

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