RESEARCH

INTERNET AND POSTMODERNITY: A COMMUNICATION SUPPORT AS NECESSARY AS IRREVERENT AT PRESENT TIME. PEDAGOGICAL NEEDS

Internet y Postmodernidad: un soporte de comunicación tan necesario como irreverente en la actualidad. Necesidades pedagógicas

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ABSTRACT

A communication tool like the Internet has been a huge revolution in our globalized world. Only in a few decades, the "Network of networks" has become the absolute protagonist in the field of virtual interrelations. And this technology, which facilitates the access and exchange of information to millions of people, has been forged in our socio-cultural context of Postmodernity. The result is an infinite conception of perspectives at the communicative level. Reality is frequently at the mercy of those subjectivities, capable of influencing large human groups according to certain interests. Therefore, together with the verification of the effectiveness and need of the Internet, this work aims to analyze the reason for the validity of these multiple truths, which have overcome the objective principles of Modernity (according to the supposed progress of Reason). In this regard, it is essential to examine phenomena such as the post-truth or the malicious use of social networks, which distort the authenticity of social and political situations of great significance. For this, it has been highly esteemed to extract essential notions of other publications, written or virtual, that address it with rigor. Likewise, it is very useful to analyze certain information on the Internet, which is due to the irreverence of pre-established interests. The conclusion derives from a necessary reflection on the alternatives of opinion that coincide with the individualism emanating from Postmodernism, with the Internet as an ally. Of the first order is the urgency of continuing to bet on education at all levels on an unlimited phenomenon.

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RESUMEN

Una herramienta de comunicación como Internet ha supuesto una revolución descomunal en nuestro mundo globalizado. Sólo en unas décadas, la "Red de redes" se ha erigido en protagonista absoluto en el ámbito de las interrelaciones virtuales. Y dicha tecnología, que facilita el acceso e intercambio de información a millones de personas, se ha fraguado en nuestro contexto sociocultural de la Postmodernidad. El resultado es una concepción infinita de perspectivas a nivel comunicativo. La realidad queda frecuentemente a merced de esas subjetividades, capaces de influir en amplios colectivos humanos según ciertos intereses. Por tanto, junto a la constatación de la eficacia y necesidad de Internet, este trabajo pretende analizar el porqué de la validez de dichas verdades múltiples, que han superado los principios objetivables de la Modernidad (según el supuesto progreso de la Razón). Al respecto, resulta fundamental examinar fenómenos como la post-verdad o el uso malintencionado de las redes sociales, que distorsionan la autenticidad de situaciones sociales y políticas de gran calado. Para ello, ha sido de gran estima extraer nociones esenciales de otras publicaciones, escritas o virtuales, que lo abordan con rigor. Igualmente, de gran utilidad es analizar determinadas informaciones en la Red, que obedecen a la irreverencia de unos intereses prefijados. La conclusión deriva en una reflexión necesaria sobre las alternativas de opinión que coinciden con el individualismo que emana la Posmodernidad, con Internet como aliado. De primer orden es la urgencia de seguir apostando por una educación a todos los niveles sobre un fenómeno ilimitado.

INTERNET E POSTMODERNIDADE: UM SUPORTE DE COMUNICAÇÃO TÃO NECESSÁRIA COMO IRREVERENTE NA ATUALIDADE. NECESSIDADES PEDAGÓGICAS

RESUME

Uma ferramenta de comunicação como Internet supôs uma revolução descomunal em nosso mundo globalizado. Somente em umas décadas, a "Rede de Redes" foi erigida como protagonista absoluta no âmbito das inter-relações virtuais. E tal tecnologia, que facilita o acesso e intercambio de informação a milhões de pessoas, foi criado em nosso contexto sociocultural da Pós Modernidade. O resultado é uma concepção infinita de perspectivas a nível comunicativo. A realidade fica frequentemente a mercê de essas subjetividades, capazes de influir em amplos coletivos humanos segundo certos

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interesses. Portanto, junto a constatação da eficácia e necessidade da Internet, este trabalho pretende analisar o porquê da validez dessas verdades múltiplas que superaram os princípios objetivais da Modernidade (segundo o suposto progresso do jornal La Razón). A esse respeito, resulta fundamental examinar fenômenos como a post verdade ou o uso mal-intencionado das redes sociais, que distorcem a autenticidade de situações sociais e políticas de grande importância. Para isso foi de grande utilidade extrair noções essenciais de outras publicações, escritas ou virtuais, que o abordam com rigor. Igualmente, de grande utilidade é analisar determinadas informações nas redes sociais, que obedecem a irreverencia de interesses pré-fixados. A conclusão deriva em uma reflexão necessária sobre as alternativas de opinião que coincidem com o individualismo que emana a Pós-modernidade, com Internet como aliado e com urgência seguir apostando por uma educação a todos os níveis sobre um fenômeno ilimitado.

PALAVRAS CHAVE: Pós-modernidade – Internet – subjetividade – irreverencia – necessidade – pós verdade – interesses – comunicação – educação.

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is an indisputable fact the need for the Internet for the use of countless activities of all kinds. Nowadays we assume the communication and information obtained by the Network as something natural, intrinsically linked to our lives, to carry out our academic, business, administrative, etc. work or simple private consultation. In this sense, based on the technological research that proliferated in the mid-seventies on the advances of communication, where the *bit* was constituted in a unit of information, the philosopher and sociologist Jean François Lyotard already advocated: "It is reasonable to think that the multiplication of information machines will affect the circulation of knowledge of sounds and images, and the orientation of new research will be subordinated to the translatability of the results into a machine language" (Lyotard, 1989, p. 15). Likewise, we are aware that it is also a method of technology not exempt from misuses for certain interests. On more than one occasion we have heard or read that "with the Internet you cannot put doors to the field", therefore, the risk of such practices is almost impossible to stop. In short, as a fabric that interacts with the whole

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of society, the Internet is much more than a technology, it is an essential means of communication that can generate all kinds of mythologies and exaggerated attitudes (Castells, 2006).

On the other hand, in a historical moment like Postmodernity, so controversial and transcendental, any virtual personal positioning can be integrated perfectly. Beyond the multiple judgments on this term in the field of philosophy, often contradictory, where it seems that there is unanimity is to qualify the attitude of postmodern man as eminently individualistic. Already from the new forms of thought that broke with the traditional limits of modernity, with Marx as a great bulwark in the nineteenth century, an anti-essentialist psychology subjected to an ontology of infinite differentiated human practices was valued; and everything, in spite of the fact that the philosopher himself maintained essentialist elements in his conception of history. Somehow, he was anticipating precepts shared by thinkers of the later century in the French post-structuralist current (which would hegemonize some theories about postmodernity in various fields) such as Michel Foucault or Jean-François Lyotard, on the other hand, thinkers considered already classical about the importance of the subjective element, independently of other intellectual presuppositions also primordial in this current. In this sense, González Rey (2007) interprets one of the most influential thinkers of modern philosophy such as Friedrich Nietzsche, commenting that "the philosopher already emphasized an instinctive human nature, oriented to pleasure, which is at the base of the metaphysical dogma of the unconscious of Freud. The pleasure would take a base of universality that feeds a notion of Being that would fix its own instinctive tendencies". (Gonzalez Rey, 2007, p. 9).

However, where philosophers and sociologists also agree about interpreting Postmodernism is in the field of criticism towards a hermeneutics of Modernity, where above all science has not responded to contemporary humanity. Lyotard himself denounces the implantation of totalizing explanation systems, or "metanarratives", rejecting the great ideologies that advocated absolute truths, especially due to the great disasters that occurred in the 20th century, and since the crisis of the early 21st century. And even for Gilles Lipovetski (1990), the end of a world where everything was fully identifiable for the sake of a stability with feet of clay, whose result has been the lack of commitment to a way of life or an ideal that was not "I" himself.

Therefore, it is essential to reflect on a current of behavior that is governing our global society, paradoxically increasingly atomized from the particularism of its members, and overcome a modernity that sought universal progress through scientific reason. However, the Postmodernity understood today also implies an inherent consequence of technological advances, despite its first nineteenth-century conception. Therefore, it will be this perspective where it is convenient to be fixed: with regard to the Internet as a method of omnipresent communication in social relations. It is about investigating ideas

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that connect with the intellectual and pedagogical sense that has always emanated from any approach of thought, philosophical, sociological, historical, etc., committed to the future of Humanity.

2. OBJECTIVES

This article will pivot on three axes, which are inevitably interrelated in order to extract valuable conclusions that will qualify a decisive event such as the Postmodernity-Internet binomial, which inescapably conditions our communicative and informative world, abstraction made of those societies and territories that even today they do not have such technology, or where modernity has not been exhausted, or sometimes not even started (Follari, 2006).

On the one hand, it is a priority to try to elucidate as accurately as possible the concepts that preside it: Postmodernity and the Internet. Therefore, an approach to the meaning of Postmodernity will be approached, from the exposition of certain generalist lines of thought, given its evident intellectual complexity of interpretation. Because in this research study, the meaning of the postmodernist discursive reality must be determined around the Internet phenomenon, of a more defined nature as controversial. Each one of these two major concepts contains crucial features that must be analyzed, even briefly in several sub-headings, considering various contributions of scholars concerned about that historical phase in which we find ourselves.

On the other hand, as outlined in the Introduction, we will try to provide some notions about the impact of the Internet on Postmodernity, from the utilitarianism and great advantages that characterizes the Network as well as its pernicious praxis: false information, insecurity in the privacy, attack on institutions, and even great disrespect from different social networks. For this, certain paradoxes must be pointed out about the theoretical technological efficiency in its generalized use, which unavoidably affects numerous social groups.

Hence the third question, also pointed out, as another objective to be proposed: in this world in continuous technological updating, we must always insist on the need for digital literacy and education of ethical coherence, despite the rapidity of sociocultural changes.

3. METHODOLOGY

The relevance of a virtual tool such as the Internet in our contemporaneity facilitates the existence of numerous studies on its tasks, its scope, its influence and other important factors. On the other hand, beyond exposing a historical route amply studied since the origin of the "Network of networks", where little could be contributed, it will

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be of great help to examine some of the proposals from which to obtain their idiosyncrasy. To do this, to cite several examples, some well-known publications are very accurate, such as Roberto Aparici, *Educational Communication in the Information Society* (2006), where a group of experts dissects the meaning of virtual communication from different angles. Or, the recent monographic articles indexed on the limits of Internet, like the one of Emilia Nicoleta, "New dimensions of Internet: source of information or propaganda?" (2016), that in addition analyzes the concrete case of Internet in the war of Iraq and the role of Islamist groups in the network. And the last number of *Practical Reason Keys* of the end of 2017, directed by Fernando Savater, is also monographically dedicated to the Internet, with several notable articles by renowned philosophers and journalists who shed the dangers of this "virtual jungle", contributing great clairvoyancea.

In addition, there are articles from printed newspapers that have portrayed in an exemplary way fundamental aspects related to the reality of virtual communication in our days. Thus, from 2016 and 2017, *El País* the texts on issues such as social networks in "Facebook, invisible divinity" by Vicente Serrano, or "Communication through social networks" by Patricia Ramírez are very eloquent; or the misrepresentation of the information in "How to fight the post-truth" of David Alandete. And in *La Opinión*, Eduardo Lagar's article "Freedom on the Internet has died" serves to explain the report of Freedom House, an international organization that controls the online information provided by democratic governments.

Regarding the interpretation of Postmodernity, the intention of this study has been to complement the contributions of renowned thinkers in several reference manuals, together with recent notable articles in indexed journals or others on the Web, linked to this concept. Thus, a book of great validity is *The postmodern condition* (1989), of the aforementioned Jean-François Lyotard one of the leading writers who have recently synthesized aspects of postmodern nature, with various exemplary theories with their inherent influences in our contemporaneity. On the other hand, Gilles Lipovetsky, with the already classic manual *The era of the emptiness* (1990), comments extensively, among other questions, the breaking of confidence in the modern rationality of the false progress, or the skepticism and narcissism that resides in the postmodern man . Or, with the theories of a current philosopher as often as Zygmunt Bauman in his *Postmodern Ethics* (2006), an issue as relevant as the moral responsibility of the man of our time, conditioned by a technological influence without remedy has been addressed.

And to also illuminate this concept with rigor, there are several specifically related articles that have been based on the theories of those philosophers and sociologists. It has been a great help those published by Roberto Follar "Reviewing the concept of Postmodernity" (2006), which reviews fundamental notions of French poststructuralism, in addition to synthesizing the situation of modernity in Latin America; or,

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"Postmodernity. New regime of truth, metaphysical violence and the end of metanarratives" (2011), where Professor Adolfo Vásquez gathers an exhaustive discussion on the philosophical foundations on reason and its new contextualization, refreshing Niezsche's postulates as the first critic of modernity. And especially illustrative is the article by Cristobal Ruiz "Education in postmodern society: challenges and opportunities" (2010), whose contributions greatly guide issues of the first order, as well as a pedagogical proposal to be taken into account. Finally, to comment on the pedagogical needs that confront what has been discussed in this work, a book such as *About Democracy and Education* (2006) by Noam Chomsky has proved invaluable.

There are several texts of these and other manuals, chapters and articles that have served me as a basic methodology to integrate the three proposed objectives. From this diversity of perspectives and alluding to specific cases, we intend to deepen into a reasoned discussion. The aim will be to try to propose consistent and effective results.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Criticisms of Modernity

There is no doubt that since the end of the 15th century, there has been a historic change of undoubted relevance in our civilization, although according to what territories and countries with their chronological ups and downs. The world known until then, after traversing a long Middle Ages, began its journey thanks to new cultural factors to offer Humanity innovative life parameters. Modernity had made its way. And somehow, the scientific and technical discoveries, the intercontinental trips and the sociopolitical changes during the following centuries were going to forge a second great historical transformation, with the Industrial Revolution of the beginning of the 19th century as a supposed support of human progress.

However, those ideas that were proposed on the basis of the Enlightenment, as a current of thought suitable for the ideal course of modern society and culture, were soon overflowed and even ineffective. Several thinkers of great influence already found that only with Reason as a bulwark of change it was not possible to advance properly. Because social inequality, political arbitrariness and intolerance of religions blocked the future of modern civilization. And together with these destabilizing elements, from a more intellectual perspective, Karl Marx was one of the first critical philosophers who opted to facilitate new ways of thinking that broke with the classical limits of modern thought based on reason, to also seek new answers in the human psyche (González Rey, 2007). Likewise, decades later Nietzsche expounded a premonitory thesis, perhaps another of the origins of postmodernity, saying that a rupture of a correct world was happening, naturalized in a language attributed to things. In addition, together with Heidegger, he made a stubborn criticism against the instrumental rationality that had

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marked the Western world in recent times. In short, reason no longer served as a form of human coexistence where the moral arbitrariness of religions was in the background; the reason for ordering scientific and technical activity and the administration of things was no longer valid; and there was no longer an unwavering faith in reason to discover the ideal beauty in art, an aesthetic supposedly comparable to a unique ethic of civilization. All in all, there was an evolution in the global communication process: technology, through the modernization of media, resulted in the interdependence of humanity, motivated by the need for information (Joyanes, 2000).

It would be then, when faced with the disastrous results of our recent history, protected by reason, a strong current of skepticism and disenchantment would emerge. "Today, the great ideologies, the political parties and the workers' movements that at other times mobilized the world are ignored. The failures generated by the great stories mean that there are no longer strong reasons to get society excited" (Ruiz, 2010, p.177). As Vattimo (1996) reminds us, phenomena such as the perverse application of the proletarian revolution, the two great world holocausts, the protests of May 68, Vietnam, Iraq, the Balkans and other forgotten wars, the economic and financial crisis of the early XXI century, the violations of human rights in countless corners of the planet, the growing destruction of the environment and other serious problems that condition our survival, cause us to bet on leaving behind modernity. And we should add politically a loss of credibility in the face of corruption and the provocation of greater social inequality, as well as the lack of institutional solidarity in the face of massive mobilizations of refugees from wars, and of course, the malpractice of technological means of communication, issues that are already integrated into a postmodernity of doubtful viability. Therefore, at this point, understood the overcoming and critique of "rationalizing" modernity, it is necessary to discuss the results offered by postmodernity. Because there are both defenders and critics on this thinking trend. It is fundamental to try to illuminate the suitability of supporting or not such a line of behavior (rather than reflection). And most importantly, we must analyze the development of a sociocultural context such as this one so closely linked to the "Network of networks".

4.2. Postmodernity and Internet as a solution?

Serve the following paragraphs to analyze the positive relationship between Postmodernity and the Internet far from detailing the huge social progress recently experienced, well known, thanks to communication on the Net. For this, it is necessary to set several essential positions of current thinking, which will try to guide that inevitable relationship.

Cristobal Ruiz (2010) exposes the importance of the reformist discourse that Jürgen Habermas would defend about postmodernity: although he has proposed limits to the

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great ideologies that dominated the 20th century, in order to reform his proposals, he also suggested that modernity was an unfinished project and that its weaknesses had to be modified. According to Ruiz, the German philosopher would be in favor of offering certain solutions, criticizing the reason but indicating the irrefutable fruits that a continuing postmodernity could offer, such as the deepening of deliberative democracy, or a public and global ethical scenario. Ruiz has also studied Bauman's theories by which postmodernity leaves the door open to emotions, ways of life, experience or otherness, in order to contribute to improve progress and to structure civilization.

> Postmodernism, in this way, frees us from the abuses of a rationalizing fundamentalism that has not infrequently fed and maintained ideas, principles and truths that were considered unquestionable, and whose ultimate purpose was domination, coercion and power over the other (machismo, classism ...). Faced with the unitary and unifying sense of modernity, postmodernity raises a multiplicity of perspectives, the fragmentation of thought and a wide range of approaches and voices, thanks in large part to a tool such as the Internet (Ruiz, 2010, p. 177).

In this sense of a consensual postmodernity, the postmodern world rejects the great saving ideas of the last centuries, above all taking into account the multiplicity of positions or truths that the virtual or digital community is capable of. And just as in the field of thought, the world of art is no longer governed by established rules, by interposed canons; Now we are working to find these rules from each work, something that the avant-gardes of the beginning of the century assimilated in a desire for permanent restlessness and curiosity, leaving behind definite categories. The consequence is the own expression of the interior world of the creator, from a diversity of formats and proposals. Civilization, therefore, is projected thanks to an enormously complex existence where each human reality constitutes a story of its own, a micro-story, especially with the multitude of subjective visions that occur on the Web. As Adolfo Vasquez thinks, who heeds to opinions from Lyotard,

> The postmodern condition of our culture implies an emancipation of reason and the influence exerted by the great stories. Postmodernity is an age of the culture, it is the age of knowledge and information, which constitute means of power. The postmodern man lives life as a set of fragments independent of each other, without any feeling of internal contradiction... the micro-stories respond to the fundamental criterion of utility, that is, they are pragmatic (Vasquez, 2011, p. 5).

And Lyotard himself comments: "Postmodernity is presented as a babelization that is no longer considered an evil but a positive state, because it allows the liberation of the individual, who, stripped of the illusions of utopias, can enjoy the present following his inclinations and his tastes" (Lyotard, 1989, p. 36). It is therefore a revindication of the

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individual and local against the universal. In addition, the technologies of communication of our era, by claiming an essential space of private expression, allow a plurality of points of view, beliefs and ideas never known as in any other era. The possibility of offering an avalanche of knowledge and information stimuli is an unusual phenomenon, easy to access and decisive for the development of the global society. The updating of the interrelation between people opens a new path in the historical evolution at all levels. It is an interconnection without mediation, an intercommunication that is increasingly free and more effective in areas such as science, technology or the humanities through the available channels. And it is precisely the current media that are leading players in the transformation of the modern to the postmodern world, participants more than active in the daily flow of an advanced world that "not only does not abhor the technological reason, but praises it and it is a constituent part of the new type of human being that promotes" (Follari, 2006, p. 44). For example, in the war atmosphere of Iraq in 2003, traditional media mobilized online by creating online digital editions, such as *El País* or *El Mundo,* which added valuable documents such as photo galleries, videos or flash technology files, where Readers had unlimited and free access to information that until then in the case of previous wars had been impossible, sometimes censored by television networks for alleged anti-patriotic content (Nicoleta, 2016).

On the other hand, Mari Paz Sánchez-Guijaldo (2017) refers to the alternating information of citizen journalism, sometimes to exercise a solidarity activism before the lack of coverage of traditional media. It has been, then, the media such as the Internet that allows anyone to have the ability to publish without the agreement of an editor, resulting in that the traditional have had to grant some way of expression to their readers in their digital editions (blogs). This implies that professional journalism has to adapt to a new way of communicating, thus widening its range of information, considering itself a real engine of change more interconnected and transparent. The professor also reminds us that "The information to be published allows a deepening of topics of interest for specialized audiences, and is often used to inform and denounce issues of abuse, corruption, etc. that can influence public opinion due to its viral effect" (Sánchez-Guijaldo, 2017, p. 40); However, he also warns that the fact that the Internet grants the possibility to every human to be to be a social communicator, does not make him a journalist or neither what he does is journalism.

However, other voices recognize a new, but paradoxical, cultural paradigm that assumes postmodernism with new communication technologies. Thus, David Lyon says: "Post-industrialism has left a cybernetic world of data processing, global networks and virtual realities. The rise of new media allows new voices to be heard before repressed, but why should we listen to one voice more than another?" (Lyon, 2000, p. 138). In short, despite the exponential communicative growth of humanity, many doubts arise and of course, bad practices in the use of the Internet. Issues such as

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hyperindividualist positions, conscious irreverence, disrespect, informative falsehood, attacks on the privacy or security of a country and other inconveniences seriously harm the social technological exchange of communication. Let's look at them in the next section.

4.3. The negative aspects of a postmodern Internet

It is clear that there are those who have observed traits of dubious ethical validity in technological postmodernity. In the first place, there is no doubt that we are witnessing a historical-cultural perspective in which subjectivities of enormous importance prevail which would halt the adequate moral progress of humanity. Thus, the same Bauman who opted for individual expressive possibilities, says:

> The moral self is the victim of the most obvious and notorious technology since it cannot survive fragmentation. In a world mapped by needs, in which the obstacles to its accelerated gratification abound, there is still much room for *homo ludens*, *homo oeconomicus* and *homo sentimentalis*; for the player, the entrepreneur or the hedonist, but not for the moral subject (Bauman, 2006, p. 225).

Subjectivity, as a differentiated qualitative level of man, is a postmodern construction, and because of that same reasoning in the midst of a changing civilization, it seems that it cannot be subject to a universal system of values. Therefore, there would be a network of normative options created by each of the existing subjectivities, which would affect our actions conditioned by a network of desires, needs, preferences and other psychic elements. It should be noted that a large part of everything is due to a progressive global freedom of expression without precedent, where the "culture of the self" stands in vindication of their own emotions The attitude of these subjectivities obey the empiricism of particular types of organization psychic in each person (González Rey, 2007). In this way, the exposure of such emotions in virtual communication would not cease to be a crystallization of an internal subjective order, almost always outside the precepts that were considered "reasonable". We are witnessing, therefore, a postmodern world in which the digital has changed the way we recognize and represent ourselves, to a virtual society where the subjectivity of each actor can be freed without any social imposition.

It will then be in those "subjectivities on line", where the subjects carry out a reconstruction of their identity based on stereotypes to demand social acceptance. Social networks thus produce a great paradox based on the supposed individualized freedom offered by the Internet, and, on the contrary, the need to comply with hypothetical approving judgments of virtual peers. "The Internet has become the largest social laboratory for experimentation in the constructions and reconstructions of the self that characterize postmodern life" (Brito & Alvarado, 2016, p. 25). And in that cult of

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technology, humanity unconsciously lets itself be carried away by a communicative reorganization that forges other "postmodern" ways of life, perhaps less solidary. Again there are other great paradoxes that preside over these virtual contact structures, which should be subject to a pedagogy sufficient to avoid those subjectivities, sometimes egocentric. In this regard, Patricia Ramírez (2014) synthesizes several advantages and disadvantages of social networks, such as the opportunity to communicate at any time of the day with anyone you love, wherever you are, but also being able to isolate yourself from those closest to you with the loss of socialization that implies; or the opportunity of shy people to express themselves calmly and practice social skills, but with the danger of being subject to an addiction because of the attractiveness of ignoring the face-to-face; or the achievement of a self-esteem based on the number of followers and "likes" (in the case of Facebook) that they receive, when the degree of such acceptance cannot really be gauged; or the opportunity to exchange impressions or discuss important issues, in the face of impulsive and irritable behaviors that lead to misinterpretations, resentment, insults or aggression, etc.

On the impact of social networks in our present, Vicente Serrano (2016) discusses the scope of Facebook:

> It is undoubtedly the most successful social network and at the same time almost inevitable, capable of competing with the traditional *mass media* and invading its space. It is perhaps the most remarkable and notable result of the digital revolution, other social networks have preceded it, but none has reached that brilliant success or that massive implantation, because none of them has affected the heart of affectivity as Facebook has done. It makes you suddenly the center of a universe in which you build your identity and you affirm yourself in search of adhesions in the form of "I like", and that you also manage as a current account of affections and encounters... Facebook finally offers the illusion of freedom and communication gathered in a simple, apparently innocuous device. The user becomes a producer, without being fully aware of it, from his emotional life. Expressed in photos, opinions and feelings, affectivity becomes a commodity that cedes in perpetuity to a company whose wealth is advertising (Serrano, 2016, p. 4-5).

Indeed, in virtual postmodernity there is a risk of fostering a generalized egoism that, taken to the extreme, leads to an unambiguous narcissism. The daily social concerns become purely personal, the growing depoliticization is a fact, the great existential questions are left aside, the banalization of culture presides over all public activity, etc., and everything, in favor of living for ourselves, without worrying about our traditions or our posterity, where narcissistic strategies promise physical and psychological health. "When the future is uncertain, there is the withdrawal of the present, which we do not cease to protect, fix and recycle in an infinite youth" (Lipovetsky, 1993, p.51). In short,

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the culture of appearance, of one's own complacency, are ways to make sense of one's existence, which is also favored by the constant consumption of products and fashions in order to satisfy an omnipresent Ego. Therefore, another paradox looms on the horizon of postmodernism with the Internet as an instrument: when network communication is aimed at satisfying one's impulse or at instincts that do not stop at a measured reason, one can be mortgaging the supposed freedom that grants such decisions. The vulnerability of the narcissistic user can make an appearance by taking the stimuli of appearance as a basis.

In this regard, we know that another negative element is based on anonymity to attack or offend from the network those who have projected their image in any sense, from the most narcissistic to the most altruistic. "Until the generalization of the Internet, anyone understands that the value 'in front of' is associated with the opposition of the cowardice of those who send a note without a signature: exposing oneself to the consequences, or throwing the stone and hiding the hand" (Gómez Cabaleiro, 2017, p. 24). And everything is produced with astonishing ease, to encourage from the concealment of the origin on the Internet (in social networks or other ways) a damage to a person or company, a false information with the appearance of truth about a social event, a misrepresentation of political, and even warlike facts that are offered as credible, and all in search of a spurious benefit, of personal, commercial and even institutional interests. In short, in our postmodern age alternative information on the part of certain people or groups are the order of the day, (abstraction made of the official inconvenience to offer certain information that various powers have always exercised). And also Emilia Nicoleta (2016) has studied the anonymous behavior of the radical Islamist groups in the network, to conclude that the Internet has facilitated a new type of war based on the great media coverage at a global level, through official websites, forums, blogs, social networks, from the immediacy and the impossibility of locating the origin. These groups make extensive use of the possibilities offered by the Network of networks: transmission of information and propaganda, organization and recruitment of sympathizers, or exposure of threats and violent acts, thus multiplying their perverse effect of horror.

Regarding the manipulation of information by virtual means, although the phenomenon comes from far we are currently witnessing a really dishonest and malevolent tendency to communicate certain news (also sometimes from anonymity). The Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels already pointed out that "a lie repeated a thousand times becomes a truth", in order to carry out the anti-Semitic strategy with which to influence German society. Well, such nonsense can be applied today to the phenomenon known as "post-truth" where, "Thanks to new technologies and the way in which political propaganda uses them, it is a concept that has the connotation of falsehood, of manipulation and revisionism of reality itself... with the interested intentions that may exist behind it" (Niño & Barquero & García, 2017, p. 83). And, given

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the fragmentation of points of view in the dissemination of information, postmodernism lends itself to the rapid validity of rumors and malicious stories. History teaches us that, since the possibility of expanding news through the development of media began, the repetition of slogans and not true ideas that are riveted has been a constant, in connivance with certain political powers or pressure groups (to this we must add the use, sometimes unconscious, of virtual mechanisms lacking objective and reflective reasoning). Therefore, in the post-truth, the deontological character that must reside in any medium, even in the electronic ones, to safeguard the reality of the facts, disappears in favor of a selection of *fake news,* images or holders that obey an interested distortion to defend or hide certain objectives. For example, hot news is the post-truth that surrounds the particular electoral management of US President Donald Trump. As well,

> In the era of social platforms, you compete with impostors who disguise the lies of rigor, seeking publicity, money or influence. There are those who disseminate it to obtain political profitability like Trump himself, who in 2012, when he had his eyes set on the White House, incorporated his speeches and gave rise to the hoax that President Obama was not born in the United States, but in Kenya. On Facebook, when a lie is shared hundreds of thousands of times and sneaks into the information cycle, a bubble is created. Users who follow Trump or who declare themselves Republicans can only see false information in their walls and not real ones, such as the president's maneuvers to avoid paying taxes or his many macho or racist statements... (Alandete, 2016, p. 3).

Even much more recently,

> The Freedom House, which measures the temperature of political rights and civil liberties, has found that government intervention on the Web to distort information is multiplying. From May of 2016 to May of this year, a total of thirty governments carried out some form of manipulation on *online* information.... White House adviser, Kellyane Conaway, was the creator of the "alternative facts" to refer to the lies of the Trump administration (Lagar, 2017, p. 13).

On the other hand, Niño, Barquero and García (2017) allude to the reliable existence of the "troll" of the Internet, as a user in charge of publishing offensive or intentionally false messages to harm a community or distort reality, which obeys the guidelines of political parties or interest groups. They also comment on the term "infoxication" to explain the overabundance of data and the contradiction between them, which affect the collective intelligence susceptible of emotions that can guide a large number of people in a specific sense.

As for the attacks on privacy, considered as a fundamental right in Article 18 of the Spanish Constitution, and confirmed by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the

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European Union, our technological postmodernity is an ideal environment to violate the private. Data protection is subject to constant attack on the Internet. Much of this arises because technological advances are able to compile more and more personal information, about routines and user preferences, through the creation of algorithms where personal data that unconsciously or not users have provided (the famous cookies) are traded. We know that the objective is that certain companies process this information to obtain an economic return through advertising and product offerings, in what has come to be called "Internet of Things". Well, in this gigantic exchange of information, *big data,* certain controls on the intimate features of a person are evaded, the principles on which data protection is based are often violated, citizens ignore how the information is being handled from the perspective of a more than doubtful marketing. In order to alleviate these important risks and abuses, on April 27, 2016, a new European Data Protection Regulation (the EU 2016/679) has been promulgated in order to respond to the new realities not contemplated in the pre-Internet era. (Barrio, 2017).

Related to the above, another obstacle of great importance for the proper working of the "Network of networks" is Cybersecurity, which in this case can not only affect specific people, but entire countries. As Fernando Savater comments,

> The revolutionary technologies for communication and the gathering of information have given rise to a new type of criminals and other cybercrimes that our parents did not know. They need subtler laws that pursue them but no less energetic than those that regulate other fields of human activity. The looting of neuralgic institutional centers, the violation of personal messages, the harassment of vulnerable users due to their youth or popularity, the theft of artistic or scientific property that creators have the right to demand of their works, the malicious blocking of indispensable servers for the functioning of millions of services without which any community would be paralyzed... (Savater, 2017, p. 7).

In this sense, again in the Trump administration to this date we are witnessing the bizarre story of the alleged espionage or *hacking* of internal US communications, by the same Russian Kremlin Government, which seems to have influenced the last presidential elections to the hurt the president's rival, Hillary Clinton. It has been Wikileaks who made this information public, having to intervene the same FBI and resulting in several resignations such as the National Security Adviser, Michael Flynn. It is a murky affair whose repercussion has shocked the American society greatly (Irujo, 2017).

5. CONCLUSIONS: PEDAGOGICAL NEEDS

Once the main issues surrounding the area of the "Network of networks" have been identified, some conclusions must be drawn whose foundation are the pedagogical

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needs that the use of the Internet must contemplate, both from its undoubted benefits and from its serious inconveniences. And everything, in the framework of the historical postmodernity in which we find ourselves, where virtual communication has a lot to say in personal relationships, as we have seen. We must always urge cultural and educational institutions to promote solid education in this changing world in which globalized society finds itself. Thus, we must conclude by insisting on an adequate audiovisual and digital literacy in the adolescent world, which still has many gaps due to the lack of resources in certain territories and countries; the ICT are the cornerstone of the Information Society and also explains the need for greater and extensive technological literacy, which could be extrapolated at all levels (Caldera and León-Moreno, 2012). And as Aquilina Fueyo states:

> Audiovisual media shape, to a large extent, the culture of the current moment. The explosion of information, the saturation of media, the access to private media of people, advertising articulating the media spheres, etc. constitute a flow of significators that rain on children, young people and adults. The practical proposals based on the idea that people must equip themselves, through teaching, with knowledge that allows them to manage and not be managed by the world and audiovisual culture are scarce (Fueyo, 2006, p. 457).

It should be noted that this phenomenon, unusual because of its strangeness until a few decades ago, often entails a kind of psychological obligation to "be connected". A large part of today's society could experience some traumatic experience if we did not belong to an Internet community, either for professional reasons or friendship, or simply by seeking information (Amón, 2017). Therefore, that fear of "not being" virtually experienced by millions of people must be handled with caution, especially for a huge young population of "digital natives" (those already born in the Internet age), and especially when the isolation and the subjectivity that postmodernity implies are incontestable facts, as already mentioned. Therefore, an important conclusion must be this, to conceive that it is a phenomenon to which progressively our civilization adheres, but which must be treated with ethical rigor.

Another clear conclusion is that, with virtual postmodernity, we no longer attend a unidirectional approach to interpret reality. There is a generalized criticism about the treatment of a world in permanent crisis, where modernity had an opportunity in the 20th century to influence appropriately. However, it was overwhelmed by an infinite fragmentation of perspectives thanks to a growing freedom of expression with technological advances as an essential support, and the possibility of showing micro-stories themselves, as pointed out by Lyotard and Vasquez. However, there is a danger that the multiplicity of opinions will be overcome by itself, where criteria of objectivity and communicative validity will be relegated. In this regard, another premise in which other educational experts insist on is to monitor what circulates on the network. Since

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communication knows no limits, where the Internet world establishes a horizontal relationship between equals, we conclude that there may be spaces where information is reported differently, as has been proven with alternative journalism; the citizenship can offer and receive other points of view of the events, definitely previous collation and authenticity of the informative material where it is necessary to be educationally prepared (Aparici, 2006). In this sense, "Educommunication in the new century should become an essential territory for the acquisition and confrontation of knowledge. A common mistake is to come to believe that information and communication generate knowledge for themselves" (García Mantilla, 2006, p. 101). Therefore, a conclusion of great importance lies in the need to forge a critical space for reflection before the avalanche of interested, more than interesting, news. Thus, before the so-called "post-truth" that confuses and distorts it is crucial to know what we are facing, hence the suitability of instructing ourselves, of comparing, of not letting ourselves be influenced by certain social or political attitudes, as explained by Noam Chomsky (2006), for which "media institutions aim to convert people into submissive individuals who do not interfere with the structures of power or authority" (p. 240). The writer gave the example of a supposed honest journalist of the *New York Times,* that due to its manifest sincerity could put in danger the authority of the newspaper, when allowing with its articles that the readers thought for themselves.

Another result of this work should be to point out the necessary communicative pedagogy in social networks. It is urgent to warn of the harmful effects of misuse of Internet users, where the user is self-absorbed without paying attention to the outside world, and even the communication lends itself to insult, threats or psychological harassment, if not to a narcissistic overexposure. Faced with this, empathy thinking about others, respect for the personality of the other, or patience before acting impulsively are resources for optimal sociability (Ramírez, 2017). Likewise, Caldera and León-Moreno (2012) come to assert that "one of the 'great advantages' of Social Networks is their ease of use, with their previous requirements, from the point of view of technological learning, practically null" (p. 185).

Finally, as Bauman advocated, it is necessary to inculcate a postmodern ethic in each moment of virtual communication between two or more people. In the case of the informative profession, we must flee from those homoludens and homooeconomicus to promote the moral man, capable of offering his fellowman real contents away from the media spectacle in which, for example, Facebook takes part, regardless of their other multiple legitimate and beneficial uses. But we must insist on thoughtful and well-informed information principles, faithful to the news, thus the work will be clean and honest, in short, objective. (Baranda, 2014).

Today the term "liquid modernity" has been coined in parallel to the term "postmodernity" to define the evanescence and vertiginous nature of our contemporary

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world. In any case, they are part of a historical context where certain subjectivities prevail (they were always there) that can use the Internet for purposes of great social benefit, such as scientists, but also with serious risks in virtual communication (other topics would be pedophilia in the network, the attack of computer viruses and others). In this sense, a pedagogical impulse at the social levels is indeed necessary.

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