Repercussions of Social Networks on Subjectivity:

Narcissism, Happiness and Psychic Elaboration

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Abstract. This paper consists of a theoretical essay based on an empirical research that has as one of its aim to analyze the possibility of psychic elaboration of personal conflicts, of mourning and of one's own issues through interaction and participation in online social networks. From the results obtained in this investigation, this work seeks to conduct a theoretical analysis on the possibility of psychic elaboration as a repercussion of social networks on the subjectivity of users. Considering the empirical evidence of a correlation between the exaltation of narcissistic aspects and the welfare of users in recent researches, the concept of narcissism was cast as the convergence point for a dialogue between the critical perspective of the so-called culture of narcissism, the critique of happiness and the Freudian concept of narcissism and psychic elaboration. The conclusion to which we come is that, although a supposed narcissistic and individualistic happiness is exalted in these networks, the possibility of psychic elaboration by means of the expression in these social networks also emerged as possible repercussions of using these networks on the subjectivity of users.
Keywords: Social networks; subjectivity; psychic elaboration.

Repercussões das Redes Sociais na Subjetividade:

Narcisismo, Felicidade e Elaboração Psíquica

Resumo. O presente artigo constitui-se em um ensaio teórico. Originou-se de uma pesquisa empírica cujo um dos principais objetivos foi analisar a possibilidade de elaboração psíquica de conflitos pessoais, de lutos e de dificuldades próprias por meio das interações e da participação nas redes sociais de internet. Tendo como ponto de partida os resultados obtidos nesta investigação, o presente trabalho tem como objetivo realizar uma análise teórica sobre essa possibilidade de elaboração psíquica como uma repercussão das redes sociais na subjetividade dos usuários. Considerando as evidências empíricas da correlação entre a exaltação de aspectos narcisistas e o bem-estar ou o mal-estar dos usuários em pesquisas recentes, o conceito de narcisismo foi elencado como ponto de convergência para uma interlocução entre a perspectiva crítica da denominada cultura do narcisismo, a crítica da felicidade e a concepção freudiana de narcisismo e de elaboração psíquica. A conclusão a que se chegou é a de que, embora haja exaltação de uma suposta felicidade narcisista e individualista nessas redes, a possibilidade de elaboração psíquica, mediante a expressão nas redes sociais, surge também como possível repercussão do uso dessas redes sociais na subjetividade dos usuários.
Palavras-chave: Redes sociais; subjetividade; elaboração psíquica.

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Repercusiones de las Redes Sociales en la Subjetividad:
Narcisismo, Felicidad y Elaboración Psíquica

Resumen. El presente artículo se constituye en un ensayo teórico. Se originó a partir de una investigación empírica en que uno de los objetivos era analizar la posibilidad de elaboración psíquica de los conflictos personales, de lutos y de las dificultades propias mediante las interacciones y la participación en las redes sociales de Internet. Basándose en los resultados obtenidos en esta investigación, el presente trabajo tiene como objetivo realizar un análisis teórico sobre la posibilidad de elaboración psíquica como una repercusión de las redes sociales en la subjetividad de los usuarios. Teniendo en cuenta las evidencias empíricas de correlación entre la exaltación de aspectos narcisistas y el bienestar o el malestar de los usuarios en las investigaciones recientes, el concepto de narcisismo fue elegido como punto de convergencia para un diálogo entre la perspectiva crítica de la llamada cultura del narcisismo, la crítica de la felicidad y los conceptos freudiano de narcisismo y de la elaboración psíquica. La conclusión a que se llegó es que, aunque haya una exaltación de una supuesta felicidad narcisista e individualista en estas redes, la posibilidad de elaboración psíquica, mediante la expresión en las redes sociales, surge también como posible repercusión de su uso en la subjetividad de los usuarios.
Palabras clave: Redes sociales; subjetividad; elaboración psíquica.

The literature specialized in the field of the so-called Cyberculture tends to be divided into skeptics and optimists or into Faustians and Prometheans when it comes to the possible impacts of devices coming from the internet on society and, consequently, on the subjectivity of users (Rüdiger, 2011). Regarding social networks, whose origins can be found within this wide field that Cyberculture is, the debate in the academic context is not different (Rosa & Santos, 2013).

This division of opinions becomes evident through studies that point, on one hand, that these networks are source of increment for the creativity, the welfare (Kazue & Fernandes, 2012) and the subjective autonomy of users, (Moreira, 2010) and, on the other hand (Kazue & Fernandes, 2012), that these networks convey a culture of Hedonist-consumerist pleasure that tends to alienate users (Alves & Mancebo, 2006; Pinheiro, 2008) and to generate some type of narcissistic-individualism exaltation (Mehdizadeh, 2010; Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, & Blushman, 2008).

Apparently, just as Paiva (2012) and Rosa & Santos (2013) observed, the *leitmov* that unites and separates these lines of thought is composed of a contrast between the perspective that considers the repercussion of these networks on subjectivity as a form of socialization and of strengthening relations, and the other one that conceives it as a narcissistic-individualistic worship to the detriment of interpersonal relations. Consequently, in face of such a division in this field of study that Cyberculture is, there is the emergence of a need for enhancing the debate. Therefore, a theoretical elaboration of these opposite conceptions becomes imperative for measuring to what extent they clash or remain as viable perspectives to comprehend such phenomenon.

Within this context, this article has as starting point the results obtained in a previous research (Rosa, 2014), in which evidence of psychic elaboration through participation and interactions that occur in social network environments was one of the main findings. Thus, to meet the proposed objective, we will base this work on the premise that, by participating in an environment as that of social networks, just as Nicolaci-da-Costa (2005) and Rosa & Santos (2013, 2014) highlighted, people have not only the possibility of interacting independently of boundaries of time and space, but also of presenting themselves with different narratives about their lives (true or not, sincere or not) and of acquiring knowledge about themselves as they write and receive feedback from their online contacts.

Before the challenge proposed in this article, we will carry out the technical elaboration from an interdisciplinary perspective. Said perspective will be supported on a dialogue between the conception of culture of narcissism (Lasch, 1983) and of critique of happiness (Benasayag & Charlton, 1989/1992) concerning the classic Freudian concepts of narcissism and psychic elaboration (Freud, 1914/1992a, 1915/1992b). Thus, without confusing the concept of subjectivity with that of psychic, we understand the former as the possibility of 'becoming', of possibilities updates, that is, just as Hornstein (2013) postulates, as possibilities for the being to be able to 'happen'. To the author, change is the living form

of subjectivity and refers to being able to convert oneself into someone else without ceasing to be what he or she once was, in spite of a certain number of qualities and the acquisition of some others.

The concept of psychic, in turn, will be understood as the integrating/separating quality concerning that which is internal and external, the self and the other (Caparrós, 1998), and, therefore, as that which drives the possibility of psychic elaboration of personal conflicts, of mourning, and of one's difficulties by using social networks. Thus, having the concept of narcissism as the articulation point for the proposed dialogue, we stress the need for reviewing this concept that comes from the Freudian orientation, which considers it as a fundamental principle of the genesis and of the operation of the psychic device (Freud, 1914/1992a). This review allows us to establish the associative nexus necessary to assess whether, indeed, it is possible that such repercussions on the subjectivity of social network users exist. However, without disregarding the critical view on the culture of narcissism, addressed by Lasch (1983) and also developed by Benasayag and Charlton (1989/1992) in relation to a supposed search for happiness as a categorical imperative, we will approach both opposite and preponderant conceptions in this Cyberculture field of study, with the aim of enhancing the debate and providing new perspectives for future investigations.

Culture of Narcissism and Critique of Happiness

The so-called culture of narcissism diagnosed by Lasch (1983) has its origin in the decay of the unshakable security promulgated by the popular American dream of personal success and happiness. According to the author, after financial crises, the defeat in the Vietnam War and the growth of social inequalities, along with the neoliberal rhetoric, intensified the promotion of an idea of individual quest for happiness. Such quest, according to this author, happens through a personal satisfaction achieved by means of success in the personal and professional life, welfare and acquisition of material goods.

This imperative of search for a supposed personal accomplishment, according to Lasch (1983), culminates in an individualistic and, above all else, a narcissistic culture. In a culture like that, individuals concentrate their interest on themselves and on a personal search for their own welfare, supposedly represented by success, by the recognition of their achievements and by personal accomplishments, to the detriment of collective ones. The implicit result of this search could be understood as the vital focus of the so-called *carpe diem*, whose outstanding effect having individuals losing interest in the past and in the future, turning the Hedonistic, the consumerist and, consequently, the narcissistic lifestyle into a human condition.

The narcissistic subject, from the perspective of Lasch (1983), seeks the other's recognition through seduction, professional and financial success, and detachment from any bond that may darken one's egocentric and selfish being. Within this context, therefore, amount is the focus of the search. Power, sex and interpersonal relations become means to achieve the intended goal that, at the same time, according to Lasch (1983), is destructive as well: finding pleasure and praising individuality and personal qualities. To Lasch (1983), in the midst of this worship to the culture of narcissism, the compulsion for concupiscence, for social recognition, for oral pleasures and for the consumption of material goods culminate in loneliness, in an inner emptiness and lack of meaning in life. The subtlest correlates of this journey are, according to the author, search for meaning in the spiritual realm, for therapeutic welfare and a supposed solidarity and compassion for the other. All of this is, however, a way to seek personal recognition, not a genuine interest in the other.

In a similar critical view, Benasayag and Charlton (1989/1992) propose that happiness has become an imposition of the capitalist market based on both personal and professional success, and on the individual's welfare when he or she is recognized within his or her social context. To the authors, this imposition operates as a narcissistic retraction of the libido of individuals who search, in the irrational and unquestionable nature of happiness, for what is converted into a sufficient and unique cause to justify all of their acts. Being happy, in this way, is the imperative of everyone's lives, which, moving beyond and supported on the metaphysical conception of happiness, is converted into feeling good, into having fun and into living fully. In this sense, such as a new categorical imperative, being happy and enjoying welfare has become the imposition of a mercantile and spectacular society. In fact, the

subject's self-esteem and social recognition would be, therefore, related to this ideal of happy life, of not having personal issues and of being successful in every way.

Following this line of thought, if we think about the predictable repercussions of the participation in online social networks on the subjectivity of users, we face the cultivation of hedonistic-consumerist and narcissistic-individualistic pleasures, which tend to alienate users, just as we have mentioned earlier. Notwithstanding these first assertions, the condition of the possibility of some type of psychic elaboration as repercussion on the subjectivity of these users, seen under the lenses of the influence of this culture of narcissism, does not comprehend the totality of what might be regarded as happiness for the different people that use the networks. For this reason, we understand that the initial inquietude presented in this article remains unanswered: is there psychic elaboration? That is the question.

What the Critics of Online Social Networks Have Not Realized Yet

When it comes to the direct correlation established in researches about social networks between narcissism and the well being of participants (Mehdizadeh, 2010), it is necessary to reconsider this correlation. The fruitful dialogue between the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman and the psychoanalyst Gustavo Dessal (Bauman & Dessal, 2014) carried out by e-mail recently, leads us to an even more accurate analysis on this proposition. In that conversation mediated by internet devices the interlocutors seek to reflect about the issue of current society based on a dialogue between the conception of liquid life and the Freudian legacy. Particularly centered on a re-reading of the work "Civilization and its Discontents" – *Das Unwohlsein in der Kultur* (Freud, 1930/2004), both authors referenced the superiority of nature, the weakness of our body and the insufficiency of norms to regulate reciprocal bonds between men in the family, in the State and in society as sources of discontentment, such as Freud claimed.

Bauman (Bauman & Dessal, 2014), when emphasizing the compulsion of contemporary society for creating more liberties to the individual, – society that consumes and exercises its individuality with no boundaries –, highlights that we put into action a swinging movement of values that oscillates between worship to freedom and lack of security. In this way, considering uncertainty (*unsicherheit*) and vulnerability not only as human qualities but also as foundations of all political power, the sociologist deals, among other themes, with the transformation of the primitive fear (of nature) into fear of the power that men may have over each other. In his analysis, the principle of the Freudian pleasure is fomented by the market but, at the same time, according to Bauman (Bauman & Dessal, 2014), the principle of reality demands its validity and shows how much we are subject to a coercive and insecure reality that becomes a temporal annoyance that we should be constantly reinventing. The correlates of this movement are, by evidence, a voracious dissatisfaction and a permanent insecurity that currently affects us all.

Dessal (Bauman & Dessal, 2014), in turn, highlights that the Freudian theoretical apparatus has a privileged place for the concept of drive (*trieb*). The subject of the unconscious, from this perspective, is deprived of any freedom concerning the search for satisfaction. On the contrary, he is a slave of an impulse that pushes him towards a pleasure of paradoxical nature - pleasure that comes from the antagonism between the life drive (*eros*) and the death drive (*thanatos*). In such a pleasure, therefore, in Freud's energetic theory, there is no security nor welfare or absolute stability. For this reason, Freud perhaps had predicted another source of malaise in civilization: the man against himself, against his own nature.

According to Dessal (Bauman & Dessal, 2014), the human life is not only threatened by the impossibility of preventing its 'becoming', but, above all, due to the fact that, from the inaugural moment, the being is pushed towards the most radical helplessness, which not even the most perfect love can remediate:

> … as subject of the word, all his existence is affected by the founding ignorance (what we know as unconscious), a radical unawareness: Who are we? What is our desire? Do we desire what we want? Do we want what we desire? What does it mean to be a man or a woman? What is our

identity? What does it mean to be a parent? Is the aspiration I believe I aspire legitimate? (Bauman & Dessal, 2014; our translation).

In face of this pile of questions derived from radical unawareness, satisfaction, welfare and happiness would be torn by internal reasons of the structuring process of our subjectivity. Still according to Dessal (Bauman & Dessal, 2014), the insertion into the world of the language perverts the nature of the human need, introducing it into an infernal circuit. In Bauman's terms (Bauman & Dessal, 2014), these Freudian constructs are the greatest and the most perdurable ones of his findings that allow us to talk about that which is ineffable:

> I agree with everything he wrote. Actually, the "unconscious", the psychological equivalent to this "dark matter" that, in spite of its invisibility, makes the universe possible and tangible, or the number we never see, at first hand, but sustains the presence of the phenomenic world, is the greatest and most durable discovery (construct?) of the Freudian legacy. It allows us to talk about that which is ineffable. (Bauman & Dessal, 2014, p. 159; our translation).

Through this dialogue, Dessal (Bauman & Dessal, 2014) reiterates that the Freudian theoretical apparatus lights our mind so we re-think the situation of the human being in face of the initial helplessness and puts us face to face with unanswered questions, which does not fit reason or the objective reality. Confronted with these affirmations, we perceive that our initial inquietudes about the possibility of psychic elaboration by participating in social networks remain open. Considering that welfare can only be conceived, in the Freudian theory, as something temporary, and that permanent relief from the drives and the ineffable aspect of our lives would only be possible, in Freudian terms, through a total release, that is, through the absolute enjoyment that death is (Moreira, 1995), we would be doomed to failure as well when searching for some type of well being or happiness in social networks. Thereby, the following questions arise: what is this welfare that, supposedly, people seek in social networks and that researches have been analyzing (Chiu, Chenga, Huangb & Chen, 2013)? What is the possibility of psychic elaboration provided by social networks immersed into this so-called culture of narcissism in these times of capitalist discourse?

In the analysis by Dessal (Bauman & Dessal, 2014), the genius Steve Jobs (1955-2001), by creating the iPhones, has converted, masterfully, what Max Weber (1864-1920) called disenchantment of the world (*Entzauberung der Welt*), giving back to the world its magical quality. To him, however, even though the capitalist economic model perpetuates because it profitably captures the mechanisms of subjectivity, the objects proposed as objects of desire cannot contain their own desire, which not only fails to being content with its object, but also recharges itself and carry on its eternal movement towards nothing. In this way, if we consider happiness and welfare as objects of the desire of the culture of narcissism conveyed by social network users, we can predict that we would be subject to a frenetic quest that would undoubtedly end up in frustration. Due to this human peculiarity, we realize that the possibility of psychic elaboration, just as we have proposed in this article, goes beyond these assumptions and needs to be better elucidated.

Narcissism and Genesis of the Psychic Device: Resuming and Moving on

Freud (1914/1992a) postulated the polysemic and controversial concept of narcissism as magma when referring to transference neurosis and narcissistic neurosis. Taking one's own body as sexual object was the initial aphorism that counted with the influence of works by Näcke (1851-1913) and Krafft-Ebing (1840-1902). However, moving further, the concept of narcissism allowed Freud, according to Hornstein (2013), to think not only of schizophrenia, paranoia, melancholy, organic illness, sleeping and love life, but also of the organization of psychism. In this way, the concept of narcissism transcends the clinic itself and fully fits into the field of the Freudian metapsychology.

The conceptual division between primary and secondary narcissism provides a support to thinking over the structuration of the Freudian model of psychic device, whose splendor is expressed by means of an object-based relationship encompassing love and autoerotism. The development of this

theoretical elaboration was carried out by Freud, especially in "On Narcissism: An Introduction" (1914/1992a) and in "Mourning and Melancholia)" (Freud, 1917/1992b), but had its first drafts in precursor works and was present throughout his work. In the course of this constant re-elaboration process in his life, Freud used the neonate as prototype and postulated that primary narcissism is a state of indifferentiation between the self and the nonself. It would be some type of undifferentiated totality as it only refers to itself; nothing is excluded and nothing is included. In this totality, the organic existence and the principles of homeostasis and nirvana reign, ensuring, respectively, the inner balance of the biological body and of the psychism. Thus, in the Freudian theory, the self does not exist in the neonate phase. It will be fully psychic only when the secondary narcissism starts, a moment in which the presence and action of the mother or of some other substituting party repeats (Caparrós, 1998).

This presence and action of the mother or of the substituting party will constitute the foundations for the rudimentary psychism to be able to distinguish between that which is internal and external, between the self and the other. From this perspective of structuration of the Freudian psychic device, one of the main mechanisms that enable the occurrence of this discrimination is splitting (*spaltung*). This mechanism was developed with greater emphasis by the Kleinian school and is defined, according to Caparrós (1998), by the separation of what is internal from what is external. Along with the denial mechanism (*verleugnung*), splitting is the basis of the advent of subjectivity.

The secondary narcissism, in turn, comes from the role of object and walks through a long way since the first identifications. Midst this back and forth of the presence and action of the mother or of her substitute, the baby will be libidinously invested by the mother or her substitute that, concomitantly, will metabolize the agony of the baby and will generate in him or her to the ability to fantasize (*reverie*) (Bion, 1962/2013). As a result, in this movement of subjective constitution, differently from what the fetal situation was, the maternal object has a discontinuous presence and, before the pleasant presences and unpleasant absences of the latter (*fort-da*), and the act of fantasizing (reverie), there is the emergence of the first relation of object and, concomitantly, the primary identification (Caparrós, 1998).

This first identification will constitute the center of unawareness and will establish an imaginative way of conceiving the body and its relationship with the surrounding reality (*innenwelt al umwelt*), becoming a specular image and the first speculative draft of the self (Lacan, 2003). On one hand, we can stress that our first identification is alienation with a specular image, and that this center of unawareness will be what will push us towards a frenetic search for being; a search which, later, will be evoked by the experience. On the other hand, regarding the object relation, we emphasize that this first object will be the mother or the substitute for which the desire will arise. In this process, the libido will tend to return to the self in the secondary narcissism phase so that there may be investment in the inner objects projected outwardly. As a consequence, we can asseverate that, in Freudian postulates, subjectivity originates in this journey that constitutes an alienating identification and, at the same time, a supposed lost object towards which the desire is driven.

In this subjective web, however, identification and desire are not isolate worlds (Hornstein, 2013). On the contrary, according to Green (1990/1993), the ideal of the self is the substitute to the primary identification and articulates narcissism and the object relation. In this way, we can understand that this ideal of the self, fomented by the first alienating identification and by the re-directioning of the desire towards a supposed object, when in contact with the so-called culture of narcissism, finds its splendor in the ideals conveyed by such culture: happiness, successes, pleasure, welfare, recognition. However, it becomes an ideal that is incapable of meeting full satisfaction because, according to Moreira (1995), this full satisfaction would be, on one hand, the correlate of the achievement of the ideal self, something impossible, or, on the other hand, the cessation of the driving movement. To Moreira (1995), this cessation, in the Freudian theory, would only be possible with the absolute release or with the absolute enjoyment, which is death. With effect, in light of these clarifications, we reiterate our questions: what do people look for in social networks? Is there psychic elaboration through the interactions in this environment?

Psychic Elaboration as Repercussion of Social Networks on the Subjectivity of Users

Freud (1890/2006), in the beginning of his journey, more precisely in the text "Psychic Treatment" (A Treatment of the Soul - *Psychische Behandlung*), formulates that the by-excellence path towards psychic treatment is that of the word. Based on said consideration, we see as adequate the assertion according to which, through participation and interaction in social networks, participants can express themselves not only by means of words but also by using videos and songs in their posts. Consequently, it would not be untrue that, from this conjecture, there is possibility of psychic elaboration via the word used in online social networks.

To found this assertion, we resume the proposition that states that, if it is possible to post images and texts and receive feedback about what one publishes on this environment (Nicolaci-da-Costa, 2005; Rosa & Santos, 2013, 2014), there is, indeed, a process of psychic elaboration by users who try to deal with personal conflicts, with mourning and with their own issues. In fact, this is one of the repercussions of social networks on the subjectivity of their users, which we will elucidate hereafter.

The environment of social networks is a writing space. Unlike the old "*dear diary*", we are before an interactive space that can light the words that lead us through a way capable of revealing that which is ineffable, obscure. Consequently, for being an inter-subjective receptacle for people, there is, then, a space for expression that can make us remember, repeat and elaborate (Freud, 1914/1991d) not only under the influence of other parties immersed into this interactive environment, but also under the influence of the erratic outcomes of the desire. Thus, midst the inevitable frustrations and difficulties inherent to life, the subject of the unconscious finds in social networks a support to their aspirations and needs, which are transmitted via the written word and also through the confection of images. The use of poems, of videos and of songs enhances even more this possibility of expression.

The psychic elaboration to which we referred is, in Lacanian terms, the expression of the condition of possibility of mistake; that which had remained outside the chain of signifiers finds a metaphorical or metonymical place and can, then, make room for a discursive dimension of the desire and break the absolute enjoyment (Lacan, 2003). In other words, we reiterate that the expression in social networks can add a pleasure that, even if superficial or alienating, can contain the *thanatico* drive that aims at total release (Moreira, 1975) and provide support to the elaboration of mourning, of personal difficulties and of tough situations. Thinking like that would not be unreasonable or naïve. What we want to highlight is that this repercussion of the modality of interaction and participation in social networks on subjectivity is, in fact, new information. This phenomenon has not been deeply analyzed in the academic environment under this perspective.

For instance, concerning elaboration of mourning, which was also evidenced by Bousso, Ramos, Figueiredo, Santos and Bousso (2014), Cazenave (2010) points out that mourning is the real loss of an object that makes a hole that suture does not cover fully in relation to the signifier. Consequently, the subject is sent to a place of bereavement and deprives himself from being able to name the actual loss he is suffering. It is necessary, then, to reconstruct the symbolic loss for the production of a new tear, something that re-covers this hole and makes up for the real feeling produced by the loss. Thus, the act of posting texts, pictures, paying a tribute to the deceased individual and receive feedback by social network contacts helps the subject elaborate his loss. In this sense, it is worth highlighting that expression by means of words and texts, and interaction with other users of the network are favorable to the elaboration of mourning in psychism.

Following this line of thought, the role of online social networks needs to receive greater attention. In addition to the immediacy and speed of information, in a way, currently evident, there is another thing that can hinder the psychic elaboration of mourning. It is worth remembering that, just as Ariés (1983) elucidates, funereal rituals have been transformed throughout History. According to the author, from a public ceremony organized by the moribund subject himself or herself to the denial of death and elimination of mourning, death, in certain cultures, starts to be experienced according to the suppression and de-ritualization of mourning, promoted by the moral duty and social obligation to look happy and avoid sadness. Consequently, burials are endowed with the quality of being an object of consumption as any other and, thus, the psychic elaboration of the loss of loved ones is little supported

in the social context. From this perspective, we can mention the existence of an supposed implicit difficult to elaborate grief in current times, not only the grief related to the loss of loved ones, but also the grief caused by the transition between different stages of the vital development and the end of affective relationships, and even the grief that comes from changes in the personal life of every individual. Therefore, in these cases, social networks can contribute, indeed, to psychic elaboration.

Due to this finding, following the way proposed by Freud (1937/1991b, 1901/1991c, 1914/1991d), so that there may be psychic elaboration, it is necessary that the unconscious material is present for it to become an analytical material. Without confusing the analytical process with the modality of interaction and participation in social networks, we state that this material may emerge and that the consequences may not be so drastic, but rather positive. On the other hand, if this analytical material is not supported by a word that enables associations, constructions and elaborations, we can predict not only the alienation of the narcissistic-individualistic subject, but also a compulsion for a repetition that, instead of giving rise to some type of re-elaboration, may come to engender distinct outcomes, as it is the case of mood and anxiety disorders, as well as the compulsive use of such networks.

As for the rest, just as what Paiva (2012) observed, we stress that the culture of narcissism that tends to be conveyed in the virtual environment is irrigated by the modality of online communication. Thus, the subject of the unconscious, through contact with other people, with his or her own frustrations and with the textual and image visualization of his or her aspirations and needs, has in his or her hands a tool so that his or her psychism can elaborate several questions, such as personal conflicts, grief and individual difficulties. From this perspective, it is worth highlighting that the role of the historicization of the self (Hornstein, 2013) enables the integration of the associative nexus between the external and the internal in psychism; between past, present and future. With effect, the doors of subjectivity are opened up to the 'becoming', to change, that is, so that new elements can be incorporated without causing the subject to cease to be himself or herself, considering the loss of some qualities and the gain of other ones.

As a result of this theoretical analysis, we conclude that the repercussions of social networks on the subjectivity of users can be positive. Paraphrasing Hornstein (2013), we highlight that, just as there is good cholesterol, there is a trophic narcissism. Regarding the latter, the primary interest of the subject has nothing to do with one's own life, but rather with goals and activities that have as objective ambitions, ideals and commitment with objects. The center of vital activities is no longer only the maintenance of self-esteem, of welfare or of identity, but also the collateral product of these dimensions converted into such activities and goals. From this perspective, once cohesion of the self and of self-esteem is reached, the subject is free to guide his or her life not exclusively for narcissistic motives. Therefore, if we think about difficulties that are inherent to the life of subjects in society, such as death, insecurity, psychic affections, poverty, discrimination and social inequalities, we can state that the environment of social networks offers indeed a support to the elaboration of mourning, of personal issues and of tough situations due to the mere fact that it enables the expression through words, videos and images.

Further Considerations

In the course of this work, we have showed that the social network environment is a device that allows for the psychic elaboration of personal conflicts, of mourning and of every subject's own difficulties. The repercussion of this environment on the subjectivity of users is, in this sense, positive. In fact, the relationship between welfare, narcissism and a supposed search for happiness driven by market ideals, seems not to be enough for us to apprehend the dimension of this phenomenon of virtual interactions in subjectivity. Evidently, other questions are at stake. Therefore, it is our role, as professionals who deal with psychic treatment, with the treatment of the soul, to comprehend them better.

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