Mediatization: a concept, multiple voices
Gomes, Pedro Gilberto

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Full Professor Pedro Gilberto GOMES, SJ
PPGCC, UNISINOS University
BRAZIL
pgomes@unisinos.br

Abstract: Mediatization has become increasingly a key concept, fundamental, essential to describe the present and the history of media and communicative change taking place. Thus, it became part of a whole, one can not see them as a separate sphere. In this perspective, the media coverage is used as a concept to describe the process of expansion of the different technical means and consider the interrelationships between the communicative change, means and sociocultural change. However, although many researchers use the concept of mediatization, each gives you the meaning that best suits your needs. Thus, the concept of media coverage is treated with multiple voices. This paper discusses this problem and present a preliminary preposition on the matter.

Keywords: communication, mediatization, sistemic map

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La médiatisation: un concept, des voix multiples

Résumé: La médiatisation est devenue un concept clé, fundamental, pour décrire le présent et l'histoire des changements médiatiques et lies à la communication en cours. Elle est devenue une partie du tout. Dans cette perspective, la couverture médiatique est considérée comme un concept qui décrit le processus d'expansion des différents moyens techniques et qui prend en considérations les relations entre le changement communicationne, les moyens et le changement socioculturel. Cependant, malgré les nombreux chercheurs qui utilisent le concept de médiatisation, il n'y a pas une voix unanime, mais des propositions parmilesquelles chacun peut choisir en fonction de ses besoins. Ainsi, le concept de couverture médiatique est abordé sur plusieurs voix. Cet article pose ce problème et présente une position préliminaire sur la question.

Mots-clés: communication, médiatisation, carte systémique

1. Problem

The fast development of technological communication devices - from satellites to World Wide Web - is creating new social relations that escape the understanding

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of everyone, including researchers and the most astute thinker who seeks to understand the society. Traditional communication mechanisms widely used in the past are quickly being replaced in our everyday life. Typewriter machines, even the most sophisticated, went out of fashion. Also, the fax and telex seem to be born dead. With the advent of the Internet, there was acceleration in social relations. Today, five years bring more development to human life than centuries in the past.

The mobile phone, integrated with the Internet, the television, and the satellite became present in the lives of people, from children and adolescents to those who have reached the so-called best age. A few years ago it was Orkut and MSN, and today Twiter and especially Facebook are part of the social imaginary, starting with children, adolescents and young people, recognized as digital natives. Traditional media such as the radio, newspaper and television have all incorporated these mechanisms in their procedures. We live in the reality of full transparency. Everything might be discovered. Privacy is submitted to the dictatorship of individual interests. It is the privatization of the public and the socialization of the private.

The world is currently in a technological euphoria. Who does not have the latest phone model, after only one semester, is considered out of the social coexistence. In the religious field, churches embrace the tools that allow their message to reach the ends of the earth. In the information domain, everyone is a reporter and an eyewitness of the events. The world is, despite the traditional media, overcoming social barriers and imbalances in the north/south informative relationship. Many ideological flags of the 70s and 80s were overcome and have lost its meaning. Those who still defend them are considered social dinosaurs. Who remembers the struggles in the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) that led to the exit of Japan and US from UNESCO?

However, what are the consequences for humanity of this tremendous development? Are we just watching a sophistication of communicative devices, always guided by the firm helm of the human being? Is society correctly understanding and sizing the events nowadays?

There are many researches and published works in this subject. However, the belief is that what was done remains on the surface of reality. It successfully describes what is happening, but it does not dive to the subsurface of processes that are established silently in the social fabric. Many researchers – in a Benjamin *flaneur* style - slide in the surface of the phenomenon, occupied in describing it, but without understanding its true complexity and size. They do not considerate, or do not fully understand the full extent of what some authors (Hjarvard, 2014; Kerckhove, 2009) have said about the world we are living. As visionary prophets of a new age, they sought to anticipate what was brewing in the basements of human history, even before the emergence of new media offered by the emergence of the Internet.

Nowadays it has become common to speak in times of change, thanks to the extreme technological development. Scholars (Werneck Vianna, 2016; Gomes, 2016), when examining the present moment, emphasize that instead of a time of change we

are living an epochal change. A time of tremendous social change that implies a new era for humanity. Paraphrasing these thinkers, it can be said that more than transformation of environment, society is undergoing an environmental transformation. A new environment is being prepared, deeply related to a society in mediatization.

In this regard, to relate the issue of the production of meaning in society with the mediatization is to place the thinking process in a different level than what has been seen so far. What is sought is the process of social meaning production in an environment marked by the rapid development of digital technologies, involving all dimensions of reality?

In retrospect, it appears that at first, communication has been very focused on the issuer's action. The receiver was passive. The important thing was who organized the message and passed it directly to the receiver. The starting point was the concept of rhetoric art, from Aristotle. According to him, rhetoric was consisted of an announcer, a speech and the listener. His goal was to modify the listener's behavior. Even with the system upgrades, the idea that there was an active emitter passing his message to a passive recipient still prevailed. It was considered that this message reached the recipient without any external or internal interference.

This position has evolved throughout history, advancing to a vision of an active receiver. The message communicated by the emitter suffered an interpretation by the receiver according to its own reality. This counterbalanced the emitter's objectives when transmitting the message.

Over time, there was a better accuracy, since this receptor activity was not a straightforward activity, but a conditioned activity by mediations. In the relationship between receiver and emitter, the message was reinterpreted in the receiver polo by socio-cultural, psychological, individual, family, even video technology mediation. This idea was developed by Jesús Martín Barbero (1997) in his book *Dos Meios* à*s Media*çõ*es*, for example.

In this context, the concept of circulation gains importance. Moving forward on the circulation concept, it is stated that a passage from the media to mediations is happening. This is the movement from a media society to a society in mediatization.

When studying the concept of circulation linked with the concept of mediatization, Antonio Fausto Neto (2010, 2013) envisaged a different and a deeper vision about how circulation emerges. Fausto Neto does not simply analyze the circulation in the common sense, that is, how messages circulate in society, in the emitter/receiver relationship. By linking the concept of circulation with the concept of mediatization, Fausto Neto (2010, 2013) demonstrates the necessity to a deeper comprehension of the circulation process in society and addresses the issue of interrelationship messages, going beyond the superficiality of the concept. In this circulation process, emitter, receiver, and the society in which these media operate are transformed and modified in the circuit.

Although stating the strength of the emitter, the activity of the receptor, and the mediations that affect the reception, society still separates and puts the media in its structure, the media as institutions, the media as devices, the media as the message system, where some people speak with authority and others listen. Even if those who listen have a projective action, a subject action, an action connected with its mediations and with its social class reality, the society still moves as a media society.

In the social process of a society in mediatization, a society that processes this interrelation and circulation through social network and mass media networks, digital technologies become almost a "second skin" of people and society, as Kerckhove (2009) explains in *The Skin of Culture*. By arguing this, the creation of a new ambience is advocated: of new relationships based on this circulation that happens in the media. Here is where one should seek the new environment that is emerging, what is the new society in the XXI century. Kerckhove (2009) in his later book, argued the arrival of Internet as a technological discovery comparable to the invention of printing. The deep impacts of this discovery are just beginning to be understood. In his work, Kerckhove offers an original interpretation of the significance of the rapid development of Internet and its impact on social life, from business and commerce to politics, education and the media.

However, we still do not fully understand the new environment that is being built in this social system, by the extreme sophistication of technological media, while used as prostheses, as extensions of the person creating a new way of being, of acting in the society.

Speaking of extensions, McLuhan (1967) developpes the concept of the media as extensions of man, and Pierre de Chardin (1962) argues that all this social interrelation is not something external, like something out of the individual and society, but something integrated into the individual and express a whole process of systemic evolution to beyond what we are experiencing today.

This has a fundamental relationship to what Fausto Neto (2010, 2013) will tell, when based on Eliseo Verón positions, that one should go beyond what appears; go beyond the objective phenomenon of message circulation, to have such circulation as builder of a new society, and as a builder of a new ambience. People are changed; society is modified by the circulation process that happens by the technologies we are using.

The emitter, receiver, society and the media are not just material things where a speaker transmit to a listener, a speaker who has a media, who has this message, a speaker that sophisticate its instruments, and a receiver that has to decode the coming message. No one who participates in this process is immune.

It is in this new environment that humans need to restore their senses, discovering the reference points that give them meaning to existence. Currently, these reference points are being given and explained by a society in mediatization. In this perspective, there is a connection between the mediatization, society and meaning. On a

more procedural view, it notes that the mediatization problem is a moment in a process that has always existed. Mediatization comes as a natural consequence from the thinking process of a media society, a society that is placed with the media within a system, converging, relating, and confronting with other fields and systems: the social, the political field and the religious, as they were established; this relationship was made by authors such as Fausto Neto (2013), in the article "Mediatization, social practice and practical sense," where he points out that we are overcoming the media society to enter a society that is being structured in the process of mediatization.

Mediatization should not be understood as it appears in the media, but as a broader society. This is the fundamental of a society as a system, as ambience, coming from a process of evolution of a media society, but structured in a special way. All this process, including the mediatization of a society, the process of a society in mediatization, is observed in the book of Stig Hjavard (2013), *The mediatization of culture and society*. At first, it addresses the conceptualization issue of what is mediatization beyond a simple relationship with the media. In a sense, the author almost does a sociological analysis of mediatization, and later, relates it to fields such as culture, games, politics and religion.

In respect to this concept of mediatization, Eliseo Verón (2013), making an important step forward in 1997, presents a scheme to analyze mediatization. This scheme to mediatization analysis implies a relationship between the media, institutions, individuals, and with each other, with the media at the center. There is a relationship media/society, individual/society and institutions, media/individuals, individuals with the institutions, and the media with institutions and individuals.

This was one of the first attempts to understand mediatization process. This scheme, presented by Eliseo Verón, more than a field relationship, becomes the creation of a new ambience systemically designed.

This leads to the need to seek and theoretically discuss the concept of mediatization. José Luiz Braga (2013) examines this matter when he discusses mediatization as an interactive reference process. More than an interaction, mediatization becomes a reference paradigm to the establishment and to the interrelationship of people and the consequent production of meanings.

This concern, which now appears in all areas, should be analyzed in order to design and consolidate mediatization as a key concept of current reality thinking. In the intellectual work, and research development, it is necessary to not permit that the concept of mediatization become a meaningless concept, without further knowledge to explain society. That is the concern and criticism of David Deacon and James Stanyer, presented in an article published in 2014, in this journal.

The fact that many people use the concept of mediatization without further explanation is criticized. Here is included the work of PPGCom at Unisinos, where an

analytical proposal and a conceptual review is elaborated as developed by Mariano Fernandez (2014) on the concept of mediatization.

Gomes (2014), for example, makes an important intellectual effort when he analyses the mediatization concept and highlights that it is a unique concept, having multiple voices. It is not an unequivocal concept, but a concept that admits several explicative perspectives, different articulations. It exists multiple voices that profess the concept, however not polysemic, but plural. Thus, it is a concept that must be systemically articulated, that contributes and represents a new ambience in society.

Moving forward in this idea, Hjavard's article in *Matrize*s (2014), theorized the media as a social and cultural change agent. The problem is that when Hjavard (2013) argues that mediatization is the theory of the media as a social change agent, it is implied that we are still in a media society, in which technological communication devices and the communication systems are agents of cultural and social changes.

Rather than agents of cultural and social changes, media is the expression of an ambience that brings a new understanding of society and culture, expressing this new ambience beyond the mere technological device. Mediatization within the social system is precisely the cultural stage where various fields and social sectors interact. Mediatization is a broader phenomenon. It is this ambience, it works within that ambience, but it is broader than this ambience.

Mediatization phenomenon has a strong semantic charge and is imposed as a challenge to a hermeneutics of contemporaneous society. To handle this challenge, the individual consideration of each media or technological device in its uniqueness demonstrates its failure. Rather than simplify the analysis, as done regularly, one should take into account its uniqueness, coherent body, as an integrated holistic proposal to understand the present time.

Media is only a particular expression of a reality in mediatization. While a researcher remains looking at the uniqueness of the media, trying to understand them individually, the understanding of what is happening today is obscured. For proper addresses of mediatization, it is imperative to consider the whole, a unified system.

The way in which radio operates, television is structured, social networks interact are not separate abilities, but the same thing. To understand the process of a society in mediatization, all the skills need to be addressed in its entirety, as a system that configures and reconfigures a way of being that allows the construction of social meaning.

For this grammar, it is challenging to find concepts that underlie all media and give consistency to the understanding of what we now understand as a society in mediatization. What might be these concepts? Preliminary and still subject to empirical verification, four concepts may enroll in this perspective: interactional reference process, devices, circulation and ambience. Systemically integrated, they can represent a hermeneutic key to communication research nowadays.

Interactional process reference is a concept of Jose Luiz Braga. For him, mediatization of society involves a third element: the issue of response that completes the circuit. In a paper that appears in 2006, Braga (2006) defines mediatization as a set of socio-technological reformulations where the media processes move to an interactional processuality reference. In his exercise, part of what defines an interactional process as hegemonic. He addresses mediatization as an interaction process into the movement to become the reference process. For him, an interactional process of "reference" sets the tone for the sub processes (...). Thus, within the mediation logic, social processes of mediated interaction start to include others that do not disappear, but fit to the reality.

In this sense, "interactional process of reference" is a perspective of organization of society. Such processes are the main drivers to the construction of social reality. The society builds social reality through interaction processes by which individuals and groups and sectors of society relate with each other.

The concept of devices is developed by Jairo Ferreira (2013), who starts from the conception that circulation is abstract. Its realization happens through the analysis of media devices. These are neither media nor message. Jairo Ferreira says that the device is a place of inscription that becomes operator of new conditions of production and reception, and at the same time, passage and media. For him, research on the devices from the perspective of circulation/mediatization is always inferential, producing new propositions and questions. Thus, the application of socio-anthropological processes in media devices produces new uses, practices and mediatized social interactions.

The position of Jairo Ferreira, briefly presented above, puts the question of the devices as a cross-cutting subject that allows a systemic approach to mediatization today.

Antonio Fausto Neto (2010, 2013) develops a more rigorous work that takes into account the concept of circulation. His emphasis goes beyond what is understood by circulation. One of his papers was published in a collective work of the Graduate Program in Communication Sciences of the Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos, called *Midiatização e Processos Sociais*. For him, language and circulation belong to the "inventory of concepts" of functionalist social science disciplines, which have research on the communication phenomena. In this pair, circulation occupies a specific place, even though it has acquired a problematical dimension in the recent context of the "society in mediatization process". In this sense, circulation is conceived as a place that acts accordingly to processes by which it can display marks of its activity. For Fausto Neto, what characterizes the circulation in the context of mediatization would be, on the one hand, their status as a "framework that unites", when producing techno-discursive practices, at the same time it puts them in motion, constituting in source if so as in the dynamic and in the process a new communicational complexity.

In the perspective taken by Fausto Neto about circulation, we see that we are in front a concept that becomes important to study and to systemically understand the society in mediatization.

The concept of ambience takes the ideas and research of Pedro Gilberto Gomes. The extreme expansion of digital technologies is requiring us to consider the society in mediatization process such as the creation of an ambience that changes the way of being in the world of people and institutions.

For that reason, mediatization has increasingly become a key, fundamental, and essential concept to describe media history and its present, and the communicative changes that are taking place today. Thus, since it has become part of the whole, one can not see them as a separate sphere. It is necessary to develop an understanding of how the increasing expansion of the media changes the way we build our culture, society and all social practices. Under this perspective, mediatization is used as a concept to describe the expansion process of different technical means and to consider the interrelationships between the communicative changes in the media and the sociocultural changes.

Consistent with this, in the last twelve years I have been doing a lot of research supported by CNPq that in its dynamism ended at the concerning about the mediatization problem.

At the end of each survey, we found what we called lost and found, with the latter more important than the first, since it gave clues for further research and the formulation stage of the proposal.

Over the years, the issue of mediatization has been asserting itself in society, both national and international, as a key object to researchers in the communication area. This author has also contributed to the mediatization subject area.

Researchers from many schools and geographic regions, by different ways and various starting points, have understood mediatization as a foundational concept for understanding what is happening today in society.

So far, however, studies of mediatization have focused on social and cultural changes in Western societies.

However, the mediatization process has also manifested (become visible) in other parts of the world, exhibiting different dynamics and consequences, depending on the social and cultural context[2].

Does the mediatization constitute a global process of change? If so, where the inequalities and dissimilarities of this process are located?[3] As mediatization is not

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[2] This reality can be observed in the social convulsions that are shaking the Arab world and the changes that are taking place in China. The opening for the study in other cultural traditions can be observed in the *Theological and Religious Perspectives on the Internet (Vol 31 [2012] 1.)* published at *Communication Research Trends*. In addition to the Catholic Church, Judaism (Jewish Cyber-Theology), Islam (Islam and Islamic Teaching Online) and the Hinduism (Hinduism and the Internet), are studied.

presented for everyone and everywhere in the same way, there may be differences and similarities between cultures and nations that are undergoing a mediatization process. Therefore, mediatization becomes part of the comparison between the media and communication research, not only in the present, but in a historical perspective as well. It is essential to understand the existence of transcultural and transnational differences and the ways by which to compare them with each other. It is here where lies the challenge of performing a comparative study to separate the different aspects of mediatization[4].

2. Concept genesis

Before we proceed to the consideration of the advances in conceptual researches about the mediatization phenomena, it is important to question how such phenomena has emerged in the description of reality in communication and what means it etymologically.

The introduction of the concept appears to be related to the concept of media that has come to us mediated by the United States. It is a neologism, since in its origin it is only the plural of "medium", the Latin term that means half. In this case, plural is "media". In the United States, the pronunciation is "mídia" and has spread as a synonym for each particular medium. That is why, in advertising, it is called "print media", "broadcast media", and "electronic media", etc.

About this subject, Ciro Marcondes (2005) relates the term as important and decisive, noting that it is originated in physics. *It is not perceived itself, but it allows the perception, that is, it transmits the characteristics of an object without changing it*. All types occur on a support, the "medium". Therefore, much more than referred to instruments, the "medium" resembles more with an ambience. This is the understanding of the term in Physics that can be, by analogy, applied to the concept of mediatization.

However, Ciro Marcondes (2005) says "that it is also necessary to keep the term "media", that is, medium (and its plural media), because it has a visceral connection to the origin of the communication processes. Communication is what enables, supports, and allows content production (forms). It is *medium* and the various communication supports, the *media*". In this way, Marcondes emphasizes that media act as a *medium* and uses the variety of *media* available.

However, reality shows us that the term *media* has been assumed, in various contexts, to mean the totality of means of communication. Consequently, the term *media* originated the concept of mediatization. In this sense, considering that Ciro links to the Physics context, perhaps it is possible take the term *media* in a different per-

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[3] This concern appears on studies about political economy of communication and also in the defense of the South against the hegemonic power of the North.
[4] This is the challenge facing us today, imposing the need for a more comprehensive comparative research.

spective, rather than deny it. Therewith, we would advance to the concept of mediatization to beyond the mere consideration of the communication technological devices, although some researchers prefer to use the term mediatization and others still use both terms interchangeably, considering that they mean the same thing.

3. First opinion

Such reality allows different interpretations, all starting from the fact that society is constituted through communication. The communication content is the expression of life of the society: past, present, future, stories, dreams, etc. The result is the sharing of experiences among people from all generations. Communication process allows the *progressive progress* of society, in ever more complex levels.

The communication process is a perfect example of the so-called systematic thinking. Systematic thinking is understood as a new approach that comprises human development by the complexity perspective. In order to understand it, the systemic approach sets its aim not only to the individual alone, but it considers its context and the relationships established there. This does not represent that the micro view will be abandoned or despised, which appears phenomenologically in the quotidian. Both views are complementary in reality contemplation. The systemic vision cannot be tagged by our criticism of the present moment or our expectations and desires for the future, reducing the visual acuity of what is actually going on the quotidian. These two approaches, although bear a risk, require articulation and strain to ensure overruns of such risks. This interaction between the two visions has proved very productive.

Braga (2014) says that Lucien Goldmann, proposes such interaction as a systematic method (in which what has been intended or hypothesized in the comprehensive general can be tested and developed for each case, and vice-versa). To the extent in which the authors who prefer one or another approach develop an agonistic among its perspectives, he believes the communication area can generate a significant knowledge, quite resistant to fallibility.

Systematic thinking requires a new way of looking at the world, man, and consequently, it also requires a change of attitude from the scientist, a posture that is conducive to broaden the focus and to understand that an individual is not solely responsible for being a carrier of a symptom, but that there are relationships that hold this symptom. A systemic map is a graphic expression of the interrelationships between the various elements at play in social processes.

The systemic map that will be designed and analyzed here seeks to show society in its communication dynamics, exhibiting the relationship between the told and the result; furthermore, it is verified the initial assertion that communication process involves, on the whole, a systemic thinking process.

The media's relationship with the meaning processes, and with the sociocultural processes, expresses the reality and occurs within what is called "media processes framework". These two movements, moreover, interact to build a social sense, carried out by individuals and companies.

The media is the electronic means that play the role of information speaker's devices. A meaning process can be perceived on it, which included the speech construction in its various configurations - both verbal and non-verbal constructions (by images, gestures and actions). Within the framework of communication possibilities, the media chooses certain concepts, images and gestures to elaborate a declarative process that allows communication with and for society. In the same movement, the media develops a dynamic of sociocultural processes.

The importance of this dynamic relies on the fact that any significant process directly affects social relationships. Such social relations, in turn, condition, determine and influence both the meaning processes and the media in their communicative practice. Relations, inter-relationships, correlations, connections and interconnections occur in a two-way movement between the three poles of media processes. That is, the media, the meaning processes, and the socio-cultural processes influence each other generating the phenomenon of media processes.

The circulation of messages takes place immediately between the sending pole and the reception pole. The same process occurs on the media. The media appropriates content and works through meaning and sociocultural processes. This complex movement takes place within the context of media processes.

The movement is also structured in connections and interconnections that take place within the framework of relationships that society engenders for faster and more efficient communication. The content transmitted reaches society and its results are returned to the process of communication via media processes, generating a broader communication environment that influences and is influenced by humans. In the communication process, there is circulation of content, which when socially developed, produces practical and symbolic results. This is shown in the different active elements in the communication process: in society, communication, and media processes. There are direct and instant relations, and indirect relations, mediated by the media in its meanings and social processes, as shown in the systemic map below.
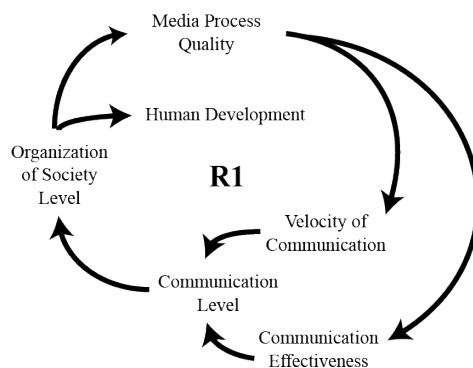
Figure 1. *Sistemic map*

This map (Figure 1) allows a systemic reading of the media processes in development today. The increase in the level of communication results in a more structured society and, therefore, increases human development and the quality of the media process, which collaborate to enhance velocity and effectiveness of communication, increasing at the same time, the communication level. R1 and R2 relations express the circulation processes, whose complexity gives rise to a society in mediatization. Pedagogically, it can be stated that R1 start the process and R2 becomes both a point of arrival and departure, in order to the movement to continue, in a movement where we can no longer identify the source. The result is the formation of a new environment that enables a new way of being in the world, as we will further see.

In the communication process there is content circulation that, when socially developed, it produces practical and symbolic results. This appears in the different elements involved in the communication process: society, communication, and the media processes. There are direct, immediate, and indirect relationships, mediated by the media in their meanings and social processes.

The media's relationship with the meaning and sociocultural processes, as shown in the figure above, expresses the reality and takes place in the context of what is called "media processes framework". These two movements, moreover, interact to build the social sense, carried out by individuals and companies.

Media are the electronic media, which act as information enunciators. The media is the environment where a meaning process takes place, including the construction of speech in its various configurations - both verbal and nonverbal (by images, gestures, and actions). Within the framework of communicative possibilities, the media chooses certain concepts, images and gestures with which it prepares an enunciation

process that allows communication with and to the society. In the same movement, the media develops a dynamic of socio-cultural processes.

The importance of this dynamic lies in the fact that any meaning process directly affects social relationships. These, in turn, determine and influence both the meaning processes and the media in their communication activities. Relations, inter-relationships, correlations, connections and interconnections occur in a two-way movement between the three poles of media processes. That is, the media, the meaning processes, and the socio-cultural processes influence each other mutually, generating the phenomenon of media processes.

The circulation of messages is instantaneous between the issue pole and the reception pole. The same process occurs mediatically. The media appropriates itself of contents and works through the meaning and socio-cultural processes. This complex movement occurs within the context of media processes.

The movement also structure connections and interconnections that develop within the framework of relations that engenders society so that communication happens quickly and effectively. The transmitted content reaches the society and its results are returned to the communication process by media processes, generating a broader communication environment that influences and is influenced by humans. As stated, it is by communication that a society is structured and the relationships that allow human development are established.

With the advent of digital technology, such interrelationships have become complex and broad, creating a new social environment. The human process of communication is enhanced, in contemporary society, by sophistication of its electronic media. Thus, the communicational inter-relationships, and the media processes, occur in the melting pot of mediatization. The reality of a society in mediatization exceeds and includes the particular dynamics that society engenders to communicate. The social environment is modified. The framework, within which the social dynamics interact, is generated by the assumption of digital reality. Digital virtuality brings as consequence the structuring of a new way of being in the world. A society in mediatization is, in this perspective, a cultural melting pot where all the social processes take place. It is a social environment, a new way of being in the world, as we said, that characterizes today's society.

The interrelationships received a semantic charge that puts them in a radically new dimension, qualitatively different on the way of being in society so far. Communication and society, imbricated in the production of meaning, articulate each other in this melting pot of culture that is the result of the emergency and extreme technological development. More than a stage in the evolution, it is a qualitative leap that establishes a completely new society. The result of this movement creates an environment (which we call the society in mediatization) that configures to the people a new way of being in the world, by which the means are no longer used as instruments of personal relationships, but are part of the social and individual self-comprehension. Identity is built from the interaction with the media. The person is

not an "I" that uses instruments as an extension of his or her body, but an individual who understands himself or herself as a being that values its relations and connections through technological communication devices.

A society in mediatization process is greater and broader than the communication dynamics carried out by the called "media society" so far. It is not only the communication that is enhanced, that is, not only the communication possibilities for extremely sophisticated technological devices that characterize the current context; but technological sophistication, widely used by people since early age, creates a new environment array that ultimately determines the way of being, thinking, and acting in society. It is this environment array that we designate as society in mediatization.

The mediatization covers two simultaneous and dialectical movements. On the one hand, it is the result and consequence of relations, inter-relationships, connections and interconnections of the use by society of the communication means and tools, enhanced by digital technology. On the other hand, it means a new social environment that focuses deeply in those relations, inter-relationships, connections and interconnections that build a contemporary society. The society is in mediatization. The human being is in mediatization. It must be underscored that such idea of mediatization configures a new way of being in the world. This is the cultural substrate on which the several social groups in the world move. A society raised in these movements is a society in a process of mediatization.

The result of this movement and the intense development of digital technologies is the establishment of a new environment where humans, institutions, and the diverse social environment interact. The perception of this new environment still faces difficulties because we are on the threshold of this new reality. We lack the temporal historical perspective so that it can be contemplated in its true dimension. At the same time, the movement launched for their understanding requires going beyond the peculiarities of the phenomena for a dimension where the particularities are overcome and emerge the very essence of what we call *a society in mediatization*.

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