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# The communicative mediation of individual and collective identities

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## Abstract

Symbolic universes are incorporated into individual and collective identities. They identify what humanises us and, eventually, what suffocates us. The genesis of symbols is linked to the transformation of animal communication into human communication, which retains features related to the links between individuals and their groups of membership, which have evolutionary origins. For this reason, the operation of symbols in the context of human societies causes existential social and historical aporias, which are described in this article.

## Keywords

Symbolic universes; social identities; social representations; anthropogenesis.

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Translation by **CA Martínez-Arcos** (Ph.D. in Communication from the University of London)

## 1. Introduction. The origin of symbolic meanings

We would like to start this essay with an epistemological observation: Symbols and identities are objects of various disciplines, including cultural anthropology and psychology of knowledge, psychoanalysis, and cultural and communication studies. For several years, the authors of this article have carried out research studies from a sociological and humanistic perspective and some of the results of this body of research will be taken into account in this paper. However, this article aims to show that the functions and meanings of symbols can be discovered at the start of the process of anthropogenesis and in its transformations, precisely because of the human and social aspects of these processes. Currently, it is already possible to monitor the evolutionary origins of these and many more specifically-human capabilities. This capacity confirms the confluence of the natural and cultural sciences that Darwin, Freud, Levi-Strauss and other thinkers predicted would occur when the scientific knowledge and resources that did not exist in their time became available. In this case, these scientific knowledge and resources are examined in Manuel Martín Serrano's 2007 book, titled *Teoría de la Comunicación. La comunicación, la vida y la sociedad* ("Communication theory. Communication, life and society") (Madrid: McGraw-Hill). [1]

### 1.1. The generation of the meaning of symbols

Symbols are phylogenetically based on a variety of communicative instructions related to the relations between communicators. These instructions mark the evolutionary moment in which animal actors living in societies are capable of referring to the links that relates them with the other members of their community. The symbols created by humans have retained their original function of designating interaction, even when they are symbolising any other reference.

Because they are symbols, signs of interaction, they *identify* us and, simultaneously, *identify the other or others* in communication. When I refer to myself, my conception of *me* is symbolically referring to the relationship with *the other* and vice versa. As a result, symbols are used in communicative interaction to implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) establish the following dynamics:

- To recognise other people's *identity* (the Other is being signified, as another *Me*);
- To manifest, simultaneously, our *own otherness* (the *Me* is established in the interaction as another *other*).

Therefore, it can be argued that the creation of the meaning of symbols originates *from the link* that each communicator has with the members of his communities of membership [2].

The explicit or at least implied references that exist in communication to the link with others imply that by simply coming into contact with others we are taking for granted the validity of the link. However, sometimes we will have to ratify or correct the reach of the link. This review is the main component of meta-communication and tends to be obligatory, at least, in the following situations:

1. *When we express what we want* (for example: "I would like to go out with you") and when *we express what we do not want* (for example: "I do not want to live in this city").

2. *When we make clear what we consent to* (for example: “I am only ready to be friends with you”) and *When we clarify what we do not consent to* (for example: “I will not give up my job to go to live elsewhere”)

The meta-communicative manifestation of the link is essential in communications referring to *the positions we occupy* and *the roles we play* in social interactions. For example, in phrases such as “I am your mother and I will not accept you coming back home stinking of alcohol”. [3]

## 1.2. Symbolic universes generated in communicative interactions

Communicative interactions generate two kinds of symbolic universes:

- The symbols of *community membership*;
- The symbols of *the independence of each member of the group, with respect to other members of the group and the group as a whole*.

Membership and independence have their objective foundation on the connection/disconnection of individuals with their communities. These two representations are created, maintained and recreated in the act of communication.

Both symbolic constructions are inseparable. They are intertwined, in a transfer of symbols, which designate what identifies us and what sets us apart. These dynamics are reproduced permanently and tend to be conflicting in everyday life.

Membership and independence are *the specific objects of reference* of the communicative production destined for the community as a whole. [4]

## 1.3. Communicative mediation of autonomy vs heteronomy

As mentioned, membership and independence are symbols of the connection/disconnection that takes place in communicative interactions. These interactions move between two contrasting objectives:

*Sometimes, they seek to facilitate the autonomy of the individuals who interact.*

*Sometimes, they seek to increase heteronomy.*

Remember: *autonomy* is a form of action in which the agent meets its needs without involving others. However, in *heteronomy* that satisfaction is linked to interactions with others.

Autonomy versus heteronomy are options –collective and individual, at the same time– that cannot be overcome or abolished.

In our communications these dynamics are manifested as ontological dilemmas:

The first and most essential dilemmas is, as Shakespeare (and before him Aristotle and Empedocles) has put it: *<to be, or not to be>* (the dilemma of each and all).

*Here is the question:*

Specifically, us humans choose between,

To be with others or to be without the others;

To be for others or to be without surrendering to others;

To be like others, or to be different from others.

The “to be or not to be” of each individual is hopelessly entangled in these dilemmas. It conforms and is transformed *into* the oscillating orientation of the link between individuals and their communities.

- The subjective and individual dimension of this knot are the identities of individuals.
- The objective dimension of the same knot is explicit at the collective level, in social representations.

Social representations *are generated and maintained* in the communication act. In addition, social representations are *transmitted and shared* through communication until they become widely accepted conceptions. They are views of the “to be or not to be” dilemma, which can be rightly termed *collective representations*.

The ways in which these opposing orientations work in communication are outlined below. The section titled “Autonomy, independence and communication” describes when and what for communication is involved in the preservation of *the individuality of the members of the group*. Meanwhile, the section titled “Heteronomy, dependence and communication” addresses when and why communication is also involved in the reinforcement of *links between group members*.

## **2. Autonomy, independence and communication**

“Autonomy” implies a physical separation between agents and –at a later evolutionary stage– it also indicates their non-coincidence in time. It is a choice that has an adaptive value:

- Putting distance between the group’s members increases resources and populations.

- And when the community is made up of separate individuals, the damage affects each member in particular, instead of compromising the entire colony.

Autonomy favours the *diversity and variability* of the components of communities. Diversity and variability, as it is known, are important advantages to ensure the reproduction of groups, when the environments or existential circumstances change.

As this evolutionary orientation advances towards the separation between specimens, the fact that individuals *do not depend on each other and are different from each other* has an adaptive value.

These are the main contributions of autonomy to the reproduction of communities. And this explains why autonomy has been the evolutionary choice that has led to the existence and development of the human species. All this despite the fact that preserving the independence of the group's members and maintaining their differences requires a greater investment of resources and very complex social organisations. [5]

Communication has contributed decisively to that evolutionary success, because it is a use of signals that has been adapted to enable long-distance interactions and the mobility of agents. Specifically, human communication has evolved to meet the needs of the group and its members in increasingly larger spaces and times.

Two conclusions can be drawn from this analysis:

- First, all human groups that have overcome disasters that have marked the history of mankind have promoted autonomy.
- And second, autonomy implies the recognition of individual differences.

### **2.1. Autonomy in the representation of individuals**

The non-dependence on others and the differentiation from others have their symbolic counterpart in the attributes that are assigned to *individuality*. Individuation paves the way for the distinctions between people's identities.

The personal perception of individuality is experienced as *subjectivity*. The collective representation of that experience is the concept of *subject/individual*.

The concept of "subject", as it is currently used, appeared in literature from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and its attributes became more popular during the Romanticism. These concepts emphasise that each human being is *an end* in itself. They dismiss and reject earlier conceptions formulated in the middle ages and modernity, which were more interested in the heteronomous dimensions of identities.

The Romanticist representation of subjectivity has made clear that we must safeguard *the separation* between communicators so that each one remain to be an individual being. When communication is used, this simple act confirms that the separation between communicators prevails and that subjectivity is thus preserved. That is why all communicative interactions involve an implicit

reference to *the distancing* that made it necessary, regardless of the issue that is being communicated.

*Ultimately, communicators are the separated ones.* Or if you prefer, individuals communicate with others to be able to live separately from them. This is another paradox that occurs whenever people interact through communication.

However, as it is known and as it will be addressed later, in order to endure, societies, either animal or human, need their members to resort to heteronomy in certain behaviours, because it is the way to ensure their integration.

### **3. Heteronomy, dependence and communication**

With the exception of the activities that are regulated by the autonomic nervous system, such as breathing or sleeping, most of the other human activities can be shared or delegated. This transforms an autonomous activity in a heteronomous one. The following examples explain the previous point:

It is optional for the child who already knows how to undress himself to do so alone or with the help of his mother; and it is optional for researchers to type their ideas themselves or to make other people do it for them.

Involving others or involving ourselves in the needs of others is a congenital disposition in all social species. Ultimately, life in society consists of meeting specific needs *in relation to others*. Humans are born with that same fondness. In fact, we are the species with the greatest proclivity to replace autonomy with heteronomy, as it is manifest in the functioning of our societies. This provision: a) has a communicative dimension; and b) performs functions of integration:

- a) Human communication provides an indicative ability to be able to ask anything to any other person. In animal communication, the repertoire of possible heteronomous instructions is limited.
- b) Given that heteronomous behaviours are the fabric that binds the members of human society together, the institutions that socialise them invest a large part of their efforts in their control. That control has two dimensions: a restrictive one, when setting the demands that can and cannot be made, depending on who is the demanding party; and an imposing dimension, which requires certain behaviours to be performed with others or for others. [6]

From the point of view of the perpetuation of societies, it is more important to cultivate heteronomy than to restrict it, because the way we settle in the world weakens ties and favours the disintegration of communities. As mentioned, the reproduction of our species requires physical dispersion, the autonomy of behaviours and the individuality of identities.

As a result, the communities that have had more possibilities of transcending are those whose members have achieved an autonomy –which disperses people– that finds its compensation in heteronomy –which integrates people–. Or what is still more advantageous: *the possibilities of prevailing have been greater for societies whose members assume heteronomy, as the way to exercise their autonomy.*

Next, we will show that this contradictory dynamic is part of *the collective identities* and is incorporated into *individual identities*. Such contradiction is reflected in the, more or less differentiated, behaviours of each person. [7]

The preservation of heteronomy in autonomy has been achieved in the following way: *the reinforcement of the link is transferred from face-to-face interactions to communicative interactions.*

#### **4. Reification of communities in public communication**

##### **4.1. Representation of the community of membership as the receiver of the link**

The communicative strategy that allows humans' willingness to heteronomy to be oriented towards the benefit of the community, consists of *the representation of the community of origin as another individual*. Such a transfer requires *the membership group to have signs that identify it* (signs that maintain it identical to itself when its members are separated).

A dialectic category can be used to designate this mechanism: *communication reifies communities as the individuals who receive the link*. This reification operates on the collective representations and is internalised during its ontogenesis (first years of life). In this way, the link with the community of origin is incorporated as a component of individual identities.

One of the main functions of public communication is to reiterate, and if necessary transform, the meanings attributed to the link between the group and its members. The mediators *are the operators of the symbols of membership*. [8]

##### **4.2. Referential and narrative dimensions of symbols of membership**

Usually, the *definitions* proposed in narratives for the identities of each community simultaneously *identify* their members as the beings that *are as we are*. And vice versa: the identifications of the members involve the *identity* that defines their groups of membership. They are *ethnocentric* and *geocentric* representations:

*Ethnocentric representations* –collective and private– of our people and of other people; of what is ours and *what belongs to others*.

Ethnocentric narratives affirm the privileged position attributed to the community itself, in the concert of the communities with which it shares spaces and time. For example, these narratives *identify* the components of the group itself, like “the most human humans” and “the only humans”.



*Ethnocentric representations are also geocentric.* The territories the group occupies are symbolically labelled as places containing the *centre of reference* to position themselves in the world.

Ethnocentrism and geocentrism are the attributes that are assigned to *what is sacred*. Religions make explicit this sacralisation of the group of membership (according to Durkheim in *The elementary forms of the religious life*). This occurred, for example, when the chosen land and the rejected ones were identified.

Learning how the link is maintained starts very early. It begins at the moment in which children can understand the existential and symbolic consequences of *belonging to* or *being excluded from* “their people”, which includes their parents and other family members. This is a vision of how the world responsible for teaching “fairy tales” works. This kind of tales includes Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs; Cinderella, her stepmother and stepsisters; Sleeping Beauty and her Prince. Heroes, antiheroes and their friends aim to protect or destroy the recipient of their efforts, who embodies the charms and virtues of the group itself. [9]

To this day, fairy tales contain the oldest representations of the link. They narrate *the obligations* of individuals towards their community and *the rewards* they can expect for their loyalty to the group. These tales are designed to make children to internalise the rule that underlies all other norms, namely: to place the existence of the group before their own existence and to place the collective interest before the satisfaction of their personal material and emotional needs.

The priority given to the reproduction of the community to which children belong is illustrated in tales as ruthless as Tom Thumb and his brothers, who were abandoned by their parents in the woods in times of famine. The obligation to remain in the group is also emphasised through fear in this kind of tales, as in the story of Hansel and Gretel, two children condemned to be fattened and eaten because they walked away from their village without permission.

It is important to highlight that the views that appear in fairy tales of the links between individuals and communities are still being reproduced in the discourses of public communication, and using the same narrative structures. For example in soap operas. And these views of the conflicts of the link are also repeated, for example, in reality TV shows [10]. This is evidence that *the symbols of membership are still socialising successive generations in ethnocentrism and locus-centrism*.

It is important to mention that the discourses that claim to “represent the individual” usually reproduce visions of the world and of social relations that were developed in early agrarian societies to ensure the cohesion of their members. These societies have already disappeared but their fears, prohibitions and impositions remain largely in our ethnocentric consciousness.

The reproduction of *ethnocentric identities* requires the production of *exocentric identities*, attributed to the exo-groups. In the corresponding tales all the members are represented with attributes that are *identical*, and *different* to the attributes that identify all of us. Exo-groups tend to be communities with which territories and resources have been shared; or with which the protagonist group has competed against.

Exocentric identities are equally promoted in tales and reflected at the cognitive level. The characteristics attributed to the components of the exo-group can be benign and even affectionate. But by definition, they are chosen to maintain the difference between their own identities and the



identities of others. That is why the features used to define *them* (the hetero-images) are symmetrical and opposing to the features that are assigned *to us* (the endo-images). Such stereotypical features function as a symbolic bubble that surrounds the people considered foreign. This is how *the safety distance* from *others* is maintained in people's mentalities. [11]

## 5. Overview

In human societies the symbolic universes have been differentiated to be able to operate with an antinomy: the contrast between integrating ourselves with the others and separating ourselves from the others.

Promoting autonomy and simultaneously reinforcing interdependence are two equally necessary dynamics to the functioning and reproduction of societies. But making them compatible generates adaptive tensions. Such difficulties are reflected in *the dual nature* of subjective identities: because they are located on the confluence of two opposing symbolic identifications, which are the symbols of independence and membership. This conflict has configured human communication so that it mediates between two orientations:

When communication *sets us apart* from others, it is imperative for it to simultaneously *identify us* with our people; and when it *makes us appear so equal* to others that it us anonymises us, it is necessary for it to simultaneously *empower us*. This is a paradox of human communication and, as it has been shown, it is not the only one.

Human communication appears, in this perspective of social interactions, as the *gyroscope of symbols*. It adapts them according to the circumstances and interests in order to legitimise sometimes the autonomy and some other times the transformation of autonomy in heteronomy.

This exploration of the origins of symbolic universes shows that the dual conformation that characterises them is –at first instance– was caused by the fact that both dimensions have an *evolutionary value*. Therefore, this double link has prevailed throughout the course of humanisation and it is expected that it will continue to be reproduced.

Ethnocentrism and geocentrism are the basic components of identities. They have been adaptive patterns while humanity was divided in local and isolated groups, which has occurred during 99% of our existence as a species. They reflect collective trends and individual values reinforced by collective history, because they have promoted loyalty, solidarity and sacrifice in favour of the communities of membership. These provisions helped endo-groups to differentiate and recognise themselves. However, these provisions have been and still are accompanied by prejudice, exclusion and even elimination of outsiders.

We do not need Darwin to realise that ethnocentric identities are no longer functional and that they became dis-adapting from the moment in which mankind became organised into nationalities. And now that we are living in the so-called age of globalisation, it is time to redirect the symbols of membership so that they become adaptive again.

In the current scenario, it seems necessary for people to feel a sense of membership towards one universal human community. It is necessary to think that humanisation will have to move towards that Universalist direction, otherwise the ethnocentrism and geocentrism operating in a globalised context can cause generalised and uncontrollable conflicts. [12]

The social production of communication is the most efficient way available to promote Universalist identities at a global scale. Symbols of membership that configure Humanity into a community that is for all and is identified as the recipient of solidarity. The problem is that discrimination between <us> and <others> is the criterion that organises the narrative construction of individual and collective identities. The social production of communication in particular and socialisation in general amplify the exclusionary and aggressive dimensions of ethnocentrism and link it –as never before– to social acceptance [13]. It is an irrational management of identities that is distorting the ethical and emotional mechanisms that ritualise the aggressiveness against the other groups. In this way, communication, which made possible the emergence and permanence of humanity, can become from now a mechanism for extinction. This state of affairs requires us to pay attention to the cultural and cognitive dimensions of the social production of communication, now that ICT is directly involved in the reproduction of the existing order, and grants greater importance to the teaching and practice of communication. [14]

## 6. Notes

[1] For the contextualisation of this book see the following references available online:

The book's chapter titled *El lugar de la teoría de la comunicación entre los saberes* (2012) available at <http://eprints.ucm.es/12980/> and the paragraph titled *Lo específicamente humano de la comunicación humana* available at <http://eprints.ucm.es/13111/>

The outstanding interview of Professor Geden Paizianello to Manuel Martín Serrano about this book provides a very illuminating view: Intercom, São Paulo, 2009, n° 32 (1). pp. 245-257, also available at [eprints.ucm.es/13109/](http://eprints.ucm.es/13109/)

*Razón y Palabra* (ITESM, México, 2007, n° 59) dedicated an issue to the book and it is available at <http://www.razonypalabra.org.mx/anteriores/n59/especialserrano/indexespecial.html>

CIESPAL has dedicated a monograph edited by *Chasqui* to Manuel Martín Serrano: *Manuel Martín Serrano y sus aportes a la comunicación* (“Manuel Martín Serrano and his contributions to communication”) (Chasqui, 2011, no. 114/115). In this monograph well-known specialists analyse this work from different perspectives. Two articles are very useful to contextualise this article: the overview of the editorial team, in *La comunicación, refundada como teoría autónoma para el estudio de todas las formas de interacciones comunicativas, desde sus orígenes evolutivos hasta sus manifestaciones culturales* (“Communication, re-founded as autonomous theory for the study of all forms of communicative interactions, from their evolutionary origins to their cultural manifestations”); and the study by Professor Castro Nogueira on the uniqueness and importance of this work, in the context of Evolutionary social constructivism in Martín Serrano (2007), *Teoría de la comunicación: la comunicación, la vida y la sociedad*.

[2] On the symbolic construction of the link see Velarde (1995a) *El Juego de la Comunicación en la Infancia* (“The game of communication in childhood”), in *Cultura, Psicología y Problemas Sociales* (“Culture, Psychology and Social Problems”) (several authors). Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Nogal, pp. 253-268. Its phylogenetic origins are explained in *Transformaciones evolutivas de las afinidades en identidades* (“Evolutionary transformations of affinities in identities”), in Martín Serrano (2007), *Teoría de la comunicación: la comunicación, la vida y la sociedad*, pp. 268-271.

[3] Cf. Velarde (2005) “La sociología y la comunicación colectiva”, in Cuesta, Ubaldo (coord.) *La Comunicación Social Contemporánea. Teoría y Técnica* (“Contemporary Social Communication. Theory and Technique”). Madrid: Universidad Complutense.

[4] A description of the specific reference objects of communication, based on the analysis of media content, is offered in Velarde (1995b) *Funciones y Disfunciones de la Comunicación* (“Functions and dysfunctions of communication”) in *Ciencias de la Comunicación* (several authors). Madrid: Ministerio de Administraciones Públicas, pp. 140-156.

[5] These analyses on autonomy and its features come from *La comunicación como vínculo y separación* (“Communication as a link and separation”). In Martín Serrano (2007), *Teoría de la comunicación: la comunicación, la vida y la sociedad*, pp. 188s.

[6] The controls that establish when, how and with whom can each person request the participation of others, reproduce in our societies the social distances that separates people, according to their status in their family of membership. Velarde (2008), *Aplicación del modelo de la mediación al análisis de las representaciones infantiles* (“Application of the mediation model to the analysis of children’s representations”) in *Mediaciones Sociales*, nº 3, pp. 267-298. The phylogenetic relationship that exists between communication and the transformation of autonomous activities into heteronomous activities is explained in *Usos comunicativos de la información* (“Communicative uses of information”), in Martín Serrano (2007), *Teoría de la comunicación: la comunicación, la vida y la sociedad*, pp. 39-50.

[7] The existential and mental dissociations generated by the aporia between autonomy and dependence are a component of the difficulties exhibited by children who are caught up in certain forms of social violence. Sometimes, violent behaviour responds to the impossible commitment to conquer autonomy by assaulting a community of origin, which rejects the child and is rejected by the child. Cf. Martín Serrano and Velarde (2015), *Violencias Sociales. Los agresores y las víctimas que son menores*. Barcelona: UOC.

[8] The functions performed by public communication in the representation of the links of the people with the various groups of their social environment is the topic of the doctoral thesis of Olivia Velarde, titled *Mediación de los medios de comunicación de masas en la construcción de las representaciones infantiles* (“Mediation of the mass media in the construction of children’s representations”) (1992, Madrid: Universidad Complutense). This study shows that the influence of the media’s representations of how relations work in each society is decisive in the feelings children manifest, whether a sense of belonging to the communities they believe correspond to them based on their family’s background, or feelings of exclusion from other communities to which they do not belong. Children internalise these allocations while they are going through the stage of socialisation of ontogenesis.

[9] The “heroes” and “heroines” of public communication (e.g. athletes, singers, actresses and actors) reproduce roles and have features that are equivalent to those learnt by children in fairy tales. Cf. Velarde (1992b), *Los arquetipos de los MCM: Heróes y Antihéroes de los niños* (“The archetypes of the Mass Media: Children’s -Heroes and Antiheros”), in *Revista del Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* (CIS), n° 57, pp. 167-178.

[10] Cf. O. Velarde (1998), La dramatización de la cotidianidad en los Reality Shows (“The dramatisation of everyday life in Reality Shows”, in *La Lengua Española y los Medios de Comunicación* (“The Spanish language and the media”), Vol. II. Spain-Mexico: Instituto Cervantes-SEP.

[11] M. Martín Serrano, O. Velarde et al, (1994), in *Historia de los cambios de mentalidades de los Jóvenes entre 1960 y 1990* (“History of changes in the mindsets of young people between 1960 and 1990”) (Madrid: INJUVE), analyse data obtained from 30 years of research on identities and ethnocentrism. The series have continued to the present day and show that every generation operate in comparison to the endo-groups and exo-groups; and that the respective images contain symmetrical and opposing contents.

[12] The solidarity functions of communication enable anthropogenesis and have maintained the socio-genesis since the beginning of humanity. Both dimensions of humanisation transform as we transform our world and transform ourselves. This dynamic is further examined in *Evolución e historia en el desarrollo de la comunicación humana* (“Evolution and history in the development of human communication”), in Martín Serrano (2007), *Teoría de la comunicación: la comunicación, la vida y la sociedad*, p. 161 and ss. These adaptive and humanising roles of communication have been in deterioration since the beginning of industrialisation. In the current sociohistorical age, communication is being applied very frequently in the destruction of ecosystems and communities. The options that are at stake are discussed in Martín Serrano (2014a), *La globalización. Un espacio y un tiempo de confrontación entre opciones humanizadoras y deshumanizadoras* (“Globalisation. A space and time of confrontation between humanising and dehumanizing options”), in *Telos* 98, pp. 13-23, available at [http://telos.fundaciontelefonica.com/seccion=1268&idioma=es\\_ES&id=2014062614020001&activo=6.do](http://telos.fundaciontelefonica.com/seccion=1268&idioma=es_ES&id=2014062614020001&activo=6.do). The same theme, focused on the possible applications of new ICTs, are described in Velarde and Bernete (2015a), *Usos sociales de las TIC que humanizan y deshumanizan* (“Social uses of ICT that humanise and dehumanise”) in Bernete, F. (Ed.), *Los escenarios de un futuro globalizado por el uso social de las TIC* (“The scenarios of a future globalised by the social use of ICTs”). Madrid. Universitas.

[13] The granting or withdrawal of social acceptance is the primary resource of the communicative mediation to promote conformity and submission to the status quo, at least since the advent of television. This is shown by the analysis of the content of public communication which have been carried out since the 1970s. The operation of this control is described in Martín Serrano (2008, 1977), *La mediación social. Edición conmemorativa del 30 aniversario* (“Social mediation. The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative edition”). Madrid: Akal.

[14] A study of the different views contained in scientific publications about the cognitive and cultural occurrences of the new ICTs has been published. In view of its results, it seems that this study does not offer a sociohistorical perspective of these effects, nor pays enough attention to its

foreseeable consequences in humanisation. Cf. Velarde, O., Bernete, F, y Franco, D. (2015b), Paradigmas de los efectos de las TIC en la cultura y en el conocimiento (“Paradigms of the effects of ICTs in culture and knowledge”). In *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 70, pp. 347-379. <http://www.revistalatinacs.org/070/paper/1050/20es.html>. For an analysis of the contribution of the teaching and practice of communication on the promotion of universalist identities and of the role of communication studies from the audiovisual age until now, see Martín-Serrano (2014b), Cuando la ciencia de la comunicación está implicada en la existencia del presente y la construcción del futuro (“When communication science is involved in the existence of the present and the construction of the future”), in *Contratexto* 22, pp. 37-49, <http://www3.ulima.edu.pe/Revistas/contratexto/02-22.pdf>

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