



## ARTICLE

## Mediations as the object of research in brazilian journals of information science and related areas

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### ABSTRACT

This article addresses the theme of mediations in a multidimensional way - vertical, institutional and horizontal mediation - and presents how these dimensions have been addressed in Information Science (CI) and Library Science and related areas (Archival Science, Museology and Information Systems) in publications in Portuguese. At first, the mediation concept is presented in its different manifestations, privileging its horizontal and vertical axis. Then, it was undertaken a panoramic study on abstracts of full articles published about that theme in 11 LIS, six Museology, two Archival Science and one Information Systems Journals, in the last ten years (articles published from January 2007 to October 2017). Through content analysis of those abstracts, it is possible to affirm the great variety of concepts and approaches of mediation. The general mediation concept is wide and generic, and has been approached in LIS and Museology, in reference as to macrosocial processes about the role of museums and library in social order, covering cultural actions, as to institutional process related do document organizing, and also situational processes related to educative actions and services offered to users and publics. By their turn, Archival Science Journals modestly present the theme, which one is almost absent in Information System Journals.

### KEYWORDS

Information Science. Librarianship. Museology. Archival Science. Information systems.

## As mediações como objeto de pesquisa em periódicos brasileiros da ciência da informação e áreas correlatas

### RESUMO

Este artigo aborda a temática das mediações de maneira multidimensional – mediação vertical, institucional e horizontal – e apresenta como estas dimensões têm sido abordadas na Ciência da Informação (CI) e Biblioteconomia e em áreas correlatas (Arquivologia, Museologia e Sistemas de Informação) em publicações científicas em língua portuguesa. Inicialmente, o conceito de mediação é apresentado em suas diversas manifestações, privilegiando seus eixos horizontal e vertical. Em seguida, foi realizado um estudo panorâmico dos resumos de artigos completos sobre a temática presentes em 11 periódicos da CI e Biblioteconomia, seis da Museologia, dois da Arquivologia e um de Sistemas de Informação, em língua portuguesa, nos últimos dez anos (entre janeiro de 2007 a outubro de 2017). Por meio da análise de conteúdo dos assuntos presentes nos resumos, é possível afirmar que há grande variedade de conceitos e abordagens das mediações. O conceito geral de mediação é bastante amplo e genérico, e tem sido abordado, na CI e Museologia, para se referir tanto a processos macrosociais que se referem ao papel das instituições museu e biblioteca na ordem social, abrangendo ações culturais, quanto para processos institucionais de organização de documentos, além de processos situacionais que envolvem ações educativas e serviços prestados a usuários e públicos. Já os periódicos específicos de Arquivologia timidamente destacam a temática, que é praticamente ausente nos periódicos de Sistemas de Informação.

### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Ciência da Informação. Biblioteconomia. Museologia. Arquivologia. Sistemas de informação.



**JITA:** AA. Library and information science as a field.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This article aims to present an overview of how mediations, as a cross-cutting theme in Information Science (IS), Museology, Archivology and Library Science, have been addressed in these disciplines. It has also sought to raise the presence of such a popular theme in journals in the area of Information Systems, another area considered interdisciplinary with the Information Science by Silva and Ribeiro (2008).

The topic of mediation has been highlighted as one of the major areas of research interest at IS (ALMEIDA JÚNIOR, 2009), and is also strongly present in the field of media studies. In the context of the insertion of IS as an applied social science, the importance of studying the mediating activities that make possible the relations of users and public with information and information and cultural equipment deserves to be highlighted. Mediation could be seen, in this direction, as a field of study and inter and transdisciplinary intervention. However, there are gaps in the understanding mediation, especially due to its overly expanded and multifaceted concept.

Faced with the difficulties in the conceptual approach of mediations, a bibliographic research was carried out that sought to raise how the subject is presented in journals in the areas of IS and Librarianship, Archivology, Museology and Information Systems. Although other areas, such as Social Communication, are interdisciplinary to IS and of great interest to research, it was decided to restrict the empirical research to the areas mentioned above, because these are the areas of action of the researcher in undergraduate teaching, given the contours of the institutional action of the School of Information Science of UFMG.

In order to undertake the study, it was necessary to carry out an exhaustive bibliographic review of the mediations and their dimensions, which is summarized in section 2, below. Once the conceptual dimensions of the concept of mediation were clarified, a bibliographic survey of all journal articles in the areas of IS, Librarianship, Museology, Archivology and Information Systems in Portuguese was carried out in order to read all abstracts with articles on mediation. Inspired by scientometrics, and a procedure already successfully performed in works such as those of Piovezan and Cardoso (2015) for evaluation of an area of scientific research, the content analysis of Bardin (1988) was used to classify the predominant mediation approach present in the abstracts recovered. The results of this analytical work are presented in the fourth section of this article. The final considerations on the mediation approach in the areas studied are pointed out below.

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## 2 O CAMPO DAS MEDIAÇÕES NA CIÊNCIA DA INFORMAÇÃO

In the dimension of information as a process, which necessarily evokes the understanding of social and cultural phenomena based on the action of information (ARAÚJO, 2016), the approach of mediation as a specific field of study in Information Science has emerged. The circulation and appropriation of messages in communicative processes, as well as in the institution of memory, are info-communicational phenomena (MARTELETO, 2010).

Regarding the social construction of reality, i.e., the constitution of human culture, mediations are "the connections that are established between social actions and motivations (individual/collective) (ALMEIDA, 2007, online)", highlighting the human agent (mediator) of social processes. "Mediation is, in this sense, binding to the world, it is an action of construction of cultural identities" (PERROTI; PIERUCCINI, 2014, p. 16). "Mediate is an autonomous and

affirmative act of creation. Of the world and of senses to it" (PERROTI; PIERUCCINI, 2014, p. 19).

Perroti and Pieruccini (2014) clarify that mediation presents a double direction: one of interpersonal-horizontal relations - of a micro order, and the other of societal-vertical relations, of the macro order.

### 2.1 Horizontal mediation

The mediating act, in its horizontal axis, is always characterized by the interaction of human agents (the mediator and the mediated in individual and collective dimensions) endowed with intentionality and reciprocity, transcendence and meaning (VARELA, 2007). The mediator would exercise conscious action in order to modify the current state (such as the state of knowledge or mobilization of resources) of the mediated in order to modify his system of references for life (transcendence and meaning). Different from the role of the mediator (based on otherness and reciprocity, which play a role in transforming reality), is the work of the intermediary (predictable and calculated), which is associated with the transport of messages or meanings, without foundations in authentic communicative exchanges, fulfilling a function of reproducing what already exists (LATOURE, 2012).

At a micro, situational, horizontal level, the mediating act and also the intermediating act take place through expression in language, through systems of signs shared among the actors involved. "By this first mediating nature of language, it is understood that the sender of any codified message assumes a determining role in the *semiosis* process of the receiver" (ROCHA, 2016, p. 70). Silva (2009) explains that one of the types of mediation is that of language. Here, the socio-cognitive facet of mediation is presented, constitutive and underlying of any mediating process: mediation is seen as an intentional process of an agent with a view to modifying the mental state of another, taking into account his cognitive processes and his possibilities of understanding the message in the context of culture (the limits of understanding the recipient), through language. Mediation as a possibility of directing the process of *semiosis* is present in the evaluation of various activities carried out in the field of mass communication, and of various institutions, whether cultural or not. This would be media mediation (DAVALLON, 2007), or implicit mediation (ALMEIDA JÚNIOR, 2009), in which professionals working in the media and institutions usually try to send messages to provoke certain readings and directed interactions of their users and public. In the case of libraries and archival institutions, these activities are conceptualized as implicit mediation - work in the "scope of identification, selection, classification and information processing" of the "information-after-non-read" (FERREIRA; ALMEIDA JÚNIOR, 2013, p. 163) or protoinformation.

Still in the horizontal dimension, the cognitive processes of appropriation of messages and the work of professionals to perform translations is essential, which highlights the socio-cognitive dimension of the concept of mediation. The work of information and communication professionals is understood as mediation work to the extent that these professionals circulate messages that serve as a bridge between the producer and his receiver. Davallon (2007) points out that the journalist, for example, invariably plays this role of bridge: by conveying a speech from someone in a newspaper, he is decoding that message to a wide audience in order to be understood in its cognitive sense. Between the one who says (one) and the other who receives (two) the message, the mediator is a third, and his act is never neutral. Cultural institutions, such as museums, also operate in this way: between the curators and broadcasters and the public, there is a third, the exhibition designer, who must be careful to anticipate possible interpretations by the public. This form of media mediation requires the mediator to master

language, such as journalistic language (in the case of the journalist), or documentary languages (in the case of documentation and library professionals), or exhibition languages (in the case of museum professionals) or archival documentation description procedures (ROCHA, 2016) in order to carry out work that is understood by its audiences and users. It would be the bridge between the specialized language of the professional and his audiences, with some difficulties greater than others. But the nature of the bridge (whether it is a wooden bridge, a penguin, or a metal structure) and the materials available to make it, partially determine the possibilities of mediation. The technical means impose limitations to the use of a language that is natural, producing its own effects, known by the concept of mediatization – co-determination of the technique in the production of communication phenomena, since the technique (such as computerized interfaces, for example), is never neutral, it plays the role of determining, partially, the communication possibilities between the professionals who use it and its users and audiences.

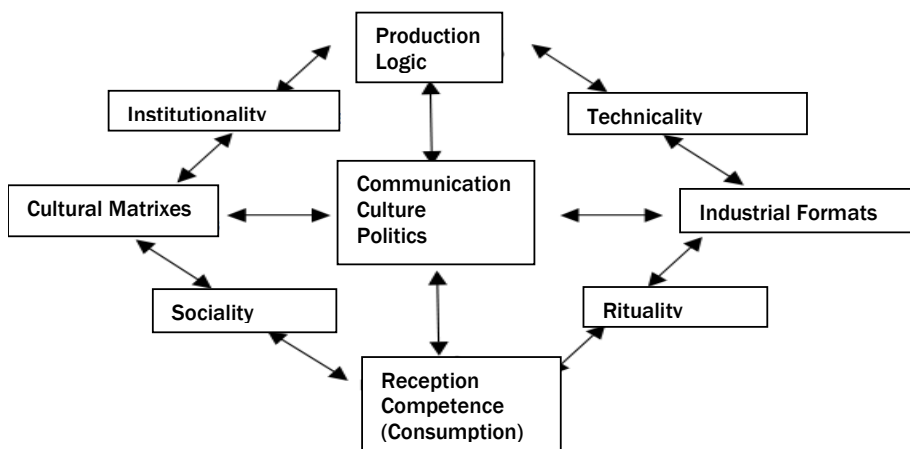
In this aspect, it is important to point out that the human agent is seen both as an individual (in intimate daily interactions) or as an agent at the service of some institutional purpose, in some social role. Complementing the view of agents as individual subjects or representatives of some institution, institutional actors - such as organizations, public or private entities, at the meso (neither micro nor macro) level in mediation processes - should also be taken into account. In this way, a journalist is an individual agent, but one who acts in such a way as to place institutional speech in a communication vehicle, which is an actor in itself. The media outlet is an institutional actor who presents himself in the journalist's speech. But from there it is necessary to think about the axis of vertical mediation, in which the breadth of institutional relations is considered.

## 2.2 Vertical Mediation

The role of mediating and intermediary acts performed by social actors - individuals, organizations, social and cultural movements, actuators - must be taken into account in a macrosocial frame of reference. It is in this direction that it is important to think about the work of Martin-Barbero (2013) (see FIG.1). For him, mediations are seen as the "fabric of processes and materiality of communication in a social and cultural environment" (LOPES, 2014, p. 72). The social is not given but is constantly constructed in increasingly mediatized communicative exchanges: reality is increasingly not constructed by face-to-face interpersonal relations, but by relations made up of (inter)media and telematic networks. There is a profound transformation in the way social processes - political, cultural, productive - are constructed.

In addition to the intrinsic mediation dimension of communication in the configuration of society, the Martin-Barbero (2013) model still considers: a) that cultural consumption is constructed in relations of negotiation of meanings between the subjects (competencies of consumption) and the cultural matrices mediated by sociality; b) that cultural production (logic of production) takes into account the cultural matrices through the mediation of institutionality; c) that the logic of production and the industrial formats follow a technical order (mediation of technicality) and, d) that consumption, in the relationship with the social offer of cultural formats, is mediated by rituality.

Figure 1. Methodological map of mediations



Source: LOPES, 2014, p. 71

Barbero's model (2013) allows us to understand communication as a mediator of cultural processes. The organization of cultural manifestations, for example, evidences the existence of a cultural matrix that articulates with the everyday world, in the social relations of group members (and here it is possible that there are cultural mediators, cultural animators and educators) and mediation actions that maintain the spontaneity or cultural life of the groups. Once such manifestations are apprehended by media activities and other cultural institutions (such as museums), the action of the institutionality (musealization actions; or the institutionalization of collections and funds in libraries and archives; or the institutionalization of various organized social movements, for example) requires the intentionality of mediators in the social and cultural field (as spokesperson members of groups and institutions). The mediation of information, by this conceptual framework, is associated with the processes of documentary mediation (when the document is instituted before the social processes, therefore associated with institutionality) that occurs both in implicit dimensions of documentary practice and explicit (ORTEGA, 2015; ALMEIDA JÚNIOR, 2009).

Both Teixeira Coelho (1989) and Perrotti and Pieruccini (2008) visualize three avenues for this mediating work of cultural institutions, starting from the cultural matrices to the institutionality regimes: 1) the path of cultural preservation and conservation, in which institutions are depository of objects of material culture or promote cultural animation actions to preserve aspects of intangible culture, for example; 2) the path of cultural dissemination, in which educational action can play an essential role, enabling cultural manifestations to be assimilated and perpetuated in the cultural fabric, without involving processes of creation of the new; 3) the path of facilitating the process of cultural appropriation and creation (fostering cultural protagonism), without anticipating any result. The difference between the diffuser and the mediator becomes clear, as the visions of Teixeira Coelho (1989) and Perrotti and Pieruccini (2014) are associated:

The horizon of expectations of [diffuser...] is the assimilation of messages by the "receiver", taken as an isolated and particular category. That of the second [mediator], is culture, that is, the public sphere of the creation of senses. From this perspective, mediation is not just operation: it is deontological action on culture and the world, a special mode of production legitimated by an ethical-ethical imperative that goes beyond and distinguishes itself from the imperative of functionality that sustains technicisms (PERROTI; PIERUCCINI, 2014, p.13).



On the other hand, in Martin-Barbero's (2013) referential (FIG.1), there is also a glimpse of the logic of the technical possibilities of constituting cultural manifestations in industrial or non-industrial form (technicality), which, in relation to consumption, requires its adaptation to personal and collective habits (rituality). There is always the risk of misappropriation of cultural manifestations in their cultural matrices, with all their meaning in the daily life of the producing groups (in their social practices, in their sociality) according to the productive logic of the media with their own language, with their restrictions in their industrial formats.

Some institutions play a leading role in cultural production, because they are institutions of the cultural industry, according to their industrial formats (such as mass media), others do not participate in the productive logic, are not cultural industries (such as libraries and archival institutions). Museums occupy, in this space, an important position in cultural production and are considered as media in themselves, unlike archival institutions and libraries, which gives them specificities in their mediation practices in relation to other institutions. This is an important hypothesis of the research that has been outlined and that will be further explored in the data analysis stage of the publications of this study. Both Lousada (2016) and Ortega (2010) and Martins (2013) will agree that the processes involved in the documentary cycle - document production, organization and dissemination - are all marked by the institutions library, archive and museum. In other words, there is mediation throughout the documentary cycle (implicit mediation in the production and organization of the document that can and should take into account the social and cultural processes that gave rise to it; explicit mediation in dissemination), but the processes of origin are linked to the orders already established by the institutions in society (such as archival institutions and the library) - in other words, the library and archive institutions do not originally act as promoters of cultural manifestations of collectivities. The nature of documents differs in the role of the institution (whether library, archive or museum) in the context of culture. Archival institutions, because they are depositary institutions of documents resulting from administrative activities, are less associated with the dynamics of cultural production, except when they propose to edit bibliographic materials concerning their funds and collections. Analogous reasoning applies to those libraries that do not have as one of their forms of action the work of editing works, even when they assume the role of mediation of reading. The museum is an important actor in cultural production, having been considered a media (TUCHERMAN; CAVALCANTI, 2010).

The conditions of cultural production present in sociability regimes have not been considered as objects of documentary mediation of institutions such as libraries and archival institutions, although they can be taken as informational mediation in an expanded concept of information as a mediating mechanism of culture (MARTINS, 2010). The conditions of rituality can be expressed in the construction of relations of cultural consumption, especially in museums (inserted in a cultural dynamic associated with processes of social distinction, BOURDIEU; DARBEL, 2003).

In addition to the Martin-Barbero model (2013), it would still be necessary to consider the mediations of reading (perhaps present in the regimes of institutionality, in the intentional actions of institutions towards groups that can produce culture/cultural matrices/world of life and also in spaces of sociability), the mediation of learning (also present in the dimensions of sociability and institutionality in spaces such as schools and in institutions of memory and culture) and the socio-cognitive mediation mentioned above (of the mental processes involved in reception and consumption).

Identification, selection, production of records, ordering, preservation, exhibition of any and all objects are documentary activities in the sense that they constitute - in an articulated manner - mediation actions from which the object is transformed into a

document. These actions form layers of meaning on the object, each one resignifying the previous one, in a movement of production of messages to an audience. The document is this resigned object and the notion of document is dependent on a theoretical-methodological elaboration of these actions (ORTEGA, 2015, p.2).

In the discussion on mediations, in the field of IC, several forms of mediation have been conceptualized, with emphasis on documentary mediation and cultural mediation. These two dimensions of mediation are interrelated to the extent that the document, in documentary mediation, is considered to be the product of a culture - it may be a cultural product of an organized group that one wishes to preserve (which require musealization actions), it may be a document of a public enterprise that one has socially agreed to preserve (which requires management actions of archival documents), it may be a literary or academic work necessary for the dissemination and production of knowledge (which requires actions of collection formation and technical processing in libraries). Although it is recognized that there are specificities, by informational and cultural equipment, in all phases of the documentation process - production, organization and dissemination - there is institutional measurement, performed by professionals.

The info-communicational system proposes, by means of a form of enunciation, a place for structuring knowledge and for receiving and seizing information. The social and technical dimensions of the device are constituted by actors, techniques and material objects in permanent interaction and in a defined context (ORTEGA, 2015, p. 10).

In the production process, institutional mediation stands out, which has characteristics of media and implicit mediation (in which the public/user is taken as a reference for the construction of the message in order to bring the universe of the document's producers and cultural producers closer together, the contact with the user/public is not dialogic). It is also possible to imagine a process of dialogic production, in which the public/user is part of the production of the messages, of the creation of the document, having there the cultural mediation, which is explicit by nature. In the process of organization, the institution usually orders, categorizes the documents according to its implicit mediation processes, also guided by documentary techniques and languages. The dissemination process can be conducted as a form of mediation by the institution so that the public/user may enjoy the products/documents and has the characteristics of explicit mediation (conducted directly with the public/users) conducted by educational actions - such as user service, guided tours - and reference services.

Information mediation is considered synonymous with documentary mediation for Ortega (2015), although documents and information are not synonymous. The document is considered to differ from information and information also requires mediation work associated with its cycle (production, organization, dissemination and use). For Ortega (2015, p. 3) "objects become documents because they are approached informatively".

The document is the product of systematic activities carried out for the purpose of appropriation of information by an audience. In other words, documents are information selected and organized materially in a system, whose meanings aim, in turn, to guide the process of meaning by the public (ORTEGA, 2015, p. 3).

Regarding the documents, Ortega (2015) discusses, informed by Meyriat's thought, the difference between the document by intention and the document by assignment.

Document by intention is a permanent name for the object to which it refers, since it is a characteristic related to its production. In addition, it can be said that the information is more evident in the document by intention, as in the case of scientific



written texts that are part of scientific communication flows. Considering the document as an object that signifies, we can speak of at least three levels of significance: the production of documents with informative intent; the proposals of significance on those documents to a public; and the significance that occurs in the process of appropriation of information by the user. The second level of signification is the responsibility of the documentality and others who act materially and symbolically around the document, and the third level is the objective and motivation of the previous ones. However, if the documentary activities are mediation actions carried out with informative intent on objects, these same objects may or may not be produced with informative intent. For it to be a document itself, the object depends on being used as such (document by assignment) and not just proposed as such (document by intention), even though both cases involve interpretative processes. Thus, if the first level of meaning is not mandatory, nor the second one needs to exist, only the level of meaning realized by the user is in question for the existence of the document, therefore, for its definition (ORTEGA, 2015, p. 10).

However, there are several not well systematic activities of object organization by institutions. In the case of communication networks and daily communicative exchanges, perhaps not exactly the production of a document and the mediating work to create it, but communicative mediation, informational mediation in a different sense from that proposed by Ortega (2015), which places informational and documentary mediation as synonyms. Silva (2009) considers other forms of post-custodial mediation for the increasing fluidity of social processes of information production outside the institutional arrangements already established, but to which could be attributed documentary character.

Although not in these terms, post-custodial mediation can be related to extra-institutional mediation. The institutional boundaries (of libraries, archival institutions, museums, cultural centers, documentation and memory centers) are, at the limit, magazines. For these cases, of information mediation, the quantity and quality of institutional actors are quite diffuse (see chart 1). Another important discussion is the process of dismediation, which could be understood as a change in the institutional regimes in society. Information, on the networks, would go through a process of self-evaluation and regulation by its audiences.

In the same direction, it would be important, still thinking in the post-custodial and extra-institutional sphere, to problematize the leading role that institutions can play in the formulation of public policies for access to information and culture.

Extra-institutional mediation, as envisioned by Silva (2009), would concern the crossing of institutional boundaries for the processes of the information cycle and also the documentary cycle. By evoking Foucault and Sartre regarding the concept of institution (HONORATO, 2015), as relations crystallized in the social order:

Extra-institutional mediation is less interested in meeting the 'characteristics and needs' (identities) of visitors, in a manner similar to the relationship between companies and their customers, than in boosting counter-publics, who manifest themselves, without identity, in a division of each one with themselves, in a break with the expectations of their insertion in certain rites and/or socialization processes (HONORATO, 2015, p. 219).

It is noted that library, archive and museum institutions have questioned their limits of performance (perhaps restructuring) to account for the daily processes that escape them. Some of them have already placed themselves as actors in extra-institutional mediations (beyond the classic limits of their performance). It is not surprising that the area of Information Systems does not present the discussion on mediations. The logic of networks would tend towards fluidity and decentralization different from the logic of traditional information and cultural

institutions.

**Chart 1.** Post-custodial mediation

Types of post-custodial mediation	Characterization
Institutional	It is part of traditional cultural institutions, such as Libraries and Archives, and is exercised by specialized mediators, such as librarians and archivists, but, at the same time, it is shared with information technology specialists and designers, who are responsible for making the website through which the collections on deposit are made available.
Distributed and/or shared	It occurs in certain types of digital services and media, such as websites and blogs, belonging to collective entities and individuals, where there is the mediator(s) who locates, digitalizes, selects and makes available content, there is the designer and the company that sells or freely provides the application and there are adherents to the service who are invited to actively intervene with content and comments.
Cumulative	As technological possibilities (new solutions and products) are innovating and expanding further, the role of the "prossumidor" (producer and user) grows enormously, developing a type of cumulative mediation that can encompass design and programmer, and that produces effects and is conditioned through active participation in communities that aggregate identical or similar interactions.

Source: Adapted from SILVA, 2009, p. 31.

*2.3 Mediations - a proposal for a synthesis*

Certainly, the discussion here on horizontal and vertical mediations gives an idea of the articulated role of these two forms of mediation which concern, respectively, the role of the figure of the mediator (professional acting in the institutions with the public) and the institutions in the social order, respectively. It should be noted that mediating activities are circumscribed in institutional orders, which in the case of museums is well summarized by Honorato (2015, p. 219):

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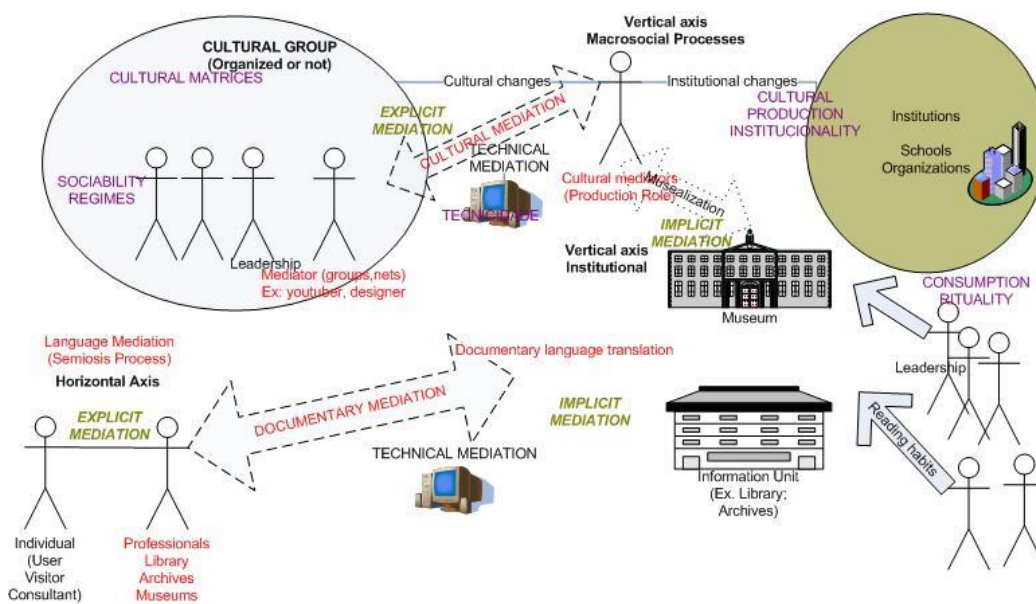
Certainly, this institutional condition of mediation is associated with a variety of issues: from the professional identity of the mediator (invariably reduced to the provision of services, and by extension, to precariousness, temporariness and vulnerability) to the conceptions of public (invariably aprioristic, systemic and desistorized, limited to empirics totaled by the categories spontaneous public, scheduled public and non-public, devoid of any political and social imaginary) (HONORATO, 2015, p. 219).

Regarding the concepts presented by Martin-Barbero (2013) in his mediation map (FIG 1), and the discussion on documentary mediation and cultural mediation processes, it is possible to state that mediation processes are multifaceted and that the concept of mediation is broad. Figure 2 and chart 2 summarize part of the discussion about them.

Figure 2, with its profusion of elements, illustrates the complexity of carrying out a synthesis of studies on mediation. The text in purple brings some concepts by Martin-Barbero (2013) about the cultural matrices and cultural regimes of the world of life that are worked on in groups and by cultural mediators in processes of cultural mediation, which can either lead to the creation of products within institutions (such as musealization processes, for example, which also involve processes of documentary mediation), or to major societal transformations within groups and other institutions. It is also possible to visualize, in the image, the horizontal axis of mediations, as in the case of the professional librarian's help to its user, for example,

and also the forms of implicit and explicit mediation, in beige color. In bold, black, the situational processes (horizontal axis), and the vertical processes of both institutional and macrosocial mediation are highlighted. Cultural consumption, reading processes, visits to museums, among other aspects of people's relationship with institutions and means of information, are represented by stick puppets and unidirectional arrows on the left. The unidirectional arrows were favored because most cultural consumption relations are not dialogical.

**Figure 2.** An image synthesis of the multiple facets of mediation



Source: From the author.

In chart 2, it is noted that there are two main general meanings attributed to the term: mediation and mediatization, the first referring to the processes of action of a third in the communicative act, the second, referring to social processes mediated by technique. As far as horizontal and vertical mediations are concerned, the variety of horizontal mediation processes (mediations in normally synchronous interactions relating to learning and reading mediation processes, reference services) and vertical mediation processes (relating to institutional actions in the social and cultural order, taken from a broader perspective) is highlighted. Both combine implicit and explicit mediation processes.

**Chart 2.** Summary of mediation processes

	<p>Mediation (general sense): Transforming action between subjects. Requires subject(s) mediator(s) and subject(s) mediated, relations of reciprocity, sharing. It is different from intermediation, which does not provide for sharing, which serves the reproduction of what is given.</p>	<p>Mediatization (general sense): Process resulting from the action of the technical environment present in the mediating action.</p>
<p>Macrosocial processes Mediation on the vertical axis</p>	<p>Cultural mediation: mediating action involves understanding the processes of cultural production and the concept of culture. The mediating agent can be a maker, animator or facilitator of the processes of cultural creation.</p>	<p>Mediatization of corporate culture and processes. Cultural production linked to technical and societal processes in a logic that can be massified or the fruit of decentralized processes in reticular forms of cyberculture.</p>

	Social mediation: mediation that concerns the formation and creation of groups, of collective movements.	
Institutional processes Mediations on the vertical axis (in social order)	<p>Institutional mediation: mediation that concerns the role of institutions in shaping social relations.</p> <p>Archival institutions (they mediate the relationship of the man/society with the documentary records of his actions). They require processes of: → Documentary mediation (management of archival documents, usually implicit);</p> <p>Information equipment (libraries, documentation centers): they measure the relationship of the man/society with the knowledge records). They require processes of: → Documentary mediation (usually implicit); reading mediation (usually explicit) → Reading mediation (usually explicit character)</p> <p>Institutions of memory (museums, memory centers): they measured the relationship of man/society with social memory and heritage. They require processes of: → Cultural mediation, explicit social mediation (actions with social movements instituting heritage)</p> <p>Cultural industry and independent cultural producers (publishers, major media) → Cultural mediation and social mediation (care for the founding movements of new ways of life and cultural manifestations)</p>	<p>Extra-institutional mediation (strongly related to the mediatization process)</p> <p>Outside of established organizations → Distributed mediation, cumulative mediation, dismediation</p> <p>Centrifugal movement of institutions → Post-custodial mediation</p>
Interactive situation Mediation on the horizontal axis	<p>Socio-cognitive mediation: a process in which the sharing of meanings between mediator and mediated by means of shared language (language that needs to be socially shared and cognitively decoded by processes of semiosis) occurs.</p> <p>It requires learning mediation processes in formal and non-formal spaces, as understood by Gohn (2006): mediating action that takes place in institutionalized settings (formal education - schools, non-formal education - institutionalized spaces, such as museums) or in non-formalized settings (informal education). The mediated is the one who learns, while the mediator almost always assumes the posture of a "teacher". It usually happens through explicit mediation processes.</p>	<p>Technical mediation: process that takes the technical tool used in the role of mediating agent, as an actor in the relationship. Example: when interacting with a bank application, the application becomes a mediating agent of the user with some banking institution; when interacting with a NIS, the interface of the system helps to shape the questions of the user for locating references; when interacting with a virtual guide in a museum, there is also the action of the interface of your program helping to configure the relation of the user with the displayed works.</p>

Source: organized by the author.

The summary chart does not exhaust the possibilities of interpretation and treatment of the subject:

The idea of mediation ends up understanding aspects that are so different from each other, ranging from the old concepts of "user service" to the activity of a cultural agent in a given institution - museum, library, archive, cultural center - to the construction of products aimed at introducing the public to a given universe of information and experiences (art, education, ecology, for example); to the elaboration of training policies or access to information and communication technologies, etc. In this way, a consensual definition of mediation seems impractical: always contextualized, it becomes a plastic concept that extends its frontiers to account for very different realities (LOUSADA, 2016, p. 123).

In order to understand the concept and its implications, the next section will present the result of a process of analysis of articles recovered with the theme of mediation, in order to have an idea to which realities the theme has referred, in Information Science and related areas.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to identify how the concept of mediation has been approached in the area of Library and Information Science (LIS), Archival Science, Museology and Information Systems, having as classification categories those presented in summary chart 2 - vertical macrosocial and institutional processes of mediation, horizontal processes. The journals were chosen through consultation with the Sucupira Platform that met the criteria of good classification (strata A1 to B1) in Portuguese language, in the areas of Communication and Information for the triennium 2013-2016. However, with such criterion, some of the areas would be underrepresented, such as the areas of Archival Science and Information Systems, the latter without journals in such strata. For areas underrepresented in relation to LIS, with few journals in strata A1-B1 in the area of Communication and Information (such as Archival Science, Information Systems and Museology), also the strata B2 and B3 were considered. Some journals, although classified in the A1-B3 strata with such criteria were discarded because they were not updated, as was the case of Datagram Zero, or because they did not specifically refer to the areas elected for the study, thus excluding those specific to the area of Social Communication in their theoretical and practical fields. Journals in other languages, such as Spanish or English, were not included, due to the already too large volume of articles recovered in Portuguese language, which led to the unfolding of the research in others, one of them, finalized and in the process of being published, concerns the approaches of mediation in English language journals in the field of Archival Science.

Once the journals had been selected, work was carried out to extract all abstracts of articles containing the word "mediation", "mediations", from the journal's information retrieval systems, published between 2007 and 2017. The analysis of the abstracts was chosen as a strategy to carry out an overview thematic evaluation, following the example of the work done by Piovezan and Cardoso (2015), when evaluating the development of a research area, in this case, the area of psychological and educational evaluation, through the analysis of the content of abstracts of several articles published in scientific events. The authors explain that the work to evaluate the development of a science - meta-science - can make use of indicators of scientific production (such as indicators of impact factors, related to scientometrics) and also discourse analysis and content of scientific papers produced. Such analyses make it possible to map the thematic development of areas of study, an aspect that converged entirely with the purposes of the research carried out here of mapping the field of mediations. In all, 247 articles were retrieved, ten of which did not present abstracts, and another 20 did not deal with mediation directly. 214 abstracts of articles were analyzed, summarized in table 1, by journal and area



consulted. A Google Forms form was created to include the categories analyzed by abstract of the article, categories that were created in a deductive way, according to the content analysis process, from the bibliographic review performed and discussed in the previous topics of this article. Later, the data fed in Google Forms were exported and treated in Microsoft Access for analysis.

**Table 1.** Total abstracts of articles recovered for analysis

Area	Journals	Total summaries analyzed
Systems of Information	JISTEM (Journal of Information Systems and Technology Management)	3
Archival Science	Agora	4
	Informação Arquivística (Archival Information)	1
Library and Information Science	Biblionline	9
	Ciência da Informação (Information Science)	15
	Em Questão (At issue)	22
	Informação & Informação (Information & Information)	27
	Informação e sociedade (Information & Society)	17
	Perspectivas em Ciência da Informação (Perspectives in Information Science)	16
	Pesquisa Brasileira em Ciência da Informação e Biblioteconomia (Brazilian Research in Information Science and Library Science)	20
	RBD - Revista Brasileira de Biblioteconomia e Documentação (Brazilian Journal of Library Science and Documentation)	11
	RDBCI - Revista Digital Biblioteconomia e Ciência da Informação (Digital Library and Information Science Magazine)	13
	Revista Ibero-Americana de Ciência da Informação e Tendências da Pesquisa Brasileira em Ciência da Informação (Ibero-American Journal of Information Science and Brazilian Research Trends in Information Science)	13
Transinformação (Trans information)	7	
Museology	Anais do Museu Paulista (Annals of the Paulista Museum)	5
	Cadernos de Sociomuseologia (Journal of Social and Museum Studies)	3
	MIDAS	15
	Museologia e Interdisciplinaridade (Museology and Interdisciplinarity)	6
	Museologia e Patrimônio (Museology and Heritage)	4
	Revista Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia (Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology Journal)	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>214</b>

Source: Research data.

Notes: three journals were selected in the Information Systems area, but only one of them led to the recovery of articles. Although the journal in the area of Systems has an English name, it is edited in Brazil and has several articles in Portuguese language. The journal MIDAS is edited in Portugal, but, as it presents articles in Portuguese language, it was considered in the study.



#### 4 ANALYSES: THE MEDIATION APPROACH IN THE FOCUS AREAS

In quantitative and absolute terms, it should be noted that the topic of mediation is more referenced in the journals of LIS (170 abstracts), followed by Museology (36 abstracts), with virtually no discussion in the area of Information Systems (three abstracts). In the Archival Science area, the discussion is shy (five abstracts).

In qualitative terms, the subject appears predominantly in theoretical review articles (119 articles), followed by articles describing field studies or experience reports (95 articles). We tried to evaluate the presence of theoretical perspectives and intervention methodologies for mediation in empirical works and experience reports. For each abstract read, content analysis was performed to identify author citations and research techniques used in experience reports or empirical studies. The summary of the analysis of intervention sites and research techniques are present in chart 3, and the presentation of theoretical perspectives in chart 4.

**Chart 3.** Locations and research techniques referenced in articles with empirical studies and experience reports

Area	Research/intervention site (Cultural, information equipment, groups or organizations cited)	Cited research or intervention techniques
Information Science and Library Science	University libraries (10); cultural groups, social groups (8); government agencies such as the Ministry of Health (8); networks, internet and applications (8); networked libraries or libraries (6); press or film vehicles (4); libraries (no type specification) (3); organizations for digital inclusion (3); private or commercial organizations (3); research laboratories (2); public library or community library (2), universities; memorial; archaeological heritage; school; archive.	Interviews, non-participating observation, carrying out tasks, workshops, questionnaires, participant observation, census survey.
Museology	Museums of diverse nature (historical, science (2) and technology, art, archaeology), archaeological site, visitors, cultural communities and groups, religious groups, school, urban space (general); environmental heritage; cultural heritage; archive.	Participant observation, interviews, oral stories, narrative interviews, observation, conversation wheels, tasks, interviews, bibliographic research, documentary research, case study.
Archivology	Not quoted.	Not quoted.
Information Systems	Parliament (Assembly)	Questionnaire

Source: Research data.

Note: Of the 95 abstracts that reported empirical studies or experience reports, 44 presented the techniques of research or intervention in LIS, and 14 others in Museology. Recurrences of the classifications of the places where the empirical research or interventions were carried out were included in the chart.

It is noted in chart 3 that empirical studies and experience reports of the areas in question differ qualitatively: research in the field of LIS refers to information equipment such as libraries, schools, organizations and networks (such as digital social networks), while research in Museology refers to museums, archaeological sites, cultural groups. The non-institutionalized scenarios, referred to by Silva (2009), which point to forms of post-custodial

mediation, or to extra-institutional mediations are present, such as the reference to social networks, groups and movements, especially in LIS. However, institutionalized scenarios are strongly present in the approach to the issue. The reference to schools is present, reflecting the existence of the museum-school partnership, for mediation actions (especially educational ones) and the school library, as in the case of the school library.

As for the research techniques used, there are convergent research techniques - participant and non-participant observation, task analysis, interviews - and divergent - oral histories, narrative interviews, conversation wheels, documentary research and case studies (Museology) in contrast to workshops, census research and questionnaires (Librarianship). The data in chart 3, referring to the Information Systems area, is not conclusive, since it refers to only one article that reported research technique in the abstract. Archival Science articles did not cite techniques to be reported but had a theoretical nature. Despite the convergences, it is possible to see, in table 2, below, that there are some differences for conducting empirical research and reports of mediation experience in the areas of Museology and Library and Information Science. It is noted that in relative terms, the use of questionnaires in the area of IS and B is greater in relation to the area of Museology and that the latter used more participant observation, interview, narrative interview or oral history, performance of tasks and bibliographic and documentary review with greater relative frequency in relation to those used in LIS.

**Table 2.** Research techniques present in experience reports and empirical studies

	Non-participating remark	Participant remark	Interview	Narrative interview or oral history	Workshop	Performing tasks	Questionnaire	Bibl. revision or doc.	Wheel of conversation	Others	Total
<b>LIS</b>											
Experience Reports	3	2	2	0	3	6	2	1	0	4	
Empirical studies	3	3	2	0	1	1	7	1	0	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>% Relative</b>	<b>14,63</b>	<b>12,20</b>	<b>9,76</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>9,76</b>	<b>17,07</b>	<b>21,95</b>	<b>4,88</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>9,76</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Mus</b>											
Experience Reports	2	2	2	1	0	4	0	4	1	1	
Empirical studies	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>% Relative</b>	<b>8,70</b>	<b>17,39</b>	<b>13,04</b>	<b>8,70</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>21,74</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>21,74</b>	<b>4,35</b>	<b>4,35</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Source: Research data.

Notes: It is important to note that the total calculated refers to the total citations of the techniques and does not correspond to the total of articles in each area. The relative percentage is the ratio of the total of techniques cited for each type of quantified technique. Abbreviations were used in the table: LIS refer to Library and Information Science; Mus refers to Museology; Bibl. revision or doc refers to the bibliographic or documentary review.

Regarding the theoretical references cited in the abstracts, as can be seen in chart 4, there is no theoretical convergence between the authors present in the abstracts of the areas of LIS, in relation to the area of Museology, with the exception of Giroux. In the area of Museology, it is noted that some authors interface with Education, History and Social Psychology. In the area of LIS, besides the field researchers (González de Gomes, Capurro, Le

Coadic), there are others in the areas of Communication, Philosophy, Archival Science, Sociology.

**Chart 4.** Authors cited as theoretical reference in summaries

Area	References cited
Information Science and Library Science	González de Gomez; Pierre Lévy; Deleuze; Lovelock; Le Coadic; Wright; Vergueiro; D’Affonseca; Condemarian; Blonquist, Foucambert, Calafange; Nutti; Freitas; Santos; Navas; Simeão; Almeida Junior; Masetto; Henri Giroux (1), Rafael Capurro; C.A.A.Araújo; Partridge, Helen; Lee, Julie; Munro, Carrie; M. Egan E J. Shera; Habermas (3); Edgar Morin; Foucault; Althusser; Freud; Lacan; Gesner; John Dury; Régis Debray; Echeverria; Flores; Maturana; Barbero; Benor, Harrison E Baxter; Ginzburg; Bauman; Ortega y Gasset.
Museology	Paul Otlet; Dean, Davallon, Wagensberg; Emmanuel Lévinas, Jean Piaget, Vygotsky, Paulo Freire; Charles Esche; Arendt; Giroux (1); Stuart Hall, Maurice Halbwachs; Paul Ricouer, e Pierre Bourdieu.
Archivology	Not quoted
Information Systems	Not quoted

Source: Research data.

Notes: Data constructed by reading the 27 abstracts that presented direct reference to authors as theoretical reference. Authors who appear cited more than once are with the number of recurrences in brackets in the chart, and are only two: Habermas, cited three times in Librarianship and IC and Henri Giroux, cited once in the abstracts of the area of Museology and once in the abstracts of Librarianship and IC.

Regarding the meanings with which mediation has been approached, the research carried out here classified the abstracts by means of content analysis, framing each one of them in a mediation approach, as presented in chart 2 of the previous section of this article. Although the abstract could point to more than one form of mediation, the predominant or most prominent one was chosen, since the content analysis procedure of Bardin (1988) recommends the indication of a classification by unit of content analysis: the unit of analysis being the whole abstract, a classification was given for it - whether it was a reference to mediation as a macrosocial process, whether an institutional or situational process. The results of the classification are in table 3.

**Table 3.** Forms of mediation present by study area

Area	Ways of Mediation	n	Detailing
Library and Information Science	Macrosocial process (social vertical)	53	Discusses cultural mediation (public policies on culture; Archives in culture; concepts of cultural mediation and art mediation). Reports on social mediation processes (interventions to create community blogs, improvement of citizenship conditions, reading mediation in community contexts, possibilities of social inclusion). Discusses the role of media vehicles in the social context. Discusses the concept of mediation in general. Discusses the mediatization of culture.
	Institutional processes (institutional vertical)	62	It discusses information mediation (concept, information mediation in archival practices, mediation in the capital market); reading mediation and reader training, without addressing specific situations; documentary mediation in

			more or less institutionalized scenarios (highlights implicit dimensions of the process, such as indexing, cataloguing, tagging); mediation outside the traditional settings- extra-institutional mediation (health context, digital information networks, discussion on dismediation and technologies); mediating role of the library and librarians in various contexts (public library, university library, information networks, health context).
	Interactive situations (horizontal)	54	It addresses specific situations/ mediation experiences: evaluation of digital inclusion programs with a socio-cognitive perspective, evaluation of library reference services, the librarian's performance for informational competence. Addresses technical mediation issues: discusses the use of interactive tools in mediation (such as Facebook in reference services, for example); mediology, in general; discusses information architecture.
Museology	Macrosocial process (social vertical)	7	It deals with the role of an artist, discusses how to preserve the manifestation of material and immaterial culture of a Portuguese region, discusses the concept of a museum, the categories of heritage and museum, discusses archaeological work for understanding the urban landscape, discusses the experience of collecting testimonies, discusses the nature of various equipment (museum, park and show house).
	Institutional processes (institutional vertical)	20	It discusses musealization, patrimonialization, social and educational role of the museum, processes of cataloguing museological documents, processes of circulation of material culture, production and circulation of works mediated by museums. Presents archaeological works and experiences of mediation with communities. It discusses the mediation of collective memories of a community through a community museum.
	Interactive situations (horizontal)	10	It describes processes of training of science museum mediators, forms of appropriation of the museum by the school, by the teachers. It speaks of specific educational actions. Discusses the mediating object in actions of involvement of the visitor with the museum. It speaks of symbolic mediation (internalization) in museums. Points out possibilities of mediation processes in museums, including accessibility and exhibitions. Discusses the museum's interlocution and biology through collections. Discusses the concepts of autonomy and heteronomy of the user of information. Talks about interaction with objects in exhibitions and interactivity.
Archival Science	Macrosocial process (social vertical)	1	Discussion about the performance of archival institutions in society.

	Institutional processes (institutional vertical)	4	Discussion about documentary mediation process carried out by professionals and about the performance of the archival institution in relation to its institutional missions.
	Interactive situations (horizontal)	0	No summaries were presented with reports of socio-cognitive and technical mediation processes in relation to users and audiences.
Information Systems	Macrosocial process (social vertical)	0	There is no discussion of the role or social function of systems and their forms of mediation.
	Institutional processes (institutional vertical)	1	Discusses the performance of IT in governance processes in general.
	Interactive situations (horizontal)	2	Discusses projects of IT appropriation in Distance Education and among the elderly.

Source: research data, compiled through analysis of the content of the abstracts recovered.

As can be seen in Table 2, the diversity of approaches to the subject of mediation is confirmed in all areas under study: both refer to broader discussions of the role of institutions in society and for culture (macrosocial processes, related to vertical mediation), and to processes that institutional action on various fronts in relation to users and audiences (institutional processes, on the vertical axis), highlighting the processes of documentary mediation, mediation of reading, for LIS; and musealization and heritage process, for Museology. With regard to reported mediation situations, in the area of Museology, educational actions, which require socio-cognitive mediations, are highlighted, as well as issues of technical mediation and evaluation of services, for LIS. Since there is a very restricted volume of work to be analyzed, the areas of Archival Science and Information Systems are hardly comparable to others, and there is a need to expand the debate around mediation in these areas. However, the absence of more extensive discussions on IT mediation, in macrosocial terms, and the lack of more concrete situational discussions in Archival Science, is highlighted.

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The ambitious objective of the article - to present an overview of how mediations, as a cross-cutting theme in LIS, Museology, Archival Science, and Information Systems have been addressed in these disciplines - has been met. It is noted that the theme refers to all forms of mediation discussed throughout the text, in its section 2: there are works dealing with cultural mediation, mediation, institutional mediation (whether documentary, reading mediation, musealization processes, mediation of traditional institutions in community processes) and non-institutional and post-custodial (such as those referring to social mediation, networking, community ties without explicit reference to the performances of traditional institutions). It is confirmed that the discussion on mediation in the area of Information Systems is incipient, and in the area of Archival Science, nascent.

The dimensions of mediation - from the horizontal-situational axis to the vertical axis (macrosocial and institutional) - are related, although we note the emphasis sometimes on interactive situations with reports of experience, sometimes discussions that report macrosocial issues in interaction with institutional orders. The focused discussion of documentary mediation, taken specifically in implicit mediation processes, does not predominate in the work. In fact, it is not possible to establish a predominant form of mediation between the summaries read and classified.

The panoramic flight is the limitation of this study, as well as of the theme of mediation itself: by encompassing processes as distinct as those of a macrosocial, institutional, and situational order, one loses the specificity and possibility of deepening the theoretical and methodological aspects of mediation practices. Future work in mediating perspectives, from this point of view, points to the need to examine the specificities of each form of mediation, by area of study, since it is not clear that intersections can be seen that place the discussions of LIS, Museology, Archival Science and Information Systems under the same conceptual denominator of Mediation.

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