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Aprofundamento das esferas públicas para a gestão social:
caminhos para uma reconstrução empírico-descritiva e normativa

Understanding the concept of public sphere in social management: ideas for an empirical-descriptive and normative reconstruction

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Abstract

This article aims to reconstruct the concept of public sphere as an empirical-descriptive and normative category of research in social management. In this process, it is revealed that the concept of public sphere has been criticized and reformulated in the works of Habermas (1962; 1981; 1992) and the most current conceptions cover a plurality of publics, interests, opinions, conflicting dimensions and oppressive potentials. This article is a theoretical essay and incudes an extensive bibliographical research focused mainly on the literature on "social management" and the "public sphere". Several gaps and limitations were identified on the understanding of the public sphere by studies in the field of social management. Considering the limitations as learning processes, this article aims to move forward from new elements. The article argues that if the public sphere is considered a locus of social management research (normative and empirical-descriptive) it is important to highlight that: (1) the public sphere- is a locus of consensus and conflict; (2) the public sphere can be concretely constituted of democratic, emancipatory, and oppressive elements; (3) it is formed by a diversity of publics (and counter-publics) with different 'capacities' of access and argumentation; (4) in Brazil there was a formation of a subordinate public sphere; (5) the characteristics of public sphere formation cannot be imported, and (6) the effectiveness of the public sphere is influenced by systemic structures. This article shows that reconstruction of the concept of public sphere defends the descriptive, normative and critical potential of public sphere, especially if it is explored considering Habermas, his commentators and critics.

Keywords: Public sphere. Social management. Habermas. Subaltern spheres.

Aprofundamento das esferas públicas para a gestão social: caminhos para uma reconstrução empírico-descritiva e normativa

Resumo

Neste artigo, buscamos reconstruir as esferas públicas como uma categoria empírico-descritiva e normativa das pesquisas em gestão social. Nesse processo, revelamos que o conceito de esfera pública passou por críticas e reformulações nas obras de Habermas (1962; 1981; 1992) e que as concepções mais atuais abrangem uma pluralidade de públicos, interesses e opiniões, bem como dimensões conflitivas e potenciais opressivos. No que tange à escolha metodológica, este artigo é um ensaio teórico. Para a construção deste ensaio, foi realizada uma ampla pesquisa bibliográfica focada principalmente na literatura sobre "gestão social" e "esfera pública". Identificamos várias lacunas e limitações nos entendimentos sobre esfera pública pelos estudos do campo da gestão social e, considerando as limitações como processos de aprendizagem, buscamos avançar a partir de novos elementos. Argumentamos que, se considerarmos as esferas públicas como *locus* de pesquisas da gestão social (normativo e empírico-descritivo), é importante destacar que: (1) as esferas públicas são *locus* de consensos e conflitos; (2) podem tanto se constituírem concretamente de elementos democráticos e emancipatórios quanto opressivos; (3) são formadas por uma diversidade de públicos (e contrapúblicos) com diferentes "capacidades" de acesso e argumentação; (4) no Brasil, houve a formação de esferas públicas subalternas; (5) as características das formações de esferas públicas não podem ser importadas e (6) a efetividade das esferas públicas é influenciada por estruturas sistêmicas. Finalmente, mostramos que a reconstrução defende o potencial descritivo, normativo e crítico das esferas públicas, especialmente, se a pluralizamos e exploramos seu desenvolvimento a partir de Habermas, seus comentadores e críticos.

Palavras-chave: Esfera pública. Gestão social. Habermas. Esferas subalternas.

Profundización de las esferas públicas para la gestión social: caminos para una reconstrucción empírico-descriptiva y normativa

Resumen

En este artículo se pretende reconstruir la esfera pública como una categoría empírico-descriptiva y normativa de la investigación sobre gestión social. En este proceso, se reveló que el concepto de esfera pública ha sido objeto de críticas y reformulaciones en la obra de Habermas y que las concepciones más actuales abarcan una pluralidad de públicos, intereses y opiniones, así como dimensiones conflictivas y potencial opresivo. Este artículo es un ensayo teórico, y para su elaboración se llevó a cabo una búsqueda bibliográfica exhaustiva, principalmente sobre gestión social y esfera pública. Se identificó una serie de lagunas y limitaciones en la comprensión de la esfera pública por parte de los estudios del campo de la gestión social y, considerando las limitaciones como procesos de aprendizaje, se buscó avanzar a partir de nuevos elementos. Si se considera a la esfera pública como *locus* de investigación de la gestión social (normativa y empírico-descriptiva) es importante resaltar que: las esferas públicas son lugares de consenso y conflicto; pueden constituirse concretamente tanto de elementos democráticos y emancipatorios como de elementos opresivos; están formadas por una diversidad de públicos (y contrapúblicos) con diferentes 'capacidades' de acceso y argumentación; en Brasil se produjo la formación de esferas públicas subalternas; las características de las formaciones de esferas públicas no pueden ser importadas y su eficacia está influenciada por estructuras sistémicas. Finalmente, se muestra que la reconstrucción defiende el potencial descriptivo, normativo y crítico de la esfera pública, especialmente si se pluraliza y explora su desarrollo fundamentándose en Habermas, sus comentaristas y críticos.

Palabras clave: Esfera pública. Gestión social. Habermas. Esferas subalternas.

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INTRODUCTION

For the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, one of the roles of researchers is to diagnose social pathologies and seek the potential of emancipation to provide new 'utopian energy', discourses and actions. **In the field of applied social sciences, can social management play this role?**

Several researchers in Brazil have responded positively to this question. According to Tenório (1998; 2005), social management is a result of dissatisfaction with the status quo of the administration, which is based on efficiency and performance through the rationalization of work and guided to the maximization of private interest. Social management also results from the resistance to the incorporation of these assumptions of the administration by public management (PAES DE PAULA, 2005) and the expansion of them for different spheres of human life. Thus, several theories of administration do not stimulate participation, distancing subjects from the north of citizenship and emancipation (CANÇADO, TENÓRIO and PEREIRA, 2011). Social management, in turn, seeks a more participatory and dialogic management (TENÓRIO, 1998).

Recently, Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2013, p. 187) defined social management as "[...] a dialectical process of social organization that is natural of the public sphere, based on well-understood interest and whose purpose is emancipation". In the work of these authors it is possible to clearly observe one of the theoretical categories of social management, the public sphere, which is understood from the perspective of Habermas. Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015, p. 145) argue that "social management develops as the public sphere develops", and that the public sphere "[...] constitutes the locus and essential condition" of the development of social management (CANÇADO, PEREIRA and TENÓRIO, 2015, p. 136).

Other authors make references to the public sphere in social management, either as an important category, or criticizing its "appropriation". Although arguing for the importance of the category 'public sphere' and its potential for the field of social management, Alcântara (2015) argues that the category is not fully "appropriated" in the field. Through the revision of several texts and the indications of Alcântara (2015), the gap explored in this article is that the public sphere of Habermas is treated with several limitations in the field of social management. Therefore, it is not explored in depth – the reason (at least one of the reasons) why 'public sphere' is criticized by Persson and Moretto Neto (2015) and Pinho and Santos (2015b).

Therefore, this article aims to contribute to social management, presenting new research possibilities, still based on the concept of public sphere and its reconstruction. It seeks to answer the question: **how can the public sphere, as understood by Habermas and considering its critics, be considered an empirical-descriptive and normative category of social management?**

To answer this question, this study responds to Alcântara's (2015) invitation to explore more broadly the work of Habermas (and his concept of the public sphere), considering his reformulations, contradictions and criticisms. In addition, this study takes on the challenge of deepening the theoretical categories of social management, as advocated by Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015). It looks at social management considering its association with the public sphere in the Brazilian context as recommended by Pinho and Santos (2015a; 2015b), at the same time taking on the criticism of Persson and Moretto Neto (2015) who consider that the public sphere is weak and not able to promote sharing of decision-making power as proposed by social management. In view of this, we argue that an advance is possible with the extension (Habermas calls ´reconstruction´) of the category of "public sphere" to "public spheres" (plurality). In fact, this expansion already took place, partly, in Habermas' work from the 1960s to the 1990s, as a result of the critical contributions of Nancy Fraser (1990; 2007) and others such as Eley in 1992; Negt and Kluge in 1993 and Thompson in 1987 (HABERMAS, 2014; PERLATTO, 2015). This observation was made in Brazilian literature in the works by Avritzer and Costa (2004), Lubenow (2012), Melo (2015) and Perlatto (2015). Far from being a "panacea", this "pluralization" (both of the expression 'public sphere' and of its conceptions) allows some advances that will be developed throughout this study.

By plurality we mean not only the idea that there are multiple spheres, but also that there are different possibilities, such as a hegemonic sphere and subaltern spheres. Therefore, the concept of plurality indicates that these spheres can interact with each other. The foundation here is Hannah Arendt's thoughts, which consider that plurality is a condition of discourse and action. In addition, the idea of plurality includes the possibility that cooperative and/or conflicting exchanges take place between public spheres. It also includes equality and difference: "plurality is the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live". (ARENDT, 1998, p. 8).

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This study also seeks to highlight the necessary advances in state-society-market relations and the separation of the lifeworld and from the system that walks with and beyond Habermas, allowing a broader treatment of interrelationships and tensions, as recently defended by Alcântara and Pereira (2017). Thus, in a reconstructed view, the public spheres appear as a fundamental category. In fact, without them, the reconstruction of the relations between the lifeworld and the system lacks "links", that is, elements of interrelation and tension. At the forefront, as a result, we advocate the adoption of public spheres as an empirical-descriptive and normative category.

By normative category[1], we understand the assumptions that social management looks for, at the level of the "must be" – in this case, how the ideals of Habermas in the public sphere base, legitimize and validate the concept of social management. On the other hand, by empirical-descriptive category we understand that public spheres can exist (form, transform, decay) as a "social phenomenon" (MELO, 2015) and this must be studied by social management. That is, the field can seek to show how public spheres are in their different configurations. Thus, we try to break with a dichotomy (normative vs descriptive) of studies in the public sphere, as exposed by Ferree, Gamson and Gerhards (2002) and Koçan (2008). In fact, there are two moments: that of describing, understanding, interpreting and explaining "how things are", and the moment of discussing, debating, instigating "how things could or should be", making sure that the conceptual assumptions do not erase the historical-social or that "concrete reality" takes away the hopes for change. In this way, it is important to understand how the public spheres are formed, transformed and what their influence power is, i.e., how 'they are' (MELO, 2015; PERLATTO, 2015), at the same time, understanding how "they should be" or "the ideal" (CANÇADO, PEREIRA and TENÓRIO, 2015), which is from where new elements of analysis are built (MELO, 2015).

Considering this, the intention here is to present a more plural perspective on the polarities with which the theme is treated in the literature (normative vs. descriptive, consensus vs. conflict, single vs. multiple). These polarities, or dichotomies, negatively mark the concept of the public sphere, leading to the loss of its potential to develop. The issue of "single vs. multiple" dimensions was highlighted by Fraser (1990). In other words, the polarities "consensus vs. conflict" and "normative vs. descriptive" are part of broad debates about the public sphere (FERRE, GAMSON and GERHARDS, 2002; KOÇAN, 2008).

Thus, in this article, **we intend to reconstruct the public spheres as an empirical-descriptive and normative category of social management**. It is interesting to note that the word "reconstruction" is being used in the sense of critically organizing theoretical and empirical elements to achieve, in a more "coherent" form, the goal that the theory had initially determined, as stated by Habermas (1983) in his work "Towards a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism". Therefore, we do not use the meanings of the term "reconstruction" adopted later, which refer to the reconstruction of competences among subjects, their conditions of understanding and validity of speech acts, as well as moral standards of conscience and law. The meaning used here is aligned with that of Paes de Paula (2015) without exploring the same path followed by this authoress.

In addition to this introduction, the next section of this article presents a section on the public sphere, highlighting the importance of the category and its structure in the works of Habermas, considering the criticisms and advances. This is followed by the discussions about the public sphere in social management, and then our contributions to this debate with various arguments in view of the intended reconstruction. In the final considerations, we present our "point of arrival" (or new "starting point"), the limitations, the considered validity criteria and a research agenda.

From Public Sphere to Public Spheres

The concept of the public sphere appears, albeit with differences, in the works of Aristotle, Hannah Arendt, Jürgen Habermas, Nancy Fraser, Charles Taylor, Niklas Luhman, John Keane, Robert D. Putnam and others (KOÇAN, 2008). Even so, Habermas stands out: "[...] it is noteworthy the impact of the formulation that Jürgen Habermas has attributed to such a concept since the 1960s, especially if we look how his construct was received in contemporary theories of

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[1]The concept of category refers to "[...] any notion that works as a rule to research or that work as linguistic expression in any field" (ABBAGNANO, 1998, apud ZWICK, 2015, p. 111). The author continues: "a first meaning given to categories is a realistic one, in which they are considered as determined by reality. A second meaning is that they are notions used to question and comprehend the reality" (ZWICK, 2015, p. 111). The proposal as normative and empirical-descriptive category here is to consider both meanings.

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democracy" (MELO, 2015, p. 11). However, Habermas formulation is not invariant. On the contrary, it is a source of reconceptualization (LUBENOW, 2012).

Habermas focused the public sphere category on several works. However, the three main discussions are the works: *Strukturwandel der* Öffentlichkeit (1962) (The Structural Change of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society), *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns* (1981) (The Theory of Communicative Action), and *Faktizität und Geltung* (1992) (Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy). We will approach each of these moments in their historical sequence, showing how Habermas transforms the concept and functions of the public sphere into each of them, as well as the various criticisms in each of these stages. Thus, it is possible to observe a history marked by the pluralization of the concept.

The category 'public sphere' in Habermas work

In his work *The Structural Change of the Public Sphere*, originally published in 1962, Habermas presents a model of public sphere based on the historical development of a bourgeois public sphere in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (HABERMAS, 2003). He observes the peculiarities of this public sphere and uses it as basis to develop a normative model (LUBENOW, 2012; VOIROL, 2008). In this way, Habermas points to "[...] a model of 'public sphere' coming from the historical developments of the emergence of a bourgeois public sphere, well-educated and politicized, especially in eighteenth and nineteenth-century in Europe (mainly in England, France and Germany), and its transformation, its progressive decline and the disappearance of the conditions that fed the public sphere in the twentieth century" (LUBENOW, 2007, p. 104).

According to Habermas (2003), the political public sphere arises from the literary sphere. The public sphere had, at that moment, the role of mediating the relationship between State and society and of challenging established authority (LUBENOW, 2012). Habermas (2003) observes that there has been a depoliticization of the public sphere due to the expansion of the 'public' in the public sphere, the refunctionalization of the press (becoming a capitalist venture), the interpenetration between public and private, and the expansion of instrumental rationality (SILVA, 2001). Habermas (2003) shows the "decline" of the public sphere – in which the infiltration of "[...] private and utility-driven interests [...] undermine the critical principle of publicity and its political role" (LUBENOW, 2012, p. 196) – and it becomes "[...] the field of competition among interests in the roughest forms of violent confrontation" (HABERMAS, 2012a, p. 225).

In *The Theory of Communicative Action* (2012a, 2012b), Habermas returns to the category 'public sphere', this time permeating a dual concept of society – lifeworld (world of everyday intersubjective relations) and system (state and market) – after a paradigm shift towards inter-subjectivity (communicative action). The lifeworld and the system, for Habermas (2012b), are not in harmony, because there is an attempt of what he calls "colonization of the lifeworld by the system" (SILVA, 2001; VOIROL, 2008). Therefore, "the public sphere now has the role of protecting and guaranteeing the autonomy of the lifeworld" (LUBENOW, 2012, p. 200)

In this context, the public sphere mediates between the system and the lifeworld – which means that public sphere is no longer considered as "liquidated" (HABERMAS, 2012b). However, Habermas believes that the public sphere can only "surround" the system. It has a limited capacity to incorporate communicative practices into the system. To reverse this situation, the author believes that the institutionalization of communicative practice is necessary, that is, that there are legal and institutional guarantees that facilitate the formation of public opinion (LUBENOW, 2012). In a text from the late 1980s, Habermas considered that "[...] the power of social integration of solidarity must be able to withstand the 'forces' of the other two resources, money and administrative power" (HABERMAS, 1987, p. 112).

In *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* of 1992, Habermas (1997a; 1997b) seeks to rethink the relationship between the system and the lifeworld, considering a double stream between them. He tries to overcome the perspective of surrounding, based on the rediscovery of civil society. The public sphere is now thought of as a system of locks (structural openings), where the political system's decision-making processes are anchored in the lifeworld and "directed" by the public sphere. This influence is based on a procedural model of (deliberative) democracy in which the public sphere and civil society are central (AVRITZER and COSTA, 2004; LUBENOW, 2012). In the context of democratic theory, Habermas (1997b, p. 91) considers that "[...] the public sphere must, in addition, to amplify the pressure of problems, that is, not only detect and identify problems, but also convincingly and influentially thematize them, furnish them with possible solutions, and dramatize them in such a way that they are taken up and dealt with by parliamentary complexes". Habermas (1997b, p. 93) defines it as "a

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network for communicating information and points of view", observing that in the public sphere "the streams of communication are, in the process, filtered and synthesized in such a way that they coalesce into bundles of topically specified *public* opinions".

Criticism and reformulation of the category 'public sphere'

Among the main criticisms raised after the publishing of *The Structural Change of the Public Sphere* are those related to the fact that the concept is centered on bourgeois society – which would generate a "hegemonic public sphere" to the detriment of alternative public spheres – and to the excessive appreciation of the emancipatory potential of liberal discourse, which would not take into consideration the impacts of discrimination (SUSEN, 2011). Fraser (1990) argues that Habermas' liberal public sphere does not consider other non-liberal spheres. Fraser (1990) denies that a multiplicity of spheres is detrimental to democracy; on the contrary, the author admits that in multicultural societies several publics are needed, since there are different identities and cultures (FONTANA, 2014; LOSEKANN, 2009). Stratified societies, when brought together in a single public sphere, tend to increase inequality and domination (FONTANA, 2014). For this reason, "subordinate sub-publics, denouncing the 'vices of origin' of national public spaces, are not forces of destabilization, but of democratization and expansion of the national policies" (AVRITZER and COSTA, 2004, p. 711). Moreover, "Habermas will later admit that his privileged approach prevented a better insight into the internal dynamics of the 'plebeian' culture and its potential to stimulate public debate" (PERLATTO, 2015, p. 125).

Fraser's criticism also addresses an assumption of equality that excludes several groups, not considering asymmetries of power (AVRITZER and COSTA, 2004). Fraser believes that it is impossible for the parts in a discussion to suspend their structural differences in order to establish a dialogue (LOSEKANN, 2009; FONTANA, 2014). The authoress also argues that it is difficult to draw the boundary between public and private, noting that by limiting the entry of private issues, people and issues are excluded from the debate (FONTANA, 2014). The criticisms of Seyla Benhabib follow this same line (LOSEKANN, 2009).

The work of the 1980s (*Theory of Communicative Action*), had a direct and indirect criticism of the category public sphere. The indirect refer to the conception of a theory of communicative action, to the focus on consensus and on the perspective of a theory focused on language as a central element (MOUFFE, 1999; YOUNG, 2001). The direct criticism, in turn, refers to the limits of the public sphere to protect the lifeworld (LUBENOW, 2012).

Habermas' responses to criticisms and indications of changes started to appear more systematically with the 1990 preface of Structural Change (HABERMAS, 2014). The author accepts criticisms related to issues such as inequalities, social conflicts and subaltern spheres. It also brings the issue of media, television and how they operate in a contradictory way, alternating "publicity" and manipulation. Habermas (1997b; 2008) also recognizes the existence of unequal positions in the public sphere, its plurality and the concept of 'weak publics' proposed by Fraser. He not only recognizes the existence of other spheres, but also admits that their existence guarantees wider access to the public sphere" (LOSEKANN, 2009, p. 50).

Even so, Habermas still received criticisms, many of them due to a construction based on communicative action; acceptance of the state and liberal law; the approximation of constitutionality to the detriment of a radical democracy (SCHEUERMAN, 2014). Miguel (2014, p. 21-22) lists some of the criticisms: (i) "insensitivity regarding the impact of social asymmetries"; (ii) "attachment to an ideal of face-to-face communication" and (iii) "... neglect of the conflicting nature of politics". However, Dahlberg (2005) argues that many of the criticisms are based on limited readings and that a more expansive reading of the public sphere shows that it can actually accommodate aesthetic-affective modes of discourse (DAHLBERG, 2005), conflicting aspects (WHITE and FARR, 2012) and struggles for power and recognition (MELO, 2015). Thus, the public sphere is also important for discussions of coercion and exclusion.

In responding to the criticism about the conflictive nature, it is important to consider that Habermas (1997b) highlights the concept of civil disobedience and the importance of the protests. Subsequently, Habermas (2008) posed the question of inequality in the public sphere, highlighting the existence of cultural exclusion of citizens and the "colonization" of the public sphere by instrumental imperatives of the media. Nevertheless, Habermas (2008) defends the public sphere as a critical and open concept that allows structures of power and capital to be contained by communicative power as well (FLYNN, 2014). However, it is clear that "[...] the conception of the discourse on public sphere – as developed by Habermas throughout the 1990s – has been criticized and supplemented" (AVRITZER and COSTA, 2004, p. 710). Therefore, even with the incorporation

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of changes, several critiques still exist in relation to the category public sphere and its conceptualization by Habermas – hence the importance of new advances.

The synthesis of criticisms to public sphere, Habermas' responses and the potential of public sphere were presented earlier, because these elements contribute to the advancement of the debates. As Melo (2015, p. 12) says, "we can better understand the different attempts to cover the historical, empirical or normative deficits of the public sphere concept that have appeared in social theory and in contemporary politics, when we are aware of the development and difficulties that Habermas' theory has presented in the last decades" (MELO, 2015, p. 12). Therefore, knowing the criticism around the public sphere concept, as Habermas himself has done throughout his works, is crucial when "one intends to use such a model outside Europe, where it was originated" (AVRITZER and COSTA, 2004, p. 710). In addition, it allows gaps to be found for the reconstruction of the category, which is the objective of this work.

Public Sphere and Social Management

The relationship between social management and the public sphere has already been discussed by other authors. This study refers to the systematizations carried out in Cançado's (2011) thesis, with some variations in the second edition of the thesis publication as a book (CANÇADO, PEREIRA and TENÓRIO, 2015), as well as in Alcântara's (2015) dissertation – (Box 1). The public sphere was the theme of the fifth ENAPEGS (National Meeting of Researchers in Social Management) in 2011, entitled "Social management as a way to redefine the public sphere". However, in the book published with the studies and discussions presented at the event, there is no in-depth theoretical discussion, methodological paths or empirical research on public sphere as conceptualized by Habermas or its variations, except for the work by Schommer, Andion and Pinheiro (2011).

Box 1

Public sphere and social management

Theme	Texts
Public sphere as a category – Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015)	Fischer (2002b); Maia (2005); Fischer et al. (2005; 2006); Carrion (2007); Gondin, Fischer and Melo (2006a; 2006b); Tenório (2008a; 2008d); França Filho (2003; 2008); Boullosa and Schommer (2008; 2009); Boullosa (2009); Schommer and França Filho (2008; 2010).
Public sphere as *locus* of social management – Alcântara (2015)	Tenório (2005); Fleig, Oliveira and Brito (2006); Oliveira, Cançado and Pereira (2010); Costa (2011); Freitas, Freitas and Dias (2012); Tenório, Brulon and Zarconi (2013); Oliveira, Vilas Boas and Pereira (2013); Cançado, Tavares and Dallabrida (2013); Peres Junior, Pereira and Oliveira (2013); Villela, Vidal and Macedo (2014); Villela, Costa and Cançado (2014).
Other texts that mention public sphere	Schommer, Andion, Pinheiro et al. (2011); Cançado, Tenório and Pereira (2011), Pereira (2012); Zwick and Pereira (2012); Freitas, Freitas and Ferreira (2014); Alcântara, Pereira and Silva (2014); Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015); Alcântara, Pereira, Silva et al. (2015); Alcântara (2015); Alcântara and Pereira (2017).
Texts presenting criticisms	Teodósio (2008; 2009); Pimentel and Pimentel (2010); Araújo and Boullosa (2013); Pinho (2010), Pinho and Santos (2015a; 2015b); Persson and Moretto Neto (2015).

Source: Adapted and expanded from Alcântara (2015) and Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015).

Note: To access the texts cited by Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015) and Alcântara (2015), see the references indicated in their work.

To understand how the studies referenced to in Box 1, deal with the relationship between public sphere and social management, we present how they refer to the public sphere and also use the conclusions of Alcântara (2015) and Cançado, Pereira and Tenório. (2015).

Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015) have identified, in an analysis of works that discuss social management, that the public sphere is one of the great theoretical categories. With this, they understand that the public sphere is an intermediary category, locus and condition of development of social management. For the authors, the public sphere is debated with references to Habermas and Hannah Arendt (who has important contributions to discuss this category). With Habermas,

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they explore *The Structural Change of the Public Sphere* and discuss the search for a new public sphere where people can deliberate. To do so, they cite the concept of public sphere present in *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* and relate this category to others, namely: deliberative democracy, dialogicity, inter-subjectivity and rationality.

Some of the works in Box 1 do not use the expression "public sphere" and therefore are not important in this analysis, but following the example of Maia (2005) - Cançado (2011) and Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015) considered that, although the expression was not used, 'public sphere' was a theoretical category present in the study. Other works, such as França Filho (2003), use the term "public sphere" in a generic way, without referencing a line of thought or specific meaning. França Filho (2008, p. 5) cites the public sphere as "the natural space of the so-called civil society, therefore a non-state public sphere of action". Several other texts cited by Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015) do not have the public sphere as a central category and will not be discussed here.

Tenório (2005) [in Table 2008d] presents the concept of public sphere and advances in its use related to social management (our reconstruction of the sense of the public sphere has another meaning) based on Habermas' understanding presented in "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy": "[...] the public sphere is therefore the intersubjective, communicative space in which people thematize their concerns through mutual understanding" (TENÓRIO, 2005, p. 105). Tenório advances in the concept of Habermas and adds: "[...] the public sphere would be that social space in which the dialogical interaction between civil society and the state deciding on public policies would occur; [...]. In fact, we rebuilt the concept of public sphere, insofar as we interpret it as the possible space of communication and deliberation between civil society, state and the market" (TENÓRIO, 2005, p. 107). This view is an extension of Habermas' public sphere (PINHO and SANTOS, 2015b). According to Gondin, Fischer and Melo (2006a, p. 3), also referencing Habermas: "[...] by 'social management of development', we mean the process of mediation that connects multiple levels of power in certain spaces and times – which constitute public spheres where the plurality of discourses has its place [...]".

Therefore, observing all the works cited above (and those included in Box 1 "Public sphere and social management"), it is possible to conclude that Tenório (2005) and Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015) were the authors that studied the concept of public sphere more in depth. We discuss below the works related to the bibliographical survey carried out by Alcântara (2015), in which the public sphere appears with reference in Habermas.

The study of Oliveira, Cançado and Pereira (2010) is one of the articles that most discussed the category public sphere, but referring only to the work "The Structural Change of the Public Sphere": "In our view, the theoretical propositions about 'public' and 'public sphere' in Habermas are the pillars for the understanding, delimitation and proposition of a concept of social management" (OLIVEIRA, CANÇADO and PEREIRA, 2010, p. 615). The authors point out that "[...] we can think of aspects of the Habermasian public sphere as the basis for the concept of social management" (OLIVEIRA, CANÇADO and PEREIRA, 2010, p. 622), opinion that is shared by Oliveira, Vilas Boas and Pereira (2013). This article makes a more detailed exploration of this work of Habermas, highlighting the perspectives of the literary and political public sphere, as well as its historical origin and function, as emphasized by Habermas. In turn, Costa (2011) cites the concept of the public sphere, remembering that it emerged from the revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie in opposition to political absolutism. The discussion in this article is also focused on the work "The Structural Change of the Public Sphere".

Tenório, Brulon and Zarconi (2013) understand, from Habermas, that the public sphere is a communicative structure where public problems are condensed and grouped in the direction of the parliamentary complexes. Peres Junior, Pereira and Oliveira (2013, p. 23) affirm that "the public sphere is the domain of social life in which public opinion is formed" and that the condition for its development is the existence of a democratic system. The authors refer to Habermas' work "Three Normative Models of Democracy". Other studies cited by Alcântara (2015) only mention "public sphere" briefly.

In analyzing these studies, Alcântara (2015) pointed out that little is said of the work "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy", in which the concept of the public sphere appears reformulated and is better elaborated by Habermas. In addition, it is possible to observe in the works that the concept appears as "given", i.e., the concept is not discussed critically (critical considerations are not presented in detail) and there is no discussion about the pertinence of this category to the Brazilian context (when this discussion occurs, it is very incipient and non-historical).

Other texts that mention the public sphere and are not systematized in Alcântara (2015) and Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015) will be presented below. The contributions of Alcântara (2015) and Alcântara, Pereira and Silva (2015) will close this topic after

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the criticisms. Schommer, Andion and Pinheiro (2011) present a discussion about public spheres based on Arendt and Habermas, relating the coproduction of public goods and social innovation in the public sphere. For them, the public sphere is a concept with various theoretical and historical understandings, but, as far as Habermas work is concerned, the authors focus only on "The Structural Change of the Public Sphere". For Freitas, Freitas and Ferreira (2014), the public sphere as locus makes the "political project" of social management possible. The conception of the authors is similar to that of Alcântara, Pereira and Silva (2014), who broaden the concept of the public sphere (arguing that the concept is plural according to Habermas himself), and emphasize that the most adequate concept to be applied to social management is that presented in "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy". However, the authors do not develop criticism towards the concept of the public sphere. On the other hand, the texts of Pereira (2012) and Zwick and Pereira (2012) propose that social management is located in a space shared between state, market and civil society, understood as the public sphere. Finally, Cançado, Tenório and Pereira (2011) cite the expression 'public sphere', but without developing a theoretical debate, and Alcântara and Pereira (2017) conceptualize the public sphere based on "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy". However, the authors also do not problematize or expand the concept of the public sphere.

An interpretation of the aforementioned studies reveals limitations similar to those already highlighted: focusing only on the work "The Structural Change of the Public Sphere" – even though there are now more citations of "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy" of 1992 – without debate involving the criticisms and taking into consideration the broad national context among others. This means that many criticisms that we will present from now on can be raised as a consequence of the still limited "appropriation" of the concept of public sphere by the very authors that compose and defend the field of social management.

Teodósio (2008) argues that Janoski's model is more important to think of tri-sectoral partnerships in the public sphere than Habermas' approach, because "the model developed by the author [Habermas] does not allow a more consistent discussion of mutual interstices, overlaps and inflexions which are presented between the state, the market and the public sphere, since Habermas (1984) considers such fields as separate and unrestricted dimensions" (TEODÓSIO, 2008, p. 94). It is also in this sense that Teodósio (2009) presents its criticism.

Pimentel and Pimentel (2010) argue that social management is more aligned with Arendt's concept of social sphere and criticize the approximation to Habermas' concept of public sphere. The limitation of this criticism is that it considers only the concept of public sphere as in the work 'The Structural Change of Public Sphere', and it understand the concept as unique and immutable. Expanding the debate, taking into consideration the work "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy", for example, Araújo and Boullosa (2013, p. 21) state that "[...] social management [...] becomes closer to the notion social sphere/space". The authors highlight Habermas' limitations such as the focus on reason (reason vs. emotion dichotomy), on communicative action and on logical-argumentative competence, disregarding the unequal distribution of "capital" (term used by Pierre Bourdieu). In this setting, the authors show the approximation to Bourdieu's concept of 'field' and Arendt's concept of 'social sphere'.

The pertinence of the Habermasian referential in social management was also criticized by Pinho (2010) and by Pinho and Santos (2015a; 2015b). Pinho (2010) states that Habermas' project demands communicative freedom in the public sphere (which would not exist in Brazil), noting that the expansion of the concept proposed by Tenório would be very optimistic. The criticism of Pinho and Santos (2015a) are more focused on the experiences of social management, and they mention the public sphere, based on their previous works, that the public sphere would have been explored in an inconsistent and imported way, without the due consideration of the national context. For Pinho and Santos (2015a), the central question is whether the proposal of social management materializes in the practice of the Brazilian reality, arguing that there is no such experience in Brazilian history to support this assumption. In the authors' text, the argument of Brazilian "backwardness" is clear, marked mainly by patrimonialism.

The article by Pinho and Santos (2015b, p. 3) "[...] defends the thesis that its [social management] qualification as an instrument of construction of the public sphere and of emancipation, contrary to Tenório's point of view, lacks theoretical and political meaning". Pinho and Santos (2015b, p.8) point out that Tenório (2005) performs "[...] a theoretical-political operation that consists of incorporating the market into Habermas public sphere" and asks whether "it is possible to conceive the public sphere as a possibility of dialogue between society, state and market and to continue to refer to Habermas" (SANTOS and PINHO, 2015b, p. 9). The authors consider that "Habermas assumes the existence of a rule of law, capable of institutionalizing the procedures and assumptions of this free communication" (PINHO and SANTOS, 2015b, p. 9).

> Particularly regarding the relationship between social management and public sphere, the demand – because of deepening the theoretical debate and of confronting the challenges posed by unequal societies such as the Brazilian one – is that an effort should be made to explicit the nature of the complex

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relationship between those terms. Who are the supposed subjects, hegemonic or counter-hegemonic, of social management? What are the economic, social and political conditions capable of transforming relations of externality and power between subject and object of knowledge, between state and society, capital and labor? What are their projects of transformation, projects of society? What theories are at the base of such formulations and what are their concrete and political, conditions; concrete capacity of realization? (PINHO and SANTOS, 2015b, p. 16).

Another very dense criticism is that of Persson and Moretto Neto (2015). These authors insist that "[...] the Habermasian public sphere is weak in promoting the effective sharing of decision-making power that social management strongly proposes" (PERSSON and MORETTO NETO, 2015, p. 13). For them the central question would be:

 [...] social management is understood as a dialogical process in which the decision-making authority is shared among the participants in the action, which refers to collective decision-making (TENÓRIO, 2008b). The public sphere of Habermas (1992a, p. 452), however, states that "discussions do not govern, only influence, through communicative power, the decision-making process that remains in the hands of the administrative power of the State". How, then, can the decision-making authority be shared among the participants in a collective action if the decision remains in the hands of the state bureaucracy? (PERSSON and MORETTO NETO, 2015, p. 2-3).

These authors engage in a broad discussion, passing through moments that resembles Habermas works "The Structural Change of the Public Sphere", the "Theory of Communicative Action" and "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy", among other studies, including criticisms like that of Nancy Fraser and others constructed by reading T. Eagleton, M. Löwy, K. Marx, M. Weber, M. Tragtenberg and others. Based on the revision carried out, Persson and Moretto Neto (2015) is the text with a broader discussion on public sphere, developed in the field of social management.

Considering some of these questions, Alcântara and Pereira (2017) indicate that the public sphere can be studied in depth as an element in the interrelationships and tensions (hence also in situations of partnerships and conflicts) between the lifeworld and the system (in the understanding the authors reconstruct beyond the Habermasian view). Alcântara, Pereira and Silva (2015) argue that the reality of an unequal society can direct social management to research both on the formation of subaltern public spheres and on the way in which so-called 'public' and 'counter-public' actors relate to social management. Similarly, Persson and Moretto Neto (2015, p. 8) point out that "[...] the distinction between strong publics and weak publics in the public sphere, introduced by Fraser (1990), is a point that deserves to be taken into account when it comes to social management". The argument of Alcântara, Pereira and Silva (2015), however, is the field of social management, Habermas' reference in being explored in an incipient way. They say that Habermas can contribute significantly to study social management and to advance in this field, but his works need to be interpreted together with the criticisms they have received.

Summarizing this section, we consider: (a) In the literature review carried out in previous studies, there are several ways of appropriating the concept of the public sphere. Some of them mention the concept briefly, others do not problematize and take it "as given"; (b) In social management studies dealing with the public sphere there are few debates with critics of the concept as understood by Habermas. Moreover, the criticisms of the concept of public sphere are found only in studies that oppose to social management or oppose the use of the concept of public sphere by social management; (c) There are few discussions (and almost no empirical research) on subaltern public spheres, weak public and the plurality of the public sphere in social management is not questioned; (d) Most of the works refer only to the concept presented in 'The Structural Change in the Public Sphere', where Habermas made his first and most contested systematization of the concept, i.e., the works relate to the first concept elaborated in the 1960s; (e) Most studies do not discuss the reformulations of Habermas' concept of the public sphere over the years; that is, they do not follow their transformations, and when they do, they are only *en passant*; and (f) The texts do not seek the potential of the concept for the study and critique of Brazilian society - Brazilian sociocultural, economic and political development.

In the following section, we develop arguments for a reconstruction of the "public spheres" within the scope of social management. This reconstruction aims to remedy – at least potentially – the various gaps found. Despite being a theoretical text, we constantly emphasize the importance of empirical references for the study of public spheres. In adition, the arguments proposed are important to broaden the critical potential of this category, considering that it can be expanded with several critical studies beyond the conception offered by Habermas, without neglecting his contributions.

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Rebuilding public spheres in social management

One of the developments towards reconstructing this category is to try breaking with the "descriptive vs. normative" dichotomy in public spheres research, observing that they can be considered simultaneously: (1) locus of social management (normative vision) and (2) theoretical-empirical category of social management research (descriptive view). In this way, the defense of 'public spheres' as a normative category does not prevent the researcher from studying "how the public sphere is", or rather "how public spheres are". Actually, in his work "The Structural Change of the Public Sphere" Habermas (2003) combines a descriptive theory with a normative theory of the public sphere (KOÇAN, 2008).

Based on Melo (2015), this reconstruction has the public spheres as a "starting point" and aims to overcome other polarities such as "single vs. multiple" and especially "consensus vs. conflict", understanding that they also involve conflicting aspects. Still within the scope of social management, this reconstruction expands the field of research and offers the potential to respond to various criticisms without "abandoning" Habermas' reference. To do so, we present a series of arguments in Box 2.

Box 2

Arguments to rebuild the public spheres in social management

Arguments – Rebuilding (public spheres)	Theoretical framework (main ones)	Problematized polarity
(1) Conceiving public spheres not only as locus of consensus, but also of the conflict and the plurality of opinions and interests	Habermas (1985; 1997a; 1997b); Melo (2015); Mendonça (2011); Pereira (2012); Perlatto (2015); Pinho and Santos (2015b); Voirol (2008).	Consensus-conflict
(2) Conceiving that, a priori, public spheres are ambiguous and can be formed concretely by democratic and emancipatory elements and by oppressive elements.	Fraser (1990; 2007); Gohn (2012); Habermas (1997a; 2003; 2008); Lubenow (2012); Melo (2015); Perlatto (2015); Teodósio (2009).	Normative-descriptive Consensus-conflict
(3) Conceiving the importance of considering a diversity of publics and their access "capabilities" as well as their argumentation in public spheres	Avritzer and Costa (2004); Fraser (1990; 2007); Habermas (1997a, 1997b; 2014); Melo (2015); Perlatto (2015); Pinho and Santos (2015b).	Single-multiple Consensus-conflict
(4) Understanding that, in Brazil, a diversity of subaltern public spheres was formed.	Blotta (2012); Habermas (2003); Lavalle (2001); Perlatto (2012, 2015); Perlatto and Lima (2009).	Normative-descriptive Single-multiple
(5) The characteristics of the formation of public spheres cannot be imported. The need to be studied in their social, historical, political and economic context.	Blotta (2012); Fraser (2007); Habermas (2003); Lavalle (2001); Perlatto (2015); Tenório (1999).	Normative-descriptive
(6) Conceiving that the potentials (effectiveness) of the public spheres are influenced by systemic, economic and bureaucratic structures of market and the state.	Flynn (2014); Habermas (2008); Lubenow (2012); Person and Moretto Neto (2015); Scheuerman (2014); Souza (2008).	Consensus-conflict Normative-descriptive

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

In the next section a debate on each one of the arguments and the way as they expand the vision of the category public sphere in the field of social management is presented.

Argument (1): Conceiving public spheres not only as locus of consensus, but also of the conflict and the plurality of opinions and interests.

It is important to emphasize that studies on public spheres should consider them as places not only of consensus, as Habermas (1997b) focuses, but also as places of conflict (a possibility that Habermas himself implies in his works). In "The theory of Communicative Action", the public sphere was a space for conflict of two different modes of integration – power and money vs. solidarity (HABERMAS, 2012b). Melo (2015) considers it naïve the idea of a public sphere based only on rational discourses oriented towards understanding, where deliberative processes would result in consensus. For the author, based on Axel Honneth, there is the need to expand the view regarding the assumption of consensus and the lines of discussion about social

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pathologies. This expansion, based on the criticisms towards Habermas' conceptions is consistent with the development of national and international literature on the public sphere (FRASER, 2007; PERLATTO, 2015).

Even in "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy" already based on a model of the circulation of power, Habermas points out that in the public sphere conflicts collide with the control of communicative streams (LUBENOW, 2007); that is, it is "a zone of conflicts, in which conflicting principles of social integration collide" (LUBENOW, 2012, p. 200). Melo (2015, p. 22) points out that "social interactions and political practices are first and foremost composed of conflicts of values and interests (often irreconcilable)". In this sense, the normative idea of "a consensual justification (fruit of 'proceduralism') could not go beyond the conflictive characteristic of deliberative processes also present in democracies" (MELO, 2015, p. 22). Therefore, public spheres are not conflict-free spaces. Thus, the reproduction of an extremely consensual notion in the field of social management is subject to criticisms such as those by Pinho and Santos (2015b) and Persson and Moretto Neto (2015).

However, it is important to emphasize that in order to conceive this conflicting dimension, it is not necessary to defend an agonistic dimension – in the sense given by Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau in direct opposition to Habermas (MOUFFE, 1999). We argue that it is possible to consider the conflicting dimension based on reconstructive procedures. From Habermas' works, it is possible to extract a more conflictive understanding of politics than that usually attributed to him (WHITE and FARR, 2012).

> The most common and most unjust criticism is the one that uses the obviousness of the factual situation of violence, manipulation, irrationality, selfishness and self-interest as dominant factors in the "real" and everyday world as a refutation of the Habermas' hypothesis. Habermas has never written about the real and everyday world as a utopian paradise of mutual understanding. [...] His hypothesis is not about denying the existence and recurrence of violence and manipulation in all human relations, from the most public to the most private. It is about the fact that the real and everyday world, with all its iniquities and injustices, is not *only* violence and domination (SOUZA, 2008, p. 194).

Regarding the conflicting character, we can explore the concept of civil disobedience as well as the importance of the protests. In the 1980s, Habermas gave prominence to the concept of civil disobedience (HABERMAS, 1985). However, the conflicting character of the public sphere goes beyond the idea of protest and civil disobedience – hence the need to go beyond Habermas. Pereira (2012, p. 81) emphasizes the conflicting character of the public sphere, "both in its vertical axis (state-society) and in its horizontal axis (among civil society actors)". According to the author, in the public spheres other forms of interaction occur, other communicative forms, generating dissensions and even violent actions. However, this is no reason to abandon and deny the emancipatory capacity of the public sphere and deliberative democracy (PEREIRA, 2012). In this sense, Mendonça (2011, p. 211) points out that "when the idea that deliberation always seek consensus is overcome, it is easier to reconcile it with pluralism". It also suggests that deliberation seeks not only consensus, but rather "operational agreements" or "reasonable dissent". This is the path followed by current deliberationist actors (MENDONÇA, 2011). According to Habermas (1997a) negotiable agreements in conflicting groups, as well as strategic agreements can be legitimate, even without consensus – a "fair bargain".

Although it is possible to consider conflicting elements in Habermas, Honneth (2003) argues that the focus on the paradigm of communication has distanced Habermas from a broader analysis of the conflictive dimension of society, which Honneth seeks to do through the theory of the struggle for recognition[2]. For Honneth, Habermas separation of the dimensions in system and lifeworld is fictional and leads to the understanding that the latter would be exempt from relations of power and domination. Therefore, we consider that we need to expand the vision of lifeworld, recognizing that in this dimension there are roots of prejudices, several levels of discrimination and ideologically constructed visions that cause injustices – against which, movements such as feminist, anti-racist and others, struggle (SILVA, MACHADO and MELO, 2010). In addition,

> [...] spheres are in permanent relationship, either dialogically or in a conflictive way. [...] it must be acknowledged that the communicative relations between them occurred historically in an unequal way,

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[2] "[...] as for Honneth, Habermas dodges the base of the social interaction, which is not the understanding and the consensus, but the conflict, its grammar and the struggle for recognition. Habermas would be very much abstract and mechanical, ignoring the foundation of social action, which is the social conflict" (LUBENOW, 2010a, p. 128). Further in this study we expose our disagreement about the idea that the base of society is only the conflict. We argue that the two dimensions (consensus and conflicts) need to be considered if we want to avoid paying the price of a partial vision of human life and its inter-relations.

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with the constant pursuit of the former in constructing a hegemonic discourse on the latter. Moreover, as Nancy Fraser observed in stratified societies, the relations between the different publics belonging to these spheres tend to be more of contestation than of deliberation (PERLATTO, 2015, p. 123).

The previous citation indicates a possibility of more "relational" debates, starting from the concept of public spheres – which is a demand highlighted by Teodósio (2008; 2009). Also in the field of social management Alcântara (2015) and Persson and Moretto Neto (2015) emphasize that these issues need to be considered. Alcântara (2015) further states that it is misleading to think that Habermas only discusses consensual agreements, especially with regard to public decisions. In addition, in social management, conceptions of conflict and consensus may allow researchers and managers to face situations in which political actions and negotiations exist in the coordination of actions. After all, Habermas (1997a, p. 207) has already pointed out that "negotiation processes are appropriate for situations in which it is not possible to neutralize power relations, as assumed in rational discourses", considering that these are very common situations, both in organizations and in our daily activities.

According to Habermas (1997a), the results of these negotiations must strike the balance between conflicting interests that cannot be reduced to a single denominator (democracy coexists with different interests, values, reasons, etc.). This does not change the orientation of social management to a dialogical management normatively proposed by Tenório (1998; 2005), but qualifies it to act in the relationships of concrete human life. Whereas, according to Alcântara (2015, p. 294), "[...] non-ideal processes can [still] serve as learning for the construction of more democratic processes".

According to Voirol (2008), even though Habermas did not go further in this perspective – and did not really dwell on the conflictive dimension of social relations, even with the consideration of Souza (2008) – from these indications we can reconstruct his idea of a public sphere with more attention to conflictive phenomena (for example, struggles for recognition, redistribution, issues such as prejudice, discrimination, discourse of hatred, etc.) and which in no way prevent the existence of consensus and understanding. Therefore, we can "[...] more systematically investigate how deformations [distortions, relations of domination] [...] are emerging, increasing and reproducing, and what specific institutional configurations reinforce them" (VOIROL, 2012, p. 98). The current national political situation indicates the need to think about the conflicts, especially those present in the public media spheres, in the "streets" and "avenues" of Brazil.

Finally, a less Manichean view of society can decisively contribute to the expansion of the field of social management, where consensus and conflict are dimensions present in human and social life. In adopting such a view, we seek to break with polarizing visions of the public sphere. Souza (2008) pointed out that, in considering the possibilities of consensus and understanding, Habermas is not disregarding the "reality" marked by conflicts, but only saying that consensus is also possible. Following Pinho (2010): do not be so optimistic, neither so skeptical.

Therefore, we agree that conflict and consensus, as well as their tensions must be studied empirically, considering ideological aspects, the socio-historical context and the diversity of actors involved in management practices. The polarization between communicative action and strategic (and instrumental) action is understood as a permanent tension that exists throughout the "social fabric" between consensual and conflicting aspects – as said by Repa (2008, p. 57) "[...] it is rare that these [actions] appear to be absolutely communicative or absolutely strategic". Alcântara and Pereira (2017) went in this direction by reconstructing the vision of lifeworld and system from inter-relationships and tensions. This reconstruction also addresses the limitations highlighted by Araújo and Boullosa (2013) and Pimentel and Pimentel (2010) on the concept of the public sphere, especially the focus on consensus and the disregard of conflicting elements.

Finally, existing public spheres can be understood as formations with different configurations of discursive practices with consensual and conflicting elements, and in this sense, the diagnosis must move to the empirical dimension. The social manager emerges (is inserted) in these complex relations that demand of them a democratic training, especially, in their reflective and self-reflexive potential to differentiate consensual from conflicting elements, common interests of private individuals/organizations. In short, the practices, actions and discourses that contribute to the emancipatory potentials – which do not necessarily coincide with the hegemonic elements of the public spheres.

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Argument (2) Conceiving that, a priori, public spheres are ambiguous and can be formed concretely by democratic and emancipatory elements and by oppressive elements.

The first argument leads us to a second about how public spheres are configured. From the beginning of his studies, Habermas emphasizes the ambiguous/ambivalent character of the public sphere, demonstrating its emancipatory and manipulative/oppressive characteristics. In the work "The Structural Change of the Public Sphere", the author shows how the bourgeois (hegemonic) public sphere was characterized as emancipatory in that context, but because of some specific factors, it became depoliticized, becoming a manipulated sphere: "to expose this ambivalent potential of the public sphere, which is capable of manifesting a critical as well as a manipulative potential, Habermas introduces the distinction between the "critical" and "manipulative" roles of the public sphere. This is in order to distinguish between genuine public communication processes and those that have been subverted by power" (LUBENOW, 2012, p. 194).

In this way, formed public spheres can contribute to democratic advances. However, discourses can be elaborated using elements such as racism, homophobia and sexism (among other typically segregating discourses) and they can condense in an undemocratic and excluding way, whether in public environments (schools, streets, etc.) or in the possibility of recognition and participation in political decisions. For this reason, Melo (2015, p. 35) emphasizes: "[...] the public sphere has historically constituted itself as a source of oppression, injustice and discrimination (against women, blacks and other social and cultural minorities)".

If, on one hand, oppressive elements can be "condensed", on the other, their democratic (and "open") role lies in the possibility of grouping movements (discursive practices) that seek the "unharmed inter-subjectivity" of publics and counterparts. Thus an example of the importance of Fraser's subaltern counterparts is highlighted by Gohn: "[...] the discursive disputes receded and the feminist movement built crucial links between movements and institutional political arenas, which allowed that the movement's demands and discourses were translated into programmatic items of platforms of trade unions, national parties and policies, as well as international conventions" (GOHN, 2012, p. 143). Therefore, as Habermas (1997b) points out, it is necessary to understand the grouping of day-to-day demands that emerge from lifeworld in academic, media and informal public spheres in order to seek the institutionalization of rights. However, it is not possible to assume that social management practices are developed in public spheres. Only field research can provide evidence of this and show the configurations of public spheres. In addition, a process of legal training with broad public support does not necessarily indicate the formation of a democratic public opinion. Even an opinion considered "enlightened" on a particular theme may contain striking elements of historical formation, such as racism, sexism and others (GOHN, 2012; PERLATTO, 2015).

Teodósio (2009) appropriately considered these aspects when it comes to the field of social management. The author argues that it is possible to explore these issues in the public sphere, as conceptualized by Habermas. In this study, we will not discuss the alternative spheres of Janoski, also presented by Teodósio (2009), and suggest that this be explored in future research.

> [...] even Habermas (1996) [Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy] seems to begin to problematize in his more recent works – although without the emphasis and strength of other discussions that problematize the presence of organizations of civil societies in the public sphere. The public sphere accepts movements even if they are averse to democracy, such as neo-Nazi and racist groups, as well as private organizations that operate in order to influence other organizations [...] (TEODÓSIO, 2009, p. 9).

Here, social management can open up to debate anti-emancipatory elements present in the various public spheres, be they informal, related to the media or academic, also marked by discourses of hatred and that hurt communicative freedom. There are few works on social management that mention "social problems" such as racism, exclusion, inequality, sexism, homophobia and others and, as observed by Fraser (1990), are elements that have an effect of silencing voices in the "general public sphere". These considerations are extremely important for the public spheres. After all, Fiss (2005) believes that the targets of discourses of hatred, for instance, are unable to freely and unconstrainedly participate, in the discussion because they are not recognized as "other party" in a dialogue – what Fiss (2005, p. 33) calls "the silencing effect of discourse", because it acts "[...] preventing full participation in various activities of civil society, including the public debate" (IBID, p. 47). Taking this into consideration, this subaltern publics (many of whom are "silenced" in the general public sphere) also react and form public spheres that expose their demands (Perlatto, 2015), even if this is a process that demands political struggles and other forms of demonstration seeking "unharmed inter-subjectivity" that they are denied. However, the discursive effects on the "body" and "mind" of historically "excluded" publics should not be minimized.

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Therefore, public spheres are constituted with ambivalent potentials that depend on a set of interests, actors, discourses, "capitals" (HABERMAS, 2008) and other elements for their critical and manipulative functions (LUBENOW, 2012) to be identified. For this, research in social management may use the theoretical-methodological possibilities of critical discourse analysis (FAIRCLOUGH, 2003), of critical hermeneutics (RICOEUR, 1990), and of depth hermeneutics (THOMPSON, 2011), among others, for understanding, explanation and interpretation of public spheres – Habermas (1997a) highlights the importance of all these forms of scientific perspectives. Finally, in terms of overcoming polarities, this argument seeks to go beyond normative vs. descriptive polarity as well as consensus vs. conflict polarity.

Argument (3): Conceiving the importance of considering a diversity of publics and their access "capabilities" as well as their argumentation in public spheres.

Habermas agrees with this argument in relativizing his diagnosis elaborated in the 1960s: "[...] alongside the hegemonic bourgeois public sphere, other subcultural or class-specific public spheres arise with their own and non-negotiable premises" (HABERMAS, 2014, p. 39). At that moment, the author lists several criticisms and studies that complement his work and compels him to think about its contradictions. With authors such as Eley, Bakhtin, Thompson, Negt and Kluge, Hall, Pateman, Benhabib, Offe and Keane, Habermas (2014) recognizes the importance of popular culture, gender issues, inequalities, social conflicts, and plebeian spheres.

This led to a change in the way public spheres were understood, and they started to be seem as constituted by different publics and holders of different capacities of access and argumentation – it is this 'open' character of the public sphere that, according to Habermas (1997b), maintains its status of democracy's 'radical' category: "[...] it is characterized by open, permeable and displaceable horizons" (HABERMAS, 1997b, p. 92). For Habermas (2008), even with the differences, the public sphere still remains – by principle – open to all (the use of empirical research is recommended to analyze this).

In this sense, it is important to analyze the interactions between the different spheres, be them cooperative or conflictive, especially in plural societies where there is the formation of several public spheres (FRASER, 1990; 2007; PERLATTO, 2015). Regarding the diversity of publics, a systematization conducted by Avritzer and Costa (2004) added the categories 'new publics' (social movements, gender representations, ethnic relations, etc.), 'counterpublics' (publics with asymmetric power relations, ethnic minorities, discriminated groups and women), 'diasporic publics' (foreigners, diaspora, counterculture), and 'deliberative' (institutionalized participation mechanisms). Thus, despite the advances, Habermas' conception was still limited (as shown above, even acknowledging the difficulties of accessing the different publics, Habermas does not explore all the consequences of these difficulties). Considering this, the complements of Avritzer and Costa (2004) are important for the Habermasian model, especially for studies in Brazil.

On the capacities of argumentation in the public sphere, some studies have shown that it is possible to consider forms of aesthetic demonstrations not considered by Habermas, that focus on the discursive and verbal/written model.

> Criticisms of Fraser and Gilroy represent for the discursive model, and its implicit praise for the possibilities of dialogue and universalism, an important correction: such criticisms imply the need to build specific structures for attracting subaltern interests and publics, as well as alerting the implicit risk of the discursive model's emphasis on verbal communication. In fact, if the public space [translation used for public sphere] is not 'porous' to the expressive force not only of the arguments but also of the performance and non-verbal forms of communication, it can indefinitely be used for the reproduction of power of those who historically dominated the process of producing verbal discourse (AVRITZER and COSTA, 2004, p. 713).

Therefore, it is necessary to extend the concept of "rational" and not to limit the forms of human expression and demonstration in the public spheres. This also avoids the criticism by Justen, Moretto Neto and Garrido (2014) of Habermasian rationalism and, partially, the "coloniality of knowledge". Therefore, to include other forms of demonstrations (of local cultures, for example, everyday knowledge, irony, humor, performances, etc.) opens the possibility for an "[...] appreciation of the plurality of voices in the public world, although they combine consent and resistance, they question and subvert the order at all times

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through carnival strategies [here referred to as Bakhtin], marked by inventiveness and creativity" (PERLATTO, 2015, p. 140-141). These issues are coherent with the idea advocated by Cançado (2011) and Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015) for an open "concept" also for social management, a concept that should not be prescriptive. It is therefore, a management concept that goes beyond the instrumental/strategic rationalism and that also moves beyond a communicative rationalism, including other forms of representation and human expression.

This means that social management expands its scope of criticism when considering the existence of diverse publics in the public spheres with differentiated capacities of influence – specifically, opens agenda to investigate the relationship between mass media and social networks. In particular, social management must focus on the understanding of legitimacy (FRASER, 2007) of decisions that can be "grouped" based on the formation of public opinion (published, hegemonic, counter-hegemonic) and on how the public interact and seek recognition, redistribution[3] or other demands (FRASER and HONNETH, 2003) – such as the sharing of decision-making power (TENÓRIO, 1998; 2005). The dimensions of recognition and redistribution (FRASER and HONNETH, 2003) that are not very much approached by Habermas are relevant in the formation of public spheres, especially in Brazil, which has a high level of inequalities. Thus, we agree with Pinho and Santos (2015a; 2015b) that these issues have to be thought and researched regarding the relationship between social management and public spheres in Brazil. Moreover, some new questions can be asked based on the issues raised by Pinho and Santos (2015b): Are the subjects not (in the sense of those who seek to empower the processes of emancipation) from social management the subaltern counterpublics? Are transformational projects not empowering (in theory and in practice) public access to such decisions? And can these be fulfilled with effective potential of deliberation?

We also suggest that empirical research seeks to understand if the various publics have access to decisions and are really considered to be participants in intersubjective practices – in agreement with the points made by Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015). However, the presence of subaltern publics, of civil society actors or of a large number of participants of movements does not indicate that the management processes and processes of public decision-making will be democratic and dialogical – actually, civil society may be "uncivil", as Teodósio (2009) also pointed out. According to Reese-Schäfer (2010, p. 101) Habermas had perceived the ambivalence of social movements and highlighted the possibility of antidemocratic movements – which "blindly defend the petrified segments of tradition".

In the research to verify this, the criteria for the evaluation of deliberative participatory decision-making processes, recently reorganized in Cançado, Pereira and Tenório (2015) can be used in conjunction with others that focus on dimensions such as recognition and redistribution. However, beyond these criteria, it is important to consider the historical formation of the public spheres, in which forms of expression can be modified and reinvented. In addition, this historical analysis can reveal hegemonic struggles and discourses that were previously "peripheral" and became hegemonic, and vice versa. Here, concepts such as order of discourse, discursive genres, hegemony, discursive struggles widely used in the context of critical discourse analysis can provide important elements of analysis for the public spheres. This means that it is important to consider the possible divergences between the epistemo-ontological foundations of these concepts and the conceptions of the public sphere (especially in the Habermasian approach).

We add that this argument seeks to break with the polarities between the conception of the public sphere as single or multiple and also between the dimension of consensus and conflict, which is directly related to the existence of one or several public spheres that can interact in consensual or conflicting ways.

Argument (4): Understanding that, in Brazil, a diversity of subaltern public spheres was formed; and argument (5) The characteristics of the formation of public spheres cannot be imported. They need to be studied in their social, historical, political and economic context.

These two arguments are discussed interchangeably. Recognizing the formation of subaltern public spheres in Brazil means to understand that the formation of public spheres is characterized by the economic, political and socio-historical contexts. Thus, it avoids the importation of European characteristics of formation of public spheres, which is a practice that, by adopting a hegemonic and colonial point of view coming from other countries, leads to despising the "local" elements. Here, we seek

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[3]According to Lubenow (2010b, p. 250), themes such as "multiculturalism, tolerance, acknowledgement, redistribution, fundamentalism, secularization" are considered by Habermas in works that are posterior to "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy", such as Einbeziehung des Anderen (1996). Notwithstanding, there is no emphasis on the phenomena of acknowledgement and redistribution explored in the debate of Fraser and Honneth (2003).

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to highlight authors who have made this debate considering the national elements and the study of the formation of public spheres in Brazil. Further, these arguments seek to go beyond the polarity between normative and descriptive and the division between the single or multiple public sphere.

Blotta (2012), in his doctoral thesis entitled *O direito da comunicação: reconstrução dos princípios normativos da esfera pública política a partir do pensamento de Jürgen Habermas* (The right of communication: reconstruction of the normative principles of the political public sphere based on the work of Jürgen Habermas), presents a brief history of the political public sphere in Brazil. Its focus is the media, but it presents important considerations in the field of social management. The author points out that the first printed newspaper in Brazil was the *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro*, which circulated between 1808 and 1821, giving rise to a first critical readership. The emergence of this press made it possible to publicize debates: "[...] although the *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro* reflects most of the official opinion, it has in many moments opened space for debates on common problems of society, in addition to proclaiming the impartiality in the production of news and plurality of sources as criteria of information quality" (BLOTTA, 2012, p. 97). Therefore, the institutionalization of the press can represent the origin of the political public sphere in Brazil, "when spaces of discussion formed by the press make possible the circulation of normative information and pretensions between formal and non-formal public spaces increasingly open to criticism" (BLOTTA, 2012, p. 97). For the author, it was close to the 1820s that the commercialization of the media occurred.

Lavalle (2001), in his thesis "Public space and life: theoretical reflections and Brazilian thinking", emphasizes that Brazil has specificities and that it would be necessary to think of the public sphere in the country in terms of "public life", which is different from public space/sphere. For the author, "public life" is close to what Habermas called representative publicity. It would be difficult to identify a public space in Brazil due to the "interlinkages between religion, politics, economy and culture that are representative of its modernization process" (LAVALLE, 2001, p. 18).

> Political culture, or as Lavalle calls it based on Sérgio Buarque de Holanda and Gilberto Freyre, the "public ethos" of the Brazilian national identity would have been generated as an antimodel of the public space of seventeenth-century Europe (where there was an emancipation of private individuals from political power and the satisfaction of immediate needs, beginning to express their condition and to problematize the organization of social and political power). [...]. Thus, the formation of the identity of national [Brazilian] political public spaces would have been marked by the traits of ruralism, traditionalism, and a "family sociability" and therefore, "pre-political" (BLOTTA, 2012, p. 98).

However, according to Perlatto and Lima (2009), authors such as Jessé Souza show that the concept of the public sphere is useful for understanding Brazilian modernity, especially against a "sociology of inauthenticity" of authors such as Sérgio Buarque de Holanda and Gilberto Freyre and others such as Roberto DaMatta and Simon Schwartzman – who highlight Brazil's backwardness, personalism, patrimonialism, and, ultimately, pre-modernity. Standing against this point of view, "Jessé Souza mobilizes the work of Habermas in three movements: to provide foundations to the very notion of selective modernization; to offer, with the concept of the public sphere, the normative framework for the evaluation of peripheral modernity; and to consolidate a consequent criticism of analyzes of personalistic bias" (PERLATTO and LIMA, 2009, p. 30). Therefore, this seems to be a possible way to also debate the criticisms raised by Pinho and Santos (2015b) towards the use of Habermas concepts in Brazil, concepts that are based mostly on the so-called "sociology of inauthenticity". Souza (2008) complements that the reception of Habermas in Brazil is compromised by the country's theoretical conceptions about politics.

On the other hand, Blotta (2012) uses the work *História da vida privada no Brasil (*History of private life in Brazil), organized by Fernando Novais, to search for clues about the formation of the public sphere in Brazil. Corroborating the analysis of Lavalle (2001), Fernando Novais demonstrates that in Brazil there was no differentiation between public and private in the same way that Habermas observed in England and France. On the contrary, what was observed in Brazil was the inverse of the Habermas model (BLOTTA, 2012). As an example, Luiz Carlos Villalta, author of an essay on Novais' work, highlights the lack of resources in public education and, consequently, the increase of people subject to private education: "The great libraries whose owners were teachers, doctors, lawyers, many times were the stage for great debates that became increasingly private" (BLOTTA, 2012, p. 100). The private spaces were the sources of debate in Brazil throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The rebellions against the established power witnessed in Minas Gerais (1789) and in Bahia (1798) arose from meetings in the private space. Thus, until the period of the beginning of the Republic, Brazil lived under a public sphere re-feudalized, under a representative publicity.

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> Even though in terms of concrete history the political public sphere was the privilege of a few, the pressures of various individuals as professionals in culture, as intellectuals and publicists and other groups previously excluded to access the spheres of economic publicity, of rights and culture that developed in the country, showed that the period of the beginning of the Republic was marked by an effervescence in these fields and the activation of a political public sphere, especially in light of the articulation of several demands for individual autonomy in the press and other media (BLOTTA, 2012, p. 104).

Blotta (2012) highlights the importance of freed slaves and foreigners as subaltern spheres endowed with characteristic cultural identity and practices. They formed communities without insertion in the public space and without social recognition. The association of these immigrants and freed slaves, when these two publics go to large urban centers in search of employment, forms the "public plebeian sphere". Citing the Modernist Movement and the Modern Art Week of 1922, Blotta (2012) points out that there was in Brazil a political public sphere originating from the literary public sphere, represented by the cultural antithesis of the modernist movement. We observe, therefore, that the Brazilian public sphere is treated in two distinct moments: before and after the Republic. Blotta (2012) also emphasizes that the same diagnosis of Habermas can derive from the Brazilian public sphere. The refunctionalization of the media caused the depoliticization of the public sphere. In addition, the author highlights the military dictatorship as a retrocession to the public political sphere and highlights the rescue of this after the Federal Constitution of 1988.

Perlatto (2015), carried out the study *Seletividade da esfera pública e esferas públicas subalternas: disputas e possibilidades na modernização brasileira* (Selectivity of the public sphere and subaltern public spheres: disputes and possibilities in Brazilian modernization), discussing the process of configuration of public spheres in Brazil. For him, Brazilian highly exclusionary society has been built since Independence with the "[...] notion that only a select few would be able to operate in the public sphere" (PERLATO, 2015, p. 126). Therefore, "the construction of a selective public sphere in the country allowed the organization of a hegemony on the part of the ruling classes, which succeeded in sustaining the constitution of a highly unequal society" (PERLATTO, 2015, p. 132). For the author the arrival of the royal family to Brazil in 1808 created an environment favorable for meetings, discussions and public conversations. However, this public sphere reached a very small number of the population (which is not unlike the bourgeois public sphere described by Habermas). At the end of the imperial and slave system, a more democratic public sphere was formed in Brazil, with the participation of many sectors of society around the issue of the abolition of slavery. However, freed slaves and the poor population were excluded: "[...] although there was an expansion of the public sphere in the Republic, it still remained little permeable to the actors of the subaltern world and the themes considered as 'dangerous' to the stability of order" (PERLATTO, 2015, p. 128).

Later, the first "Vargas period" (1930-1945) expanded the Brazilian public sphere and the social rights. The military coup of 1964 represented a setback in the process of expanding the public sphere: "In this context, the conceptions oriented toward the production of consensus and social 'solidarity' that marked the previous period were replaced by the exacerbated overvaluation of individualism" (PERLATTO, 2015, p. 131). The 1988 Constitution was a resumption of the Brazilian public sphere, emphasizing mechanisms of participation beyond representative democracy, such as plebiscites and public policy councils. Perlatto (2015) reports that even out of the general public sphere, subaltern publics in Brazil were able to speak in different ways against hegemonic discourse: "To the space denied in 'public discourse', popular sectors would carry out practices and create expressive forms 'outside of the scene', constituting 'hidden discourses' (PERLATTO, 2015, p. 133).

The whole discussion of Perlatto (2015) aims to show that in Brazil there was the construction of subaltern spheres with the most varied forms of discourse that managed to resist the hegemonic narrative. In this sense, popular sectors of Brazil are not passive, unsociable and "apart from public life", but, on the contrary, the subaltern sectors resisted the constituted power. It is important to know how these public spheres are formed in Brazil without thereby importing the European model. Therefore, the interesting thing is to search the history of the public spheres as has been done in several places, such as Russia (GORSHKOV, 2004), the Arab countries (MURPHEY, 2009), South Korea (KOO, 2007) and Latin America (PICCATO, 2010). This process should not disregard the transnational public sphere (FRASER, 2007), but understand how it relates to the diversity of national public spheres in a cooperative and/or conflictive way. Thus, even if the diagnoses are different (PINHO and SANTOS, 2015b), it is important to highlight the characteristics of Brazil to carry out research with the category 'public sphere'.

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Therefore, the public spheres must be understood by the available means, primary or secondary, considering their socio-historical, political, economic context (PERLATTO, 2015; MELO, 2015), because the "[...] studies could be enriched if they were based on a more historical approach and less focused on the 'classic' paradigms of civil society and the organization of the public sphere" (PERLATTO, 2012, p. 84). It is possible then to observe that the public sphere, which is the "third institution of modernity [...] has also been present in Brazil since the nineteenth century" (PERLATTO, 2015, p. 122).

Social management, having the public spheres as a category, can be aware of the existence of subaltern (historically constructed) publics, their discourses, forms of organization, besides understanding the process of formation of public spheres in Brazil and its specificities, without the idea of "inferiority" and "inauthenticity" in relation to European models. Therefore, public spheres are "social phenomena" that can occur in different societies and historical times. Thus the characteristics of public sphere formation cannot be imported, since they must be studied in their socio-historical, political, economic context, taking into account other relevant elements of life in society. With this, the social management research on public spheres – considering its limitation – can develop in an historical way in order to contribute to the country.

Argument (6): Conceiving that the potentials (effectiveness) of the public spheres are influenced by systemic, economic and bureaucratic structures of market and the state.

In the work "Theory of Communicative Action", searching for a response to the criticism of reason, Habermas (2012a; 2012b) demonstrates how communicative rationality is present in our daily lives. However, he points out that there is a colonization of the lifeworld. In "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy", he presents a more aggressive model of the public sphere, based on Bernhard Peters' model of power circulation. However, Habermas (1997b) is still skeptical about the democratic possibilities of the public sphere in the face of the mass media.

Persson and Moretto Neto (2015) analyze the relationship between bureaucratic structure, public sphere and its implications on social management. The authors start from the viewpoints of Habermas, Tragtenberg, Weber, Prestes Motta, Marx, and others, to analyze this relation. Persson and Moretto Neto (2015, p. 6) believe that "bureaucracy remains with a high potential to misrepresent the communicative power engendered in the spaces of dialogical discursiveness of the public sphere by promoting refractions in its communicative actions" and, furthermore – as Tragtenberg corroborated – "Bureaucracy is not an element that comes only from the functional need of the technique, but it is, above all, an ideological system of domination". The authors stress the "controversy" between Habermas and Weber: for Weber, "bureaucracy remains a first-class means of power for those who have the bureaucratic apparatus, because an associative action, ordered and directed in a planned way, outweighs any communitarian action, or action of masses" (PERSSON and MORETTO NETO, 2015, p. 6). Corroborating Marx, Persson and Moretto Neto (2015) emphasize that the bureaucracy seeks to overlap instrumental logic with communicative logic, which is characteristic of the public sphere and the lifeworld, to serve the interests of governing groups.

Persson and Moretto Neto (2015, p. 10) point out that we live in a society of bureaucratic organizations and that, in this context, "communicative reason loses space and the effect is the neutralization of critical thinking and the depoliticization of public spheres". Later, the arguments presented by Persson and Moretto Neto (2015), even if based on concepts by authors like Marx, Weber and Tragtenberg, still need to be deepened, as the authors themselves point out. However, they conclude that the category 'public sphere' is weak for the proposal of social management, which is based on the search for sharing decision-making power. We may consider this a call for other authors in the field of social management to develop empirical research that seeks to confront the affirmation of these authors – as pointed out by Pinho (2010). However, it is possible to highlight some considerations about the criticisms of Persson and Moretto Neto (2015) regarding the fact that the discourses, in Habermas' view do not govern, they influence.

In "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy", Habermas refers to "influencing" and this does not generate any incoherence. In fact, Habermas' differential is to place communication as a central part of a broad political system. Habermas conceives the political system as much larger than simply government or "governing"; he includes the instances of bureaucratic power (which must fulfill its systemic roles given the current complexity of society. This means that bureaucracy was a learning process for dealing with broad problems and systemic integration) and the communicative power that emerges from a variety of informal spaces for deliberation (FLYNN, 2014). Therefore, Habermas rescues the ideal

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of debate and communication (he searches references in Hannah Arendt and expand it). Souza (2008) points out that in Brazil politics is widely regarded as only an administrative state – reducing its importance as a social and intersubjective construction.

Faced with this, the criticism of Persson and Moretto Neto (2015) seems to be more related to the idea of a representative democracy, which sees politics as restricted to the administrative state – which is a common vision for Brazilians, as highlighted by Souza (2008). From a Habermasian point of view – considering a deliberative democracy and a broad political system – "influencing" is of fundamental importance, as much as "governing". As stated in "Theory of Communicative Action", the administrative system (in the dual conception of society) and its bureaucracy is rigid, but "Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy", Habermas softens this idea and conceives a plural political system. Therefore, in Habermas, we can consider that the political system is defined not only by the administrative power of those who "govern", but rather by the communicative power of those who dialogue and "influence".

Finally, the conception that the potentials (effectiveness) of the public spheres are influenced by the systemic structures of the State and the market has two perspectives of analysis. The first, highlighted by Persson and Moretto Neto (2015), indicates that the systemic structures limit the "power" of the public spheres. In this case, it is worth mentioning Habermas (1987, p. 111) words "[...] the lifeworld is threatened in the same way by commodification and bureaucratization; neither of the two means – power or money – is now, as before 'more innocent' than the other". However, a second path indicates that there are several interrelationships and tensions between the lifeworld and the system (therefore, in the public spheres). Thus, Alcântara and Pereira (2017) indicate that the analysis of how relations between state, market and civil society are established need empirical research and that: "it is necessary [...] more plural conceptions of state, civil society and market (ALCÂNTARA and PEREIRA, 2017, p. 14), and there are interactions that are not limited to the Habermasian concept of "colonization", for example. A literature of studies discussing state-society interactions (ABERS, SERAFIM, and TATAGIBA, 2014) in different perspectives may help in this debate, and the literature on coproducing public goods also seems to be relevant at this point (SCHOMMER, ANDION and PINHEIRO, 2011).

Therefore, when seeking to break with "consensus vs. conflict" and "normative vs. descriptive" polarities, we suggest that the relations between state, market and society may be diverse and require empirical studies – the proposal then concludes that it is possible for both cooperative and conflictive understandings and relations of power and domination – and such relations can be mediated by the public spheres. This vision, as highlighted in the introduction, conceives the plurality of the public sphere (ARENDT, 2009) as a source of equality and difference, of discourse and of action. This argument then, calls for research that seeks to understand the transformation of communicative power into administrative power and how law as a medium relates to this process (SCHEUERMAN, 2014). It also opens up a research perspective on the colonizing effects of the market and the state in the formation of public spheres (or, as previously indicated, new ways of thinking about interactions), especially research on how the present relations "society-state", "labor-capital" and "market-society", among others (TENÓRIO, 1998; 2005), and their impacts on management. Incidentally, it should be noted that colonization is a relevant theme in the criticism towards Habermas, which is underestimated in diagnoses based on the author within the field of social management.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this article, we sought to reconstruct public spheres as an empirical-descriptive and normative category of social management, in an attempt to understand the transformations, criticisms and reformulations of the category 'public sphere' in the works of Habermas (1962; 1981; 1992). In this process, the study revealed that the most current concepts of public sphere cover several issues and a plurality of publics and conflicting dimensions. We identified several gaps and limitations in considerations made by social management about public sphere and from this, and recognizing the limitations as learning processes, this study managed to offer new elements for the debate. Thus, the public spheres were reconstructed as an empirical-descriptive and normative category of social management. This reconstruction has already been carried out by authors in other fields of knowledge, especially, from the dialogue with authors critical of Habermas.

We argue that if we consider public spheres as locus of social management (normative and empirical), it is important to deal with the specificities of the Brazilian context for the strengthening of social management itself. In this sense, the reconstructions undertaken here do not treat Brazil as a democratically "backward" country, which has not yet reached modernity and,

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therefore, cannot appropriate Habermasian ideals. On the contrary, it seeks the potentialities of Habermas in order to "think Brazil" and the forms of management. Reconstruction demonstrates the descriptive, normative, and critical potential of the category 'public sphere', especially if we pluralize it and explore its development from and beyond Habermas.

The arguments developed on the basis of extensive literature point out that: (1) public spheres are locus of consensus, conflict and plurality of opinions and interests; (2) these same public spheres are ambiguous and can both concretely constitute democratic and emancipatory elements as well as oppressive ones; (3) public spheres are formed by a diversity of publics and with different "capabilities" of access and argumentation; (4) in Brazil there were the formation of several subaltern public spheres, amid the systemic and structural constraints; (5) the characteristics of public sphere formation cannot be imported, since they must be studied in their socio-historical, political, economic, and other contexts – and, based on the "place", the relations with the transnational public spheres are considered; (6) the potentials (effectiveness) of public spheres are influenced by the systemic, economic, and bureaucratic structures of the market and the state. In most cases, they are limited by these structures (observing that 'limited' does not mean 'determined'), but cooperative relations are also possible.

Such arguments go against (each with a specific focus) several of the highlighted polarities (often dealt with in the literature in unilateral ways): single vs. multiple; consensus vs. conflict and, more profoundly, the need to overcome the (rigid) perspectives of normative and descriptive approaches. At the beginning we ask: how can the public sphere conceptualized by Habermas (together with the broad criticism received) be considered an empirical-descriptive and normative category of social management? The answer is to state that it is only through an empirical-descriptive and normative reconstruction that goes beyond Habermas' original proposal that public spheres become central to the development of social management. This reconstruction contributes by indicating ways to the theoretical, practical and methodological development of social management, from which social management can stress managerial practices and their emancipatory and pathological-repressive potentials (in their different configurations). Therefore, we came to a new "starting point". This new starting point is open to further reconstruction and empirical research.

With the reconstruction of the category 'public sphere', it is necessary to consider whether the interpretations carried out have "validity". We did this by adapting to the following criteria, developed from Habermas (1997a; 2012b) and Thompson (2011): (i) fallibility; (ii) non-exclusion; (iii) consistency; (iv) non-imposition; (v) self-reflection and (vi) intersubjective recognition. In general, this means that the arguments raised are amenable to criticism and are open to divergent interpretations, and it is necessary to consider the moments of "application" of certain categories or elements of these categories (HABERMAS, 1997a). Reconstructive processes need to be non-imposing; that is, they can be accepted by the potential of understanding through arguments (HABERMAS, 2012b), not by any form of imposition (THOMPSON, 2011). This process must be self-reflexive, in which the subjects "learn" during the development. Finally, the "validity" of this reconstruction still depends on the (intersubjective) recognition, by readers, peers, and critics, that the proposal contributes to advances in that field of knowledge or practice – and therefore, in Habermas terms, it depends, considering a context of communicative freedom, of a "yes" position regarding our arguments – we are aware that it is also about relations between "capitals" in the way Bourdieu thinks about science and scientific capital.

As limitations, it is important to emphasize that: (a) We do not directly approach Habermas' new discussions on the public sphere after the 1990s – even if they are more peripheral; (b) We do not address the differences and complementarities between the concepts of the public sphere by authors such as Hannah Arendt, Charles Taylor and Niklas Luhmann, nor how they can bring new elements to social management; and (c) We do not explore in depth how this reconstructed perspective of public spheres approximates and distances itself from the various approaches to social management.

In addition to the limitations that can be transformed into new theoretical and empirical research, as well as the several indications for research already mentioned, this study leads us to present other possibilities to form an even broader research agenda: (1) To develop theoretical-empirical research through theoretical-methodological perspectives, in order to analyze and understand the formation of public spheres and the role of the social manager in this context; specifically, to develop methodological processes of studies and evaluation of the transformation of communicative power in administrative power; (2) To discuss the importance of the concepts of recognition and redistribution in the formation of public spheres; (3) to discuss the importance of public, religious, moral and ethical values for the formation of public spheres; and (4) to understand how current relations are established, considering mass media, social networks and the formation of public spheres on controversial topics, among other possibilities.

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