ORGANIZATION IN CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC SPHERE

Rosemarie HAINES

Associate Professor, Faculty of Public Administration,
National School of Political and Administrative Studies, Bucharest, Romania
rh2006ro@yahoo.com

Abstract:

The critical analysis of Habermas' Public Sphere Theory and the comparative undertaking to the current day enables us to assert that in contemporary society, public sphere is no longer a political public sphere, this dimension being completed by a societal dimension, the public sphere has extended and now we can talk about partial public spheres in an ever more commercial environment.

The new rebuilding and communication technologies create a new type of public character: the visible sphere – non-located, non-dialogical and open. Information and communication are more and more involved in the restructuring of capitalism on an international scale and the reorganization of leadership and management systems.

The reevaluation of the public sphere, public opinion, communication allows us to define public sphere according to the profound mutations from today's democratic societies.

Key words: public sphere, communication, paradigm, organization, identity

JEL classification: A 13, D 23, D 83

INTRODUCTION

The present study sets out to draw the paradigm for the new public space, as a consequence of globalization wich impress a redefinition of contemporary public space. An analytical and comparative approach allows for the identification of the features of the new public space. As a consequence of the analysis we will see that the new space has a global as well as a specific impact namely, the new public space corresponds to a new global society.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the traditional model of the public character no longer corresponds to the existent social and political circumstances. The public sphere is no longer perceived in spatial, dialogical terms, the individuals no longer confronting each other in face to face interaction.

The new public sphere is enlarged, diversified, fragmented, governed by commercial norms and marked by certain characteristics of modern communication, as asymmetry, the preponderance of the visual speech in comparison to the argumentative one, the fragmentation of spaces, the unequal participation to public spheres, the superimposition of the professional and private life on the interaction situations.

The public sphere has evolved in close connection to the existent communication models of the democratic society: opinion media, commercial media, television, mass media, generalized public relations.

At present, these models act simultaneously, but the relationships between them are complex because they complete each other, they differentiate or even oppose one another.

Public sphere is no longer a public political sphere, the political dimension being added a social one, so that we can talk about partial public spheres.

Habermas' communicational action is now in close relationship with the new information and communication technologies that contribute to the creation of a new type of public character, opposed to the traditional one that was characterized by face-to-face interaction, namely the visible – non-located, worldwide and open.

In this new development paradigm, organizations have received a major role in the social field and implicitly in the configuration of public sphere.

The organization is a central actor of today's society, able to influence social relationships on three levels: identity, culture and change (Sainsaulieu, Segrestin, 1986).

HABERMAS AND THE THEORY OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE

The communication and organization concept are interdependent, complementary and must always be connected to a theory of social action and implicitly with a theory of public spheres.

Jurgen Habermas has built the theory of a public sphere as a type of ideal where the "publicity principle" or "the public use of reason" by the individuals reunited in a public was placed on the forefront; with other words, the public use of reason as argumentation and debate represent the environment where the opposition between the civil society and the power of the state was taking place (Habermas, 1978). In his apprehension, the public sphere was a form of mediation between the state and the public power sphere in civil society. The Publicity Principle opposes the secrecy practice promoted by the monarchic state. In the bourgeois public sphere, the opinion media and different forms of politic representation lead to the creation of a "public opinion" that has at its basis rational criticism and argumentative speech and that "operates some sort of an arbitrage between private opinions and interests" (Miege, 1989). Common classes were exempted from this public sphere and the creation of the Providence State, the development of mass culture and the use of polls in the economic and political life have transformed the Publicity principle. Publicity being manipulated and managed, can no longer allow the free and rational creation of public opinion, as it had the tendency to produce a "manufactured" consensus or to lead to public sphere rationing in the benefit of the political power and the detriment of public discussion of private opinions.

In J. Habermas' conception, the interpenetration private- public in favor of social status increase, the development of an mass cultural goods industry and the use of advertising and marketing techniques in political propaganda is equal to a cease of "public use of reasoning" (Habermas, 1978). This is replaced with a type of opinion manipulation by interest groups and media with the purpose of insuring the "plebiscite adhesion of a dependent group" or the "feudal occurrence of a consensus", "acclamatory", essential in the integration of the social and political system.

With time, Jurgen Habermas makes amendments to the public sphere concept previously formulated, ascertaining that the political sphere is pluralist from its very beginning; thus, alongside and in close connection to the bourgeois public sphere a public "riff-raff" sphere is born in specific forms, a concept that takes the mutations in the current representation systems into account (Haines, 2002). The first normative model is gradually replaced with a more complex representation, made of a "fragile network of autonomous public spheres that don't accede to a common sphere, the diffuse conscience of the community with anything else than the structure of discussion that are its own". The phenomenon of bourgeois public sphere creation has marked the start of the public approach to social problems, traditional barriers between the private and public sphere thus becoming insignificant.

"Mass media marketing has fundamentally changed the nature of public sphere: what once was an exemplary forum for rational – critical debate becomes a field of cultural consumption and the public bourgeois sphere collapses in a simulated world of image creation and opinion management" (Thompson, 1995)

In an article published in 1992, Jurgen Habermas, suggests a new definition of public sphere as being build of the communication conditions through which the discursive opinion and will of a public made up of citizens can be created. (Habermas, 1992). He continues to ascertain that public sphere is "a communicational generation of the legitimate power", in agreement with his prior theory of communicational action that opposes instrumental or strategic actions (Floris, 2002).

The public sphere is crossed by inequality relationships and social dominance. It is the "mediation field between the opposing social interest and positions that need to cross the cultural and symbolic form of opinion making; public sphere is a mediating field of the power fields in the symbolic management of social relationships, that is a battlefield for legitimate dominance and symbolic violence to assert its legitimate definitions" (Floris, 2002).

Public sphere expresses four mediation forms:

Field of public opinion formation thorough all forms of communication existent in society.

Field of democratic formation of a political will through universal suffrage, of the parliament and parties.

A mediation sphere between state and civil society.

A conflict space that expresses the social inequality and dominance relationships (Floris, 2002).

Among these social fields, there is a collision interdependency. Thus, mediation between the state and civil society is not just a democratic negotiation process between the private civil sphere and that of the government. It is also the mediation of the economic, politic and symbolic force ratios of society that is the mediation of unequal capacities and powers in economic and market production, in selecting and exercising a political activity, in the production and access to cultural goods and in the creation of legitimate representations (Floris, 2002).

THE NEW PUBLIC SPHERE

In the beginning of the 21st century, the traditional model of the public character is no longer adequate to the existent social and political circumstances. Public life is no longer a collection of individual in a common area, who engages in debates about common interest problems. The model of the public sphere is no longer perceived in spatial and dialogical terms; the individuals no longer confront each other in face-to-face interaction.

The new public sphere is enlarged, diversified, fragmented, more and more governed by commercial norms (Miege, 2008). Actually, some characteristics of modern communication, such as:

- Asymmetry: the subjects are found in partial interaction situations, and the dominance or exclusion phenomena often annihilate or complicate social exchanges;
 - Visual discourse predominates over the argumentative discourse;
- Fragmentation of spaces There is an unequal participation to the public sphere or public spheres (consequence of the development of new information and communication techniques and unequal access to them.);
- Superimposition of the professional and private live, has profoundly modified the Public Sphere concept.

The paradigm of the new public sphere has evolved in close connection to the four communication models successively appearing in the history of democratic societies:

- Opinion media (especially in the 18th century);
- Commercial media for the large audience (starting at the end of the 19th century);
- Audio-visual mass media and especially generalist type television for the large audience (whose influence has become decisive starting with the half of the 20th century);
 - Generalized public relations (Miege, 2008).

Bernard Miege ascertains that, at present, the models are simultaneously acting, but the relationships between them are complex because they complete each other and they are different and even opposed. Besides the dominant model, still governed by generalist television for the large audience, we must also take into account the communication strategies of companies, public and social institutions. Generalized public relations gain more and more important and opinion polls participate more and more, through mass media, to the construction of social representations. The relationship between the public and private sphere are permanently under modifications due to the information and communication techniques which creates an individualization of social practices (for example digital services).

The public sphere, is no longer a political public sphere; this dimension is completed by a societal dimension, since the publishing of opinions is no longer limited to the political sphere, the public sphere thus extending, and we can talk about partial public spheres.

Thus Jurgen Habermas theory can be developed in four directions, considered to be complementary by Bernard Miege:

- 1. from public sphere to societal public sphere;
- 2. from written media (opinion) to generalist audio-visual mass-media;
- 3. from mass-media (press and radio) to generalist public relations;
- 4. from a unitary public sphere (in principle) to fragmented and partial public spheres (Miege, 2008)

 The researcher advances the assumption of the creation of a new communicational action, due to the momentum gained by the information and communication techniques that completes existent models. Some of the characteristics of this new model would be:
- this is a more societal model than the others in which politics covers a limited space, since the ratio between the information and communication techniques and politics are still distant, but are on the verge of reorganizing themselves;
- the purpose of work and professional sphere is more important than in the past within public spheres;
- it is a more selective and more heterogeneous model than the media models preceding it (access to the digital environment is problematic);
- it is a model in close interaction with preexistent models.

In conclusion, in the new public sphere model the audio-visual mass media remains dominant; the public sphere continues its fragmentation process going from a political public sphere to a societal public sphere in an increasingly commercial environment. Miege talks about models of communicational actions, a concept that makes the connection to Habermas' communicational action theory, but draws attention on new norms of the communicational action in relation to the new communication and information techniques.

Habermas' apprehension about the public sphere is a spatial and dialogical one. (Thompson, 1995). It is based on the idea that individuals meet in a common location in order to engage in a dialogue with one another, as equal participants to a face-to-face conversation. This apprehension has little to do with the type of action and communication that have become more and more common in the modern world. Even today, there are certain contexts of social and political life, as for example rallies or public meetings of different types that still present a certain similarity to the meetings from the villages – cities of classical Greece. But, this model of the public character is nowadays far from the practical life context of the individuals.

The traditional concept of public life is in discrepancy with the new forms of public character, created by information and communication. Mediated communication (radio, TV, newspapers, etc.) can be understood as an extension of the traditional model, as a conversation, but different from the face-to-face type conversation, because it involves thousands or millions of potential participants and is therefore an illusion of communication understood as a dialogical communication in a shared location.

The new information and communication technologies create a new type of public character: the visible sphere – non-located, non dialogical, open in which symbolic mediated forms can be expressed and received by a large number of other non-present individuals (Thompson, 1995). The public mediated character is a non-located space meaning it is not located to certain spatialtemporal locations. It is a space meaning it is an opening, a sphere of possibilities in which symbolic mediated forms may occur, but it is not a space, meaning a certain space, in which individuals act and interact. Just as the development of communications means gives symbolic forms the possibility to travel beyond the context of their occurrence, it also prevents the public character phenomena from sharing a common space: the mediated public character sphere is extended in time and space and has a potentially global spread. The public mediated character is non-dialogical to the purpose that the issuers and receivers of the mediated symbolic forms are not, usually engaged in a dialogue with one another. The issuers issue mass-media messages for a nondefined series of potential receivers and the receivers receive these messages in the context they are not allowed to answer the issuers in a direct and discursive manner. The public mediated character is an open space, meaning it is a creative and non-controllable space, a space in which new symbolic forms can be expressed, in which new words and images can appear at the same time, in which the information that has been previously hidden to the sight may become available and in which the consequences of the fact of its becoming visible cannot be fully anticipated and controlled.

Due to these characteristics of the mediated public character, the fight for visibility has intensified in social and political life, and the nature of power and politics in modern society has changed. The question that is posed today is how opinion can be created, when the written media loses ground to the audio visual and electronic means of communication.

From the 18th century, until the half of the 20th century, written media developed more as opinion media. It was about creating a public sphere, a location for polemics and contradictory debates, being characteristic of a new way to perceive politics. The media was considered the expression of public opinion, the public opinion itself. Obviously, it is about the public opinion of those who were enrolling in the game of the democratic political fight in 21th century, and not about the opinion of large masses, being suspended for a long time. In time, it is developing an "objective" and "neutral" media, which trusts the mission to the intellectual for creating opinions. The reporter became witness and observer. The implication of the editorialist from the 19th century and beginning of 20th or of the intellectual from the 20th century, disappears gradually, with the development of new pylons of information and communication regarding mostly the function of information and publicity. The audiovisual (the image) does not encourage the ideas debate, but rather the spectacular character of the disputes. As Pierre Bourdieu declares, the television does not represent a space for discussions and argumentations (Bourdieu, 1996). Unlike to the period when newspaper was dominating, the television and the primary medias of audiovisual make a system which organize our public space according to their quality. Hereby, the expression of opinions converts radically in accordance with the used communication mean (Lits, 2010). Thanks to the television, information becomes instantaneous with the event, it is succeeding briskly, which precludes the analyse and the reflection and as well the development of some debates ideas.

Within the specialized literature is expressed the idea that the debate spaces are changing with the new ways of communication, as in the case of internet. There are experts who affirm that the internet can not create a public space, in the classical meaning of term. The internet changes radically the profession of newspaperman. Hereby, the relation of newspaperman with the sources is different: the sources are multiple indeed, but less reliable, the journalist loses the function of master of sources. Some of them consider that the internet exceeds the classic journalist by offering more diversified information, which send to the external sources and to other sites, as well, the internet facilitates the interaction with the receivers (permanent feed-back, opinions of readers available online, evaluation of article by online scoring systems, etc.). The multiplicity of messages transmitters creates the situation where it does not exist exclusive right of knowledge, the knowledge being elaborated jointly. The participation and the interaction gives to the receiver the feeling that he is a co producer in the same time. But the jointly enunciation leads to the loss of identity. The debate, the polemic can not exist outside the identity of participants. The lack of identity of sender is a major impediment for the construction of opinions, that is of a democratic public space. Therefore, the internet can not build itself a new public space.

Finally, the fight in society makes part as well from a paradigm of fight and of politics action. However, the representative democracy which has triumphed in the modern world, is far from the democratic ideal which has started 2500 years ago.

The institutionalized representative democracy at the level of national state related to the market economy which is practically self-contained, creates new problems in a society which has registered a progress. The idea of legitimacy is pointed out by a series of problems, such as:

• the professionalisation of politics and the bureaucratization of politics parties, the active participation to the political process has became more and more limited to the professional officials, who have transformed politics in a career, the political parties depend on the elective support to acquire the power and permanently are looking to distinguish themselves from other parties by the rivals denouncement and through a political game by the participation of all persons at elections at every four or five years;

- the inequalities generated on market: the democracy has assured the election right of citizens, but he has agree with the illegal process which represents the access way to power, to economic resources and to chances of life for individuals.
- the democratic practices are limited within the sphere of the institutionalized politics, but there are many spheres of social life which are really excluded of taking decisions regarding the democratic procedures;
- the representative democracy was institutionalised mainly at the level of national state, but the territorial delimitation has became more problematic, in the context of globalisation, when the national states are involved in power networks which are extending beyond the own borders and limit the manoeuvre space of national governments, which have been democratically elected. As well, a series of themes, such as: the activity of international corporations, problems regarding the pollution, environmental dissipation, the increasing number of weapons of mass destruction, as well as others, which cannot be really solved within the political of national state (Thompson, 1995).

GLOBALIZATION, PUBLIC SPHERE AND ORGANIZATION

Currently, the present expansion of communication should be put in connection with the capitalism during its period of liberal globalization (Mattelart, 1993).

"The communication accompanies the suis-generis globalization; it creates worldwide a number of networks more or less high-performance and without doubt, less available than it was foreseen. It offers a new range of products and services mainly transnational and offering to the public and private leaders organs a whole series of techniques of managing the society" (Miege, 2004, b). It promulgates a "globalization" ideology - being the condition for a deep transformation of the capitalist approach of production. The communication is classified by two different paradigms, which try to identify the processes of information and communication, both at the private space and the public one;

- technical and economical paradigm,
- the paradigm of computerization.

The technical and economical paradigm suggest an explanatory system based on the technical and economical rationality consisting of a chain of successive and inducted causalities: technical changes of the productive system, society changes, cultural changes and political changes.

The computerization paradigm, connected with the first one, is based on technology, according to it, the informatics, completed by networks, has to handle socio-political and socio-cultural consequences propitious, sustained by adequate public politics.

The idea which circulates in the currently society is that after the industrial stage, the capitalist approach of production passes to a new phase, which is based on the process of computerization and communication. On the one hand, there is a process of industrialization of communication and on the other hand, the society's computerization takes place, being a process in which all the institutions participate (or the organizations), and individual users as well. It is sure the fact that information and communication participate more and more to the reorganization of capitalism (as model of production) at global scale and to the leadership and management systems (Miege, 2004). The strategies and the techniques of communication are used more intensive by the public or private organizations, the communication being considered a consensual way of action which uses persuasion and impression, the authoritative ways - traditionally used in well hierarchical organizations being abandoned.

The organizations have achieved an important role within the social field to organise public space. Organizational fields, along with other factors, make the public space being able to influence the social rapports at three levels: identity, cultural and of change (Sainsaulieu, Segrestin, 1986). Exploring the institutional approach regarding the contribution of Sainsaulieu and Segrestin within the organization sui-generis, we could affirm that the organization becomes a stake of society, having a potential of recognising and redefining the collective identity.

The culture of organization being understood as a traditional binding of some shared values (membership feeling, collective capacity to produce consensus regarding the projects, work community, etc.) it can pass the boarders of organization, and the values, the models and the systems of own representation can contribute to the society transformation and evolution. The change will astonish the dynamic of relation between organization and society, both in the interior of organization and within the whole society.

The use of techniques and of technologies of communication in almost all the social institutions and the creation of the communication networks have contributed to the organization of work within network, favouring the interactivity, decentralizing the practices and the new organisations. The flow of information determines new logics of organization, the organizations becoming more fluid, open and decentralized.

The paradigm of networks is used both in communication approach and in the organizations themselves. The analyse of networks permit to study the organizations, both the internal functionality and within organizations and the relations between organizations and environment (Lazega, 1994).

This perspective regarding the research of organizations leads us one more time to the idea of configuration of one public space having others characteristics, a fragmented public space and competitor and restrictive in the same time, because the access to the new techniques of information and communication is not equal. The political system, the administrative system, the economical system and the private system, which is overlapping more and more with the professional space, all of them are crossing the contemporary public space.

The organizations manage the social rapports within the public space using the communication techniques. The role of the membership organization within the public space of the enterprise is connected with the approach how has evolved the enterprise in time, the apparition of the capitalist enterprise, the managerial concepts and the evolution of the information and communication techniques.

After the first industrial revolution, the organization (enterprise) has appeared as old-fashioned and there was a need of a new management where the staff to be implied and stimulated by participation and communication. The new style of management has specialised in a truth ideological activity of "production of new values and adequate symbols for reaching the adhesion of employees to the concepts and the managerial strategies" (Floris, 2002). The new non-Taylor management left place to the extension of information circulation, to the productivity of quality, to a more simple leadership, where the motivation of employees is taken into account. The strategies of the established global communication have valued the cultural proportions of the management. We can affirm that three series of phenomena have been used to force the development of communication activities within the enterprises, and later on, within the organizations:

- the renewal of leading approaches,
- phenomena regarding the production, the treatment and the circulation of information related of work and introduction of informatics techniques which have transformed the information into a strategic factor of productivity,
- the involvement and the motivation of the employees (Floris, 2002).

The organizational communication can be analysed in those three spheres of the enterprise: the space of work organization, the administration space or the structural, bureaucratic organization and the space between enterprises and different environments of it (Le Moenne, 2002).

The area of enterprise (organization) has both material and symbolic dimensions which refers to an own imaginary, imaginary which will be insert within the social global imaginary.

The new methods of elaboration strategies used by leadership which suppose action by the instrumentality of signal generating, signs and symbols within the socio cultural contexts where they operate. For existing and resisting, the organisations should define the formal rules, the procedures the principles and to action in such a way to shared, and to produce a commune imaginary, susceptible to be shared and to have a favourable public opinion.

The computerisation revolution contributes to the establishing of new practices and paradigms for symbolical administration with the purpose of forming adhesion and trying to create common imaginary forms.

Instrumental vision (from the functionalist perspective) regarding the communication within the organisations introduce us the communication as a surveillance tool, of information transmission, the promotion of organisational change. However, the communication does not mean just to send information, a message, it means as well to put together, to build a commune meaning within the speech. Structuring the significance change the functionalist perspective when the organization is conceived as a monolithically instance within the information circulates and messages are conveyed.

We can define the organisational culture as being composed by series of artefacts, values and assumptions born by the interaction of organisation's members (Keyton, 2005). The organisational groups solve their problems by external adaptation and internal integration. The organisational culture is a determinant role of these processes, a subjective phenomenon which is manifesting as a build composed by many levels such as: artefacts, values, assignments.

The artefacts, the values, the assignments compose a system; the rules, the standards, the customs and the physical attributes are visible and tangible. The rules are patterns of behaviour and communication and approaches of social control in the same time. The values consist in strategies, goals, principles or qualities considered ideal or divisible, which guide the organisational behaviour. The values are associated with work and include the prestige, the self-control, the authority, the ambition, the independence, the creativity, the equality, the tolerance, the respect, the politesse, the engagement and harmony. Some series of values may be a real support for the organizations, others can be a fight source. The organisational sources are visible within the employees actions and influence the way how the members of organization facilitate and practice the communication (Keyton, 2005).

The assignments are abstract and implicit beliefs of organisation's members about themselves, about their relations with other members of organisation, clients and other external instances, about the organization itself or the work they do.

The organisational culture establish areas within the collective goals arise, the individual actions and where the communication take place. Therefore we can deduce that the organization is a dynamic, cultural complex composed by more cultural systems of group or systems of goals.

In a communicational approach of organisational culture (Eisenberg, Murphy & Andreus, 1998). We feel that the interactions between the members of organization create the reality within organisation, and the organisational culture is composed by communication. The symbols, the messages, the meanings are part of the talkative process, which create the organisation. The members of organization create by their talkative performance a symbolical and social reality.

The relation between communication and organisational culture is presented by the following model:

- communication creates and recreates the organisational reality,
- the significances are built within local, social and historical contexts, the significances may be different for the members of organisation, the significances appears in the public dialogue between the members of organization and are influenced by the past significances,
- the vision of different groups regarding the organization and its activity differs; each alternative interpretation is in a process of negotiation with these realities, each interpretation being valid for the members of organization who share it,
- communication within organization is influenced by the prime reality and as well, it sustains the existence of this reality.

The communication uses symbols to distribute messages. The symbols reflect the organisational culture, influence the behaviours, contributing to the internationalisation of values and rules, facilitating the communication of organisation's members and incorporating the organisational system of significances. The promulgated symbols within organisations, are invested

with power because they express values and assignments, those created, maintained and produced by the members of organization by communication. And the consensus of organisational culture is based on the congruence of the artefacts, of values and of own assignments of organisation's members. A strong organizational culture is building by an internal, redundant system of communication and by a supported management of organisational image.

For an organization to be operational, it should have a vision, a mission and a strategic plan of action. The vision indicate the significance and the orientation of organisation, but it dictates the genre of relation with external groups. The internal communication within the organization is a modality of identity creation, by creating a commune universe of reference made by a sector of activity, by purposes and structure, by a commune history, by values, myths, and commune symbols.

The external communication transmits this system of reference to the exterior; this distinct individuality of the organisation, feeling of membership of organisation's members is closely related with the image which the organization is producing itself. The external image of organization should be identical with its real identity. Otherwise, the organization will lose by credibility and public image will be negative.

CONCLUSION

By public image, the organization is individualizing in public space. The organisational identity depends on the existence of organisational communication. Therefore, we can admit the identity function of communication. The adhesion of members of organisation, being understood as an agent of their sociability (the sociability being the process by which the actors of organization are constituted in collective actors by collective solidarity) is realising by strategies of representation and communication because of the image which makes from organization an institutional place of communication and information.

Configuring a new public society has a global impact and corresponds to a new public society.

A new public space, havening new features, creates new perspectives in analysing life both at macro and micro social levels. We believe that, for future research, the directions of interdisciplinary research can be extended in order to understand how communication contributes to the creation of organizational identity or how organisational management changes under the influence of the new public space.

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