

WHO DECIDES TO DECIDE THE PUBLIC? SELECTIVITY, SUBALTERNITY, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

QUEM DECIDE O PÚBLICO? SELETIVIDADE, SUBALTERNIDADE E A LUTA POR DIREITOS HUMANOS

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Abstract

The dominant public sphere often marginalizes subaltern voices, perpetuating inequalities and compromising the effectiveness of human rights policies. This study investigates the mechanisms of exclusion present in the hegemonic public sphere and explores emerging alternatives that seek to promote greater inclusion and equity. The first hypothesis suggests that the public sphere is structured by processes that favor hegemonic groups, excluding divergent perspectives. Chantal Mouffe, in her theory of agonistic democracy, argues that conflict is inherent in democratic societies and that the suppression of dissent limits the plurality necessary for democratic vitality. The second hypothesis points to the emergence of subaltern public spheres as spaces of resistance and political rearticulation. Boaventura de Sousa Santos, through the epistemologies of the South, emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing knowledge and practices emerging from these spheres, challenging the monoculture of knowledge imposed by Western hegemony. The third hypothesis proposes that human rights policies are more effective when they incorporate the perspectives of marginalized spheres. James C. Scott, by analyzing everyday forms of resistance, reveals how hidden infrastructures can inform public policies more sensitive to the realities of subaltern groups. The adopted methodology consists of a critical literature review, analyzing the contributions of Mouffe, Santos, and Scott. The results indicate that the selectivity of the public sphere reinforces social hierarchies, while subaltern spheres offer essential counter-narratives for the construction of more inclusive and representative public policies.

Keywords: Public sphere; Subalternity; Human Rights; Public Policies; Social Exclusion.

Resumo

A esfera pública dominante frequentemente marginaliza vozes subalternas, perpetuando desigualdades e comprometendo a eficácia das políticas de direitos humanos.

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I declare for all due purposes that generative artificial intelligence was used in the preparation of the spelling review of this article.

Este estudo investiga os mecanismos de exclusão presentes na esfera pública hegemônica e explora alternativas emergentes que buscam promover maior inclusão e equidade. A primeira hipótese sugere que a esfera pública é estruturada por processos que favorecem grupos hegemônicos, excluindo perspectivas divergentes. Chantal Mouffe, em sua teoria da democracia agonística, argumenta que o conflito é inerente às sociedades democráticas e que a supressão de dissensos limita a pluralidade necessária para a vitalidade democrática. A segunda hipótese aponta para o surgimento de esferas públicas subalternas como espaços de resistência e rearticulação política. Boaventura de Sousa Santos, por meio das epistemologias do Sul, enfatiza a importância de reconhecer e valorizar conhecimentos e práticas emergentes dessas esferas, desafiando a monocultura do saber imposta pela hegemonia ocidental. A terceira hipótese propõe que políticas de direitos humanos são mais eficazes quando incorporam as perspectivas das esferas marginalizadas. James C. Scott, ao analisar formas cotidianas de resistência, revela como infraestruturas ocultas podem informar políticas públicas mais sensíveis às realidades dos grupos subalternos. A metodologia adotada consiste em uma revisão bibliográfica crítica, analisando as contribuições de Mouffe, Santos e Scott. Os resultados indicam que a seletividade da esfera pública reforça hierarquias sociais, enquanto as esferas subalternas oferecem contra-narrativas essenciais para a construção de políticas públicas mais inclusivas e representativas.

Palavras-chave: Esfera pública, Subalternidade, Direitos Humanos, Políticas Públicas, Exclusão Social.

Summary: 1. Introduction; 2. The constitutive exclusion of the hegemonic public sphere; 2.1 Agonistic Democracy as a Critical Alternative; 3. Subaltern public spheres as spaces of resistance; 4. Incorporation of subaltern perspectives in human rights policies; 5. Final considerations; 6. References.

1 INTRODUCTION

The public sphere is traditionally conceived as an open and inclusive space where diverse voices contribute to the formation of public opinion and the development of policies that reflect the interests of society. However, in practice, this sphere often marginalizes subaltern voices, perpetuating inequalities and undermining the effectiveness of human rights policies. This article seeks to investigate the mechanisms of exclusion present in the hegemonic public sphere and explore emerging alternatives that promote greater inclusion and equity.

The hypotheses proposed by the author are based on the following premises: The dominant public sphere is structured by exclusionary mechanisms that privilege hegemonic groups. Subaltern public spheres emerge as spaces of resistance and political rearticulation. Human rights policies are more effective when they incorporate perspectives from these marginalized spheres.

To address these hypotheses, the study employs a critical literature review, drawing on the analyses of theorists such as Chantal Mouffe (political agonism and radical democracy), Boaventura de Sousa Santos (epistemologies of the South and sociology of absences), and James C. Scott (everyday resistance and hidden transcripts).

The analysis developed in this essay demonstrates that the hegemonic public sphere operates through exclusionary mechanisms that reproduce social hierarchies and silence marginalized voices. This structural selectivity not only consolidates inequalities but also compromises the effectiveness of public policies aimed at guaranteeing human rights. In the Brazilian context, as noted by Perlatto (2015), this

dynamic dates back to the 19th century, when an elitist public sphere was consolidated, marked by the systematic exclusion of subaltern groups—a legacy that persists in contemporary forms of political marginalization.

In response to this exclusion, subaltern public spheres emerge as spaces of insurgency and redefinition of the political. These counter-publics, as highlighted by Hogemann (2024), play a doubly transformative role: (1) they destabilize hegemonic narratives by articulating invisible demands, and (2) they function as laboratories for political alternatives. The actions of indigenous movements, peripheral collectives, and LGBTQIA+ organizations exemplify how these spheres reconfigure the public debate, challenging the limits of representative democracy.

Overcoming this paradox requires, therefore, the institutionalization of mechanisms that broaden the participation of subaltern voices in decision-making processes. As the analyzed cases demonstrate, incorporating these perspectives is not merely symbolic but an essential condition for public policies that effectively promote equity. This implies rethinking the power structures of the traditional public sphere, transforming it into a plural space where conflicts are substantively mediated—the only path to a democracy that transcends its merely procedural dimension.

2 THE CONSTITUTIVE EXCLUSION OF THE HEGEMONIC PUBLIC SPHERE

The public sphere is a controversial topic. Since its origin in bourgeois society, the concept of a discursive and deliberative space, in which everyone can participate using enlightened reason to influence public policies, is fundamental to democracy. However, there are groups excluded from this process, and mass media often serves private interests originating from groups, political parties, and individuals with economic and influential power. In contemporary society, these critical issues persist, and democracy depends on maintaining its basic foundations, including respect for human rights and ensuring the equal participation of all citizens. (HOGEMANN, 2024, p.10)

The contemporary analysis of the dynamics between the hegemonic public sphere and subaltern counter-publics reveals a constitutive tension that redefines the very foundations of democratic politics. As Chantal Mouffe (2013, p. 15) warns, "Every consensus exists as a result of a prior exclusion; there is no inclusion without exclusion." This perspective challenges the traditional Habermasian conception of the public sphere as an idealized space for rational and inclusive debate. Mouffe (2000) emphasizes that such a conception masks a structurally exclusive reality, stating, "The idea that we could reach a universal rational consensus is not only an illusion but a dangerous one, as it leads to the suppression of differences that constitute the political" (p. 32).

This critique exposes the hidden mechanisms of exclusion operating within the dominant public sphere. Empirical studies demonstrate how linguistic barriers (Bourdieu, 2001), participation requirements based on cultural capital (Perlatto, 2015), and the racialization of speaking spaces (Gonzalez, 2020) function as filters that systematically silence subaltern groups. In the Brazilian context, as Holston (2008, p. 178) observes: "Citizenship has always developed through a dual dynamic:

on one hand, the formal expansion of rights; on the other, the maintenance of informal mechanisms of exclusion that preserve privileges."

The first hypothesis raised in this essay suggests that the public sphere is structured by processes that favor hegemonic groups, excluding divergent perspectives. This is evidenced by a dual system of filters:

a) Epistemic Barriers: Bourdieu (1989) identified how cultural capital determines who has legitimacy to participate in public debate. In Brazil, research from IPEA (2022) reveals that 78% of experts invited by major media outlets belong to the upper social strata (A/B), perpetuating a cycle of cognitive exclusion.

b) Grammars of Power: Santos (2018) argues that "The indolent reason of the Global North has naturalized certain discursive codes as universal, invalidating other forms of meaning production" (p. 92). A paradigmatic example is the formal requirements for participation in municipal councils, which often exclude community leaders without formal education (Avritzer, 2009).

Addressing these exclusionary mechanisms requires a critical reevaluation of the structures that govern the public sphere, aiming to create genuinely inclusive spaces that embrace the diversity of voices within society.

2.1 Agonistic Democracy as a Critical Alternative

The theory of agonistic democracy proposed by Mouffe (2005) offers a fundamental analytical framework to understand this tension. Distinguishing between "the political" (the antagonistic dimension inherent in society) and "politics" (the institutional forms of conflict management), the author argues: "The aim of democratic politics is not to eliminate conflict but to transform antagonisms into agonisms—that is, to create institutions that allow conflicts to be expressed productively" (p. 21), enabling Parliaments to incorporate social movements as legitimate actors. A significant example of implementing mechanisms for regulated conflict concerning radical antagonisms was the participatory budgeting experience in the city of Porto Alegre during the 1990s (Baiocchi, 2005).

This perspective reveals the limitations of traditional deliberative approaches. As studies by Avritzer (2002) on participatory budgets demonstrate, even seemingly inclusive mechanisms can reproduce hierarchies when they fail to recognize both the material asymmetries in access to participation and the coloniality of dominant discursive patterns (Santos, 2010), as well as the epistemic violence against non-hegemonic knowledge (Spivak, 1988).

In the face of this structural exclusion, what Fraser (1990) termed "subaltern counter-publics" emerge. These alternative spaces—from community assemblies to digital activism platforms—serve a dual function. On one hand, they act as destabilizing forces, as Rancière (1996, p. 37) aptly observes: "Politics begins precisely when those who 'have no part' claim their right to speech and visibility." Examples such as the #BlackLivesMatter movement (Tufekci, 2017) demonstrate how these counter-publics compel the thematization of previously invisibilized issues.

On the other hand, there is a second, reconstructive function to consider. In the words of Sousa Santos (2014, p. 215), "The epistemologies of the South do not

seek alternatives, but rather alternatives to the alternatives, questioning the very terms in which problems are posed." This materializes in experiences such as indigenous community radios (Hernández, 2021), which create grammars to articulate political demands.

The developed analysis allows us to assert that exclusion is not a defect but a constitutive feature of the traditional public sphere, and in this sense, subaltern counter-publics play an indispensable role in the radical democratization of public space. However, it is necessary to emphasize that effective transformation requires not only inclusion but also the restructuring of the very rules of the political game.

As Mouffe (2013, p. 112) concludes, "A vibrant democracy requires conflicts that can be expressed agonistically, without this threatening the democratic framework itself." Thus, only by recognizing the inevitable and productive nature of conflict can a truly plural public sphere be constructed.

3 SUBALTERN PUBLIC SPHERES AS SPACES OF RESISTANCE

[...], but epistemicide was much broader than genocide because it occurred whenever there was an intention to subordinate, marginalize, or criminalize practices and social groups that could threaten capitalist expansion [...] both in the peripheral, extra-European, and extra-North American spaces of the world system, as well as in the central European and North American spaces, against workers, indigenous peoples, blacks, women, and minorities in general (ethnic, religious, sexual) (SANTOS SOUZA, 2014, p. 328).

The second hypothesis posited by the author of this study points to the emergence of subaltern public spheres as spaces of resistance and political rearticulation. These spheres function not merely as arenas of opposition but as dynamic laboratories for political reinvention. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2010) introduces the concept of epistemicide to describe the systematic marginalization of non-Western knowledge systems, emphasizing that the apparent absence of political alternatives results from epistemic violence that silences peripheral knowledges. He identifies three central mechanisms of this cognitive domination:

- a) Monoculture of knowledge: The imposition of Western rationality as a universal standard, marginalizing other forms of understanding.
- b) Ecology of absences: The systematic invisibilization of alternative ways of knowing, reinforcing the hegemony of dominant knowledge.
- c) Epistemological fascism: The denial of the possibility of alternative knowledges, delegitimizing understandings that challenge the established order.

Complementing this analysis, James C. Scott (1990) explores the "infrapolitics of the dominated," highlighting that resistance often manifests in non-institutional registers. He argues that the political history of subalterns is predominantly composed of everyday acts of resistance that rarely gain prominence in grand historical narratives. This perspective illuminates fundamental dimensions of subaltern spheres, such as:

- a) Insurgent territoriality: The use of informal urban spaces as political arenas, redefining concepts of citizenship and belonging.

b) Alternative political economies: Informal economic practices that generate counter-narratives to neoliberalism, offering models of economic resistance.

c) Embodied epistemologies: Performative protests where bodies in resistance become political texts, challenging dominant narratives.

Concrete examples of these dynamics include:

a) Community Radios of Oaxaca (Mexico): These stations operate as living archives of endangered indigenous languages, serve as platforms for denouncing state violence, and function as spaces for horizontal political education, strengthening cultural identity and community mobilization.

b) International People's Tribunal: Initiated by Boaventura de Sousa Santos and other critical jurists, this tribunal challenges the Western monopoly on international justice, validates subaltern historical narratives, and establishes new parameters of global accountability, promoting a more inclusive and representative justice.

c) Argentine Popular Assemblies (2001): These assemblies demonstrated the viability of constructing direct democracy amidst the ruins of neoliberalism, transforming crisis into an opportunity for radical political reinvention and the building of social alternatives.

Thus, the second hypothesis explores how subaltern spaces reinvent politics, whether through an Epistemology of Resistance, as exemplified by the Zapatista assemblies in Mexico that develop community justice systems based on customs and traditions, decolonial pedagogies that re-signify concepts of rights (Mignolo, 2011), and solidarity economies that challenge capitalist logics. But also through Everyday Infrapolitics. Scott (1990) documents how Malay peasants use gossip as an alternative historical archive; musical satires to critique elites; and discreet disobedience in agricultural work. In Brazil, examples include the "rolezinhos" in shopping malls as political performance (Rúrion, 2014) and graffiti in peripheral areas as a symbolic contestation of urban space.

This analysis suggests that subaltern spheres are not mere appendages of the dominant system but active centers of alternative political theory production. Their epistemologies challenge the dichotomy between resistance and proposition, demanding methodologies that recognize the epistemic agency of marginalized groups. As emphasized by Santos (2010), the South is not merely a geographic location but a metaphor for the suffering caused by systems of oppression, as well as the potential for resistance and reinvention generated by this suffering.

4 INCORPORATION OF SUBALTERN PERSPECTIVES IN HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES

The specificity of modern democracy lies in the recognition and legitimization of conflict and the refusal to suppress it through the imposition of an authoritarian order. By breaking with the symbolic representation of society as an integrated body—typical of the holistic model of organization—a pluralist liberal democratic society does not deny the existence of conflicts but provides institutions that allow them to be expressed in an adversarial manner. [...] A democratic society requires discussion about possible alternatives; moreover, it needs to offer political forms of

identification that revolve around clearly differentiated democratic position. (MOUFFE, 2005, p. 28-30)

Integrating demands from subaltern spheres is essential for constructing more just and representative public policies. Chantal Mouffe (2005) proposes the concept of "democratic agonism," emphasizing the importance of channeling conflicts in an institutionalized manner, recognizing the plurality of perspectives in society.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos, a prominent sociologist known for his work on the epistemologies of the Global South, critiques the Western-centric notion of universal human rights. He proposes the concept of "diatopic hermeneutics" as a framework for engaging with diverse local and cultural knowledge, aiming to bridge the gap between different cultural understandings and promote a more inclusive approach to human rights.

A practical application of this approach is evident in Brazil's implementation of historical reparation policies targeting quilombola communities. These communities are descendants of enslaved Africans who escaped colonial plantations and established autonomous settlements known as quilombos. Recognizing the historical injustices faced by these communities, the Brazilian government has initiated measures to acknowledge their contributions and address past wrongs.

In March 2023, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva signed land titles for three quilombola territories, benefiting 936 families. This action was part of a broader effort to rectify the historical denial of land rights to these communities. The titling process, managed by the National Institute of Colonization and Land Reform (INCRA), is the final step in officially recognizing traditional territories. The initiative also includes the Aquilomba Brasil program, which focuses on improving housing, education, and infrastructure within quilombola regions. (Agência Brasil, 2023)

These reparative actions are not isolated; they are part of a larger movement toward social inclusion and cultural recognition. In November 2024, Brazil celebrated Black Consciousness Day as a national holiday for the first time, honoring the legacy of Zumbi, a leader of the Palmares quilombo. This day serves to acknowledge the enduring struggles against racial inequality and to celebrate the rich cultural contributions of Afro-Brazilian communities. (The Guardian, 2022)

By integrating diatopic hermeneutics into public policy, Brazil exemplifies a commitment to understanding and valuing the diverse cultural perspectives of its populace. This approach fosters a more inclusive society, where historical grievances are addressed, and cultural diversity is celebrated, aligning with the broader goals of social justice and equality. The third hypothesis of this study suggests that human rights policies become more effective when they incorporate perspectives from marginalized spheres. Thus, human rights would constitute true battlegrounds. The institutional translation of these resistances could occur using diatopic hermeneutics, as Santos proposes, considering the perspective of "dialoguing with the conceptual universes of different cultures without reducing one to the other, accepting the incompleteness of all perspectives" (2014, p. 217). An example of this is the recognition of special indigenous jurisdiction in Colombia by the 1991 Constitution, creating unprecedented legal pluralism.

James C. Scott, a distinguished political scientist, delves into the subtle yet impactful ways subordinate groups resist domination in his seminal work,

"Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts." He introduces the concept of "infrapolitics" to describe the informal, often covert practices employed by these groups to express dissent and challenge prevailing power structures. Operating outside institutional frameworks, infrapolitics encompasses a range of actions that, while discreet, significantly influence social dynamics and power relations.

Central to Scott's analysis is the notion of "hidden transcripts." These are the private, offstage critiques and narratives developed by subordinate groups in response to their oppression. Hidden transcripts manifest in various forms, including these notions: First, Tax Evasion the deliberate avoidance of tax payments as a protest exploitative economic system. Second, the idea of Spreading Gossip, as sharing information within communities to challenge dominant narratives and empower marginalized voices. And, finally, the concept of Deliberate Reduction of Work Effort. Consciously lowering productivity to resist oppressive labor demands.

These actions, though subtle, underscore the resilience and agency of subordinated groups. They serve as a testament to the enduring human spirit's capacity to resist oppression, even in the face of systemic adversity.

Integrating an understanding of infrapolitics into public policy development offers a pathway to more inclusive and responsive governance. By acknowledging and valuing these forms of resistance and knowledge, policymakers can design initiatives that resonate with the lived experiences of marginalized communities. This approach not only enhances the effectiveness of policies but also fosters social justice by addressing the root causes of inequality and exclusion.

Recognizing the significance of hidden transcripts and infrapolitics necessitates a paradigm shift in how we perceive political engagement and resistance. It calls for a broader definition of political action, one that transcends formal institutions and embraces the everyday struggles and strategies of those on the margins. This perspective enriches our understanding of power dynamics and highlights the importance of cultural and social contexts in shaping resistance.

In essence, James C. Scott's exploration of infrapolitics and hidden transcripts illuminates the complex and often covert ways in which subordinated groups navigate and contest oppressive systems. By bringing these subtle forms of resistance to the forefront, we can cultivate a more nuanced and empathetic approach to policy-making and social reform, ensuring that the voices and experiences of all members of society are heard and valued. Understanding and valuing these infrapolitics require a paradigm shift in policy-making, going beyond formal structures and acknowledging the complexity of informal social practices. By incorporating the perspectives and experiences of subaltern groups, human rights policies can be better adapted to the real needs of communities, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes. This approach contributes to building a more democratic, plural, and just society, where the diversity of experiences and knowledge is recognized and valued.

Thus, integrating demands from subaltern spheres into public policies is essential for promoting a more just and democratic society. By adopting a perspective of "democratic agonism" and "diatopic hermeneutics," it is possible to recognize and value the diversity of knowledge and experiences present in society. Additionally, understanding and incorporating the infrapolitics of subaltern groups

can make human rights policies more effective and sensitive to the specific realities of these communities, contributing to building a more inclusive and equitable society.

When analyzing the relationship between social movements and the state, it is essential to consider both the challenges and achievements arising from this interaction. Two central aspects emerge in this context: the paradox of institutionalization and the risk of cooptation.

The paradox of institutionalization refers to the tension faced by social movements when seeking state recognition and resources without compromising their autonomy and identity. Entering governmental structures or collaborating with official institutions can lead to changes in internal dynamics and action strategies. This apparent paradox can be explained by the specificity of participatory arrangements in which such movements are inserted, differing from traditional institutions by innovating the institutional format, combining mechanisms of direct and representative participation in public policy formulation.

On the other hand, the risk of cooptation involves the absorption or neutralization of social movements' demands by the state apparatus, potentially diluting original claims and weakening mobilization effectiveness. In the Brazilian context, an illustrative example is the experience of quilombola leaders participating in governmental councils. Studies indicate that 37% of these leaders perceive a "dilution of demands" when engaging in these instances, suggesting that their specific claims may be minimized or absorbed by broader government agendas.

Despite these challenges, initiatives aim to mitigate the negative effects of institutionalization and cooptation. A positive example is the creation of itinerant ombudsman services by the Public Prosecutor's Office of Bahia (MPBA) in indigenous territories. These services aim to bring the institution closer to communities, ensuring their demands are heard and considered in public policies. The initiative demonstrates an effort to recognize and respect cultural diversity and local specificities, promoting social inclusion and justice.

The relationship between social movements and the state is complex and multifaceted. While institutionalization can offer resources and visibility, it also presents risks of autonomy loss and demand dilution. Recognizing and addressing these challenges is crucial to ensure that collaboration between social movements and state institutions leads to significant advancements in rights promotion and the construction of a more just and equitable society.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study concludes that the inherent selectivity of the dominant public sphere reinforces social hierarchies, marginalizes subaltern voices, and perpetuates systemic inequalities. Subaltern public spheres emerge as crucial spaces of resistance and the production of counter-narratives, fundamental for the formulation of more inclusive and representative public policies. By recognizing and valuing these marginalized voices, democratic debate is enriched, promoting the implementation of human rights policies that more effectively address the needs of the entire society. Therefore, it is imperative that policymakers and social agents consider the contributions of subaltern public spheres in building a more just and equitable society.

Throughout the text, it became evident that the selectivity of the hegemonic public sphere, by privileging certain groups and perspectives, results in the systematic exclusion of other voices, reinforcing existing power structures and limiting the diversity of opinions in public debate. This dynamic not only silences marginalized groups but also improves the quality of democratic deliberations, preventing the consideration of a broader range of experiences and knowledge in the formulation of public policies.

On the other hand, subaltern public spheres offer spaces where marginalized groups can articulate their experiences, develop counter-narratives, and mobilize around their demands. These spheres function as laboratories of political innovation, in which new forms of participation and representation are experimented with, challenging the limitations imposed by the dominant public sphere. By bringing to light alternative perspectives and knowledge, subaltern spheres play a vital role in promoting a more inclusive and responsive democracy.

The incorporation of the demands and perspectives of subaltern spheres into public policies is essential for the promotion of social justice and human rights. By integrating these voices, policies become more sensitive to the realities and needs of all segments of society, especially those historically marginalized. This process not only strengthens the legitimacy of the implemented policies but also contributes to building a more cohesive and equitable society.

It can be observed that Mouffe, in her theory of radical democracy, argues that the recognition and appreciation of conflict are fundamental for democratic vitality and that the attempt to suppress dissent in the name of universal consensus results in the marginalization of divergent perspectives and the perpetuation of inequalities. Therefore, a truly plural democracy must create spaces for the expression of conflicts and for negotiation between different positions, recognizing the legitimacy of demands arising from subaltern spheres.

Following the paths constructed by Boaventura de Sousa Santos, through the epistemologies of the South, the importance of recognizing and valuing the knowledge and practices emerging from subaltern spheres was found, as well as the critiques directed at the "monoculture of knowledge" imposed by Western hegemony, which disqualifies other modes of knowledge and perpetuates the exclusion of peripheral voices. He proposes the "ecology of knowledges" as an approach that values epistemological diversity and promotes intercultural dialogue, essential for the construction of more inclusive and representative public policies.

In James C. Scott, by analyzing the everyday forms of resistance of subaltern groups, it was possible to verify how the "hidden transcripts" can inform public policies more sensitive to the realities of these groups, as this author highlights that, in contexts of domination, subalterns develop "hidden transcripts"—forms of discourse and practices that discreetly challenge dominant narratives. By recognizing and integrating these forms of resistance and knowledge into public policies, it is possible to develop more effective approaches in promoting human rights.

Considering this, three paths emerge for the construction of a more inclusive public sphere:

- a) Reform of public arenas: Implementation of measures that ensure the representation of subaltern groups in decision-making spaces, such as quotas and other forms of affirmative action, aiming at the democratization of political participation.
- b) Intercultural translation: Development of mechanisms that facilitate dialogue between hegemonic and community knowledge, promoting mutual understanding and the integration of different perspectives in the policy formulation process.
- c) Creative conflictivity: Establishment of protocols that transform antagonisms into agonisms, recognizing conflict as inherent to democracy and creating spaces for its constructive expression.

In conclusion, the selectivity of the dominant public sphere reinforces social hierarchies and perpetuates the marginalization of subaltern voices. However, subaltern public spheres offer essential counter-narratives that enrich democratic debate and inform the construction of more inclusive and representative public policies. Recognizing and valuing these voices is fundamental for the promotion of a more just and equitable society, in which human rights are effectively guaranteed to all citizens.

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