



THE FIELD OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION STUDIES AND THE APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM OF CORRUPTION: POSSIBLE INTERLOCUTIONS

Leonardo Granato¹

Abstract: The present article allows for possible dialogues between the trajectory of the Public Administration field of study in the country and the theoretical approaches to the problem of corruption in public organizations. Based on a bibliographical research, a larger scope of the public administration discipline has been shown, in line with the changes in the political approach to corruption. As a conclusion, the convergence of both fields into the category of “public” should be seen as a characterization of the challenges faced in each of the fields. This new category involves, in addition to the discussions on management efficiency, a focus on the democratic issue.

Keywords: Public Administration; Corruption; Public Interest; Democracy.

1 Introduction

Despite its historical character, corruption² has increasingly attracted the attention of some disciplines of Applied Social Sciences and Human Sciences, which have sought to develop a new comprehensive approach to the phenomenon, associated with the concepts of public interest and democracy. In the same way, the field of public administration studies in Brazil has also undergone different paradigmatic changes. At present, the scope of the discipline is expanded from the "public" category, involving concern for the issue of democracy, besides management. In this context, based on a bibliographical research, this article aims to provide possible dialogues between the course of the field of studies in public administration in the country and approaches to the problem of corruption.

From the expression, we will discuss the origin of the discipline of public administration in the United States, essentially represented by the separation between politics and administration, and the institutionalist approach to corruption, to secondly address the emergence of the field in politics. Brazil, showing the close concern of the area with bureaucratization, modernization and

¹ Professor of the Department of Administrative Sciences and the Graduate Program in Political Science of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul - UFRGS. Coordinator of the research group CNPq Nucleus of Political and Administrative Studies (NEPA-UFRGS) (leonardo.granato@ufrgs.br).

² The term corruption comes from the Latin term *corrupt*, which may refer, as an abuse of power, to corporate, police or political corruption (the latter referred to public officials), or, as to the degradation of something, to putrefaction or corruption of materials (change in the purity or integrity of a substance). Corruption, as an abuse of power in general, is a phenomenon of complex nature and has multiple and varied causes and consequences, which is why it has been studied by several fields of knowledge. Already, within the scope of this article, we will refer to political corruption, associated in some way with those practices carried out by bureaucratic bodies of government, political agents and parties, among others, to obtain some kind of undue advantage.

efficiency of the State apparatus. Third, we will try to approach a new stage in the evolution of the field, represented by the expansion of the scope of the discipline, in dialogue with the changes in the concept of corruption. Finally, we will describe the characteristics of the studies in the last fifteen years, as well as a new perspective of corruption that embraces contemporary democratic values, concluding about the convergence of the category of "public" as a characterization of the challenges of the field of public administration studies and the political approach to corruption.

2 The problem of corruption, the need for efficiency and the political / administrative dichotomy

The field of studies of public administration in Brazil was structured from the 1930s on the basis of the North American experience, and this experience is the antecedent that explains the contours of the field in its genesis and evolution (FISCHER, 1984). As Waldo (1964) warns, this field of study in the United States was, at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, aimed at preparing public servants for modern public administration, facing the conditions of inefficiency, dishonesty and chaos prevailing in the public sector at that time. According to the author, as the country moves rapidly towards an urban industrial condition, law, as the main basis of study and administrative action, is explicitly abandoned by the concept of "management", and thus, the rise of public administration as a self-conscious study is a response to this situation (WALDO, 1964).

The foundations of the adoption of the management conception as the origin mark of the discipline can be found in the first place in the stimulus and conviction that the methods of physical science can and should be transferred to social phenomena³; second, in the famous essay The study of administration by Woodrow Wilson⁴, published in 1887; and, thirdly, in the search for valid principles for the administration of "any organization", be it state management or private management, which could be studied as mere technical questions.

Wilson (1966: 86-87) related the elimination of corruption with the introduction of an efficient administration:

The venomous atmosphere of city government, the tortuous secrets of state administration, confusion, sinecure, and corruption at every step discovered in the Washington offices prohibit us to believe that any clear conceptions of what constitutes good administration are for the most part largely broadcast in the United States.

In this context, Wilson (1966: 86) advocated a new approach to government management:

That is why there must be a science of management that seeks to flatten the ways of government, make its business less formally businesslike, invigorate

³ As Waldo (1964) explains, there was a departure from the types of philosophy that emphasize the a priori, the transcendental, the ideal, and an approximation of the types of philosophy that accentuate experience, the observable, reality in the physical sense. Materialism, empiricism, positivism, realism, pragmatism, to name a few, have in common the fact that they claim to be associated with modern physical science and to represent or interpret science.

⁴ The former US president is considered one of the founding fathers of the public administration as a discipline in that country.

and purify its organization, and crown its duties with respect to duties.

The author also emphasized that: "The field of management is a field of business. It is separated from the bustle and political quarrel [...] Administrative issues are not political issues" (WILSON, 1966, pp. 91-92). Thus, by separating the implementation of public policies (the sphere of administration) from the political decisions that created them (policy sphere), Wilson sought efficiency in administration, which in turn would help to protect policies from corruptive and fraudulent practices, typical of nineteenth century patrimonialism.

As Avritzer and Filgueiras (2011) explain, it is important to emphasize that, in this context of transition to modernity, it was believed that low institutionalization would promote corruption in the public sector, and that it was therefore the political responsibility to contribute to the process of modernization of the country. According to Huntington (1997), modernization in this sense would be structured from the difference between the "public" role of the server and its private or private interest, cornerstone of bureaucratization in the Weberian sense⁵, as well as the creation of the institutional framework necessary to prevent corruptive practices.

From the dichotomy between politics and administration, a public administration discipline associated more and more with the Weberian model of bureaucracy and with general theories of organization and administration related to business administration, essentially concerned with efficiency and economy, in the belief of that there is always a way or "best method" to carry out any operation or movement, being the criterion of minimum economic means that will determine the superiority of the mode adopted⁶. The problem with this approach was that it disregarded the fact that, insofar as public and private organizations are different in many respects, but mainly in their primary objectives (while the former seek to realize the values and goals adopted by society as a whole, second, they seek to maximize profits to survive within the market), they also require different approaches, according to their characteristics and specificities (GRANATO, 2016a).

In turn, as management was separated from politics, and since the bureaucratic apparatus of government should be concerned with choosing the most efficient way to implement policies,

⁵ The Weberian model of bureaucracy was largely described and analyzed mainly after World War II, and its characteristics are essentially the following: hierarchization and rationality of authority, which presupposes the division of labor; limited authority of the position, governed by explicit rules; fixing the remuneration of positions, according to their respective hierarchy; technical competence of the employees, appointed and not elected to the position; separation between the employee's property and the property of the administration, that is, between the state and private; emphasis on rules and written communications; rational discipline; impersonality, impartiality and neutrality of the official (WEBER, 1999). As Wahrlich (1979) puts it, it is important to clarify that in terms of the Weberian ideal-type conception, this model could not, of course, be prescriptive in character. On the contrary, it was a purely descriptive model of a "bureaucratic utopia", designed to serve as a starting point for the analytical study of the effectively existing bureaucracy. According to the author, all the analysts and commentators of the Weberian model point out this fact, but in the meantime many of them end up treating the model as if Weber had given the word "ideal" the sense of "paradigm." On the concept of bureaucracy, see also Prestes Motta (1985)).

⁶ There is a voluminous and easily accessible literature dealing with the theories of organization and administration of classical schools. As a complement to reading this article, see Wahrlich (1979); Guerreiro Ramos (1966); Prestes Motta (2001); Prestes Motta; Vasconcelos (2002).

public administration discipline would not have to worry about corruption. Consequently, as the essentially political and ethical issues in the orbit of public administration shifted, efficiency and rational action became the central reference of the scientific approach applied to public organizations.

As we shall see in the next section, this perspective of separation between politics and administration has thus demarcated the genesis and development of the field of study in Brazil, conceiving public administration as the space of execution, by the administrative apparatus of the State, apolitically, impartial and efficient manner, of public policies defined in the political sphere. In this way, public administration was, at the beginning, a "free" discipline of values, always following the steps of positivist methodology, with a mechanistic and rationalist theoretical approach, aimed at contributing to the government's administration "functioning" Efficiently and economically. In turn, the institutionalist approach to corruption described in this section was hegemonic until the 1980s, contributing, in Brazil, to reinforcing the perspective of bureaucratization and control of management as anti-corruption tools.

3 Efficiency and modernization: vectors of the discipline in the early days

As in the United States, it would also be possible to affirm that public administration studies in Brazil started with the objective of training civil servants, in this case in the context of the administrative reform of the Estado Novo⁷, in the 1930s, a reform that had as its purpose the establishment of a public service in the way of the Weberian bureaucracy, which was to counteract the patrimonialist characteristics - essentially nepotism, clientelism and lack of separation between public and managerial patrimony - , hitherto prevalent in the political institutions of Brazil⁸. However, it is important to point out that, just as Waldo (1964) pointed to the North American case, the prehistory of this academic formation in the country was strongly marked by the predominance of the normative approach of the public administration, which reduced its problem to the elaboration of norms and regulations, inheritance of the scholars of the time that, under influence of the Roman legislation originating from the "metropolis", considered administrative law and public administration as different aspects of the same phenomenon (COELHO, NICOLINI, 2014)⁹.

Returning to the 1930s, the creation of the Public Service Magazine in 1937 and the founding of the Public Service Administrative Department (DASP) in 1938 can be considered initial milestones in the constitution of this field of study. The DASP, created to be the administrative branch of the Estado Novo, where the functions of the administration department,

⁷ Expression that refers to the Brazilian political regime founded by Getúlio Vargas in 1937 and that was in force until 1945, also known as Era Vargas.

⁸ For more information, see Costa (2008); Abrucio; Pedroti; Pó (2010); Andrews; Bariani (2010); Bariani (2010); Filgueiras (2008).

⁹ See also, Wahrlich (1979); Keinert (1994)).

linked to human resources, materials, budget, and advisory body of the presidency of the country, coexisted, became the main locus of study and instruction in public administration until the mid-1940s. As the nucleus that propagated the theories of organization and administration of classical schools originating in the United States, the DASP redefined the focus of the study of public administration in Brazil, shifting it beyond administrative law. Thus, according to Keinert (1994), a period was opened up until the end of the 1970s, in which the paradigm of public administration prevailed as an administrative science, marked by an orientation of instrumental, mechanistic and prescriptive thinking, by the separation between administration and politics, and by the tendency to value efficiency and administrative techniques as instruments of change in the country¹⁰.

As a result of the effort to institutionalize a modern and efficient public administration, in the 1940s the idea of establishing a center for public administration studies was born. Simultaneously with the decline of the importance of the DASP and the end of the Estado Novo, and with the initial support of the United Nations, the Getúlio Vargas Foundation (FGV) was established in Rio de Janeiro in 1944, and in 1952, of this Foundation, the Brazilian School of Public Administration (EBAP), structured as an institution of teaching, research and technical assistance, that counted from the beginning with the support of North American professors¹¹. As Wahrlich (1979) points out, the theoretical foundations of the so-called "administration for development", which, although basically imported by Latin America through foreign technical assistance, are also from the 1960s, it presents several elements from the Latin American experience administrative reform, essentially translated into the idea that the process of governmental administration must increasingly relate to the programming and execution of economic and social development, leading the State to exercise the rational command of the process of transformation and modernization¹².

It is important to highlight the fact that, also from the 1960s, in line with the approach to the problem of corruption described in the previous section, the state administrative apparatus begins to manage large organizations, occurring a growth of the governmental machine, with views to increase their capacity for intervention, centralization and control. Thus, during the post-1964 authoritarian regime, under the prevalence of a centralized administration based on the action of a technocratic bureaucracy that reinforced the valorization of planning as an instrument

¹⁰ In this sense, results of interest to emphasize that developed in Brazil, a challenge to emerging principles of rational-instrumental orientation, represented by authors such as Alberto Guerreiro Ramos, Mauricio Tragtenberg and Fernando Prestes Motta, exponents of the critical part of Brazilian thought in administration. See Guerreiro Ramos (1965, 1966, 1989); Prestes Motta (1985, 2001); Tragtenberg (1974).

¹¹ In 1959, an agreement was signed between Brazil and the United States, the Education Program in Public and Business Administration, with the objective of developing training in the area of public administration and business, reinforcing existing courses (EBAP), and the Business Administration School (EAESP), headquartered in São Paulo, created in 1954), and supporting the creation of new courses, such as the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) and the Federal University of Rio Grande of the South (FURG). For further information, see Fischer (1984); Bunny; Nicolini (2014); Fadul et al. 2012).

¹² See also Motta (1972).

for development and resolution of the country's problems¹³, the training in public administration was basically developed in institutions dedicated to the teaching of administration. From the beginning, there was a tendency to characterize the identity of specific formation in public administration, emphasizing the "administrative science", oriented to the administration of companies, as a common core¹⁴.

4 Public administration for democracy and new anticorruption approaches

From the 80's, in a context of political-social mobilization and economic-financial crisis and state management model¹⁵ According to Keinert (1994), in the country, the field of studies of public administration receives a great contribution of the analyzes based on the field of political science, approach that begins to gain space in relation to the approach of the administrative sciences, until then hegemonic¹⁶. Thus, according to the mentioned author, studies on the question of democracy, power, equity and public policies¹⁷, giving less emphasis to efficiency, and extending the scope beyond the merely governmental. In the same way as the redemocratization of the country, as well as the edition of the Federal Constitution of 1988¹⁸, created a favorable scenario for the strengthening of the public sphere and democratic culture in the country, consolidating the proposal of participation and control of civil society in public management, the concerns of public administration with democracy began to feel. Keinert (2014) went so far as to say that, from the 1990s, such studies were not restricted to governmental bureaucratic bodies, but extended to a series of actors, mainly civil society movements and organizations, involved in issues and issues " public, "thus broadening the locus of the country's public sector¹⁹.

In line with the new neoliberal precepts prevailing at the international level, and with the consecration of the market paradigm, a movement was consolidated in Brazil to "reduce" the size of the state apparatus and its role, finding main expression in the National Privatization Program of 1990, in the approval of the Master Plan for the Reform of the State Apparatus in 1995 and in

¹³Decree-Law no. 200, 1967, through which the Secretariat for Modernization and Administrative Reform was created, reaffirmed the importance of planning (understood from a technical perspective), secured the expansion of state-owned enterprises and centralized control in the Department of Planning. For more information, see Silva (2010).

¹⁴ This trend was explained for the first time in 1967 at the Third National Conference on Public Administration, held in EBAP, in Rio de Janeiro: "The trend in Brazil is clearly in favor of integrated course ... This trend has been encouraged by Federal Education Council, through its rules on the minimum curriculum for 'administration', not 'Public and Business administration "(NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, 1967, p. 256). As Farah (2011), state regulation of training in administration, with reference to the establishment of requirements for the administrator profession, eventually consolidate the association between education in public administration and business administration, contributing to strengthen the thesis of universality of the "scientific principles" of management and the perspective of rationality. For more information, see also, Rabbit; Nicolini (2013).

¹⁵ In these terms, the emergence of the National Program of Debureaucratization in 1979, putting questions to the excess of formal mechanisms of management and control.

¹⁶ See also, Coelho; Olenscki; Celso (2011); Gaetani (1999).

¹⁷ For further information, see Farah (2011).

¹⁸ According to Costa (2008), innovations in the area of citizenship rights, mechanisms for political inclusion and participation, state intervention in the economic domain, redistribution of public revenues among government spheres, institutionalization of social policy instruments, among others, p. 858), that "the promulgation of the Constitution represented a real reform of the State".

¹⁹ See also, Andion (2012).

the creation of the Ministry of Federal Administration and State Reform²⁰. Regarding the fight against corruption, according to Avritzer and Filgueiras (2011), the institutionalist approach, which showed that greater bureaucratization would not eradicate corruption in the public sector, gave way to the so-called "economic approach" prevailing in the 1990s. The economic perspective, the problem of corruption is explained according to concepts derived from economic assumptions such as rent-seeking (which concerns the strategic-rational action of government actors concerned with maximizing their income to the detriment of public resources)²¹, or by the fact that corruption stuns economic development and limits the performance of large global traders.

In this economic approach, in addition to being inefficient and a bad resource allocator, the state apparatus has come to be seen as the natural space where corruption takes place. In this way, from a market conception and deregulation in the fight against corruption, it was expected that reforms that would reduce the size of state bureaucracies, and their monopolies, and expand internal and external control mechanisms²², would also reduce incentives to corruption, providing transparency as a priority resource in public organizations²³.

In this context, based on the "uncritical" importation by Brazil of management instruments typical of markets, as well as their logic and values²⁴, and of a so-called "broader and more democratic approach," the field of public administration studies focused on a management style that combines "technical competence and innovation, pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness, participatory decision- (public hearings, plebiscites, forums, councils, participatory budgets, etc.)" (KEINERT, 2014, p.173), and should not ignore, however, the processes of predatory privatization directly linked to cases of corruption in Brazil and Latin America²⁵.

Regarding the previous expression, Paes de Paula (2005a) argues that although management reform has absorbed in its own way a discourse that emphasizes democracy and participation, in fact its proposals maintain the dichotomy between politics and administration,

²⁰ About the so-called "managerial reform of the State", see Bresser Pereira (1996, 1998). It should be clarified that this reform is conceptually associated with New Public Management, a model adopted by the Anglo-Saxon countries in the 1970s and 1980s, which is based on the assumption that efficient and effective administrative structures are mission-oriented, competitive, entrepreneurial and decentralized. Proponents of this model argued for its "universally applicable" model status, since there was a movement of global convergence towards a single model of public management. For more information, see Hood (1991). See also, Andrews (2010).

²¹ For more information, see the text by Rose-Ackerman (1997).

²² It should be clarified that internal control refers to the practices of supervision, correction and guidance that the public administration itself exercises over its own acts, while external control refers to that carried out by the legislative and judicial branches. See Di Pietro (2015).

²³ According to Avritzer and Filgueiras (2011), such an economic approach is narrow in that it starts from a reductionist postulate of the concept of corruption. By linking corruption to rent-seeking practices and costs for a country's economic development, corruption is addressed only with respect to the monetary aspects involved in its concept. In this sense, corruption has extremely relevant political and social costs, which refer to the question of the legitimacy of political institutions, governance, and values such as integrity, ethics and trust in public authorities. To deepen such questions, see Leal (2006); Berthin Siles (2008); Granato; Oddone (2010); Wielandt; Artigas (2007).

²⁴ See Misoczky (2004); Prestes Motta; Alcadipani; Bresler (2001). In the same sense, see Diniz (2001).

²⁵ It is important to mention that in the wake of the so-called "post-bureaucratic" paradigm, inaugurated by New Public Management with a market-centered perspective and reducing the role of the State apparatus in the social agenda, other approaches and interpretations about public administration were bifurcated, such as the "good governance" demanded by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as a prerequisite for developing countries to receive economic resources and technical support; the "e-government"; the "new public service"; the "open government", among others.

adhering to a administrative dynamic that is based on the alleged advantage of stimulating rational and maximizing action, and which reproduces the centralizing logic of power relations and restricts citizen access to decision making and control. According to Coelho's (2008a; 2008b) studies, managerial logic led many academics to erroneously treat public administration as a transposition to state organizations of the management practices of private enterprise organizations. In general terms, this transposition has branched out and has invaded the public administration's sphere of knowledge, expressing itself in a "hegemonic articulation" of upper management courses, implying the subordination of public administration courses to market logic (PIRES et al. al., 2014, p.13)²⁶.

However, since the late 1990s, in a context of growing denunciation of the regressive impacts of neoliberalism across society, a broader debate on the contours and delimitation of a field of study dealing with the "public" "(GRANATO, 2016a), and that is capable of hosting different disciplinary, multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary formations that take into account the specificities of a discipline destined to the achievement of social welfare²⁷. In this context, as we shall see in the following section, issues related to democracy and corruption demanded special interest in field studies, but the positivist method and the efficiency paradigm were not effectively abandoned.

5 Accompanying the demands of the country's democratic maturation

Perhaps the fact that best describes in recent times the concern of public administration studies for the democratic question is the gathering of a group of university actors (teachers, academic managers and students) from various parts of Brazil that, a little more than a decade ago, have been promoting the movement called "Campo de Públicas". Essentially, it is an open and horizontal network that defends a "public" (and congregation of related disciplines) as opposed to "business" perspective, "seeking to delimit two fields that, while technically and scientifically dealing with issues, issues and management problems, do so by relating to distinct objects and goals that are not only different but delineated through completely specific processes and mechanisms "(PIRES et al., 2014, p.111)²⁸.

Thus, the purpose of the Public Field has been to affirm the importance of a training in public administration aimed at solving issues of public interest, collective well-being and inclusive public policies, in a renewed republican perspective when facing the government actions in the search for socioeconomic development in the context of deepening the quality of democracy

²⁶ It should be clarified that the pedagogical projects of the courses, during this period, were guided by the Minimum Curriculum of Administration, with a clear prevalence of the imported contents of the field of business administration, approved by the Opinion n. 433, of 1993, of the National Council of Education (CNE).

²⁷ Henry (1995) recalls that this debate also occurred in the United States in the 1970s, when the various courses in the field of "public" resisted the creation of structures by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration. See also, Spicer (2004).

²⁸ For more information on the emergence and course of the movement, see Pires et al. (2014).

in the country (GRANATO, 2016a). In this sense, we deem it important to emphasize that, as a product of the academic-scientific mobilization of the Public Field actors, the National Curricular Guidelines for Public Administration, approved by CNE Resolution n. 1, of 2014, thus obtaining its recognition in undergraduate education in the country. Undoubtedly, this brings us back to a new post-2003 historical context, where the government agenda turned to the overcoming of neoliberal dogma, the revitalization of the State's role, the return of state economic coordination and the developmental vision adjusted to the restrictions of globalized capitalism and, above all, for the expansion of public policies for social inclusion in a context of resumption of public investment capacity and deepening of the democratic system through the openness and transparency of the State apparatus and community participation and control²⁹.

Although there was no alternative to propose a democratic reform of the State and its apparatus (COSTA, 2010), and even if certain guidelines that had already been introduced by management reform were followed up, a series of initiatives, especially in the field of participation and social control and transparency³⁰, in opposition to the formalization of more central controls. These initiatives, grouped in the "publicl"³¹ by Paes de Paula (2005a, 2005b), from 2011 onwards, they became part of the categories established in the National Action Plan for Open Government³².

In the societal perspective, public management is understood as a political-deliberative action, in which the individual participates deciding his destiny as citizen, voter, worker or consumer; its self-determination is based on the logic of democracy and not on the logic of the market (PAES DE PAULA, 2005b). With regard to corruptive practices, at this stage we observe

²⁹ See, Abrucio (2007).

³⁰ Since 2003, sectoral councils, participatory budgeting, public hearings and various governmental programs have been providing new means of dialogue and negotiation between public administration structures and society, aiming at the participation and social control of public policies. There are also other instruments that collaborate with the objectives of citizen participation, accountability and transparency mentioned above, such as the Fiscal Responsibility Law (Complementary Law No. 101 of May 4, 2000, as amended by Complementary Law No 131 of 27 May 2009), which is one of the strongest instruments of transparency in relation to public expenditure in the country; the Office of the Comptroller General of the Union, created in 2003 to assist the President of the Republic in matters relating to the defense of public assets and to increase transparency in management; the Transparency Portal of the Federal Government, launched in 2004 so that the citizen would follow the Internet as the public money is being used, helping to supervise it; the National Program for Public Management and Decontamination (GESPÚBLICA), approved by Decree no. 5,378, of February 23, 2005, which aims to support the development and implementation of solutions that allow continuous improvement of the management systems of public organizations and their impact on citizens; the Law on Access to Information (Law 12,527 of November 18, 2011), which regulates the right of access to public information provided for in the Brazilian Constitution; the National Policy and the National System of Social Participation, approved by Decree n. 8,243, of May 23, 2014; and Anti-Corruption Law n. 12,846, dated August 1, 2013, regulated by Decree no. 8,420, March 18, 2015.

³¹ In theoretical terms, approaches such as governance, and the new public service, are also based on democratic theories and citizenship, aiming at revitalizing the state apparatus for a better qualification of deliveries made to society. See Secchi (2009); Andion (2012); Denhardt (2012); Motta (2013).

³² The Open Government Partnership is an international initiative founded in 2011 by a group of eight countries, including Brazil. Currently, there are more than 60 countries that have joined this initiative, as well as various civil society organizations, whose objective is to promote efforts to adopt standards of transparency, access to public information, accountability and citizen participation in the management in the context of their national realities. Actions related to the Open Government Partnership are operationalized through a document called the "Plan of Action". An evaluation of the extent to which the recent trends of the Open Government paradigm offer an opportunity to stimulate processes of improvement and democratization of the Brazilian Public Administration was made in Granato (2016b).

a convergence between the new societal perspective of the field of public administration and the political approach to corruption. According to Avritzer and Filgueiras (2011), the concept of corruption must be analyzed as a polysemic and necessarily political phenomenon, and not only in its economic dimension. Their approach must be guided by the public interest, in order to configure a range of social issues and problems involved in this concept. According to the authors, the introduction of the "public" category allows a more comprehensive approach to the different problems that shape corruptive practices in democratic societies, fundamentally because it transcends the idea that corruption refers only to the misuse of public money. This perspective assumes that the effect of corruption is not only on the managerial dimension of the state apparatus but on the problem of legitimacy of a democratic order as a whole (involving a multitude of aspects ranging from social and economic to cultural and political), and allows to absorb the idea that the fight against corruption involves a broader approach, based on an open conception of citizenship and social control (AVRITZER; FILGUEIRAS, 2011, page 13)³³.

The concepts of societal public administration and political corruption reflect in some way the desires of researchers and professionals committed to the emerging values of the concept of democratic rule of law, representative and participatory democracy, and shared management models, for reaffirming the importance of forming public administrators that accompany the requirements of a Brazilian democratic maturity. In short, today, the trajectory of public administration studies in Brazil and its convergence with the political approach to corruption seems to show the impetus of some actors in the field to recreate it based on the ethical-political dimension of democratic management³⁴, adequate to the needs, projects and challenges of Brazilian society, starting from the configuration of an own inter / multidisciplinary "identity"³⁵, although living with the emphasis on administrative efficiency, typical of the managerial orientation that finds particular expression in the scope of the research³⁶.

6 By way of conclusion

Through this article we seek to reaffirm the importance of consolidating a field of studies of public administration in the country committed to democratic values as guiding elements of an area that is still in (re) construction and (re) composition. According to the proposed objective, throughout the work we present and discuss the trajectory of the studies, in such a way as to allow us to show the gradual concern and incorporation of the themes related to corruption and

³³ The idea of public interest also refers to the international sphere in times of globalization. National realities are interconnected, and the problem of corruption "transcends" state boundaries. As a product of intergovernmental cooperation processes developed within the framework of the Organization of American States and the United Nations, the Anti-Corruption Conventions of 1996 and 2003, respectively, have become common guiding standards for Latin American public administrations the design and implementation of anti-corruption policies.

³⁴ See Nogueira (2005).

³⁵ See Fadul *et al.* (2012).

³⁶ See Peci *et al.* (2011).

democracy, values and the category of public interest within the scope of discipline, in addition to the concern for the issue of efficiency in management.

Undoubtedly, since the 1950s, when foreign missions supervised the development of the first public administration programs in Brazil, until today, the field of studies has undergone several transformations that, in some way, have resulted in the search for an identity that the democratic maturity of the country. In a way linked to such transformations, we study the different conceptions about the problem of corruption, in dialogue with the transformations of the field, which today demands the commitment of the Brazilian society to combat it, considering the breadth of social, political, cultural and economic.

This therefore has a particular relevance in a field of knowledge that requires the integration between theory and practice, between reflection and action, and which should prepare public administrators sensitive to theoretical and operational requirements that represent management solutions and viable, innovative public policies and effective to the social demands and the processes of change of the country. However, it is not a question of any solution or of any administrative practice; must be those aimed at achieving the democratic and public interest values of the Brazilian State, in a context of increasing demands for accountability, transparency and accountability. Postures that public administrators must observe permanently.

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