

**Jürgen Habermas's Theory of the Public Sphere
and its Transformation in the 21st Century**

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of Philosophy
University of Santo Tomas
España, Manila

In Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of
Bachelor of Arts in Classical Philosophy

By:
Airon Jeunne B. Amosin

May 2017



UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
ECCLESIASTICAL FACULTIES



APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled

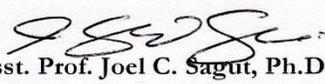
**JÜRGEN HABERMAS'S THEORY OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE
AND ITS TRANSFORMATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

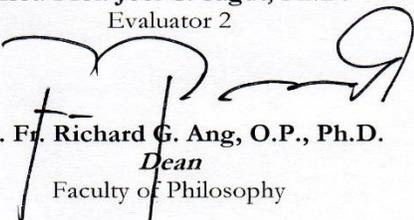
prepared and submitted by **Sem. Airon Jeunne B. Amosin**, has been approved and accepted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **Bachelor of Arts (Classical)**.


Asst. Prof. **Levito V. Cariño, Ph.D.**
Adviser

Approved by the following evaluators:


Asst. Prof. **Fleurdeliz Altez - Albela, Ph.D.**
Evaluator 1


Asst. Prof. **Joel C. Sagut, Ph.D.**
Evaluator 2


Rev. Fr. **Richard G. Ang, O.P., Ph.D.**
Dean
Faculty of Philosophy



UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
ECCLESIASTICAL FACULTIES



CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this AB Classical Major in Philosophy Thesis of Sem. Airon Jeunne B. Amosin entitled "**Jürgen Habermas's Theory of the Public Sphere and its Transformation in the 21st Century**" has passed originality checked by turnitin software.

With this, clearance has been granted for Sem. Airon Jeunne B. Amosin to present this work for Final Defense.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel C. Sagut".

Joel C. Sagut
Secretary

ABSTRACT

This study is embedded in Jürgen Habermas's theory of the public sphere and its transformation in the twenty-first century. This study aims to show that the public sphere is a concept that is relevant in today's society. With the developments in the media plane particularly in the present century, the concept shows that it can transcend its traditional limits and can be understood in another context.

This study mainly utilizes the method of textual analysis and exposition in further understanding the evolution, decline and transformation of the public sphere. The first chapter contains the usual introductory part. It serves as the preface to the main discussion of the study. The second chapter is a discussion of the evolution and rise of the public sphere theory in the eighteenth-century particularly in European societies. These historical underpinnings serve as the basis of the theory. The third chapter is a discussion of the decline of the public sphere brought about by socio-political changes in the nineteenth-century. This chapter shows that the public sphere has disintegrated mainly due to the citizens' loss of critical attitude and the manipulation that occurred in the public sphere's medium. The fourth chapter dwells with the new configurations of the public sphere in the twenty-first century brought about by the rise of different information technologies. Lastly, the fifth chapter contains the summary and conclusion of the study.

This study concludes that with the rise of different information technologies in the present century particularly with the rise of the Internet, the concept of the public sphere has not only revived but it has also been transformed as well.

The study implies that the developments in the media plane can benefit the society but only through the efforts of the society as a whole as well as with the help of citizens who continuously engage in fruitful dialogue and meaningful debate.

Keywords: *Bourgeois, Bourgeois Constitutional State, Literary Public Sphere, Political Public Sphere, Press, Public Sphere, Rational - Critical Debate, Representative publicity, Refeudalization*

For the love of Wisdom...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

A.	Background of the Study	11
B.	Statement of the Problem	19
C.	Significance of the Study	19
D.	Scope and Limitations	21
E.	Structure of the Thesis	23
F.	Research Methodology	25
G.	Definition of Terms	27
H.	Review of Related Literature	30

CHAPTER TWO

The Theory of the Public Sphere

	Introduction	42
A.	Rational Sources for the Idea and Ideology of the Public Sphere Theory	43
a.	Thomas Hobbes and ' <i>The Leviathan</i> '	44
b.	John Locke and ' <i>The Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> '	46
c.	Jean-Jacques Rousseau and ' <i>The General Will</i> '	47
d.	Immanuel Kant and ' <i>What is Enlightenment?</i> '	50
B.	The Rise of Early Capitalism in a Feudal Society	53
C.	The Genesis of the Bourgeois Public Sphere	61

D. The Social Structures and Political Functions of the Public Sphere	66
Recapitulation	71
CHAPTER THREE	
The Refeudalization of the Public Sphere	
Introduction	73
A. The Public Sphere's decline during the Nineteenth-century	75
B. The Deprivatization of the Intimate Sphere: From Debating Citizens to Consuming Citizens	82
C. The Manipulation of the Press and the Mass Media	87
Recapitulation	94
CHAPTER FOUR	
The Continuity of the Public Sphere Theory in the Twenty-first Century	
Introduction	96
A. The Internet: An Effective Medium of the Public Sphere in the Twenty-first Century	97
a. Accessibility	102
b. Information	102
c. Interactivity	103
B. The Rise of 'Online Deliberative Forums': An Extension of the Public Sphere on the Cyberspace	105
C. The Ambiguities of the Internet and its Solution	112
a. Validity	114

b. Reflexivity	115
c. Equality	116
d. Autonomy	117
e. A Response	118
D. Religion in the Public sphere	124
a. The Existence of Religious Worldviews in the Public Sphere	126
b. The Role of Religion in the Public Sphere	129
c. The Use of a Generally Accessible Language in the Public Sphere	133
Recapitulation	137

CHAPTER FIVE

Finale

Summary & Conclusion	141
Bibliography	149

List of Abbreviations:

Primary Sources (Habermas's Texts):

BFN - Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse
Theory of Law and Democracy

CES - Communication and the Evolution of Society

DS - Dialectics on Secularization: On Reason and Religion

JHBNR - Jurgen Habermas: Between Naturalism and Religion

JHSP - Jurgen Habermas on Society and Politics: A Reader

STPS - The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere

TCA1 - The Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and
System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason

TCA2 - The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the
Rationalization of Society

TNMD - Three Normative Models of Democracy

Creator of all things, true source of light and wisdom, origin of all being, graciously let a ray of your light penetrate the darkness of my understanding.

Take from me the double darkness in which I have been born, an obscurity of sin and ignorance.

Give me a keen understanding, a retentive memory, and the ability to grasp things correctly and fundamentally.

Grant me the talent of being exact in my explanations and the ability to express myself with thoroughness and charm.

Point out the beginning, direct the progress, and help in the completion, I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- A Student's Prayer by St. Thomas
Aquinas

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The new technologies have also opened the way for dialogue between people from different countries, cultures and religions. The new digital arena, the so-called cyberspace, allows them to encounter and to know each other's traditions and values.

- Pope Benedict XVI, *New Technologies, New Relationship. Promoting a Culture of Respect, Dialogue and Friendship*

A. Background of the Study

In the *Revolt of the Masses*, the Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega Gasset described rise of the age of the masses when the masses were able to realize their growing social power.¹ The public life of the people was deemed necessary for this aided the masses to know and discuss with their fellows the existing injustices and this led them to rebel and fight for what they consider to be just. In Aristotle's *The Politics*, he stated that man is a 'social being' and a being capable of speech.² Indeed, the public arena where people discuss and perform dialogue is essential for a man because it constitutes "a truly human way of life."³

The development of information technologies in the society today proliferated the growth of literacy and education.⁴ It also fostered the people's

¹ See Jose Ortega Gasset, *The Revolt of The Masses*. (London: Unwin Books, 1961).

² See Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Politics*. Translated by Benjamin Jowett, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), Book 1, Lecture 1.

³ Karen Sanders, *Communicating Politics in the Twenty-First Century*, (London: Macmillan, 2009), 24.

⁴ Ibid.

ability to improve the public sphere and their public life by enabling them to communicate and discuss more important issues at a far-reaching level. With the present technologies making the world 'ever-smaller', a "culture of respect, dialogue and friendship"⁵ can occur but only if the people utilized this progress with good intention.

In line with the aforesaid thoughts, Jürgen Habermas's theory of the public sphere can be employed as a paradigm for the improvement of the people's public life. The theory of the public sphere can be employed as a paradigm for this improvement because the public sphere enables the people to articulate and discuss their thoughts regarding the socio-political issues to their fellows. Habermas developed the theory when it started to become influential during the eighteenth-century in Europe. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, he defined the public sphere as a sphere that is "made up of private people gathered together as a public while articulating the needs of society with the state."⁶ It is a sphere in which private people gather together to become a public with the intention of protecting their private lives and properties against the feudal state authorities.

⁵ Pope Benedict XVI, *New Technologies, New Relationship. Promoting a Culture of Respect, Dialogue and Friendship*. (Vatican City: Editrice Libreria Vaticana, 2009.)

⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Translated by Thomas Burger and Erederrick Lawrence, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1991), 176.

During the eighteenth-century, the citizens started to entertain and discuss more about socio-political issues instead of merely literary works. This social relevance that the citizens have acquired made them influential and powerful as opposed to the state. The sphere that Habermas was trying to conceptualize was a discursive space existing between the state authorities which are considered its public components and the citizens which are the private. Habermas observed that the ideal age of the public sphere occurred during the eighteenth-century in Europe when it became influential and relatively powerful during that particular point in time. However, the theory declined; it has lost and has displaced its ideal democratic functions. The sphere has lost its functions to uplift discourse and rational-critical debate. It declined due to socio-political changes during the nineteenth century.

One of the grave factors that contributed to the decline of the theory during the nineteenth-century was the manipulation of the 'public opinion' by controlling the public sphere's medium. The medium of the public sphere was deemed essential for the public sphere itself because it helps in aiding and disseminating information effectively. The medium of the public sphere aids the people to be aware and have access to information efficiently. The state as well as the interests' groups manipulated and controlled the public sphere's medium by transmitting their selfish agendas through the increase in advertisements and entertainment instead of generating and stimulating rational-critical thinking and debate.

Habermas ended his work with the depiction of the decline of the public sphere during the nineteenth century. However, he gave an enthralling end in the last paragraph of the book. Since the public sphere emerged because of socio-political changes during the eighteenth century and also socio-political changes during the nineteenth-century have led to its disintegration and decline, he concluded that the public sphere is highly dependent on changes favoring it. The public sphere therefore is capable of a positive 'substantive change' only if the society passes through a benign or positive change that is advantageous to it.⁷

The theory of the public sphere - its evolution and decline - remains inviting, as the public sphere contains democratic potentials and influential power to arouse people's use of reason and publicly express such. The public sphere invites people to continuously engage in socio-political affairs that is advantageous to the society. The public sphere through the utilization and use of a proper and effective medium can stir up 'public opinion' and prompt the state to act to the injustices present in the society.

There is no other period in world history wherein technological advancements have been making its greatest impact on the society than it is today. The development of information technologies in the twenty-first century aids people's public life and the public sphere by "providing a new unbounded space

⁷ Ibid., 250.

for communicative action.”⁸ The development of information technologies also provides an avenue for the public sphere to be understood in other platforms existing in the twenty-first century. The developments have remodeled the concept of the public sphere by making the acquisition of information easier since information technologies in its many forms produced an immense ‘news sites and forums.’⁹ The different platforms of information technologies today are utilized by the people to gain accurate and vast information, it has also given the concept of the public sphere the opportunity to be revived of its democratic potentials and extend such to these platforms. With the flexibility of different platforms of information technologies in the twenty-first century, it would be possible to simultaneously read online news while going to work and discuss the present-day issues to fellow coworkers at the same time.¹⁰

There is then a need now to understand the concept of the public sphere in the different platforms of present information technologies and utilize these technologies as the public sphere’s medium in order for the concept to be transformative and significant in the twenty-first century.¹¹ In other words, if the

⁸ Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts, *After Habermas: A New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*, (Oxford UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 134.

⁹ See Jennifer Brundidge, "Encountering "Difference" in the Contemporary Public Sphere." *Journal of Communication*, (2010), 680.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 688.

¹¹ See Galina Sinekopova, "Building the Public Sphere." *Journal of Communication*, (September 2006), 507.

public sphere were to be redeemed of its democratic potentials and be fully functional in the twenty-first century, it must not only be revived of its democratic functions but it needs to be understood in the different platforms of information technologies today. Through this, the present technologies could not only be used for one's entertainment and one's pleasure but rather it can be utilized for the emergence of forums that foster rational-critical thinking and debates.¹² If the concept of the public sphere then could be understood also in the different platforms of the present information technologies, then it could "become a concrete manifestation of society's democratic character."¹³

Mark Poster reasoned that the emergence of information technologies included with it the likelihood for people to effectively inquire about socio-political affairs.¹⁴ This emergence means that the public life of the people could be improved and the public sphere theory may be employed as a paradigm for this improvement. However, an understanding of the public sphere in different platforms of information technologies is a big step, and utilizing it as its possible medium is even a bigger step. This changes in the understanding of the public sphere is considered a great change to the traditional and initial understanding of

¹² See Sara Bentivegna, "Politics and New Media." In L. Lievrouw & S. Livingstone (Eds.), *Handbook of New Media: Social Shapings and Consequences of ICTs*, (2002), 52.

¹³ Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks, *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and Public Sphere in the New Media Age*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1991.), 2.

¹⁴ Mark Poster, "Cyberdemocracy: Internet and the Public Sphere. In D. Porter (ed.), *Internet Culture*. (1997), 209.

the theory. The possibility for change in the public sphere however could actually be seen in Habermas's conceptualization of the theory. Habermas argued that the public sphere is capable of a substantive change and its democratic functions is highly dependent on the socio-political environment that favors it.¹⁵ The people's ability to remain critical of their arguments in the public sphere is also essential since any improvement in the society can only be useful if the people utilize such for the society's good. Hence, to prove that the public sphere is dependent on socio-political changes and people's ability to be critical, a textual analysis and exposition of the theory of the public sphere based on Habermas's post-doctoral thesis *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* is deemed essential for it could prove that the public sphere is indeed possible for transformation in the twenty-first century brought about by the different platforms of information technologies.

This task, therefore, is the reason for the study. The researcher will prove that Habermas's theory remains to be and should be an important part of the society since the public sphere has always existed as a component of a democratic society and it is the focal point of our desire for a good society.¹⁶ The public sphere is essential for the society because a truly functional public sphere indicates the society's democratic character. Without a functional public sphere, the society

¹⁵ Ibid., 515-523.

¹⁶ Cf. Dahlgren and Sparks, *Communication and Citizenship*, 1-2.

could not distinguish if a state is truly a democratic state or not. A public sphere is highly dependent on deliberating and critical people that through discussion, debate and agreement, produced a 'public opinion.' Through 'public opinion', it compels the state to justify their actions since 'public opinion' is a relatively powerful force of the collective people who perform rational-critical debate and regard such force as legitimate, rational and good for the society.

Given all these, the study aims know the impact of information technologies on the transformation of the public sphere in the twenty-first century.

Peter Dahlgren, a public sphere theorist, hints that:

“We need an understanding of the public sphere which is congruent with the emerging realities of today, and serviceable for both research and politics. This involves coming to terms with Habermas’s analysis, incorporating it and modifying it within new intellectual and political horizons.”¹⁷

The researcher intends to prove that the public sphere could be understood in the different platforms of information technologies in the twenty-first century and the public sphere transcends its traditional conception and limits as initially conceptualized by Habermas. The cooperation of both the people as well as the the society is necessary if the public sphere were to genuinely exist appurtenant to the twenty-first century society. The public sphere may have disintegrated of its democratic functions during the nineteenth century but given the rise of

¹⁷ Ibid., 2-3.

information technologies, it is now the moment to once again regain a true sense of the democratic purpose of Habermas theory of the public sphere.¹⁸

B. Statement of the problem

This study endeavors to understand Habermas's theory of the public sphere and appropriate his thoughts in the twenty-first century brought about by the development of information technologies today. The main problem in our undertaking then is: **What accounts for the transformation of the public sphere in the 21st century?**

In order to answer the main point of the study's philosophical inquiry, the researcher would like to answer it in a systematic manner. Thence, sub-questions are carefully structured to answer the main problem:

1. *What is Jürgen Habermas's public sphere theory?*
2. *What happened to the public sphere during the nineteenth century?*
3. *What are the new configurations of the public sphere in the twenty-first century?*

C. Significance of the Study

The study is significant for four reasons. First, it seeks to determine the importance of the concept of the public sphere especially in the present century.

¹⁸ See Sinekopova, "Building the Public Sphere.", 515.

Second, it emphasizes the importance of the public life in the lives of the people. Third, it shows how should people use the present technological advancements today for the society's good. Lastly, it encourages the people to know their essential role in the society in order to promote deliberative democracy. The study aims to motivate people to consistently engage in rational-critical thinking and debate.

In addition, Habermas's theory has been thought to be irrelevant in the present century since when reading *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, there is a need to remember that Habermas is not only using a philosophical analysis in his work but also utilizes the field of sociology in further understanding the theory. He greatly relied on historical proofs and empirical evidences for the elaboration of the theory while also exposing its decline. The researcher intends to respond to the critics of Habermas who argue that the theory has no contemporary relevance because it already declined during the nineteenth-century by using Habermas's recently published books, articles, speeches and interviews which are relevant to the study in order to justify and show the public sphere's continuing importance. Hence, at the verge of relativities and pluralistic mentalities in the contemporary setting, where conjectures and speculations envelop the structure, this study is also a response to the critics of Habermas who judge him extensively and perhaps sometimes unfairly.¹⁹

¹⁹ Cf. Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 1.

D. Scope and Limitations

The Scope: The public sphere is a general and broad topic. It may cover an array of the developments of thought beginning, from the very primitive civilizations such as Greek city-states the 'agora', for instance, a market-place of the Greeks and hitherto. For this reason, the study is only limited within Habermas's analysis of the public sphere theory starting from the fourteenth century in Europe. The researcher mainly utilizes the primary source *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* to understand the theory.

With the hope of shedding light to the topic, the study seeks to analyze and expose a feature of Habermas's works which are relevant to the study. The use of Habermas's books helps only when its contextualization fits the nature of the discussion. This study will therefore chiefly dwell on his published books such as *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, *Jürgen Habermas on Society and Politics* and his article on *The Three Normative Models of Democracy*. Further, it must be known that Habermas himself did not provide a specific book regarding the contribution and effects of the different technological advancements to the public sphere. However, the researcher utilizes Habermas's present lectures and interviews regarding the development of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. A fraction of the study therefore utilizes the works of Peter Dahlgren, Lincoln Dahlberg, Ananda Mitra, Karen Sanders, among others who extensively studied and followed the public sphere theory. It must also be noted that since this

work is an exposition and to most extent a textual analysis of what a public sphere is especially on the eyes of Habermas, all references concerning his works on the topic also concern this enterprise.

Limitation: The language of the original primary texts that will be mainly used is German; well-recommended authors are therefore used. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence are the only translators that the researcher used in reading the primary source *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Hence, the study is limited only to these translations and interpretations.

It must also be noted that Habermas is a sociologist and some of his findings highlighted the emerging scenarios that occurred in the early modern Europe particularly in Germany. Hence, the study is only limited to the published works, articles and thesis that are related to these events and may not employ field work of any sort.

Overall, this study is not of any statistical sort. This study is qualitative in nature. Hence, the study will not use statistics to validate the study. The objectivity of the study lies on the findings following Habermas's philosophical and sociological analysis of the theory of the public sphere as well as his successors' views as regards the theory.

E. Structure of the Thesis

The study aims to understand Habermas's theory of the public sphere and its rise, decline and configuration in the society. The public sphere has been conceptualized to undergone both evolution and disintegration during the eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century in Europe brought about by socio-political changes. However, developments in the media plane provide the chance for the public sphere to be revived of its democratic functions and be given a new configuration with the rise of information technologies. Overall, the researcher argues that information technologies have a great impact on the understanding of the public sphere in the present century. The researcher will try to prove that the development in information technologies transformed our understanding of what a public sphere is especially in the twenty-first century. With these in mind, the following chapters of this study will be:

Chapter I contains the usual introductory part of a thesis, which will provide a foretaste of the structure and substance of the thesis. It is comprised of the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Significance of the Study, Scope and Limitation, Structure of the Thesis, Research Methodology, Definition of Terms and the Review of Related Literature/Studies. This will serve as a preface to the main discussion of the study.

Chapter II is a textual analysis and exposition of the theory of the public sphere. In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the historical background of

Habermas. This will include his emergence in the contemporary political thought and the political circumstances of his environment shall also be discussed in order to know where the thinker will come from. This chapter will discuss renowned modern philosophers who contributed to the intellectual and theoretical foundation of the public sphere theory. In addition, this chapter will explore the developments in the political environment of Europe starting the fourteenth century. These will include a discussion of the rise of early capitalism in the feudal societies of Europe where the public sphere theory started to emerge. These historical underpinnings provided by Habermas will serve as the exemplar for the talk of the public sphere in the present century. Socio-political structures that the public sphere had developed during the eighteenth-century will also be explored in this chapter.

Chapter III is a textual analysis and exposition of the refeudalization of the public sphere. The historical decline of the public sphere will be discussed in this chapter. This chapter will expose the socio-political changes during the nineteenth-century that in one way or another, contributed to the disintegration of the public sphere in just a span of a century. In addition, this chapter will thoroughly discuss the loss of citizen's criticality and the manipulation that occurred on the medium of the public sphere that greatly contributed to its decline. Furthermore, this chapter will end by summarizing the factors that contributed to the decline of the public sphere during the nineteenth-century.

Chapter IV is a discussion using exploratory and explanatory approach. This chapter will discuss the possibility of configuration on the traditional understanding of the public sphere brought about by the developments in the media plane. This chapter will start by presenting the Internet's three inherent characteristics. This chapter will argue that because of the Internet's inherent characteristics, it can be a medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. In addition, this chapter will also discuss the rise of 'online deliberative forums' in the cyberspace. This will show that the public sphere has not only revived of its democratic functions but was also extended to the cyberspace as well. Furthermore, this chapter will provide a response and a solution to the Internet's current ambiguities in order to avoid the mistakes committed during the nineteenth-century. Lastly, the study will discuss religion in the public sphere.

Chapter V will be the summary and conclusion. The researcher will articulate in this chapter a response to the study's sub-questions and main problem.

F. Research Methodology

As regards the procedure of gathering instruments and sources of data for analysis, the researcher mainly employs the method of library research using books, lectures and journal articles directly concerning the topic. Resources from online databases are also of great importance and use for they provide an array of discussions either against or in support to Habermas and his works on the public sphere which the researcher deems beneficial to the study. With these, the

researcher utilizes a combination of textual analysis, exposition, exploratory and explanatory approach in further understanding the theory. The study primarily employs textual analysis since the researcher analyses Habermas's works and other works concerning the study. The study is also expository since the study intends to explain and describe the factors that contributed to the evolution, decline and configuration of the public sphere.

The study is also exploratory and explanatory. It is on the one hand exploratory because the study does not just end in the reading of the thesis itself. Rather, the researcher invites the readers to an additional research and study that may help improve the common understanding of what a public sphere is. On the other hand, it is explanatory because the study serves as a descriptive analysis of the public sphere.

Additionally, the study utilizes an interdisciplinary approach in the analyzing of the data gathered from the texts as well as in the writing of the thesis itself. Drawing inspiration from the discipline of sociology, in which incidentally Habermas, too, is indebted, the study employs a context-based reading in analyzing the texts which could be analogically equated to the method of textual analysis. This simply means a constant reference to the historical, biographical and cultural narratives that in one way or another contributed to the birthing of the ideas or concepts propagated in the sources. This will be a tool for the study to reveal the true nature of the public sphere as well as point some out of its flaws

which will enable the researcher to discuss from history what must be learned in order not to repeat the process of deconstruction again and again in the present century and for the centuries to come while at the same time furnishing the thought that the study wishes to discuss in a manner that will appeal to the consciousness of the contemporary mind-set.

G. Definition of Terms

In this section, the researcher intends to discuss the key terms in order to have better grasp of the study.

Bourgeois – The bourgeois is a troublesome term. It appeared on Habermas's original German work termed as *bürgerlich* which may be translated in both connotations as 'bourgeois' or 'citizen' and in expression such as 'civil society'. *Bürgerlich* also means the 'middle-class' citizens which is different from 'craftsmen' and 'shopkeepers'.²⁰

Bourgeois constitutional state – The bourgeois constitutional state was formed to link the public sphere to the idea of law. It secures its citizens basic rights which made the public sphere in the political realm "an organ of the state so as to ensure institutionally the connection between law and opinion."²¹ The state established this to abolish the idea that the state is a dominating force that threatens the

²⁰ STPS, xv.

²¹ Ibid., 81.

autonomy and rights of the people. Its existence is however highly dependent on the socio-political factors during the eighteenth century.

Literary public sphere (*Literarische Öffentlichkeit*) – The literary public sphere is an “early public sphere in the world of letters whose institutions were the coffee house, the salons and the Tischgesellschaften (table societies).”²² The literary public sphere showed that the people could engage in important discussion because of their capacity to criticize and comment on literary works. With the necessary preparations, literary public sphere can develop into a political public sphere.

Political public sphere (*Politische Öffentlichkeit*)– The political public sphere is a public sphere in the political realm.²³ It developed out of the literary public sphere. The people, on this public sphere, are prepared to gather together as a public and use their reason critically. The political public sphere is interchangeable with the term *bourgeois public sphere* in the study. Habermas’s theory of the public sphere was visible on the characteristics of the *political public sphere* or the *bourgeois public sphere*. Hence, when the researcher refers about Habermas’s theory, it may refer to *political public sphere* or the *bourgeois public sphere*.

²² Ibid., 30.

²³ Ibid.

Press – The press was used initially for the purpose of aiding the exchange of news and information to the merchants at a fast rate. During the eighteenth century, it has acquired a unique explosive power by being “a genuinely critical organ of a public engaged in critical public debate.”²⁴ The public sphere’s development and influence was greatly based on the capability of the citizens to utilize the press as a medium that fosters rational-critical debate and stirs up ‘public opinion.’

Rational - critical debate – The rational-critical debate is the ‘lifeblood’ of the public sphere. It occurred during the eighteenth century when citizens publicly engaged in debates and use their reason critically. Rational-critical debate initially emerged on the consciousness of citizens because of their capacity to question literary works. It has intensified and further developed when the citizens started to entertain political questions and utilized the press.

Representative publicity (*Repräsentative Öffentlichkeit*) – Representative publicity is the “display of inherent spiritual power or dignity before an audience.”²⁵ It existed during the feudal states consisting of kings and nobilities by showing their political power before the people. Representative publicity preceded the literary public sphere.

Refeudalization – Refeudalization is a process identified by Habermas that existed during the nineteenth century. It is the return of the elements of the representative

²⁴ Ibid., 60.

²⁵ Ibid., xv.

publicity where the people were merely treated as an audience and not as people that engages on rational-critical thinking and debate. However, Habermas does not believe that today's states are fully returning to the characteristics of the middle ages but only certain elements of it.

H. Review of Related Literature/ Studies

Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Philippines: Anvil Publishing Inc., 2003.

The book will be useful in chapter four of the study. In this book, Benedict Anderson discussed his very own concept of 'imagined communities' and he used the Philippine society for the development of the said concept. Anderson explained that an 'imagined community' is a group of citizens who perceived themselves to be a member of a certain group without even physically meeting each other. Citizens felt to belong in a certain community even though they did not physically meet for the reason that each of their decision affect their fellow citizen, especially when the decisions of the collective citizen agree with each other. The mutual decisions of citizens regarding questions that affect the community as a whole gather them together though not necessarily in a physical place but more on their consciousness. Despite the citizens' inability to meet physically, in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. This is because of the power of their connection with each other that affect the society they lived in. In connection to the study, the researcher relates the concept to the

people in the twenty-first century when they were able to realize that they belong in a 'virtual community' through their dialogue and debates that could lead to the formation of 'public opinion' – a deliberated voice of the people. Hence, the people felt that they belong in a community even though they did not physically meet because of its effect in the society. The book is important because the researcher will discuss the Internet as a new medium of the public sphere during the twenty-first century where it fostered a 'virtual community' in which individual opinions are considered and given a voice.

Hannah Arendt. *The Human Condition*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

The book will be useful in chapter two of the study. Hannah Arendt, in this comprehensively well-written book, addressed the attitude of men towards the earth. The launching of the first ever man-made satellite deviated the attention of men towards the space and it degraded the earth's importance. It has alienated human beings on the planet that they inhabit. The initial part of the book can be summarized as the struggle of humanity to free themselves from the binds of the earth that Arendt had witnessed with the advent of telescopes and satellites. In the concluding part of the book, Arendt suggested human activities that are necessary for the society to function well. Moreover, Arendt also emphasized the importance of society for the development of citizens. Arendt's unique description of a society which is composed of public and private realms is essential to the understanding of the public sphere. Arendt also emphasized the importance of the household

economy that existed within the bounds of private realm. This household economy of the private citizens is an important discussion when citizens already engage themselves in the public realm. Arendt's description of the society is relevant to the study because it also agrees with Habermas's description. Habermas argued that the citizens during the eighteenth century public sphere initially gathered together for the purpose of establishing a common ground among each citizens' private interests and to act against the absolutist and unjust state. The researcher utilizes Arendt's description of the 'private realm' and the 'public realm' as well as her definition of what a society is.

April Carter. *People Power and Political Change: Key Issues and Concepts*. London & New York: Routledge, 2012.

The book will be primarily used in chapter two of the study. April Carter discussed the potential of people as agents of political change. Utilizing her knowledge of history, she described the issues and concepts that was prevalent in authoritarian regimes and absolutist rulings. Through a massive and popular protest, the people were able to achieve what they desired - a society where everyone's opinions were heard and acted upon by the state. Some of the protest were achieved peacefully while others unfortunately became bloody. However, the events that occurred whether peaceful or not maintained that people play an important role for the development of the society through their collective efforts to affect the state's decisions. In connection to the study, there were events that occurred during the eighteenth century that compelled the state act to the appeals

of the citizens. This sense of autonomy made them independent to the state. These events later on formed the 'bourgeois constitutional state' where for the first time the public sphere was related to the idea of law and was considered legal.

Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts. *After Habermas: A New Perspectives on the Public Sphere.* Oxford UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

The book will primarily be used in chapter three of the study but will also be beneficial in chapter four. In this book edited by Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts, the public sphere as initially described by Habermas in his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* was extensively criticized for the purpose of knowing its limitations as well knowing its capacity for configuration in the twenty-first century. The book is a compilation of the works of social theorists which studied and criticized the concept of the public sphere. In the same manner, the social theorists also studied the public sphere's possible ambiguities and issues in the present century so that knowing such, it could avoid the fate of the 'refeudalized' public sphere. By reading the book, it allows the researcher to consider other possible mediums and platforms in understanding the public sphere in the present century.

Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks. *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and Public Sphere in the New Media Age.* London and New York: Routledge, 1991.

The book will be used in chapter three but will be primarily useful in the chapter four of the study. Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks compiled the works of scholars in order to know the capacity of today's developments in the media plane

in order to understand the public sphere in the twenty-first century. The book also criticized the public sphere because of its evolution and decline in the society. The book serves as a supplement to the primary source. The book also revives the talk of the public sphere in the twenty-first century by considering its possibility for configuration and innovation brought about by the developments in information technologies.

Joshua Gunn and Barry Brummett. "Popular Communication After Globalization." *Journal of Communication* (December 2004): 705-721.

The article will be mentioned in chapter three but will be primarily useful in chapter four of the study. Ph. D. professors Joshua Gunn and Barry Brummett set out to define the term 'popular communication' by acknowledging and emphasizing first the term 'popular.' Popular is hounded by different culture. It can be either understood as a high or low culture. The presence of mass culture could be a means of social control that could avoid violence and absolutist rule of the state. However, popular is also driven by the anxiety of mass audience that can be characterized as 'passive consumers.' The result of popular communication is a confusion between the authentic or the manipulated information in the contemporary media. The article concludes by arguing that people should always be critical towards socio-political matters. The article echoes Habermas's depiction of the essential role of the people because despite the manipulative publicity that existed during the nineteenth century brought about by the manipulation of the public sphere's medium contributing to the manipulation and control of the

society, the critical publicity could still be possible in the twenty-first century if people only do their part. In other words, critical publicity could be achieved in the twenty-first century if people remain to be critical of political matters. This can only be done if they deviate from a passive and a consumerist attitude. The article dwells on important democratic aspect of the public sphere, that is, the sense of autonomy and criticality of citizens. Citizens, as Habermas argued and as the article suggests, must develop an attitude for rational-critical thinking and debate.

Eli Hecksher. *Mercantilism*. Translated by Mendel Shapiro. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1935.

This seminal and historical book of Eli Hecksher dwells with modern western societies and how these societies should be organized in order to achieve the common good. Hecksher argues that the balance brought about by mercantilism helps in avoiding the society to fall, once again, to the feudal dark ages of the medieval period where citizens were treated as a powerless audience. In addition, the researcher uses the book to show the contribution of early capitalism in the separation of the state and society into two separate entities. The book therefore is a deeper articulation of mercantilism and capitalism that supplements the primary source. Since Hecksher's book dwells on the contribution of capitalism and mercantilism, the book will be mentioned only in chapter two of the study where mercantilism and capitalism will be thoroughly discussed.

Robert Holub. *Jurgen Habermas: Critic in the Public Sphere.* London and New York: Routledge, 1991.

The book is a collection of debates that the public sphere theory provoked and debates wherein Habermas himself had engaged. Robert Holub stated that Habermas entered these debates in order to learn from the thoughts of contemporary social-political thinkers of his time. The book starts with a brief discussion on the rise and fall of the public sphere. In addition, some parts of the book clarify the public sphere theory by thoroughly interpreting the debates that Habermas engages to. The book is important to chapters two and three of the study but most part of the book will be useful in chapter four.

Immanuel Kant. *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals.* Translated. Lewis White Beck. New York: Macmillian, 1990.

Immanuel Kant, in this book, discussed about morality and how to achieve such. He goes on to argue that 'enlightenment' means that man must think independently of others. He said that ignorance is self-incurred and in order to escape this self-incurred ignorance, man's own efforts is needed. Thus, man should know how to think for himself. The influence of Kant in Habermas is visible by the way Habermas defines 'private sphere.' Habermas argued that private sphere must be autonomous and free from the functions and interventions of the state. In addition, according to Kant, publicity drives citizens to rationalize politics instead of just using will with no rational justifications. Habermas then interpreted that reason alone and not the use of sheer will must be considered in order for a

truly democratic society to exist. In using will however, it must be purified by reason. There is a need to rationalize one's will in order for the society to avoid manipulation. Hence, the book is essential to the study because it dwells on Kant's concept of morality and the means for citizens to achieve enlightenment which deeply influenced Habermas's theory. The book will only be used in chapter two of the study.

Immanuel Kant. *Kant's Political Writings*. Translated by H.B. Nisbet. Cambridge: England, 1970.

The book will be used only in chapter two of the study. H.B Nisbet compiled the political works of Immanuel Kant. In this book, Kant argues that it is in the nature of man to communicate more especially about politics and matters that affect mankind as a whole. The book is important to the study because Habermas argues that citizens started to discuss issues of their private lives and brought the latter to the public because of their inherent desire for a good life. In addition, the book agrees with Arendt's definition that issues in the private realm are indeed possible to become publicly relevant. The book is beneficial to the study since it will help the researcher to prove that indeed Habermas was deeply influenced by Kant's philosophy.

Charles Lindblom. *The Market System: What It Is, How It Works, and What to Make of It*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2002.

The book will be primarily used in chapter three of the study. Charles Lindblom, thoroughly explained and analyzed the prevailing logic of the society

that aims to satisfy the interests of wide audience despite its complexities. Lindblom argues that a massive change occurred in the society and that the world is undergoing a radical change. Just like Habermas's claims, indeed changes occurred in the society and it had contributed to the decline of the public sphere during the nineteenth-century. Lindblom also discusses about the growing power of the state and the societal interests' groups to manipulate and persuade the society that in turn affect the way the market operates. This echoes Habermas in the concluding chapter of his *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. The book is an analysis of the growing power of the state and the elites to the society. In addition, the book points out the logic of advanced capitalism that contributed to the decline of the public sphere during the nineteenth century.

Luke Goode. *Jurgen Habermas: Democracy and Public Sphere*. London: Pluto Press, 2005.

This comprehensively well-written book by Luke Goode is divided into five chapters. Chapter one excavates Habermas's classical work, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* as its primary basis in extending the Habermasian idea of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. Chapter two discusses the responses that Habermas's work had provoked and aims to know what can be learned from them. Chapter three is the response that Habermas made regarding the criticisms on his theory. Habermas did this in order to further understand the theory. Chapter four looks at the role of the developments in the media plane in understanding the public sphere in the twenty-first century. Lastly,

chapter five thoroughly discusses the public sphere's unique concept of 'reflexivity' that emerged in the present century as the core of the 'politics of the public sphere'. The book serves as an extension and an elaboration of Habermas's classical work by giving a different lens to the researcher as well as trying to understand the importance of his theory in the society. The book will be important in all chapters of the study since it contains an elaboration of the public sphere during the eighteenth century and nineteenth-century and the book also emphasize the public sphere's importance in the present century.

Marc Oliver Pasco. "On the Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: A Philosophical Critique of Contemporary Media and its Relation to a Democratic Society." *Ad Veritatem* (October 2007): 93-118.

In this article, Mark Oliver Pasco extensively discussed about Habermas's theory of the public sphere and its importance in the democratic society. However, as Habermas himself argued, the public sphere collapsed brought about by socio-political changes. The article ends with open-ended questions that invites readers to ponder upon the present situation of the society. On the one hand, the article suggests that it is possible that the public sphere could regain its democratic potentials by knowing the essential aspects of what really is a genuine public sphere. On the other hand, the article also suggests that if the essential aspects of the public sphere are not maintained, the public sphere will remain a sphere composed of manipulation and undeliberated private interests as Habermas depicted in the nineteenth-century. The article will be used in all chapters of the

study since it is a critique as well as an envision for the transformation of the public sphere in the twenty-first century.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau. *On the Social Contract*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987.

Rousseau, in this well-known book, talked about the 'general will' in which the terms 'public' and 'opinion' were for the first time merged together to form the term 'public opinion'. However, Rousseau's general will was deemed to be censored and manipulated. Nevertheless, Habermas was influenced by Rousseau to develop the public sphere by having an essential aspect – public opinion – which serves as a powerful force of the citizens against the state's injustices. With the citizens performing rational-critical debate in the public sphere, public opinion will be formed. The book will be used only in the chapter two of the study.

Karen Sanders. *Communicating Politics in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Macmillan, 2009.

In this book, Karen Sanders describes the world of political communication at the present century. With the emergence of technologies that aids in communication and information processes, the understanding of the public sphere today was taken to another height. It is possible for the public sphere to be understood in other platforms. In today's society, technology plays an essential role in generating reliable and fast results whether on votes, opinions or political matters. However, questions remain regarding the validity of news existing on these present-day information technologies. Despite this, Sanders praises the

growing information technologies especially the emergence of the Internet in all its forms because it has improved communication and fostered rational-critical thinking and debate to a greater level. With this, Sanders presented the three inherent characteristics of the Internet which served as an evidence of its importance in people's public life. Sanders argues that with the critical attitude of citizens towards politics together with the help of the society, the public sphere could be understood again as a sphere which fosters a just, rational and a democratic society. The book will be primarily used in chapter four of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

The Theory of the Public Sphere

The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people coming together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated above against the public authorities themselves to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor.

- Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*

Introduction

This chapter dwells on the modern philosophers Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant since their works served as a theoretical and intellectual foundation to Habermas's understanding of the public sphere theory. This chapter also dwells with the rise of early capitalism in the feudal societies of Europe since these rendered citizens the power to affect the state by acquiring properties and by having a critical attitude. With the citizens having able to gain such power and property, the rise of the bourgeoisie public sphere emerged wherein the middle-class citizens of the eighteenth-century Europe was able to realize their growing influence because of their relative power in the society. This rise to power of the middle-class citizens was due to their capacity to engage in rational-critical debate and ability to question political matters that in turn resulted to a mutually agreed and shared opinion called the 'public opinion.'

The public sphere greatly relies on the capacity of the citizens to take action against the unjust and unreasonable authority of the state. The public sphere's

existence therefore is highly dependent on the capacity of the citizens to engage in rational-critical debate as well as to the socio-political changes that favors it.

A. Rational Sources for the Idea and Ideology of the Public Sphere Theory

Habermas considered the theoretical and intellectual foundation of the public sphere theory in the works and observations of modern intellectual philosophers that preceded him. The functions of the bourgeois public sphere crystallized in the idea of 'public opinion.' Public opinion served as an introduction to the idea of the bourgeois public sphere which derived its classic formulation in the Kantian doctrine of right.²⁶

According to Habermas, 'opinion' has two meanings; first, opinion as 'mere opinion' that lacks certainty and a judgement that is not fully demonstrated. Second, opinion as a 'reputation' in regards to what one represents in the opinion of others.²⁷ In the context of the study, the latter meaning of opinion is more connected to the theory since it carries with it a connotation of a 'collective opinion' and refers more to a social character of the public sphere because it tries to relate with the other. It is evident because of the definition of the word 'reputation.' However, opinion did not straightforwardly evolve to be known as a 'public opinion.' Public opinion is a late eighteenth-century coinage that would refer to

²⁶ Ibid., 89.

²⁷ Ibid., 89-90.

the “critical reflections of a public to form its own judgments.”²⁸ Habermas studied the works of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant for the conceptualization of the theory.

a. Hobbes and ‘*The Leviathan*’

Habermas began to conceptualize the theory of the public sphere by studying the seventeenth-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes is known for his absolutism that is evident in his theories of the rights of sovereigns that evolved during the Civil War Period.²⁹ His absolutism is evident in his political doctrine ‘Leviathan’. The ‘Leviathan’ is a political doctrine for an all-powerful state that guarantees the security of its subject against man’s state of nature by putting limits on a person’s rights so as to avoid disrupting and dissolving the agreed decisions on the state.³⁰ In this political doctrine, Hobbes saw religious mysteries pessimistically since for him it has no rational basis for its doctrinal and authoritative claims. When it comes to religious mysteries, he stated that “sometimes the more you think about them or ‘chew’ on them, the harder it is to ‘accept them’.”³¹ Moreover, he characterized the church as a power-hungry

²⁸ Ibid., 90.

²⁹ Tom Sorell, *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 9.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Laurie Johnson Bagby, *Hobbes’s Leviathan: Reader’s Guide*, (London & New York: Continuum, 2007), 73.

institution.³² Hence, he argued that the main danger that threatens the state is a religious controversy. Because of this, he took a momentous step when he identified 'conscience' with 'opinion'.³³ He was influenced by his experiences on 'religious civil wars' and he advocated that the church should be subordinated to the state.³⁴ Patricia Springborg, a reader of Hobbes, echoes him by saying that "there are some opinions in religion that are dangerous to the peace and order of society, it is because they may encourage subjects to rebel against their sovereign."³⁵ Because of this, Hobbes considered religion a private matter, a private conviction that should not be brought publicly. Habermas understanding Hobbes states that conscience is similar to an opinion that should have no importance or value to the public life in any way.³⁶ However, since the citizens in Hobbes's 'Leviathan' are prohibited to debate and settle their private convictions in the public arena and because it was banned from the sphere of politics, these circumstances all the more increased citizens' private opinions because it was free from state scrutiny and control. Their opinions are not brought to the public arena but only discuss in their homes and private places. Thus, the sovereign was unable

³² Ibid., 76.

³³ Cf. STPS, 90.

³⁴ Cf. Patricia Springborg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*, (United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 309.

³⁵ Ibid., 310.

³⁶ STPS, 90.

to track such developments because it is embedded deep within the citizens' inner lives. Citizens' convictions and opinions may have developed only privately but it became relatively powerful because it was not controlled by the absolutist state. "Hobbes's devaluation of religious conviction actually led to an upward evaluation of all private convictions."³⁷ There may exist restrictions and prohibitions in Hobbes's political doctrine 'Leviathan'; however, the same restrictions and prohibitions had placed a great importance on citizens' private opinions and these circumstances started as the beginning of 'opinion' as a strong force when expressed publicly.

b. John Locke and *'The Essay Concerning Human Understanding'*

One of John Locke's philosophical work, *'The Essay Concerning Human Understanding'*, enhanced the notion of 'private opinion' that was emergent in Hobbes's political doctrine 'Leviathan'. Locke claimed that the 'Law of Opinion' is a category of equal rank beside the divine and state law. He added that "the law of opinion judges virtues and vices; virtue, indeed, was measured precisely in terms of public esteem."³⁸ For Locke, habits, informal ideas and opinions of others restrict and in some way, controls one's behavior. Opinion is the "informal web of folkways whose indirect social control was more effective than the formal

³⁷ Carl Schmitt, *Der Leviathan*, Quoted in STPS, 91.

³⁸ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Quoted in STPS, 91.

censure..."³⁹ The law was also called as the 'Law of Private Censure'. The law was not formed in the public arena but any citizen can have an influential opinion over others. It was grounded in the "consent of private men who have no authority enough to make a law."⁴⁰ In other words, it, in a way, serves as a social control to the actions of citizens. However, Locke argues that the 'law of private censure' is not a constitutionally mandated law. It was just an 'unsaid norm' that existed in the minds of each citizen so that each could act justly in accordance with what was considered the norm and the right thing to do. Nevertheless, the 'law of private censure' fulfills its main task of forming, though indirectly, citizens through the pressure of another citizen. In other words, the influence of a citizen to its fellow citizen by way of expressing one's opinions affects one's behavior. At this point in Habermas's conceptualization of the theory, he was able to notice that opinion is indeed influential to the lives of citizens especially on their public lives.

c. Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the 'General Will'

A philosopher for the first time spoke of '*opinion publique*' (public opinion). Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his famous '*Discourse on the Arts and Sciences*' mentioned the term 'public opinion.' He does this by combining the meaning of *opinion* with the attributes of *publique*. Rousseau described a society "dedicated to public affairs,

³⁹ STPS, 91.

⁴⁰ John Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding*, Quoted in STPS, 91.

a world in which social activities were, as in the *ancient polis*, fundamentally political in nature."⁴¹ He wanted a situation in which the citizens were sovereign and the state acted according to their collective will. This 'will' will be later be known as the 'General Will'. With this, he provided the foundation for the public's democratic self-determination through the establishment of a common will of the citizens. The downside of Rousseau's social contract however is that "everybody must submit to the community his person and property along with all his rights so as to have from then on, a share in the rights and duties of all through the mediation of the general will."⁴² His concept of the 'General Will' has downsides because of its consequences i.e., the citizens must surrender their properties and rights first before they could participate and join in the people's general will. Rousseau added that "public opinion is the sort of law whose censor is the minister."⁴³ He wanted a democracy but a type of democracy that does not depend on a debating public. Rather, a type of democracy that can be described today as a 'representative democracy.'⁴⁴ Rousseau's social contract, though democratic in form, somehow mirrored the absolutist state of Hobbes's political doctrine. "The

⁴¹ Patrick Riley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Rousseau*, (United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 72. Italics are mine.

⁴² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*. Translated and Edited by Donald Cress, (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), 33.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁴⁴ See Luke Goode, *Jürgen Habermas: Democracy and Public Sphere*, (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 12

physiocratic view of the 'enlightened monarch' entailed a public debate without democracy."⁴⁵ In addition, Rousseau's democracy ultimately postulated that the general will must not be based on citizens' ability to deliberate and reason out on socio-political issues but rather on the citizens' ability to persuade using their collective will. Hence, the 'General Will' is more of a "manipulative exercise of power."⁴⁶ Because of this, the 'General Will' is non-welfarist and noncommunal.⁴⁷ Beside the downsides that exists on Rousseau's 'General Will' Habermas developed an important aspect in the conceptualization of the public sphere i.e., a public sphere must constitute a 'public opinion' for it is a powerful force. However, citizens who collectively gather together to form this 'public opinion' must still possess their rights and their properties in order for them to remain an autonomous individual separate from the state entity. In other words, the citizens must not be easily persuaded by any citizen nor the state. The 'public opinion', therefore, should not be based on will but through a reasoned discourse and debate.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ STPS, 98.

⁴⁷ Cf. Andrew Levine, *The General Will: Rousseau, Marx, Communism*, (New York: Cambridge University Press), 34.

d. Immanuel Kant and '*What is Enlightenment?*'

Kant's principle of publicity was essential for Habermas's conceptualization of the theory of the public sphere. Most of Habermas's theoretical and intellectual foundation of the theory originated from his thorough reading of Kant. Habermas affirms this by stating that "the idea of bourgeois public sphere attained its theoretically fully developed form with Kant's elaboration of the principle of publicity in his philosophy of right and philosophy of history."⁴⁸ Kant's principle of publicity stated that publicity served as a bridging principle between politics and morality.⁴⁹ For Kant, public opinion was aimed at rationalizing politics in the name of morality. This is so because public opinion appeals to the public and the public aims to emancipate from manipulation and coercion which may in some cases result to immoral actions.⁵⁰ In addition, Kant articulated that a critical 'public sphere' should subordinate politics to morality.⁵¹ Thus, his principle of publicity held that there could exist a convergence between politics and morality with the help of citizens' used of critical reasoning and form themselves as a public in order to articulate their concerns.⁵² In order for the private citizens to have a rational and

⁴⁸ STPS, 102.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 102-117.

⁵⁰ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 12-13.

⁵¹ Ibid., 12.

⁵² Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace*. Edited and Translated by Lewis White Beck (New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1957), 128.

critical discussion in the public sphere however, they must first be enlightened. In his essay *'What is Enlightenment?'*, Kant defined enlightenment as the ability of a man to escape 'from his self-incurred tutelage'. Further, tutelage is a "man's inability to make use of his understanding without the direction from one another."⁵³ Liberation from this self-incurred tutelage meant enlightenment and this would ultimately lead citizens to think about their private lives. Citizens' ability to think independently would initially lead to diversity but because the aim of public sphere is to reach a mutually agreed opinion, it would result to citizens arriving to a 'public opinion'. As opposed to Rousseau's General Will, Habermas contented that the most important way to reach agreement is by authorizing reason to speak out publicly, not by persuasion or sheer will but only by reason. However, the subordination of politics to morality should not be considered as the domination of morality but both should converge in a way that it does not encroach upon the other. The public sphere, even though it is a separate sphere from both the state and the society, must be able to bridge both realms. Locke's principle of publicity influenced Habermas to conceptualize the theory of the public sphere in a manner that it is free from the control of anyone but only through the use of citizens' reason alone.⁵⁴ Moreover, the autonomy and freedom of citizens from outside force is a requisite in order for the citizen to participate in

⁵³ Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Translated Lewis White Beck, (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 83.

⁵⁴ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 13.

the Kantian republic.⁵⁵ A perfectly 'free' civil society is the goal of Kant's principle of publicity. Despite the autonomy of citizens, it is important that citizens understand that individual good can only be achieved by first attending to the demands of the society and humanity in general. Hence, the citizens must think of themselves as a public member and not as a separate individual.⁵⁶ Kant's principle of publicity solidified Habermas's theoretical and intellectual foundation of the theory because Kant's principle bridged both the realms of morality and politics which is beneficial to the society. Not only that citizens should converse about socio-political matters, but also of moral issues. The previous statement means that citizens in the public sphere should discuss not solely about political matters but political matters which have moral basis.

The works of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant together solidified the theoretical and intellectual foundation of the public sphere theory. Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau developed the understanding and importance of opinion as well as public opinion while Kant bridged morality and politics by utilizing public opinion as an appeal to the public's use of the citizens' reason. Kant also defined enlightenment which enabled Habermas to understand that a citizen free from control is needed necessary for a genuine public sphere. Having established the theory's essential theoretical and intellectual foundation, the next discussion

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ STPS, Quoted in Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 13.

dwells with early capitalism in feudal societies of Europe. The rise of early capitalism in European societies resulted to the emergence of the public sphere in these societies.

B. The Rise of Early Capitalism in a Feudal Society

Habermas noticed the emergence of the public sphere in the feudal states of Europe. He states that “with the emergence of early finance and trade capitalism, the elements of a new social order were taking shape.”⁵⁷ The economic theory called ‘mercantilism’ is an economic policy that assures profit to merchants by means of trade. Mercantilism aids in generating wealth to merchants.⁵⁸ These trades however needed an effective communication amongst the merchants for it to be efficient and in order for the merchants to gain more profit. Capitalist trading therefore, in its early stage, aimed to set up effective means of communication to merchants for a faster and better transfer of trade goods. Trade newsletters then were made.⁵⁹ These were made because the expansion of trade also required an exact and more information about distant places and “as trade expanded over great distances, the need for information grew.”⁶⁰ Hence, during the fourteenth

⁵⁷ STPS, 14.

⁵⁸ Eli Hecksher, *Mercantilism*. Translated by Mendel Shapiro, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1935.)

⁵⁹ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 4.

⁶⁰ Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 4.

century, merchants' organized effective mail routes in order to ease the traffic in news that developed alongside the rise in trade goods. However, due to the limits of mail routes, these newsletters only circulated amongst closed merchants.⁶¹ The idea of 'publicness' still remained to be primarily immediate, oral and theatrical under feudal powers and absolutist rule, it is still merely that of a 'representative publicity' where merchants are merely treated as an audience.

New stage of capitalism developed in the mercantilist phase when merchant companies were no longer satisfied with limited markets in their own societies. Even in the middle ages citizens were already creating their own ways and "sought to achieve their purpose without the aid of the useless central authority."⁶² Merchants wanted to trade good with distant places and markets. Hence, this resulted to them opening up of new markets for their products by means of grand expeditions.⁶³ The development triggered the expansion of mercantilist policy and in turn resulted to the reduction of the passivity of merchants towards socio-political affairs.⁶⁴ Merchants actively involved themselves more in the society by trading goods on distant places and markets

⁶¹ Cf. Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 4.

⁶² Hecksher, *Mercantilism*, 65

⁶³ Cf. STPS, 17.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

thus also developing new ideas because of merchants' exposure to other places and market. Habermas writes:

*"The relation between authorities and subjects took on a peculiar character as a result of mercantilist policies, policies formally oriented the maintenance of an active balance of trade."*⁶⁵

During the sixteenth century, independence between the 'centralized state' and the merchants occurred but not yet completely. This gradual independence marked a different understanding of the concept of 'publicness.'⁶⁶ The growing properties and influence of merchant capitalists in the society made them powerful to the point that even the centralized state depended on them for finances because of their effective and profitable market trades. This mutual independence of the 'centralized state' and the merchants gradually took a concrete form in the society. Thus, the feudal understanding of 'publicity' changed. In other words, the 'representative publicity' of feudal states have disintegrated. Habermas called this as the 'process of polarization.' Hence, there was a visible and clear separation between the state and the society.⁶⁷

The polarization of state and society made the former composed of the public elements while the latter composed of the private. Habermas noticed that the "the first visible mark of the analogous polarization of princely authority was

⁶⁵ Ibid., 18. Italics are mine.

⁶⁶ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 5.

⁶⁷ STPS, 11.

the separation of the public budget from the territorial ruler's private holdings."⁶⁸

The budget separation of the 'public' and the 'private' made the centralized state dependent on its own finances but since its finances depended also on the remits of the merchant capitalist rulers, the state became dependent to the society.

The polarization between state and society separated political powers into two separate entities. On the one hand, the society gained the privatized sphere of the court; while on the other hand, the state gained the independent institutions of the bureaucracy and the military. The increasing differentiation of the society and the state, particularly a separation of political authority from the sphere of everyday and domestic life, contributed to the emergence of the public sphere.⁶⁹

In addition, the 'depersonalization' of state authorities led to the existence of a 'civil society.'⁷⁰ The emergence of civil societies led the state to restrict the processes of economic production to the family's individual economy and this "economic activity that had become private had to be oriented toward a commodity market."⁷¹ Joseph Schumpeter observes that the family's individual economy became the focus for the existence of economic reproduction and because of this, "a private sphere was born as a distinguishable entity in contrast to the

⁶⁸ Ibid., 12.

⁶⁹ Cf. Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 2.

⁷⁰ Cf. STPS, 19.

⁷¹ Ibid.

public.”⁷² Hence, the needs of the citizens in their own ‘private sphere’ became the basis for economic production. The needs of the family became the primary concern when private people gathered together in the public sphere. Hannah Arendt refers to this as the “private sphere of society that has become publicly relevant”⁷³ Arendt stated that:

“Society is the form in which the fact of mutual dependence for the sake of life and nothing else assume public significance, and where the activities connected with sheer survival are permitted to appear in public.”⁷⁴

To put it clearly, the needs of the family in the private sphere were brought to the public sphere and satisfying its needs were of primary importance to these private people for they belong to it.

The invention of the press was meant to solve the increase in traffic in merchant trade newsletters. The press became the substitute of trade newsletters and mail routes. The press has revolutionized trading because of its capacity for a rapid dissemination of newsletters throughout Europe. With the socio-political changes during the mercantilist phase, the press has developed a unique explosive power.⁷⁵ Initially, together with the prices of domestic and imported products, the press served as an instrument of the state authorities by censoring its contents and

⁷² See Joseph Schumpeter, *Die Krise des Steuereestaates*, Quoted in STPS, 19.

⁷³ STPS, 19.

⁷⁴ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 46.

⁷⁵ Cf. STPS, 20.

primarily as “a kind of transposition of the publicity of representation into the new form of public sphere.”⁷⁶

A new stratum of ‘bourgeois citizens’ occupied a central position in the public sphere. Market trades enabled the merchants to become the middle-class citizens since market trades enabled them to possess private properties and influential power in the society. Also, this stratum of bourgeois was also the reading public since at first the news primarily reaches only to them.⁷⁷ This phase however led to the downward social mobility of the old occupational orders of craftsmen and shopkeepers.⁷⁸ There was social separation that existed between the middle-class citizens and the craftsmen and shopkeepers. Nevertheless, the middle-class citizens’ important social status in the civil society led to tension with feudal state authorities. The feudal state authorities became interested with the rising power of the bourgeois citizens. This made the bourgeois citizens obligated to protect their properties and this also developed their sense of autonomy.

Furthermore, the continuing interests and unjust actions of the feudal state authorities provoked the middle-class citizens to act against these inequalities. There was a growing tension existing between the ‘reasoning’ public and the

⁷⁶ Ibid., 21.

⁷⁷ Usually, the promulgation of the authorities did not reach the ‘common man’ but only ‘the educated middle-class’ or the ‘bourgeois.’ See STPS, 22.

⁷⁸ The craftsmen and the shopkeepers were regarded as lower-class citizens during the eighteenth century because it was a class lower than the bourgeois class which are considered the middle class.

principle of rule by decree.⁷⁹ The political struggles of the middle-class citizens against the state powers managed to generate a social space between the state and civil society. This space was generated for the purpose of dialogue and debate with the feudal state authorities.⁸⁰ This new social space was then called the 'public sphere'. Habermas adds:

“Because, on the one hand, the society now confronting the state clearly separated a private domain from public authority and because, on the other hand, it turned the reproduction of life into something transcending the confines of private domestic authority and becoming a zone of public interest, *that zone of administrative contact became “critical” also in the sense that it provoked the critical judgement of a public making use of its reason.*”⁸¹

The struggle gained its optimum during the second half of the seventeenth century. However, the new social space was not fully functional yet.⁸² In order for the new social space to fully perform its democratic functions, there must be a change on the use of the press since it was used only for disseminating information

⁷⁹ Cf. Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 6.

⁸⁰ Cf. Dahlgren and Sparks, *Communication and Citizenship*, 15.

⁸¹ STPS, 24. Italics are mine.

⁸² It should be noted that although Habermas seems to emphasize the spatial dimension of the public sphere, it is important to know that he is actually not referring to any actual place; rather, what he meant by public sphere is more of an abstract quality where the public gather to discuss matters concerning society and politics. What makes a public sphere such is that citizens perform rational-critical debate, its lifeblood. Rational-critical debate can be done by discussing and arguing about socio-political issues. Habermas therefore states that a public sphere may not directly refer to any actual place but rather a sphere which exists in the middle of the 'private' and the 'public' when citizens engage in dialogues and debates. See the following: Dahlgren and Sparks, *Communication and Citizenship*; Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*; Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*; Robert Holub, *Jürgen Habermas: Critic in the Public Sphere*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1991).

about trades and it was somehow controlled by the feudal state authorities for their own purpose. This emerging social space could develop its full potential when the middle-class citizens utilize the press, without the control of the state, as a medium in disseminating political information while exposing the unjust actions of the state. Hence, in order for the public sphere to perform its democratic functions, the press must be utilized by the middle-class citizens for their benefit instead of the state controlling it and instead of the press being only used for mere knowledge about trades.⁸³

The tension that existed between the 'reasoning' citizens and the feudal state authorities paved the way for the former to question the latter's legitimacy. The middle-class citizens criticized the state's actions because these citizens were not wholly controlled by the state anymore because of their growing private properties and influential power in the society. The criticisms regarding the legitimacy of the state's actions managed to generate a new social space, i.e., a public sphere. When the middle-class citizens manage to utilize the press in disseminating political information and criticisms, Habermas argued that this has marked the rise of the bourgeois public sphere.

⁸³ Cf. Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 5.

C. The Genesis of the Bourgeois Public Sphere

By the second half of the seventeenth century, a publicly accessible press emerged in Europe. This means that the dissemination of information has reached a greater number of recipients compared to newsletters because of its ability for mass production and regularized printed communication.⁸⁴ In addition, the press departed from the principle of immediacy. This means that not only information about the prices of goods existed on the printed news but it also contained literary works. The printed news contained opinionated published articles regarding literary works. Printed newsletters became “the medium through which individuals could fully express their views and spell out their arguments and critiques.”⁸⁵ Aside from the developments in the press and the opinions that exist on it, ‘coffee houses’ and ‘salons’ were equally important for they were able to gather the bourgeois and intellectual strata to discuss about literary works, at least initially.⁸⁶

As the new strata progressed, this bourgeois literary public sphere became open to more and more citizens and became interested on the ‘putative general interest.’ Habermas remarks that “the presence of large masses gathering in squares and mobilizing on the streets managed, astoundingly, to disempower a

⁸⁴ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 6.

⁸⁵ Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 4.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

regime that was armed to teeth.”⁸⁷ The bourgeoisie literary public slowly accommodated discussions outside literature and became interested in socio-political issues. Citizens, because of their growing concern on political issues, “readied themselves to compel public authority to legitimate itself before the public opinion.”⁸⁸

During the first half of the eighteenth-century, the ‘literary public sphere’, because of their growing concern to political issues, changed into a ‘political public sphere’ because of the shift of discussions from literary works to political issues. Because of the printed newsletters containing opinions regarding literary works, rational-critical debate entered into the daily press.⁸⁹ Habermas considered the literary public sphere “as the prefiguration of a political public sphere oriented towards matters of state policy.”⁹⁰ The ‘literary public sphere’ was important in the establishment of a ‘political public sphere’ because it was through the former that citizens was prepared to discuss socio-political issues because their rational-critical thinking was fostered when discussing about literary works. Citizens became more critical when it comes to socio-political issues. The political public sphere that existed during the early eighteenth century was the basis for the

⁸⁷ Jürgen Habermas, “What does Socialism Mean Today? The Rectifying Revolution and the Need for New Thinking on the Left” in *New Left Review* 1, 9.

⁸⁸ STPS, 25-26.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁹⁰ Holub, *Critic in the Public Sphere*, 3.

theory. More so, the political public sphere is a sphere of bourgeois citizens or the middle-class citizens. Habermas described the bourgeois public sphere as a sphere in which private individuals gather together to form a public and express their private needs that is socially relevant. Political issues that concern the private lives of citizens is therefore the very core of discussion in the public sphere.⁹¹

Printed newsletters became “relatively open spaces of debate” because of diverse opinions and discussions existing therewith.⁹² With the proliferation of ‘coffee houses’ and ‘salons’, the bourgeois citizens increasingly discuss and debate about the legitimacy of the state’s actions. As the society becomes increasingly complex and as the citizens becoming more and more interested in the laws that govern their daily lives, the bourgeois public sphere became the site for the “public’s use of their reason” (offentliches Rasonnement).⁹³ The citizens, however, due to the complexity of issues, must “involve the overcoming of private interests and opinions to discover common interests and to reach societal consensus.”⁹⁴

Habermas defined the public sphere as such:

“By public sphere, we mean first of all *a domain of our social life in which such a thing as public opinion can be formed*. Access to the public sphere is open in principle to all citizens... Citizens act as a public when they deal with matters of

⁹¹ Cf. STPS, 27.

⁹² Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 4.

⁹³ STPS, 27.

⁹⁴ Marc Oliver Pasco, “On the Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: A Philosophical Critique of Contemporary Media and its Relation to a Democratic Society.” *Ad Veritatem* (October 2007), 96.

general interest without being subject to coercion; thus with the guarantee that they may assemble and unite freely, and express and publicize their opinions freely.”⁹⁵

The bourgeois public sphere fostered not only its citizens’ critical reasoning but it also became an influential force for change. The ‘public opinion’ existing in the public sphere became an effective steering force for change and created pressure in the society.⁹⁶ More and more citizens became increasingly involved in the public sphere. Because of this, the power of feudal state rulers now rests on the cooperation of the ruled which could lead in principle to the ruler being overthrown if they continue to pursue their unjust actions.⁹⁷

In the same manner, the citizens also challenged the interpretative duopoly of state and the church since “the values of critical dialogue were meant to erode dogmatism.”⁹⁸ Total reliance on the use of reason in justifying one’s actions was important to the bourgeois public. If there was no reason for a certain unjust action of the state, it would undergo criticisms and discussions in the public sphere.

The status of the old powers was evoked and the bourgeois public cease to function as their strategic tools.⁹⁹ The rational-critical debate existing on the public

⁹⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *Jürgen Habermas on Society and Politics: A Reader*. Edited by Steven Seidman, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 231. Italics are mine.

⁹⁶ Cf. Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 4.

⁹⁷ Cf. April Carter, *People Power and Political Change: Key Issues and Concepts*, (London & New York: Routledge, 2012), 75.

⁹⁸ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 9.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

sphere “took place in principle without regard to all preexisting social and political rank and in accord with the universal rules.”¹⁰⁰ Habermas’s theory was at its peak during the early eighteenth-century in Europe. Marc Oliver Pasco succinctly summarized the public sphere as:

“If one would try to locate the public sphere as such, one will find it in the realm situated between the sphere of public authority and the domain of civil society *wherein citizens were able to reflect critically upon themselves and the practices of the state, safe from coercion and persuasion. It was only reason (in the spirit of the Enlightenment), in its democratically crystallized form as unforcedly formed opinions and principles that was permitted to speak and prevail in the discussions.* Responses and comments to issues that concerned the public as a whole were derived from the unhampered and free-flowing exercise of rational argumentation. People made up their minds and came to arrive at a shared consensus on the basis of better arguments. Critically formed and uncoerced public opinion was the product of these critical deliberations.”¹⁰¹

During its peak, the public were “democratically allowed to articulate and express their deepest subjectivities in parity with that of others.”¹⁰² As long as the issues presented belonged to the ‘domain of common concern’, these issues can be discussed in the public sphere. As mentioned earlier, the citizens’ discussions were founded on the basis of their use of critical reasoning.¹⁰³ Hence, the public sphere can seldom be wrong in the formation of its ‘public opinion’ because the public

¹⁰⁰ STPS, 54.

¹⁰¹ Pasco, “On the Structural Transformation”, 97. Italics are mine.

¹⁰² Ibid., 97.

¹⁰³ STPS, 27.

opinion is not just based on a one-sided argument but rather on diverse opinions that was mutually agreed and shared by its citizens. Citizens in the public sphere only discussed issues which are essential and necessary to society's good.¹⁰⁴ The 'public opinion' existing in the public sphere, therefore, was founded on citizens that "critically scrutinized political matters."¹⁰⁵

D. The Social Structures and Political Functions of the Public Sphere

The bourgeois public sphere was the middle class-citizens that gather together to become a public. These citizens however, before they gather together in the public sphere to engage in rational-critical debate, came from a family. The bourgeois conjugal family played a significant role in the development of the public sphere because the deepest recesses of the family possessed its own public; the bourgeois conjugal family has its own intimate sphere. Citizens discussed about socio-political issues in the home first and brought these issues in the public sphere. Therefore, citizens are prepared to engage in discussions and debate in the public sphere because there was a necessary preparation that existed in the intimate sphere of the family.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 66.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 96.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 29.

According to Habermas, the conjugal family of the middle-class citizens of the early eighteenth-century is a bourgeois nuclear family and a patriarchal type of family.¹⁰⁷ The conjugal family provided two essential roles to citizens that enabled them to engage in rational-critical debate in the public sphere. Firstly, the conjugal family provided a citizen with a sense of autonomy. This autonomy stems from the capability of the private citizen to possess a property. The private property that citizens possessed gave them a sense of independence and freedom from the state authorities. Habermas argued that the acquisition of private properties provided citizens with a sense of autonomy because having such meant that they are not controlled by any state directives because of their capacity to make their own decisions and gain their own profits. Habermas argued that only the laws of the market apply to citizens with properties.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, the sense of independence and freedom was based on citizens' capability to possess properties. It has set citizens to free themselves from the constraints and directives of the state. Habermas added that the 'law of non-interference' protected citizens' properties from the state and it further gave them a sense of autonomy.¹⁰⁹

Secondly, the conjugal family provided citizens with the necessary emotional training to prepare them to enter into dialogue and debate in the public

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 43.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 46.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 46-47.

sphere. This provided an individual with a consciousness of himself, elements of voluntariness, community of love and cultivation that prepared him to interact with others in the public sphere with the proper emotional training.¹¹⁰ The family became a source of subjectivity and individuality because the emotional needs as well as the individual expressions were valued in the private realm of the conjugal family. The family became an emotional training ground before citizens enter into the public sphere to engage in rational-critical debate with other citizens. In other words, a conjugal family created a citizen that possessed dual identities. He is both a property owner and an emotionally-attached human being. Citizens' autonomy and emotional training prepared them to enter the public sphere and use these preparations to effectively debate with other citizens while at the same time being concerned with the well-being of other citizens. A citizen therefore, in order to be effective in the public sphere, should possess these dual identities.

The rise of the literary public sphere and its transition to political public sphere also included with it the emergence of its political functions. In the literary public sphere, literary works had to legitimate itself on 'coffee houses' and 'salons'.¹¹¹ The citizens used their critical reasoning when debating about these works. Citizens extended their discussions on socio-political issues without them initially thinking about its real consequences in the society.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 33.

¹¹² Ibid.

Initially, citizens only discuss about political issues because of the injustices and unfair treatment of the state. The citizens, however, did not expect that it could greatly affect the society. With the relentless discussions and debates of citizens about political issues existing in the society, it had encouraged them to consider a rational solution to solve these issues. As debates continued, the citizens arrived at a mutually shared opinion. This became known as the 'public opinion'.

The continuing interests of the feudal state to the private properties of citizens as well as the current injustices existing in the society provoked the public sphere to use a powerful force, the 'public opinion'. Citizens utilized the press as a medium to extend 'public opinion' to most citizens in the society, if not all. The publication of periodicals, journals, and articles in the printed newspapers became a literary political propaganda set against the state. The use of the press, as medium of the public sphere during the eighteenth century, paved the way for more citizens to engage in debates and dialogues. Thus, the 'public opinion' became an effective steering force for change.

The power of the press to disseminate the 'public opinion' to most citizens in the society pressured the state to respond to the 'public opinion' by addressing these issues and justifying their actions. Otherwise, if the 'public opinion' was not responded, the state could suffer since citizens were empowered because of their growing number that agree with the public opinion. The state, therefore, responded to the "public opinion by the creation of the 'bourgeois constitutional

state'." ¹¹³ For the first time, the public sphere was linked to the idea of law because of the establishment of the 'bourgeois constitutional state'. The public sphere now legally served as a check and a moral compass on the abusive actions of the state.

Habermas, in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, quoted Carl Schmitt by arguing that "law is not the will of one or of many people, but something rational-universal; not *voluntas*, but *ratio*."¹¹⁴ In other words, citizens' opinions were considered before the law is established. The public sphere was considered a legal part of law-making during the eighteenth-century because citizens produced a 'public opinion' that is not based merely on sheer will but on agreed reason.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 81.

¹¹⁴ Carl Schmitt, *Verfassungslehre*, Quoted from STPS, 81. Italics are mine.

¹¹⁵ Cf. STPS, 82.

Recapitulation

Habermas developed the theory of the public sphere in the philosophical works of modern philosopher Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant. These modern philosophers contributed to the theoretical and intellectual foundation of the theory. It was in the work of Kant that Habermas was greatly influenced in his conceptualization of the theory. Kant's principle of publicity bridged morality and politics which was visible in the bourgeois public sphere during the eighteenth century because it served as a legal check on the morality and domination of the state.

In addition, Kant described enlightenment as a man's ability to free himself from another man's influence. He also argued that enlightenment is the ability of man to think independently for himself. This influenced Habermas by arguing that in order for a citizen to be effective in the public sphere, he must first acquire essential training which was located in the intimate sphere of the family. These two namely; the autonomy of citizens because of their possession of private properties and necessary emotional training which strengthens and rationalizes their will. These essential training made citizens an effective contributor in the public sphere.

The rise of early capitalism in feudal societies was the reason that citizens acquired private properties. The acquisition threatened the state because of the citizens' vast landholdings. The continuing interests of the state to the society's affairs provoked citizens to question their authority and legitimacy. Initially,

citizens only debated about literary works but because of the undiminished intervention of the state to the affairs of the society, citizens began to entertain political questions. This transition of discussion changed the 'literary public sphere' to 'political public sphere'. The society gradually separated itself from the state but not yet completely.

The state continued to intervene with the society. Because of this, the middle-class citizens utilized the press as a medium of the public sphere to effectively transmit the 'public opinion'. The press contained political propagandas and questions set against the state. The press, because of its effectivity in disseminating political propagandas and information, reached most citizens in the society. It invited citizens to debates and to question the state's actions. Because of this, the state was compelled to respond to this pressure of the citizens by addressing and responding to the issues. The state therefore established the 'bourgeois constitutional state' which made the public sphere a legal check and a moral compass on their actions. The 'bourgeois constitutional state' was established in order to diminish the thought that the state is an authoritative state. This was done by giving the public sphere the opportunity to be heard by considering the 'public opinion' in the law-making of the state.

CHAPTER THREE

The Refeudalization of the Public Sphere

Jürgen Habermas's study ends with his depiction of the decline of the bourgeois public sphere and its final 'disintegration' in the modern industrialized welfare states of advanced capitalism.

- Peter Dahlgren, *Communication and Citizenship*

Introduction

The great Ionian philosopher Heraclitus centered his philosophy on change. He asserted that everything is in a constant flux; that it is not possible for a man to step into the same river twice. On the one hand, it is because that man, when stepping in the river again, is not the same man anymore; On the other hand, the water is not the same two moments together.¹¹⁶ Understanding Heraclitus's philosophy allegorically, it would mean that it is not possible for the world to be the same in different times. Therefore, everything is in constant change

Jürgen Habermas would agree to this when the public sphere disintegrated during the nineteenth century brought altogether by socio-political changes. During the nineteenth century, there was process that occurred. He termed such as the 'refeudalization' of the public sphere. It is when the 'representative publicness' of the high middle ages was once again visible in the society. Citizens, just like in the feudal ages, were treated again as an audience and the 'public opinion' was manipulated by the state since they were able to control the public sphere by penetrating through its medium. On the one hand, citizens brought this

¹¹⁶ Read Anthony Kenny, *A New History of Western Philosophy: Ancient Philosophy*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 12-17.

tragedy upon themselves when their critical attitude towards socio-political issues changed; while on the other hand, the penetration and control of the medium of the public sphere during the nineteenth century also contributed to the 'refeudalization' of the public sphere.

This chapter dwells with the factors that contributed to the 'refeudalization' of the public sphere. The continuous decline of the public sphere weakened the citizens' capacity to engage in rational-critical thinking and debate. Also, the continuous penetration of the state to the medium of the public sphere affected the 'public opinion'. These, among other circumstances, affected the citizens' attitude regarding politics since the press and the mass media¹¹⁷ centered only on presenting nonpolitical related events instead of socio-political related events during the nineteenth-century. Thus, rational-critical debate was engendered. The manipulation on the press and the mass media during the nineteenth-century somehow also presented socio-political related events but the state, together with the elite groups, made sure that citizens only seem to look like they participate but in fact they are only treated as a mere audience where their opinions are not given any voice at all. This decline in the people's critical attitude together with the manipulation in the public sphere's medium meant that indeed, 'representative publicness' was manifested again in the society.

¹¹⁷ What Habermas refers by 'mass media' are the improvements in information dissemination that occurred during the nineteenth-century. It is not our modern understanding of what 'mass media' is; rather, it is the mass media as understood in the context of Habermas's work regarding the public sphere theory. For a thorough understanding and explanation of what Habermas refers by 'mass media', See STPS, 181-195.

A. The Public Sphere's decline during the Nineteenth-century

The separation of the state and the society as well as the clear separation of its functions fostered the public sphere during the eighteenth century. The separation disengaged the elements of social reproduction and political power which in the feudal societies functioned together. On the one hand, social production was disengaged from the state; while on the other hand, political power was separated from the sphere of the society. The political public sphere, though a sphere existing between the private and the public, originated in the intimate sphere of the family. This could be observed by the way the public sphere functions; citizens express their deepest private concerns and brought it to the public sphere for discussion and debate. This means that the discussion in the public sphere are discussions that originated from the intimate sphere of the family. The public sphere is constituted by autonomous and educated citizens who critically debate on important societal issues that is also socially relevant.¹¹⁸ With the members using rational-critical debate when debating about societal and political issues, every citizen is given a chance to present his arguments in the public sphere. Rational-critical thinking and debate of each citizen eliminated their private interests. Hence, a mutually shared opinion existed. This is called the 'public opinion.'

¹¹⁸ Cf. Holub, *Critic in the Public Sphere*, 3.

However, in a span of a century, the nineteenth century public sphere took on a radical transformation. There have been innumerable dramatic socio-political changes that occurred that, in one way or another, contributed to the disintegration of the public sphere during the nineteenth century. The citizens have been caught up by the manipulation in the press and the mass media during the nineteenth-century. The citizens' attitude toward rational-critical debate had changed because of this. The radical transformation of the public sphere took place "as early forms of capitalism began to be institutionalized and market forces began to dominate and dictate the political and economic foundation of the nation."¹¹⁹

The press and the mass media, the public sphere's mediums, had become commercialized because it was now controlled and manipulated by the state. The mass press is "owned and operated by the market elites."¹²⁰ This resulted to societal interest groups to trade their societal functions to the state in order for these groups to push forward their own agendas and interests without the citizens knowing such due to the guise of publicity. The citizens failed to distinguish what was the true 'public opinion' from what was considered a manipulated opinion because of the influx of private interests on the press and the mass media as well as the citizens themselves failed to engage in rational-critical thinking and debate.

¹¹⁹ Pasco, "On the Structural Transformation", 98.

¹²⁰ Charles Lindblom, *The Market System: What it is, How it works, and What to Make of It*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2002), 213.

In the initial part of *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas stated that the public sphere originated from the feudal social order of the high middle ages, “this *publicness* (or *publicity*) of *representation* was not constituted as a social realm, that is, as a public sphere; rather, it was something like a status attribute.”¹²¹ In other words, citizens, on this type of publicity, were merely treated as an audience. There was no debate that occurred. The opinions of citizens have no effect whatsoever in political affairs. Paolo Mancini, a public sphere theorist, remarked that the nineteenth century public sphere has mirrored the feudal understanding of ‘*publicness*’ where the state elites presented their decisions to the masses who do not question such decisions but blindly agree to these decisions.¹²² Habermas agrees with Mancini since in the concluding chapters of his book he observed that the public sphere during the nineteenth century became similar to ‘representative publicity’ of the middle ages. He called this tragedy as the ‘refeudalization’ of the public sphere in the modern society. Peter Dahlgren, also a public sphere theorist, agrees with Mancini by explicitly arguing that “Habermas’s study ends with his depiction of the decline of the bourgeois public sphere and its final ‘disintegration’ in the modern industrialized welfare states of advanced capitalism.”¹²³

¹²¹ STPS, p. 7. Italics not mine.

¹²² Cf. Dahlgren and Sparks, *Communication and Citizenship*, 10.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 2.

The 'refeudalization' of the public sphere occurred when the clear separation between the state and the society collapsed. Habermas, in *Society and Politics*, noticed this collapsed by affirming that with the "interlocking of the public and private domains, not only do political agencies take over certain functions in the sphere of commodity exchange and social labor; societal powers also take over political functions."¹²⁴ The state intended to adopt the interests of the civil society as its own. The state, noticing the collapsed, tried to intervene again with society's affairs which successfully resulted to the blurring of these two spheres.

In addition, it was not only the state's intervention with the society that contributed to the collapse but the society as well has contributed by intervening with the state's affairs. The state intended to adopt the society's functions and the society as well intended to adopt the state's function. Hence, there was a 'mutual interpenetration' that occurred between the two spheres.¹²⁵

Habermas described the 'mutual interpenetration' between the two separate spheres as the "stateification" of society and the "societalization" of the state. This resulted to a "repoliticized social sphere" in which "the distinction between 'public' and 'private' could not be usefully applied."¹²⁶ The separation of the functions of both spheres blurred. Robert Holub, a critic and a reader of

¹²⁴ Jürgen Habermas, *Jürgen Habermas on Society and Politics: A Reader*. Edited by Steven Seidman. (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1989), 236.

¹²⁵ Cf. STPS, 142.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

Habermas's public sphere theory, remarked that since "the rise of the public sphere depended on a clear separation between the private realm and public power, their mutual interpenetration inevitably destroys it."¹²⁷

Furthermore, the advanced capitalist countries abandoned the principles of free trade in favor of 'protectionism.'¹²⁸ The new protectionism, favored by the advanced capitalist countries, shielded the country's domestic industries while at the same time highly taxed the products or imports that came from other countries. The shielding of country's domestic industries together with the taxing and restricting of imports from other countries ensured that "there would never be a real chance for a liberalization of the market."¹²⁹ The 'liberalization of the market' was important for the public sphere because this liberalization is where citizens could muster ideas from other countries. These enabled citizens to know the injustices prevalent in their state. By putting heavy taxes on imports, it would be difficult for citizens to develop and exchange ideas with other citizens.

The 'refeudalization' of the public sphere went hand in hand with the interventionist economic policy which Habermas characterized as 'neomercantilist'. The state, due to the capacities accrued to advanced capitalism, acquired new functions as well. The state became a 'nightwatchman' on society's

¹²⁷ Holub, *Critic in the Public Sphere*, 6.

¹²⁸ Cf. STPS, 143.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

affairs. The state functioned as a social welfare state where the citizens voluntarily allowed the state to intervene with their private lives in exchange for societal benefits.¹³⁰ Because of this, there was a growing tendency for the 'centralization of government power' due to the functions which the state has accumulated.

The society also tried to intervene with the state's affairs. The society became a venue for the formation of organized private interests. In order for the organized private interests to forward their own agendas to a greater number of citizens, societal interest groups "exchanged their private societal power for political power."¹³¹ As a result, the public sphere's medium - the press and also the mass media - were in the controlling hands of the state. In addition, the state, all the more, became influential and powerful because it has acquired the trust of the citizens by being a 'social welfare state'. Therefore, the separation that existed before between the state and society totally collapsed and their 'mutual interpenetration' with each other benefited mostly the state.¹³²

The state and the society were now "fused into a single functional complex that could no longer be differentiated according to criteria of public and private."¹³³ The 'refeudalization' of the public sphere during the nineteenth century occurred. Peter Dahlgren, in his thorough reading of Habermas,

¹³⁰ Ibid., 222-236.

¹³¹ Ibid., 146.

¹³² Ibid., 146-147.

¹³³ Ibid., 148.

summarizes the decline of the public sphere during the nineteenth-century as such:

“With mass democracy, the public loses its exclusivity... The state, to handle the growing contradictions of capitalism, becomes more interventionist; the boundaries between public and private, both in political economic terms, begin to dissipate. Large organizations and interest groups become key political partners with the state, resulting in a ‘refeudalization’ of politics which greatly displaces the role of the public. The increasing prevalence of the mass media, especially where the commercial logic transforms much of public communication into public representation, advertising and entertainment, erodes the critical functions of the public. The public becomes fragmented, losing its social coherence. It becomes reduced to group of spectators whose acclaim is to be periodically mobilized, but whose intrusion in fundamental political questions is to be minimized.”¹³⁴

When the loss of distinction between the public and the private occurred, it did not only affect the genuineness of the public sphere but there was also underlying effects to the citizens. The citizens, because of its dependence to the state, developed attitudes which undermined their capacity for rational-critical thinking and debate. This change of attitude was because of the state’s establishment of the ‘social welfare state’ where citizens indeed benefit but at the cost of their sense of autonomy and criticality. Habermas indicated, therefore, that during the nineteenth century, the citizens developed certain attitudes which undermined their capacity for rational-critical thinking and debate.

¹³⁴ Peter Dahlgren, *Television and the Public Sphere*, (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 8.

B. The Deprivatization of the Intimate Sphere: From Debating Citizens to Consuming Citizens

The 'mutual interpenetration' of the state and the society affected the institutions of the conjugal family as well. It disassociated the processes of social reproduction and the intimate sphere. The intimate sphere "once the very center of the private sphere, moved to its periphery to the extent that the private sphere itself became deprivatized."¹³⁵ The family has lost its ability to produce citizens which engages in rational-critical thinking and debate since the state manipulated the deepest recesses of intimate sphere of the family. ¹³⁶ Mark Oliver Pasco, a critic of the public sphere theory and its decline during the nineteenth-century, realized that "when the competition between organized private interests invaded the public sphere, its rational-critical function was displaced by capitalist undertakings with its drive for profit maximization and by political interest groups, which utilized the mass media for propaganda."¹³⁷ Hence, the private sphere became 'deprivatized' to the extent that private sphere exists only in appearance. Habermas observed that the family has lost its crucial and important role in producing citizens with dual identities. On the one hand, the sense of autonomy was lost because of the 'social welfare state' that promised the family

¹³⁵ STPS, 152.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 162.

¹³⁷ Pasco, "On the Structural Transformation", 99.

with societal benefits. The family has entrusted to the state their private properties. On the other hand, the emotional preparation was lost due the disappearance of essential values of protection, care, upbringing and guidance of the family to a citizen.¹³⁸

In addition, the loss of identities altered the citizens' attitude towards socio-political affairs. During the nineteenth century, the habit of leisure and the consumerist attitude prevailed in citizens' lives. Pierre Bourdieu, a social theorist and a renowned public intellectual¹³⁹, called this tragedy as the 'disenchantment with politics' where citizens are not interested anymore to discuss about socio-political affairs unless it is interesting and entertaining.¹⁴⁰ The public sphere's lifeblood, the rational-critical debate, also "became a victim of this 'refeudalization'."¹⁴¹ The citizens fail to engage in rational-critical debate; instead, citizens focused on satisfying their habit of leisure and consumerist attitude. This attitude of citizens towards rational-critical thinking and debate outweighed its social relevance for the citizens only wanted to be entertained and be satisfied. The public sphere, during the nineteenth century, has lost its democratic functions.

¹³⁸ STPS, 156.

¹³⁹ Bryan Turner, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 45.

¹⁴⁰ See Pierre Bourdieu, *On Television*, translated by Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson. (New York: The New Press, 1996), 1-9.

¹⁴¹ STPS, 158.

Furthermore, Rolf Meyersohn, a sociologist, affirmed that "...without a protective and supportive private sphere the individual is sucked into the public realm which, however, becomes denatured by this very process."¹⁴² The state noticed the citizens' change of attitude towards rational-critical thinking and debate and took advantage of these changes. The citizens' attitude to be entertained were satisfied by the increased in advertisements and nonpolitical related shows and events on the public sphere's mediums – the press and the mass media. Instead of discussing socio-political events and issues, citizens during the nineteenth-century became passive of these events and issues. The press and the mass media, because of the state's control, failed to maintain the opportunity of citizens to create a true 'public opinion' in the public sphere. The medium of the public sphere, which initially served for the purpose of amplifying and transmitting 'public opinion', now contained private interests of the state and societal interests' groups.¹⁴³ Citizens, tragically, became more of a consumer and a passive audience rather than being active citizens of the society. Pasco stated that:

"The capitalist agenda materialized in the structural transformation of the public sphere when *the once discourse-driven arena of the democratic public sphere turned into an arena for consumer manipulation and profit engineering of corporations*. If before, we could say that the public sphere was more of an event rather than a place, that is was an occasion for participative, free flowing, uncoerced, rational deliberation among citizens; in the age of liberal capitalism, the events in the public sphere have been subtly controlled

¹⁴² Rolf Meyersohn, *Commercialism and Complexity in Popular Culture*. (Paper presented at the fifty-fifth Meeting of the American Sociological Association, New York, 1960), 75.

¹⁴³ Cf. Pasco, "On the Structural Transformation", 100.

and orchestrated by a few people and are delicately made to appear as democratic as possible.”¹⁴⁴

The ‘refeudalized’ public sphere “became a stage for publicly advancing the private interests of the elite with no trace of its once noble form.”¹⁴⁵ Simultaneously, the public sphere declined because of the mutual interpenetration of the state and the society with each other coupled with the citizens’ development of habit of leisure and consumerist attitude. Culture-debating citizens had, according to Habermas, been displaced by culture-consuming citizens.¹⁴⁶ The citizens weakened their capacity to criticize and question the state’s actions since they do not involve themselves anymore in debates regarding political matters. The citizens, in other words, entrusted everything to the state’s control. Citizens merely accepted what was presented to them without arguing nor debating; thereby losing the citizens’ public character and democratic importance. Nick Stevenson, a social theorist, noticed the change of citizens’ attitude during the nineteenth century by studying their reactions on television shows. He observed that:

“[The citizens] watch and consume pictures and reports and perhaps feel that [we] ought to be move by them; but insofar as [we] are also possessed of a quite blasé attitude in the face of the fleeting, [we] are not so moved. In fact, [we] are more likely to see more and more pictures of horror simply in

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., Italics are mine.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 99.

¹⁴⁶ See STPS, 159-180.

order to discover how deeply and irredeemably blasé [we] might become.”¹⁴⁷

The observation of Nick Stevenson proved that the citizens had become unconcerned and blasé enough that they are not affected even with tragic pictures existing in the society. The ‘refeudalized’ public sphere produced a breed of citizens who are ‘passively entertained’ instead of citizens who are active and critical. Hence, the ‘refeudalization’ of the public sphere “completely corrodes its ideal functions and shatters the process of rational deliberation among citizens.”¹⁴⁸ The passive citizens during the nineteenth-century “have been wittingly or unwittingly subservient in their almost stupefied acquiescence in them to the dazzling displays of the renovated spectacular public sphere of the media.”¹⁴⁹

The politicization of the manipulated mediums of the public sphere - the press and the mass media - all the more contributed to the passivity of the citizens towards socio-political issues. The press and the mass media, brought about by the logic of late capitalism, took on a “dramatic transformation both in form and substance.”¹⁵⁰ The ‘refeudalized’ public sphere, now controlled and manipulated by the state and societal interests’ groups, intentionally failed to provide citizens with information necessary for them to foster rational-critical thinking and debate.

¹⁴⁷ Nick Stevenson, *Understanding Media Cultures*. (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 50.

¹⁴⁸ Marc Oliver Pasco, “On the Structural Transformation”, 99.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 101.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 101.

C. The Manipulation of the Press and The Mass Media¹⁵¹

Habermas argued that “the shift in function of the principle of publicity was based on a shift in function of the public sphere as a special realm.”¹⁵² The shift in principle of publicity was due to change on the mediums of the public sphere - the press and the mass media. Initially, the press was a vehicle for the transmission and amplification of the ‘public opinion’, that is, it operates to provide and intensify the people’s public life and foster rational-critical thinking and debate. Because of the effectivity of the press to relay the ‘public opinion’, most citizens in the society engaged in discussion and aimed to reach a mutually shared opinion set against the state’s injustices.¹⁵³

During the nineteenth century however, the press together with the developments in the mass media communications in Europe had changed the public sphere’s capability to foster rational-critical thinking and debate with the “influx of private interests that achieved privileged representation within it.”¹⁵⁴ The press and the mass media at this point failed to be the public sphere’s mediums opposed to state’s injustices because together with the societal interests’ groups, the state now operated and controlled the press and the mass media.

¹⁵¹ STPS, 181-195, See Footnote no. 117.

¹⁵² STPS, 181.

¹⁵³ JHSP, 234.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 235.

Hence, the initial purpose of the press as a medium of the public sphere set against the state's injustices has perished.

In addition, the press was initially confined to "the organization of the flow of news and the collating of the news itself."¹⁵⁵ In the press during the nineteenth century however, a political function was added to its economic one.¹⁵⁶ The state benefited from this political function by manipulating societal events. Societal developments, during the nineteenth century, developed improvements in communication processes which enabled not only the press to be public sphere's medium but also to consider other possible mediums that could relay information at a faster rate. However, instead of these developments being an effective transmitter of the true 'public opinion', it began to shape and manipulate 'public opinion' because of the state's control to it. Habermas denoted that this is visible with the increase of advertisements in the mass-dominated public sphere instead of political related events. Habermas added that the existence of advertisement meant the invasion of the organized private interests of societal interests' groups and the state to the public sphere. The presence of advertising clearly blurred the separation of the private and the public and it signified the dominance of private interests prevailing on the public sphere. The press and the mass media became "a gate through which privileged private interests invaded the public sphere."¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ STPS, 82.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 182.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 185.

The press became “the mouthpiece of large capitalist companies rather than of the public as such.”¹⁵⁸ Pasco aptly amplifies this point by saying that “the overwhelming capacity of capital to manipulate and transform the public sphere has indeed marked the substantial decline from the ideal public sphere of the bourgeois society to the refeudalized media of modern society.”¹⁵⁹ The public sphere, therefore, became a venue for the advancements of advertisements and private interests.

Furthermore, the proliferation of advertising brought to the society the rise of ‘opinion management’. Opinion management is distinguished from advertising by the fact that “it expressly lays claim to the public sphere as one that plays a role in the political realm.”¹⁶⁰ Habermas stated that ‘opinion management’ is worse than advertising because the former tries to fake news just to attract attention and to gain a fake ‘public opinion’.¹⁶¹ Habermas provided an example that this could be observed during elections when citizens engaged in polls and consensus and the results were shown to them; However, the results that were shown were not the true results but rather fake results that in turn produced fake ‘public opinion’. Hence, opinion management imparted citizens with a ‘false consciousness’.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Pasco, “On the Structural Transformation”, 104.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ STPS, 193.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid., 194.

Citizens were deceived that each of them contribute to the establishment of 'public opinion' while the truth is that the 'public opinion' was already manufactured to favor the state and societal interests' groups despite the seemingly rational true polls and consensus. Bourdieu saw this tendency of manipulation in the 'public opinion' in his book *On Television* by giving a negative impression towards polls and consensus.¹⁶³ During the nineteenth-century, polls and consensus were not in fact soliciting the opinions of each citizen, there seems to be a recalling of the old 'publicity' where citizens were merely treated as an audience. The public sphere during the nineteenth century showed features of a staged 'public opinion'; it is only a staged display of publicity. Since the state during the nineteenth century was considered as a 'social welfare state', the state had a role to play in protecting and managing the society while at the same time manipulating the opinions of citizens. Luke Goode argued that the state adopted a culture of 'welfarism'. He further argued that a "culture of welfarism, underscored by both state and non-state institutions, reached into domains of social reproduction that were once the

¹⁶³ Bourdieu argues "that the audience rating system can and should be contested in the name of democracy. This appears paradoxical, because those who defend audience ratings claim that nothing is more democratic (this is a favorite argument of advertisers, which has been picked up by certain sociologists, not to mention essayists who've run out of ideas and are happy to turn any criticism of opinion polls and audience ratings into a criticism of universal suffrage). You must, they declare, leave people free to judge and to choose for themselves ("all those elitist intellectual prejudices of yours make you turn your nose up on all this"). The audience rating system is the sanction of the market and the economy, that is, of an external and purely market law. Submission to the requirements of this marketing instrument is the exact equivalent for culture of what poll-based demagogy is for politics. Enslaved by audience ratings, television imposes market pressures on the supposedly free and enlightened consumer." See Bourdieu, *On Television*, 66-67.

preserve of the family.”¹⁶⁴ The state penetrated into the intimate sphere of the family. Hence, the citizens, since they felt that they are entitled to services, had changed their attitude towards the state. Citizens failed to criticize state’s actions for the fear of losing benefits that the latter provides to them. Citizens felt that they were being supervised by the state for their own benefit; but rather, the state was trying to gradually remove their sense of autonomy and independence to the former. Hence, the citizens “relate to the state not primarily through political participation but by adopting a general attitude of demand.”¹⁶⁵ This apolitical attitude towards the state paved the way for the latter to develop a sector known as ‘public relations’. Public relations however, was only a strategy of the state and the societal interests’ groups in order to push forward their own agendas to the society behind closed doors.¹⁶⁶

The criteria of rationality, which is the most important aspect of rational-critical debate in the public sphere, was lost due to the sophisticated opinion-molding by the state and the societal interests’ groups.¹⁶⁷ Hence, the general interest that was formed, according to Habermas, was just a ‘sham public interest.’ Sham public interest is not based on citizens’ rational-critical debate but rather

¹⁶⁴ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 18.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., Quoted in STPS, 211.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. STPS, 94.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 195.

through the state's influence to the 'public opinion'. The citizens were being deceived in such a way that they thought that they consume based on their use of critical reasoning but in fact they only consume what the state expected them to consume. The public sphere therefore, had become similar to feudal understanding of what 'publicness' was.¹⁶⁸ The citizens because of the 'false consciousness' that was embedded deep within their private lives were not aware of the manipulation done to them by the state and the societal interests' groups. The citizens were caught up in the capitalist machinery of the press and the mass media. They failed to distinguish the true 'public opinion' from the fake 'public opinion' because of their failure to engage in rational-critical thinking and debate. The 'critical publicity' during the eighteenth century was therefore replaced by the 'manipulative publicity' of the nineteenth century.¹⁶⁹ The incited citizens have been "wittingly or unwittingly subservient in their almost stupefied acquiescence to the dazzling displays of the renovated spectacular public sphere of the media."¹⁷⁰

As a summary, this chapter discussed four factors namely: the failure to establish a clear separation between the state and the society¹⁷¹, the mutual

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ See STPS, 236-250.

¹⁷⁰ Pasco, "On the Structural Transformation", 104.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 4.

interpenetration of the state and society with each other¹⁷², the citizens' loss of critical attitude and sense of autonomy from the state, and the manipulation and control of the public sphere's mediums. These factors, hand in hand, contributed to the 'refeudalization' of the public sphere during the nineteenth century.¹⁷³ The researcher considered these factors as the factors that contributed to the manipulative publicity existing in the public sphere during the nineteenth century. The 'critical publicity' had left no trace of its once noble form during the eighteenth century. However, Habermas argued that the 'refeudalized' public sphere did not collapse to the point of its total disappearance in the society.¹⁷⁴ Habermas argued that in order for the public sphere to have a 'critical publicity' again, all structures must be reorganized in accord to the principle of publicity.¹⁷⁵ A genuine public sphere could still exist in the twenty-first century through the efforts of both the citizens as well as the society.

¹⁷² Ibid., 5.

¹⁷³ Habermas's, using the sociological approach, has observed a range of factors that contributed to the decline of the public sphere during the nineteenth century. However, these factors, if all are considered, are too numerous for the study. Hence, the researcher only presented four factors that contributed to the public sphere's decline. See STPS, 141-235.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 209-211.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 209.

Recapitulation

In just a span of a century, the public sphere disintegrated and took on a radical transformation brought about by socio-political changes during the nineteenth century. The separation of state and society with each other became blurred. The blurring of the separation between the two spheres of the state and the society resulted to their 'mutual interpenetration'. The state intervened with the societal affairs of the society and the society too intervened with the state's affairs. The state intervened with the citizens' private realms while at the same time the societal interest' groups traded its societal powers to gain political ones resulting to the possession of the mediums of the public sphere by the state. In addition, the attitude of citizens changed brought by the development of the habit of leisure and consumerist attitude. The development of 'social welfare state' also changed their attitude towards the state. This resulted to the decline of the rational-critical debate, the lifeblood of the public sphere. Furthermore, because of the mutual interpenetration that occurred, the state was able to control and manipulate the press and the mass media¹⁷⁶ which was initially owned by the society. The state, now controlling the press and the mass media, became more powerful because they used these mediums not to extend 'public opinion' but to manipulate and control it. Habermas made a distinction between 'critical publicity' and 'manipulative publicity' where the latter emerged during the

¹⁷⁶ STPS, 181-195, See Footnote no. 117.

nineteenth century brought altogether by the manipulation and control of the state and societal interests' groups as well as the citizens' change of attitude. Habermas called this process as the 'refeudalization' of the public sphere where the 'representative publicness' of the feudal state was once again visible.

However, despite the pessimism of Habermas, it did not hinder him to fully abandon the potentials of a genuine public sphere. He stated that the public sphere can again regain its democratic functions because the public sphere is open for a 'substantive change.'¹⁷⁷ This claim by Habermas in his concept of the public sphere served as a hint and a hope for those who wished to study the concept in the present century.

¹⁷⁷ STPS, 250.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Continuity of the Public Sphere Theory in the Twenty-first Century

After the inventions of writing and printing, digital communication represents the third great innovation on the media plane. With their introduction, these three media forms have enabled an ever-growing number of people to access an ever-growing mass of information. These are made to be increasingly lasting, more easily. With the last step represented by Internet we are confronted with a sort of "activation" in which readers themselves become authors. Yet, this in itself does not automatically result in the progress on the level of the public sphere. [...]

- Jürgen Habermas, *Internet and Public Sphere*.

Introduction

This chapter dwells with the Internet's three inherent characteristics. These inherent characteristics showed that the Internet possess functions to be a possible medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. This chapter also dwells with the rise of 'online deliberative forums' in the cyberspace. According to the standards set by Habermas in his work *The Three Normative Models of Democracy*, 'online deliberative forums' manifested the capability of the people to involve themselves again, this time in the cyberspace, in rational-critical thinking and debate because these forums showed the democratic ideals necessary for the public sphere to genuinely exist even in the cyberspace. In addition, the need to learn from the history of the public sphere theory is deemed essential in order to avoid repeating the public sphere's fate during the nineteenth-century. There is, therefore, a need to know the Internet's current ambiguities because these can obstruct the Internet as an effective medium of the public sphere. Hence, a

response is needed in order for the people as well as the society to know their important role in the maintenance of the Internet as a medium of the public sphere.

Furthermore, the public sphere aims to reach and perform dialogue with many people as possible. With the developments in the media plane in the twenty-first century, people are given the opportunity to develop their public life. Even societal institutions such as religious institutions are welcomed to engage in discussion and debate in twenty-first century which was impossible when Habermas's conceptualized the public sphere during the eighteenth-century. Hence, this chapter also dwells on religion in the public sphere.

A. The Internet¹⁷⁸: An Effective Medium of the Public Sphere in the Twenty-first Century

The twenty-first century is a century of vast technological advancements. People who were born during this century were commonly referred to as the 'digital natives', and those people who needed to adapt to such environment were commonly referred to as the 'digital immigrants.'¹⁷⁹ Not only that society changed but the people were affected by these societal changes as well. Despite the

¹⁷⁸ What the researcher refers by the 'Internet' is the different platforms of the Internet that possess the potential for the people to again perform rational-critical thinking and debate, the lifeblood of the public sphere. Hence, any platform that could enable a fruitful dialogue and a true discourse and debate may be considered as the Internet that the researcher refers in the study.

¹⁷⁹ Marc Prensky, "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants." *Horizon*, (October 2001), p. 3. See also Marc Prensky, "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrant, Part II: Do They Really Think Differently?" *Horizon*, (December 2001), 5.

technological advancements that, in one way or another, can aid the society, it still remains on the hands of the people to make such advancements advantageous to the society. Hence, one may say that the technological advancements of the twenty-first century manifest a 'two-edged sword' - it could be used for the betterment of the society; however, it could also be used to for the decline of the society.

Jürgen Habermas's theory was dismissed to be irrelevant in the twenty-first century by his critics.¹⁸⁰ This is so because the public sphere is highly dependent on societal changes that favor it. The accusations were not entirely wrong, however, since Habermas himself, in his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* ended with a pessimistic attitude towards the public sphere because of the socio-political changes disfavoring its genuine existence during the nineteenth century. Habermas's book emphasized the disintegration of the public sphere during the nineteenth-century and called such decline as the 'refeudalization' of the public sphere. However, his successors¹⁸¹ continued to

¹⁸⁰ See the following authors/writers who do not support the existence of the public sphere in the twenty-first century: Matthew Carmona, "Contemporary Public Space, Part Two: Classification." *Journal of Urban Design* (February 2010), pp. 157-173; Matthew Eastin, Bradley Greenberg and Linda Hofschire, "Parenting the Internet." *Journal of Communication* (2006), pp. 486-504; Pasco, "On the Structural Transformation", pp. 93-118; Sinekopova, "Building the Public Sphere.", pp. 505-522; Michael Socolow, "A Profitable Public Sphere: The Creation of The New York Times Op-Ed Page." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* (Summer 2010), pp. 281-296; Edson Tandoc and Marko Skoric, "The Pseudo Event Paradox: How Pseudo-Events Flood in the Philippines Press and Why Journalists Don't Recognize it." *Asian Journal of Communication* (March 2010), pp. 33-50; Jennifer Siebel Trainor, "Review: Persuasion in the Public Sphere: What an Argument Is and What It Might Be Made to Do." *College English* (January 2006), pp. 309-319.

¹⁸¹ See the following authors/writers who supported the existence of the public sphere in the twenty-first century: Lance Bennett, Victor Pickard, David Lozzi, Carl Schroeder, Taso Lagos, and Evans Caswell, "Managing the Public Sphere: Journalistic Construction of the Great

rethink the theory and the possibility of reviving its democratic functions in the twenty-first century. The improvements in technology especially in information technologies were seen as an opportunity for the public sphere to regain its democratic functions by having new, possible mediums that could again foster rational-critical thinking and debate amongst a greater number of people through the use of information technologies' various platforms.

People felt that the world is becoming smaller and smaller. Karen Sanders, a twenty-first century political critic, stated that in this decade people utilize the Internet as an effective meeting point to discuss injustices and perform different protests to injustices.¹⁸² The Internet, in different platforms, increased the people's

Globalization Debate." *Journal of Communication* (September 2004), pp. 437-455; Brundidge, "Encountering Difference", pp. 680-700; Leanne Chang and Thomas Jacobson, "Measuring Participation as Communicative Action: A Case Study of Citizen Involvement in and Assessment of a City's Smoking Cessation Policy-Making Process." *Journal of Communication* (December 2010), pp. 660-679; Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*; Lincoln Dahlberg, "The Internet and Democratic Discourse: Exploring the Prospects of Online Deliberative Forums Extending the Public Sphere." *Information, Communication & Society* 4:4 (2001), pp. 615-633; Dahlgren and Sparks, *Communication and Citizenship*; Gans, "News & the News Media", pp. 8-17; Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*; Joshua Gunn and Barry Brummett, "Popular Communication After Globalization." *Journal of Communication* (December 2004), pp. 705-721; Holub, *Critic in the Public Sphere*; Matthias Kohring and Jorg Matthes, "Trust in News Media: Development and Validation of a Multidimensional Scale." *Communication Research* (April 2007), pp. 231-252; Claudio De Magalhaes, "Public Space and the Contracting-out of Publicness: A Framework of Analysis." *Journal of Urban Design* (November 2010), pp. 559-573; Matthew McAllister and Joseph Turow, "New Media and the Commercial Sphere: Two Intersecting Trends, Five Categories of Concern." *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* (December 2002), pp. 505-514; Ananda Mitra, "Voices of the Marginalized on the Internet: Examples from a Website for the Women of South Asia." *Journal of Communication* (September 2004), pp. 492-510; W. James Potter, "The State of Media Literacy." *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* (December 2010): 675-696; Stephan Schmidt and Jeremy Nemeth, "Space, Place and the City: Emerging Research on Public Space Design and Planning." *Journal of Urban Design* (November 2010), pp. 453-457; George Varna and Steve Tiesdell, "Assesing the Publicness of Public Space: The Star Model of Publicness." *Journal of Urban Design* (November 2010), pp. 575-591.

¹⁸² Sanders, *Communicating Politics*, 159.

involvement on important matters especially on matters concerning politics. Different platforms of information technologies existing in the twenty-first century had changed our traditional understanding of what really is a public sphere.¹⁸³ Because of the developments in the media plane, one can say that the public sphere is not only limited to a 'face-to-face interaction' and 'one-to-one encounter.'¹⁸⁴

In addition, the Internet also gave the people the chance to effectively involve themselves in socio-political affairs.¹⁸⁵ Information is easily accessible to anyone and anywhere. Even the marginalized groups or individuals of the society are now involved with the current socio-political issues by having the knowledge of the latest information and social issues at a much faster rate, thanks to the inherent characteristics of the Internet.¹⁸⁶ Ananda Mitra, in her study on the marginalized women, points out the benefits that the Internet provides especially on the marginalized in the society by arguing that:

*"With the increasing availability of the Internet, many marginal groups are producing a presence in cyberspace. The presence can be thought of as a phenomenon in which the Internet is providing a unique forum for the dispossessed to find a voice in the public sphere."*¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Read Crossley and Roberts, 131-139

¹⁸⁵ Sanders, *Communicating Politics*, 159.

¹⁸⁶ The Internet as the researcher pertains in the study, See footnote no. 178.

¹⁸⁷ Mitra, "Voices of the Marginalized on the Internet", 492. Italics are mine.

Furthermore, Pope Benedict XVI, during the 43rd World Communications Day stated that the Internet opened up “a range of means of communication that permit the almost instantaneous communication of words and images across enormous distances and to some of the most isolated corners of the world; something that would have been unthinkable for previous generations.”¹⁸⁸ When compared to the previous mediums of the public sphere, the Internet has shown that it could be an effective of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. The Internet however, does not only mirror the previous mediums but it has more promising potentials than the previous ones. It is highly accessible because of its relatively cheap access, it invites people of different classes to discuss about societal issues and it also alleviates social inequality and spatial boundaries. The seemingly unlimited reach of the Internet in disseminating information is highly needed by the people to foster their public life in the twenty-first century.

The three inherent characteristics of the Internet shows that it is truly an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. The Internet “continues to extend its reach and its connecting potential flows from its three characteristics.”¹⁸⁹ The three characteristics are; accessibility, information and interactivity.

¹⁸⁸ Pope Benedict XVI, *New Technologies, New Relationship*.

¹⁸⁹ Sanders, *Communicating Politics*, 159.

a. Accessibility

The Internet is accessible in two ways: “first, it is materially an accessible medium, relatively cheap and straightforward to use. Second, the absence of barriers to entry means that it is open to everyone with the necessary material resources.”¹⁹⁰ The Internet is a medium where the attainment of information is cheaper or in some instance, free. When compared to the public sphere’s previous mediums, the Internet is capable in weakening social and spatial boundaries because it enables people to engage in dialogue despite one’s location. The Internet, therefore, weakens ‘social boundaries’ but bridge ‘geographical divides.’¹⁹¹ Because of this, people could argue and debate their concerns and socially relevant issues on the Internet. Hence, the internet enables the people to discuss about socio-political issues to a greater level.¹⁹²

b. Information

Due to the accessibility of the Internet, the information is also becoming widely available to anyone. The Internet has been made more accessible with the ‘developments of search engines.’¹⁹³ It has made access to information accessible with just a few ‘clicks.’ Sanders enunciated that “the availability of vast swathes

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Brundidge, "Encountering Difference", 681.

¹⁹² Cf. Benett, “Managing the Public Sphere”, 439.

¹⁹³ Cf. Sanders, *Communicating Politics*, 159.

of information empowers schoolchildren, journalists, academics, citizen groups and all those who seek to know.”¹⁹⁴ With the information becoming widely accessible through the Internet with just a few ‘clicks’, anyone could have access to the latest news and engage in rational-critical debate based on the acquired knowledge and information. The Internet, therefore, provides a wide array of information that is otherwise unavailable or difficult to attain without the Internet.

c. Interactivity

The Internet permits rational-critical thinking and debate to another level. The providers and users of information could converse at any issues at an instant. The people, because of the Internet, not only discuss and debate about issues with themselves but they are also capable to converse with the providers of information themselves. The people could challenge the providers of information and their information for its validity which was impossible during the eighteenth and nineteenth century because the information which was published on papers were not capable for instant inquiry to the readers. Luke Goode, a proponent of the public sphere theory, affirms that the most pervasive aspect of the Internet is its interactivity. He said that “the point about digital technologies is that they are interactive: they allow us to talk back.”¹⁹⁵ The interactivity of the Internet gathers those people with different views and allow them to directly discuss opposing

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 107.

views and arrive to a mutually shared views that could unite the society.¹⁹⁶ In addition, the Internet's interactivity allows the people to be 'action-oriented', that is, it allows them to act upon these mutually shared opinions and apply such to their lives and to the society.¹⁹⁷ The people does not only discuss about societal issues for them to be aware; rather, they discuss issues for the purpose of involving themselves with socio-political affairs.

The Internet's inherent characteristics showed that it could foster the people's rational-critical debate, the lifeblood of the public sphere. The Internet showed that it could be an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. The Internet allows the people to access information at the easiest and cheapest way possible. It also empowers the people to revive rational-critical debate that was visible during the rise of the public sphere during the eighteenth century. The researcher therefore argues that because of the Internet's inherent characteristics, it is truly an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first. In addition, the Internet, in its different platforms, made Habermas's public sphere theory relevant in the twenty-first century by enhancing people's capability for rational-critical thinking and debate.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. Benett, "Managing the Public Sphere", 439.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Pope Benedict XVI, *New Technologies, New Relationship*.

B. The Rise of 'Online Deliberative Forums': An Extension of the Public Sphere on the Cyberspace

James Bohman reminds public sphere theorists that the innovations in the society also requires "rethinking both democracy and the public sphere outside the limits of its previous historical forms."¹⁹⁸ The changes on the traditional understanding of the public sphere as a venue for 'face-to-face interaction' and a 'one-to-one communication' had opened up for the public sphere to exist in other platforms.¹⁹⁹ The public sphere therefore is also possible to exist on the cyberspace. It does not however follow that every cyberspace that exists on the Internet manifest the democratic aspects that the public sphere needs in order to genuinely exist.

Peter Dahlgren argued that the "public sphere in the contemporary situation is conditioned by other historical circumstances and is imbued with other potentialities."²⁰⁰ He further stated that:

"The romantic notion of a public sphere composed of individuals speaking face to face or communicating via small-circulation print media is not of much utility. We live in the age of electronic media and mass publics and cannot turn back the historical clock; we can only go forward."²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 151.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 131-139.

²⁰⁰ Dahlgren and Sparks, *Communication and Citizenship*, 2.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

Before one moves forward to the possibility of extending the public sphere on the cyberspace, however, one needs to consider Habermas's understanding of 'deliberative democracy' since this type of democracy served as the basis for the democratic functions of the public sphere. Habermas, in his work *The Three Normative Models of Democracy* argued that there are three types of democracy. These three models are: *proceduralist, communitarian and deliberative democracy*.²⁰² A genuine public sphere, according to Habermas, can only emerge on 'deliberative democracy' because it involved a "compromise of competing interests in a manner compatible with the common good and, on the other hand, to bring universalistic principles of justice into the horizon of the specific form of life of a particular community."²⁰³ According to Lincoln Dahlberg, Habermas's three different models of democracy emerged as concepts relative to the rise of different types of cyberspace on the Internet.²⁰⁴ A certain cyberspace could serve as an extension of the public sphere if and only if it possess the democratic ideals of what a genuine public sphere should be. Dahlberg, based on Habermas's description of the three types of democracy, exposed the emergence of the three prominent camps prevalent on the cyberspaces of the Internet. Dahlberg stated that:

²⁰² For a thorough understanding of the three models of democracy that Habermas describes, see Jürgen Habermas, "Three Normative Models of Democracy in *Constellations*, 1(1). (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 1994), 1-10.

²⁰³ TNMD, 5.

²⁰⁴ Lincoln Dahlberg, "The Internet and Democratic Discourse: Exploring the Prospects of Online Deliberative Forums Extending the Public Sphere." *Information, Communication & Society* 4:4, (2001), 615-622.

“...three dominant ‘camps’ have emerged. First, a communitarian camp, which stresses the possibility of the Internet enhancing the communal spirit and values. Second, a liberal individualist camp, which sees the Internet as assisting the expression of individual interests. *Third, a deliberative camp, which promotes the Internet as the means for an expansion of the public sphere of rational-critical citizen discourse* – discourse autonomous from state and corporate power through which public opinion may be formed that can hold official decision makers accountable.”²⁰⁵

According to Dahlberg and in agreement with Habermas’s *Three Normative Models of Democracy*, the deliberative camp is the only camp where a genuine public sphere could exist since “the deliberative position offers a more powerful democratic model”²⁰⁶ compared to the previous camps.

The characteristics of the communitarian camp on the Internet dissolves the existence of a genuine public sphere on the cyberspace because it loses an essential aspect of democracy, that is, the pluralism of discourse. Communitarian camp dissolves the pluralism of discourse of the people because it only aims to foster communal interaction which are one and the same. From its word ‘communitarian’, it only focuses on the development of a community rather than having arguments that fosters rational-critical thinking and debate. The communitarian camp does not foster rational-critical debate and discourse since the aim of this camp is only to develop an ‘ethically integrated community’. The tendency and danger of an ethically integrated community is that it only consists

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 616. Italics are mine.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

of dialogues and conversations which are not beneficial to the society. Its conversation only aims to reach people's emotional aspects, such as gossips and slanders. Members of this camp are "not often forced to confront the full range of public concerns and values that are to be faced when living with difference in everyday offline life."²⁰⁷ The result of conversations on this type of camp, therefore, are only one and the same opinion which have no political significance. Fragmentation could also result to this camp because people may have the tendency to separate themselves if they do not 'feel' to belong to such camp. Hence, this type of camp produced a cyberspace which focuses only on shallow and unbeneficial discussions to the society.

The second camp, in contrast to the communitarian camp is the liberal individualist camp. Unfortunately, the liberal individualist camp, too, does not foster a genuine public sphere because it overemphasized an essential aspect of democracy, that is, the individualism of citizens. While it is true that individual opinions are crucial to the public sphere because it encourages each and every one to express their individual views no matter how radical it is, the liberal individualist camp however promotes "the use of the Internet to provide individuals with the means to access a plethora of political information and express their views directly."²⁰⁸ The main aim of liberal individualists is to 'take

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

action' and to 'let your views' be heard without dialogue and careful consideration of other people's opinions.²⁰⁹ From its word 'liberal individualist', citizens who choose to be a member of this camp tend not only to be 'individualist' but also 'liberal' to the views of others, they fail to sympathize and empathize with other people. People, belonging to this camp, only express statements as it is without rational-critical thinking. They overemphasized their capacity and their freedom in expressing opinions. In addition, petty online wars could occur because of the overemphasis of each and every individual's opinion. The liberal individualist camp loses the democratic ideals of a genuine public sphere since their opinions do not undergo rational-critical debate and so loses its rational and communicative part. Their radical and individualistic views had a tendency to discourage other people to engage in dialogue and debate. Therefore, people, on this type of camp, will choose not to express their opinions anymore regarding any political issue for the fear that they may be wrongly criticized by other people who do not deliberate.

Despite the tendency of the people to fall prey to these two camps, Dahlberg turned "to an examination of the possible realization of the third camp's vision - that the public sphere of rational-critical discourse will be extended through cyberspace."²¹⁰ Upon reading Habermas's three models of democracy, Dahlberg argues that despite the previous camps, there are still "many spaces of discourse

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 619.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 615.

that exist online and may be seen as extending the public sphere.”²¹¹ The deliberative camp “assures an ongoing deliberative, thoughtful dialogue where citizens can think and rethink issues, confront new ideas to people and change their minds in the course of the discussion.”²¹² In contrast to the communitarian camp and liberal individualist camp, the deliberative camp focuses on fostering the capacity for rational-critical thinking and debate of the people. Dahlberg encourages people to involve themselves only to this kind of camp since this camp is only where a genuine public sphere can be extended in the cyberspace. He added that:

“The [deliberative] model assumes that difference always exists between subjects, difference which necessitates a process of rational-critical discourse in order for privately-oriented individuals to become publicly-oriented citizens and for public opinion to develop that can rationally guide democratic decision-making.”²¹³

The rise of ‘online deliberative forums’ manifest that the public sphere had been extended on the cyberspace because these forums discuss about relevant socio-political issues and possess the democratic ideals that Habermas described on the three normative models of democracy.²¹⁴ Moreover, the growing number of

²¹¹ Ibid., 620.

²¹² The CivicExchange Strong Democracy in Cyberspace project (<http://webserver.law.yale.edu/infosociety/civicechange.html>), Quoted in Dahlberg, “Extending the Public Sphere”, 621.

²¹³ Ibid., 616.

²¹⁴ The existence of ‘online deliberative forums’ in the different platforms of the Internet showed that Habermas’s theory of the public sphere had been extended to the cyberspace. Dahlberg provided statistical proofs for the capabilities of ‘online deliberative forums’ to foster the people’s capacity to engage in rational-critical thinking and debate, the lifeblood of the public

people that is a member of 'online deliberative forums' showed that the 'public opinion' cannot only be made on a 'physical forum' nor on a 'one-to-one communication' and 'face-to-face interaction.' Rather, 'public opinion' can foster in the cyberspace as well as long as that cyberspace showed the democratic ideals of what Habermas thought of as a 'deliberative democracy.'²¹⁵

Brian Connery stated that the "users of the internet, like the denizens of coffee-houses, frequently have access to information".²¹⁶ Despite the absence of physical encounter, 'online deliberative forums' paved the way for the development of people's rational-critical thinking and debate. The Internet, therefore, is not only an effective medium of the twenty-first century public sphere but it has also aided in extending the public sphere to exist in other platforms. The people of the twenty-first century public sphere mirrored the community coined by Benedict Anderson. His well-known formulation of 'imagined community'²¹⁷ manifest itself in 'online deliberative forums' because though the people does not meet each other physically, in their minds live an image of communion because of

sphere. For a summary of his doctoral thesis, See Dahlberg, "Extending the Public Sphere.", 615-633.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 622.

²¹⁶ See David Porter (ed.), *Internet Culture*, (London: Routledge, 1997), 169.

²¹⁷ It is imagined as a community because while it is true that some of the people in a society may not meet each other physically, yet in their minds live an image of communion because of the mutual decisions and agreements that affect their private lives. In this case, the people imagine themselves to belong in a certain community because of the issues that affect their private lives which are discussed and debated on 'online deliberative forums'. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (Philippines: Anvil Publishing Inc., 2003).

the common decisions which affect their private lives. The researcher argues that the rise of 'online deliberative forums' showed that the public sphere had been extended on the cyberspace because of its potential to foster deliberation amongst its members.

It is true, as argued above, that the public sphere had once again gained its democratic functions because of the Internet as its new and effective medium in the twenty-first century. However, despite the optimistic view of the Internet as an effective medium of the public sphere, there are pitfalls, if not given a response, to the Internet's effectiveness as a medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. It is important to address the Internet's ambiguities in order to avoid the fate of nineteenth-century public sphere where the state manipulated the 'public opinion' by controlling the public sphere's medium. A response must be given to the Internet's ambiguities in order to remind the people as well as the society of their critical and crucial role for the maintenance of the Internet as a medium of the public sphere. Hence, the next discussion dwells on the Internet's current ambiguities.

C. The Ambiguities of the Internet and its Solution

Today, there is a rapid development that occurs in the society because of the technological advancements of its time especially with the emergence of the Internet in its different platform. It is true based on the explanations given above

that the Internet is an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century because of its inherent characteristics. However, the Internet has shown ambiguities which could deviate it from its effectiveness as a medium. A response is needed to be addressed, therefore, to these ambiguities so that the people as well as the society could know their essential role in maintaining the effectiveness of the Internet as a new medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. The ambiguities of the Internet regarding the questions of validity, reflexivity, equality and autonomy will remain a threat to the effectiveness of the Internet as a medium if these issues are not given a response.

Habermas was not able to publish a book regarding the contribution of the Internet as a possible medium of the public sphere today. He also failed “to account for the increasing prevalence of media and the role they play in contemporary social and political life.”²¹⁸ The development in information technologies especially the emergence of the Internet, however, had inevitably made the public sphere configured to the cyberspace. In *Virtual Community: Finding Connection in a Computerized World*, Howard Rheingold argued that the rise of the ‘electronic agora’ is already at hand.²¹⁹ The electronic agora is characterized as an ‘electronic coffee house’ in which “like the eighteenth-century coffee-house, the Internet has provided users with access to information and opinion beyond

²¹⁸ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 92.

²¹⁹ See Howard Rheingold, *Virtual Community: Finding Connection in a Computerized World*, (London: Vintage, 1993), 67.

that provided by the 'official' disseminator of news"²²⁰ The advent of electronic coffee house is capable in aiding citizens to "(re)discover the art of speaking, debating, and discursively testing the claims of the powerful and of each other."²²¹ The effectiveness of the public sphere greatly relies on both the people's capacity to engage in rational-critical thinking and debate with the proper utilization of the public sphere's medium. It is the task, therefore, of the people to maintain a free, valid and unmanipulated flow of information and opinion through the use of the different platforms of information technologies.

The Internet's ambiguities must be given a response in order that the people as well as the society could know their essential and critical role in maintaining the effectiveness of the different platforms of information technologies for their benefit. As regards this, the Internet's ambiguities will be discussed and a response are provided at the end. According to Dahlberg, the present ambiguities of the Internet are; validity, reflexivity, equality and autonomy.²²²

a. Validity

The question of the validity of information that exists on the Internet is an important question. This is so because people of today greatly rely on the use of

²²⁰ Porter, *Internet Culture*, 169.

²²¹ Goode, *Democracy and Public Sphere*, 107.

²²² There are actually six current ambiguities of the Internet according to Lincoln Dahlberg. However, the researcher considered and focused only on four ambiguities which are an essential discussion to the study. For a full discussion regarding the six ambiguities, See Dahlberg, "Extending the Public Sphere.", 622-630.

the Internet for gaining information. It is true that information is easily accessible to people who could access the Internet. The Internet, however, has information which are not backed up by reasoned justifications. The Internet can also be a cause of widespread false information and misinformation.

In addition, irrelevant socio-political questions surround the Internet. The information seems to be convincingly true that people fail to check references for its validity. Charles Ess, a media studies professor, argued that the “topic get developed in a several exchanges of shorter messages rather than in one exchange of long position statements.”²²³ This means that the information conveyed, due to the speed of the Internet, gets shorter every time. The tendency is that when the information shortens, essential information tends also to be lost in the series of discussions. The danger, therefore, is that people will consider everything in the Internet as true without careful analysis and proper use of rational-critical thinking.

b. Reflexivity

The rapid exchanges of information on the Internet restrained its operation for reflexivity. The rapid exchanges possess the tendency for the people to deviate from developing a critical attitude. Pasco noticed that “since the wide array of voices are amplified at a louder volume and an ever-faster rate, people are

²²³ Charles Ess (ed.), *Philosophical Perspectives on Computer-Mediated Communication*, (United States: State University of New York Press, 1996), 16-17.

becoming less and less attentive and critical of certain pressing matters.”²²⁴ In other words, since the exchanges of information is rapid because of the Internet’s speed, people fail to critically reflect and deliberate on their respective positions and opinions because of the psychological pressure to respond quickly or otherwise one will be ‘left out.’ The lack of understanding on a certain issue and information, because of the people’s failure to deliberate upon it, could lead them to be unprepared when shifting positions and opinions when they are faced with justified opinions. The rapid exchange “limits the time and space available for deliberating upon claims and critiques.”²²⁵ There is then a tendency for the people to develop an attitude of bigotry in their chosen opinions and positions. This means that people will continue to argue that their assertions are true despite the facts that argue otherwise. This ambiguity stems from the fear of ‘being out of trend’.

c. Equality

The different inequalities occurring on the cyberspaces of the Internet spring outside of it. This means that the biases and the inequalities existing on the society were brought to the cyberspace. These inequalities are race, gender and especially

²²⁴ Pasco, “On the Structural Transformation”, 104.

²²⁵ Lincoln Dahlberg, “Wiley Online Library.” *Computer-Mediated Communication and The Public Sphere: A Critical Analysis*. October 2001. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2001.tb00137.x/full> (accessed January 23, 2017).

money. In these inequalities, people usually favors those citizens that are 'educated, white, English-speaking and male' when presenting about issues related to society and politics. These inequalities must be addressed because if the people only favor arguments of people because of their race, gender or money, the result is that "the internet can at best support an elite public sphere."²²⁶ According to Habermas *Three Normative Models of Democracy*, this is not an aspect of a true democracy because in a true one, everyone is given the chance to speak out one's arguments concerning society and politics. If these inequalities are not addressed, the Internet defeats its most significant aspect and the reason for its utilization as the public sphere's medium in the twenty-first century, that is, its capacity to include a greater number of people despite the social status.

d. Autonomy

The danger of not being able to maintain the clear separation between state and society is and will always be a danger for the public sphere. This danger remains even on the public sphere in the twenty-first century. The increasing commercialization of the Internet brought about by the corporate and societal interests' groups has the potential to destroy the people's capacity for rational-critical thinking and debate. Since "the drive for profit has influenced the operation of the public sphere"²²⁷, there is a tendency for the people to be

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Pasco, "On the Structural Transformation", 104.

manipulated using the logic of commercialization and this could lead to the development of people to be uncritical of political matters. If this ambiguity is not given a solution, the danger of 'manipulative publicity', because of the manipulation of state and corporate interests, threatens the twenty-first century public sphere to imitate the fate of the 'refeudalized' public during the nineteenth-century.

e. A Solution

The first three ambiguities - the questions of validity, reflexivity and equality - sprung from the public sphere's prerequisites, that is, the sense of independence and criticality of citizens. The last ambiguity - the question of autonomy - sprung from both the first and second prerequisites, that is, the clear separation, including its functions, of the state and the society. These ambiguities should be given a solution in order that the Internet will remain to be an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century and avoid falling to the tragedy of the nineteenth century 'refeudalized' public sphere. Dahlberg, a renowned researcher on media politics and digital democracy, based his observation of the Internet's ambiguities by also understanding the Internet's democratic potentials. Hence, while presenting the Internet's ambiguities, he also provided solutions and responses to overcome these ambiguities.

First, the problem of validity can be solved at the level of the Internet users. The people must assess and challenge any information that exist on the different

platforms of the Internet. People must avoid dogmatizing the information just because it can be found on the Internet. Information should always be challenged and criticized in order to know whether it is true or not. This could be done if people foster their rational-critical thinking and debate. Dahlberg stated that “deliberation involves engaging in reciprocal critique of normative positions that are provided with reasons rather than simply asserted.”²²⁸ Even if the information is true, it should still be backed up by reasoned justifications and visible sources in order that people can validate such information in cases of doubt and uncertainty. The Internet, truly, is a source of information but it has fake ones as well. It is the task, then, of the people to differentiate which information are true ones or fake ones. Therefore, this ambiguity lies on the people’s capacity to be critical of information that are presented to them.

Second, the problem of reflexivity sprung from the Internet’s speed. This problem can also be solved on the part of the Internet users. People fail to examine and reexamine their standpoints for the fear that they may be ‘left out.’ This is because examining and reexamining one’s standpoints means that one must continue to dwell on the same issues over and over again in order to know the gaps on one’s standpoints. People therefore fear that, with the Internet’s speed, one will be ‘out of trend.’ Hence, they fail to examine and reexamine their standpoints. However, it does not follow that the fastest response is always the

²²⁸ Dahlberg, “Extending the Public Sphere”, 623.

response that is valid and true. People must overcome the fear of being 'left out' just for the sake of responding hastily with no proper deliberation. The people, rather, must "present their positions carefully, listen to others, and take time to reply."²²⁹ In addition, people must overcome the attitude of bigotry and must be "challenged to rethink their positions when confronted with strong critique and powerful alternate positions."²³⁰ The people should therefore, overcome the fear of being 'out of trend' but instead remain critical to every information that the Internet provides.

Third, the problem of equality is a societal issue. This problem can be solved using the Internet as an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. The Internet promotes equality today by having the capacity to invite those people even the disregarded and neglected ones in the society to discussion and debate.²³¹ The Internet, as a medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century, recognizes people despite its race, gender or even those without property into dialogue and discussions. The Internet's inherent characteristics gave marginalize groups an opportunity to be heard in the society.²³² Dahlberg agrees with Mitra by stating that "every participant affected by the validity claims under

²²⁹ Ibid., 625.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ See Mitra, "Voices of the Marginalized."

²³² For a thorough discussion regarding the marginalized people of south Asia and the capability of the Internet to foster equality to these marginalized women, See Mitra, "Voices of the Marginalized", 492-510.

consideration is equally entitled to introduce and question any assertion whatsoever.”²³³ The Internet in its different platforms has a sense of ‘blindness’ in its users.²³⁴ The problem of equality therefore is not a direct problem of the Internet; rather, it is caused by inequalities that already existed in the society. It is therefore the task of the society to address the problem of equality since if this is not addressed, it could affect people’s decisions by disregarding those people who may have something to contribute to the public sphere but are neglected just because they are thought to be unequal in the eyes of other people.

Lastly, the problem of autonomy. This could be solved through the efforts of the society also. Even the public sphere of today, the Internet, as the public sphere’s current medium, is threatened by the dangers of commercialization and late capitalism. The drive for profit greatly contributed to the collapsed of the public sphere during the nineteenth century by controlling and manipulating the public sphere’s medium. It is undeniable that there are many cyberspaces on the Internet that are driven by the logic of commercialization and late capitalism already. There are cyberspaces which does not solicit for the opinions of the people but rather only to gain profit to the people. In order to avoid the decline of the public sphere in the present century and the centuries to come, cyberspaces which the people consider to be cyberspaces which foster rational-critical thinking and debate as well as cyberspaces that engages people to discuss about political issues

²³³ Dahlberg, “Extending the Public Sphere”, 619.

²³⁴ Cf. Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 138.

must not be “affiliated to any political party, interest groups or private concern.”²³⁵ In addition, these cyberspaces must not accept “commercial advertising or announcements.”²³⁶ The competition between commercial interests’ groups and groups which foster rational-critical thinking, however, seems to be one-sided since the former have more money to expand its cyberspace compared to the latter. To overcome these, people as well as the society must only foster what Dahlberg describes as ‘online deliberative forums’ because this kind of forums existing in the cyberspace are forums that fosters people’s rational critical thinking. The people as well as the society could help maintaining this kind of forums existing in the cyberspace through funding and support. Dahlberg states that “funding is required to enable deliberative initiatives to resist incorporation by commercial and non-deliberative interests to expand, multiply and improve.”²³⁷ Therefore, the society plays a pivotal role in maintaining the Internet as an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century and the centuries to come.

As a summary, the ambiguities could be solved both by the efforts of the people as well as the aid of the society. On the one hand, people must develop a critical attitude towards the information that are presented to them. They must continue to engage in rational-critical thinking and debate despite the seemingly

²³⁵ Dahlberg, “Extending the Public Sphere”, 627.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid., 629.

accessible and true information existing on the Internet. On the other hand, the society should face the problem of equality so that it will not affect the Internet's democratic potentials. The society must utilize the Internet to the betterment of the people. This could be done by only funding and supporting cyberspaces which foster socio-political discussions. The society must support 'online deliberative forums' for these forums manifest the existence of the public sphere in the cyberspace.

Having provided and identified the solutions to the Internet's ambiguities, the Internet can become more capable of fostering validity, reflexivity, equality and autonomy. This is so if and only if the people and the society do their part. 'Internet democracy' could be achieved if the people and the society utilize the Internet in ways that are beneficial to the society. Peter Dahlgren stated that the "Internet is in the forefront of the evolving public sphere."²³⁸ Indeed, the Internet can only have an unhampered, free flow of communication and a true 'public opinion' "if there are agents who make it so."²³⁹ Sanders summarizes the development of the public sphere in the twenty-first century by saying that every advancement and improvement in the society indeed possessed democratic potentials, these

²³⁸ Peter Dahlgren, "The Internet, Public Spheres, and Political Communication: Dispersion and Deliberation." *Political Communication* 22 (2005), 160.

²³⁹ Crossley and Roberts, *After Habermas*, 154.

however highly depends on the people's dedication as well as the society's support in order to actualize such democratic potentials.²⁴⁰

D. Religion in the Public Sphere

The public sphere in the twenty-first century extends its reach to almost everyone in the society. Even institutions which were banned before in the public sphere are now invited to debate and discuss in the public sphere. Not only that a greater number of people join the public sphere in the twenty-first century but societal institutions can join as well. Societal institutions such as religious institutions are now included in the public sphere. Pope Benedict XVI, in his speech pertaining to the rising digital technologies, stated that:

*The new technologies have also opened the way for dialogue between people from different countries, cultures and religions. The new digital arena, the so-called cyberspace, allows them to encounter and to know each other's traditions and values.*²⁴¹

In the early works of Habermas especially in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, he disregarded the existence and role of religion in the public sphere. He intentionally disregarded religion because the public sphere during the previous centuries, especially during the rise of the public sphere during the eighteenth-century, aimed to emancipate itself from the seemingly absolutist and authoritarian rule of feudal societies in European countries. Religion before was

²⁴⁰ Cf. Sanders, *Communicating Politics*, 159.

²⁴¹ Pope Benedict XVI, *New Technologies, New Relationship*. Italics are mine

considered a feudalistic and authoritative realm since its religious doctrines were thought to be absolute and doctrinal. Religious doctrines were thought to be impossible for debate and discussion. When these doctrines are discussed, debated or questioned by the public, it was considered a hypocritical act. Habermas therefore, in his historical analysis of the public sphere theory, disregarded religion not because he meant to do such, but because the theory's history disregarded religion because of its tendency to deviate from rational-critical debate, among other difficulties.²⁴² Religious issues therefore in previous centuries were excluded in the public sphere because it was considered merely as an issue of 'private concern' and issues without societal nor political significance.

Habermas, sensing the public sphere's democratic characteristic to include everyone to discussion and debate especially in the twenty-first century because of the emergence of information technologies, argued that "religion plays an essential role in the social and political realms of the modern world. It is still present in highly secularized state and its influence in the realm of political discourses cannot be undermined."²⁴³ The researcher, therefore, discusses the existence and role of religion as an important societal institution in the public sphere of the twenty-first century. The researcher added this topic in the study so

²⁴² STPS, 8-12.

²⁴³ Christian Bryan Bustamante, "From Secularism to Post-Secularism: Jürgen Habermas on Religion in a Secular State," *Scientia: The Research Journal of the College of Arts & Sciences*, (June 2014), 7.

as to remove the assumption, based on the public sphere's history, that some institutions especially religious ones must be separated in the public sphere.

a. The Existence of Religious Worldviews in the Public Sphere

Historically speaking, a citizen of faith is hesitant to bring his religious views in the public sphere for three reasons. First, a citizen of faith feels a sense of fear and inadequacy that his religious views do not relate to the immediate issues of the society. Second, a citizen of faith does not even bother anymore at all to bring his religious views in the public sphere for the reason of its doctrinal and authoritative attitude which disregard any possible debate regarding such views. Since religious worldviews seems to be doctrinal and authoritative, it is a difficult task for a citizen of faith to debate, bringing along with him his religious background, without sounding absolute to any socio-political claims based on his religious worldviews especially issues regarding ethics. Lastly, the beliefs of a citizen of faith is simply difficult to be grasped by other people who may belong to another religion or may be secular.²⁴⁴ A citizen hesitates to bring his religious worldviews and principles to the public sphere because it may sound to other people as a form of imposition to their own individual views. These, among others, are the reason for the hesitance of a citizen of faith to bring along his religious background and views in the public sphere in previous centuries.

²⁴⁴ Cf. Jesster Fonseca, "Public Sphere: Church and State, Habermas and Ratzinger." *Scientia: The Research Journal of the College of Arts & Sciences* (June 2014), 169-173.

A conversation begins when there is a common discussion that exist. Religious principles were regarded as a 'private matter' because of the fact that the language used is enclosed and understandable only to its members. In so doing, people in the public sphere have "overlooked the fact that faith can be discovered and learned in conversation with others."²⁴⁵ In addition, the public sphere, when disregarding religion, loses a societal institution that greatly contributes to a wide range of dialogue and fruitful discussion that could improve society's understanding of certain matters.

The concept of the public sphere, as argued above, was revived of its democratic functions in the twenty-first century because of the proper use of the Internet as the public sphere's medium. The knowledge that religion possessed especially regarding ethics must be discussed in the public sphere for this could benefit the society. Habermas contended that religion is a worldview that is simply impossible to separate or remove from a citizen of faith when engaging in rational-critical debate. The above statement clearly means that Habermas disagrees with John Rawls's concept of 'Original Position'. Rawl's 'Original Position' argues that epistemic constraints must be removed so that fair justice or 'justice as fairness' will be achieved.²⁴⁶ One's tradition is indeed difficult and may often be impossible to remove in a one's worldview especially when religious citizens debate and

²⁴⁵ Daniel O' Connell, "The Church and the Public Sphere." *Doctrine and Life* (2007), 6.

²⁴⁶ See Jürgen Habermas, "Reconciliation through the Public Use of Reason: Remarks on John Rawls's Political Liberalism" in *Journal of Philosophy*. (New York: Penguin Group Inc., 1995), 17-34.

discuss about ethical views since these traditions are already part of their worldviews. Religious worldviews, then, must not be disregarded in the public sphere for this is a difficult situation especially for religious citizens. If the public sphere then of the twenty-first century fail or does not include religious worldviews of religious citizens in the public sphere, then it ceases to be a genuine public sphere. It loses its democratic characteristic to include everyone to rational-critical debate. A genuine public sphere should include everyone no matter what tradition a person has as long as that person discusses issues which has socio-political significance. The public sphere of the twenty-first century, therefore, must learn to accept the existence of religious worldviews on some of its members' worldviews.

The acceptance of religious worldviews in the public sphere is not just all about toleration of religious people in the public sphere however; rather, religion's existence plays an essential role in the public sphere. A public sphere must not only tolerate the existence of religious worldviews but must also include understanding religious doctrines since "religious traditions and communities of faith have gained a new, hitherto unexpected political importance."²⁴⁷ Religion could identify injustices existing in the society by going back to its doctrines. Hence, religion contributes to the progress of society by having a unique

²⁴⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *Jürgen Habermas: Between Naturalism and Religion*. Translated by Ciaran Cronin. (United States of America: Polity Press, 2008), 114.

understanding of abstract ethical concepts. The researcher proceeds by discussing religion's unique role in the public sphere.

b. The Role of Religion in the Public Sphere

The acceptance of the existence of religious worldviews in the public sphere should not only be because it is merely tolerated. Rather, people must understand that religion has a unique role to play in the public sphere. Jesster Fonseca, in his analysis with the debate that happened between Habermas and Pope Benedict XVI, argued that "the political community and the Church are different and independent of each other, that is, the temporal common good is the responsibility of the State, whereas spiritual concern is for the Church."²⁴⁸ The church and the state respect each other's sphere as long as both arrive to their goal and as long as the latter does not violate the moral and ethical convictions of the former. The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church agrees with the previous statement by arguing that:

*"The duty to respect religious freedom requires that the political community guarantee the Church the space needed to carry out her mission. For her part, the Church has no particular area of competence concerning the structures of the political community: "The Church respects the legitimate autonomy of the democratic order and is not entitled to express preferences for this or that institutional or constitutional solution", nor does it belong to her to enter into questions of the merit of political programmes, except as concerns their religious or moral implications."*²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ Fonseca, "Habermas and Ratzinger", 170.

²⁴⁹ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004), no. 424. Italics are mine.

The question of justice should not solely belong to the state's decision because "there is an immediate connection between justice and ethics/morals, the Church should not just stand back and watch whatever political actions the state and the people transact."²⁵⁰ The Church then has the right to speak "when it comes to the question of justice."²⁵¹ Fonseca, a San Beda College professor, clarified the previous statement by arguing that the "ministers should participate in striving for a just and humane society only in theory, and never in the actual practice; while the lay faithful should participate both in theory and in practice."²⁵² In addition, the encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* supported this by reminding the people that:

"[The Church] has to play her part through rational argument and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice, which always demands sacrifice, cannot prevail and prosper. *A just society must be the achievement of politics, not of the Church. Yet the promotion of justice through efforts to bring about openness of mind and will to the demands of the common good is something which concerns the Church deeply.*"²⁵³

The ministers, in order to carry out their strive for a just and humane society, should instead "educate the faithful on their political responsibility; educate the faithful on what justice is; and energize justice with charity. These

²⁵⁰ Fonseca, "Habermas and Ratzinger", 177.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Pope Benedict XVI, *Encyclical Letter Deus Caritas Est*. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005), #28. Italics are mine.

would actually bring us to one of the wellsprings of democracy.”²⁵⁴ Religion therefore plays a unique role in the public sphere, that is, “to energize justice with charity as justice demands self-sacrifice; and enlighten reason’s self-centeredness.”²⁵⁵ Religious institutions produced a breed of people which discuss important abstract ethical concepts such as justice, equality and freedom in a different perspective compared to secular institutions. Religion’s unique role in the public sphere is to give a different perspective and understanding regarding ethical concepts of freedom, equality and especially about justice to the society. Religious doctrines produce a wide array of discussions in the public sphere because of the richness of its doctrines. A citizen of faith gives the public sphere different ethical perspectives “of what is desirable and possible, to stimulate deliberation about them, provide a reexamination of premises and values, and thus broaden the range of political responses and deepen society’s understanding of itself.”²⁵⁶ Reading Habermas, a citizen of faith must only articulate his religious worldviews to the public sphere using ‘communicative action’ and not through the use of ‘strategic action’ since the latter is a form of manipulation.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ Fonseca, “Habermas and Ratzinger”, 177.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Michael Himes and Kenneth Himes. *Fullness of Faith: The Public Significance of Theology*. (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 23.

²⁵⁷ For a through and further discussion of Habermas’s definition of ‘communicative action’ and ‘strategic action’, See the following works: Jürgen Habermas. *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1984.); Jürgen Habermas. *The Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld*

Communicative action is the “dialoguing with the intention of reaching a real consensus with the other at all costs.”²⁵⁸ While, strategic action tries to impose one’s views to another person through the use of sheer will. A public sphere, then, if it distanced itself from religion will loss “a great source of wisdom and insight into how citizens can live meaningful lives in the twenty-first century.”²⁵⁹ Religion, therefore, has a unique role in the public sphere of the twenty-first century because religious institutions produce a breed of people which have a different moral and ethical perspectives compared to secular institutions. These different ethical perspectives are beneficial to the society because it fosters rational-critical debate, the public sphere’s lifeblood.

Religion has a language that is exclusive only to its members. Despite religion’s possible contribution to the development of the society, if the language used to express religious arguments are exclusive and understandable only to its members, then it would still not benefit the society. It would rather result to misunderstanding and misinterpretation in the public sphere. There is therefore a need to address the proper use of language in order to foster a fruitful discussion and dialogue among religious people and secular institutions in the public sphere. Hence, the researcher dwells on the proper use of language in the public sphere.

and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1987).

²⁵⁸ Fonseca, “Habermas and Ratzinger”, 178.

²⁵⁹ O’ Connell, “Church and Public Sphere”, 4.

c. The Use of a Generally Accessible Language in the Public Sphere

The society and the state must work hand in hand for the betterment of the understanding of human rights since both “serve the personal and social vocation of the same human beings. However different in missions, they both intend to aid the citizenry to exercise their rights and perform their endeavors.”²⁶⁰ Duncan Forrester, a theology professor, noticed that most people of faith have ‘theological fragments.’ He described ‘theological fragments’ as elements that “illuminate and challenge some aspects of the conventional wisdom, and contribute to the building of just communities in which people may flourish in mutuality and hope.”²⁶¹ In addition, theological fragments are part of the worldviews of the people belonging to a religion. When different religious and secular institutions engage in discussion and debate in the public sphere, a problem of language occurs because of diverse ‘jargons’ and the existence of language barriers in these different institutions. Rational-critical debate could not be achieved if both religious and secular institutions do not find a way to address the difficulties and limitations in their use of language in the public sphere. To answer this difficulty, Fonseca, echoing Habermas’s on *Dialectics of Secularization*, suggested that religious institutions “should develop an epistemic stance regarding its view with the state and events

²⁶⁰ Fonseca, “Habermas and Ratzinger”, 171.

²⁶¹ Duncan Forrester, *Christian Justice and Public Policy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), i.

of the world."²⁶² These new epistemic attitudes can be acquired through learning. Secular institutions, as well, are not spared from this epistemic stance since "a secularist consciousness does not suffice for the required cooperation with fellow citizens who are religious."²⁶³ Habermas suggested that:

*"The admission of religious assertion into the political arena only makes sense if all citizens can be reasonably expected not to exclude the possibility that these contributions may have cognitive substance – while at the same time respecting the priority of secular reasons and the institutional translation proviso. This is what the religious citizens assume in any case. Yet such an attitude presupposes a mentality on the part of secular citizens that is far from a matter course in the secularized societies of the West."*²⁶⁴

Habermas recognized the plurality of discourse that exist on the public sphere today and the changes that the society had to adopt regarding these pluralities. With this, he noticed the rise of post-secular societies. These societies started as secular societies; however, post-secular societies differ from secular societies since the former considered the importance and contribution of religion in the society while the latter intended to deviate from anything related to religion. Habermas stated that in post-secular societies, religion maintains a lay "claim to a public influence and relevant significance, while the secularistic certainty is losing ground that religion will disappear worldwide in the course of accelerated

²⁶² Fonseca, "Habermas and Ratzinger", 179.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ JHBNR, 139. Italics are mine.

modernization.”²⁶⁵ Post-secular societies have a post-metaphysical thought which benefit the people. Habermas stated that post-metaphysical thought:

“... is prepared to learn from religion while remaining strictly agnostic. It insists on the difference between certainties of faith and validity claims that can be publicly criticized; but it refrains from the rationalistic temptation that it can itself decide which part of the religious doctrines is rational and which part is not. Now, this ambivalent attitude to religion expresses a similar epistemic attitude which secular citizens must adopt, if they are to be able to willing to learn something from religious contributions to public debates – *provided it turns out to be something than can also be spelled out in a generally accessible language.*”²⁶⁶

Habermas is trying to say that in order for both religious and secular institutions to have a fruitful discussion, there must be a language that is understandable and acceptable to everyone in the public sphere. Habermas called this language as the ‘secular language’. Religious institutions then, in order to have a fruitful dialogue with secular institutions in the public sphere, is required to translate their religious language to a language that is understandable and acceptance to everyone and not only exclusive and limited to its members. In other words, Habermas is arguing that there should be a ‘translation proviso’ and the language that should be used is the ‘secular language’ since this is the language that is generally accessible to everyone regardless of worldviews and traditions.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ Jurgen Habermas, “A Post-Secular Society – What does that Mean?,” (delivered at the Istanbul Seminars organized by Reset Dialogues on Civilizations in Istanbul on June 2 – 6, 2008.)

²⁶⁶ JHBNR, Quoted in Fonseca, “Habermas and Ratzinger”, 180. Italics are mine.

²⁶⁷ Cf. JHBNR, 139.

It is a contribution, therefore, of both secular and religious institutions to produce a fruitful dialogue and debate in the public sphere. Secular and religious institutions must “adopt in order to learn from each other and reach an agreement.”²⁶⁸ Pope Benedict XVI reminds the people in the present century that:

The new technologies have also opened the way for dialogue between people from different countries, cultures and religions. *The new digital arena, the so-called cyberspace, allows them to encounter and to know each other's traditions and values.* Such encounters, if they are to be fruitful, require honest and appropriate forms of expression together with attentive and respectful listening. The dialogue must be rooted in a genuine and mutual searching for truth if it is to realize its potential to promote growth in understanding and tolerance.²⁶⁹

In a pluralistic society, “the citizens of faith and people from the secular world have a duty to recognize their differences and work toward consensus by learning and understanding such differences.”²⁷⁰ The only way therefore, is through the use of a ‘generally accessible language’ of religious institutions and the utmost respect of secular institutions towards every tradition that exist in the public sphere.

²⁶⁸ Fonseca, “Habermas and Ratzinger”, 181.

²⁶⁹ Pope Benedict XVI. *New Technologies, New Relationship*. Italics are mine.

²⁷⁰ Bustamante, “From Secularism to Post-Secularism”, 11.

Recapitulation

The emergence of information technologies has given the public sphere the chance to revive its democratic functions by utilizing the Internet as a new medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. The Internet²⁷¹ possessed three inherent characteristics; these characteristics are accessibility, information and interactivity. Because of the Internet's inherent characteristics, every individual who wished to involve themselves in the public sphere are welcomed(accessibility); information is cheaper and censorship is not an issue(information); the Internet changed the understanding of dialogue and discourse to a different level(interactivity). These characteristics showed that the Internet is truly capable to be an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century.

The traditional understanding of the public sphere as a venue for a 'face-to-face interaction' and 'one-to-one communication' must be changed in order for the public sphere to be understood in terms of different platforms of the Internet in the twenty-first century. In order for the public sphere to be fully functional in the twenty-first century, it must be understood in terms of its existence in the cyberspace. According to Dahlberg in his analysis of Habermas's work *The Three Normative Models of Democracy*, the rise of 'online deliberative forums' proved that the public sphere had been extended on the cyberspace because 'online

²⁷¹ The Internet as the researcher pertains in the study, See footnote no. 178.

deliberative forums' manifested Habermas's description of a 'deliberative democracy' - a type of democracy which the public sphere can only genuinely exist. These forums foster the people's capability for rational-critical debate, the lifeblood of the public sphere.

The Internet was regarded as an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century because of its inherent characteristics; however, this effectiveness is threatened because of its current ambiguities. These ambiguities are; validity, reflexivity, equality and autonomy. The Internet's ambiguities must be given a response so that the Internet will not imitate the fate of the mediums of the previous public sphere which had been controlled and manipulated. The solution to the Internet's ambiguities was provided by Dahlberg in his post-doctoral thesis - a study on Internet democracy. He argued that the people as well the society play an important and critical role in maintaining the Internet's democratic potentials that is beneficial to the development of both the people and society.

The public sphere in the twenty-first century is not only open to any individual but also to societal institutions as well. Even societal institutions such as religious institutions which were disregarded before are welcomed in the public sphere of the twenty-first century. Religious institutions that were not privileged to join the public sphere before because of their doctrinal and authoritative character are now welcomed because of the democratic characteristics of the public sphere to include everyone to debate and discussion. In today's society, religious

worldviews of religious people are not only tolerated in the public sphere but it is also accepted because religious worldviews contribute to the society by providing the public sphere with a unique definition of certain concepts especially on abstract ethical concepts such as justice, freedom and equality. Religious doctrines possessed a great wisdom which is beneficial to the public sphere and to the society.

Habermas noticed the pluralism of language that exist in the present century. Thus, the pluralism of language was also brought in the public sphere. Pluralism of language could result to misunderstanding and misinterpretation especially if religious and secular institutions debate with each other without a common language. Habermas, therefore, argued that both secular and religious institutions must develop an 'epistemic attitude' towards each other's arguments. This attitude could be achieved through learning. In addition, he proposed the 'translation proviso' for religious institutions. In 'translation proviso', religious institutions are required to translate their religious worldviews to a language that is understandable and acceptable to everyone in the public sphere. This language is the 'secular language'. Both secular and religious institutions must treat each other's argument equally in order to foster fruitful dialogue and debate. There could only exist a fruitful dialogue if both secular and religious institutions listen to each other's arguments with utmost respect and equality.

Habermas's theory of the public sphere remains to be an important part of democracy because it gives the people as well as the society the chance to debate

and discuss important socio-political issues. The public sphere could indeed be understood in other platforms. Information technologies especially the emergence of the Internet indeed foster people's public life. Truly, Habermas's theory of the public sphere is highly dependent on socio-political changes that favors it.

CHAPTER FIVE

Finale

... it is open to substantive change.

- Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*

Summary and Conclusion

This study endeavored to understand Jürgen Habermas's public sphere theory and its transformation in the twenty-first century. Habermas's critics dismiss his theory to have lost its contemporary relevance and importance because of how his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* ended, the researcher then seeks to find out how his theory could still be revived of its democratic functions in the twenty-first century brought about by the developments in the media plane. The enquiry begins by bringing to the fore Jose Ortega Gasset's description in *The Revolt of The Masses* that people today are starting to realize their growing social power. This growing social power of the people are further aided by the technological developments especially in the twenty-first century. The rise of information technologies in the twenty-first century developed people's public lives and involvement in political affairs. The use of technological advancements of today especially the emergence of the Internet in its different platforms must be utilized in order to foster a fruitful dialogue, encounter and solidarity to all people. Hence, in regard to this, the researcher utilized Habermas's theory of the public sphere as a paradigm for the improvement of people's public life.

Chapter two started by a discussion on the historical development of the public sphere theory during the eighteenth century. The philosophical works of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant were essential for its theoretical and intellectual foundation. The researcher dwelled with the rise of early capitalism in the feudal societies of Europe. This was essential to the development of the public sphere in these societies since early capitalism brought with it the capacity for citizens to acquire private properties thus giving them a sense of autonomy and independence from the state. The public sphere theory, in its full form, emerged during the early eighteenth century when citizens fully separated themselves from the state. A separate and clear understanding of 'private elements' and 'public elements' managed to generate a new social space called the 'public sphere.' The public sphere was relatively a powerful sphere because it possessed with it the capacity to foster people's rational-critical thinking and debate that stirred and created 'public opinion.' The public sphere became more influential and powerful when citizens utilized the press as the public sphere's medium. The public sphere, though a sphere separate from both the society and the state, aimed to address the state's unjust actions. The state, responding to the growing 'public opinion' that was against them, established the 'bourgeois constitutional state'. The establishment of 'bourgeois constitutional state' aimed to abolish the idea that the state is authoritative and an absolutist state. The 'bourgeois constitutional state' listened to the 'public opinion' of citizens and relate the 'public sphere' to an idea of law and a moral check on the state's actions. The chapter ended by arguing that

citizens who join in the public sphere should possess a dual identity. These identities were essential in order for citizens to effectively engage in rational-critical debate, the public sphere's lifeblood. Wholly, this chapter aimed to show the historical significance and social importance of the public sphere during the eighteenth century in European societies.

Chapter three started by arguing that change particularly in the society is inevitable. The researcher argued that the public sphere gradually declined due to socio-political changes. This chapter discussed the state's continuous penetration to the society's affairs while at the same the society also penetrated into the state's affairs. This 'mutual interpenetration' benefited mostly the state by having able to control and manipulate the press and the mass media for its own selfish agendas. The manipulation of the medium of the public sphere - the press and the mass media - made the state all the more powerful since they were able to manipulate and control the 'public opinion'. In addition, citizens during the nineteenth century developed a habit of leisure and consumerist attitude. These attitudes and habits changed how citizens discussed and approached socio-political issues. Citizens failed to foster rational-critical debate, the lifeblood of the public sphere. Instead, citizens prioritized their apolitical attitude. This undermine their important role in the public sphere. Furthermore, the state responded to the apolitical attitude of the citizens by increasing advertisements in the public sphere and its medium. Habermas called this decline as the 'refeudalization' of the public sphere. 'Refeudalization' is the disintegration of the elements of a genuine public

sphere brought about both by citizens themselves and the manipulation on the public sphere's medium.

Chapter four started by arguing that the twenty-first century is a century of vast technological advancements. The researcher, in agreement with public sphere theorists, considered these advancements as an opportunity for the public sphere to be configured and revived of its democratic functions in the twenty-first century brought about by the improvements in the media plane. This chapter presented the Internet's three inherent characteristics. These characteristics showed that the Internet was an effective medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. These characteristics fostered people's rational-critical thinking and debate. In addition, this chapter discussed about the rise of 'online deliberative forums' on the cyberspace. These forums showed that the public sphere was not only revived of its democratic functions in the twenty-first century but it has also been extended to the cyberspace. 'Online deliberative forums' bear the democratic ideals that Habermas defined in his *Three Normative Models of Democracy*. The public sphere can exist on 'online deliberative forums' since these forums agree to Habermas's definition of 'deliberative democracy' - a type of democracy in which the public sphere could genuinely exist. Furthermore, this chapter also discussed about the Internet's ambiguities. The researcher, with the solutions provided by Dahlberg in post-doctoral study of Internet democracy, provided a response to these ambiguities. A solution was deemed essential so as to avoid the fate of the nineteenth century public sphere, that is, a 'refeudalized'

public sphere. The researcher concluded that both the efforts of the people as well as the society play a crucial role for the maintenance of the Internet as the public sphere's effective medium in the twenty-first century.

Lastly, this chapter discussed about the possibility for existence of social institutions which was previously disregarded in the public sphere. Religion was disregarded before because of its doctrinal and authoritative doctrines which undermined people's right to questions such doctrines. The public sphere of the twenty-first century however welcomed those societal institutions which were disregarded before especially religious institutions because of their societal importance. The researcher started by arguing the worldviews of religious people should also be included in their religious principles because if it is separated, it would be a great burden to them. It is therefore necessary to accept the possibility of the existence of religious worldviews by the religious people in the public sphere. In addition, the public sphere should not separate itself from religious institutions because of religion's unique role in the public sphere. Religious institutions and their doctrines have a unique approach and explanation to abstract ethical concepts such as equality, freedom and justice. Religion institutions therefore should not only exist in the public sphere but also their religious doctrines should be given importance because of its possible contribution to the betterment of the society. Furthermore, there is need for a 'generally accessible language' especially when religious and secular institutions debate with each other. A 'generally accessible language' is needed in order to avoid

misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Habermas argued that the language needed is the 'secular language' because this is the language that is understandable to most people, in not all in the public sphere. Both religious and secular institutions must do their part in the public sphere in order to foster rational-critical debate.

The developments in the information technology were considered by the researcher as a development that made Habermas's theory of the public sphere significant in the twenty-first century.

Habermas ended his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* with the decline of the public sphere because of the manipulative use of its medium coupled with the people's change of attitude towards political issues. This thesis aimed to give the concept of the public sphere a new understanding because of the rise of the information technologies in the twenty-first century. The researcher considered the emergence of the Internet in its different platforms as an opportunity for the concept to be revived of its democratic importance and be understood in the context of the emerging technologies in the twenty-first century. The emergence of the Internet also provided the people the chance to engage again in rational-critical debate, the public sphere's lifeblood. The most significant aspect of the public sphere is its capacity to stir and create 'public opinion.' The people must utilize the Internet as a medium of the public sphere in the twenty-first century because of its promising democratic potentials.

This thesis also aimed to encourage the people to utilize the emerging information technologies of today as a tool for the betterment of the society. The Internet through its different platforms should be used not merely for entertainment but most especially for the people to be aware of the current events and to take action against the prevalent injustices existing in the society. In addition, today's development in the media plane must be utilized to connect more and more people, to know different worldviews and to help the marginalized people of the society. With the proper use of technologies today, the people could be emphasized and sympathized to more and more people. Furthermore, the researcher invites the people to always engage in rational-critical thinking and debate and to involve themselves in the society's democratic affairs. Indeed, the public sphere is open for a 'substantive change.' A positive change in the society could further our understanding of what really is the impact of the public sphere in our public lives.

Therefore, in answering the main problem **What accounts for the transformation of the public sphere in the 21st century?**, the researcher presents three answers:

First, one can know what accounts for the transformation of the public sphere in the twenty-first century by first knowing the democratic potentials and societal importance of the public sphere. This could motivate the people to further know what really is the theory of the public sphere. This is the discussion of chapter two.

Second, one can know what accounts for the transformation of the public sphere in the twenty-first century if there is a knowledge of the public sphere's historical decline. This is needed in order to avoid falling to the same tragedy all over again in the twenty-first century and the centuries to come. This is the discussion of chapter three.

Third, one can know what accounts for the transformation of the public sphere in the twenty-first century if the people and the society know that the technological advancements in the present century could give the public sphere a new configuration and a new understanding. This could encourage the people to utilize the Internet through its different platforms for the public sphere's development in the present century. This is the discussion of chapter four.

In answering the main problem, the rise of different information technologies together with the developments in the media plane account for the transformation of the public sphere in the twenty-first century. The rise of different information technologies and the developments in the media plane in the twenty-first century were responsible for changing our old and traditional understanding of what is a public sphere. One may say therefore that the developments in information technologies aided and further improved the people as well as the society's understanding of the concept of the public sphere.

Bibliography

A. PRIMARY SOURCES

1. Books

Habermas, Jurgen. *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Translated by William Rehg. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996.

_____. *Communication and the Evolution of Society*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1979.

_____. *Jürgen Habermas: Between Naturalism and Religion*. Translated by Ciaran Cronin. United States of America: Polity Press, 2008).

_____. *Jurgen Habermas on Society and Politics: A Reader*. Edited by Steven Seidman. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1989.

_____. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Translated by Thomas Burger and Erederrick Lawrence. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1991.

_____. *The Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1987.

_____. *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1984.

Ratzinger, Joseph and Jürgen Habermas. *Dialectics on Secularization: On Reason and Religion*. Edited by Florian Schuller. Translated by Brian McNeil. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006.

2. Journal Articles

Habermas, Jürgen. "Reconciliation through the Public use of Reason: Remarks on Jown Rawls's Political Liberalism" in *Journal of Philosophy*, 17-34. New York, USA: Penguin Group Inc., 1995.

_____. "Three Normative Models of Democracy" in *Constellations*, 1(1), 1-10. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 1994.

_____. "What does Socialism Mean Today? The Rectifying Revolution and the Need for New Thinking on the Left" in *New Left Review* 1, 7-18.

3. Lectures

Habermas, Jürgen. "A Post-Secular Society – What does that Mean?," (delivered at the Istanbul Seminars organized by Reset Dialogues on Civilizations in Istanbul on June 2 – 6, 2008.)

4. Interviews

Habermas, Jürgen "Internet and Public Sphere: What the Web Can't Do," (Interview published in the "[Feuilleton](#)" of the "[Frankfurter Rundschau](#)" of 14 - 15 June 2014. Questions by Markus Schwerin. Original title: "Im Sog der Gedanken")

B. SECONDARY SOURCES

1. Books

Aquinas, Thomas. *Commentary on Aristotle's Politics*. Translated by Benjamin Jowett. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Philippines: Anvil Publishing Inc., 2003.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Bagby, Laurie Johnson. *Hobbes's Leviathan: Reader's Guide*. London & New York: Continuum, 2007..

Bourdieu, Pierre. *On Television*. Translated by Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson. New York: The New Press, 1996.

Butler, Judith, Jürgen Habermas, Charles Taylor, and Cornel West. *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere*. Edited by Eduardo Mendieta and Jonathan Vanantwerpen. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.

Carter, April. *People Power and Political Change: Key Issues and Concepts*. London & New York: Routledge, 2012.

- Carver, Terrell. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Marx*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Christman, John. *Social and Political Philosophy: A Contemporary Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Crossley, Nick and John Michael Roberts. *After Habermas: A New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*. Oxford UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
- Dahlgren, Peter and Colin Sparks. *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and Public Sphere in the New Media Age*. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Dahlgren, Peter. *Television and the Public Sphere*. London: Sage Publications, 1995.
- Dobb, Maurice. *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*. London and New York: Routledge, 1954.
- Douglas, Kellner. *Media Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Ess, Charles. (ed.) *Philosophical Perspectives on Computer-Mediated Communication*, United States: State University of New York Press, 1996.
- Featherstone, Mike. *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*. London: Sage Publications, 1991.
- Fleming, Marie. *Emancipation and Illusion: Rationality and Gender in Habermas's Theory of Modernity*. United States of America: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.
- Forrester, Duncan. *Christian Justice and Public Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Freeman, Samuel. *Rawls*. London and New York: Routledge: 2007.
- Gasset, Jose Ortega, *The Revolt of The Masses*. London: Unwin Books, 1961.
- Goode, Luke. *Jurgen Habermas: Democracy and Public Sphere*. London: Pluto Press, 2005.
- Guyer, Paul. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- _____. *Kant*. London and New York: Routledge: 2006.

- Hecksher, Eli. *Mercantilism*. Translated by Mendel Shapiro. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1935.
- Himes, Michael and Kenneth Himes. *Fullness of Faith: The Public Significance of Theology*. New York: Paulist Press, 1993.
- Holub, Robert. *Jurgen Habermas: Critic in the Public Sphere*. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Howe, Leslie. *On Habermas*. United States of America: Wadsworth, 2000.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Translated. Lewis White Beck. New York: Macmillian, 1990.
- _____. *Kant's Political Writings*. Translated by H.B. Nisbet. Cambridge: England, 1970.
- _____. *Perpetual Peace*. Edited and Translated by Lewis White Beck. New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1957.
- _____. *The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Edited by Mary Gregor and Jens Timmermann. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Kenny, Anthony. *A New History of Western Philosophy: Ancient Philosophy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004.
- Kovach, Bill and Tom Rosenstiel. *The Elements of Journalism*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2001.
- Levine, Andrew. *The General Will: Rousseau, Marx Communism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Lindblom, Charles. *The Market System: What it is, How it works, and What to Make of It*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Edited by Peter Nidditch. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
- McCarthy, Thomas. *The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States of America: The MIT Press, 1989.

- McGrade, Anthony Stephen. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Philosophy*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Nerone, John. *The Media and Public Life: A History*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2015.
- Newman, Alex. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Locke's "Essay Concerning Human Understanding"*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Owen, David. *Between Reason and History: Habermas and the Idea of Progress*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.
- Payrow Shabani, Omid. *Democracy, Power and Legitimacy: The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003.
- Porter, David. (ed). *Internet Culture*. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Rawls, John. *The Idea of Public Reason Revisited*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Rasmussen, David. *Reading Habermas*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Basil Blackwell, 1991.
- Riley, Patrick. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Rousseau*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Rheingold, Howard. *Virtual Community: Finding Connection in a Computerized World*. London: Vintage, 1993.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse on the Sciences and Arts*. Hanover: New England University Press, 1992.
- _____. *On the Social Contract*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987.
- Sanders, Karen. *Communicating Politics in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Macmillan, 2009.
- Sertillanges, Antonin. *The Intellectual Life: Its Spirits, Conditions, Methods*. Translated by Mary Ryan, United States: The Catholic University of America Press, 1946.

Sorell, Tom. *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Springborg, Patricia. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Stevenson, Nick. *The Transformation of the Media: Globalization, Morality and Ethics*, New York: Pearson Inc., 1999.

_____. *Understanding Media Cultures*, London: Sage Publications, 1995.

Thomassen, Lasse. *Habermas: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London and New York: Continuum, 2010.

Turner, Bryan. (ed.). *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 258.

Volkmer, Ingrid. *The Global Public Sphere: Public Communication in the Age of Reflective Interdependence*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014.

White, Stephen K. *The Recent Work of Jurgen Habermas: Reason, Justice & Modernity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

White, Stephen K. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

2. Papal Encyclical, Apostolic Letter and Papal Message

Benedict XVI. *Encyclical Letter Deus Caritas Est*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005.

_____. *New Technologies, New Relationship. Promoting a Culture of Respect, Dialogue and Friendship*. Vatican City: Editrice Libreria Vaticana, 2009.

John Paul II. Apostolic Letter *The Rapid Development*. Vatican City: Editrice Libreria Vaticana, 2005.

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004.

Francis. *Communication at the Service of an Authentic Culture of Encounter*. Vatican City: Editrice Libreria Vaticana, 2014.

3. Journal Articles

- Arevalo, Jorge Alexis. "Critical Reflective Organizations: An Empirical Observation of Global Active Citizenship and Green Politics." *Journal of Business Ethics* (October 2010): 299-316.
- Benett, Lance, Victor Pickard, David Lozzi, Carl Schroeder, Taso Lagos, and Evans Caswell. "Managing the Public Sphere: Journalistic Construction of the Great Globalization Debate." *Journal of Communication* (September 2004): 437-455.
- Bentivegna, Sara. " Handbook of New Media: Social Shapings and Consequences of ICTs." Edited by Lea Lievrouw and Sonia Livingstone. *Politics and new Media* (2002): 50-61.
- Brundidge, Jennifer. "Encountering "Difference" in the Contemporary Public Sphere." *Journal of Communication* (December 2010): 680-700.
- Bustamante, Christian Bryan. "From Secularism to Post-secularism: Jurgen Habermas on Religion in a Secular State." *Scientia: The Research Journal of the College of Arts & Sciences* (June 2014): 1-20.
- Carmona, Matthew. "Contemporary Public Space, Part Two: Classification." *Journal of Urban Design* (February 2010): 157-173.
- Chang, Leanne, and Thomas Jacobson. "Measuring Participation as Communicative Action: A Case Study of Citizen Involvement in and Assessment of a City's Smoking Cessation Policy-Making Process." *Journal of Communication* (December 2010): 660-679.
- Dahlberg, Lincoln. "The Internet and Democatic Discourse: Exploring the Prospects of Online Deliberative Forums Extending the Public Sphere." *Information, Communication & Society* 4:4 (2001): 615-633.
- Dahlgren, Peter. "The Internet, Public Spheres, and Political Communication: Dispersion and Deliberation." *Political Communication* 22 (2005): 147-162.
- De Magalhaes, Claudio. "Public Space and the Contracting-out of Publicness: A Framework of Analysis." *Journal of Urban Design* (November 2010): 559-573.
- Eastin, Matthew, Bradley Greenberg and Linda Hofschire. "Parenting the Internet." *Journal of Communication* (2006): 486-504.

- Fonseca, Jesster. "Public Sphere: Church and State, Habermas and Ratzinger." *Scientia: The Research Journal of the College of Arts & Sciences* (June 2014): 169-184.
- Gans, Herbert. "News & the News Media in the Digital Age: Implications for Democracy." *Daedalus* (Spring 2010): 8-17.
- Gunn, Joshua, and Barry Brummett. "Popular Communication After Globalization." *Journal of Communication* (December 2004): 705-721.
- Kohring, Matthias and Jorg Matthes. "Trust in News Media: Development and Validation of a Multidimensional Scale." *Communication Research* (April 2007): 231-252.
- McAllister, Matthew and Joseph Turow. "New Media and the Commercial Sphere: Two Intersecting Trends, Five Categories of Concern." *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* (December 2002): 505-514.
- Mitra, Ananda. "Voices of the Marginalized on the Internet: Examples from a Website for the Women of South Asia." *Journal of Communication* (September 2004): 492-510.
- O'Connell, Daniel. "The Church and the Public Sphere." *Doctrine and Life* (2007): 2-12.
- Pasco, Marc Oliver. "On the Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: A Philosophical Critique of Contemporary Media and its Relation to a Democratic Society." *Ad Veritatem* (October 2007): 93-118.
- Potter, W. James. "The State of Media Literacy." *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* (December 2010): 675-696.
- Prensky, Marc. "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants." *Horizon* (October 2001): 1-6.
- _____. "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrant, Part II: Do They Really Think Differently?" *Horizon* (December 2001): 1-9.
- Rawls, John. "Reply to Habermas." *Journal of Philosophy* (March 1995): 132-180.
- Schmidt, Stephan, and Jeremy Nemeth. "Space, Place and the City: Emerging Research on Public Space Design and Planning." *Journal of Urban Design* (November 2010): 453-457.

- Sinekopova, Galina. "Building the Public Sphere." *Journal of Communication* (September 2006): 505-522.
- Socolow, Michael. "A Profitable Public Sphere: The Creation of The New York Times Op-Ed Page." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* (Summer 2010): 281-296.
- Tandoc, Edson and Marko Skoric. "The Pseudo Event Paradox: How Pseudo-Events Flood in the Philippines Press and Why Journalists Don't Recognize it." *Asian Journal of Communication* (March 2010): 33-50.
- Trainor, Jennifer Siebel. "Review: Persuasion in the Public Sphere: What an Argument Is and What It Might Be Made to Do." *College English* (January 2006): 309-319.
- Varna, George, and Steve Tiesdell. "Assesing the Publicness of Public Space: The Star Model of Publicness." *Journal of Urban Design* (November 2010): 575-591.
- Woodward, Kathleen. "The Future of the Humanities - in the Present & in Public." *Daedalus* (Winter 2009): 110-123.

4. Online Sources

- Dahlberg, Lincoln. "Wiley Online Library." *Computer-Mediated Communication and The Public Sphere: A Critical Analysis*. October 2001.
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2001.tb00137.x/full> (accessed January 23, 2017).
- Dahlgren, Peter. *The Internet, Public Spheres, and Political Communication: Dispersion and Deliberation*. n.d.
http://courses.washington.edu/insc555/wordpress/wp-content/readings/Dahlgren_2005.pdf (accessed March 14, 2016).
- Habermas, Jurgen. "ResetDoc: The Web Magazine For All Tribes of the World." *ResetDoc Web site*. September 16, 2008.
http://www.resetdoc.org/story/00000000926#.WAS20BRx_fM (accessed October 18, 2016).