

Governance Reforms: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly; and the Sound: Examining the Past and Exploring the Future of Public Organizations

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Abstract This paper addresses governance reforms of the last three and a half decades and looks into the future. This is done in three parts. The first part presents a birds-eye view of the massive literature on governance and governance reforms with a focus on the good, the bad, and ugly sides, then in part two argues for an alternative concept or theory of “sound governance” with characteristics and dimensions that overcome the deficiencies of other models of governance. As a consequence of reforms, the third part examines the past and explores the future of public organizations via “going home” as a conclusion with possible scenarios, challenges, and opportunities.

Keywords Governance reforms · Sound governance · Public organizations · Democratic public administration · Globalization · Predatory capitalism · Citizen participation · Capacity building · Bureaucracy · Administrative state

Introduction

Governance has always been a central issue of historical evolution of civilizations since the ancient time, with public organizations and administration at the heart of the process. Similarly, governance reforms have evolved and inspired governments throughout the history and received prominent attention inside and out, sometime slowly, other times urgently. If the concept of governance has evolved significantly,

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from government-subjects to governance-citizens today, so have the various forms of reforming government and governance, and the organizations that serve them. Yet, it is only the last few decades that the concept “governance” has captured a centerpiece of attention in government and public administration worldwide. Indeed, replacing or substituting governance for public administration has become a fashionable trend in academic as well as practitioner’ circles worldwide. This begs a key research question: “why ‘governance’ now, and why citizens have become so important today in the process of governance now?” Why was it not a key question earlier? These are important questions in need of serious investigation and analysis, a task beyond the scope of this paper—it has been addressed elsewhere (see Farazmand 2009b for details), in which it is hypothesized that the concept of ‘governance’ is directly related to the rise of contemporary corporate globalization, “a process through which worldwide integration is taking place” (Farazmand 1999, p. 209), with public administration as a central moderator (see Farazmand 2004, 2009a, b, *forthcoming-a*).

One of the most important issues of the contemporary world is the rapidly changing nature and role of government, and the process of governance and administration, in the age of accelerated globalization, however defined. The traditional and historical roles of “state” and government have changed, causing a major alteration and transformation in the nature of government under accelerating globalization. This changed role of government has also altered the nature of the governance and administration processes, and has resulted in a profound transformation of the philosophy, functions, and institutional foundations of governments almost everywhere in the world. Governments have become more instrumental in narrowly defined roles of facilitating market based values of surplus accumulation, empowering market institutions as the supreme organizations of corporate capitalism, and providing stability and order through social control and security. The historical role of the public sector organizations, public administration, and government in providing stability, public service, and correcting for market failures, as well as fairness and equity through social welfare functions has been abandoned and reduced to facilitating the functions of corporate capitalism noted above (Farazmand 2009b, 2012). But there is a limit to market organization (Arrow 1974), and despite the hostile attempts of the far-right ideologues, the “administrative state” correction of market failures has been historically understood, acknowledged, and established (Stillman 1991; Farazmand 2012).

The central force behind these multiple changes and transformation appears to be globalization of capital, a process that transcends nation-states, economies, markets, institutions, and cultures. While nothing totally new, the process of globalization is accelerated by a number of contributing factors or forces that include: technological innovations; declining domestic economies of powerful industrialized countries of the North; the military and political pressures as well as wars of the latter nations on the third world countries of the South; the fall of the former Soviet Union as an alternative world system power; the role of western ideological propaganda; the role of the United Nations’ agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), and World Trade Organization (WTO); international donors, including the USAID; the rising citizen expectations, including labor demands for sharing power in management and organizational democracy; and availability of new cheap labor force across gender and racial groups worldwide (see Farazmand 1999; Hoffman 2006; Huntington 1996).

Over a decade ago (Farazmand 2004, 1), this author observed:

with the acceleration of globalization process has also developed a worldwide grassroots movement of counter-globalization. This is a global movement that aims at reducing the adverse impacts of globalizing corporate capital, containing and reducing the massive fall-outs of globalization such as environmental degradation, economic pillage, poverty, forced labor, child labor, and wage slavery.

In 2012, the world witnessed this global movement of anti-capitalism dubbed 99% v. 1%, embracing a much broader concept of protest against the political and economic orders of the day. This global movement, while repressed by the forces of the capitalist state and slowed down for some time, is still alive and will likely continue as the crisis of capitalism deepens worldwide. The transformation of government has deeply challenged governance and public administration processes, structures, and values everywhere, and the need for capacity building, enhancement, and innovation in policy and management has become more pronounced than ever if governments are to meet and manage the challenges of globalization. New ways of thinking is required. What is needed is application of a new concept of “sound governance,” not the highly normative and contested ‘good governance’, and more innovative ways of public organizations that engage citizens, fights corruption, promotes “public good and broad based public interests,” enhances service delivery capacity, and advances democratic administration. After all, it is administration that makes or breaks governance and government.

The discussion is framed around five interrelated subjects: (1) key concepts of governance with a multitude of diverse notions of the term; (2) “sound governance” with major dimensions, key issues, and characteristics; and (3) explorations into the future of public organizations.

Governance: Key Concepts and Issues

Three important areas of concern, namely diversity and confusion over what governance means, variety of concepts and ideas dubbed governance, and the definition and rationale for governance are briefly presented in this section.

Governance: diversity and confusion diversity in concepts has characterized government and governance reforms during the last two decades. It reflects different conceptual and ideological perspectives on governance and administration. These concepts provide opportunities as well as constraints or challenges: Opportunities are presented by the creativity and innovation in conceptualizing the notions of governance and administration, and contributed to a fresh body of new knowledge on the subject. However, ideas considered politically unfavorable have been pushed aside in favor of the ones considered superior. On the other hand, the diversity of concepts also produces new challenges and constraints that add new dimensions to the theory and practice of government and administration.

First, *confusion* arises with diversity when there is no consensus or agreement as to what for example governance is or should be. Second, adoption of certain specific concepts or notions of governance by many or most governments and organizations

may lead to their prominence and dominance in theory and practice, but this may not necessarily prove their superiority over alternative models pushed aside or ignored. An example of this problem is the worldwide adoption of the new public management (NPM) and sweeping privatization imposed at home in industrialized countries and on developing nations—the opportunity cost of adopting alternative models (as opposed to eclectively adopted NMP) was ignored. Third, constraints and challenges arise when the search becomes endless and self-serving, with a result of differential consequences some of which could be harmful to those affected by such experimentations.

Concepts Some of the most commonly used concepts of governance or government that have provided ideas for and characterized ‘reforms’ during the last three decades have been the following: good governance, entrepreneurial government, competitive government, market-based governance, economic governance, meta-governance, social and political governance, enabling governance, participatory governance, regulatory governance, interventionist governance or government, steering government versus rowing government, and the like. A key characteristic of all these concepts is the claim in rejecting the traditional forms of authoritarian, bureaucratic government with unilateral decision making and implementation, and bringing to the playing field approaches that broaden citizen involvements, civil society, and nongovernmental organizations.

For example, the entrepreneurial models of government or governance reforms focus on market approaches with emphasis on market-like competition among public organizations, results-oriented outcomes and outputs, performance measurements, bonus for performance, empowering managers to fire and hire temporary employees, privatization, efficiency, steering government versus rowing government, and getting rid of bureaucratic rules and regulations. Osborne and Gaebler’s popular book, *Reinventing Government* (1992) book set the tone for the sweeping changes and reforms that characterized much of the changing character and role of governments at all levels for the last two decades.

An offspring of this global reinventing government has been the British born ideological movement of “new public management,” an intellectual arm of the globalization of corporate capitalism. This author has detailed this issue elsewhere (see, for example, Farazmand 1999, 2001, 2002a, b, 2009a, b, c, 2012). The key tenets of “new public management” emanate directly from its intellectual source of neo-conservative economic public choice theory (Buchanan and Tolluck 1962; Niskanen 1971; Downs 1962; Williamson 1985), which prescribes corporate market ideology against government bureaucracy, public service delivery through government organizations, and social capital expenditures and in favor of privatization, expanding the private business and corporate organizations, consumerism, individualism, and large military-security government expenditures to promote the system of corporate capitalism, even predatory capitalism and predatory globalization (Farazmand forthcoming-b, Galbraith 2006; Ghemawat 2017; Parenti 2010).

Proponents of NPM have avoided the important issues of equity, fairness, accountability, monopolistic or oligopolistic nature of runaway globalizing corporations, and other political economy questions that public choice theory has been criticized for. They follow the same argument in favor of transforming governance and government into a market-like organizational arrangement in which the business corporate sector takes over the functions of government and public service delivery while avoiding the social and externality costs of such business, therefore dumping the unprofitable and

social-cost operations on the government to pay for (see for example, Hood 1991; Barzelay 2001; Behn 2001). Who will pay for these costs, and how should these costs be assessed in the overall calculus? Will at the end of the day governments be more efficient and effective, or democratic and responsible? These questions are lost in the perfect storm of corporate capitalism that has swept the nation states across the world.

The concept of NPM has already met its severe critics, whose reports worldwide show how flawed this old idea of management in the new bottle is and how it has failed to respond to critical issues and substantive aspects of governance and administration (see, for example, the Final Report of the IASIA-IIAS 2001 conference in Athens, Argyriades 2001).

A second group of concepts on governance has appeared in the writings of social scientists as well as by the UN sponsored projects, seminars, and workshops. For example, Guy Peters (1996, 2001a, b) keenly detects four conceptualized models of governance that have appeared in the body of literature: market model, participatory model, flexible government, and deregulatory government, each of which has significant structural, managerial, policy making, and public interest implications distinct from others, yet overlapping on many features. Another example is the concept “social and political governance” and “mega governance” as distinct models that purport to emphasize interactions between government and society in a so-called chaotic, changing world characterized by diversity, complexity, and dynamics (see the collection of essays in Kooiman 1993), or “governing as governance” (Kooiman 2003), which reshuffles old ideas into new configurations with emphasis on governing. These models of governance and government tend to promote the new notion of dynamic interactions among various actors in society, including civil society that reflects diverse interests, and complexity born out of rapidly changing national and global environments that affect governance at all levels. However, what is missed in most if not all these concepts is the normative issue of ‘power’ and those who hold the stronger or dominant power—by virtues of wealth, organization, resources, connection, and privileged position they enjoy in society and across the globe—vis a vis other players in the process. In corporate capitalism, it is the corporate power elites that dominate the institutions and processes of governance, and dilute the notion of true democracy, participation, and citizen involvement—this is the logic of collective action as determined by economic power.

Public management, administration, and governance are not neutral concepts; they embody ‘normative values’ and carry consequential outcomes (Wamsely 1996). In a similar fashion, the United Nations Development Program espoused, through a number of seminars, workshops, and working papers, the extended the notions of economic governance, political governance, social governance, and administrative governance. These concepts constituted the elements of *systemic governance*, a notion that “encompasses the processes and structures of society that guide political and economic relationships” for multiple purposes, including the promotion of good governance (see, for example, UNDP 1997a: 9–10).

Then the notion of “good governance” entered the new literature. The concept “good governance” as espoused and promoted by the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, such as the UN Department of Economic and Social Development, UN Development Program, the World Bank, and International Monetary Fund, as well as by most global corporations and Western governments through

their international organizations like USAID, became the driving force of the time—and continues. These global institutions, with the powers they hold, placed ‘good governance’ as one of the most pressing requirements on third world countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin/ Central America as a condition for international assistance (Amsden 2007; Hamilton 1989). As part of the structural adjustment programs (SAPs), the United Nations agencies under the instructions and pressures of donor institutions of the North (western governments and corporations) demanded developing countries to adopt the notion of “good governance” and implement a number of structural and policy reforms in their governments and societies as a condition for international aid—no reforms, no aid. Seminars, workshops, and conferences were held worldwide that stressed the concept and demanded results for sustainable development (see, for example, UNDP 1997a, b, 2000).

However, the concept “good governance” evoked serious criticisms as well as praises worldwide. ‘Good governance for whom, and bad for whom’ became the sticky questions. These are key questions raised by social scientists and many politicians. For example, the former president of Tanzania, Julius K. Nyerere, in delivering the keynote address at the UN Conference on Governance in Africa in 1998, severely criticized the notion of “good governance” as an imperialistic and colonizing concept. He viewed it as an imposing concept forced upon developing and underdeveloped countries of Africa by the industrialized Western powers and trans-national globalizing corporations. According to him, these donor organizations and governments as well as their UN representative organizations had viewed that governance in Africa was “bad” and decided that they should be reformed into “good” by shrinking the size of the state and public administration, expanding the private business sector through privatization, and paving the ways for globalizing corporate capitalism in search of high profits and of integration into the global market system (see the UNDESA 1998). This was a key flaw of good governance—what is good for corporations does not necessarily mean good for people in Africa or Asia, or even Western countries, including the United States and many European nations. It is this deficiency and other problems of the concept good governance, as well as the other notions of governance noted earlier, that have encouraged adoption of an alternative and more comprehensive concept of “sound governance” in this article and elsewhere (see Farazmand 2004).

Definition and rationale the concept of governance has also received different definitions. For example, UNDP (1997a) defines governance as “the exercise of political, economic, and administrative authority to manage a nation’s affairs. It is the complex of mechanisms, processes, relationships, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and obligations and mediate their differences” (p. 9). Accordingly, “governance transcends the state to include civil society organizations and the private sector, because all are involved in most activities promoting sustainable human development” (UNDP 1997b, 11). This definition identifies three key components of governance: the state and its institutions, the civil society organizations that were traditionally left out in the past governing systems, and the private sector supposedly not involved in the governing process or dynamics. This typical definition of governance as espoused and promoted by the UN and many other international organizations and institutions has been a hallmark of the conceptual transformation of the traditional concept “government” and “governing”

into “governance and good governance.” Although “good governance” has not gained further stride recently, and in fact it has diminished in application in scholarly and governmental reports, the concept “governance” has gained more popularity worldwide, and this attention is also noticed in the public administration literature. In fact, many international conferences, seminars, and symposia organized during the last two-three decades or so have emphasized as their central theme the concept “governance” followed by the terms administration or public administration. The two concepts have also been used in companion and in many cases as a replacement for public administration. The 2012 ASPA conference also adopted ‘governance’ as its major theme, and many subsequent conferences carried the same name as of even today. Examples include “Open Governance,” “Opening up Governance” (AOM Conference 2016) “Governance without Government,” and the like.

Similarly, the concept “governance” has been used in the public administration scholarly literature in a growing fashion. Examples include Kettl (1993), Osborne and Gaebler (1992), Peters and Savoie (1995), Peters (1996), Frederickson (1997), Farazmand (1997, 2007), Kooiman (2003), Salaman (1989) and others. While the use of the term governance in political science is not uncommon, its sudden prevalence in public administration shows a major shift in conceptualization and intellectual discourse as well as practical application within the profession of public service management—governance has come to display an “increasing negative attitude toward public administration,” noted Gary Wamsley (1996, 368), and has replaced public administration or politics. For example, Osborne and Gaebler write that “this is a book about governance, not politics” (1992, p. 247). Here a new dichotomy of politics and administration or rather governance is presented and it is a problem. Also, as Frederickson (1997) notes, the authors confuse readers by assuming the two being the same, or assuming it as a concept that subsumes both politics and administration. Peters (1996, 2001a, b) offers a splendid explanation of the concept in his four models of governance with corresponding structural and managerial functions.

These examples illustrate (1) the contemporary shying away from, or hesitation with, the use of the traditional public administration concept, and (2) the more inclusive and comprehensive concept of governance that sounds both more interactive and less negative. However, despite the advantages, *confusion* arises immediately, a problem that has not been addressed by most scholars yet. Like management and administration, governance is applied to both public and private sectors and in a wide range of institutional settings, whereas in reality governance also applies to corporate governance. Should we be more specific by adopting the term “public” governance, like public administration or public management, and business or corporate governance or management? Context is important to eliminate confusion.

The deficiency with the concept governance and ‘good governance’ stems from at least two factors. One is that interaction of only three forces or elements are considered to constitute good governance—the interaction among the state, civil society, and the private sector. This triadic interaction ignores perhaps the most important force affecting governance in developing and less developed nations, that is the international/global power structures, the globalizing state power and the “predatory” transworld corporate elites that tend to dictate policies on other nations—and they dictate policies in developed nations of the West too; “the chicken has come to roost” (Farazmand 2012). This globalizing force has replaced the 19th century colonialism with new

imperialism in the twentieth and twenty first centuries. Today the predatory corporations and predatory globalizers are a major threat to all nations, their economics, their democracies, and the quality of life (Farazmand 2012, 2002a, b, c, d, *forthcoming-b*; Galbraith 2006; Korten 1995). Through technological, political, economic, and military interventions, predatory global power structure has interfered and replaced independent, legitimate, and sovereign governments in the third world nations over and over throughout the last eighty years, as the projects of regime change by wars and violence continue in the Middle East to this day. Governance in developing nations is more dominated by these global forces, and less with domestic dynamics. Similarly, in advanced nations of the North, corporate elites dominate the governance process at macro and micro levels by the virtue of money and power. It is the “logic of force and coercion” rather than mutual respect and tolerance that rules international/global as well as domestic governance processes (Hoffman 2006; Korten 2001; Morgan 2006). Even the UN has become an instrument of this logic in global governance.

Also, the concept “good governance” is heavily loaded with normative values—what is good and what is bad—as defined by global power elites (Hardt and Negri 2000; Hoffman 2006; Parenti 2010). The concept is also misleading because of the double standards often applied by the more powerful in global arena—dictators serving our interests are praised and their atrocities ignored, while unfriendly democrats (elected by the will of their people) determined to stay free and independent are threatened with sanctions, violence, and even wars of invasion. The history of Latin American countries and Middle East as well as many African countries the last hundred years illustrates numerous cases of the above conceptualization, filled with not only “bad governance,” but also “ugly governance and governments.”

Examples are many, but three would suffice, including the bloody military coups by the US-CIA and British Government that toppled: (1) the democratically elected governments of Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in August 1953, reinstalling the absolute dictatorship of the Shah in Iran till its removal by the popular Revolution of 1979; (2) the democratically elected President of Chile, Salvatore Allende on September 11, 1973, bombing the presidential palace, killing Allende, and imposing the dictator General Pinochet on Chilean people for the next twenty plus years; and (3) the democratic leader of Indonesia, General Sukarno, killing him and about half a million of his supporters, replacing him with General Suharto to serve the neocolonial purposes. Other examples include imposing and supporting such notorious dictators as Samosa in Nicaragua, Marcos in the Philippines, Hosni Mobarak in Egypt, and other despotic rulers across the world. Only deeply rooted popular revolutions have been able to replace these and similar foreign installed and supported dictators. What was and is “good governance,” has often been “bad or even “ugly governance or governments” for most countries. The chicken has come home to roost now, as the predatory corporations and predatory global elites dominate local as well as national and state economies and governments in the United States and much of Europe. Democracy and democratic values has been sacrificed at the altar of “greedy and predatory corporations and globalization” (Farazmand 2012, *forthcoming-b* Korten 2001; Parenti 2010). As one member of the British Lower House of the Parliament pointed out at an IASIA conference—a panel on Privatization—in Paris in 1997, “What is good for Walmart, has been very ‘bad’ for the environment and

governance for our small local rural based government in the UK—money influences and changes the governance structures and process, and Walmart has already achieved that goal.”

Sound Governance

Rationale and Characteristics The concept “sound governance” is offered as an alternative to the term good governance for several reasons. First, it is more comprehensive than any other concept reviewed earlier, and includes the important global or international force of governance. Second, it includes the normative as well as technical and rational features of good governance. However, it presents a balanced view of governance that is less biased and takes into consideration the genuine features of indigenous governance systems that may be at odd or conflict with the globally dominant neo-colonialist power structures and their unilaterally prescribed models of governance. In other words, a government or governance may be sound and yet its value system in conflict or at odd with foreign, global powers.

Third, the concept ‘sound governance’ has all the quality characteristics of governance that is superior to good governance and is sound technically, professionally, organizationally, managerially, politically, democratically, and economically. It is also sound in terms of capacity, anticipatory behavior, democratic character, responsiveness and competence, and cultural values embedded in societal values and structures. Fourth, sound governance is in accord with the constitutional values and responsive to international norms, rules, and regimes. Good governance as defined by its proponents overlooks this important constitutional feature that bounds nation-states and sovereign governments. Sixth, the concept sound governance has an ancient origin in the First World-State Achaemenid Empire of Persia with a highly efficient and effective administrative system (Ghirshman 1954; Olmstead 1948; Cameron 1968; Frye 1975; Cook 1983; Farazmand 1998). According to Darius the Great, successor to Cyrus the Great, “no empire can survive much less prosper without a ‘sound economy and sound governing and administrative system’.” Darius the Great has gained a high reputation among historians as also a Great Administrator (Cameron 1968; Cook 1983; Frye 1975; Olmstead 1948).

The term ‘sound governance’, therefore, is used here to present a broader and much more comprehensive notion of government and administration than government and governing have implied. Sound governance means a participatory process of governing the social, economic, and political affairs of a country, state, or local community through structures and values that mirror a society. It includes the state as an enabling institution, the constitutional framework, the civil society, the private sector, and the international/global institutional structure within limits.

Sound governance is therefore inclusive and promotes participation and interaction in an increasingly complex, diverse, and dynamic national and international environment. The concept “soundness” is used to characterize governance with superior qualities in functions, structures, processes, values, dimensions, and elements that are necessary in governing and administration. Governing refers to the function through governance by whatever actors or authorities or institutions, including nongovernmental ones, whereas governance consists of process, structure, value, management,

policy, and administration. Hence, sound governance denotes a system of government that is not only domestically sound, but is also sound internationally or globally in its interaction with other nation-states and their governments on an independent and self-determining fashion.

Dimensions of Sound Governance Sound governance consists of several major components or dimensions. As vibrant elements of a dynamic system, these constitutive elements interact dynamically with each other, and all form a unique oneness which operates with internal diversity, complexity, harmony and intensity, and external challenges, constraints, and opportunities. Both internal and external dynamic features interact constantly keeping the dynamic governance system in direction and actions with purpose.

The dimensions of sound governance are many, including the following: *First is the process* that involves governing with the interaction of all elements or stakeholders; this is a meaning that good governance tends to promote, but for whom and from whose perspective is the question? *Second is Structure* as a body of constitutive elements, actors, rules, regulations, procedures, decision-making frameworks, and authoritative sources that sanctions or legitimates the governance process. This structural embodiment is shaped and operates both vertically and horizontally and is influenced by a multitude of internal and external, local and international factors and forces. Process explains how governance works, whereas structure gives framing directions with rules and regulations to the process. *Third is the Cognition and Values of governance*, a dimension that represents the unique or deviant value system of the governance structure or process. For example, an unhealthy, corrupt, and poor governance system is loosely organized, lacks institutionalization and legitimacy, and is highly dependent on external forces for legitimacy to stay in power.

Sound governance breeds healthy and dynamic values that underlie its structure and process dimensions. Normative values of fairness, equity, integrity, representation, responsiveness, responsibility, tolerance, and equality before law for all citizens form the sticking glue of sound governance system keeping all other dimensions together in a solid way. *Fourth is the Constitution*. It is the fundamental guiding document that serves as a blueprint for governance, a most important source of legitimacy if respected. However, in a weak, poorly organized, and unsound governance system—if it is called a system at all—the constitution is nothing more than a formal document; it is ignored and bypassed most of time and used selectively to serve particular powerful interests. This is a typical problem of “formalism” or duality in governance processes around the world that are heavily influenced or dictated by external globalizing power structure. Formalism occurs when formal rules and regulations are supplanted by informal and unofficial norms and behaviors in politics, governance, and administration to serve specific purposes but they are applied rigidly when dealing with adversaries or system challengers (see Farazmand 1989; Riggs 1994). All governance systems exhibit a degree of formalism, and this includes highly advanced industrialized nations of the West, but this problem is more chronic in less developed and developing nations (Riggs 1994; Riggs 1966). High degrees of formalism erode system legitimacy and trust among citizens.

Fifth is organizational and institutional dimensions as key properties or components of sound governance. What are the institutions of governance? How well do

these institutions operate in coordination with other institutions of government? Governance structure and process as well as policies depend on governance institutions, and without institutions there is no sound governance. Are the institutions formally and constitutionally sanctioned as legitimate? Are informal institutions at stronger play in the governance process? These are fundamental questions regarding this dimension of governance. However, institutions without sound organizations are fragile and doomed to failure, as they cannot perform and do what they have been created to do. On the other hand, well organized and well performing institutions contribute to sound governance (Scott 2008). Thus several key questions arise: How well are the governance institutions organized, how well do organizations of governance system perform, and how well do the outcomes and results of organizational performance serve governance constituencies, clients, and citizens? These are key measures of this dimension of sound governance. Institutions without sound organizations cannot survive, and organizations without institutions are also fragile and have low chance of survival; their legitimacy is dependent on institutionalization which gives them a cognitive recognition, a normative feature that feeds to the soundness of governance system.

Sixth is the management and performance as an integrated dimension of sound governance. But mere performance is not sufficient; it must produce desired and intended outcomes, outcomes that translate into institutional and system legitimacy. Management must perform and deliver results. Without an up to date sound management system characterized by efficiency and effectiveness, sound governance will suffer from incompetence, poor performance, waste and duplication, bureau pathologies, and lack of legitimacy. *Seventh is Policy*, a dimension that gives the elements or dimensions of process, structure, and management sound guidance, direction, and steering. Two types of policy are in order in sound governance: one is external to individual organizations of governance, and it comes from the legislative and political or judicial authorities representing the will of people. The second type of policy is internal to the individual organizations and institutions of governance; it is organizational policy, a guidance set of steering that defines and determines the rules, regulations, procedures, and values applied to manage organizational performance toward desired mission and goals of sound governance—it is a *normative* power. The more participatory in making these policies, the more credibility and legitimacy they award to the public management and governance systems.

Eighth is the international or globalization forces as a very important dimension of sound governance. Today, in the age of accelerated globalization and global interdependence, nation states, governments, and citizens are increasingly drawn into—voluntarily or involuntarily—an increasingly growing set of regimes that either show intolerance toward certain governance behaviors formerly and traditionally considered normal and internal to sovereign governments (e.g., the Apartheid regime in South Africa, or genocide in Africa), or demand implementation of various rules, regulations, and protocols agreed upon collectively at regional or global levels.

Examples include the United Nations and its various agencies and organizations scattered worldwide, such as the International Labor Office, World Food Organization, World Health Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organization, and others. Along these international organizations are a multitude of non-governmental and grassroots global movement organizations formed by

concerned citizens worldwide whose objectives and activities serve a wide range of purposes such as environment, poverty, migration, health and hunger, and human rights. These international forces and institutions play important role in defining and influencing the parameters for governance in various countries, even in powerful, industrialized nations. Together, they form the global movements of “counter-globalization” and “glocalism” and represent the antithesis of predatory globalization and its anomalies—they form the opposite or parallel forces to formal powerful global forces of hegemony and domination (Agnew 2005).

Ninth is the dimension of Ethics, Accountability, and Transparency. A key feature of sound governance is its principled foundation on ethical values, accountability requirements, and transparency structures and values in performance. This cardinal principle of sound governance checks against the potential abuses and corruptions of the system as well as against the blind and imbalanced principles of pure efficiency and economy in the management and administration processes. These principles are safeguards against domestic corruption and foreign dictation.

Tenth is participation and citizen engagement, as a heart of sound governance. No governance or government system can survive long enough without the consent of its people, and participation of citizens. Sound governance relies on citizen engagement, citizen participation in various forms institutionalized organizationally and politically. Obviously, this all depends on the level of governance—local governance demands direct and indirect involvement of citizens in the process. At state or provincial level, indirect citizen involvement is important, but often they are represented by mediating organizations or institutions. At national level, governance takes different functions and requires various citizen involvements. Finally, regional and global governance takes a whole set of different institutional, political, and economic forms of governance.

The Future of Public Organizations: Shall We Go Home Now?

Reform has always been a central feature of all governments and governance systems in history. The story of governance reforms continues, sometimes following the pattern of “snake and ladder” going up and down and other times with continuity, as it has for the last three-four millennia; it will also continue forever. What is central to all government or governance, and governing, reforms is organization and administration. Administration is the exercise of power, and power drives governance, politics, economies (and vice versa), and cultures, though the latter may be a driver. If administration is the exercise of power, organization is the most central to the exercise of power, hence central to both administration and governance or government. No organization, no power, and no governance (Long 1949; Holden 1997). Concentration of power means control of administration, which also means of governance and government, hence the reality of power elites—competing or coalescing—(Mills 1956; Hunter 1953), ruling class (Marx 1966), and the “organizational elites” (Farazmand 1993) that operationalize the wills and dictates of the ruling class or power elites into reality. Thus, the imperative of organizations in general, and public organizations in particular, to governance and governance reforms is beyond doubt. The question is how to reform organizations and reorganize in order to achieve the goals—expressed or latent—of governance reforms.

This question has been answered, at least eclectically, the last thirty plus years by a multitude of ideas, prescriptions, and ideologies, mostly dominated by market theory and corporatization, commercialization, privatization, and as of recently and collaborative organizational forms.

Examining further the past of these changes, and looking into the future of public organizations requires application of analogies the two American great political scientists used during the second half of the twenty century. About 60 years ago, Simon (1979) analogized the discourse on organizational decision making like visiting an empire with many colonies in various disciplines, stretching from political science and economics to sociology, psychology, management, and administrative science. Similarly, Waldo (1961, 1978) dubbed the study of organization theory as an “elephantine” problem. The study of public sector organization, reorganization, reconfiguration, and restructuring has presented itself as both an empire with many colonies and an elephantine problem. This brief discussion addresses with a birds-eye view of both issues by visiting the empire’s colonies spread all over the world.

Visiting the Empire: Framing the Big Picture

Visiting the Empire and its colonies as well as the Elephant, one can discover and identify at least three big pictures depicting three broad historical periods in the development and evolution of organizations and organizational eclecticism in public governance and administration. The first period goes back to the late nineteenth century and early twenty century rise of the modern administrative state with the rapid growth of public enterprises, also called state enterprises, public authorities, public corporations, and so on. The history of the rise and expansion of both the administrative state and public enterprises (PEs) goes back father to as early as the ancient time, with the Persian One-World State Achaemenid Empire as a clear example, and to the nineteenth century Australia, the United States, Canada and many European countries, as well as developing nations (Farazmand 1996; Wettenhall 1996; O’Nuallain et al. 1996). Public governance and administration were organized with a strong and growing role of the government, public bureaucracy, and public enterprise systems that steered and rowed the economy, along with public service delivery and security functions. The ideological underpinning was that of market capitalism tempered by a leading role of modern government that would bring a degree of social equity to various classes of societies—variations displayed differences and characteristics of the colonies of the empire around the world.

The second period was ushered in by three major historical events of the first half of the twentieth century—the Russian Socialist Revolution of 1917 building the first global socialist state, raising the flag of anti-capitalism and championing a slogan of “workers of the world unite”; the Great Depression of the 1930s engulfing the global system of capitalism deep in crisis, which further led to the rise of Keynesianism with a strong role of government in governance, administration and economy; and World War II followed by the ensuing rise of the Cold War, manifested by hot proxy wars, intense ideological wars, and capitalist-socialist competition in all areas of global politics, economics, cultures and military-security systems.

Throughout these major historical events, the strong and interventionist role of the government, the administrative state, the public bureaucracy and public enterprise was

expanded, promoted and valued in public governance and administration in societies under the capitalist systems led by the United States, Western Europe and Japan. Competition between capitalism of the west and socialism led by the USSR and China continued well into the late twentieth-century. Nationalization, governmentalization, and publicization were norms to counter socialist ideological claims and slogans in support of the working classes and revolutionary movements, to provide expanding public goods and social safety nets to dissuade revolutionary movements in urban as well as rural worlds around the globe, and to show to the world an egalitarian face of capitalism.

The latter two phases of this historical period clearly showed a strong and workable model of public governance and administration with clear organizational features of public, private and nonprofit sectors, though boundary spanning expanded after WWII, and drawing a sharp line between public and private sectors became fuzzier after 1950s—what governments did was done with the private corporate sector, and what the private corporate sector did was subsidized and aided by government support and funding. Nevertheless, a degree of eclecticism of public sector organizational forms and functions was institutionalized and established.

Ambiguities were minimal, opportunities were reasonably abundant, and design systems fairly normal and expected. However, the cost of running a welfare state became too heavy and burdensome to governments trying to maintain a balance between butter and guns (Burkhead and Miner 1971). The result of the increasing government bankruptcies, disrupted public sector functions due to decline of tax revenues as a result of citizen tax revolts in American (e.g., California anti-property tax Proposition 13 followed by Massachusetts' Proposition 5 and so on), and the inability of many governments to run public functions all led to a "governability crisis," the "fiscal crisis of the State" (O'Connor 1973), and the "Impossibility Theorem" (Arrow 1970). They all signaled the crisis of the welfare state in a competition to outdo socialism and maintain a balance between butter and guns. This all changed, however, as neoconservative economic liberalism led by the neoclassical public choice theory provided a new prescription that called for abandoning the welfare state, beginning a sweeping privatization and downsizing policy, and an aggressive military-corporatist globalization policy to save the system from self-destruction or implosion.

The third period began with the election of Ronald Reagan in the US and Margaret Thatcher in the UK, both of whom declared officially and openly that government was a problem, not a solution, and aggressively led a global crusade against public sector organizations and public service in favor of sweeping privatization, marketization, commercialization and the transfer of what the public sector has stood for centuries to private corporate sector organizations. The welfare state, the administrative state and public sector functions for public good were dismantled and transferred to corporate profiteers. This global crusade also forced most developing nations of the world in need of money to reform and privatize their public sectors as prescribed and dictated by the powerful global financial institutions of the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), USAID, and other donors. This was coincided by corporate globalization of the world with a market ideology of neoconservative public choice theory, aggressively supported by the powerful states of the United States, Britain, Germany, Japan, and France, by both peaceful and violent means of war. Again, the IMF, the WB and the United Nations facilitated the new ideology of shrinking government, dismantling the administrative state and bureaucracy, and privatizing public enterprises and most

other public sector organizations, a trend that has continued to date (see Farazmand 1999, 2007; Friedman 1999; Ohmae 1990).

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 collapsed the long standing tradition of the dual global world order of capitalism and socialism with known boundaries and expectations. It gave a new boost to corporate globalizers with a new mission of aggressive globalization and “flattening the world” (Friedman 2005) armed by new ideologies of market supremacy and self-righteousness, a triumph of capitalism over socialism, and a claim of not only being able but also having the right to run and manage government as well as market organizations. Corporate globalization, state globalization of the capitalist order after the fall of the Soviet Union and socialism in Eastern Europe, and sweeping privatization and marketization have since taken a new global stage of operation with many organizational forms, structures, functions and configurations. The result has since been massive public-private sector organizational reconfigurations as well as eclecticism in public governance and administration.

Public Governance and Organizations at the Crossroads

Despite proliferation of various governance reforms and ideas of changing public governance in the last several decades, “eclecticism” has been the dominant characteristic in both form and substance. *Substantively*, the reforms have changed the nature, the role, and the character of the modern state and governance in favor of corporate private business sector, making governments an agent of the latter, and transforming the public-private sector configurations with profound consequences for various classes of people across the world. In *form*, the reforms have been top-down and ‘eclectic’ applying the private sector business or market models to public governance and administration. Eclecticism means selectivity, deliberate choice making, and leaving alternatives out, picking what we like, advocating what we like and leaving out what we don’t. It is a cherry picking practice. Organizational eclecticism is a process as well as a phenomenon that has captured much of organizational design, structuration and optimization in organizational studies, governance reforms and reorganizations, and change and transformations of administrative systems during the last 37 years or so (Peters 2001a, b, 2002). It has affected modern bureaucracy and public administration in both developed and developing nations (Farazmand 2009a, b, c; 2010; Peters 2010).

As discussed earlier, public governance—as opposed to private corporate or business governance—and public administration have gone through many changes and transformations. They have changed from a fairly unambiguous, settled and well-understood period of government and administration during the third period outlined above (with all their expected behaviors and functions) to a period of “predatory corporate globalization” (Galbraith 2006, 2010; Farazmand 2012) marked by anti-bureaucracy, market ideology, anti-publicness and neo-institutional theory driven forms. Some of these governance and administrative forms may resemble the ancient and middle age feudal organizational systems with slavery, exploitation and the law of the barons, while others offer hope of escaping juxtapositions, trial and error, and even novel ideas to move forward. Public administration and governance are now at the new crossroads, two of which resemble the old and the new, the backward and the forward, and the despair and the hopes, so we are told by the ‘new ideologues’ to believe.

Organizational eclecticism and selectiveness under this period has taken a dizzying shape, sometimes even schizophrenic beyond polar syndrome over the last 37 years,

despite the big promises the optimist (some rather naïve) proponents of globalization were making in the 1990s that wars and conflicts would be of the past history, that market organizations (read “corporations”) would be the answer to all problems and issues of modern governance and administration (see, e.g., Friedman 1999; Ohmae 1990; Fukuyama 1992). That myth was soon exposed and the same proponents acknowledged, some openly (Druker in Korten 1998a, b; Stiglitz 2010), and others implicitly (Ostrom 1990), that the market was not the answer to all issues of societies as previously claimed or thought so, that a government role must be entered to correct for market failures (see, e.g., Osborne and Gaebler 1992). Drucker noted: “We are learning very fast that the belief that the free market is all it takes to have a functioning society—or even a functioning economy—is pure delusion” (cited in Korten 1998a, b: 151). Similarly, Osborne and Gaebler (1992: 45) noted: “Those who advocate it [privatization] on ideological grounds—because they believe business is always superior to government—are selling the American people snake oil.”

Under this era of predatory globalization and predatory capitalism, the role of government is acknowledged: to rescue capitalism and its globalizing corporations from self-destruction, bankruptcy and overseas competition. The system has now needed government bailouts, as the last ten years of global crises have shown, demanding massive government bailouts in the United States, Europe, and elsewhere. Today, after many years of massive bailouts to save corporations and capitalism together, governments are back to playing an old role, but unfortunately that role is not serving the average people of the working and middle classes. Rather, massive trillions of dollars have been poured into the pockets of the same bankrupt corporations and their corrupt elites who had claimed the world would be “flat” under corporate globalizers (see Friedman 2005) for good, but had failed to deliver and plunged the global economies into deep crises with massive consequences for the poor, working and middle classes. Government’s role is now one more time in service of the corporate elites and together they tend to rule the world (Korten 1995, 2001; Galbraith 2010), acting as an “agent of corporate globalization,” hence what this author has dubbed as “agencification” (Farazmand 2002a, b, c, d, forthcoming-b, forthcoming-c). So, how has public governance and administration been organized under this period? Eclecticism and cherry-picking selectivity has characterized this era of public sector organizational reforms and configurations of governance and administration. Several points are deemed essential to understanding this selectivity and eclecticism. The order is arbitrary.

First are the big and small questions. Public governance has gone through at least three phases of institutional isomorphism: the government and governing of the 1980s and 1990s, with sweeping privatization (see Peters 2001a, b); the idea of governance with a weak and market driven government and partnership building of the early 2000s with many forms, shapes, names and labels as presented by numerous scholarly and UN publications (Farazmand 2004, 2007; Kooiman 2003); and governance with a return of government with various partnership building and many organizational forms, structures, and functions since the late 2000s, a process that continues and is likely to continue for the years to come (see Farazmand forthcoming-b, forthcoming-c, for more details on this institutional governance isomorphism).

The big questions of this era are: How has governance been shaped and reshaped under globalization—both peacefully and violently—around the world, in the North

and South countries? How have public sector organizations—the traditional bureaucracies and the public enterprises or state owned enterprises—been changed and shaped, and what roles do they still play in this era of governance isomorphism? There are more questions beyond the space limit of this discussion, but these big questions beg answers in countries of both the North and the South. The answer to the first question is offered as market, market ideology and corporate organizational forms, functions and performance. The answer to the second question is twofold: the bureaucracy and public enterprises have been privatized and transferred to market organizations under the globalizing corporations and corporate elites, whose domain of organizational operations seem global and endless. Initially, these public organizations were supposed to be selectively chosen for privatization using the criterion of efficiency, but that criterion soon changed and all public sector organizations were subjected to privatization on the grounds of downsizing, rightsizing, and marketization.

Yet, the bureaucracy has never been, nor will it ever be, dismantled—it has survived millennia of changes and slogans because it is instrumental to system maintenance, market security and operations, and market failures as well as corrections (Farazmand 2009a, b, c). Its characters and behaviors may have changed toward military-security directions, but its role functions never have. Why then is bureaucracy necessary to governance, government, public administration, and even democracy? The answer is given by many, including Waldo (1992) who finds it necessary and as going hand-in-hand with democracy; and Weber (1947) who calls it a necessary companion of “capitalism” and an “instrument of control power”—as a “key instrument of governance, administration and control, and serving interest group politics, policy politics and partisan politics” (Farazmand 1989), as well as an instrument of “interest group politics” (Moe 1989) because “structural politics is interest group politics.” As Moe (1989: 328) argues: “A bureaucracy that is structurally unsuited for effective action is precisely the kind of bureaucracy that interest groups and politicians routinely and deliberately create.”

Consequently, as Wise (2002: 139) observes: “Organizational effectiveness is repeatedly sacrificed on the altar of interest group protection and representation.” Hence, public sector organizational configurations have changed due to various interest groups’ politics, pressures, directions, and exactions. The result has been what Wise (2002) calls “public service organizational reconfigurations,” with prolific private sector organizations entering the public sector era of governance and organizations. Eclecticism then follows as to what forms and types of organizations could participate in the new configurations—a choice often dictated or at least influenced by powerful corporate interest groups. The impact of this organizational reshaping of governance and administration has been worldwide, but varied from country to country in the North as well as the South.

Second, as noted earlier, the presence and push of predatory corporate globalization of the world has also created its own antithesis—the rise of “counter-globalization” and “anti-globalization” movements with a call for returning to local, community and self-organizations in modern governance of the twenty first century world. Progress has been slow, but the movement has gained momentum several times, punctuated at the meetings of the IMF, World Trade Organization and WB in various locations of the globe, at the G7 meetings, and by the global movement of the Occupy Wall Street. The results have been the birth and rise of certain new organizational forms with functions

countering corporate globalization. Hence a new generation of organizations has entered public governance and administration not directly controlled by governments. Proliferation of isomorphic organizational forms in governing and government governance has resulted in more eclecticism around the world to serve the interest groups as Moe noted—some with success, others less so, but various roads have been taken, with targets met and lessons learned under this era of public sector organizational eclecticism. Un-ambiguity in organizational forms and role expectations of the second period noted earlier have been replaced by a strong ambiguity in forms and roles, as well as a dizzying proliferation of eclectic organizational forms. This proliferation has been characterized by various public-private-nonprofit partnerships, state-civil society partnerships, state-citizen collaborative organizations, network organizations, socio-economic governance organizations, organizational hybridity, jurisdiction-based organizational forms and fields, and many other forms.

Third, “challenge” has characterized much of the organizational eclecticism in this era of public sector governance and administration. Indeed, the word “many” should characterize the word “challenges”: what forms, what functions, what issues, what principals, what agents, what customers, what processes, and many other “whats” as well as many “hows” and “wheres” are the key words of the challenges facing the designers, operators, managers and decision makers of this era of organizational eclecticism in public governance and administration. These challenges are growing as the dizziness in the proliferation increases to sheer madness. One of these challenges has been the old expression of “snakes and ladders” in organizational structuration, reforms and change. Should centralization be the model, is decentralization better, or should a hybrid combination of both models be applied, but where and under what conditions? This is a “horse” that has been beaten over and over for thousands of years, but never has it been bleeding so badly almost to its death. Where are we going with these constant changes, reforms, reshaping, and so on?

If corporatization and marketization were the answers to the problems of claimed purported inefficiency of government bureaucracies and public enterprises, why then is there so much proliferation of organizations in governance? Why has this proliferation not been accompanied by a much more detailed assessment of alternative organizational forms proposed and offered by counter-globalizers, advocates of community based organizational forms, and especially cooperatives that are self-organizing, democratic, engaging, effective and efficient, and can reduce a government’s burden in governance and administration? The rising challenges, the lack of satisfactory answers to design questions, the elite nature of corporate led and controlled organizational eclecticism, and the increasing ambiguities in this era of governance and organizations lead us to wonder if the “horse” can be saved? Do we have solutions to save it? This leads to a final question here: Shall we go home now, please?

Shall We Go Home Now?

The last 37 years or so has been a long era of trying different ideas, forms and types of experiments staged and led by corporate-market driven designers in regard to public service, governance reforms, and administrative changes. Many roads have been taken,

targets have been met, and lessons—good, bad, and ugly—have been learned. The colonies have been populated by many models and types of eclectic organizational structures and sizes in favor of top-down and institutional models of change and reform, at the exclusion of many alternatives that could have served us better, or at least not worse. Today, the dilemma remains as ever: What should be done now in the face of many challenges?

There appear to be at least three options. One option is to continue experimentation, a muddling through along with a ‘snakes and ladders approach’, as well as innovations in organizing and managing alternative models of organizations to govern and manage public arenas. This option may or may not produce positive results, but exhaustion is near if not already happened. The old statement “if you don’t know where you are going, any road will take you there” may apply here.

The second option is to go back to the unambiguous options of the old second era choices—socialize again, nationalize the privatize organizations, properties and assets belonging to the broad-based general people and apply the traditional models of public enterprise systems managed with business like principles of efficiency and economy balanced by the principles of equity, fairness, responsiveness, representation, and effectiveness. There is no USSR and no serious or imaginary threat of socialism; therefore, an eclectic choice of socialist models of organizations such as cooperatives in towns and countries, industries and service sectors, and local and regional jurisdictions. Nationalize what belongs to the people, socialize what people cannot afford, and maintain a healthy balance between efficiency and fairness. Were there not forms or types of organization that were both efficient and progressive or fair under socialism in the former USSR or in present China, or elsewhere in the world? Can these forms or types of organization be included in our organizational spectrum of choices in governance? Can we also consider some of the counter- globalization and locally-oriented citizen-based community organizations in public administration and governance? We certainly can and it would not hurt to broaden the scope and spread the net. We have nothing to lose or worry about.

The third option is to revitalize the administrative state based on new and more people-oriented organizational forms beyond the present eclecticism, revive the mission of the government in governance, reclaim the power of the people in governance, and start reorganizing and regenerating energies for the greater public good. Marketplace organizations have a right place in managing the economy, in producing and delivering private goods and services, in forming and operating partnership based organizational systems, and in helping move the society forward, but they also are inherently inclined to take over, control, monopolize and dominate not only the economy but also public governance and administrative organizations; they can be and have been harmful, as history has shown over and over again. It is the rightful role of government—representative, democratic, responsive, and competent “sound” government—to play the leading role of maintaining a balance, curbing market abuses and correcting for market failures, and the rightful role of a competent public administration to perform its functions of broad public service guided by “principled professionalism” (Farazmand 2013).

The bureaucracy has survived several millennia of changes and revolutions, and it will continue to survive and might even thrive; it is indeed a hypocrisy to claim democracy and governance without bureaucracy, because it is needed by all parties,

it is a machinery of government and governance—both public and private—and it is also a central instrument of rule and control as an organization of power, a conduit of exercising power in governance—all forms—and administration in capitalism and socialism. Both Karl Marx (1966) and Max Weber (1947, 1984) correctly recognized and stated, “bureaucracy is the most effective instrument of power,” for whomever or whatever ruling class that rules society and economy (Farazmand 2002a, b, c, d, 2010). It is instrumental to all forms of governance and government and ruling systems.

Now, shall we go home, please?

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