The Quality of Governance and the Quality of Democracy

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The title to this paper links two of the most fundamental concepts in the social sciences, as well as two of the most important elements in contemporary governing. These two terms represent two fundamental values that citizens should expect from the public sector, particularly in the countries of the industrialized world. On the one hand, citizens expect and demand governance, meaning most basically the capacity of the institutions of the public sector to make and implement policy choices effectively. In addition, citizens increasingly also demand that those public services be provided efficiently. As I will discuss below governance increasingly involves actors from the private sector, but the impetus is in most instance derived from the public sector. In addition, citizens expect that the policy choices being implemented will correspond rather closely to the demands made by those citizens. The most common style of democracy has been representative, with the demands of citizens usually thought of as being expressed through voting for political parties, with those parties then making the formal choices in the parliament and cabinet.¹

These two terms are important in their own right, but the relationship between the two is perhaps even more important. As I will point out in more detail below, a number of reforms have been implemented over the past several decades for the purpose of increasing the governing performance of political systems. These reforms have produced some benefits for both the public sector itself, and for citizens, but they also have had significant negative impacts on the democratic performance of those public sectors. The developments in contemporary forms of governing in the industrialized democracies are attempting to make the linkage between governance strategies and democracy even closer. Those changes in governing also have tended to make conventional forms of democracy less capable of fulfilling their promise, and therefore we need to examine changing formats, and changing meanings, of democracy in contemporary political systems.

Governance

¹Although normatively desirable, this model has a number of empirical weaknesses, even in majoritarian political systems that should be able to translate votes into action relatively easily (Rose, 1976).
I will begin this discussion by examining the concept of governance, as well as the reality of changes in governing, especially within the industrialized democracies. At one level governance appears to continue very much as it has in the past. The same representative institutions of parliament and cabinet remain the focus of most attention about governing, and also remain important in actual policy choices. However, these institutions have been augmented, or perhaps circumvented, by a wide variety of alternative structures that have been granted ever greater responsibility for exercising control over many aspects of the economy and society. The public bureaucracy has always been more influential than the conventional model of parliamentary democracy would admit (see Page and Jenkins, 2005) but that structure is now to some extent swamped by the array of alternative and complementary forms of administration. These emergent structures have been justified as means of enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the political system, but their secondary effects— even assuming that they do indeed enhance efficiency— must be considered also.

At its most basic level, the concept of governance refers to the capacity of the public sector, alone, or in concert with other actors, to steer the economy and society. In the now almost stereotypical version of governing in democratic systems parliaments, cabinets and prime ministers were the central players in governance. These democratically selected, whether directly or indirectly, actors were meant to take much of their direction from the public through elections, and the public service was meant to accept the direction of these democratic actors. Although we know that this linear model of governing was often a useful fiction for legitimating the governing system, these governing institutions have been central in governing, especially in selecting the collective goals toward which the other institutions of the governing system are meant to direct their governing activities.

Governance has been carried on for as long as there have been governments and/or other mechanisms for making collective decisions. It is important to understand, however, that governance has been becoming more complex over the past several decades. The changes in processes of governing occurring have been both within the public sector itself, and in the relations between the public sector and private actors. Those private actors may be in the market sector, or they may be in civil society, but in all these cases any simple linear conception of governing has become lost in the wide array of interactions and the development of multiple veto points (Tsebelis, 2000) that any would-be governor now must confront. Many of the choices about governance that have been adopted have been made in the name of enhanced democracy, but in the end they may make any such democracy more difficult to obtain.

Relations with Social Actors

The etymological root of “governance” and government are in a Greek word referring to steering a ship. The most fundamental task for governing is to provide direction to the society and to find ways of achieving the goals that have been set by some collective process (see Pierre and Peters, 2001).
Contemporary governance theory has tended to emphasize the use of non-state actors as components of governing (see Tiilhonen, 2005), and indeed the term “governance” has come to imply the interaction of the public sector and social actors in the process of solving collective problems (Sørenson and Torfing, 2007). At the extreme some scholars have argued that “governance without government” is not only possible but normatively desirable (Rhodes, 1997; 2007). The arguments of these scholars has been that the conventional government institutions are excessively bureaucratic, and too clumsy to be able to respond to the rapidly changing social and economic environment within which they function. On the other hand, networks of social actors are sufficiently nimble to react to change in a prompt and creative manner and are also able to involve members of society to enhance the legitimacy of any emergent solutions..

If we take the more reasonable position that governing is no longer totally the province of formal institutions then we can begin to understand the nature of contemporary governance. Formal political institutions do remain important in the processes of governing, but they do so in conjunction with a wide range of market and social actors. This style of governing has been common in many societies for decades if not centuries, using formats such as corporatism and corporate pluralism (Rokkan, 1967), but these practices have become extremely widespread.

The heartland of network governance remains Northern Europe (see Sorenson and Torfing, 2007; Klijn and Koppenjaans, 2007) but governing in almost all countries has been opened to direct involvement by a wider variety of participants. These participants are sometimes characterized as “stakeholders”, or they may be broadly defined networks including a wide array of actors with some interest or involvement in the policy area. The assumption has been that this involvement will bring more information to bear on making policy choices, and further than once decisions are made through this method they will be both superior technically and encounter fewer implementation problems once adopted.\(^3\)

The assumptions about the superiority of decisions made through networks fall into the general category of heroic assumptions. The assumption appears to be that although the actors involved in networks are there to represent their interests and the interests of the members of the organization they will somehow shed those interests in favor of rational decision-making within this policymaking arena (see Marinetto, 2003). In reality the actors are likely to defend those interests as vehemently within the network as elsewhere. Further, unlike legislative bodies that have decision-rules for resolving conflicts among the actors (generally majority rule), most networks lack those rules. Hence, any decisions are likely involve reaching some consensus, a consensus that may be the lowest common denominator (Scharpf, 1988). In short, network forms of governance may have difficulty in making decisions and the decisions they make may be of poor quality.

Both the extreme and less extreme versions of the arguments on behalf of utilizing networks and other social actors in governing also contain a strong normative element. These arguments

\(^3\)The assumption here is that if the relevant parties have all agreed to the policy in the network negotiations they will be unlikely to oppose it as it is implemented.
imply that the traditional mechanisms for representing social interests, notably political parties, legislatures and political executives, do not perform that representational function adequately. This loss of representative capacity reflects in part the decline of public involvement in parties and other political institutions, as well as changes within those institutions themselves (see below). In this view, therefore, other forms of representative structures are necessary to augment more familiar democratic institutions to enable democratic controls over the public sector to maintain its viability.

A crucial part of the normative argument on behalf of network democracy is that those networks are in fact more representative and more responsive than are traditional representative institutions. While that arguments appears to be supported, given the attempts to make the structures open to the full range of actors involved with the policy area, that appearance may not match reality. To be involved effectively in networks a segment of society typically must be organized, and capable of effective participation. Many segments of society that may most need greater representation in policymaking are the very social segments that are less capable of effective organization than are the middle class sectors that dominate most representative institutions. Thus, the use of networks may only continue patterns of political exclusion.

Further, the networks are able to define their own membership, and may exclude those groups or individuals who do not agree with them. Engaging in this pattern of exclusion may facilitate making decisions but that exclusivity may obviate the very purpose of creating networks, i.e. making policy making more open and representative. Thus, although governance reforms have been attempting to improve policymaking through opening the systems for a wider range of inputs, there are numerous problems created by these reforms.

**Complexity in the Public Sector**

At the same time that the public sector has been involving networks, stakeholders, and market actors, the public sector itself is becoming more structurally and procedurally complex. One of the most common changes of this type is the development of autonomous and quasi-autonomous organizations to fulfill a variety of public purposes. These organizations are generally referred to as “agencies” and “quangos”, but those terms may mask even greater variance within these types of organizations (Pollitt and Talbot, 2004; Skelcher, 1998). These organizations often were created from ministerial organizations, dividing the multi-purpose ministries into a number of single purpose organizations governed by their own boards and executives, with reduced ministerial accountability as a consequence.

Agencies were one of the common prescriptions from the New Public Management and its agenda for reforming the public sector (Christensen and Laegreid, 2004), but there others mechanisms that reduced the role of the public sector even further. Much of logic of NPM has been to reduce the importance of the public bureaucracy in the delivery of public services and replace to use mechanisms such as public-private partnerships, contracting, and the development of quasi-markets. The adage used to justify these changes was that the public sector should “steer and not row”, and that the public sector would be well advised to use private sector
organizations, or at least private sector instruments, to deliver services.

Another mantra for the New Public Management was “let the managers manage”, meaning that senior public managers should be given more latitude to make their own decisions about managing programs, without either interference from their political “masters” or restraints from ex ante regulations over their choices in areas such as budgets, personnel management and procurement (see DiIulio, 1994). By empowering these managers, as well as empowering the lower levels of the bureaucracy to make more decisions (see Peters and Pierre, 2001), the continuing reforms of the public sector

As well as attempting to increase efficiency by using market instruments, reforms of governing have also been emphasizing the desirability of removing some aspects of governing from direct democratic control. The most obvious example of the need to create “credible commitment” for public sector institutions has been in the independence of central banks (North, 199x; but see McNamara, 2002), but same logic can be used for many regulatory organizations, beginning originally with the reforms of the Progressive era in the United States. In addition, many important accountability organizations, such as auditors and inspectorates, have become more independent from political control.

The increasing independence of organizations within the public sector has generated a “new separation of powers” in the public sector (Viborg, 2007). While the old separation of powers was primarily among institutions that their own political base, the more contemporary version has tended to create organizations that do not have any clear political base. Thus, the separation of powers may operate without some of the checks and balances considered important for this governance format, and hence a number of major activities for the public sector may be carried out without any significant form of accountability.

In summary, the exercise of governance through the public sector has become substantially more fragmented than in the conventional model of parliamentary democracy. The level of control of presidents, prime ministers and ordinary ministers over public programs has been reduced as the public sector has been divided along several dimensions and social actors have gained greater involvement in making decisions. The empowerment of senior managers has even reduced the legitimacy of ministerial interventions over the administration of programs, so that individual programs may function with a great deal of autonomy even if they remain totally within the public sector.

These changes within the public sector must be added to the increased involvement of the private sector and social actors in making policy. The combination of all these “decentering” reforms

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4In fairness the courts have been a central component of separation of powers doctrines, and other than at appointment they tend not to have direct political connections. Their independence was to a great extent justified by presumed reliance on the law, although there is a substantial body of literature demonstrating that judges are strongly influenced by political ideologies.
has been to make central steering of the public sector more difficult. While any linear notion of policymaking must be considered skeptically, the complexity of the policy process has been increasing, along with the number of both veto points and points at which some drift away from the original intent of policymakers may occur. Thus, attempting to impose any sort of control and central direction over policy has become a more futile exercise. This futility is in part by design, but it is also a byproduct of a number of incremental changes in governing.

Coping with Complexity: Metagovernance

The fundamental changes within the public sector, and in the relationships between the public and the private sectors, have increased the complexity of governing in the industrial democracies, as in most other countries. The traditional model of governing, in which there was an almost linear process through ministerial organizations and its administrative staff was always an extreme simplification of reality, but the governing process had indeed been simpler. Making policy decisions and implementing those decisions now require more convoluted and complex negotiations among the actors, and many more actors.

There are at least three problems created by the complexity described above. Perhaps the most obvious problem is that elected officials are less capable of controlling policy, I will return to this point as I discuss changes in democracy below. The second issue that emerges from the complexity of contemporary governance is that implementation has, in fact, become more problematic. A conventional model of implementation implies that there should be some degree of correspondence between laws and other authoritative statements and the manner in which the programs are put into effect (see Hill and Hupe, 2008). The “top down” model inherent in most implementation studies implies that

Beginning at least with the Pressman and Wildavsky (1974) notion of “clearance points” the assumption has been that the greater the complexity of the implementation system the less likely it was that the program as implemented would match the program as designed. That drift in policy is even more likely when the organizations involved in the implementation have their own interests that may be different from those of the program itself. The use of private organizations, whether market-based or not-for-profits, as well as the use of instruments such as contracts, tends to virtually ensure the drift away from the stated intentions of programs.

The third and related issue is that accountability is more difficult to enforce, or indeed even identifying responsibility for actions, or inaction, is more difficult. As already demonstrated contemporary governance is based on mobilizing and involving multiple actors, so that identifying responsibility for any outcomes is at best difficult. The problem of “many hands” has long been seen as a crucial element in identifying responsibility for public action (Bovens, 1998), but that problem has been exacerbated by reforms in the public sector itself (agencies) and the increasing involvement of non-governmental actors in implementing, and to some extent making, decisions. In these complex systems of governing, effective though they may be in many instances, identifying responsibility and enforcing accountability has become virtually impossible.
The Quality of Governance

The final, and perhaps most crucial, question about governance is what constitutes high quality governance. To some extent the term “good governance” has been hijacked by the World Bank (Kaufman, 1999) and other international donor organizations to mean the reduction of corruption and the improvement of transparency in the public sector. The assumption is that if government actors become more honest and government programs are made more accountable then it will somehow become better able of steering its society and of making proper allocations of resources among competing purposes and groups within the society.

While the reduction of corruption is an important aspect of improving the quality of governing, it may be more a means to the end of better governing than it is an end itself.5 In the conception of governance I am using here, the extent to which the outcomes of governing were consistent with the stated goals of the governing is a reasonable measure of success. In a political context measuring the degree of congruence in any precise way may be difficult, if not impossible, but it is nonetheless clear that high quality governance would imply that sort of matching.

The most obvious problem in such a conception of the quality of governance is that governments do not have any single set of goals. Even in the few majoritarian, single party governments extant the multiple organizations within that government will have different, and often vastly different priorities. The single party government, e.g. in the United Kingdom, will not be without its own internal factional differences, while the coalition governments more common in European democracies may have pronounced partisan differences.6 Therefore, understanding governance requires not only creating some coherence in these potentially incompatible goals but also measuring the extent to which that coherence was achieved.

Attempting to understand the quality of governance also requires understanding the extent to which the goals being pursued were within the capacity of the public, even with the assistance of its allies, to achieve. The public sector may be able to create outputs—public spending, building schools, providing loans for businesses—but can it create education or economic growth? Probably not, and therefore to some extent the outcomes of governing for citizens—what

5By this I mean that the improvement of accountability in the public sector is normatively desirable, but it is more important as a means for producing more effective and responsible governing. As noted, I am more concerned about the capacity of political systems, whether or alone or in concert with social actors,

6This is all the more so given that there are an increasing number of “rainbow coalitions” that span the political spectrum. Some of these coalitions have been very successful, but have required developing mechanisms for accommodating those partisan differences and reaching coordinated and strategic approaches to policy.
Christian Bay discussed as objective security--are more complex. This incapacity of the public sector to produce the benefits for which it may have willingly assumed responsibility reflects part of the logic for shifting toward more complex models for service delivery and for involving a wider range of social action.

**Metagovernance and Coping with Change**

The above discussion has shown the degree of change occurring in contemporary governance. Any traditional, linear conception of governance dominated by, if not the exclusive province of, the public sector has become outmoded. These changes have produced many benefits for citizens, and for the public sector itself, but they also have created problems of coherence, control and reliability that need to be addressed. “Metagovernance” has been developed as a term to describe the strategies that have been adopted by many governments to cope with those governance problems.

The basic idea of metagovernance is to provide direction to governance, and to overcome some of the fragmentation of governance solutions, without returning to the older command and control style of control. Achieving the balance between the values of autonomy for organizations and individuals, and central direction and controls, represents one of the more important challenges to contemporary government. The changes that have produced greater autonomy are unlikely to vanish easily, and in many ways they should not. The question therefore is how to facilitate decentered formats for service provision and policymaking while maintaining some golden thread of control. The metagovernance reforms have helped to some extent to overcome the fragmentation and “hollowing” of contemporary States, but many of the most fundamental issues remain unresolved.

**Changing Democracy**

The term of democracy is one of the most contested in political science. This is true in part because the meaning is indeed complex and slippery, but also because democracy is a hortatory word that evokes positive reactions among academic and the public alike. There is no surer way to defeat an argument than to say the consequences of the choice involved would be undemocratic. Despite the widespread rhetorical uses of the term, however, providing an exact social scientific meaning is highly contested (Beetham, 1994; Collier and Adcock, 1999), and even there the measures may have some ideological as well as scientific purposes.

My purpose here is not, however, to provide any precise meaning for democracy, or to test the extent to which real countries have attained that standard. Rather, I will begin with a rather more general conception and understanding of democracy, and then focus on the changes that appear to be occurring in the manner in which contemporary democracy is being practiced. The common sense model considered here is one in which voters choose among parties, and the elected officials in a legislature then tend to honor the pledges that they and their parties made during the campaign. In addition to the tasks of selecting policy, another of the major tasks of
legislatures is to hold the members of the executive accountable for their actions. This accountability function applies both to the political executive–presidents, prime ministers and ministers–and the unelected public bureaucracy.

Over thirty years ago Samuel Huntington (1974) questioned how benign post-industrial politics would be. Although he discussed a number of issues in the transformation of democratic systems one of the more important was the disparity between a more educated population that would want to participate in politics, and the increasing complexity of the issues that had to be decided through the political process.

**Responsible Party Systems**

This purposefully simple conception of democracy also depends upon several subsidiary points. One important component of the functioning of democracy has been the responsible political party (Adam, 2001). Stable and responsible political parties serve as a focus for the public, and enable the public to make relatively rational choices and policy, even if the choices were retrospective (Fiorina, 1981; Berry and Howells, 2007). Further, those parties provide the means for recruiting political elites and maintaining the institutional apparatus for governing. In addition, a legitimate democracy requires substantial involvement and identification on the part of the public. The functioning, as opposed to ideal, model of democracy therefore has been one based on political parties and the involvement of the public in governing primarily through those political parties.

Although we generally posit that political parties are in the business of representing the interests of the voters to the State, the opposite may in fact be increasingly true. That is, so called “cartel parties” may be more interested in representing the State to the public. The argument by some scholars, and by critics more generally, is that the major established political parties have become more interested in maintaining their position and their public funding than necessarily in fighting too vigorously for constituent interests.

**Challenges to Representative Democracy**

Several crucial elements of representative democracy are being threatened and seem to be undermining that form of democracy. The first of these elements is the decline in conventional political participation in many democratic systems. With a few notable exceptions, e.g. the American primaries in 2008 and the most recent French presidential election, voting has been declining. In some instances that decline has been precipitous. While it may be argued that this declining participation is a reflection of satisfaction with democracy, the survey evidence (Table 1) does not support such an optimistic interpretation. It appears that levels of satisfaction have been declining, and

As well as a decline in the levels of participation, there has been a decline in membership of, and identification with, political parties. A number of scholars have documented the decline of party membership in the majority of democratic systems (see Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000) and the
decline in the number of people who identify with a party, whether actual members or not, has also been declining rapidly. In short, perhaps the major political parties no longer can play the central role in democratic governance that they have in the past?

Along with the decline in membership in traditional, established political parties, there has been an increase in the importance of single-issue and “flash” political parties. Although there is an ample array of established political parties espousing a wide range of positions, the public recently have been more willing to eschew those parties in favor of parties organized around the appeal of individuals. These parties do not provide the stable orientations to policy and to governing more generally associated with the more established parties. The stable orientations associated with the more established political parties provide some predictability and some consistency of policy.

Importantly, the party systems of Central and Eastern European countries have been especially volatile (Tavits, 2004), raising some questions about the level of institutionalization of democracy in those systems, despite their successes in launching democracy. These party systems now change rapidly, with a number of the parties being organized around individuals or particular policy issues rather than around more stable ideas. Given that the voters in these countries have less history in working through political parties and other representative institutions the fluidity of the party system may be expected, but it also imposes many risks for effective democracy.

As noted above, the established political parties have a special importance for democracy. The parties provide some more or less predictable policy positions for citizens and government alike, and providing a stable source of political identity for the public. Those political parties provide voters with important heuristics for choice, and thereby simplify their voting choices and facilitate their participation in politics. If this anchoring of political judgements and guide for evaluating policy is minimized then citizens will have to invest more time and energy in deciding how to vote, and may therefore simply not vote.

**Linking Governance and Democracy**

While both governance and democracy are central concepts in political science, as well as in the real world of governing. The two terms are important on their own, but their linkage is even more crucial. This linkage is especially important as the traditional versions of democracy have been threatened, and there is a perceived need to build alternative mechanisms for involving the public in political processes related to governing. I will be especially interested in the role that the public bureaucracy and policy networks play both in providing governance and in ensuring some form of democracy.

The decline in political parties and representative institutions has led many citizens to search for alternative forms of democratic participation. The causation in the previous sentence may, in fact, be reversed and the development of viable alternatives may have been leading to at least some part of the apparent decline of the representative institutions. If the public perceives the
availability of opportunities for participation that are more directly related to their day to day
concerns then it is only sensible for them to pursue those alternatives and attempt to influence
programs in a more immediate manner.

The search for alternative forms of democracy is in many ways a search for new forms of
accountability. That statement has at least three implications. The first is that many of the
traditional forms of accountability are not as effective as they once were. The linear model of
accountability inherent in parliamentary forms of accountability is not suited to the extreme
complexity of governing described above. The empowerment of many different actors through
delegation or through political involvement means that the direct linkages between the public
sector and service delivery can no longer be assumed. Any realistic instruments of
accountability must match the complexity of the processes they seek to monitor and control.

The second, and more basic, implication is that accountability may be becoming the central
democratic activity for many modern states. If many of the input mechanisms for popular
control over policy have become attenuated and weakened then the logical focus for control is
through attempting to hold political, and non-political, actors responsible for what they have
already done. This strategy for linking democracy and governance is rather different from the
retrospective voting already mentioned above in that it attempts to supplement voting with other
instruments of asserting public control over public programs. The focus on accountability
implies a much more direct imposition of control over the delivery of services than is available
for other forms of accountability (Day and Klein, 1988; Thomas, 2004).

The third implication, following from the other two, is that in addition to changing many aspects
of accountability, the nature of legitimation for the public sector is also changing. In many ways
the public sector is now legitimated by what it can produce rather than by the political processes
that produced the decision. That statement may appear excessively strong, given the central role
that democratic political processes can and do retain. That said, however, the decline in popular
involvement in those processes, and their simultaneous concerns with the quality of the services
being provided, have produced something of the “supermarket” state (Olsen, 1988) in which the
public seeks to make choices about which services it will consume.

The quintessential case of output legitimation is argued to be the European Union (Scharpf,
1999), with limited input legitimacy, but substantial apparent success in enhancing economic
performance, and some successes more generally in governing. The familiar arguments about
the democratic deficit in the EU point to the role of successful performance as a means of
justifying the role of this political system. The general movement toward an “audit society”
(Power, 1998) has accelerated the shift toward output legitimation in most of the industrialized
democracies. That is, the emphasis on measuring policy performance and quantifying the
successes and failures of public programs has tended to emphasize the quality of governance and
to focus public attention toward that performance.

We (Hood, James, Peters and Scott, 2004) have argued that the conventional hierarchical forms
of accountability are now being augmented by other forms, notably competition among programs
and organizations. This competition is at times explicit, but more commonly is tacit and is
reflected in lists of test scores for schools, or lists of mortality rates for hospitals, or clearance rates for police departments. While these indicators have numerous and well-known problems (Bouckaert and Peters, 2002) and may even be inversely related\(^7\) to some aspects of quality, they do provide some means of understanding how well these public services are being delivered.

The political assumption behind this competitive model of accountability is that if an organization is shown to be performing poorly then its clients will mobilize to place pressure on that organization. This pressure may be exerted in part through the representative institutions, but much of it will come directly from the clients. In this view, the local facility becomes the major locus of accountability and of democratic mobilization. Many members of the public may not care about international affairs, or even about national economic policy, but they will care about their local schools, and if the political parties are no longer capable of providing the citizens with a sense of influence over those schools then there may be more direct avenues for influence.

As noted for networks, however, thinking about enforcing accountability through the more direct means may do little to improve the disadvantage that many segments of society have when attempting to influence government. Again, being effective in forcing accountability on formal institutions in the public sector requires presentational and organizational skills that may be in short supply in just those parts of the society who are most likely to need the best public services to compensate for other deprivations.

**Summary and Conclusions**

This paper has presented a somewhat bleak view of the capacity of contemporary democracies to provide effective governance. Perhaps the general tendency of academic analysts is to identify all the problems in a governing system and not to see the virtues that have been created. That having been said, the continuing reforms of the State, combined with more autonomous changes in the political system, have created real problems for contemporary democracies. In particular, governments need to find ways of knitting together the strands of decentering reforms with assertions of central direction and coherence.

As implied above, after some decades of denigrating the public bureaucracy, restoring some stability in governing and linking social actors with the center of governing may require a reinvigoration of the public bureaucracy. At least in the short-run this may be easier than attempting to rebuild party systems that have been decaying, or finding ways of reinforcing the central political institutions. As also noted above, the lower levels of the bureaucracy has been becoming increasingly important as a locus for governing and even for democracy, and reform may therefore further substantiate these changes and find alternative means of governing throug

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\(^7\)For example, mortality rates for the best hospitals may be the highest simply because they are given, or are willing to take, the most difficult cases. Smaller and less intensive hospitals may take the “low-hanging fruit” and leave the more difficult cases to the university teaching hospitals.
hthem. This is not an argument for abandoning traditional models of parliamentary democracy but rather an argument for finding means of supplementing those institutions.

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