

## Normative Dimensions of Metropolitan Governance

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## Normative Dimensions of Metropolitan Governance

- Is the debate on metropolitan mechanisms of cooperation ideologically charged i.e. normative dimensions?
- In the literature the words used to describe local government cooperation vary greatly:
  - *Institutional arrangement* is also called *structure* or *city-region* by Sancton,
  - *Metropolitan region* by Saavitch and Vogel or Phares, and
  - Ostrom uses the word *instrumentality* or *instrumentalities* to express an idea that,
  - Castells calls *network governance*;
- *Beyond the rhetoric the issue here is to acknowledge, describe and analyse forms of cooperation that take place at the local level often amongst municipalities but also include other public, and many private actors that have stakes in the region wide policies.*

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- *Theorization (Keating, 2004, Savitch and Vogel, 2009):*
- *Four different views include:*
  - *The metropolitan government (old regionalism) approach that centres on efficiency and effectiveness – providing economies of scales – equity and redistribution. Policies reach the largest number at the lowest possible cost*
  - *The metropolitan governance perspective focuses on equity and competitiveness,*
  - *The rescaling and re-territorialization view that centres on global competitiveness and implies intergovernmental linkages (renewed roles Province/ State/ Central-Federal)*
- *Also literature of the last half century addressing those questions has been greatly influenced by the public choice views:*
  - *(1) Rational actors have very limited, if any, incentives to cooperate;*
  - *(2) Focuses of efficiency (inclusion and exclusion)*
  - *(3) Leviathan steps in to regulate cooperation.*

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- *Theorization: Four different views include:*
- *The metropolitan government (old regionalism) approach centres on efficiency and effectiveness – providing economies of scales – equity and redistribution. Policies reach the largest number at the lowest possible cost - its organizing principle is a bounded territory that is democratically accountable to a community of electors – those elect government. Government is the lead policy decision maker*
- *The metropolitan governance perspective focuses on equity and competitiveness – here again the organizing principle is based on bounded territory, however, accountability and responsiveness are not uniquely in the hands of electors but also include public and private stake holders. Government shares policy making with others.*

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- *The rescaling and re-territorialization view that centres on global competitiveness and implies intergovernmental linkages (renewed roles Province/ State/ Central-Federal) . Recognizes that economic regions and urban regions rarely overlap: Government is one of many decision makers (local / global: corporations, interest groups, communities, stakeholders)*
- *Also literature of the last half century addressing those questions has been greatly influenced by the public choice views: Rational actors have very limited, if any, incentives to cooperate; Focuses of efficiency (inclusion and exclusion) Leviathan steps in to regulate cooperation, but, government does not need to be involved.*

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- **Background: Why go beyond some of those questions:**
- The institutional forms and functions of cities follow a variable geometry of institutional arrangements that have evolved from traditional multifunctional government into a multitude of uni-functional governance arrangements,
- All can be more or less accountable or responsive to a local community – community of electors / community of service recipients.
- Placing the primacy on political accountability and responsiveness seems to anchor local governing capacity in the local politics of a place;
- Shifting the priority towards the efficient delivery of services results in servicing the needs of market forces.
- All locality struggles to establish the appropriate institutional framework to meet the needs of its communities and its economic region

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- Because, argues the LSE **Urban Age Project** (Ricky Burdett & Philip Rode (2007) *The Endless City*, Phaidon, London/UK)
- *Contemporary Global Cities – Metropolitan Regions have four major government design issues: (1) Regional Fragmentation, (2) Organization of provision of governmental Services, (3) being in the global economy and concurrent role of privatization in city planning and service delivery.*
- *These in turn raise issues of*
  - *Planning - where the relevance of city boundaries are in question yet in the absence of local / regional government policy decisions are not possible (Regional Government/nance)*
  - *Cities are so large that city – government power needs to be subdivided – (Citizen participation)*
  - *The global economy is organised in a network of cities where private sector stakeholder are prominent – in a governance policy process based on consensus – yet government legitimacy is unique (other partners don't have) – the basis of this legitimacy is self-government (sub-city institutions or regional planning, elected regional mayor, strong intergovernmental relations.*

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- (E. B-J & J. Martin (2010) *Local Government in a Global World?* Toronto)
- **Huge literature discussion the following themes:**
  - (1) The global economy modifies the politics of state relations – intergovernmental – top down – bottom up – international.
  - (2) The global economy, new technologies, free trade transform the relations of states and other governments – governing is more complex!
  - (3) Free trade regimes pressure governments to deregulate, decentralize and download
  - (4) All seem to enhance sub-national entities as economic players – the articulation of each level of government key to the construction of a local territorial economy

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- Basically, there are three major trends:
  - (a) Central government are less able to regulate, to organize fiscal equalization, reduce inter-regional and provincial competition
  - (b) Central governments encourage intergovernmental competition
  - (c) Decentralizing and devolving changes intergovernmental relations, local institutions and governing capacity
- These have implications for (1) intergovernmental influence, (2) local restructuring and (3) democratic accountability

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### *The literature on “Restructuring and Reforms”*

- Political space – the forms and functions of cities – follows a variable geometry of institutional arrangements ...
- ... traditional multi-functional government or a multitude of uni-functional governance arrangements
- The size of constituencies and the forms and function(s) of government institutions have implications for local democracy and the delivery of local services
- Democratic accountability and efficiency of a service-delivery system (economies of scales/market mechanisms) are key to the debate
- *New Public Management* literature favours uni-functional delivery - efficient governance mechanisms as well as PPPs and privatisation

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### *What we find on “Restructuring and Reforms”*

- Restructuring does not emerge from clear strategic federal, state/provincial policies
- The *New Public Management* literature is influential in Australia

Australia (Marshall):

- Underscores the managerial role of local governments, and justifying reform
- Regional development organizations and privatization of regional services are successful initiatives

Canada (Sancton):

- Finds it difficult to link the managerial views of New Public Management in the Canadian rationale for reform
- In Canada the efficiency/effectiveness criteria are lost in discourses/debates
- Reforms take place giving functions to two tier local governments in East.

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### *The literature on “Intergovernmental Relations”*

- **No city is ever able to do what it pleases!** They exercise power within the legal framework set by others – national governments / sub-governments. These provide how local government is formed (elected/appointed), what it can do (functions), and its authority over what territory (planning)
- What is the constitutional status of municipalities?
- Are they natural persons with spheres of jurisdiction?
- Are they an order of government?
- *Are municipal – provincial/ state relations hyper fractionalized and quasi-subordinate?*
- Or, hyper fractionalized, not subordinate ? Asymmetric?

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### *What we find on “Intergovernmental Relations”*

Australia (Sansom)

- Constitutionally - local governments are creatures of states but recognized as federal intergovernmental policy partners. Presence in federal state ministerial councils and on Council of Australian Governments.
- Federal level provides significant level of funding – Federal policies give local governments a national stage. Funding is scheme organized for efficiency

Canada (Graham)

- Constitutionally - local government are the creatures of provinces
- Some provinces grant “natural person powers”
- Local governments implement federal programs

Overall

- Overview: local governments are part of policy making process in Australia, in Canada they are not associated to federal/provincial discussions.

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### *The literature: “Participation and Governance”*

- Shift from government to governance
- Governance more about public policy process and engagement than about structure – government like institutions
- Governance engages citizens and interest groups widely
- Governance is about certain degrees of formality of participation and process, including in and out groups.

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### *What we find on “Participation & Governance”*

- Distinction between Government and Governance is clear – government still dominate local politics
- Trends are not for all communities: smaller, peri-urban and rural communities do not experience those changes :

Australia (Aulich):

- There are initiatives, and rhetoric on third way politics, stakeholders, inclusion, partnerships and community, but the overall evidence is inconclusive.

Canada (Philips):

- There are three models of citizen and community engagement: community government, local governance and community governance
- The current community building agenda is driven by “non-governmental actors and communities” shifting from government to governance. Municipalities are no longer only deliverers of services.

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### **In conclusion**

- There is evidence of a shift from government to governance – but scant evidence of increased citizen participation but for larger communities in Canada – *Is local government weakened?*
- Restructuring and reforms take place in Canada and Australia – NPM ideas are influential in Australia. Services are contracted out in Australia – they are downloaded in Canada – *Is service provision and democracy weakened?*
- Intergovernmental relations are still subordinate but more complex – local governments have gained formal policy influence in Australia. In Canada, there is no evidence that rural communities are left behind – *Should higher / regional / provincial / state government play a renewed role?*

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*Thank You for your attention!*

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