

Organizational models and public management reforms

Leonardo Secchi

1 Introduction

Since the 1980s public administrations around the world have carried out important changes in public management policies (PMPs) and in the design of programmatic organizations (DPOs). These management reforms consolidate new discourses and practices drawn from the private sector, and use them as benchmarks for public organization in all levels of government.

Hays & Plagens (2002: 327) give a sense of the magnitude of the reforms: “Popular strategies for reform have come directly from the private sector in what is perhaps the most profound redefinition of ‘public’ administration since the field first emerged as an identifiable specialty”.

The claimed triggers of these waves of “modernization” are the fiscal crisis of the state (Aucoin 1990, Hood 1995, Pollitt & Bouckaert 2002a), growing territorial competition for private investments and skilled workforce (Subirats & Quintana 2005), availability of new technological and organizational knowledge, the rise of pluralist and neo-liberal values (Kooiman 1993, Rhodes 1997), and the “growing complexity, dynamics and diversity of our societies” (Kooiman 1993: 06). The Europeanization process (Olsen 2002, Radaelli 2005) has played a role in stimulating the adoption of new organizational models and overhauling public management policies at the national, regional and municipal levels of government.

The bureaucratic organizational model became the target of harsh criticism. Also referred to as Progressive Public Administration (PPA), the Weberian bureaucratic model was deemed inadequate in the contemporary institutional context because of its postulated inefficiency, slowness, self-referential style and detachment from the citizens’ needs (Barzelay 1992, Osborne & Gaebler 1994, Hood 1995, Pollitt & Bouckaert 2002a).

Two organizational models and one relational paradigm were presented as alternatives to the PPA model. New Public Management (NPM) and Entrepreneurial Government (EG) are organizational models that embody sets of prescriptions for organizational matters. The Public Governance (PG) movement is a relational model because it offers an approach of linkage between a system (the public organization) with other systems and the surrounding environment.

In the long run public management reforms have the potential to change the organizational and relational model of a public organization. Sometimes public management reforms are used merely for rhetoric purposes. Other times public management reforms have little effect or fail completely.

2 The bureaucratic model

The Weberian bureaucratic model is the organizational model that enjoyed a notable widespread in public administrations around the world during the 20th century. This model is attributed to Weber because this sociologist had assembled, analyzed and synthesized its principal characteristics. This model of management is also named Progressive Public Administration or PPA (Hood 1995), referring to the reforms introduced in the United States at the turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries, during the Progressive Era.

Since the 16th Century the bureaucratic model already enjoyed an appreciable diffusion in public administrations and in religious and military organizations, especially in Europe. But it was during the

20th century that this model reached its apex, with its adoption within public, private and non-profit organizations.

Already in 1904, in Max Weber's book "The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism", references were made to bureaucracy, its dissemination in Western countries and its characteristics of specialization, control and, above all, rationality.

"(...) No country and no age has ever experienced, in the same sense as the modern Occident, the absolute and complete dependence of its whole existence, of the political, technical, and economic conditions of its life, on a specially trained organization of officials. The most important functions of the everyday life of society have come to be in the hands of technically, commercially, and above all legally trained government officials. (...) In fact, the State itself, in the sense of a political association with a rational, written constitution, rationally ordained law, and an administration bound to rational rules or laws, administered by trained officials, is known, in this combination of characteristics, only in the Occident, despite all other approaches to it". (Weber 1904/ed.1930: 16-17)

But it was after the death of Weber, and after the publication of his *Economy and Society* in 1922 that the theoretical bases of bureaucracy were decisively defined.

In his description of the ideal typical models of domination, Weber identified the exercise of rational-legal authority as the source of power inside bureaucratic organizations. In this framework, power emanates from the norms, from formal institutions, and not from a charismatic profile or from tradition.

From this fundamental assumption stem the three main characteristics of the bureaucratic model: formality, impersonality and professionalism.

Formality imposes the institution of rights and responsibilities for organizational members, the configuration and legitimacy of an administrative hierarchy, the written documentation of administrative procedures, the formalization of the decision making-process, and formalization of internal and external communications. Employees' tasks are formally established in a way to assure the continuity of work and a standardization of organizational services, in order to avoid individual discretion on the execution of assignments.

The value of impersonality prescribes that the relationships between the members of the organization, and between the organization and the external environment, are based on job positions and on lines of authority. The director or manager of a sector or department has the ultimate authority and responsibility to decide and communicate his/her decision. The director or manager is the person who formally represents the organization. Even more important than that, impersonality implies that the organizational positions belong to the organization, and not to the individuals performing it. This avoids the individual appropriation of power, prestige, and other sorts of benefits, when the individual changes his/her functions or leaves the organization.

Professionalism is intimately connected to the positive value attributed to merit as a criterion to equity and differentiation. Work duties are attributed to individuals through fair competition in which the contender has to show better technical skills and knowledge than the others. The negative effects of nepotism are the principal targets of professionalism. The employees' promotion along the hierarchy depends on experience in the workplace (seniority) and on performance (achievement) (March 1961). The ideal target is to create a hierarchy of competences, a meritocracy. Other characteristics that stem

from professionalism are the separation of public property/patrimony (organizational) and private (individual), remunerated work, the rational division of labor, and the separation of work and life environments.

“Experience tends universally to show that the purely bureaucratic type of administration (...) is, from a purely technical point of view, capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency and is in this sense formally the most rational known means of exercising authority over human beings. It is superior to any other form in precision, in stability, in the stringency of its discipline, and in its reliability” (Weber 1922, ed. 1978: 223).

The Weberian bureaucratic model established outstanding organizational expertise. One of these is the separation of planning and execution. Based on the principles of professionalism and the rational division of labor, the separation of planning and execution reinvigorates the Wilsonian distinction between Politics and Public Administration (Wilson 1887), whereas *Politics* is responsible for the elaboration of public goals and *Public Administration* is responsible for carrying out the decisions in the field. In the private firm environment, Weberian bureaucracy consolidates the prescription of Taylor (1911) of the division of duties between executives (using the brain) and workers (using the muscles).

The concern with organizational efficiency is primary to the bureaucratic model. On the one hand the economic efficiency values impose the rational allocation of resources, which in the Weberian theory is translated into a special concern with the allocation of people within the organizational structure. On the other hand the organizational efficiency value induces obedience to the formal prescription of duties, in other words the preoccupation with ‘how’ things are made¹. In public choice theories these mechanisms inducing bureaucracy to accomplish tasks through the prescription of duties, are named ‘*ex ante* constraints’ on bureaucracies or agencies (McCubbins, Noll & Weingast 1989).

Another value underlying the idea of bureaucracy is equity. Bureaucratic organizations should give equal treatment (duties, salaries etc) to employees that perform the same functions, and bureaucracy has to provide standardized products and service to the recipients of their activities.

Implicit to the Weberian bureaucratic model is the general mistrust vis-à-vis human being. The procedural control of the duties and concerns with impartiality of the organization towards its employees are expressions of McGregor’s (1960) theory X. Theory X, in contrast to McGregor’s theory Y, is understood as organizational mistrust towards people. Organizations that consider, even implicitly, human nature according to Theory X hold an understanding that employees dislike work in general, prefer to be guided, avoid responsibility, and have to be constantly coerced and directed in order to perform their tasks in an appropriate manner.

Criticism towards the bureaucratic organizational model is vast. In the aftermath of the Second World War a wave of intellectual confrontation against the bureaucratic model was led by Waldo (1948) and Simon (1947) and Merton (1949).

Robert Merton (1949) elaborated one of the sharpest and most direct criticisms towards the bureaucratic model, analyzing its negative effects on organizations and other spheres of life. These negative effects have been called dysfunctions of bureaucracy: the impact of red tape on the

¹ Drucker (1974: 45) made this distinction between efficiency and effectiveness advocating that “Efficiency is concerned with doing things right. Effectiveness is doing the right things.” In this sense effectiveness is concerned with ‘what’ and efficiency is concerned with ‘how’, both being essential to organizational success.

employees' lack of motivation, resistance to change deriving from restrictive job descriptions, and the goal displacement provoked by a blind pursuit of norms. Another important issue exposed by Merton (1949) is the abuse of seniority criteria for job promotion, which hinders competition between employees and fosters a sense of group integrity and corporatism, detaching organization from the recipients' interests concerning products and services. Beyond this, the characteristic of impersonality can lead bureaucrats not to pay attention to the peculiarities of individual needs. Merton (1949) also enumerates arrogance towards the public/clientele on the part of civil servants, because public bureaucrats feel untouchable in their monopolistic position as service providers. These dysfunctions can be even more detrimental in organizations where their success depends upon creativity and innovation.

After Merton, further criticisms have been made of the bureaucratic model, and are described implicitly in the following definitions of post-bureaucratic organizational and relational models: New Public Management, Entrepreneurial Government and Public Governance.

3 Managerialism

Two organizational models have depicted the global management reform movement in the last decades: the New Public Management (NPM) model and the Entrepreneurial Government (EG) model. These two approaches share the same values of productivity, marketization, service orientation, decentralization, efficiency in policy delivery, and accountability (Kettl 2005). NPM and EG are recurrently regarded as managerialism.

NPM is an extra-bureaucratic normative model for designing and managing public administration based on values of efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness.

Some authors refer to NPM as a well-identified movement in space and time, as a process of change in the public administrations of Northern European countries, Canada and in Oceania in the '80s and '90s (Christensen, Lagraeid & Wise 2002, Kettl 2005).

According to Barzelay (2000: 229), NPM is a field of professional and policy debate on themes of "public management policy, executive leadership, design of programmatic organizations, and government operations." Other authors, instead, simply consider NPM as a set of tools, and not as an ideology, a tendency or a movement (Schedler *in* Jones 2004).

Hood & Jackson (1991) claim that NPM is an administrative argument or "philosophy of administration", in which efficiency and performance values are prevalent. This philosophy of administration is based on a set of doctrines and justifications. The doctrines are prescriptions for action, rules of thumb to be applied in the management and design of public organizations. The justifications are reasons for the pertinence of doctrines, giving them a rational sense. As Hood & Jackson (1991) claim, doctrines and justifications are 'relatively coherent' with each other, and some philosophies can use a certain prescription based on a justification, while other philosophies can use the same prescription but based on totally different justifications.

The justifications are composed of values, recurrently partial and disputable, but with normative force. According to Hood & Jackson (1991) there are three large groups of values that influence justifications:

- Group *sigma*: efficiency and rational allocation of resources; limitation of waste; simplicity avoidance of confusion.
- Group *theta*: equity; fairness; mutuality; neutrality; accountability; and avoidance of abuse by

the agent (dishonesty, carelessness).

- Group *lambda*: responsiveness; systems' resilience; flexibility; elasticity, reliability, and robustness.

Barzelay (2000) and Parsons (2006) state that NPM is a normative model for designing and organizing public administration, founded on arguments, doctrines and justifications deriving from the positive interpretation assigned to the group *sigma* of values.

The interpretation of NPM as doctrines is shared by Pollitt & Bouckaert (2002b) and by Hood (1995). For Pollitt and Bouckaert (2002b), NPM can be considered a religion, a system of beliefs in which is based on instrumental rationality. Hood (1995: 95-98) moved forward the discussion and enumerated a set of NPM operational prescriptions:

1. Disaggregation of the public service in specialized units, cost centers.
2. Competition between public organizations (public *versus* public), and between public and private organizations (public *versus* private).
3. Use of management practices derived from corporate private management.
4. Attention to discipline and parsimony.
5. Hands-on management (entrepreneurial managers with autonomy to manage).
6. Measurement of performance.
7. Output measures (i.e. salaries based on job performance).

The book *Reinventing Government*, written by Osborne & Gaebler in 1992, inaugurated "Entrepreneurial Government" as a pragmatic style of public management.

This approach was clearly inspired by the new managerial sciences, bringing to the public sector the teaching of seminal corporate management books like 'The practice of Management' (Drucker 1954) and 'In Search of Excellence' (Peters & Waterman 1982). Originally, the ideas of Entrepreneurial Government (EG) developed more intensively in the United States when this model became central to the Presidential program of the Democratic Party in 1992, and was then used as one of the important sources for the Government Performance Results Act of 1993 and the National Performance review during the Clinton-Gore administration.

Using a prescriptive language, Osborne & Gaebler (1992) summarized a list of 10 "commandments" to turn a bureaucratic public organization into a responsive and rational public organization that could grant freedom of choice to citizens/customers. The Ten Commandments of EG are synthetically summarized here:

1. Catalytic government: governments do not have to assume the sole responsibility for the implementation of public policies, but rather they have to "steer" different social agents in solving collective problems.
2. Community-owned government: governments have to open up the management of public policies to community participation.
3. Competitive government: governments have to create competition mechanisms for public organizations and between the public organization and the private counterparts, striving to foster the improvement of service delivery. This Commandment is aimed at breaking governmental monopolies on service delivery.
4. Mission-driven government: governments have to shift from a "red tape" obsession into a goal achievement perspective.

5. Results-oriented government: governments have to replace their input control efforts for output and outcome measurements.
6. Customer-driven government: governments have to shift the self-referential logic towards citizens' satisfaction logic.
7. Enterprising government: governments have to strive to increase earnings through enterprise funds and service delivery.
8. Anticipatory government: governments have to abandon the reactive problem-solving behavior for a pro-active behavior, building strategic plans in order to prevent untreatable problems.
9. Decentralized government: governments have to involve career civil servants in the deliberative processes, taking advantage of their know-how and innovative skills. Apart from enhancing organizational innovation and problem solving, decentralization is expected to boost motivation and self-esteem among bureaucrats.
10. Market-oriented government: governments have to promote the logic of market competition, investing money in venture capital, acting as market broker for services, creating regulatory and information institutes in order to abate transaction costs.

At times these commandments overlap, as in the cases of the result-oriented and mission-driven commandments and in the cases of the market-oriented, enterprising government and competitive government. At times these commandments lead to contradictory values like those described on catalytic government and enterprising government. Despite this, the book shows coherence in the primary reference values as rationality, effectiveness, and freedom of choice.

Implicitly, the EG model by Osborne & Gaebler has a positive and constructive consideration of human behavior. The authors, especially in chapters two (community-owned government) and nine (decentralized government), claim a quasi-romantic understanding toward the behavior and the motivation of citizens and public employees. The ideas of Osborne & Gaebler also exalt values linked to the communitarian philosophical stream, principally when they evoke the importance of civic involvement in the processes of change, in communication, and in the partnerships between the public and the private spheres.

The size of the public sector is a secondary theme for Osborne & Gaebler (1992), and their attention is directed to the way things are done within government and public administration.

4 Public governance

The definition of *governance* is not exempt from disputes. This is because the definition of governance does not face multiple interpretations within a single epistemic community (as in the case of NPM), but rather the term governance creates ambiguities between different disciplinary areas.

The main disciplines studying “*governance*” are international relations, development theories, the managerial sciences, political sciences and public administration.

International relations studies conceive governance as changes in power relations between states in the current international scenario. The so-called globalizers, of liberal tradition, see governance as the defeat of the state model of international relations preponderant since the 17th Century, and the transition to a new collaborative model between state and non-state actors in solving collective international problems. Governance is thus a process of establishing horizontal mechanisms of collaboration between actors and networks to cope with borderless problems like drug smuggling, terrorism, and environmental emergencies.

Since the mid-1970s the studies of European integration have been detaching from traditional international relations studies (Jachtenfuchs 2001). Lately these studies have been dominated by different theoretical perspectives and one of them is the governance approach in which member states are no longer the sole privileged actors, and policymaking in the European Union is influenced by a multiplicity of actors and their interrelations.

Development theories treat governance as a set of adequate management and democracy practices that helps national states in enhancing economic and social development². “Good governance” is therefore a combination of good practices for public government. The IMF and the World Bank ask for “good governance” as a requisite for developing countries in applying for economic and technical support. Examples of these proper practices are administrative efficiency, public accountability and efforts to tackle corruption “as essential elements of a framework within which economies can prosper” (IMF 2003: 01).

Governance in a managerial perspective is a set of basic principles to increase the effectiveness of control by market authorities on private organizational activities. The corporate governance perspective is also intended to decrease agency problems between boards of directors and shareholders. Examples of institutional principles are the articulation between authorities to oversee law compliance, and the pursuit of integrity and objectivity by authorities in regulating markets. Examples of governance principles for private enterprises are the proportional participation of shareholders in strategic decision-making, the cooperation of the private enterprise with external (trade unions, creditors) and internal stakeholders (employees), information transparency and the management accountability of the executive board *vis-à-vis* shareholders (OECD 2004).

The interpretation of governance that will guide this dissertation in the debate on the changing goals and tools of government is the one derived from political sciences and public administration. In this sense Public Governance (PG) is understood as a model of horizontal interaction between public and private actors in policymaking (Kooiman 1993, Richards & Smith 2002).

The label “governance” denotes pluralism, in the sense that different actors have or should have the right to influence public policymaking and it implicitly embraces a shrinking role of the state (less hierarchical and less monopolist) in solving public problems. Therefore PG is also associated with neo-liberalism. PG also denotes the reinvigoration of politics within public administration, the diminishing role of technical criteria in decision-making and the strengthening of participatory mechanisms for public deliberations.

The driving forces for the PG movement and its values are multiple. The first is that “the growing complexity, dynamics and diversity of our societies puts governing system under new challenges that new conceptions of governance are needed” (Kooiman 1993: 06). The second is the rise of neo-liberal values and the so-called *Hollowing out of the State*, in which the incapacity of the state is proclaimed. This ideological movement disregards the state’s ability to autonomously solve its own failures and preaches the reduction of the national authority upwards (IMF, World Bank, European Union), outwards (market and NGOs), and downwards (local governments, local agencies, Quangos).

² This explanatory framework is the opposite to the *modernization theory* approach (Lipset 1959) in which economic development is proposed as an independent variable to democracy, and the rise of democracy in a country depends on its reaching a certain level of economic development.

The third driving force is the adoption of NPM models of management by national, regional and local administrations, focusing stronger attention on performance and the eradication of public problems rather than on “who” implements policies or “how” policies are implemented. In fact some scholars consider governance as a consequence of the NPM movement, with which it shares some common features: “there is some kinship between the two perspectives and it appears clear that the recent interest in governance has, in part, been triggered by the increasing popularity of New Public Management and the idea of some generic forms of societal control” (Pierre & Peters 2000: 65).

Pierre & Peters (2000) outline the inexorable elements of PG: structures and interactions. The structures can take on the mechanisms of hierarchy (government), (auto-regulated) market and community/society/networks. The interactions of the three structures are fluid, with no or few clear-cut distinctions between them. In a PG environment the interactions between public and private spheres are blurred.

This relational approach and the reinforcement of community/society structures in policymaking is the novelty proposed by governance theorists. “Governance (...) is no longer based on authority being centered on elected politicians (hierarchical model) nor on yielding responsibility to the private sector (market model), but rather it regulates and designates collective resources through relations with both the civilian population and with the other levels of government” (Brugué & Vallès 2005: 198).

A reason for greater dissent within the epistemic community of public administration is the differing comprehension regarding the leading role of the state in the current context of PG. In the one hand Kooiman (1993) perceives a diminution of the protagonist role of the state in policymaking. According to Kooiman, PG implies not only the involvement of non-state actors in policy implementation and management, but rather the whole process of “co-managing, co-steering, co-guiding, co-producing” (Kooiman 1993: 02). Rhodes (1997: 57) shares this assessment stating “the state becomes a collection of interorganizational networks made up of governmental and societal actors with no sovereign actor able to steer or regulate.”

Richards & Smith (2002) dispute this type of understanding, responding that the state keeps its leading role in public policymaking. According to them, PG provokes the creation of multiple centers of policymaking, at local, regional, national or supranational levels. The state, nevertheless, does not lose importance, but rather lessens its implementation role in order to enlarge its roles of coordination and control.

This state-centered approach claims that PG generates “collaborative instruments and a more transparent and integrative state model (...) to serve as a vehicle for the pursuit of collective interests” (Pierre & Peters 2000: 92).

Shifting to more practical matters, PG also provides organizational platforms to facilitate the attainment of public goals such as the involvement of citizens in policymaking, using mechanisms of deliberative democracy and policy networks³.

Deliberative democracy was experimented in Japanese industries as a procedure designed to take advantage of the knowledge and cognitive frames of the employees in organizational decision-making

³ Policy networks can be considered a research approach, a philosophy of mediation of interactions, and a specific configuration of interaction between public and private actors within a policy area (Börzel 1998). This last interpretation was used in this paper.

on products and industrial processes (Sabel 2001). These organizational experiences have also been used in the governmental sphere in order to enhance the intermediation of public and private actors for the solution of collective problems and the reduction of accountability chains. Mechanisms for deliberative democracy have already been experimented in different policy fields, and the consensus conferences, community empowerment and deliberative Election Day are examples of it (Regonini 2005). The underlying democratic ideal of democracy is the replacement of aggregation of the preferences (votes) with a cyclical process of cross-fertilization of preferences in the policymaking.

Policy networks represent a specific modality of interaction between public and private actors (Börzel 1998). Participation in policy networks is open to any political agent motivated to join it and it produces relatively low negative externality to its surrounding environment (Regonini 2005). The relative independence of policy networks is underlined by Rhodes (1997: 52): “(...) networks are self-organizing. At its simplest, self-organizing means that a network is autonomous and self-governing (...) networks resist government steering, develop their own policies and mould their environments.”

PG also denotes the coordination of state and non-state actors in government operations and the *private public partnerships* (PPP) are basic mechanisms of cooperation. In this regard Klijn & Teisman (2003: 137) define PPP as “co-operation between public and private actors with a durable character in which actors develop mutual products and/or services and in which risk, costs, and benefits are shared”.

The policy areas in which PPPs are intensively adopted are in the infrastructures sector and in environment protection (Klijn & Teisman 2003), and these contracts foresee control mechanisms to measure results and impact on the economic and social environment.

5 Comparing management models: continuity or discontinuity?

The description of these organizational and relational models in such a separate manner seems to obscure the basic elements of continuity and discontinuity. In addition, introducing these models in isolated “packages” could divert interpretation to an idealization that is not empirically corroborated. This paper presents the shared and distinctive attributes of the bureaucratic, the NPM/EG, and the PG models.

The principal common element of these models is the concern with control. In the case of PPA, the characteristics of formality and impersonality are intended to control the public agents, the communications, and the internal and external relationship in the organization. This control function is a consequence of an implicit assessment that public employees behave like the category X of human beings (McGregor 1960). The control function in the NPM movement is perceived both in its public choice version (political control on the bureaucrats) and in its managerial variant (control of the policy outcomes). The PG relational model assigns a positive value to the involvement of non-state actors in the policymaking process as an arrangement to devolve control to the recipients of public actions (societal control). Using the terminology from the systems theory (Bertalanffy 1969), these models use the control function to maintain the homeostasis of the organizational system. They are not, therefore, rupture models.

The PPA and the managerial models share the Wilsonian distinctions between politics and administration. The separation of politics and administration is pervasive to the Weberian PPA model, in which the agenda building process is supposed to be kept as a political duty, while implementation is

the responsibility of the administration. According to Aucoin (1990)⁴, in the NPM the distinction of politics and administration is notably present in the public choice/principal-agent approach, when it evokes centralization of decision-making in the hands of the political actors. In the managerial approach the separation of politics and administration is also present, although admitting that middle managers should be involved in the tasks of policy design. As a consequence of pluralist values, the PG movement presents elements of discontinuity in comparison to the Wilsonian distinction.

As organizational models, PPA, NPM and EG deal with decentralization issues within the administrative structure, an issue that the PG movement does not shed light on. For Hood (1995), the avoidance of managerial discretion has been a mark of the PPA model and the so-called red tape prescribed as necessary to avoid moral hazards by bureaucrats. NPM and EG have a more positive perception of public employees, and as a consequence the accountability mechanisms are designed to focus on the policy outcomes, rather than on processes (Hood 1995, Barzelay 2001, Jones 2004).

The question mark that still hovers is: to what extent can this distinction be empirically generalized? What organizational levels does the claimed discretion refer to? And, to what type of decisions is middle-management discretion applied (discretion on *how* or discretion on *what*)? Is there an actual prevalence of *ex post* controls over rule-bounded controls in the NPM and the EG models? If the conclusions by Aucoin (1990) are not taken as elucidative, these questions seem far from being clarified⁵.

The type of relationship between the internal and external organizational environment is one of the uniting points of the managerial and the PG models. They differ from PPA in this regard. The public and private spheres are considered different “worlds” in the Weberian bureaucratic model. This clear separation was intended to tackle menaces such as patrimonialism and corruption, perils of the pre-bureaucratic model. In the NPM, EG and PG precepts however, the formal-legal boundaries of the state becomes analytically impertinent, and mechanisms for lowering the barriers between public and private realms are present in deliberative practices, in policy networks, in PPP, in the principle of catalytic government suggested by Osborne & Gaebler (1992).

One of the clear distinctive aspects of PPA, NPM, and PG models is the way they refer to the citizen. In PPA the citizens have been called *users* of the public services. In the NPM and EG rhetoric the citizens are treated as *customers*, whose needs public organizations strive to satisfy. Under the umbrella of governance the citizens and other organizations are called *partners* or *stakeholders*, with whom the public builds horizontal patterns of relationship.

Another criterion to differentiate PPA, NPM, EG and PG is the analysis of the four classic administrative functions or processes: *planning, organizing, directing and controlling*.⁶

As stated above, the control function is present in all three models. The planning function is especially emphasized by NPM and EG in the processes of strategic planning, in the agreement of goals between politicians, public managers and public employees, in the adoption of Management by

⁴ Aucoin (1990) makes no reference to the NPM label because Hood coined it between 1990 and 1991. Nevertheless, Aucoin focuses his analysis on the type of administrative changes known today as NPM reforms.

⁵ Aucoin (1990) concludes that there exist a pendulum-like dynamics, swinging managerial values and practices through time and organizational contexts.

⁶ These four administrative functions are usually studied at management schools and they are derived from the original contribution by Henri Fayol (1916), a French engineer who described the role of managers in the functions of *Prévoir, Organiser, Commander, Coordonner, Contrôler*.

Objectives. PPA puts greater emphasis on the organization function: the analysis and the formal description of duties, the rational division of tasks, the creation of workflows and communication channels between departments or sectors. Finally, the most original contribution of governance is direction, understood as the sum of leadership and coordination activities. The PG relational model is regardful of the external coordination, the steering capacities of the public entity in articulating with other public organisms, private organizations, NPOs, networks and citizens in the policymaking process.

We summarize the distinctions and similarities of the four models in table 1:

Table 1: Basic features of the organizational and relational models

	<i>PPA</i>	<i>NPM and EG</i>	<i>Governance</i>
Systemic function	Homeostasis	Homeostasis	Homeostasis
Systemic relationship with the environment	Closed	Open	Open
Politics vs. Administration	Separated	Separated	Blurred
Core administrative functions	Control/Organization	Control/Planning	Control/Coordination
Managerial discretion	Low	High	n.a. ⁷
Citizen	<i>User</i>	<i>Customer</i>	<i>Partner</i>

6 Conclusions

A public management reform is a set of innovations in public management policies and in the design of programmatic organizations carried out by a public organization, based on a fairly coherent set of justifications and rhetoric. Public management reforms are generally backed by justifications of efficiency, accountability and flexibility (Hood & Jackson 1991).

A public management reform occurs when a public organization progressively shifts its practices, relationships, and rhetoric from one pattern to the other. Public management reforms occur in different time and space, with different scopes and values. In the 19th and early 20th Century the so-called civil service reform in the United States was marked by the transition from the pre-bureaucratic to bureaucratic model of public administration (Bresser-Pereira 2004). The same transition was later verified in other countries.

Recently, the progressive shift from the bureaucratic model to these new organizational and relational models of NPM, EG, and PG has been considered as a new global wave of public management reforms.

It is important to remind that the presumptive “magic” of public management reforms has to be taken cautiously. This paper has shown that firstly: the new organization and relational models share important characteristic with the traditional bureaucratic model: they are not rupture models, and they also put emphasis on the control function.

Secondly, public management reforms can easily become symbolic policies or rhetorical (Gustaffson 1983, March & Olsen 1983, Battistelli 2002) when politicians and public officials strive to enhance the public perception of the administrative organizations using public management reforms as a vehicle for that aim. It is not rare complete efforts of reforms going further in rhetoric than in deeds.

⁷ As stated above, PG dedicates little attention to internal organizational matters like administrative or vertical decentralization.

Lastly, any empirical verification of public management reform has to consider the incremental process of organizational change. Instead of talking about the ascension, preeminence and decline of organizational and relational models, it is more propitious to acknowledge the cumulative process of organizational/managerial values and practices.

Analytically a researcher can verify parts of PPA, NPM/EG, and PG within a single public organization. Even the forgotten pre-bureaucratic model still hovers: the inheritance of pre-bureaucratic characteristics is still present in contemporary democracies and public organizations in systems of patronage and in political designations of high-office job postings following criteria of loyalty and party alignment. Evidences of nepotism and gerontocracy, even if condemned on principle, have not yet completely disappeared from the practices in public administrations.

Furthermore, within a single organization the researcher can find different degrees of penetration of the different models. Rather than researching the adoption of homogeneous organizational models, it is more fruitful to verify continuities and discontinuities in single organizational units, hierarchical levels, or geographic zones.

Author's information

Leonardo Secchi

Professor at the Center of Applied Social Sciences at *Universidade Comunitária Regional de Chapecó* (Unochapecó). Brazil. Editor in chief of the scientific journal *Revista Gestão Organizacional*. Coordinator of the research group *Gestão Social*, Unochapecó.

Ph.D. in Political Studies – *Università degli Studi di Milano*, Italy.

M.Sc. in Administration – *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina*, Brazil.

Bachelor's degree in Administration – *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina*, Brazil.

Address: Av. Senador Attilio Fontana, 591-E, Bairro EFAPI, Chapecó – SC, CEP 89809-000, BRAZIL

Phone: + 00 55 49 3321-8054

E-mail: leonardo@unochapeco.edu.br

References

Aucoin, Peter (1990) Administrative Reform in Public Management: Paradigms, Principles, Paradoxes and Pendulums. *Governance*, 3(2): p. 115-137.

Barzelay, Michael (1992) *Breaking through bureaucracy : a new vision for managing in government*. Berkeley: University of California Press. xxi, 237 p.

Barzelay, Michael (2000) The new public management: a bibliographical essay for Latin American (and other) scholars. *International public management journal*, 3: p. 229-265.

Barzelay, Michael (2001) *The new public management : improving research and policy dialogue*. The Aaron Wildavsky forum for public policy, Berkeley, New York: University of California Press : Russell Sage Foundation. xx, 218 p.

Battistelli, Fabrizio (org.) (2002), *La cultura delle amministrazioni: fra retorica e innovazione*. Franco Angeli: Milano.

Bertalanffy, Ludwig von (1969) *General system theory; foundations, development, applications*. New York: G. Braziller. xv, 289.

Börzel, Tanja (1998) Le reti di attori pubblici e privati nella regolazione europea. *Stato e Mercato*. 54(3): p. 389-432.

Bresser-Pereira, Luiz Carlos (2004) *Democracy and public management reform: building the republican state*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press. xi, 317 p.

Brugué, Quim, Vallès, Josep Maria (2005) New-style councils, new-style councillors: from local

- government to local governance. *Governance*. 18(2): p. 197-226.
- Christensen, Tom, Lægreid, Per, Wise, Lois (2002) Transforming Administrative Policy. *Public Administration*, 80(1): p. 153-178.
- Drucker, Peter Ferdinand (1954) *The practice of management*. 1st ed. New York: Harper. 404 p.
- Drucker, Peter Ferdinand (1974) *Management: tasks, responsibilities, practices*. 1st ed. New York: Harper & Row. xvi, 839 p.
- Fayol, Henri (1916) *Administração Industrial e Geral: Previsão, Organização, Comando Coordenação e Controle*. 10 ed. 1989, São Paulo: Atlas, 1989.
- Gustafsson, Gunnel (1983) Symbolic and pseudo policies as responses to diffusion of power. *Policy sciences*, 15(3): p. 269-287.
- Hays, Steven W., Plagens Gregory K (2002) Human resource management best practices and globalization: the universality of common sense. *Public Organization Review*, 2(4): p. 327-348.
- Hood, Christopher (1995) The 'new public management' in the 1980s: variations on a theme. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 1995. 20(2/3): p. 93-109.
- Hood, Christopher, Jackson, Michael W. (1991) *Administrative argument*. Aldershot, Hants, England ; Brookfield, Vt., USA: Dartmouth Pub. Co. xii, 221 p.
- IMF (2003) *The IMF and the good governance*, Available from: <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/gov.htm>. Access date: 08/08/2006.
- Jachtenfuchs, Markus (2001) The governance approach to European integration. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 39(2): p. 245-264.
- Jones, Larry R (2004) New public management has been completely discredited, thank God! *International Public Management Journal*, 5(2): p. 148-172.
- Kettl, Donald F (2005) *The global public management revolution*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. vii, 108 p.
- Klijn, Erik-Hans, Teisman, Geert R. (2003) Institutional and Strategic Barriers to Public-Private Partnership: An Analysis of Dutch Cases. *Public Money and Management*, 23(3): p. 137-146.
- Kooiman, Jan (1993) *Modern governance : new government-society interactions*. London; Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage. 280 p.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin (1959) Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy. *American Political Science Review*, 53(1): p. 69-105.
- March, James, Olsen, Johan P. (1983) Organizing political life: what administrative reorganization tells us about government. *American Political Science Review*, 77(2): p. 281-296.
- March, Robert M. (1961), Formal organization and promotion in a pre-industrial society. *American Sociology Review*, 26(4): p. 547-556.
- McCubbins, Mathew D., Noll, Roger G., Weingast, Barry R. (1989) Structure and Process, Politics and Policy: Administrative Arrangements and the Political Control of Agencies. *Virginia Law Review*, 75(2): p. 431-448.
- McGregor, Douglas (1960) *The human side of enterprise*, ed. Anonymous. New York: McGraw-Hill. 246.
- Merton, Robert K (1949) *Social theory and social structure; toward the codification of theory and research*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press. 423 p.
- OECD. (2004) *OECD principles of corporate governance*. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/32/18/31557724.pdf>, Access date: 08/10/2006.
- Olsen, Johan (2002) The many faces of europeanization. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40(5): p. 921-952.
- Osborne, David, Gaebler, Ted (1992) *Reinventing government: how the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co. xxii, 405 p.
- Parsons, Wayne (2006) Innovation in the public sector: spare tyres and fourth plinths. *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal*, 11(2): p. 1-10.

- Peters, Tom J., Waterman, Robert H. (1982) *In search of excellence: lessons from America's best-run companies*. 1st ed. New York: Harper & Row. xxvi, 360 p.
- Pierre, Jon, Peters, B. Guy (2000) *Governance, politics, and the state*. New York: St. Martin's Press. viii, 231 p.
- Pollitt, Christopher, Bouckaert, Geert (2002a) Avaliando reformas da gestão pública: uma perspectiva internacional. *Revista do Serviço Público*, 53(3): p. 5-30.
- Pollitt, Christopher, Bouckaert, Geert (2002b) *La riforma del management pubblico*. Milano: Università Bocconi Editore.
- Radaelli, Claudio (2005) If Europeanisation is the Analytical Solution, What is the Problem? Looking for the Research Puzzles in a New Field of Inquiry, in *The Palgrave Guide to European Studies*, M. Cini and A. Bourne, Editors. Palgrave: Basingstoke.
- Regonini, Gloria (2005) Paradossi della democrazia deliberativa. *Stato e Mercato*, 73(1): p. 3-31.
- Rhodes, Roderick .A.W (1997) *Understanding governance: policy networks, governance, reflexivity, and accountability*. Public policy and management. Buckingham; Philadelphia: Open University Press. xiii, 235 p.
- Richards, David, Smith, Martin J. (2002) *Governance and public policy in the United Kingdom*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press. xviii, 312 p.
- Sabel, Charles F. (2001) *A Quiet Revolution of Democratic Governance: Towards Democratic Experimentalism*, in *Governance in the 21st century*, OECD, Editor. 2001, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: Paris. p. 121-148.
- Simon, Herbert A. (1947) *Administrative behavior: a study of decision-making processes in administrative organization*. New York,: Macmillan.
- Subirats, Joan, Quintana, Imma (2005) Hacia la segunda descentralización en España ¿son los municipios parte de la solución? los claroscuros de la descentralización local. Instituto de Políticas Públicas y Gobierno - Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona. p. 60. Mimeo.
- Taylor, Frederick Winslow (1911) *The principles of scientific management*. 1911, New York, London: Harper & Brothers. 2 p. l., [7]-77 p.
- Waldo, Dwight (1948) *The administrative state; a study of the political theory of American public administration*. New York,: Ronald Press Co. viii, 227 p.
- Weber, Max (1904) *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. 1930, London: G. Allen & Unwin. 22 p. l., vii-xi 1 (a)-(e), 2-292 p., 1930.
- Weber, Max (1922) *Economy and society : an outline of interpretive sociology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.
- Wilson, Woodrow (1887) The study of administration. *Political Science Quarterly*, 2(2): p. 197-222.

Table and graphics

Table 2: Basic features of the organizational and relational models

	<i>PPA</i>	<i>NPM and EG</i>	<i>Governance</i>
Systemic function	Homeostasis	Homeostasis	Homeostasis
Systemic relationship with the environment	Closed	Open	Open
Politics vs. Administration	Separated	Separated	Blurred
Core administrative functions	Control/Organization	Control/Planning	Control/Coordination
Managerial discretion	Low	High	n.a. ⁸
Citizen	<i>User</i>	<i>Customer</i>	<i>Partner</i>

⁸ As stated above, PG dedicates little attention to internal organizational matters like administrative or vertical decentralization.