

# The Definition of Terms “Governance” and “Crisis” as a Precondition for Understanding the Transmodern Policy Forming Activities

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## ABSTRACT

The goal of this paper is to emphasize the necessity of reaching a general agreement about the meaning of terms “governance” and “crisis” to meet the preconditions for finding a solution to the key issues arising during the policy forming activities. The politological expert-scientific discourse must therefore first resolve the issue of its theoretical-methodological identity and autonomy from other expert-scientific fields to be able to decisively participate in the political discourse with corresponding authority.

Participation in the domain of public works only recently took on the characteristics of a profession in its own right and a corresponding scientific field. Almost exclusively, individual spheres of politics, economy or society were discussed as separate entities, always losing the big picture in the process, i.e. the asymmetry being expressed by presenting particularity as a whole, imposing the private on the public. However, owing to the increasing use of the well-known Anglo-Saxon term “governance”, which, along with the term “globalization”<sup>2</sup>, walked into social science glossaries through the front door in the late twentieth century, the preconditions for defining this type of activity were met.

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<sup>2</sup> The problematization of the concept of globalization which originated in the framework of the politological branch of international relations primarily takes the form of considering the trans-border overlapping of economics and policy by establishing a common dominant model, a version of the concrete historical type of liberal capitalism accompanied by neoliberal politics. The increasing complexity of globalized world likewise raises the issue of ensurance of appropriate mechanisms of governance, raising the need to redefine the new reality of the globalized world. The term “governance” denotes basic organizational processes covering three ideal type principles of organizational structure – hierarchy, market and network. The solution to the main issue must be sought in the resolution of the question of whether this organizational combination occurring in the area of governance under the conditions of the globalized world may be understood by relying on the resources of traditional political science or by seeking to establish new theoretical-methodological approaches? Find out more in: Cerny, Philip G., “Globalization, governance and complexity”, (Prakash/Hart, eds., 1999: 188-212).

The first step is to find an appropriate Croatian term for all those actions, institutions, motivations, processes and quality of the totality of public activities contained in the term “governance”. Regardless of the different perspectives taken to approach the content of the term “governance”, we are primarily concerned with the institutional (Heywood, 2000: 93-94) and constructivist<sup>3</sup> approach, the traditional interpretation of which (having its origins in international relations) was characterized by a hierarchical institution with state on top and relations/regimes established in the international community.

Such relations moved along an operative continuum with the relations of anarchy (including competition) and hierarchy on either end, depending on the level and the concrete historical period.

Since the term “governance” (Heywood, 2000: 19-21) is originally a theoretical twin of the term “government” and today encompasses actions characteristic of all three spheres of the societal community - political, economic and social - the key distinguishing characteristic of this activity found in each of the mentioned spheres, separated for analytical purposes, needs to be determined. As opposed to government, which in traditional politology (Geddes, 2003: 27), as a topographic category, plays the main role in the realization of descriptive purposes of knowledge about politics, exhausting itself by systematization, classification and typologization, the term “governance” is more abstract and primarily covers the process-procedural aspect of legal and political action.

Understanding the policy shaping activity as organization of collective action, understood as a discussion, analytically speaking, includes two separate process-procedural aspects or two functionalities: negotiation and contracting. They consist of the logical and the communication content involved in the argumentation and proving process. Negotiation<sup>4</sup> results in a condition shared by the actors and its

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<sup>3</sup> In the ocean of various institutional approaches, we find the neo-institutional concept with four subtypes which are not exclusively politological-oriented (rational choice institutionalism; historical institutionalism; sociological institutionalism; discursive institutionalism) most interesting. Using the resources of the school of sociological institutionalism, many politologists from the international relations branch developed the so called constructivist approach, and named themselves constructivists. They will be treated as a separate group in this paper. A comprehensive review of the concept of institutionalism available in: Schmidt, Vivian “Institutionalism”, (Hay/Lister/Marsh, eds., 2006: 98-117).

<sup>4</sup> The issue in the centre of interest of the international relations branch is the issue of the possibility of establishment of world governance, as an activity resting on the negotiation and contracting practice. Starting

purpose is reaching an agreement, while contracting establishes and fixes with a legal instrument the understanding or agreement reached.

The political community/polity is a place in which governance has two levels: private and public autonomy in the form of political conflict, political strife or political competition and is greatly defined with the term “governance”<sup>5</sup>. Institutional and extra-institutional aspects are scenes at which the governance practice unfolds in the field of tension created between the public/policy area and the private/politics autonomy. The original meaning of the term political community/polity therefore does not relate to just any form of common action, but rather pertains to a special form of community based exclusively on the agreement of all members of that community - non-personal individuals, which is not reached by coercion or threat of any form of coercion.

And it is here that we find it necessary to commence with the exploration of the new meaning of the term “governance” and establish how the original term of governance or governing was modified, reshaped and changed in the new circumstances, becoming so widely accepted, although insufficiently well defined. The equation of the paradigm of world governance with the global governance approach seems to be unacceptable. It is immediately apparent that the modification of the term governing into term governance implies drawing the focus away from the traditional institutions, motivations and power of government in the form of a modern state towards the practice of public regulation in the context of new functionality shared by the trans-modern state and other actors from all three spheres of private autonomy.

The organizational field of public works, understood as a function of the societal community as a whole, gives framework, basis and content required for defining the term “governance”, legitimizing every such action as separate from other actions in the area, materially determined by the concept of privacy as a function of particularity, individual or group alike. A breakthrough towards understanding the

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from linking the concept of “governance” with the process of globalization, a key breakthrough is made in the understanding of the new condition in which the area of the political needs to be examined. More about the text: Lake, David F., “Global governance – A relational contracting approach”, (Prakash/Hart, eds. 1999, 31-53).

<sup>5</sup> Why world governance should not be equated with the practice of “global governance” is elaborated in: Keohane, Robert o./Nye, Joseph S., “Governance in globalizing world”, (Keohane, 2002: 193-218).

field of public works as a function of the community as a whole on the one hand and placing this activity in the domain of conscious, institutional and measurable action on the other, allows the establishment of an appropriate interpretational transcription of term “governance” into the Croatian term “vladavinstvo”.

The constitutive principle and key distinguishing feature of activities to which the term “vladavinstvo” pertains is the principle of equality, the greatest achievement of modernism, in creation since the sixteenth century. This principle applied as a norm to the material substrate of the belt of public works represents a gravitational centre of sorts, for the theory and practice of all activities alike. Since the category of contract or contracting has central place in the application of the principle of equality in the culture of law, the term is contractualism captures all the complexity of the principle of equality in practice.