



Global History and Contemporary Politics: Lessons from the Past for Future Governance Models

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Abstract

Global history is a key basis for comprehending political issues of today and creating models of future governance. The governance challenges of today, such as democratic backsliding, political polarization, climate change, digital disruption, public health insecurity and geopolitical realignment, demonstrate that many of the challenges of the modern world are related to historically recurring governance issues of weak institutions, legitimacy crisis, leadership failures, and low levels of public participation. Research explores the lessons for more resilient, inclusive, transparent and adaptive governance systems from around the world. In this article, the author discusses and proposes, based on historical and theoretical viewpoints, that the balance of authority and accountability, institutional continuity and reform, national sovereignty and global cooperation and technological innovation and democratic values are essential for successful governance. It also calls attention to the importance of future governance models to go beyond a narrow approach of administrative efficiency to include multi-level coordination, sustainability, ethical digital governance, evidence-based decision making and citizen engagement. Historically informed governance has been found to provide a way to ensure that the policymakers do not make the same mistakes again and can enhance public trust in times of crisis. Study can add to the theory of governance by connecting past experience with the current political discourse, and can have implications for governments, international institutions and public institutions looking for more sustainable and responsive models of governance.

Keywords: Global history; Contemporary politics; Governance models; Institutional resilience; Democratic governance

Introduction

A global history perspective is very important for an intellectual understanding of the present political issues and challenges, as few of them are stand-alone problems; they are influenced by long term institutionalization processes, political struggle, economic change and social adjustment. Throughout history, all societies have faced similar issues of authority, legitimacy, trust in society, distribution of resources, crisis management and institutional endurance. In the modern world, these challenges are more complicated by globalization, technological disruption, climate change, geopolitical competition, social inequalities and so on. The National Intelligence Council (2021) highlights that the next few decades are expected to witness a more competitive global order in which states, institutions and societies will be increasingly challenged by demographics, technology, resources and power dynamics. These predictions call for a reconsideration of past experiences as less a record of the past, and more a tool for analysis to be used in the design of a more adaptive and inclusive governance models.

Historically informed governance is also necessary in the face of the multidimensional uncertainty that modern societies have to face. The United Nations Development Programme (2022) states that uncertainty is a characteristic of the current times, impacting the human development, social cohesion, political stability and public trust in institutions. Such uncertainties are not novel and have occurred in past history numerous times with the societies experiencing pandemics, economic crises, wars, environmental stressors, and institutional breakdowns. But today's crises are of a greater scale, faster pace and are more interdependent, requiring more sophisticated governance responses. The issue is that nowadays crisis is often interpreted as a discrete technical issue and not as an event that is a result of more profound historical, institutional and political processes. This can lead to a repetition of past mistakes by governments, such as lack of responsiveness, lack of coordination, over-centralisation, citizens' exclusion and short-term decision making.

The economic recovery and financial governance following large economic shocks also emphasizes the need to learn from the institutional responses. In the context of the post-pandemic recovery, financial systems, public policies, and governance structures need to be assessed, not just on their growth recovery potential, but also on their equity, resilience, and social protection potential. In discussing the World Bank's discussion on equitable recovery, Owusu-Pepurah (2024) highlights the role of financial governance in influencing equitable and sustainable recovery outcomes. This means future governance models need to be more than just efficient administration, and include distributive justice, institutional accountability and social resilience.

The conventional governance mechanisms also have their limits, as is shown by climate change. Calvin et al. (2023) demonstrate the climate risks are already impacting ecosystems, economies, public health and human security, and that urgent, coordinated and transformative action is needed. In the past, governance systems that adapted to the changing environmental, economic and social conditions have proven successful, while systems that failed to see the pressures of change or defend the vested interests of outdated institutions have failed. But, the United Nations (2023) also contends that the current crises can be a catalyst for change if science, policies and institutional change are integrated with sustainable development goals. Hence, the study of global history can be beneficial to understand the governance practices that have led to stability, adaptation and legitimacy, and those that have led to exclusion, conflict and decline.

The importance of this study lies on the fact that it provides a linkage between the interpretation of history and the political interpretation of the present and the thinking about the future governance. Theoretically, it helps to reinforce the interconnection of global history, studies of governance and institutional analysis of politics. It also provides concrete insights for policy makers on lessons learned from historical experiences for more future-oriented, resilient and inclusive governance systems.

There are two principle objectives of the study, therefore:

1. To draw out the important 'governance lessons' from experiences in the world's history and explore their implications for today's political issues; and
2. To suggest new governance concepts for the future, which include historical learning, institutional flexibility, participation of citizens, equity and sustainability.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Historical Perspectives on Governance

2.1 Conceptualizing Governance Across Historical Eras

Governance can be conceived of as the way in which the authority, the rules, the institutions and the collective decisions are organised to govern the society. In the past, governance has shifted from a very centralised imperial system to a feudal decentralised system, to colonial governance, to a constitutional state system and to the current system of networked governance. This evolution reveals that governance is not the monopoly of Government but that it involves institutions, citizens, markets, international organisations and non-state actors which affect public authority and decision-making. According to Pierre and Peters (2021), the concept of governance has evolved from a state-driven to a broader governance of coordination, accountability and institutional capacity. Likewise, Ansell and Torfing (2022) state that the governance of the modern era needs to be analysed in terms of different governance theories as authority is now more diffused between public, private and civic governance.

2.2 Major Governance Theories

The theoretical framework for this research is the institutional theory, historical institutionalism, policy feedback theory and global governance theory. Institutional theory is concerned with the impact of rules, norms and administrative structures on political actions and political outcomes. History institutionalism is especially relevant in that it demonstrates how institutional decisions made in the past impact on future governance options. Policy feedback theory also suggests that policies affect not only the problem itself, but also the expectations for the future of the political, behavior of citizens, and institutional decisions. Political consequences of policies can be long-term by influencing interests, identities and incentives, as noted by Béland et al. (2022). In the global arena, governance theory can also be used to understand the nature of the response of international institutions, transnational networks and regulatory systems to 'cross-border challenges'. As the international order changes, global governance theory needs to take into consideration both power politics and institutional arrangements, according to Fioretos and Tallberg (2021).

Table 1 provides an overview of the key theoretical bases in this article. It illustrates how each theory can aid in the understanding of the relationship between governance experience in the past, governance problems in the present and governance models in the future.

Table 1. Major Theoretical Foundations for Linking Global History, Contemporary Politics, and Future Governance Models

Theory	Core Focus	Relevance to the Article
Institutional Theory	Rules, norms, and formal organizations	Explains how governance structures shape political outcomes
Historical Institutionalism	Path dependency and institutional continuity	Shows how past decisions influence present governance
Policy Feedback Theory	Effects of policies on politics and society	Explains how governance choices reshape future political behavior
Global Governance Theory	International institutions and transnational coordination	Helps analyze global challenges beyond the nation-state
Network Governance Theory	Collaboration among state and non-state actors	Supports future models based on coordination and participation

2.3 Historical Models of Political Organization

Historically, the political organization of a society has always been a reflection of its social, economic and technological context. All ancient empires had a central authority, military force, taxes, and a hierarchy of administration to keep large numbers of people under control. Feudal governance was a way of devising power among local rulers and landholding elites, which resulted in a fragmented political system, based on loyalty and obligation. Colonial rule brought in imposed governance frameworks which were not always inclusive for development but focussed on extraction. Contrary to that, the modern democratic systems are founded on constitutionalism, representation, citizenship and institutional accountability. These historical models demonstrate that governance systems that are

legitimate and responsive to changing conditions, survive. According to Barnett et al. (2021) today's global governance is undergoing transformation because the traditional institutions have to be able to react to new forms of interdependence, crisis and power redistribution.

2.4 Historical Cycles of Political Stability and Collapse

Governance systems rise and fall, and their resilience is closely related to their rise and fall. Stable systems tend to find ways to adapt, be held accountable, socially include and manage conflict. By contrast, failing systems tend to have strong institutions, but are captured by elites and lack legitimacy, administrative capacity and responsiveness to social and economic change. Scholte (2021) contends that it is time to transcend the narrow institutionalist account of governance and think more about the changes in authority, legitimacy and global social relations. That's significant because historical collapses are not typically triggered by a single event, they are generally a consequence of an accumulation of institutional weaknesses.

2.5 Analytical Framework

This article's analytical framework is a linkage among three dimensions: historical experience, contemporary political challenges and future governance design. There are lessons to be learned from past experience with regard to legitimacy, institutional longevity, crisis response and public authority. These lessons are being put to the test in contemporary politics, as it faces up to the democratic pressure, technological disruption, climate change, inequality and geopolitical realignment. Future governance models must, therefore, be a blend of institutional memory and innovation, flexibility, participation and cooperation with the rest of the world. This framework views history as a not passive but active source for political learning in order to establish more resilient and inclusive governance systems.



Historical governance experiences generate lessons that help interpret contemporary political challenges and guide future governance models.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Linking Historical Governance Lessons, Contemporary Political Challenges, and Future Governance Models

The logical steps taken in the study from historical governance experiences towards future oriented governance models are depicted in Figure 1. It demonstrates that history, including the experience of legitimacy, accountability, resilience, crisis management and citizen participation are a link between political development and governance reform.

3. Historical Lessons from Global Political Development

3.1 Governance Successes in World History

History of political development reveals that good governance has typically relied on institutions that can organize authority, manage resources, facilitate economic growth and possess legitimacy in the midst of change in social conditions. One of the most potent bases of enduring forms of governance was administrative efficiency, meaning that states with a capacity to tax, establish law, communicate and administer a public sector had a greater ability to maintain political control. According to the historical political economy approach, institutional design and political power are not only co-

evolving but also social adaptation, and governance success is the result of both administrative design and social adaptation (Charnysh et al., 2023). Likewise, the evolution of democracy is sometimes a gradual process of diffusion, adaptation and engagement with geography, economy and society over a long period, and not a process of sudden institutional transfer (Gerring et al., 2022).

The constitutional evolution is also an important lesson from the world's history. Political authority was limited by rules, rights, representation and accountability mechanisms which increased the stability of governance systems. The development of the welfare state is also a testament to the increasing scope of governments in the past going beyond order maintenance to the provision of social protection, economic inclusion and public welfare. Koyama and Rubin (2022) demonstrate that economic growth and institutional development have been linked historically; it is more likely to be prosperous when political institutions facilitate trust, exchange, innovation and social coordination.

3.2 Historical Governance Failures

Experience shows that governance can fail to function in the face of exclusionary, extractive, unchanging or unresponsive power. Overexpansion, administrative problems, financial issues, internal strife among elites, and a loss of legitimacy were common causes of imperial collapse. While authoritarian government can create order for the short term, history has demonstrated that too much power concentrates in one place can lead to a lack of accountability and less institutional learning. Historical Political Economy is a field that highlights the interaction of political institutions, economic structures and social conflicts over time, and often their resilience and/or their breakdown, as Jenkins and Rubin (2024) put it.

Institutional failure also is associated with failure to adapt. Systems of government that fail to account for the social, technological and economic shocks or citizens' involvement are subject to crises. Singh et al. (2024) point out that the history of technology, power, and prosperity is mixed, with technology not necessarily leading to inclusive outcomes unless institutions are able to equitably share the benefits and manage power effectively.

Table 2 provides a summary of some important historical lessons learned about governance. It demonstrates how successes and failures provide valuable lessons for today's political analysis and the design of governance.

Table 2. Historical Governance Experiences and Core Lessons for Future Governance

Historical Experience	Governance Pattern	Core Lesson for Future Governance
Administrative efficiency	Strong legal, fiscal, and bureaucratic systems	Build capable and responsive institutions
Constitutional evolution	Limits on authority and protection of rights	Strengthen accountability and rule of law
Welfare-state development	Social protection and public welfare	Link governance with equity and inclusion
Imperial collapse	Overexpansion and legitimacy crisis	Avoid rigid and extractive governance
Authoritarian governance	Concentration of power	Preserve participation and institutional checks
Economic and political crises	Instability under pressure	Develop adaptive crisis-response systems

3.3 Leadership and State Capacity

Leadership is a key component in the process of institutional capacity to governance outcomes. Good leadership enhances coordination, public confidence, administration and response to crises. Leadership, however, without institutional accountability can also result in authoritarianism, corruption and policy failure. From a historical perspective, governance is thus not simply a matter of power but of mobilizing state power within the boundaries of the constitution and institutions. Political outcomes can only be explored in the interplay of leaders, institutions, social groups and economic

3.4 Crisis Management in Historical Perspective

Governance systems have been subjected to a variety of crises: wars, economic crises and pandemics. States that have come through a major crisis tended to be flexible, coordinated, to have engaged in public communication, and to have enjoyed institutional legitimacy. Systems with elite fragmentation, military rebellions, fiscal weakness and lack of trust were more prone to breakdown, however. As Mainwaring and Simison (2022) demonstrate, economic crises and military rebellions pose serious challenges to the survival of democracy, particularly in challenging political contexts. This historical perspective is particularly important for today's governance as the crises which are faced today are increasingly interwoven in many aspects such as economic, health, technological and geopolitical.

3.5 Core Lessons from Historical Experience

Global political development lessons are: Accountability, Legitimacy, Adaptability, Citizen Participation. Accountability is a safeguard against the misuse of power; legitimacy helps to build public trust; adaptability helps institutions to adjust to change; and citizens' participation helps to increase democratic resilience. History indicates that governance structures hold when they are balanced and there is a combination of authority and inclusion, as well as continuity and reform. Hence, global history cannot only be a history of past events; it can also be a resource for learning about governance for the present and future institutional design.

4. Contemporary Political Challenges Through a Historical Lens

4.1 Democratic Governance Under Pressure

Today, democratic governance is facing growing challenges due to democratic backsliding, polarization, institutional mistrust and fading constitutional norms. Historically, these are not unprecedented challenges: in the past, democracies have been subject to a wide range of episodes of instability that involve a hostile political competition, a decline in the strength of institutions and a loss of public confidence. Carothers and Hartnett (2024) contend that democratic backsliding can be misunderstood if it's seen as a homogenous process, but it typically unfolds in a variety of patterns, depending on the political context. Likewise, Grillo et al (2024) describe how democratic backsliding can manifest in various ways, such as through the expansion of executive powers, manipulation of institutions, and a reduction in respect for democratic institutions.

Political polarization exacerbates the vulnerability to democracy because it sets disagreement in an institutional perspective. As Levitsky and Ziblatt (2024) demonstrate, such use of democratic systems can make them fragile, as the political minorities, constitutional rules, and party competition can prevent the functioning of democracy and undermine its democratic legitimacy. The historical lesson is that democracy is not solely about elections but is also about the willingness of parties to be tolerant towards each other, about the institutional constraints on them, and about their respect for common democratic rules.

4.2 Globalization and Governance Complexity

The governance of the world is growing more complex due to the growing interdependence between states, economies, societies and international institutions in the globalised world. Problems that transcend national boundaries, such as migration, financial instability, health crises, cyber threats and environmental risks, are some of the challenges that contemporary governments must address. The territorial sovereignty has been the basis of political systems in the past, and in the present situation, coordination across national borders is needed. The concept of multipolarity in the world order requires multiple layers of political, economic and institutional relationships, which is what is called complex interaction capacity by Acharya et al. (2023) to explain the cooperation. This establishes a governance landscape where sovereignty is still relevant, but is no longer enough to deal with transnational issues.

The main political issues of today and their historical background are shown in Table 3. It demonstrates that the current governance issues can be more fully understood by viewing them in the

Table 3. Contemporary Political Challenges and Their Historical Governance Relevance

Contemporary Challenge	Historical Parallel	Governance Lesson
Democratic backsliding	Decline of constitutional safeguards	Protect institutional checks and civic freedoms
Political polarization	Elite conflict and social fragmentation	Strengthen democratic norms and dialogue
Global interdependence	Earlier phases of imperial and economic integration	Build cooperative governance mechanisms
Digital power and information warfare	Historical control of communication and propaganda	Ensure transparency and public trust
Climate governance	Past resource and environmental pressures	Promote long-term collective action
Multipolarity	Shifts in historical world orders	Adapt institutions to changing power structures

4.3 Technology, Information, and Political Power

The use of technology is now a major part of politics today and shapes the capacity of states, the way they communicate with the public, surveillance, electoral behaviour and citizen participation. Digital governance has the potential to be efficient, transparent and deliver services, but also poses risks in the areas of misinformation, artificial intelligence, data control, and information warfare. Throughout history, the control of the communication system has been related to political power, whether it is imperial messengers, print media, broadcasting or digital platforms. The key distinction is that today information is circulated at a faster speed, in greater volume and by algorithms. This renders technological governance as a central political issue as opposed to an administrative issue.

4.4 Climate Change and Global Governance

Climate change is one of the most challenging governance challenges of our time, due to its long-term nature, the need for international cooperation, and the challenges of making the required trade-offs between development, equity and sustainability. Slow-moving structural pressures often turned into crises because of historical governance failures, which were manifested by a failure to act on such pressures until they had reached crisis proportions. The challenge is similar in the political sphere, with the short term electoral cycle and national interests clashing with the planetary level responsibilities. Thus, institutional foresight, scientific policy integration and cooperation between different levels (local, national and global), are necessary to achieve effective climate governance.

4.5 Emerging Geopolitical Realignments

The world is also undergoing a significant geopolitical reshuffle, with multipolarity, strategic competition and evolving world power dynamics are becoming a reality. Freedom House (2026) has noted that authoritarianism is a growing threat to democratic freedoms in the world, and Nord et al. (2026) have pointed out that democratic era is under significant pressure due to the growing trends of autocratization. Wunsch and Blanchard (2023) demonstrate that the processes of backsliding in third-wave democracies can be analysed both historically and in a comparative way, as they tend to follow certain sequences. Therefore, the main takeaway from history is that governance systems need to be flexible in order to avoid a systemic collapse when the stresses on the institutions are becoming overwhelming.

5. Toward Future Governance Models: Integrating Historical Lessons and Contemporary Needs

5.1 Characteristics of Effective Future Governance

Future governance models should be capable of addressing the uncertainty and technological, institutional and transnational crises of today's world. It is the most transparent, inclusive, accountable

and resilient governance systems that will be the most effective. To ensure public trust, transparency is essential, particularly in the use of data, digital platforms and AI by governments in public decision making. Inclusiveness ensures that governance is not only for the elite or the central government but also is responsive to the needs of citizens, communities and marginalized people. Raising institutions to be held accountable for their actions helps to prevent arbitrary power; resilience helps states and governance networks to absorb and adapt to crises. In periods of turbulence, strong governance is particularly crucial as institutions need to be able to act and adapt to uncertainty and complexity, as Ansell et al. (2024) contend.

5.2 Institutional Innovation and Governance Reform

Institutional innovation is needed since the institutional order is frequently too rigid to meet these fast evolving political, economic, technological, and environmental challenges. Governance needs to shift towards adaptive governance institutions that are able to change policies, learn from evidence and coordinate across sectors in the future. Howlett and Ramesh (2023) underline the importance of static and dynamic robustness of policy systems, where the institutions are stable and at the same time adapt to new risks. Evidence-based governance is also a priority – decisions on climate change, digital transformation, public health and economic recovery are also based on reliable data, scientific expertise and public accountability. Mazzucato (2021) also argues that mission-oriented governance has a potential to drive states to address big societal challenges by focusing public purpose, innovation and investment on long-term collective goals.

The proposed principles of future governance is shown in table 4. It maps each principle onto its policy relevance and demonstrates the capacity to take lessons from the past and apply them to governance reforms in the present.

Table 4. Principles and Policy Relevance of Future Governance Models

Future Governance Principle	Core Meaning	Policy Relevance
Transparency	Open information and visible decision-making	Builds public trust and reduces institutional suspicion
Inclusiveness	Participation of diverse citizens and groups	Strengthens legitimacy and democratic responsiveness
Accountability	Institutional checks and responsibility	Prevents misuse of authority and policy failure
Resilience	Capacity to absorb and recover from shocks	Improves crisis response and institutional continuity
Adaptability	Ability to revise rules and policies	Supports innovation under changing conditions
Digital responsibility	Ethical use of data and AI	Protects rights while improving public services

5.3 Multi-Level and Networked Governance

Governance in the future cannot rely solely on the national state as much of the issues of today are multi-level – local, national, regional, global. Coordination is needed among government, international organisations, civil society, businesses, and citizens to address coordination challenges arising from climate change, cyber security, pandemics, migration and financial instability. Multi-level governance enables the public authority to function in interconnected institutional structures, instead of a single central structure. Networked governance is also needed because complex challenges require the sharing of the knowledge, the design of a policy in a collaborative manner and the implementation of the policy in a flexible way. This is because of the historical experience that governance systems that become isolated, rigid and disassociating with society are not well functioning.

5.4 Governance for Complex Global Challenges

The need for governance models is on a global level, where the challenges are complex and can't be

addressed in a reactive way. Long-term sustainability planning is required in the context of climate change, cross-border regulatory coordination is needed in cybersecurity, and rapid institutional response, preparedness and trust are needed in public health crises. Data is critical for improving lives, but so is the need to protect rights, inclusion and public value in the governance of data, as underscored by the World Bank (2021). In a similar vein, OECD (2024) highlights the key role of the following four areas to be considered when evaluating the state of digital government: service delivery, openness, governance capacity, and user-centered public administration.

5.5 Proposed Future Governance Framework

The future governance model is based on five components – historical learning, institutional adaptability, technological integration, citizen engagement and international cooperation. Learning from the past empowers policymakers to avoid past mistakes; flexibility of institutions facilitates reform; integration of technology enhances administrative capacity; participation of citizens reinforces legitimacy; and cooperation with international bodies helps to tackle common risks. According to OECD (2025), AI is rapidly gaining traction in key government activities, which needs to be managed responsibly and under the umbrella of ethical, legal and institutional protections. Similarly, Department of Economic (2024) argues that e-government and artificial intelligence are also associated with sustainable development, stressing that digital transformation cannot only be about administrative modernization, but must also facilitate inclusive and accountable forms of governance.

5.6 Policy Implications

The policy implication of this section is, that future governance reform should be a blend of institutional memory and innovation. Governments need to increase public accountability, invest in digital capacity, have participatory mechanisms, and have adaptive policy systems for uncertain conditions. There is a need to safeguard democratic legitimacy, social equity and long-term sustainability in the future governance.

6. Discussion

The conversation reveals the extent to which issues of governance, institutional adaptation and political authority of today's politics are entangled in historical patterns of governance. Throughout the history of different societies, societies have repeatedly struggled with issues of legitimacy, administrative capacity, public trust, social conflict and coordination. There is an indication that these problems are not just a result of the lack of immediate political success, but also a result of long-term institutional development processes, as such problems persist. Here, the theory of governance is helpful, as it addresses the way in which authority is wielded in formal institutions, informal norms, networks and through public participation (Ansell & Torfing, 2022). Meanwhile, the current governance is a complex system that involves the interplay between state power and international organisations, markets, civil society and transnational actors (Pierre & Peters, 2021).

The historical record also suggests that governance systems survive if they manage to combine continuity with reform. Adaptive institutions have the capacity to maintain political order, whereas institutions that are less adaptive in the face of social, economic and/or technological change are likely to lose their legitimacy. The relevance of policy feedback theory, in particular, is that it demonstrates that policies are not simply a reflection of social demands, but also help to shape future political expectations, citizen behaviour and institutional possibilities (Béland et al., 2022). It implies that choices made in the governance processes today may have long-term consequences for democratic participation, trust in institutions and social stability. Additionally, bureaucratic autonomy is key in achieving resilience as good governance demands administrative institutions to be capable, professional, and shielded from overly intrusive politics (Bersch & Fukuyama, 2023).

The results further indicate that governance in the future should be viewed and understood within a domestic and global context. Global governance is not just an intergovernmental process of cooperation, but one in which authority is diffused, actors are multiple and overlapping, and institutions are overlapping. Barnett et al. (2021) state that global governance is being transformed by the changing conditions in the world and Fioretos and Tallberg (2021) highlight the need to

incorporate power, institutions and political contestation in global order. This is essential since current challenges like climate change, migration, regulation of the digital space, public health and security can only be solved with a holistic and transnational solution. Today, it is a pluralistic age which demands negotiating across a variety of institutions and value systems to govern (Johnstone & Lincoln, 2022).

Thus, in the twenty first century, governance innovation will need to be a balance between the learning from history and institutional change. To overcome the limitations of narrow institutionalism, governance theory needs to take into account the broader changes in legitimacy, participation and social power, according to Scholte (2021). Likewise, Barnett (2021) poses the crucial question of whether there is change in the existing global governance systems or a fundamental governance change? This separation is important for future models as it might not only be necessary to have improved institutions, but new forms of cooperation, accountability and public legitimacy as well.

The conclusion is that history must be an institutional learning and not a symbolic reference point for governments, international organizations and public institutions. Cooperation is a new concept that needs to be rethought in a polarized world, with the principles of inclusive governance, renewed public trust and shared responsibility (Conceição, 2024). The article makes its contribution in theory, in that it links historical institutional perspectives with the current debates on governance. In practice, it emphasizes the importance of resilient institutions, responsible leadership, participatory policy making, and flexible and adaptive global cooperation.

7. Conclusion

This study believes that the global history provides a good basis to understand the current politics and to develop the model for future governance. Results from the analysis indicate that governance issues of legitimacy, accountability, institutional resilience, leadership, citizen participation, crisis management and adaptation have emerged time and time again throughout history, albeit in different forms and shapes depending on the social, economic, technological and geopolitical context. The big takeaway: Effective governance mechanisms are ones that balance authority and accountability, stability and reform, and national priorities and broader collective responsibility. History shows that political systems that become rigid, exclusionary, too centralized or unable to react to new crises, have failed. These lessons are very relevant to contemporary political systems, as the need for future-oriented and historically-informed governance is present in the phenomena of democratic backsliding, polarization, climate change, digital transformation, public health crises, and geopolitical realignment. The article advances a theoretical framework by combining global history, governance theory, and the contemporary political analysis. It also provides practical support through a focus on transparent, inclusive, adaptive and resilient governance institutions. However, it is important to recognize that the study is interpretive and that the large scale of political development in the world at large may not reflect regional variations and local governance experiences. Future research should thus include comparative governance studies between regions, the study of AI-empowered governance and digital states, the study of global governance institutions' reform and longitudinal studies of institutional resilience. Comparisons of governance models across regions would also be useful for determining which historical lessons can be transferred, and which lessons need to be adapted to the region.

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