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Good governance and confidentiality: a matter of the preservation of the public sphere

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Abstract

Purpose – *The purpose of this article is to discuss the concepts confidentiality and transparency in the context of good governance.*

Design/methodology/approach – *After exploring the concepts of confidentiality, good governance and other relevant concepts, they are related to each other.*

Findings – *When it comes to good governance, transparency is overrated and confidentiality is taken for granted. For good governance, there must be a balance between the two to preserve the public sphere.*

Originality/value – *The paper contributes to the understanding of good governance and the evolution of the public sphere.*

Keywords *Good governance, Confidentiality, Transparency, Privacy, Social media, Populism, Public sphere.*

Paper type *Viewpoint*

Introduction

Intrusions into the privacy of celebrities or public figures and resulting violations of their anonymity are a well-known and widespread problem. The problem exists for a long time, may take different forms and generally evolves with changes in society. This also means that from time-to-time, the levels of protection of the rights of a person, whether public or private, need to be reevaluated (Warren and Brandeis, 1890). Among the factors of change are those caused by technological advances, which means that the problem often evolves in parallel with the development of the media. This can be seen from the rise of the "paparazzi" in combination with the innovations in the field of photography (Nordhaus, 1999). In the recent past, the problem has certainly attained a new degree of intensity due to the transformation of media in the digital age[1]. Recent examples, such as the almost instant and global publication of explicit pictures taken of Prince Harry in Las Vegas and intimate pictures of Prince William and his spouse in France testify to this claim.

Similar questions but with broader implications were raised in the context of the phone hacking scandal *involving News of the World* and other newspapers published by *News International*, a subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch's *News Corporation* (BBC News UK). This scandal involved systematic hacking into the phones of celebrities and later prompted Rupert Murdoch to apologize and to close down its subsidiary in 2011 (Preston and Peters, 2011). The scandal also let to a parliamentary inquiry under the chairmanship of Lord Justice Leveson into the culture, practices and ethics of the media (The Leveson Inquiry).

These problems, however, are not only pertinent to public figures and celebrities as to their presentation in tabloids. It is also an important aspect in the debate about the divide between the public and the private sphere in the context of good governance and, furthermore, about the role of transparency in good governance, in particular. In this regard, there, equally, exist numerous examples, such as the publication by the

government of Alaska of the email correspondence of the former state governor Sarah Palin in 2011 or else the so-called "*Vatileaks*" affair implicating the butler of the present Pope (Yardley and Rutenberg, 2011;Donadio and Pianigiani, 2012). Arguably, the most notorious example of this kind is provided by the case of *Wikileaks*, a not-for-profit media organization which, as it declares itself, pursues the goal of sharing important news and information with the public[2]. The issue of transparency gained wider notoriety when *Wikileaks* started its activities of disclosing confidential governmental documents in 2006 and reached a peak with the disclosure of US classified documents in 2010 (Wikileaks, 2012). Many view such disclosure as an enhancement of democracy while others perceive it as a threat to national security. At this point, it is clear that the modes of disclosure of information have drastically changed, as was aptly summarized as follows:

> Clearly, leaking has become easier in the age of WikiLeaks. Gutenberg opened the days of the press with limited and slow distribution. Now, there is no need to copy and carry volumes of heavy, printed material to convert it into more hard copy for slow distribution. Immediate access – and the threat of immediate harm and no means of recall – prevail. There is no bonfire for the Internet like the one that can be lit under books. There is no Internet injunction that could circle the globe with an invisible force of law (Davidson, 2011).

In other words, the scale and speed by which information has been and can be leaked in the future constitutes not only a serious challenge to transparency laws but, most importantly, a threat to the sensitive balance between the needs for transparency, on the one hand, and the justification of the preservation of confidentiality, on the other (Fenster, 2012). In this regard, it was argued that a well-regulated public sphere is an important condition for good governance to emerge (Odugbemi and Jacobson, 2008). This, however, entails the question about the contours of the public sphere and its boundaries to the many private spheres. For the public sphere to function properly, the balance between transparency, accountability, confidentiality and privacy are essential. Additionally, for the balance to be established, there must be a sufficient amount of trust for the public sphere to function properly. In view of the above, the question arises whether this excess of transparency affects good governance negatively and, ultimately, whether there can be good governance without confidentiality and privacy?

The issue has become even more relevant after Edward Snowden leaked information to the media on several mass surveillance programs of the US and Brirish government in May 2013. Government agencies monitor citizens as part of the program of national security. This means that it is not only celebrities whose privacy is at stake, but the privacy of everybody using the Internet.

Governance and good governance

The concept of governance is not synonymous with the one of government (Graham *et al.*, 2003). Yet, there exist a plethora of attempts to define "governance". It is only safe to state that etymologically "governance" derives from a Greek verb (*kubernao*) and means "to steer" (Groves, 1844). Accordingly, governance mechanisms provide steering for a country, organization or institution. Otherwise, governance may refer to decisions that define expectations, grant power and verify performance. A definition provided and used by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is that it refers to the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented) (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP). Governance determines who has power, who makes decisions, how other players make their voice heard and how account is rendered (Institute on Governance). Or else, good governance is related to the concept of checks-and-balances. Good governance refers to governing according to certain values and principles. In general, governance must cover three areas: the public domain, the market domain and the domain between the two, the non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Corporate governance refers to governance of the domain where profit

organizations function or the market. Public governance refers to the government domain, whereas private entities, such as NGOs may have their own form of governance. In summary, the concept of governance has been aptly described as a "mystery" because there is "little we actually know about how we are governed" and "so much about global society itself eludes our grasp" (Kennedy, 2008). This is largely due to the fact that governance is a concept in the making. What appears in our grasp already is that governance in the decades ahead means "to discern powerful tensions, profound contradictions, and perplexing paradoxes" (Rosenau, 1995). Those tensions between transparency and confidentiality are certainly among them.

Good governance requires and depends on a comprehensive set of values and norms or principles. According to the United Nations (UN), good governance has the following seven characteristics or values:

1. *Participation:* The degree of involvement of all stakeholders.

2. *Decency:* The degree to which the formation and stewardship of the rules is undertaken without harming or causing grievance to people.

3. *Transparency:* The degree of clarity and openness with which decisions are made.

4. *Accountability:* The extent to which political actors are responsible to society for what they say and do.

5. *Fairness:* The degree to which rules apply equally to everyone in society.

6. *Efficiency:* The extent to which limited human and financial resources are applied without waste, delay or corruption or without prejudicing future generations (United Nations, 2008).

Among these characteristics, confidentiality is not mentioned as a value, norm or principle related to good governance (Graham *et al.*, 2003). Nonetheless, good governance is often associated with the values of transparency and accountability, but the role and importance of confidentiality or privacy are rarely stressed. The argument presented here is that there must be a balance between transparency and confidentiality for good governance to flourish (Figure 1).

Transparency is a prerequisite for accountability. There must be transparent information available if citizens and regulators are to hold authorities accountable. On the other hand, everybody has the right to some privacy. Some information must remain confidential for there to be privacy, and, therefore, confidentiality is a prerequisite for privacy. Consequently, there is a potential conflict between transparency and confidentiality and between accountability and privacy.

Over the years, social sensitivity to transparency and accountability has developed, but there has not been a corresponding level of public concern about confidentiality and

Figure 1 Relationship between transparency, accountability, confidentiality and privacy

privacy. This might be a reaction to the previous lack of transparency and enchantment with the availability of new technologies. However, this imbalance may lower the quality of governance. For good governance, the balance between transparency and confidentiality should, therefore, be restored.

Public sphere and governance

The public sphere is essential to good governance. The public sphere, as defined by German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas, is an area in social life where people can get together and freely identify and discuss societal problems and through that discussion influence political action (Habermas, 1991). Some people relate the public sphere to the Greek agora (The World Bank). Others point to the forming of public opinion. The public sphere is a discursive space in which individuals and groups congregate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a common judgment. The public sphere can be seen as a theater in modern societies in which political participation is acted out through the medium of talk and an area of social life in which public opinion can be formed.

The public sphere mediates between the *private sphere* and the *sphere of public authority*. The *private sphere* includes civil society in the narrower sense and the area of commodity exchange and of social labor. In other words, it is the market. The *sphere of public authority* deals with the authority of the state, and the institutions of state authority such as the police and the ruling class. In contrast with this, the *public sphere* crosses over both these realms, and through public opinion, it can put the state in touch with the needs of society. The *public sphere* is conceptually distinct from the state; it is a space for the production and circulation of dialogs that can in principle be critical of the state. The *public sphere* is also distinct from the economy; it is not an arena of market relations but rather one of discursive relations, a stage for debating and deliberating rather than for buying and selling (Goede, 2009; Wicks, 2009). These distinctions between state apparatus, economic markets and democratic associations are essential to democratic theory. The people themselves come to see the public sphere as a regulatory institution against the authority of the state. The study of the public sphere centers on the concept of participatory democracy and how public opinion becomes political action.

> Participatory democracy can be characterized by the ability and willingness of individuals to engage with political actors in the democratic process. The participants have a sense of personal responsibility to struggle against systemic exclusion and domination and believing that one can be successful against this domination (Nylen, 2003, p. 28; Belden, 2009) (Table I).

The central tenet of this concept of the public sphere is that political action is directed by the public sphere and that the only lawful governments are those that listen to the public sphere. Democratic governance is based on the capability of citizens to engage in open-minded debate, as well as the opportunity for them to do so. However, Calhoun (2010) argues that the public sphere is, by definition, always somewhat influenced by other interests arising in the private sphere and the sphere of public authority. The public sphere is not totally free from other, external influences.

Table I Private sphere, public sphere and sphere of public authority		
Private sphere	*Public sphere*	*Sphere of public authority*
Citizens		Executive
House holds		Legislative
Firms		Judiciary
Individuals' privacy should be protected by confidentiality	Public opinion should be governed by norms of decency	Individuals should be protected against the state by transparency
Corporate governance and NGO governance		Public governance

Transparency and confidentiality

Transparency was named as a value. As such it becomes translated into a set of norms, policies, practices and procedures that allow citizens to have access to information held by centers of authority (society or organizations) and enables them to have confidence that such information can be audited by the appropriate agencies that operate on their behalf. Again a definition of transparency provided by ESCAP is as follows:

> Transparency means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. It also means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement. It also means that enough information is provided and that it is provided in easily understandable forms and media (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP).

Feedback mechanisms are necessary to fulfill the goal of transparency. Transparency has become a general requirement for democratic societies. The right to be informed and to have access to information has been an important issue in modern societies and, notably, the global information society as well as its economic counterpart, the so-called "knowledge-based economy". Some people think that transparency means all sorts of information should be available, not merely the information that relates to a specific decision or policy. Newspaper and television reporters have tried to stretch the definition of information that should be in the public domain, making the case that even personal information of those involved should be available in the public interest.

Transparency is a condition for realizing accountability. Accountability is a value that is often associated with such concepts as responsibility, liability and other terms linked with a belief in account-giving. It may even be used synonymously with the concept of responsibility. In leadership roles, accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions and policies, including administration, governance and implementation of policies within the scope of an employed position. It is assumed that occupying an official position encompasses the obligation to report, explain and be answerable for consequences resulting from one's actions.

In this context, accountability has been listed as a key requirement of good governance. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Who is accountable and to whom varies depending on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organization or institution. As a thumb rule, an organization or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP)).

In connection with transparency, confidentiality is the assurance that information about particular persons, the release of which would represent an invasion of privacy for any human being, will not be made known without the permission of the individual or individuals concerned, except as allowed by law. Confidentiality has been defined by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) as "ensuring that information is accessible only to those authorized to have access" and is one of the cornerstones of information security. Confidentiality, however, should not be confused with secrecy, as it constitutes a condition for privacy. Privacy is the right of individuals to hold information about themselves in secret, free from the knowledge of others. Privacy is, hence, the ability of an individual or group to shield themselves or information about themselves and, thereby, to reveal themselves selectively. The borders and content of what it is legitimate to regard as private differ from culture to culture and from individual to individual, but the various definitions share a number of basic common themes. A possible rule for determining an invasion of privacy of celebrities is, for instance, that the taking of a photograph in a public place is generally not considered a violation of the right to privacy and "individuals in public places are regarded as voluntarily subjecting themselves to the scrutiny of the public" (Nordhaus, 1999). On the

other hand, privacy is sometimes related to anonymity, which means the wish to remain unnoticed or unidentified in the public realm. When something is private to a *person*, it usually means there is something specific to them that is considered inherently special or personally sensitive. The degree to which private information is exposed, therefore, depends on how the public will receive this information, which may largely differ between places and over time. Nowadays, many people believe that transparency and accountability is all that matters. This dilemma can be exemplified by the disclosure of the medical records of President Hugo Chavez. In June 2010, the president made it known that he had had an operation to remove a cancer in October 2012 while he was running for a new term of office. This raised the question of whether the electorate has the right to know information from his medical file or not. At least one of his doctors expressed his opinion in the affirmative[3].

Finally, the concepts of good governance, transparency, accountability, confidentiality and privacy are all related to trust. Trust is a social construct. Trust is attributable to relationships between social actors, both individuals and groups. Society needs trust because "[W]hatever government does, a trusting environment makes it possible for government to act" (Uslaner, 2004). Citizens are continually being asked to authorize the activities of government and other organizations that operate at the edge of what is confidently known from everyday experience, at the point where new possibilities are ineffable. Without trust, every possible outcome and combination of circumstances would always have to be considered, leading to paralysis. Trust can be seen as a bet on one possible future, so that society, social organizations and individuals can derive the possible benefits. Once the bet is decided (i.e. trust is granted), the person who trusts suspends his or her disbelief and the possibility of a negative outcome from a course of action is discounted. Because it operates in this way, trust acts to reduce social complexity, allowing for actions that are, otherwise, too complex to be considered or even impossible to consider at all. Individuals and organizations that could not achieve positive results alone are able to achieve cooperation with others because they are prepared to place their trust in others. Without trust, society could hardly function. To illustrate this point, we accept payment because we trust we will be able to exchange this for food, clothing and shelter. The money has no intrinsic value unless we have the confidence that others will honor their value. This understanding helps explain the definition of money as a legal tender (Procter, 2005). As a result, modern society would be completely impossible without trust.

The public sphere under pressure

Much of the debate over the public sphere relates to the basic theoretical structure of the public sphere, including such aspects as how information is debated in the public sphere and what influence the public sphere has over society as a whole. The next quote reflects this ongoing debate.

> Suffice to say at the outset that there is no fixed and hence absolute definition of public sphere. What we have is rather broad and vague definitions of it that theorists use to reflect upon different values and reveal basic elements of democratic societal association (Koçan, 2008).

According to Habermas (1991), a public sphere began to emerge in the 18th century, through the marketplace, the growth of coffee houses, literary societies and other societies and voluntary associations. This happened at the same time as the growth of the press, as it is illustrated in Figure 2, on the evolution of the public sphere below. In their efforts to discipline the state, parliament and other agencies of representative government sought to manage the public sphere. The success of the public sphere depends on the following elements:

- universal access, or the approximation of universal access, to the public sphere;

- a degree of autonomy or freedom of coercion;

- the denunciation of hierarchy, putting everybody on the same level;

Figure 2 The evolution of the public sphere (Baekdal, 2009)
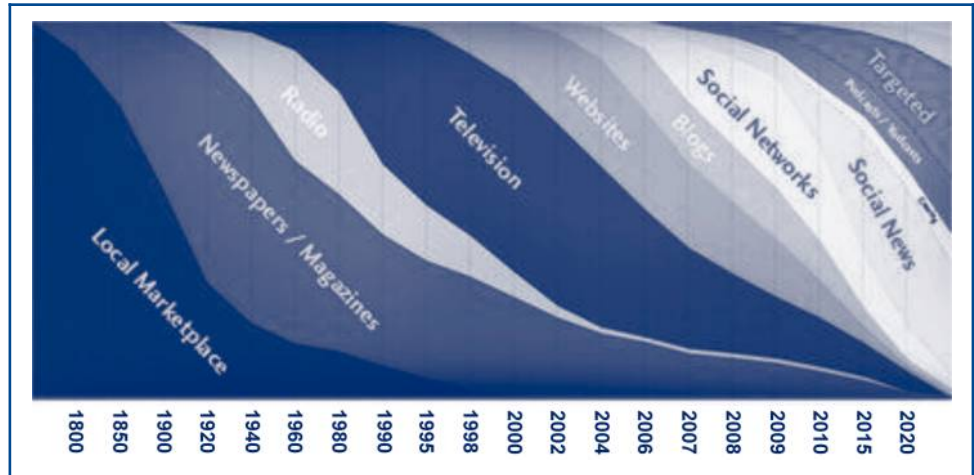
- the rule of law; and
- the quality of participation and a commitment to logic.

For Habermas, the success of the public sphere was founded on rational–critical dialog, where everyone has the ability to participate equally and where the best communication skill is the power of argument. Even though these conditions were at least partially met, the still elite played an important positive role in the public sphere. Because the public sphere depends on two important criteria, namely, freedom from coercion and commitment to logic, without which the ideal of the public sphere is never fully achieved.

In the modern era, transparency has become easier to foster and confidentiality is in jeopardy. Technology has altered the structure of the public sphere and so changed the quality of democratic governance. The mass media have dominated the public sphere for a century. Mass media made it possible for populists to communicate their simplified messages directly to the people. Often part their message is a simplified conspiracy theory about how the elite may harm the people. This is the populist interpretation of transparency and accountability, as it was summarized by Pehe as follows:

> The modern media seem to play an increasingly important role in the rise of populism, as both the media and modern populist politicians have one common denominator: they speak supposedly in the name of *vox populi*. Their falling back on the *vox populi,* however, is not most of the time limited to just reacting passively to the majority will, but often involves efforts to manipulate the public with the help of sensitive issues that resonate well with the atavistic side of human nature, such as nationalist feelings, ethnic allegiances, or fear of foreigners (Pehe, 2012).

The populists go over the heads of institutions to address the people directly, through the popular media, who are the willing partners of the populists in their over-emphasis on transparency as the key quality of the public sphere. The real challenge, however, emerged with the creation of links between commercial powers and control of the mass media. The commercial element has removed the level playing field in the public sphere. Commerce or capital has more access to media as again stated by Pehe in the following lines:

> Some sociologists and political scientists have noted that in modern societies the public space is rapidly being privatized by individual and group interests that are not rooted in active civic engagement. In fact, active citizens and a civil society as a whole are often seen as enemies of such interests. Public space is becoming increasingly depopulated. We live in an era in which the media that work in the service of private interests, however, fill the public space with virtual stories that often have only one purpose—to manipulate public opinion and transform the civil society into an unstructured mass (Pehe, 2012).

This means that politicians with access to capital have means to increase their influence in the public sphere and, thereby, impact the private sphere and enter the sphere of public authority. In this way, a pact between the populist politicians and capital is forged. Through the media, politicians in the public sphere can manipulate voters, secure their election and serve the interest of the economic elite. The case of the former Prime Minister of Italy, Silvio Berlusconi, provides a good example for this phenomenon (Shin and Agnew, 2008; Cheles, 2003).

The emergence of social media, web 2.0, in the new millennium (Baekdal, 2009) has made thing even more complex. This is also illustrated by Figure 2. Populists get instant feedback from the people and have technologies to instantly manipulate public opinion. Technology has altered the balance between transparency and confidentiality and so changed existing modes of governance. Through social media, like Facebook, Twitter or blogs, politicians can make their viewpoints known instantly. When watching politicians nowadays during meetings and sessions in parliament, it is normal for them to be online using their smart devices all the time. They read what voters think and they send out what they think. They even publish private or confidential information about opponents. On these platforms, there is often no clear distinction between the private and the public sphere. Documents, photographs and videos are made instantly and widely available and can be viewed 24 hour a day, 7 days a week and all over the globe (Chaves, 2010; Youngs, 2009; Wright, 2009; Gunter et al., 2009). Sometimes this information is leaked through intermediaries. There is now no editor or media proprietor between the politician and the public. Politicians' followers, the people, spread this information further and react based on the information that they have been given. Politicians monitor this reaction and adjust their messages based on this feedback. Social media combine with the more traditional media that are relatively less flexible. This use of the media naturally triggers a reaction from opponents. The political rivalry often becomes very dirty and not everybody is able to stand this process. Populists, with their simplistic and bold messages, feel at ease in this environment, while others feel very uncomfortable. This leads to a process of self-selection, attracting more populists to the political arena, while deterring other types of politician.

It may be asked whether or to what extent the new media have transformed everyone into public figures (Clayman, 2004). "Public figure" is a legal term applied in the context of defamation actions as well as in cases of invasion of privacy. A public figure cannot base a lawsuit on incorrect harmful statements unless there is proof that the writer or publisher acted with actual malice. The burden of proof in defamation actions is higher in the case of public figures. Public figures, especially those in higher positions, act as role models, which is to say that they have a profound influence on the behavior, lifestyles and culture of the general population. Not everybody who uses the social media has the intention to become a public figure, but when they become more politically active they may be treated as public figures.

Likewise, do governments and politicians enter the public sphere through the mass media and new media in an effort to influence the public debate in the public sphere. In doing so, they create an environment which, ultimately, reduces the public sphere time and again. It must be clearly stated that the public sphere is primarily the sphere of citizens and not the sphere of politicians. The initiative must be in the hands of the citizens. What has happened is that others have wrested the initiative from citizens and very often to the detriment of citizens as it was observed:

> Another noticeable contradiction is the ever more porous and fluid boundaries between what is considered to be private and public. The convergence of different types of communication – characterised before as one-to-one (the telephone), one-to-many (television or radio), and more recently many-to-many (peer-to-peer application or wikis) – makes privacy a contentious issue. As a result communication initially intended as private or directed at a limited social network can suddenly become extremely public (Cammaerts, 2008).

Due to these developments in the media of communication, the public sphere has become a fertile soil for populism. Populists claim to be at one with the people, and, therefore, they are opposed to the elite and the normal institutions of society. Consequently, there arises interdependence between populists and the media. Talk shows have become an important platform through which populists communicate with the people. Programs where the public can call in to express their views are particularly useful to the populists, who can use them to create a sense of consensus, even where no consensus exists. Being correct is no longer the norm, in the sense that being correct involves being corrected. Populist politicians and their followers occupy spaces in the media, where they are only likely to encounter views that are similar to their own, reinforcing their prejudices. An example of how the new media dissolve the boundaries between private and public can be seen in the use of Twitter. In 2011, an American congressman had to resign after he sent sexually suggestive photographs of himself via Twitter to various women (Pilkington, 2011). To give yet another example, India's Minister of Foreign Affairs had to resign in 2010 after tweets about his business affairs connected him to the sport of cricket (Lahiri, 2010).

The elite can play a leading role in public debate. They are independent and other conditions are fulfilled for them to engage in a dialog in the public sphere. But populists attack them and claim that they primarily look after their own self-interest. In some cases, there may be some truth in this statement, but often it is not the case. However, even when there is no truth in the assertions of the populists, members of the elite find the debate uncomfortable and withdraw from operating in the public sphere. Equally, populists stir emotions like nationalism and the exclusion of specific groups (often based on ethnicity) to rally support. They endeavor to obtain total political power (Vossen, 2010). The lack of privacy and the availability of social media play into the hands of populists because they have instant feedback from citizens on all matters. They also have information for character assassination of opponents or potential opponents and a system through which they attempt to tarnish a person's reputation. Else, they use transparency to discredit authorities and institutions. As a consequence, the lack of confidentiality and privacy and excessive of transparency encourages populism, which stands in opposition to good governance. Such excessive intrusion is detrimental to rational dialog and debate in the public sphere.

Digital optimists or utopians believe that the situation, as described above, is just a transitory phase toward a better participatory democracy in a better than ever public sphere and that all global problems – war, poverty, illiteracy and fascism – will be solved eventually (Morozov, 2010). Nonetheless, this remains to be seen. In the meantime, populists see the profound social confusion as an opportunity to snatch power from the elites and their institutions. To date, it is not certain whether or not the introduction of the media, especially social media, in the public sphere is likely to create a better public sphere. In the Middle Eastern countries social media have initiated changes in the public sphere, the Arabic Spring, with direct consequences and important changes following in the realm of politics. The long-term implications, however, are unknown. In European countries, social media seem to stimulate populism. A public sphere mediated by social media provides many opportunities to canvass support by conveying simplified messages and presenting oneself as a charismatic leader and the true representative of the *people*.

Concluding remarks

To date, there have been too few studies of confidentiality and privacy on relationship with good governance. Much attention is given to transparency and accountability. There is no clear explanation for this (Bennett, 2001). To the initial question, whether there can be good governance without confidentiality and privacy, a preliminary answer is hard to find. This is due to the fact that actors will try to withdraw from the public sphere and the sphere of public authority will try to dominate the public sphere. To preserve the public sphere, privacy should be protected and the need for transparency should be regulated. As it was argued in this article, in today's public sphere, the boundary between the public and the

private sphere has become vague and blurred. More legislation and social dialog is required to ensure privacy and fair information practices. The primary function of legislation is to set borders and norms, not primarily to prevent violations. By opening public debate, legislation makes it possible to address violations and to have a constructive dialog about them. In this way, legislation fosters self regulation.

To improve good governance, the balance between confidentiality and transparency needs to be fostered. The current situation has reduced the public sphere, as many individuals and other actors withdraw to try to protect their privacy and their integrity. Others eschew the option of entering and participating in the public sphere. By not entering or leaving the public sphere, those actors leave room for populists. A form of governance is required that ensures privacy and fair information practices, so as to create the conditions for dialog and so attract actors to the public sphere. This would create the conditions for more private citizens to contribute their ideas. The more people participate and the more ideas are brought in, more likely it is that better discussions will be developed. The rebalancing of confidentiality and transparency as well as privacy and accountability is an effort to rescue the public sphere.

Notes

1. See also Gritzalis.

2. See Wikileaks, available online [or not] at: http://wikileaks.org/

3. http://articles.cnn.com/2012-07-03/americas/world_americas_venezuela-doctor-arrested_1_military-secrets-presidential-palace-venezuelan-president-hugo-chavez?_s=PM:AMERICAS (accessed 9 July 2012).

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