

# Review of: "The Failure of Public Water Utility Privatization From Araral's Perspective: Implications for Ethiopia's Water Sector"

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Although professor Araral's article is a critical analysis of the failure of privatizing public water utilities, the reviewer is not found to be critical in his own analysis, though the descriptive analysis helps understanding the overall arguments and findings of the article. Nonetheless, it brings the question of reviewing the article, while there is no specific question found in the beginning of the review article. From my point of view, discussing or analyzing the concept of "privatization" should be seen as part of the broader concept of decentralization, which essentially involves the global process (or globalization) of liberalization as well as policy diffusion in global political economy.

What surprises me is how the original and review article confines "water" in between public and private dimension, while there is a scope for governing water from the perspective of "global commons", which brings the issue of collective action problem as well. It is good that professor Araral highlights public-private partnership in his analysis, though the reviewer gives a little focus on it. As a bottom-up approach, community-based management has been suggested particularly for urban poor communities, while there are a number of studies including the work of Newaz and Rahman (2019), which find the limitations of this approach though in a rural setting of water governance. However, one the strengths of this review article mainly lie in the ways reviewer informs the overlooked aspects (social and environmental) of public water utilities, at least in a limited effort. Bringing such as approach can widen the opportunity to understand the role of local elites including politicians in decentralized water governance, as recently studied by Newaz and Rahman (2022).

Overall, the review article has well-captured the fundamental arguments of the failure of privatization, though lacking a critical analysis. Discussion about comparing different cases should be understood how these are contextualized, especially while to offer policy solutions, given that privatization process can be varied not only across countries, also across different sectors. Therefore, any analysis of privatization should carefully deal with the existing concepts and theories, even by bringing (if necessary) the other spaces of decentralization, such as devolution and political or democratic decentralization.