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INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: A NEW TYPE OF BUREAUCRACY? LESSONS AND CHALLENGES FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

International bureaucracies are a new area for comparative public administration (PA) research. In order to advance the exciting potential emerging from an 'international perspective' on PA, this book has systematically examined particular features of international bureaucracies using different analytical concepts. These concepts—*bureaucratic autonomy, administrative styles, bureaucratic entrepreneurship, administrative expertise, bureaucratic budget-making, and multilevel administrative coordination*—are in no way exclusive to international administration contexts. On the contrary, they were originally developed in order to understand national public administration (NPAs) as

idiosyncratic politico-administrative systems. Transposing these concepts to the international level and into transnational contexts hence poses considerable challenges; yet, if successfully applied to international configurations, the concepts open up new opportunities for the study of PA as a whole.

What we conceive as a modern comparative PA agenda takes on the challenges emerging from ongoing processes of internationalization and globalization. This new agenda—also emergent in contributions on multilevel governance (Hooghe and Marks 2003), the European administrative space (Trondal 2010) and transnational administration (Stone and Ladi 2015)—remains rooted in traditional PA thinking. Efforts to systematically study international administration phenomena aim to innovate PA concepts and theories rather than rendering them obsolete. Such work is important not just for the sake of providing analytical tools and theoretical clues to contend with the growing relevance of international organizations (IOs) and their IPAs; it is also necessary to develop a truly comprehensive comparative PA agenda that accounts for new realities that transcend vertical as well as horizontal borders and functional confinements. Only by embarking on such a program will PA be able to fulfill its specific role in explaining the transformation of statehood and its consequences in our times (Knill 2001; Bauer 2015). In brief, two main questions guide this chapter: to what extent do IPAs vary from their national counterparts and how can insights gained from the analysis of IPAs through a classical PA lens serve, in turn, to innovate national PA research? The chapter will, first, discuss features and peculiarities of IPAs, arguing that—notwithstanding strong variation across national and international administrations—these features differentiate IPAs from (Western) national PAs. We emphasize that the particularities of IPAs emerge not so much from structural, organizational aspects, but from the environment in which IPAs operate and how this environment impinges on their strategies and behavior. Second, we discuss the implications of our joint research efforts regarding IPAs for the discipline of PA more broadly— a discipline that so far remains, without doubt, more attuned to national and subnational politico-administrative contexts.

DISTINCTIVE BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS OF IPAS: FIVE PROPOSITIONS

To what extent do IPAs differ from their national counterparts? Do they reveal distinctive features that support their categorization as a specific type of PA? If we start from a structural perspective, we might initially

conclude that there are more similarities than differences between national and international administrations.

First, intra-organizational structures and processes in IPAs do not appear to be too different from their national counterparts. Simply put, an administrative hierarchy is an administrative hierarchy regardless of the level at which it operates. Second, like any PA, IPAs are established and operate on the basis of legal rules that define their internal operations, their mandate and competencies, as well as their interactions with other public and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) across different levels. Third, like their national counterparts, IPAs fulfill their tasks using budgetary resources allocated to them by their political principals. And finally, both national and international bureaucracies are subject to political control and oversight by their masters in order to constrain bureaucratic autonomy. Of course, as Max Weber (1976) anticipated and principal-agent theories teach us (McCubbins et al. 1987), a certain degree of bureaucratic autonomy is inherent to the reliance on—ideal-typically—instrumental bureaucracies. In sum, there are a lot of structural similarities between national and international administrations.

This emphasis on similarity, however, does not mean that important differences between IPAs and their national counterparts are not sufficiently acknowledged. Indeed, several distinctive characteristics of IOs and their administrations have been emphasized (Nedergaard 2007; Abbott and Snidal 1998; Weiss 1982; Liese and Weinlich 2006). These characteristics include IPAs' multilateral character and the existence of multiple principals (Hawkins et al. 2006); IPAs depend on constituent member states as well as on political leaders. Further characteristics are their dependence on member states in terms of resources and their strong focus on policy formulation, combined with insufficient means to enforce their decisions directly and a heavy dependence on national administrations for policy implementation. The multiplicity of IPAs' external relations, both horizontal and vertical, results in a highly volatile external environment, which 'changes with every admission of a new Member, with every revolution, almost with every election' (Haas 1964: 385). Furthermore, IPA staff is characterized by a high degree of professional and cultural heterogeneity.

Such distinctive characteristics are important, yet these structural features alone hardly constitute an urgent challenge to our established view on PAs. National administrations can similarly vary in terms of their staff heterogeneity, their role in policy formulation or implementation, or their dependence on other organizations. Likewise, there are

national constellations in which administrative bodies might face multiple principals. In other words, from a merely structural perspective, there is little to suggest that IPA is a 'distinctive beast' in the rich and highly heterogeneous population of PAs.

Based on the findings compiled in this book, however, we argue that what distinguishes IPAs relates not so much to their internal structural dimensions, but to the context in which these specific administrations operate: namely, the international system. Unlike the environment provided by national politico-administrative systems, the international system is not as bound by formal rules and clearly structured hierarchical relationships. Instead, a substantial amount of anarchy is considered a decisive feature of international politics and the international system (Bull 1977; Hawkins et al. 2006). And as the preceding chapters have shown and as we argue below, these contextual differences have distinct effects on administrative strategies and behavior. The consequences are such that because of these contextual factures and their impact on IPAs, one can speak of a new type of bureaucracy at the international level. Thus, a systematic analysis of IPAs opens up new perspectives on PA in general, indicating potential features of administrations that have not yet been sufficiently described, let alone perceived as constituting distinct administrative bodies. More specifically, we outline below five propositions suggested by the book's chapters.

Proposition 1: IPAs Are Inherently Autonomous
The question of bureaucratic autonomy and political attempts to constrain bureaucratic drift constitutes one of the core topics of the PA literature (Page 1985; Kam 2000; Bauer and Ege 2015). A central premise of this debate, as mentioned above, is that the ideal type of a purely instrumental administration merely executing political decisions is an analytical fiction rather than a real-world phenomenon. As predicted by Weber (1976), the political power of the bureaucracy emerges as a functional necessity, given the difficulties of completely programming the administration in the context of increasingly complex and numerous state activities. Under such circumstances, political leaders become more and more dependent on the specialist knowledge provided by their administration. The autonomy of an instrumentally designed bureaucracy emerges as the inevitable consequence of an ideal-type model incompatible with a complex reality (Knill 1999). The central question, therefore, is not so much whether instrumental bureaucracies exist at all, but what degree of

bureaucratic autonomy they possess and how exactly principals exercise control. Comparative research on national administrations has produced a broad range of valuable insights in response to these questions; it has also demonstrated that mechanisms of political control as well as degrees of bureaucratic autonomy vary across countries (Knill 1999; Peters and Pierre 2004; Page 1985; Schnapp 2004). Notwithstanding this variation, there seems to be a general consensus in the literature that political principals remain the masters of the game—that is, national governments can adjust their means of political control if and when their respective bureaucracies overreach.

Turning to the international level, we would expect that exactly this scenario—continuous adjustments of political control and surveillance of IPAs through their principals—would likewise hold true in the realm of intergovernmental policy-making, in which sensibility with regard to national interests should strongly circumvent the room for discretion and autonomous activities by IPAs. Indeed, one could arguably expect to find something closer to the ideal type of an instrumental bureaucracy at the level of IOs rather than anywhere else.

Yet, paradoxically, our findings show that exactly the opposite is true. Instead of being more instrumental than their national counterparts, IPAs are more autonomous. As shown in Chap. 2, the comparatively high autonomy of IPAs can be considered a systematic feature resulting from the specific context in which IPAs operate. Bauer and Ege argue that bureaucratic autonomy at the international level is less well contained and controllable than in national contexts. Although they are organizationally less cohesive than their national counterparts, IPAs benefit from changing opportunity structures and actor relationships in ongoing global affairs. The contextual analysis reveals that IOs do not constitute the same 'political context' as national political systems are. IPAs can, for instance, exploit the complex set of interests of multiple member state representatives (Cox and Jacobsen 1973; Lyne et al. 2006). Even the assumption that individual member states are unified principals can be challenged because their diplomats are 'proximate principals' (Elsig 2011) who are frequently replaced and may have different ways of interpreting their country's position. Therefore international bureaucracies can develop specific capacities and exploit particular structures and actor constellations, eventually reshaping the balance between bureaucratic autonomy and political control at the international level. Currently, the autonomy structures of IPAs are designed with a view to what we know about keeping *national* PAs 'in check.' IPAs' potential for

bureaucratic autonomy—and it is only potentials that can be captured by the approach as developed in Chap. 2—is thus clearly greater and the risks of undue exploitation of bureaucratic autonomy are higher in international than in national situations. This does not mean that every IPA is similarly autonomous. Indeed, the empirical analysis in Chap. 2 demonstrates that IPAs vary with respect to their structural autonomy. Nevertheless, given the abovementioned factors, autonomy can be considered a systemic feature of IPAs that emerges, paradoxically, from the intergovernmental context in which they operate.

Proposition 2: IPAs Are Entrepreneurial
The concept of bureaucratic autonomy refers to the formal relationship between the administration and its political leaders. At a very basic level, it addresses the question of whether and to what extent the goals and content of political decisions are defined by the bureaucracy or its political masters. Yet, this dimension tells us nothing about the dominant behavioral routines that characterize administrative behavior and operations. These informal routines or standard operating procedures are typically discussed under the concept of administrative styles (Knill et al. 2016).

In Chap. 3, a basic distinction between entrepreneurial and servant styles of IPAs is developed that implies more or less active roles of IPAs during the stages of policy initiation, policy drafting, and policy implementation. Knill et al. show that administrative styles are determined by two central factors: internal variables related to the policy ambitiousness of a bureaucracy, and external factors related to the extent to which an IPA is subject to institutional challenges—that is, growing political oversight or potential challenges with regard to their status and operations. Based on this distinction, four scenarios are distinguished that are characterized by different administrative styles: (1) a servant style (low ambitiousness/low challenges); (2) an institutional entrepreneur style (low ambitiousness/ high challenges); (3) a policy entrepreneur style (high ambitiousness/low challenges); and (4) a policy and institutional entrepreneur style (high ambitiousness/high challenges).

The analysis reveals a range of important aspects that characterize the informal behavior of IPAs and potentially render them highly distinct from their national counterparts. First, there is a high likelihood that IPAs will be entrepreneurial (either as policy or institutional entrepreneurs or even both at the same time) rather than simply performing a servant role. In three out of four scenarios, it can be expected that IPAs

will display a strongly entrepreneurial role. Second, the analysis reveals that entrepreneurship entails highly strategic behavior on the part of IPAs. Administrative styles respond to the institutional and political opportunity structures in which IPAs operate. In certain constellations this might imply that IPAs will refrain from making full use of their formal autonomy in order to avoid potential interference with the political interests of their masters (Knill, Eckhard and Grohs 2016). But in other scenarios, administrative routine behavior may entail that IPAs with a rather weak formal position constantly seek to go beyond their mandate and push their policy and positional interests by 'flying below the radar of member states' (Abbott et al. 2015; Knill et al. 2016).

This point is driven home by the analysis of secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements in Chap. 4. Jörgens et al. revisit entrepreneurship theories and conceive these relatively small international secretariats as brokers that are able to exploit their privileged information access and their function as a hub of communication exchanges during ongoing international negotiations. Attention-seeking and brokerage are analyzed as mechanisms through which small IPAs can also successfully seek political influence—with particular focus on the early stages of the international policy-making process.

Proposition 3: For IPAs, Expertise and Information Are More Important Tools Than Rules and Formal Powers
The formulation and implementation of rules that regulate the behavior and interactions of societal actors is a central tool of government (Hood and Margetts 2007; Knill and Bauer 2016). There is no doubt that rules do much to resolve political problems and provide common goods. Rules ensure equality, uniformity, equity, order, and reliability. It is hence hardly surprising that there is a high societal demand that governments tackle political problems by making rules. As already emphasized by Max Weber's seminal account of the rise of bureaucracy as the key organizing principle for modern societies, bureaucratic machines are not only fueled by rules, but also play a vital role in their mass production (Weber 1976). The standard assumption in the PA literature is not only that rules are the most essential tool of bureaucracies, but also that the authority of the latter rests on their ability to define and enforce legal rules.

Yet, the findings in this book suggest that this assumption might require some modification when we turn to IPAs. Of course, rules are still of crucial relevance at the level of IOs. This refers in particular to the

specification of internal guidelines and procedures. However, rules seem to matter to a lesser extent when it comes to the policy-making activities of IPAs. In this regard, legally binding decisions are of minor importance, given the fact that, in many instances, the mandate and legal competencies of IOs are already more restricted than is the case for national governments. This means that the authority of IPAs, constituted through their role in developing and implementing rules, is much lower than that for their national counterparts.

The limited relevance of rules, however, does not mean that the authority of IPAs in general is lower than that of national bureaucracies. Rather, it seems that the authority of IPAs emerges from different sources. More specifically, for IPAs information and expertise are more important than rules in this regard. This becomes apparent not only through the above-mentioned role of IPAs as attention-seekers and information brokers (Chap. 4), but more generally through the analysis provided in Chap. 5, which revisits the concept of authority in order to develop a tool to comparatively study the role of IPAs. Busch and Liese focus on expert authority and how it can be empirically studied, particularly in the area of social exchange and organizational reputation. Their chapter develops the expertise concept as an important feature of IPAs and a precondition for their policy influence.

In many instances, IPAs dispose of considerable substantive and procedural expertise and information with regard to the design and implementation of public policies. This property places IPAs in a strategic position from which to spread information to their political principals and to their organizational environment, as well as to detect and use information provided by actors within their domain. The higher the extent to which an IPA disposes of information and expertise considered essential both within and beyond its organization, the greater its nodality in transnational communication networks. Typically, the policy influence emerging from nodality is based on the publication of data, information, recommendations, and advice. Influence based on nodality is further enhanced by the fact that, in many instances, IPAs form part of epistemic communities understood as transnational networks of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain (Haas 1990). Within such communities experts frequently interact and develop joint problem definitions and solutions, enabling new policy ideas to spread like viruses (Dudley and Richardson 2000; Holzinger and Knill 2005; Helgadóttir 2016).

Proposition 4: IPAs Generate Budgetary Resources

The budget constitutes a core resource of PAs that crucially affects their leeway for acquiring new personnel or tasks. Although budget allocation is regularly characterized by political conflicts of redistribution across different policy domains, national budgeting usually follows a pattern of incremental adjustments that is only rarely interrupted by punctuations (Baumgartner and Jones 1993). The typical picture is one of incremental budgetary updating, implying that, within national contexts at least, PAs rarely face budgetary shocks, but rather operate in a context of relatively stable budgetary conditions.

This view is crucially challenged, however, when we turn to the international level. As shown in Chap. 6, IPAs display a much higher vulnerability to budgetary instability and consequently develop a range of strategies to mobilize budgetary means from alternative sources in order to reduce their dependence on member state contributions. For IPAs, budgeting can be conceived of as a core organizational process that involves and concerns all actors within an administration. The struggle to safeguard needed financial resources leads—especially in times of retrenchment—to particular administrative response strategies and adjustment processes. Patz and Goetz demonstrate the complexity of principal–agent constellations in IO budgeting, underscore the importance of voluntary funds, and show how the motives of IPA administrative leaders can affect administrative reaction patterns to budget pressures. To be sure, IOs cannot determine their revenues as sovereign states (at least in principle) can. Hence, the threat of resource withdrawal is much more real for IOs and their IPAs than in national contexts. It is this dynamic and the investigation of the options available to IPA leaders, given their varying preferences, to design organizational strategies in order to safeguard IPAs budgetary powers that constitute a prime contribution of this chapter.

Proposition 5: IPAs Actively Shape Their Organizational Environment

So far, we have primarily focused on internal features characterizing the role and behavior of PAs within the politico-administrative system. Yet, it has been widely acknowledged in the PA literature that PAs interact with their environment (Hannan and Freeman 1977; Santos and Eisenhardt 2005). As a consequence, particular attention has been paid to patterns that characterize the relationship between PA and societal actors, including phenomena like agency capture and more general patterns of interaction, like pluralist or corporatist relations. Still, this literature largely

neglects the fact that administrations might play a highly active role in structuring their own environment. An important exception in this context is the phenomenon of administrative interest intermediation identified by Lehmbruch (1987). He shows that administrations might actively try to promote the establishment of societal self-organization in order to benefit from societal knowledge generation and to rely on these structures to implement public policies more effectively.

When focusing on IPAs, we find that bureaucratic attempts to strategically structure their organizational environment are much more pronounced than for their national counterparts. On the one hand, Benz et al. in Chap. 7 reveal that IPAs play a highly active role in setting-up structures of multilevel administration. They develop an analytical framework that conceptualizes the relationships between administrations across different territorial levels. They argue that multilevel coordination in administration is based on cooperation and persuasion rather than on coercive modes, and they reveal particular dynamics of inter-administrative governance, implying that information exchange constitutes inter-administrative relationships. In other words, the reality of administrative interaction between IPAs and national administrations is distinguished by the absence of coercion and hierarchical subordination; multilevel administrative coordination, therefore, is rather voluntaristic and less formalized than is the case in purely national contexts. The particular conditions of multilevel administrative exchange are particularly beneficial for international administrations. This is so because the taming effect of the shadow of hierarchy that bureaucratic actors in the national context feel and anticipate (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995; Heritier and Lehmkuhl 2008), is much less effective internationally. For example, while national administrations have to adjust their strategies and actions in response to party politics, specific national legal interpretations, or simply a limited range of acceptable options in a relatively homogenous setting, such conditions do not apply to the same extent to IPAs. Instead of party politics, IPAs cope with special interest groups or NGOs. The professional background and commitment to particular policy causes is regularly much more coherent in these rather homogeneous groups.

In sum, the contributions in this book point to a number of peculiarities that shape the behavior and strategies of IPAs. Compared to their national counterparts, IPAs act in an environment that is characterized by complex principals, greater institutional challenges and vulnerability, the non-availability of many classical administrative tools, and a less formalized setup

of multilevel coordination. Facing these conditions, IPAs seem to have a higher potential for formal autonomy, entrepreneurial behavior, reliance on information rather than rules as a central resource, active mobilization of budgetary resources, and strategic structuring of their organizational environment. Yet, it is obvious that these features are not equally developed across different IPAs. At the same time, we might observe similar features for some agencies operating at the national level—particularly with regard to the proliferation of independent regulatory agencies (Jordana and Levi-Faur 2011). However, if one were to imagine a continuum depicting the extent to which real-world administrations resemble Max Weber's ideal-typical depiction of bureaucracy as a strictly hierarchical organization, governed by the rule of law, and acting instrumentally as the servant of its political masters, mainstream Western national administrations as described by Pierre (1995) or Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) would be much closer to that ideal than IPAs. The question thus becomes what our analysis of IPAs provides in terms of new insights for PA in comparative perspective.

Conceptual and Theoretical Implications for PA

Compared to the machineries of NPAs, IPAs are a relatively smaller subset of bureaucratic organizations. But as processes of both globalization and internationalization advance, IPAs are set to become increasingly relevant. Further study of international bureaucracies—as undertaken in this book—is one obvious answer to this new challenge. Given the similarities and differences of IPAs compared to national administration analyzed above, an interesting question emerges whether the discipline of PA as such may benefit from studying IPAs too. Are there implications of our research on IPAs that might yield insights for PA as a whole? We suggest the following arguments as potentially worthwhile for such a discussion.

Self-restraining Bureaucratic Behavior Needs to be Added to the Potential Range of Administrative Strategies

Our findings point to a necessary recalibration of the assumed central 'motivation' or 'preference' of bureaucrats. Too often, the tendency is still to posit 'expansive' or 'pro-active' administrative behavior as the default expectation, based on budget and office maximization conceptualizations in the public choice tradition (Niskanen 1971; Dunleavy 1991). And yet,

as Knill et al. (2016) show, even when IPAs have formal competences and policy tools at their disposal, they may back down and restrain themselves instead of attempting to push member states toward the policy ends. IPAs walk a fine line between acting within the range of their often ambitious but vaguely formulated mandate and choosing means that might contradict member state interests. Broad policy mandates provide IPAs with the necessary leverage to design or implement policies based on means that fit the end, but they also invoke risks as IPAs struggle to anticipate at what point they might cross the red line. As Breakey and Dekker (2014) have shown for the implementation of peacekeeping mandates, bureaucrats' fear of punishment can lead to risk averse decision-making—even, at the aggregate level—to the extent that the original policy purpose threatens to fail. Most importantly, as Patz and Goetz argue in Chap. 6, budget cuts constitute a viable threat to any IPA. Administrative self-constraint is thus in the best bureaucratic self-interest as it appears to be connected with the assessment of environmental uncertainties and anticipated risks of a proactive behavior. With the exception of Edward Page (2012), we see little conceptual, let alone theoretical work in PA that accommodates and fruitfully incorporates such self-restraining behavior in the mainstream of comparative PA research. However, to the extent that modernization increases societal uncertainty as perceived by individual bureaucrats, self-constraining bureaucratic behavior might also occur more commonly in domestic contexts, and should therefore be taken more seriously conceptually and theoretically.

The Ability to Interconnect Actors and Channel Abundant Information Are New Sources of Administrative Power

Analyzing bureaucracies rests largely on the belief that these organizations have developed superior ways to handle policy-relevant information. Indeed, the classical accounts see the power of bureaucracies—in particular, the power of asymmetry with their principals—as based in their ability to store, record, and systematically utilize information and marshal the necessary expertise to assess and produce alternative policy proposals (Eisenstadt 1959; Mayntz 1978; Derlien, Böhme, and Heindl 2011; Olsen 2008). Our IPA analyses show, however, that the value of pure information as such is decreasing for PAs. Rather, it is their capacity to filter relevant and trustworthy information about appropriate policy solutions and interconnecting the right sample of relevant actors—that is,

their ability to act as a 'clearing house' that creates and manages a network (or epistemic community, cf. Haas 1990) in which appropriate policy solutions can mature and be further disseminated—that is most significant. Whereas recording and technical expertise once characterized successful bureaucracies, today, administrations distinguish themselves by their ability to connect and orchestrate a wide array of actors in a policy domain. The source of bureaucratic power has thus shifted—or at least diversified. And as Chap. 4 shows, one consequence of these changes is that bureaucracies may seek the attention of relevant players, instead of remaining in the background, only wielding their powers in a gray-eminence-style. Competition in a policy domain characterized by the presence of multiple governmental and NGOs further fuels the struggle to define the contours of policy debates. It is precisely the constellation of the international context with its many relatively equal principals, the absence of a clear hierarchy of political priorities, and many competing sources of information that may particularly support such shifts in the bases of bureaucratic powers.

Yet, such phenomena are by no means restricted to IPAs. Similar behavior might also be observed for their national counterparts, given the reported change of the role of the state toward that of a moderator among conflicting societal interests. A first account of this has been put forth by Workman (2015: 42), who argues that bureaucracies rarely hold a monopoly on policy-relevant information, not even in the national context. The more the world becomes interconnected and the easier access to information becomes, the more bureaucracies at all levels must struggle to be heard if they want to maintain their relevance for policy-makers.

A New Balance Between Bureaucratic Autonomy and Political Control Emerges

IPA analysis indicates that principal–bureaucracy relationships are more complex in the international sphere than at the domestic level. This implies that traditional controls of administrative behavior are rather ineffective. In brief, as Chaps. 2 and 6 demonstrate, IPAs appear to enjoy greater bureaucratic autonomy as their options to act have increased, while swift direct control faces collective action problems among complex and heterogeneous principles (Lyne et al. 2006). At the same time, however, we observe a vulnerability of IPAs with regard to far-reaching political interventions, which remain atypical for national administrations. Chapter 6, for example, illustrates the 'continuous discrepancy between political

demands to solve global problems, on the one hand, and insufficient budgetary supply for IOs to react to these challenges, on the other' (Patz and Goetz 2016:). IPAs struggle to maintain their financial resources and at the same time face a permanent risk of their resources being withdrawn. Furthermore, as outlined in Chap. 7, their relevant role as information 'clearing houses' notwithstanding, IPAs' limited resource base renders them critically dependent on the willingness of national counterparts to provide and share policy-relevant information. Such uncharacteristic bureaucratic risks seem to be the flip side of the coin of the extraordinary freedoms IPAs enjoy. Striking a balance between granting the right freedom for an administration to fulfill its delegated tasks, and designing the appropriate institutional controls to keep elected politicians in reasonable control is never an easy task—and, empirically, a variety of strategies have been attempted. If the internationalization of national administrations engenders similar dynamics as those that characterize international constellations—namely, a proliferation of principals, a retreat of ideological, party-political orientation, and the rapid shift of participant structures—then a greater oscillation of the balance between bureaucratic autonomy and political control also becomes likely at the national level. PA should thus consider how this impacts our standard thinking about the nexus between bureaucracy and politics.

The Resilience of IPAs and Their Adaptability to Forbidding Context Conditions Challenges Traditional Accounts of Bureaucracy

Classical PA accounts tend to describe 'le phénomène bureaucratique' (Crozier 1963) as slow, languid, inefficient, and unable to effectively respond to shortcomings even if and when they are recognized. This has to do with the hierarchical way in which bureaucracy is organized and the unwillingness of bureaucratic decision-makers to accept intervention from outside. The study of IPAs demonstrates, by contrast, that international bureaucracies may not replicate the same patterns. Although national administrative tools—such as the authority to officially demand, forbid, guarantee, or adjudicate (cf. Hood and Margetts 2007)—are frequently unavailable at the international level, IPAs have found alternative ways to turn the opportunities available to them into tools to influence policy-making in line with their mandates. For example, Chap. 6 shows that IPAs strategically respond to budget pressures by aligning organizational

structures and procedures toward improved resource mobilization. This is why, the primary budget of many IPAs is increasingly complemented by supplementary special arrangements covering individual tasks and involving only some of the member states (cf. Laurenti 2007). Furthermore, evidence outlined in Chap. 4 suggests that IPAs that lack direct influence on policy-making processes rely instead on strategies that target the multilevel nature of policy domains, for instance by linking broader transnational policy discourses to specific negotiation items. IPAs thereby purposely establish communicative links with actors that are most likely to echo their own views on the policy topics at question. This supports our earlier conclusions regarding new sources of administrative power. Moreover, it also challenges the standard depiction of bureaucracy in PA research. Given that twenty-first-century phenomena such as internationalization and new information techniques create new challenges for bureaucracies at the domestic level, we also expect such adjustment strategies to occur there. For instance, due to modern means of communication and intercontinental travel, foreign affairs ministries throughout the world have lost their monopoly on maintaining their respective state's external relations. Our findings on IPAs suggest that they will not remain idle but will struggle to find alternative ways to maintain their political relevance.

The Study of IPAs Provides Methodological Leverage for Producing General Insights

A major impediment for comparative PA to generate more general theoretical knowledge about bureaucratic behavior and the impact of administrative structures and processes is the difficulty of systematically comparing national administrative systems. The more PA explanations have to rely on the specificities of national political or administrative systems, the more difficult it becomes to reach a greater level of abstraction and generalization. We contend that the analysis of IPAs might offer some remedy, as the idiosyncrasies of national administrative systems can largely be excluded. This offers new opportunities to extend the generalizability of PA theories. This is mainly because comparing national and international administrative action requires greater abstraction and, at the same time, a more selective choice of explanatory variables that are relevant at *both* levels (cf. Alger 1963). Of course, the precise choice of variables always depends on the specific research question. But studying IPAs at the international level presents fresh opportunities to investigate the causal weight of administrative

influence on policy-making—and more possibilities to arrive at generalizable results than when investigating this question comparatively in national constellations alone. Observations made in Chaps. 2 and 4 that IPAs differ in the extent to which they can influence policy-making, depending on whether they are forum organizations involved in policy formulation or service organizations with a focus on project implementation, may serve as a starting point. By the same vein, many national standard variables such as the impact of (national) traditions, party-political interference, and the homogenizing effect of specific bureaucratic education and recruitment can be dismissed or controlled for, enabling researchers to design their analyses accordingly—and pose new questions or question apparent certainties of the classical PA canon. In this sense, IPA analysis offers a valuable chance for new insights but also a potentially productive way to overcome disciplinary blind spots and presumptions.

Conclusion

We have argued in this chapter that IPAs constitute a distinctive type of PAs. Rather than due to internal structural reasons, this is because of the distinct way in which the international context affects IPA strategies and behaviors. Acting in the context of complex principals, institutional challenges, and vulnerability, the unavailability of many classical administrative tools, and less formalized patterns of multilevel coordination, IPAs seem to have a higher potential for being formally autonomous, they are entrepreneurial, rely on information rather than rules as central power resource, actively mobilize budgetary resources, and strategically structure their organizational environment. These features set them apart from mainstream Western bureaucracy as depicted in PA literature.

The analysis of international bureaucracies bears fruitful challenges—as we have hopefully shown in the previous chapters. If the discipline of PA is concerned with the development of public policies and the behavior of those officials tasked with their execution, then it is necessary to also take into consideration such processes at the level of IOs and international public policies. With IPA, we see the contours of a new type of bureaucracy, the study of which should be of great interest to PA. In addition, IPA analysis holds the potential for PA to revise and innovate itself as a field of study. Let us not be misunderstood: our goal is not to advocate an entirely new PA in order to assess IPAs and their interlinkages with national bureaucracies. Rather, existing PA has to account for new

environments, patterns, and configurations; it has to integrate these new phenomena into its traditional corpus of concepts and approaches, a shift that demands adaptation not abdication. Therefore, we argue that IPA analysis presents both a challenge and a confirmation of the PA perspective on the current transformation of the state and its institutions. We hope that this book contains ideas and approaches scholars of comparative PA and the sociology of bureaucracy will find useful as they further theorize IPAs and the internationalization of national PAs.

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