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**International Public Administration: A
New Type of Bureaucracy? Lessons and
Challenges for Public Administration
Research**

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Abstract

This concluding chapter takes stock of what we have learned about International Public Administrations in view to identify general patterns as well as to improve our understanding of potential implications for further PA research. It brings to the fore the particular challenges that emerge when the discipline of Public Administration is venturing beyond its classical focus on national or sub-national bureaucracies. Our main argument is that international public administrations constitute a genuinely new type of bureaucracy. The structures and processes of IPAs are familiar in many important respects. However, it is the conjoint occurrence of distinct contextual factors and their effect on the behavior and strategies of international administrations that make up for their distinctness in kind. This becomes visible in a set of peculiar behavioral patterns. Our study IPAs hence entails a challenge and a confirmation of the PA perspective on the current transformation of the state and its institutions.

Introduction

International bureaucracies are a new area for comparative public administration research. In order to advance the exciting potential emerging from an 'international perspective' on public administration, this book studied systematically particular features of international bureaucracies based upon different analytical concepts. These concepts—*bureaucratic autonomy, administrative styles, bureaucratic entrepreneurship, administrative expertise, bureaucratic budget-making, and multilevel administrative coordination*—do not have exclusivity for being applied to international administration contexts. On the contrary, originally they have been developed as attempts to understand national public administrations in their 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, this analytical transposition, as we will argue below, opens up new opportunities for the academic discipline of Public Administration (PA) as a whole.

What we conceive as a modern comparative public administration agenda takes on the challenges emerging from ongoing processes of internationalization and globalization. This new agenda remains rooted in traditional PA thinking. The likely outcome of studying systematically international administration phenomena aims thus at innovating PA concepts and theories rather than rendering them obsolete. Engaging in such an endeavor is important not just for the sake of providing analytical tools and theoretical clues to come to grips with the growing relevance of international organizations (IOs) and their international public administrations (IPAs); likewise it will be helpful for integrating the new realities fueled by processes of transcending vertical as well as horizontal borders and functional confinements into a truly comprehensive comparative public administration agenda. 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 productively feedback, hence innovating national PA research? Before this background, this chapter will, in a first step, discuss features and peculiarities of IPAs, arguing that—withstanding strong variation across national and international administrations—these features render them special compared to (Western) national public administrations. We emphasize that particularities of IPAs rest to a lesser extent upon structural aspects, but primarily emerge from the environment in which IPAs are operating and how it impinges on their strategies and behavior. In a second step, we discuss the implications of our joint research efforts regarding IPAs for the discipline of Public Administration as such—that so far still remains, without doubt, rather geared towards national and subnational politico-administrative contexts.

Peculiar behavioral patterns characterizing IPAs: Five propositions

To what extent do IPAs differ from their national counterparts? Do they reveal distinctive features implying that we can even speak of a specific type of public administrations? If we start from a structural perspective, we might at first glance conclude that there are much more similarities rather than differences between national and international administrations.

First, intra-organizational structures and processes in international public administrations do not appear to be too different from their national counterparts. An administrative hierarchy is an administrative hierarchy regardless whether it runs at national or at international level—to put it most bluntly. Second, like any public administration, also IPAs are established and operating 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 across different levels. Third, like their national counterparts, IPAs fulfill their tasks on the basis of 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. A certain degree of bureaucratic autonomy is, of course, as principal-agent theories teach us (McCubbins, Noll and Weingast 1987) and already Max Weber (1976) anticipated, an almost natural by-product 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 does not mean that important differences between IPAs and their national counterparts are not sufficiently acknowledged. Indeed, several distinctive characteristics of international organizations and their administrations have been emphasized (Nedergaard 2007; Abbott and Snidal 1998; Weiss 1982). These include their multilateral character and the existence of multiple principals (Hawkins et al. 2006): IPAs depend on the constituent member states as well as on political leaders. Further characteristics are their dependence on the 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 the implementation of their policies. The multiplicity of their external relations, both horizontal and vertical, results in a high volatility in their external environment, which ‘changes with every admission of a new Member, with every revolution, almost with every election’ (Haas 1964: 385). IPA staff is characterized by a high degree of professional and cultural heterogeneity.

Without questioning the importance of these peculiarities, these structural features as such hardly constitute an urgent challenge to our established view on public administrations. Also at the national level, administrations might vary in terms of their staff heterogeneity, their role in policy formulation or implementation, or their dependence on other organizations. And there are also national constellations in which administrative bodies might face multiple principals. In other words, from a merely structural view, there seems to be not so much that render IPAs a ‘distinctive beast’ in the rich and highly heterogeneous populations of public administrations.

Yet, we argue on the basis of the findings compiled in this book, that the major peculiarities distinguishing IPAs from their national bodies are not so much related to internal-structural aspects, but to issues related to the context in which these specific administrations operate: namely the international system. Other than in national politico-administrative systems, the international system is not so much characterized by formal rules and clearly structured hierarchical relationships. Instead, quite a substantial amount of anarchy is considered a decisive feature of international politics and the international system (Bull 1977; Hawkins et al. 2006). These contextual differences, as this book’s chapters have shown, have distinct effects on administrative strategies and behavior. The consequences

are such that one can speak of a new type of bureaucracy that emerges at the international level. Thus, a systematic analysis of IPAs opens up new perspectives on PA in general, indicating potential features of administrations that so far have not been sufficiently described and not even perceived of as administrative bodies. More specifically, the evidence presented in the previous chapters suggests the following five propositions.

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 finding of this debate is that—as mentioned already above—the ideal type of an administration constituting a mere instrument to execute political decisions is an analytical fiction rather than a real-world phenomenon. As already 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 is therefore not so much on whether something like instrumental bureaucracies exists at all, but on the degree of bureaucratic autonomy and the means of political control. Comparative research on national administrations has produced a broad range of valuable insights in response to these questions; and it 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). Regardless of this variation, however, there seems to be a main consensus in the literature that political principals remain the masters of the game; i.e., national governments are able to adjust their means of political control if they feel that their bureaucracies overstretch their competencies.

If we turn to the international level, we should expect that exactly this scenario—continuous adjustments of political control and constant surveillance of IPAs through their principals—should be the dominant feature 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. In short, if we should ever expect to find something that comes close to an instrumental bureaucracy, we should find it in IOs rather than anywhere else.

Yet, paradoxically, our findings show that exactly the opposite is the case. Instead of being more instrumental than their national counterparts, IPAs are more autonomous. As shown in chapter 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 are not the same ‘political context’ than national political systems are. IPAs can, for instance, exploit the complex set of interests of member state representatives (Cox 1973 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. Autonomy structures of IPAs remain designed with view to what we know about how to keep *national* public administration 'in check'. The potential for bureaucratic autonomy—and it is only potentials that can be captured by the approach as developed in chapter 2—is thus clearly greater and thus the risks of undue exploitation of bureaucratic autonomy is higher in international than in national situations. This does not mean that every IPA is similarly autonomous. The empirical analysis in chapter 2 demonstrates that IPAs differ indeed with respect to their structural autonomy. Nevertheless, as a result of the above-mentioned factors, autonomy can be considered as systemic feature of IPAs. This autonomy emerges—paradoxically—as a feature of the intergovernmental context in which they are located.

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 if 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 chapter 3, a basic distinction between entrepreneurial and servant styles of IPAs has been developed; implying 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. On the one hand, internal variables matter that are related to the policy ambitiousness of a bureaucracy. On the other hand, external factors are of importance. The latter refer to the extent to which an IPA is subject to institutional challenges; i.e. to 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 styles (low ambitiousness / high challenges); (2) an institutional entrepreneur style (low ambitiousness / low challenges); (3) a policy entrepreneur style (high ambitiousness / high challenges); and (4) a policy and institutional entrepreneur styles (high ambitiousness / low challenges).

The analysis reveals a range of important aspects that characterize informal behavior of IPAs and that potentially render them highly distinct from their national counterparts. First, the likelihood that IPAs are entrepreneurial (either as policy or institutional entrepreneur or even both at the same time) is much higher than a mere servant role. In three out of four scenarios, it can be expected that IPAs display a strongly entrepreneurial role. Second, the analysis reveals that entrepreneurship entails a highly strategic behavior of IPAs. Administrative styles carefully respond to the institutional and political opportunity

structures in which IPAs operate. In certain constellations this might imply that IPAs refrain from making full use of their formal autonomy in order to avoid potential interference with political interests of their masters (Knill, Eckhard and Grohs 2016). At the same time, in other scenarios administrative routine behavior may entail that IPAs with a rather weak formal position constantly try to go beyond their mandate; trying to 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 chapter 4. Jörgens et al. re-visit 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 also small IPAs can 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 help to provide common goods. They 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 a consequence, rules are omnipresent. 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 the mass production of rules (Weber 1976). As a consequence, the standard assumption in the PA literature is not only that rules are the most essential tool of bureaucracy, but also that their authority rests on their ability to define and enforce legal rules.

Yet the findings in this book suggest that this assumption might require some modifications when we turn to IPAs. Of course, rules are of crucial relevance also at the level of IOs. This refers in particular to the specification of internal guidelines and procedures. However, rules seem to matter to a much 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 much more restricted as it is the case for national governments. This means that the authority of IPAs, as it emerges from their role in developing and implementing rules, is much lower than for their national counterparts.

The limited relevance of rules, however, does not mean that in general the authority of IPAs 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 by the above-mentioned role of IPAs as attention seekers and information brokers (chapter 4), but more generally by the analysis in chapter 5, which re-visits the concept of authority in view to developing a tool to study comparatively the role of IPAs. In this study, Busch and

Liese focus on expert authority and how it can be empirically studied, in particular in the area of social exchange and organizational reputation. In their project they develop the expertise concept as an important feature of IPAs and precondition for IPAs to wield 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 that can be considered as essential both within and beyond its organization, the greater their 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 1992). Within such communities in which experts frequently interact and develop joint problem definitions and solutions, new policy ideas can spread like viruses across policy communities (Dudley and Richardson 2000; Holzinger and Knill 2005; Helgadóttir 2016).

Proposition 4: IPAs generate budgetary resources

The budget constitutes a core resource of public administrations that crucially affects their leeway for acquiring new personnel or tasks. Although budget allocation is regularly characterized by political conflicts of re-distribution 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 hence one of incremental budgetary updating, implying that in the national context, public administration rarely faces budgetary shocks, but rather operates in a context of relatively stable budgetary conditions.

Yet this view is crucially challenged when we turn to the international level. As shown in chapter 6, IPAs display a much higher vulnerability to budgetary instability and—as a result of this—develop a range of strategies to mobilize budgetary means from alternative sources in order to reduce their dependence from member state contributions. For IPAs, budgeting can be conceived of as a core organizational process that involves and concerns actually all actors within an administration. The struggle over safeguarding the needed financial resources leads—especially in times of retrenchment pressures—to particular administrative response strategies and adjustment processes. Patz and Goetz show how complex principal-agent constellations in IO budgeting are, and underscore the importance of voluntary funds and the motives of IPA administrative leaders affect the administrative reaction patterns to budget pressures. Sure, IOs cannot themselves determine their revenues as sovereign states in principle can. Hence, the threat of resource withdrawal is much more realistic 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 public administrations within the politico-administrative system. Yet, it has been widely acknowledged in the PA literature that public administrations 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 public administration and societal actors, including the discussion of phenomena like agency capture, and more general patterns of interaction, like pluralist or corporatist relations. Yet this literature largely neglected the fact that administrations might play a highly active role in structuring their environment. An important exception in this context, however, is the phenomenon of administrative interest intermediation identified by Lehmbrecht (1987). He shows that administrations might actively try to promote the establishment of societal self-organization in order to actively benefit from societal knowledge generation and to rely on these structures for implementing 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 chapter 7 reveal that IPAs play a highly active role in setting-up structures of multilevel administration. They develop an analytical framework for conceptualizing the relationships between administrations across different territorial levels. They argue that multilevel co-ordination in administration is based on co-operation and persuasion rather than on coercive modes and reveals 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 coined 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 is much less effective internationally. For example, while national administrations have to adjust their strategies and actions on party politics or specific national legal interpretations or simply on a certain range of acceptable options in a relatively homogenous setting does not apply to the same extent to IPAs. Instead of party politics, IPAs rather cope with special interest groups or non-governmental organizations. 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 unavailability of many classical administrative tools and a less formalized setup of multilevel coordination. Facing these conditions, IPAs seem to have a higher potential for being formally autonomous, for being entrepreneurial, for relying on information rather than rules as central resource, for actively mobilizing budgetary

resources, and for actively trying to strategically structure 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—in particular with view of the proliferation of independent regulatory agencies (Jordana and Levi-Faur 2011). However, if there was something like a continuum in the extent to which real world administrations resemble Max Weber’s ideal typical depiction of bureaucracy as strictly hierarchical organizations, governed by the rule of law and acting instrumentally as the servant of their 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 provides our analysis of IPAs in terms of new insights for PA in comparative perspective.

Conceptual and theoretical implications for PA

Compared to the machineries of national public administrations IPAs are a relatively small subset of bureaucratic organizations. With globalization and internationalization advancing, IPAs are however set to become increasingly relevant. The study of international bureaucracies—as undertaken in this book—seems therefore an obvious answer to this new challenge. Given the similarities and differences of IPAs compared to national administration analyzed above, the interesting question emerges whether the discipline of Public Administration as such may benefit from studying IPAs, too. Are there implications of our research on IPAs that might have repercussions for PA as a whole? We suggest considering the following backslashes as potentially worthwhile for such a discussion.

1. Self-restraining bureaucratic behavior needs to be added to the potential range of administrative strategies

Our findings point to a necessary recalibration of what we conceive of as central ‘motivation’ or ‘preference’ of bureaucrats. The dominant position is still too strongly rooted in assuming ‘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). In particular, as Knill et al. (2016) showed, IPAs even if they have formal competences and policy tools at their disposal may back down and restrain themselves instead of pushing member states towards certain policy ends—as their mission would make us expect they would. 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 it also involves risks as IPAs struggle to anticipate at what point they might cross the red line. As Breakey and Dekker (2014) showed for the implementation of peacekeeping mandates, bureaucrats in such constellations fear punishment which leads to risk averse decision-making—at aggregate level to the extent even that the original policy purpose threatens to fail. Most importantly, as Patz and Goetz argued in chapter 6, budget cuts constitute a viable threat to any IPA. The behavior of administrative self-

constraint thus is in the best bureaucratic self-interest as it appears to be connected with the assessment of environmental uncertainties and anticipated risks of a pro-active behavior. With the exception of Edward Page (2012), we do see little conceptual, let alone theoretical work in PA that would allow for accommodating and fruitfully incorporating 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.

2. *The ability to inter-connect actors and to 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 asymmetry with their principals—based in storing, recording and systematically bringing to bear information, and have available 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 that pure information is of ever less value for public administrations. Rather it is their capacity to filter relevant and trustworthy information about appropriate policy solutions and in inter-connecting the right sample of relevant actors, i.e. to act as a ‘clearing house’ that creates and manages a network (or epistemic community, cf. Haas 1992) in which the dominating interpretation of the appropriate policy solution can mature and be further disseminated. It is thus not anymore recording and technical expertise that characterizes successful bureaucracies, it is their ability to interconnecting and orchestrating a wide array of actors in a policy domain. The sources of bureaucratic powers thus shift—or at least diversify. And one consequence—as chapter 4 shows—of these changes is that bureaucracies may seek the attention of the relevant players, instead of staying in the back ‘not to be seen’ and wield their powers in a grey-eminence-style. Competition in a policy domain, i.e. the presence of multiple governmental and non-governmental organizations, 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, a lacking 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, but might also be observed for their national counterparts, given the reported change of the role of the state towards a moderator among conflicting societal interests. A first account on this has been put forth by Workman (2015: 42), who argues that not even in the national context bureaucracies hold a monopoly on policy-relevant information. The more the world gets 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.

3. *A new balance between bureaucratic autonomy and political control emerges*

IPA analysis indicates that in the international sphere principal-bureaucracy relationships are more complex than at the domestic level. This implies that traditional controls of administrative behavior are rather ineffective. In brief, as chapters 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—untypical for national administrations. Chapter 6, for example, illustrated 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’. IPAs hence struggle to maintain their financial resource and at the same time face a permanent risk of their resources being withdrawn. Furthermore, as outlined in chapter 7, their relevant roles as an information ‘clearing house’ nonetheless, 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 the balance between granting the right freedom for an administration to fulfill the delegated tasks, and designing the appropriate institutional controls to keep elected politicians in reasonable control is never an easy task—and empirically one finds certainly more than one proper balance. If the internationalization of national administrations is coined by aspects that characterize also the international constellation, i.e., a proliferation of principals, a retreat of ideological, party-political orientation, quickly changing participant structures, then a greater oscillation of the balance between bureaucratic autonomy and political control becomes likely also for the national level. PA should thus consider the implications that may derive from this for standard conceptualization of the nexus between bureaucracy and politics.

4. *The resilience of IPAs and their adaptiveness to forbidding context conditions challenges traditional accounts of bureaucracy*

Classical PA accounts tend to describe ‘le phénomène bureaucratique’ (Crozier 1963) as slow, languid, inefficient und unable to effectively respond to shortcomings even if 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 simply replicate these patterns attributed to their national counterparts. 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 for influencing policy-making in line with their mandates. For example, chapter 6 found that IPAs strategically respond to budget pressures by aligning organizational structures and procedures towards improved resource mobilization. This is why the main 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 chapter 4 suggests that IPAs which lack direct influence on policy-making processes instead rely on strategies that target the multi-

level 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 on new sources of administrative power. More than that, it also challenges the way bureaucracy is often depicted in PA research. Given that 21st century phenomena such as internationalization and new information techniques create new challenges for bureaucracies at the domestic levels, 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 the state's external relations. Our findings on IPAs suggest that they will not remain idle but struggle to find alternative ways to maintain their political relevance.

5. *The study of IPAs provides methodological leverage for producing general insights*

A major impediment for comparative public administration to generate more general theoretical knowledge about bureaucratic behavior and the impact of administrative structures and processes constitute the difficulty to systematically compare national administrative systems. To the extent that PA explanations have to rely on 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 to produce major impact on the international administrative constellations and actions. This offers new opportunities to reach out for greater 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. Of course, the precise choice of variables always depends on what exactly constitutes the research question. For example, it opens the chance to put back on the agenda attempts to investigate causal weight of administrative influence on policy-making—with some more hope to come to generalizable results than in investigating this question comparatively in national constellations. Observations made in chapter 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, homogenizing effect of specific bureaucratic education and recruitment can be dismissed or controlled for, researcher can design their analyzes 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 incrustations.

Conclusion

The analysis of international bureaucracies bears fruitful challenges—as we have hopefully shown in the previous chapters. With IPA, we see the contours of a new type of

bureaucracy emerging, the study of which is per se of great interest to PA. In addition, IPA analysis holds the potential for reaching out to new insights for PA as a field of study. Not to be misunderstood. Not a new PA is required for covering the analysis of IPAs and IPA interlinkages with national bureaucracies. Rather PA has to account for new environments, patterns and configurations, i.e. it has to integrate these new phenomena in its traditional corpus of concepts and approaches, and this will require adaptation not abdication. IPA analysis holds in our eyes thus 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 public administration and the sociology of bureaucracy will find useful for further engaging in theorizing IPAs and the internationalization of national public administrations.

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