

Volume 83 Number 3 2005

Public Administration

an international quarterly

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0033-3298 (200509) 83:3;1-T

ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE IN GERMANY

JÖRG BOGUMIL

The theoretical and empirical analysis of administrative activities has been an important area of research since the establishment of political science as an academic discipline in Germany at the end of the 1960s. But is administrative science still a significant part of political science in Germany today? I argue here that in Germany a political science oriented administrative science has developed from a science focused on public administration, that is, on organizational questions, to one focused on public policies and thus on questions concerning the conditions and consequences of political problem solving and control (*Steuerung*). The question of the internal organization of government is increasingly regarded as an irrelevant one; in addition, the institutional promotion and funding of political science administration research has dramatically decreased since the 1970s. Today's new challenges (economization and internationalization) for both government and public administration seem to exceed the capability of political science administrative research. These challenges open up new opportunities, however, since, in the search for solutions beyond the dichotomy of market/managerialism on the one hand and traditional bureaucracy and state government on the other, political science in particular regains more importance. As will be shown, there are now tendencies which indicate that political science administrative research might encounter a stronger political demand. If the consequent research is able to find a new mixture of theory and practice, this in turn could help revitalize political science administrative research in Germany.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Public administration was and is still affiliated in multiple ways to economics and politics. It was and is still part of the political process on which it exercises influence and by which it is influenced in turn. The theoretical and empirical analysis of administrative activities has therefore been an important area of research since the establishment of political science as an academic discipline in Germany at the end of the 1960s. But coming up to date, is administrative science today a significant part of political science or is political science an important component of administrative science or administrative sciences?

In approaching an answer to this question, I am going to employ three steps to develop my argument. The starting point is the subject of public administration and its scientific appropriation (cf. page 000). Here I will demonstrate that administrative science in Germany is not a discipline in its

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own right but a part of different academic disciplines which themselves have a more or less interdisciplinary orientation. The education of senior civil servants is still dominated by law departments. In the second step, I will turn towards administrative science as a sub-discipline of political science and roughly trace the development of political science-based administration research since the 1970s (cf. page 000). My central argument is that the political science-oriented administrative science has developed from a science focused on *public administration*, that is, on organizational questions, to one focused on *public policies* and thus on questions concerning the conditions and consequences of political problem solving and control (*Steuerung*). In the 1990s the question of the internal organization of government was increasingly regarded as irrelevant and the institutional promotion and funding of a political science based-administration research (in the sense of public administration) has also dramatically decreased since the 1970s. That the discussion about the ambiguities, problems and successes of a managerially driven administrative reform and the search for solutions beyond the dichotomy of on the one hand market and managerialism and on the other hand traditional bureaucracy and state government, will not only be a challenge but also a chance to re-vitalize political science-based administration research in Germany, is the central issue of the third step of my argument (cf. page 000) where I will investigate the prospects for political science-based administration research.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES IN GERMANY

The disciplines of the administrative sciences

'Administration' (and what is meant here is especially public administration) is without a doubt a multifarious phenomenon. The following aspects can be taken into consideration:

- the tasks and performance of public administrations;
- the procedural rules and actual procedures;
- its formal and informal structures;
- its internal and external relations; as well as
- its personnel and how they are recruited, their career models, their abilities, their attitudes, and their motivations and frustrations.

Furthermore, administration consists of many different parts. What is being referred to – whether administrations at the EU, *Länder* (federal) or local level, or public institutions such as the 'Bundesagentur für Arbeit' (Federal Institute for Employment), the 'Deutsche Bundesbank' (the German Federal Bank), or Social Security – makes a difference. A point made by Ernst Forsthoff might be in order here; he said that administration cannot be clearly defined, but can only be described (Forsthoff 1973, p. 1).

In view of this diversity, it is not surprising that many disciplines are concerned with 'administration'. The most important among these are: law,

economics, business administration, political science, sociology, psychology, history and the philosophy of law. Since administrative science is pursued by many disciplines, the term is often used in the plural, for example, in the name of the Deutsche Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften (The German University of Administrative Sciences) in Speyer.

In Germany overall, the disciplinary approach to the topic of 'public administration' is dominant. Attempts to establish administrative science as an independent discipline have not been successful (König 1990, 305ff.; Jann 1998a). Instead, what has happened is that the single specialist disciplines have opened themselves up to an interdisciplinary approach. Administrative law is complemented by administration doctrine, where the methodology is not dogmatic and where it is recognized that the analysis of public administration requires an interdisciplinary view (see, for example, Thieme 1984). In business administration, traditional research on public enterprises is complemented by questions concerning management and leadership, organization and personnel, decisions and control. This in turn allows an opening for sociological and psychological perspectives (Reichard 1977). In terms of sociology textbooks, we have that of Pankoke and Nokielski (1977) and *The Sociology of Public Administration*, published by Renate Mayntz in 1978, showing many inter-disciplinary links, especially to the field of political science. In 2005 the first textbook devoted administrative science will be published (see Bogumil and Jann 2005).

Taking an overview, table 1 shows the approaches in administrative sciences that can be distinguished. They are categorized according to the dominant questions of legality, efficiency, efficacy and legitimacy of public administration (Bogumil and Jann 2005, p. 39).

The teaching of the administrative sciences

In Germany, the teaching of administrative science at university level usually involves a field of specialization – either in law, business administration,

TABLE 1 *Dimensions of relevant questions in administrative sciences*

	<i>Ex-ante normative</i>	<i>Ex-post descriptive</i>
Legality	Administrative law Public law	Administrative law Research in legal facts (<i>Rechtstatsachenforschung</i>) (<i>Administrative courts</i>)
Efficiency	Public business administration New public management (<i>Management consulting</i>)	Controlling Monitoring (<i>Courts of account</i>)
Efficacy	Economics Finance (<i>Political consulting</i>)	Public policy Evaluation research
Legitimacy	Constitutional law Political science Political theory	Political science

sociology or political science. However, for decades, law departments have had a virtual monopoly in the education of senior civil servants (*höherer Dienst*) working for territorial authorities. In addition, a great part of the administrative training programmes for civil servants takes place beyond the walls of universities, in colleges within public administration, in management academies, or in institutions within public administration which offer their own training. Since 1976, a stipulation to enter the higher civil service (*gehobener Dienst*) in the territorial authorities has been a college degree. The higher civil service is superior both in terms of the numbers employed in the senior civil service as well as occupying, especially in local administrations, important positions in middle management.

Explicit courses of study in public administration at university level in Germany are found only in Konstanz (since 1969; see also Esser *et al.* 1977) and (since 1995) in Potsdam, awarding degrees in 'administrative science'. In Konstanz, the Department of Politics and Administrative Science has 12 chairs; in Potsdam it has eight. Both degree programmes cover nine semesters and aim to provide a general education in order to enable graduates to transfer skills and work in many different professions. Based on a close interlacing of political and administrative science, an interdisciplinary programme is provided which includes sociology, law, economics and business administration. A practical orientation is given to both degree programmes by means of an obligatory 7–8 month internship as well as by a problem-centred specialization during the final semesters. In 1975, 173 students were enrolled in administrative science in Konstanz; at the beginning of the 1990s, there were about 2100 students; and in 2004, about 560. In Potsdam there are currently 356 students enrolled in administrative science. During the last 35 years (1969–2004), 3509 students have graduated from the administrative science department in Konstanz. The course of study aimed at a diploma as a final degree ended in 2003 and was replaced by a new Bachelor of Arts course in 'administrative science' as well as a Master of Arts course in 'public policy and management' with specializations in 'public policy and governance', 'management and resolution of conflicts', 'administrative reform and organizational change' and 'European integration and international organization'. Each year there is provision for 170 BA students and provision for 60 MA students is being planned.

In addition, the German University of Administrative Sciences in Speyer is an example of a special educational institution – its one-year post-graduate programme in administrative sciences was established in 1969. The University at Speyer has 17 chairs, 5 for law, 3 for economics and 5 for administrative science; the administrative science chairs are, however, somewhat law oriented. Only one chair respectively can be explicitly attributed to political science and to sociology. The university profits from the fact that graduates in law, economics and the social sciences often consider a further degree as useful for preparing for the demands they will later face working in public administration or as economists. As of 2004,

a total of 1184 students have completed the postgraduate programme begun in 1969.

Apart from the Departments of Administrative Science in Konstanz and Potsdam, the Universities of Bamberg, Berlin, Darmstadt, Duisburg, Hagen, Hamburg, Münster, München and Oldenburg each have one chair for administrative science in Departments of Political or Social Science. Some of them have also established courses of study which include administrative science: for example, the Master of Arts in 'Governance' (*Politische Steuerung und Koordination*) at the University of Hagen. Looking at the institutionalization of social science administrative research at universities as whole, then, some chair do exist, but there is by no means a critical mass.

ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE AS A SUB-DISCIPLINE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

The primacy of the essentially legalistic focus on public administration that emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century has remained unchanged through the eras of the German Empire, of the Weimar Republic, of National Socialism, and even during the establishment of the German Federal Republic. It was only as late as the 1960s that an intensified social scientific interest in public administration gradually developed. From a sociological perspective I mention the contribution here of Renate Mayntz (1978, 1995) and, especially, Niklas Luhmann (1966, 1967). The re-orientation in political science – after focusing on the establishment of a *Rechtsstaat* and on laying the foundations of a modern western democracy in reaction to the Nazi dictatorship in the first years after World War II – was impelled by changes in the political development of the Federal Republic at the end of the 1960s. These included a change of government, organizational reforms in the federal ministries, the introduction of integrated planning and decision-making systems, and territorial and functional reforms – as well as by the response to discussions in the USA on administrative science.

Since the beginning of the 1970s, the discussion on administrative science within political science has concentrated on questions of the problem-solving abilities and the political role of the administration. Fritz Scharpf especially developed the programmatic conception of administrative science as part of political science (Scharpf 1973; see also Narr and Naschold 1971). This assertion was directed less against the other administrative sciences – for example, to claim a part of their field of research – but, rather, it was intended to provoke political science itself. Up to that point, political science could hardly be accused of making the claim, let alone putting it into practice. Scharpf himself, in contrast, took the stance that the quest for political-administrative structures and processes that were adequate to solve the problems experienced under modern conditions constituted the comprehensive framework for all administrative sciences and the central research topic of a policy-oriented political science.

Starting from the fact that policy-making – as the solving of societal problems and the active shaping of societal structures – is becoming ever more difficult, questions that relate to the possibilities of political control deserve increased interest. It is here that the central question of policy analysis is being developed, namely how societal problems are being dealt with, solved, and – as would be emphasized today – often enough those that themselves are caused by politics and administration. According to Scharpf, political problem-solving processes are always information-processing operations as well as interaction processes among different actors with different interests and powers. If, to date, political science has investigated mainly the logic of these processes – that is, conflicts and power processes – now, in addition, the selectivity of information-processing operations need to be taken into account (Ronge and Schmiege 1973). Emphasis is being put on the conditions of selective perception and the solving of problems at the individual level as well as at the level of organizational structure. This view is based on the adoption of March and Simon's behaviourist decision-making theory (cf. Bogumil and Schmid 2001, p. 45).

In the future, the administrative science-oriented discussion within political science will be focused especially on the administrative contribution to policy-making. The politico-administrative system, then, becomes the object of investigation of administrative science. This way, even semantically, the normative separation of the political and administrative spheres is abandoned and instead their interweaving is largely assumed (see Grauhan 1969; Offe 1972; Jann 1998a, p. 52; Bogumil 2001, 117ff.). This constitutes a break not only with the American tradition of public administration, but even with the idealistic notions of the traditional doctrine of the separation of powers in political science. The administration is always involved in policy-making. For reasons of information processing alone, politicians depend, as part of the political process, on the administrations' collecting information, identifying problems, developing alternative actions and initiating decisions.

Empirical research has over the years provided important insights, for example, on the predominance of the administration, executive leadership, effects of positive and negative coordination, implementation and evaluation research, corporatism, administrative mediation of interests, and cooperative state or cooperative administration. Simultaneously, the state-centred view concerned mainly with 'making the apparatus more intelligent' has shifted and, instead, there is an examination of the possibilities of control by societal subsystems. Renate Mayntz calls this a *paradigm shift*. The conception of the state which views the state as a societal centre of control is abandoned.

On the one hand, empirical policy analyses in different sectors of society have contributed to this paradigm shift, which has directed attention to other forms of creating order in societies, such as the market and organized societal self-regulation (for details, see Mayntz 1995, 148ff.); interest has

especially been focused on the combined action of societal and governmental actors. Within the framework of a social scientific theory of modernization, the theoretical explanation for the withdrawal of the state – due to processes of functional differentiation – is the second reason for the paradigm shift. As a result, the problems of negotiation systems, of the ability for action and decision of actors bound in networks, the role assumed by governmental actors and the quality of policy results in such structures are pushed higher up the political agenda.

Conceptually, those efforts are bundled in actor-centred institutionalism (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995; Czada 1998; Scharpf 2000). Actor-centred institutionalism explains political events in terms of institutional rules and individual actions. By taking account of actors and institutions, both perspectives can be integrated. The instruments on which political control is concentrated are the interaction of cooperative actors in semi-state sectors, political networks and negotiation systems. It is directed at an external impact – that is, on societal sectors – rather than on internal control in public administration itself. The interior structure of societal subsystems, then, becomes more important than the interior structure of the state. The internal organization of the politico-administrative system, especially the organizational problems of public administration, appear increasingly uninteresting in the light of a trend to 'de-hierarchize the state'. It is emphasized here that the tasks of the classical state will not become outdated and that political control always takes place in the shadow of hierarchy; this hierarchical shadow, however, enjoys little empirical attention.

The administrative science inspired by political science thus develops continually – departing from the limits of problem solving in states that are set by their interior structure towards a control science specializing in the preconditions and consequences of political problem solving. It emphasizes the characteristic features of societal subsystems: their ability for self-regulation and their mutual interweaving and influence. It thus develops, just like its American exemplar, from 'a science focused on *public administration*, that is, questions of organization, to a science focused on *public policies*, that is, questions relating to the preconditions and consequences of political problem solving' (Jann 1998a, p. 53; transl. by the above author, original emphasis).

From the 1990s onwards, the gap in that part of political science-based administration research that looks at organizations now presents a problem as the practical efforts for an interior modernization of the state again gain new impetus. Political science reacts – with few exceptions – with a delay. An increase in efforts to modernize the state (caused mainly by problems in consolidating the state's budget), under the heading 'public management', heighten activity in effect throughout administrative science; this increase in activity, however, has a strong bias towards business administration as well as being normative in concept. That part of management doctrine that is inspired by business administration raises its profile; and in fact many administrations now make use of consultants. Nevertheless, the amount of

empirically founded knowledge on the extensive processes of factual changes in the administrations at the communal, *Länder* and federal level is – in the light of the reluctance to pursue political and social scientific research – still modest (see also Derlien 1999, p. 7). There are exceptions (cf., for example, Kißler *et al.* 1997; Naschold *et al.* 1998; Naschold and Bogumil 2000; Jaedicke *et al.* 2000; König and Füchtner 1998, 1999; Konzendorf 1998), but in the main self-presentations and self-evaluations predominate. There seems to be no systematic research funding at all as far as I can see. On the contrary, applications to the German Research Association (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) for the establishment of a research programme in the field of a more social science-oriented administrative science have consistently been turned down.

A look at the 1970s, the heyday of political and social scientific administration research and a time when research was both intensely supported and funded, is illustrative here. Administration scientific research was initiated and financed, for example, by government commissions as well as expert reports; by programmes of the Volkswagen-Fund (which funded a research programme in Administrative Science from 1969 to 1976) and of the Federal Ministry for Research and Technology (BMFT); or within the ambit of a DFG emphasis programme (which funded implementation research at the end of the 1970s and a large interdisciplinary research group (*Sonderforschungsbereich*) on administrative science at the University of Konstanz in the 1980s).

Thus, the above argument, which indicated that research interest in political science developed away from administration research for *conceptual* reasons has to be complemented by move towards *practical* application. For a long time now political science-oriented administration research has not been funded, at least to any considerable extent since, in times of recession, business administrators and economists seem to be those who are trusted to advise.

In the 1990s, in the course of budget consolidation efforts, the German public administration embraced modernization efforts in the area of Public Management – ideas that had been disseminated internationally for some time – those who profited were business administrators and consultancy firms. Particularly at the higher colleges of public administration (Fachhochschulen), the curricula adopt issues that are inspired by business administration – new studies are established and new chairs established. Consultancy firms proliferate and meet a high demand on the side of the territorial authorities. The *Land* of North-Rhine-Westphalia, for example, paid about 50 million Euros during the last few years to consultant firms. This resulted in 73 relatively similar examinations of organizations, and – as far as can be judged – without any noteworthy consequences for the structures and shapes of the organizations involved. Numbers of a similar magnitude are guesstimated for other *Länder*.

At the end of the 1990s, political science-oriented administration research still has a rather low key existence. In contrast to the 1970s, it cannot profit

from the current political agenda. This results in a contradictory situation. To overstate slightly, one could say that in the 1970s intensive promotion and funding of research in the field of political science-based administration research existed, but obviously hardly any practical change ensued. In the 1990s, the basic ideas behind public management – raising cost-consciousness, decentralizing budget responsibility, reviewing the scope of public activities – are largely uncontroversial among political parties, and from the federal to the local level extensive modernization measures are adopted, but there exists no systematic approach to research funding. This is problematic for political science if it no longer succeeds in empirically understanding the ongoing changes in public administration. This brings me to the next point, to the question of the prospects for political science-based administration research in Germany.

PROSPECTS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE-BASED ADMINISTRATION RESEARCH

The situation of political science-based administration research in Germany is problematic due, since the end of the 1980s, to the shift of attention in the scientific community of policy research. There is a low degree of institutionalization of administrative science in terms of chairs of political science; there is a complicated relationship between politics and political science-based administration research. Both, however, administrative politics as well as political science-based administration research, have to face new challenges based on the fundamental changes in government and administration (see Benz 2003). Among these are the following:

- the economization of government and administration on the one hand, due to the 'modernization' of instruments of control and of administrative structures (under the heading 'New Public Management'), and on the other hand due to the (formal and/or material) privatization of public tasks and the re-regulation concerned with the respective markets; as well as
- the internationalization and in particular the europeanization of administrative action and – connected to this – the increased importance of multi-level co-ordination.

The 1990s were marked by the take-off of an administrative reform movement dominated by managerial ideas. But meanwhile the anglo-saxon 'first movers' as well as the continental-european 'late comers' have become aware of the ambiguities, problems and successes of managerially driven administrative reform. Just as in the politics of deregulation and privatization, where a search for solutions beyond the dichotomy of, on the one hand, market and managerialism and, on the other hand, traditional bureaucracy and state government, has begun in terms of the reform of administrations and politico-administrative clusters. For the most part, these searches are bundled under the heading 'governance', but without recognizable (and

similarly clear) reform paths to the New Public Management movement (Jann 2003). What we are looking for is the development of administrations and of the relations between administration and politics that learns from the mistakes and shortcomings of managerialism. At the same time we are looking for a new political science-based administration research, one that pursues new ways of administrative analysis combining economically and managerially inspired concepts with insights from sociological and political institutionalism. We are looking for a post-managerial administrative research genuinely rooted in political science. And we are looking for new topics and forms of administrative teaching in political science to emanate from this. Thus, in the face of those changes described above, government and public administration as well as the political science-based administration research are confronted with new challenges that raise fundamental questions for political and administrative sciences:

- Where are the opportunities and limitations of the division of labour between politics, administration, the private and the third sector? Which consequences for the capacity of political control result from the new governance mix?
- In which way are the basic conditions of democratic legitimation and political control of administrative action changing?
- Which structural changes inside the administrative system are consequences and which are preconditions of a 'new statism'?

The challenges briefly outlined here may seem to exceed the capability of political science-based administration research. On the other hand, these new challenges provide new opportunities since, among the disciplines linked to administrative sciences, political science as a *cross-sectional* discipline as well as a discipline that is oriented particularly to the public and political aspects of administration, is predestined to deal with these questions (see Benz 2003).

Having laid out this background, to conclude, I would like to outline several possibilities for re-vitalizing political science-based administration research in Germany (see Bogumil and Jann 2005, p. 233). These possibilities can be found first and foremost in the (re-)integration of public policies and public administration, thus in the more intensified mutual reference of policy research and administrative research as well as in a realistic estimation of the chances and limitations of policy consulting by administrative sciences as well as its uses.

Reintegration of public administration and public policy

In light of the situation in political science just outlined, Werner Jann makes a call 'to reintegrate the perspectives of internal and external control problems of the public sector, Public Management and Public Policies' (Jann 1998a, p. 56; translation the above author). He sees the common point of reference in questions on intra- and inter-organizational control as well as their boundaries/constraints and preconditions. Organization theory and

political science have larger areas of common questions and problems than has been acknowledged to date. While the modern science of business economics deals with the 'boundless company', political science deals with the same question with regard to the nation state. Both try to get a grip on the problem with new theories on public and private institutions.

If we relate Werner Jann's basic idea, which I share, more directly to the current processes of modernizing public administration, it turns out that a political science-oriented administrative science would be accorded a particularly important role in the debate. Modern business administration does sharpen our view on central problems (control of complex public organizations, decentralization and integration, learning in public administrations), but it does not provide satisfactory answers. This is because it often lacks the understanding or the knowledge of the special characteristics of politico-administrative processes. I will give some examples:

- Party competition and negotiation constraints, for example, are often seen only as factors hampering the raise of administrative effectiveness while neither their internal logic nor their potential for control are adequately understood.
- With regard to the interaction between politics and administration, the old and slightly unrealistic model of legislative programme control is once again pulled out of the magic hat without taking notice of the fact that the interweaving of politics and administration has long been empirically proven – as the term 'politico-administrative system' demonstrates – and that there are also some good functional reasons for this interweaving (Bogumil 1997, 2002).
- The principle of hierarchy is much too hastily dismissed without realizing the still existing possibilities and necessities of hierarchical control, and without taking notice of the fact that hierarchy is an essential element of our system of government and administration.
- While introducing management elements, the special characteristics of public goods are not adequately paid attention to. The production of public services is not simply distinguished by the production of saleable and marketable service. Public goods are goods that should be accessible to all citizens, goods that no one can be excluded from consuming. This, of course, diminishes the willingness to contribute to the production costs. Which good is to be considered 'public' is basically a political question. In addition, guaranteeing the accessibility of public goods calls for fair procedures.
- While trying to initiate learning processes, much too little attention is paid to processes of power and decision-making, especially within government departments, that greatly affect the implementation and distributive effects of policies.

One, if not 'the', essential characteristic of public administrations lies in democratically legitimized political control. Political science has produced

numerous findings on the problems and possibilities of political control as well as on the problems and possibilities of democratic legitimization. If these are taken into account, some things look quite different from what economists and legal commentators frequently imagine. Political science should, therefore, on its own behalf and in the interests of Administrative Sciences generally, become more involved where analysis and changes of public administration are concerned. From my own point of view, policy research especially is called for under the condition that it, *too*, concentrated again more on the public sector as its research focus and dealt with the problems of the state's capacity to control. It could instead contribute to a better understanding of the preconditions of designing and implementing politico-administrative programmes. The experience political science gained as a result of institutional reforms remain instructive for modernization measures (see Scharpf 1987; Naschold and Bogumil 2000). In addition, research could be done in the following areas:

- the effects of different forms of networks (bureaucratic, clientele-oriented, participatory, corporatist, pluralist); or
- the effects of different styles of decision-making (incremental, optimizing adaptation, satisficing (i.e. obtaining a good enough outcome), rational search); or
- the influence of advocacy-coalitions on the success of politico-administrative measures (Jann 2001, p. 336; for further examples, see Howlett and Ramesh 1995; Sabatier 1993).

This could greatly stimulate the discussion on modernization. All in all, what has been missing so far is cooperation between policy research and political science-based administration research to the stimulation and benefit of both.

Links to theory and practice

Administrative science was and is always closely linked to the political agenda (Mayntz 1978; Ellwein 1982; Jann 1998a; Derlien 1999). The most important research questions for the most part did not emanate from theoretical research programmes. The doctrine of the state, the everyday practice of public administration, and educational interests can be identified as the decisive influential factors. In the times of Mercantile chairs in Germany mid-eighteenth century, when 'Kameralistik' were established, an education in 'Kameralistik' was the precondition for a promotion to higher positions in public administration. From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, in a time of liberalism and *Ordnungsverwaltung* (maintenance of the public order), education in administration became the province of lawyers. From the early 1970s onwards, the dissemination of people who had an education in social sciences coincided with practical problems of political planning and control. It was during this period that – as described above – research funding was intensified and many important insights for political science

could be drawn. A period of euphoria, however, was later followed by disappointments both on the side of practical administration and on the side of political science; furthermore, communication between them largely broke down. Concomitantly, the promotion and funding of political scientific administration research started to dry up.

There are some indications that political science-based administration research is not only called for in terms of content, but that it might again face increased political demand. There are two central approaches to the administration from the political science viewpoint: the perspective of control and the perspective of democracy. As outlined above, there has been a change in the intra-academic attention structure with regard to the control perspective and in terms of political practice. This latter has for a long time shown a more neo-liberal orientation that has made approaches difficult; changes now seem to be underway. In addition, the perspective on democracy apparently has (again) become more important over the last years in the academic field as well as in political practice, thus opening up further access points. The two examples from the field of administrative research that follow highlight this change:

As part of the discussion on public management, one can see that the original focus on the aim of efficiency is being supplemented by questions on political control and democratic legitimacy. On the local level, in particular, practical efforts and discussions accumulate both in the direction of strategic management elements and in the direction of a 'civic community' (*Bürgerkommune*), bringing questions of democratic legitimacy back into the frame. Independent of the *status quo* of its implementation, the debate over the 'civic community' differs positively from 'public management' insofar as it does not regard the citizen as a customer but as a co-designer and client of the public community. This also refocuses attention on local representative bodies. Simultaneously, the debate on civic and civil society is reinforced on the federal level. For example, the German Bundestag has set up a committee of enquiry on 'The Future of Civic Commitment' (Enquetekommission 'Zukunft des Bürgerschaftlichen Engagements'), a committee established by a consensus embracing all party groups. In all, 41 scientific experts have been commissioned, many of them social science administrative researchers. The final report of the commission of enquiry was debated before the Bundestag in June of 2002. In addition, in the *Länder*, several committees of enquiry or committees of modernization have been established and these increasingly demand social scientific consulting (for example, the committee of enquiry 'Future of the cities' in North-Rhine-Westphalia).

In the discussion on the state we said that the old political models of the social-democratic welfare state or the liberal-conservative minimal state that relied on private market mechanisms don't seem to work anymore. All the indicators are to the fact that the relationship between governmental regulation, economic competition and social participation is about to enter a new

stage. This involves the new development of a complex regulatory structure for society – now more and more referred to as structures of ‘governance’ – a correlation Frieder Naschold drew attention to many years ago. In this context, a new political model that refers to some of these problems has arrived at the federal level in Germany, represented by the red-green government, newly elected in the autumn of 1998. While the conservative-liberal government favoured the model of the ‘lean state’, the lean state is now to become the *activating state*. The term describes a state that contributes to optimizing processes within society, guarantees certain basic needs (public infrastructure, education, public safety, legal certainty and social security), and supports private initiative and societal commitment. It is, however, far from clear how these abstract goals will be realized and which consequences they will have. Indeed, it becomes evident that there is a greater need for political science research and consultation in this area as well.

In the course of trying to put the new, albeit still blurred, model of the ‘activating state’ in concrete form, and especially of reconstructing the traditional social security system and the outdated social state, there arises a new demand for expertise in political and administrative sciences. During the last three years in Germany, three major reform commissions have been set up with the participation of Germany’s most renowned political and administrative scientists: the ‘Hartz commission’, the ‘Rürup commission’ and the ‘commission on federalism’, with Arthur Benz, Werner Jann, Frank Nullmeier and Fritz W. Scharpf.

To the degree that the managerial ‘conquest’ of the public sector is not any longer the primary topic under consideration, but, rather, the combination of formal and informal systems of regulation and control, that is, of institutions, comes back into focus and the viewpoint of political science becomes more important for practical decisions. However, according to Benz, one problem is not resolved by this. In order to improve the acceptance in its own discipline, political science-based administration research needs to put more emphasis on its theoretical foundations; this in turn puts at risk the painfully acquired acceptance among practitioners and among the other disciplines of administrative sciences. In this dilemma, Benz recommends that we enhance theoretical power and hence the reputation of political science by returning to the conception of governance and that we withdraw – in contrast from practitioners and other disciplines – to a more distanced yet critical stance, accompanying this with well-founded analyses (Benz 2003).

In my opinion, this latter strategy does not seem to be the most appropriate way forward. When political science-based administration research is above all research on administrative reform, then it cannot and ought not to evade the demand from practitioners. The chances and limitations of consulting, however, should be reflected on – on both sides – in order to avoid unnecessary frustrations. Political science-based administration research for the most part cannot give simple answers; rather, it highlights as central themes the organizational, institutional, societal and economic

restrictions of changes that experienced practitioners know only too well – but nevertheless have difficulties in elucidating analytically. It is exactly for this reason that it is simultaneously appropriate to deal with theoretical problems and their practical solutions. The logical consequence of the failure of naïve managerialism and the depleted soil of management consultancy, consists precisely in *not* regarding them as peers (and going to equal level with them), but rather – to elaborate – to enter into continuous discussion and dialogue with practitioners – less splendid, but providing more problem-oriented answers and options for political decisions to be made. If this strategy proves successful, a consequence will be not only new stimuli and opportunities for administrative science-oriented research but a situation where the current restructuring of university courses of study can be used to more strongly institutionalise, in terms of both BA and MA studies, political science-based administration research in Germany.

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Date received 11 March 2003. Date accepted 28 July 2004.