

## American vs. European Public Administration: Does Public Administration Make the Modern State, or Does the State Make Public Administration?

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*"What is Public Administration?" has worried American administrative scholars throughout this century: Is it a discipline? Profession? Field? Focus? Enterprise? Or, what? This essay takes a new look at that old question, one that Dwight Waldo spent much of his academic career wrestling with. It begins by looking at how Dwight Waldo's *The Administrative State* conceived of the American state, in contrast to the European state experience. The author concludes that Public Administration on both sides of the Atlantic is intricately intertwined with state development, its whole and parts, its past, present and future. Thus, our own Public Administration—and Europe's as well—can only be understood within the peculiar, nation-state context. In Europe literally the state makes Public Administration; whereas within the United States, the reverse can be said to be true.*

It is often argued that America has produced little original political theory. *The Federalist Papers* are frequently cited as America's best contribution, but after that the list becomes skimpy or uncertain. As some suggest, the United States, like Rome, practices politics well but does not necessarily offer brilliant additions to Western thought on this topic. We remain doers, not theorists.

Perhaps that observation is generally true, but surely Dwight Waldo's *The Administrative State* belongs on any short list of America's world-class contributions. Dwight Waldo is too modest to make that claim for himself, so I will make it on his behalf.

Am I overstating the case? I think not.

No other work—after nearly half a century—still reveals so clearly the intellectual foundations and value framework of Public Administration.<sup>1</sup> None has wrestled so profoundly with the meaning or purpose of the administrative state, the most powerful institution that governs America today. Not many American scholars until recently have attempted to study the *state*, or even dare mention *state* in a book title (that is, until the so-called "return-to-state" theorists in the mid-1980s made it a respectable line of inquiry). As Gianfranco Poggi observed (1978), after World War II American political scientists, for mysterious reasons, went "to incredible lengths to forget the state" altogether in their political analyses. Dwight's courage and remarkable achievement—writing a book about the *state* in this period—stand alone when he is compared with his contemporaries.

Moreover, it was not just any *state* he identified. For the first time Waldo outlined the centrality of the administrative state for American governance. His viewpoint then, and to some extent even today, was radical and continues to swim against the mainstream of political science in the United States. For many years, Dwight Waldo's was the proverbial voice in the wilderness crying for us to pay attention to the obvious: the administrative state. As a result, his work still challenges us to develop our research agenda, our thinking, and our capacities to deal with this central, yet neglected, phenomenon.

I would argue that Waldo bequeathed to us not only an invaluable body of scholarship exploring many facets of the administrative state, but also a body of scholars whom he nurtured to continue his work. Many of us at this symposium could be classified as “Waldovians,” drawn into this academic career by Waldo’s subtle encouragement to pursue this or that line of administrative research. This time, though, it is Waldo’s treatise I will discuss, especially about how it helps define Public Administration.

Waldo’s book described the character and substance of the American administrative state. It synthesized all the Public Administration literature up to that time, 1948 (and as some wag said half mockingly, that job probably does not need to be done for another half century). Waldo read everything, digested it, organized it, and with well-turned phrases, conceptualized in a new way the meaning of the administrative state. So what did he tell us?

## What *The Administrative State* Tells Us About Public Administration

First, the American state that Waldo described is a recent innovation. It is largely a product of the last century—a brief time frame in contrast to European state development, which evolved over the past half-millennium or more. Especially important, his book described American state formation as occurring roughly a century or more after the ratification of the U.S. Constitution. As its opening chapters relate, the genesis of the American state can be found in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Here was a very different era than the eighteenth century, the historic birthplace of American constitutionalism. Our Enlightenment-inspired founding fathers sought to establish “the first new nation” by constraints on state powers, via checks and balances, federalism, periodic elections, protection of individual rights, indeed everything to *prevent* the formation of a European-style state. The American state framers, as *The Administrative State* explains, sought the reverse. They showed little love for the founders’ built-in constitutional constraints. Woodrow Wilson, for example, says all sorts of nasty things about separation of powers throughout his voluminous writings. Why? Wilson, like other American state creators, wanted an expansive role for government in American society, one that would tackle numerous sorts of new jobs he viewed as vital to dealing with a plethora of threats to the existing constitutional order, such as the closing of the frontier, rapid urbanization, technological change, industrialism, labor-management unrest, and international challenges. The constitutional order the American state creators knew and admired seemed to be in jeopardy of collapse, hence they reached for remedies that often negated the founder’s basic values, or at least *some* of their cherished values, so that the constitutional order might survive. Thus, from the outset there was an inherent tension between the American state and the American Constitution, products of differing times, needs, and norms. This tension persists to this day and results in crucial dilemmas for our field *and our society*.

Second, as the title of Waldo’s book underscores, the American state was—and remains—an administrative state. Contrary to most of the so-called return-to-state literature where “the capitalist state,” “military state,” “party state,” “welfare state,” and even “maternal state” are prominently featured, Waldo—correctly I

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think—labels our modern state as “an administrative state.” This is perhaps a reason why little of the return-to-state literature has been cited in Public Administration—the return-to-state theorists missed the *administrative* essence of the American state, or, maybe they don’t acknowledge what seems so obvious to many of us in Public Administration (see Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, 1985, for one of the prominent works in this area). Waldo’s second and third chapters outline the quintessential administrative origins as stemming from overlapping layers of reforms, for example the personnel movement, administrative training, the reorganization movement, foreign influence, business influence, and scientific management. These segmented layers of administrative reform resulted in incredibly complex, yet subtle, sources for American state development, which continue to elude the comprehension of most historians and political scientists today (who, unlike Waldo tend to view—wrongly I feel—the American state through the European state conceptual lens). These layers of reform give the American state its uniqueness. It is like no other!

Third and equally important, the American state envisioned by Waldo was rooted in a peculiar, indigenous constellation of American values. The heart of his book, Part 2, analyzes the normative dimensions of the American state. Looking through an intellectual telescope of more than 2500 years of political theory, much like an astronomer viewing the oddities of the rotation and terrain of a distant planet, Waldo found a strange amalgam of founding norms for the American state that he analyzed around the great classical questions of political theory: What is the meaning of the good life? Who should rule? What are the criteria for action? How should we define the separation of powers? Centralization vs. decentralization? The arguments surrounding each issue were examined insightfully and thoroughly, yet the debate was by no means even-sided. Tilts and tendencies were apparent within each cluster of values that characterize the American state as unlike any other—for example, our ardent belief in individualism, materialism, peace, liberty, and equality. With varying accents and emphases, the main substance and contours of these arguments remain with us today, mostly as Waldo outlined them 50 years ago.

Fourth, Waldo described these complicated state-framing values not as absolutes, but in fluid relationship with one another. Much like Einstein’s theory of relativity replaced the static world of Newtonian mechanics, so, Waldo’s *Administrative State* revolutionized our stable pre-1940 POSDCORB world of Public Administration. Administrative values became more contrapuntal, competing, fluid, and mobile. Waldo argued throughout his academic career that there is no one-best-way to do public administration—not scientific management, not POSDCORB, not any other doctrine. The one-best-way became many best ways in Waldo’s seminal work. Ideals, values, norms and theories always stood in rivalry with one another. Reifying one or a few over others was a source of numerous problems. Debate and discussion, in short, democratic administration (with a small “d”) were preferable to the alternative where a one-best-way dominates.

Fifth, Waldo maintained that hard and fast distinctions were not—could not—be drawn between politics and administration. The two were inevitably and inextricably intertwined. That message frustrates those in search of simple formulas and easy answers—from enthusiasts of POSDCORB to reinventing government. Waldo's challenge remains: The dichotomy upon which our field was founded is not a simple either/or, nor could it become that clear or neat. He embraced complexity and knowledge from many fields. As his last lines conclude in *The Administrative State*: "In any event, if abandonment of the politics/administrative formula is taken seriously, if the demands of present world civilization upon public administration are met, administrative thought must establish a working relationship with every major province in the realm of human learning" (212). That challenge is one we still wrestle with today.

Finally, American state formulation, according to Waldo is inductive not deductive. There are no top-down, first principles, no reason of state, no divine right of kings, no grand plan from which the American state sprang to guide the future. Rather, the administrative state came about by an inductive process. We designed our state from the bottom up, not the top down. We had no alternative. The U.S. Constitution, once again, contained so many inherent roadblocks rather than building blocks to administrative state formation that America's administrative state creators in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had to "chink-in" bits and pieces of state here and there outside the formal written Constitution. They created what some, such as Don Price, call "the Unwritten Constitution" (1983). Like log-cabin builders "chinking-in" bits of mud and straw around the cabin logs to keep their rough-hued homes warm and snug in the winter, so, too, the Americans, as Waldo outlined, had to add a regulatory agency here, an experimental budget system there, or a new classification scheme for personnel somewhere else.

Recall that the early textbook authors like Leonard White and W. F. Willoughby did not title their books, *State Administration*, or *American Bureaucracy*. Indeed, the American administrative state founders consciously avoided using words such as *state* or *bureaucracy*. Rather, the term *public administration* reflected more accurately the experimental, grassroots building up of institutional reforms for serving public—democratic?—purposes. It was a loose-jointed, incremental, localist-oriented, bottom-up process aimed at helping to achieve democratic values that the term *public administration* aptly described, or sought to describe—"an American original," as Waldo's book tells the story.

If we accept Waldo's approach to conceptualizing the chief governing institution in our society as valid, one premised upon the notion that administrative literature yields up a basic definitional framework for comprehending the modern state, would his approach work elsewhere? For example, Europe? By looking at European administrative thought in general, or what they refer to as administrative sciences, does it tell us something about the nature of the modern European state in contrast to the American state? How do their states compare with the United States, based upon their own contemporary public administration? More interestingly, what further insights do such comparisons yield for the American administrative state? Remember one of Waldo's frequent questions: compared to what?

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Over the past six years or so I've been privileged to have had two extended teaching assignments in Europe: as a visiting professor of public administration at Leiden University (the Netherlands) and as the John Marshall Professor at Budapest University of Economic Sciences (Hungary). In both positions, I was able to travel extensively throughout Europe, attempting to examine firsthand their administrative sciences, via their administrative educational institutions, training programs, research, and scholarship. I was able to look around, ask a lot of questions, collect several boxes of materials, and try to make some sense of what was happening in Europe within our field today. Nothing systematic, mind you; I was more or less a peripatetic observer. With a Dutch colleague and friend, Walter Kickert, I later recruited top administrative scholars from five European nations/regions to describe the current trends in administrative sciences in their respective localities for a specially commissioned symposium in *Public Administration Review*, "Changing European States; Changing Public Administration," which appeared in the January/February issue of 1996 (Kickert and Stillman, 1996). This symposium offers perhaps the most up-to-date snapshot of European Public Administration available in print. So what did I discover?

## What the European State Tells Us About Public Administration

First, the state is critical to understanding the past 500 years of European history. It was the centerpiece around which most conflicts were fought, from the Renaissance and Reformation through the twentieth century. The concept of the state also defined the political thought of those centuries. If Americans seek to flee the state, from the Pilgrims down to the radical right today and remain squarely antistatist to the core, the greatest European theorists are state-centered. Think of Hobbes, Bodin, Kant, Hegel, T. H. Greene, Filmer, Mazzini, or von Treitschke. Indeed Machiavelli coined the word, *stato* from the Latin *stare*—to stand—meaning something with firmness, content, authority. The intense, brutal warfare of the era of the Italian Renaissance in which Machiavelli lived and was deeply involved certainly had much to do both with the rise of state theory and with state institutions. Or, as Bruce D. Porter neatly sums up, "States make war, but war also makes states" (1994, 1). We should also quickly add that Roman law, Catholic religious thought, technological changes like the printing press, the scientific revolution, the Protestant Reformation, and other events were equally significant factors that gave rise to modern European states. Even the greatest revolutionaries in Europe, Marxists and anarchists, framed their writings in opposition to the state, either seeking some new utopian replacement or a natural community of mankind without a state. The state became the basic focal point

for key European political debates around which statist and anti-statist contended. It also framed from the outset the intellectual parameters of Public Administration thought. As Jacques Chevallier (1996) begins in his essay on contemporary French Public Administration, "The development of administrative science in France is inextricably linked to a particular French model of the state" (74). Within each European nation, the state is the defining source for the scope and substance of Public Administration.

The common European use of the term *administrative sciences*, as opposed to the American term *Public Administration*, is a clue to the clearer, more precise substance of the state-defined discipline of their field as opposed to our own. There is much more of a sense of a settled content to this field of study in Europe (at least, until recently) than in America. It is viewed as a significant and important intellectual endeavor or an academic inquiry that is established, recognized, and related directly to *rulership*, as opposed to American scholarship, which contends repeatedly over the identity issue: what is Public Administration. In America, if its legitimacy is continuously questioned, in Europe, its very pervasiveness is deemed *the* problem.

Second, while a definition of *state* is indispensable to comprehending European Public Administration, there is no *one* type of European state that defines uniformly its administrative sciences. Rather, the closer one examines Europe (or for that matter, the world) a diversity of states is evident: for example, in Sweden the state is the "people's home"; in former soviet-controlled East European nations, the image comes to mind of predatory states that acted as "wolves" toward one another; in the Netherlands until comparatively recently pillarization, corporatism and consensus-democracy defined the state. These various state models led to a very different cast and character of Public Administration within each nation. So while European administrative sciences are largely derived from the notion of the state, each European nation reflects distinctive state attributes that, in turn, contribute to considerable differences among the national styles of Public Administration thought. In short, Europeans agree the *state* is self-evident, but there is no agreement about what "it" actually is!

A case in point is Germany. Wolfgang Seibel (1996) begins his essay on German administrative science as follows: "What characterizes German public administration since the eighteenth century is its early modernization relative to the political regime" (74). He goes on to describe how a well-developed German administrative system in advance of its democratic constitution allowed Germany to function under conditions even when the political regime collapsed, as it did in 1918 and again in 1945. The key to survival has been the self-reforming qualities of German public administration that allowed it to sustain and renew itself, even during periods of extreme political crisis. Thus Seibel labels German administrative science as reform, since sustained self-renewal has been its major trademark throughout modern history. Even now the reformist orientation of German administrative science is evident, says Seibel, because its central thrust in the 1990s focuses upon issues of German reunification.

On the other hand, Great Britain can trace a history of nearly 800 years of democracy dating from the Magna Carta in 1215, but it has a comparatively new professional civil service, originating primarily from the Northcote-Trevelyan Report in 1854. The

dominance of political forces has been especially apparent since 1979. When Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher took office, she initiated sweeping reforms of the British state, downsizing, scaling back, and privatizing many of its functions. Ideological democratic politics easily swamped administrative professionalism because of its comparatively thin roots in England. Lacking a Roman-law tradition (except for Scotland), Great Britain's administration more readily adapts to political change compared to that of the continent. Thus, it is not uncommon today to read "declinist" accounts of British Public Administration, describing "the end of public administration." (Chandler, 1991; Rhodes, 1991; Pollitt, 1996). Particular state politics and historic traditions within the confines of a national context decisively influence the style, tone, direction, and emphases of various European administrative sciences.

Third, European administrative sciences exhibit a far greater sense of historical depth and breath than analogous studies in the United States. An almost ahistorical perspective prevails in American Public Administration. The belief that the world can be recreated *de novo* is characteristically American (case in point: the popular reinventing government movement in the 1990s). Few American administrative scholars would write as did the Frenchman Legendre, that the field is the fruit of "successive sedimentation," and that the study of history is indispensable to the study of the administrative sciences (Chevallier, 1996, 72). Indeed, if history is mentioned in the standard American Public Administration text, it is given short shrift and simplistic presentation (though case studies use history, they usually lack any significant historical dimensions and are conceived of as mainly pragmatic training tools for improving the here and now).

Europeans, by contrast, see their institutions as freighted with heavy national historical baggage and their administrative sciences as creatures of an evolutionary process, which is often complex and dense with varied levels of arguments and interpretations. European administrative sciences thus talk in centuries whereas Americans are lucky to see any connection between today and yesterday. This ahistorical cast gives thinking in American Public Administration greater ranges of expressed dynamism and open-ended possibilities for change. From the European vantage point, such absence of a sense of history seems incomprehensible, shallow, even illusionary. Public Administration for them can be understood only within the cocoon of history. Thus, if European administrative sciences begin with an understanding of state, they also proceed from an essential understanding of the evolving state within a national, historical context. Typical European texts start by explaining the rise of the absolutist state in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Prussia, England, and France, which led in turn to the rise of state functions that next required training for personnel and research in fields such as revenue collection, military professionalism, and economic affairs. Many European textbooks further explain how European universities responded by establishing the first chairs in cameralism (1729). By the end of the 1700s every German university had created new chairs in this field of *polize wissenschaft* and France had developed a new *science de la police* though without separate chairs or curricula. And so on. It is essentially a different view of the world in length, breadth, and depth from the American administrative perspective.

Fourth, the European positive law tradition, unlike the Ameri-

can common law tradition, decisively influences the content, logic, and institutional autonomy of its Public Administration, particularly on the Continent. If the Anglo-American common law tradition builds up precedents based upon an accumulation of discrete cases, the positive law tradition works in reverse—deducing from general state legal principles to decide rulings in discrete cases. The former looks to cases to find precedents; the latter looks to higher legal principles to impose on specific cases. This tradition naturally gives courts, lawyers, and the law in Europe critical influence and autonomy in defining the study of Public Administration.

Again, a knowledge of history is necessary to understand why legal influence became so pervasive on the Continent. The legal foundation of European bureaucracies was derived from Roman civil law and later developed by medieval clergy and modernized by Frederick the Great and Napoleon. When the absolutist monarchy in the late eighteenth century was defeated throughout Europe after the French Revolution, thanks to “the Atlantic Revolutions,” a phrase coined by R. R. Palmer, state power shifted to democratically elected parliaments operating under liberal constitutions. Government’s primary role changed from managing a king’s estates (the source of early cameralist studies) to protecting rights and liberties—especially the right of property, which is the basis for a modern free-market capitalist economy—and to dealing with trade, international affairs, and defense. The parliamentary *Rechtsstaat* or law-based state’s *raison d’être* became the making and enforcing of laws. Thus by the late nineteenth century, the study of Public Administration shifted from cameralism (management studies) largely to the study of law, positive law for the promulgation of the state’s rights and responsibilities. It set government apart from the general population and gave those who ran it special official privileges. Lawyers became the elite in the upper and middle ranks of government, and judicial training came to dominate European Public Administration education. By the dawn of the twentieth century, the scientific positive law tradition meant educating bureaucrats as lawyers—or lawyers as bureaucrats—in such topics as the rights and duties of citizens, integration of nation-state, and definition of the welfare function. In England, with its common law traditions, a liberal arts “Oxbridge” education remained the preferred preparation for the public service.

America, meanwhile, began its administrative training largely from a management basis. Leonard White’s *Introduction to the Study of Public Administration* (1926), America’s first text in the field, underscored its assumption, in the preface, that the study of Public Administration should proceed from a study of management, not law. In an administrative state built from the bottom up and lacking any sense of state, let alone positive law tradition to enforce reason of state, the managerial model seemed to White and early founders of the field to be more realistic. It was more in tune with the needs of the administrative system in America, less elitist and hierarchical and capable of finding support and influence among practitioners in the field. William E. Mosher, the first dean of the Maxwell School, was also a leading force, along with White, in spreading this management gospel, which still predominates among NASPAA-accredited schools.

Fifth, and directly related to the foregoing characteristics of European administrative sciences, the method of administrative logic is therefore largely deductive, not inductive. The centrality of

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the state, its historic evolution, and a positive law tradition that led to state autonomy all serve to define administrative sciences as a top-down enterprise with clear first principles from which to deduce correct approaches for thinking about Public Administration. Reason of state, as mentioned before, continues to be prominent in the continental lexicon of Public Administration, whereas it is wholly missing in American administrative citations. There is, for example, no mention of this important term in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, even though it was prepared by American scholars in 1968, at the high-point of the ethical and moral firestorm confronting the United States during Vietnam, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Great Society. Why? In part, because Americans are so hostile to state and, in part, because the bottom-up state they erected is so elusive and ephemeral, Public Administration remains hard to define, and deciding on its first principles is even more difficult. Thus, a term that is so central to Europeans makes little sense to Americans.

Another example: Americans are fond of using case studies to train administrators precisely because of the inductive method of administrative analysis. Look at a situation and induce administrative principles from the empirical context. No wonder scientific methodologies, from Taylor’s scientific management to the social science behavioralists and the concepts of the more modern “tools” approach, have found fertile ground in American Public Administration. On the other hand, Europeans rarely rely on case analyses. Nor have they been attracted to scientism to train administrators, for inductive reasoning seems neither logical nor real when an authoritative state is so apparent and decisive in their lives. The main task of continental state administrators, and they are called *state* administrators and not *public* administrators, is therefore to deduce from state principles and apply state law. The vast bulk of continental training in Public Administration remains thus squarely rooted in law. In Germany, for instance, only two schools, the University of Konstanz and the Graduate School of Administrative Sciences at Speyer do *not* teach Public Administration from a legal perspective. Only four years ago Sweden, arguably the most advanced welfare state in the world, opened its first Public Affairs School at Orebro. Understanding how few alternatives to legal models of Public Administration are available on the Continent is significant for gaining a perspective on the field in Europe.

The sixth characteristic of contemporary European administrative sciences is that this situation is rapidly changing. A new “framing” environment for the European state is rapidly transforming its administrative sciences and by necessity yielding up a wider range of alternative models beyond law. The European Union’s roughly 320 million people and its state structures are experiencing far-reaching challenges in the 1990s. Some of these powerful forces (perhaps the most influential since the French Revolution) include:

- ◆ collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War;
- ◆ reunification of Germany;

- ◆ creation of newly independent, post-socialist East European nations;
- ◆ growth of ethnic tensions and New Right politics;
- ◆ outbreak of civil war and ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia;
- ◆ strengthening of overhead European Union authority;
- ◆ trends toward regionalization below the European nation-state;
- ◆ prolonged European unemployment above 11 percent;
- ◆ reduction of American forces and redirection of NATO policies;
- ◆ intense competition from Pacific Rim and American businesses;
- ◆ increasingly wired society, government, and businesses;
- ◆ redefined international responsibilities for immigration, population growth, and environmental policies.

For a century liberal European welfare states could routinely function with lawyers and the state law in charge. These states now find comprehending and responding to the rapidity of numerous transformations can no longer be entrusted solely to lawyers and the law. Diverse methodologies and better administrative tools are essential to grasp realistically these profound social, economic, and political forces reshaping Europe as well as how best to cope with them. Also, these new reframing environmental factors are recasting decisively the requirements for practical administrative skills beyond technical and legal training. As a result, in many European nations the administrative sciences are flourishing as never before. Wolfgang Seibel refers to this process in Germany as the *neo-verwaltungswissenschaft* movement. Walter Kickert in the Netherlands describes it as “a pluralism of new approaches.” Christopher Pollitt (1996) in England characterizes it as “a new managerialism.” Torben Beck Jorgensen labels the process in Scandinavian Public Administration as a shift “from continental law to Anglo-Saxon behaviorism” (Kickert and Stillman, 1996). The growth of new institutions and training schools in Europe has been impressive, especially in the Netherlands, Scandinavia, and France together with the sheer increase quantitatively and qualitatively in administrative science research, much of it in the direction of American-oriented, social science-based research. Also, with the European Union’s development, there has been a further revision of old ways as well, such as the recent move of France’s prestigious Ecole Nationale d’Administration from Paris to Strasbourg in order to be closer to the European Union Parliament.

Finally, when one examines the content of contemporary European administrative sciences, it exhibits not only greater pluralism but an emphasis clearly different from that of the United States, one stressing state activism and intrusiveness. For example, much of the recent administrative scholarship in Germany in the 1990s is directed at the challenges of imposing state reunification. In the Netherlands scholarship is interested in new forms of governance through complex steering networks. In England it is focused on the application of business models to force efficiency and economy on government as symbolized in recent government reports like *Citizen’s Charter* or *Next Steps*. In the post-socialist East European nations, policy planning, judicial oversight, economic control, and effective program implementation are major themes reflected in administrative training and education. The continuing influence of the strong-state European tradition within the field therefore is readily apparent, whereas within American Public Administration,

topics of economic planning, managerial control, and law enforcement remain problematic, even marginal to the mainline study of administration in recent decades.

## Four Observations, Of Sorts...

What concluding comments and observations can be drawn from this survey comparing American and European administrative sciences? First, my answer to the question in the subtitle of this article—Does Public Administration make the modern state or does the state make Public Administration?—should be readily apparent by now. Continental Europeans deduce Public Administration from *reason of state* whereas America’s *missing sense of state* forces us to induce state from Public Administration. This fundamental difference, a deductive vs. an inductive way of thinking about the field, stands as a great divide separating the two sides of the Atlantic. It can be a source of considerable confusion and misunderstanding. Neither side quite knows how to make sense out of the other’s administrative sciences. The differences, nonetheless, can offer mutual attractions. Europeans are intrigued with the realism, dynamism, and democratic thrust of American Public Administration, especially now as they must grapple with enormous changes confronting their region. Americans—whether they realize it or not—can learn much from European conceptions of history and administrative order. American might also learn from the European depth of theoretical understanding about the field, particularly today when the American administrative state must deal with new realities abroad as the last global superpower, and at home, coping with massive political, economic, and social challenges. Both could learn from each other.

Second, when viewed from the comparative perspective, definitional issues such as “What is Public Administration?” that plague American administrative scholars become more or less a by-product of inductive methodology. A built-up administrative state creates a much more messy field—without clear-cut boundaries, substance, or focus—than does one neatly constructed top-down. Without first principles to define what state is or is not, ample room is left to question repeatedly the scope and substance of the field. Nonetheless, a state does exist in America and is defined *from* our Public Administration ideas and practices. Here is the challenge for Americans—a definitional one Waldo pointed out long ago—that we need to respond to as a first step toward intelligently dealing with the administrative state in *both* our personal and public lives. Europeans also can learn from comparative insights in a different fashion. As they possibly move away from rigid and traditional state structures, from those demanding deductive logic, they too can learn from the United States’ experiences, problems, and prospects involving an inductive study of Public Administration.

Third, the divide in administrative thinking between Europe and America today may assist us in addressing institutional issues such as the one raised at this conference i.e., the democracy/bureaucracy conundrum. Where a state makes Public Administration, distinctions between democracy and bureaucracy are—or can be—sharper, more logical, and better defined. However, where Public Administration makes the state, questions such as what is democracy, what is bureaucracy, and how do they relate to one another become far more problematic. Democracy is—or can be—infused

into most aspects of American bureaucracy, and vice versa. Clouds of confusion are generated as a result of such intricate intertwining. Yet this amalgam also offers important strengths, specifically, a highly adaptable, democratic administrative system that can respond with considerable flexibility and rapidity to the needs of the moment. We must quickly add, though, that it is also the most difficult, confusing—indeed exasperating—system to operate, one whose very democratic/bureaucratic complications are the source today of so much frustration—and outright hostility—by the very Americans it was designed to serve. Waco and the Oklahoma City bombing are only recent poignant reminders of how deadly this ingrained hostility has become.

Finally, the unique American way of thinking about the enterprise of Public Administration, our inductive approach, requires a subtle, interdisciplinary, administrative-focused approach to understanding this phenomenon. The standard, specialized, empirical tools of analysis in the kitbags of most behavioral political scientists, sociologists, or quantitative economists and psychologists just do not by themselves work very well for comprehending the whole and its parts of the modern administrative state. Both normative and empirical methodologies from an array of fields are required today. And here, once again, may be the genius and

courage of Dwight Waldo. Not only did he reveal in *The Administrative State* the diverse, complex, intellectual foundations and value framework of the most powerful institution that governs America today, he has remained remarkably consistent throughout his career—through the behavioral revolution of the 1950s, the counterculture clashes of the 1960s and 1970s, and the bureaucrat-bashing in the 1980s and 1990s. He reminded us time and again that coming to grips with our administrative state's role, purpose, and place in American life may well be our greatest challenge, and he asserted that no single discipline holds the answers. To repeat once more the prescient last lines of *The Administrative State*: "In any event, if the abandonment of the politics administrative formula is taken seriously, if the demands of present world civilization upon public administration are met, administrative thought must establish a working relationship with every major province in the realm of human learning" (212).



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### Note

1. Throughout the essay, the author follows Dwight Waldo's practice of using public administration in lower case to refer to the institutions and practices of the field as opposed to Public Administration when discussing it as the study and theory. This writer also realizes that he uses "state," "government," and "administration" at times interchangeably throughout

this essay. When viewed from the European perspective, this can be highly confusing, if not misleading, but the American language is not precise in its differentiation of these terms, so critical to European administrative sciences. It should be added, however, if "state" is confusing for Americans, the French refer to *État* only in capital letters.

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