

## **ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK "ADMINISTRATIVE ARGUMENT" BY C. HOOD AND M. JACKSON.**

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### **SUMMARY**

Christopher Hood and Michael Jackson's work, "Administrative Argument" is a research work that embraces the study of 99 administrative doctrines through time; it contemplates the analysis between doctrines, philosophies and justifications, assuming these three generic types. It highlights the problematic as to why, at certain times of history, one doctrine is more accepted than another, identifying the power of rhetoric, that underlies within the answer to this query and concentrating on the acceptance factor as a research line.

A fundamental contribution is how it shows that the doctrines are not new, but rather they alternate through time, according to the evolution of each society and Nation, this concept is linked to the diverse notions of State during each time period.

It presents 3 examples of administrative argument; The 1854 British Northcote Trevelyan Report, the 1937 United States Brownlow Report, and the 1977 New South Wales Government Administration Wilenski Report.

It is a complex work divided into four parts, presenting the particularity, at the authors' proposal, of being not necessarily read in lineal form, but with other variants according to the readers' interests.

**KEY WORDS** Doctrines, Philosophies, Argument

## INTRODUCTION

The object of study of modern Public administration is a field of controversies, there is an ample contribution of concepts, theories and methodologies, without achieving an accumulative progress of arguments and proposals, the efforts have been multiple but erratic, impeding an accepted and overwhelming theoretical posture. During the eighties' there was an impulse oriented to grant it, an interdisciplinary focus, coming from European thought, in order to reduce its acquired positivist impromptu. The discussion if it is, a science, discipline or profession, is not over. Maybe it contributes to the different existent visions in time, that Public Administration is strongly bound with the vision of the concept of State, that evolutions according to the tendencies of each time; it is so, that cyclically it is considered that the State is the public policies maker, or sometimes competing with the private sector, in other cases as the only axis of an entire society, also in a role excessively absent, among other possibilities.

It contributes to complicate the situation due to the fact that social, sociological aspects are manifested, of preponderance in power groups, political factors, evolution of thought currents, such as positivism and behaviorism, to mention some. It constitutes a referential framework, not very clear and abundant, but without achieving the necessary scientific rigor for their growth as a science.

The pioneer author of public management science is Juan Carlos Bonnin, in France in 1808 who defines it as a social science. This work achieved later impact in Spain, Germany and Italy; in America, Mexico enunciates the disjunctive politics-administration.

As has been pointed out, not little has been written on this field, however, there appears as outstanding the research effort carried out by Hood and Jackson, on the summary of the 99 doctrines at different periods of time, and the incorporation of the importance of rhetoric, and philosophy, doctrines and justifications relationship. We consider that it is an important contribution oriented to classify, to gather and to assign it a coded order, establishing subtypes, keys, areas and references to pages.

This is a proposal of selected reading, where it is sought to synthesize the most outstanding

aspects in each part of the work, which due to its importance, is included as reading material in postgraduate courses, and suggesting, nevertheless, the complete reading of the book to greater enrich personal knowledge on the matter.

## **DEVELOPMENT**

Christopher Hood and M. Jackson's work, "The Administrative Argument" consists of 4 parts that can be read according to the order in which the, reader prefers to organize.

### **FISRT PART**

It is dedicated to the administrative argument and the administrative doctrine, the paragraph corresponding to "we will organize ourselves", takes some distance from the usual treatment of this matter, and it outlines on the other hand, the query as to which are the doctrines and arguments that convince one to adopt one or another organization form. By means of interrogating 3 "philosophers" as to of how we should be organized, they deduced three different focuses (the number 3 repeats itself throughout the work). By means of this procedure the authors arrive to the following conclusions. Each philosopher proposes one or more administrative doctrines, each group of doctrines offers a different answer as to how to be organized, none of the doctrines are new, and lastly none could prove the truthfulness of the doctrines. The ideas based on common sense, with the support of valid examples which fit to give them force, they demonstrate the rhetorical character of public administration since it is this administration that is treated in this book.

In paragraph II, "Doctrines and persuasion in the administrative argument", the relationship between doctrines of the previous chapter and the administration "science" is analyzed. There are three possibilities, a "Hobbes one " that proposes a procedure to demonstrate which is the way of being organized, and to subject them to approval; another is "Aristotelian" that sustains that there is no better form of being organized, because it depends on the circumstances, and in third place to study the relationship between argument and acceptance, before the existent connection between design and performance.

There is also, an interesting question when the authors sustain that the effect of an

administrative doctrine is in function of its credibility and not of its truthfulness, this opens up the road for the rhetorical analysis that is sustained all through this work, highlighting the persuasive effect in the presentation of the ideas where metaphor and analogy, complete a fundamental role.

Rhetoric it compared to a code which unlocks a lock, which represents a problem, this code, is that speech which is able to convince. Deepening this focus, the authors introduce a distinction between doctrines, philosophies and justifications.

The authors clarify that they understand as philosophy, a group of doctrines that keep relative coherence, backed by justifications, which are divided into "sigma type", referred to effectiveness and allocation of resources and tasks, "theta type", linked to justice and the carrying out of duties, and "lambda type" that has to do with dependability, solidity and adaptability, especially under adverse conditions. A doctrine may have one or several justifications, different doctrines may also share the same justification and different philosophies may share the same doctrines, as it is possible to find similar philosophies with different doctrines.

Then the relationship between the theories is analyzed (they explain in a part of the context), the policies (intentional declaration towards a part of the context), and the doctrines (group of ideas), these being located between the two previous ones on an imaginary axis.

Six characteristics are detailed, that were found recurrently in the administrative doctrines: \* "they are ubiquitous (somebody will always say how to do something successfully) \* they are organized on flexible data and logic" \* they triumph over their rivals by means of a social process of acceptance" \* they are usually contradictory (rival proverbs are used, which are mutually annulled) \* they are often unstable (subject to fashions) they tend to rotate (they appear rebaptized under new forms), this last one linked to the previous one. Before treating on the acceptance factor, with which the first part concludes, H. Simon's program undergoes criticism, who demonstrated that the principles in organization seemed like proverbs, and product of a positivist era, tried to link design with performance, by means of systematic experiments as those of the natural sciences. Even due to this effort, the proverbial focus continues being effective. It is this conclusion that gives cause to the authors to suggest that before the connection between design

and performance, it is preferable to examine the "bunch of keys" (group of doctrines, justifications and philosophies) of the administrative argument.

## **SECOND PART**

Summary of 99 examples under the items who – what – how, in that order, (chapters III, IV and V), of administrative doctrines of all times. The methodology tries to find repetitions, beyond the denominations that assume at each period of time, in intent to prove that there is nothing new under the sun. It tries to separate the straw from the wheat, in a reduction of doctrines in time, as a common denominator that robs them of perturbing elements for the analysis. An alphanumeric classification code is used, which also connects with similar doctrines.

## **TIRAD PART**

Treats the acceptance factor which corresponds to section VI, where 3 examples of administrative argument corresponding to 3 reports of different periods of time and places, are introduced, they are: the Northcote -Trevelyan, the Brownlow and the Wilenski New South Wales

Report on Government Administration. The first one arises after the patronage crisis, the right to vote in the 1830's decade, for the middle class, that implied less public employments than voters, since the patronage was used by the outstanding families for their second children, with mediocre capacities that derived in a system crisis. The report presents suggestions for the problem, as for example exams for the recruitment, promotion due to merit and separation of the intellectual and routine work. Although these ideas did not prosper in the short term, they had a 70 year-old impact in British public administration. The second report corresponds to a derivation of Roosevelt's New Deal, the Federal Government's structural framework was conformed by more than 100 units, which depended more from Congress than from the president, therefore this report suggests a vertical and more centralized informative structure that allowed the president an effective control, logically it was neutralized by Congress, but through time it achieved a great impact. The last of the reports is more recent, and it arises to overcome the bureaucratic inertia, it is of a more combative reformist focus, than the previous ones.

Why? if in the beginning they did not have acceptance, later they achieved it?. Here 6

requirements are enunciated: 1) symmetry between problem and solución.2) Use of the metaphor to achieve persuasion.3) Ambiguity for diverse recipients. 4) Emphasis on the public benefit. 5) Selection of arguments in favor, hiding the contrary ones. 6) Influence on doubt with the rhetorical argument.

Chapter VII presents fiction and metaphor in the administrative argument. Here we can appreciate a work hypothesis based on the force of the metaphor and fiction to persuade, taking advantage over the "concrete factual realism" which looks for truth without decorations.

Mary Douglas, anthropologist who analyzed the roots of institutional thought, sustains that thought should be metaphoric to be instituted, and that, while greater the fiction, it captures greater attention and intellectual impulse. In economy, fiction of an economic opportunist and selfish entity is given, and of the economically rational individual. In this order the perfect information and the uniform distribution participate of the market power. All generating respect and admiration.

Perhaps the CFR (concrete factual realism) due to Bentham's influence, that in the beginning attacked fictions as the original contract, as a means to win power and wealth, had its effect, although we should wonder up to what point, Bentham was preponderant in the orthodox public administration, reflection of the CFR. What possibilities are there of eliminating the myths and fictions that are behind the formal relationship of structures and procedures? What to say of the dichotomy between the elaboration of policies and administration? Perhaps the explanatory factor is how the public administration is, due to enthusiasm of transforming it into a science.

Types of Metaphors and Fictions:1) Tetamae. 2) Instruments for innovation. 3) Instruments to confront the contradiction of rules and the excessive inclusion. 4) Instruments for the explanation. Tetamae: Japanese phenomenon to adopt explanations that nobody believes, but convenient for public speech. They are given because it is easier to defend than the true reason, within certain wisdom limits.

Instruments for innovation: They are good to persuade that a new case type can fit into previous categories (to treat airplanes as if they were ships).

The new tatemala replaces the previous ones as they lose credibility, things change but they

continue being the same.

If there is no difference between politics and administration, then all administration is politics, and the only thing that fits is the participative democracy, but it is impossible, because as Oscar Wilde said "there are not enough nights in the week."

Procedures to confront the contradiction of rules and excessive inclusion. The excessive inclusion refers to prohibit or to sanction facts that have not been in the legislator's intention (that an ambulance cannot enter a space to transport an injured boy). It is common then for two procedures, to reinterpret the facts or change them, to avoid penalizations, for that, the use of fiction is necessary.

Fictions and metaphors as instruments of explanation and interpretation

There is a fine line between fiction and metaphor as justification. E.g. The German cameralism metaphor that the State is like one great family farm, works in two directions. Two classic administration metaphors are those that assimilate a machine or an organism. In the machine metaphor, Max Weber based himself on it for his bureaucracy; the workers were as the machine's teeth. In this sense their functions and capacities are assimilated to be reprogrammed. The machines have to be repaired, controlled and maintained. If bureaucracies are machines, the same evaluations would be applied: reliability, security, production, useful service. At present, with a more modern focus, they are the information processing machines.

The organism metaphor comes from antiquity; State and Church were considered as bodies. If they are organisms, it is expected for them to be born, grow up and to decline, as well as to defend themselves when they are attacked, and their survival is endangered, they compete in battles to win territories, and that they adapt themselves to the environment. The vital cycle metaphor, Bernstein (1955) and Anthony Downs (1967), to explain the quick growth phenomenon, and the high "infant mortality" in the first years. Also when one speaks of illnesses and dysfunctions, and therefore cures and treatments.

Another contemporary application of the organic metaphor is the notion of population systems and ecology, in which the organizations are seen as competitors to occupy the niches of

their environment, with rival candidates that are expelled or modified by evaluative selectors.

Fictions and metaphors may be difficult to identify, their persuasive effectiveness can depend on this.

The authors sustain that the orthodox public administration was in favor of the CFR which has impeded that it be seen as a discipline, in the sense of the economy and with it the loss of persuasive power, while metaphor and fiction are crucial for the practical and intellectual development of the administration, they assure that to equal the econocrats the trained hardship that derive from adopting false suppositions consistently, would be needed to be reached.

#### **FOURTH PART**

Called "Conclusion" and made up of chapters VIII "Two administrative philosophies: The modern and the antique" and IX "Recapitulation and conclusion", Two examples of administrative philosophies, the XVIII century cameralism movement, and the NPA (new public administration) of the '80's are analyzed. 3 situations of the comparison are deduced from both.

- The NPA: United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia, with Canadian and American variants, are vague terms similar for the flu virus that transmutes itself and appears again, the same as cameralism, crossed national frontiers and different policy sectors, their characteristics are:
  - A change in the administration policies, emphasizing more in costs than in policies
  - Change aggregation to degradation in the organization of public services, in the U shaped monopoly systems to the detailed budgets.
  - Plan changing and well-being rendered by public services to the emphasis in reduction of costs and labor discipline.
  - Change the process to the production of control mechanisms and responsibilities (quantitative methods for measuring performance and efficiency)
  - Divorce between provision and production in public policy. Term contracts and the handing over to the private sector.

Many of the ideas came from practice and not from the academic world.



Taylor's influences to avoid waste and lack of efficiency.

The late cameralism: A group of administrative doctrines. Is among the lost causes but helps to understand the acceptance factor. Its name arises from the chamber in which taxes were gathered. It influenced Europe in its time. It was conservative and radical, conservative from what it takes from Christian absolutism as the natural order of society, static structures with an appropriate life level for each social class, radical for trying to be a State driven economic development science, designed by the Germans by means of industrialization. It is characterized by:

- Change from noble birth to meritocracy to recruit Public administrators. (1770, entrance exams).
- Change of feudal rights knowledge, to management science. (It includes Fiscal administration, in natural resources and economic regulations).
- Change of local particularities to standardized principles.
- Change to a more professionalized system, based on university studies.
- Explicit procedures to assure the execution of duties, fixed salaries.

The philosophy rests on five supposed principles:

- A strong State rests on economic development.
- The economic development and the social order are not spontaneous; they require the government's active participation.
- Professional public services, loyal to the State and not to a cast.
- That the intermediate organizations are noxious (unions, etc.) for economic development.
- Economic development, social welfare, strong and educated leader will tend to be synonymous.

In their more general form these suppositions have not disappeared at the present time. The NPA and late Cameralism as doctrine groups.

There are 7 likenesses.

- The term public administration.

Administrative technology as key for effective state administration.

- Execution should be separate from political appointments.- Austerity as an administrative

virtue and the importance of State financial system.- Preference to avoid direct state administration in complex processes

- Hierarchical and centralist nature in the practice.
- Absence of questioning of social and political order in which the public administration operates.

Some differences: NPA a single boss, cameralism collegiate forms at the highest levels. NPA empowers administrators, Cameralism, decisions by means of rules. NPA limitation of public service duration, remuneration according to performance, Cameralism, favored permanency and fixed salaries.

The NPA and the late cameralism as argument forms.

Cameralism invoked science but was expressed in Baroque form, with argument style in form of histories narrated in great detail; its science was the detail of practical rules, florid style and great generalizations.

One could hope that the NPA have Simon's style tests and controls, but there were no experiments and the pilot tests were rare and ambiguous.

Six keys for persuasion, comparison between NPA and Cameralism.

To understand why the NPA key fitted the lock in the '80's the same as cameralism in the XVIII century and their loss of power in the following century, 6 key elements of the acceptance factor, should be studied

•Symmetry. Among the existent doctrines or the community problems, which one tries to persuade. In cameralism it was sought to build a strong German state to equal the great powers, Russia and Great Britain). For Frederic the Great the key to the performance of his soldiers was the feeding of the peasants. After the French Revolution, the Germans were convinced that what was necessary was a revolution from above to avoid a revolution from below, and that it was important to strengthen Germany re France and Prussia. It also supported the centralizing pretenses of the monarchy, re the dispersion of the authority handed over to the people. The monarchy wanted to be rid of aristocracy in government, judicial and

military positions, due to birth right. Therefore it developed proposals for the king's control on the new bourgeois officials (administrative performance by automatic rule)

- As to the NPA, although it is very recent, to be able to be fully appreciated, one can say that; concordant with a desire for change, emergence of something new. An emergent system of policy elaboration as technology in political campaigns (opinion polls, professional political strategists) the objective is to be able to be in contact with the big groups and their changes, thus Thatcher was able to be in power longer than if she had done otherwise.
- Such a development would imply a growing demand of elected politicians for advising. It would be trapped between the professional survey polls and party strategists, on one hand and on the other one the public services administrators,
- The so called post-industrialism with its socio-technical changes, Kondratiev's fifth cycle. Imply a change in top technology, displacing old technology for microelectronic and biotechnology.
- Change in the economic structure that moves away from mass production, standardized to come closer to the services and to production flexibility.
- Change in the composition of the electorate labor forces, with the increase of office workers with university education.

#### The metaphor

Cameralism incorporated two very powerful metaphors, the first one the image of a State like a great family inheritance and of the government as the property administrator. The second, more mechanical, conceived society, as a factory in which all had to play a role, and the government as a factory machine. As the German leaders tried to imitate the English industrial system, it is probable that this metaphor was very convincing.

The NPA primordial metaphor was to direct the state organization as a private corporation. The high officials stopped to speak as bureaucrats, they changed their language (e.g. to Administer by results). The private sector consultants moved to the public one.

#### Ambiguity

Cameralism's main ambiguity resided in the supposition that the diverse parts of German society

were harmonious. This covered the necessities of state governments' centralization and the peoples' privileges. The opposed forces partly reconciled themselves. Radical and conservative elements are combined.

The NPA's attraction was the capacity of its ideas to appeal, at the same time, to different groups. Public welfare and private interests.

The public administration's new service grants a new base to reduce personnel and expenses, and reducing the power of the public sector's unions and of service professions.

The clientist policy as a condition of public regulation which benefits the private sector.

Selectivity in the argument

It is the selective use of the example and the motto, instead of the demonstration by means of solid data. Cameralism selected histories to prove what it sought. It used authors such as Montesquieu (of the Illustration). Particular historical events were used as proofs for general truths. NPA also appealed to mentioning examples, mottos, and its defense was abundant in flawed anecdotes and waste of the "old public administration."

Histories of successes and failures were selected, carefully omitting those that did not fit in the wanted stereotypes. The doctrines that did not fit were left to one side.

The elimination of doubt.

The capacity to eliminate the well founded doubt, such as a successful theatrical representation is destined to eliminate the spectator's doubt.

E.g. That the interests of a prince were in no way the interests of the peoples' group.

One of the characteristics of the elimination of the cameralism doubt was the enormous production volume. That their inconsistent comparison with the private sector as to politicians' remunerations and the high executives, at the same time, they rejected the argument for the line workers in the public sector.

One of the characteristics for cameralism doubt elimination, was the enormous volume of their written production - that could serve to silence or as to convince - But late cameralism could not eliminate doubt. The defeat of Prussia on behalf of Napoleon weakened its credibility, the

abandonment of the mercantilist ideas for the liberal ones, seems to have caused damage for its association with the camarists administrative postulates. The NPA did not appeal to a wide volume of its production.

They used certain arguments:

Ad hominem, which treated the skeptic as réprobos. That is to say that they attacked in a personal way those who expressed doubts, instead of attacking their arguments, the skeptics were presented in this way as not belonging, not very practical dreamers or theoretical academics.

The time pressure that caused a sensation of crisis and urgency, with the purpose of eliminating the objections based on the advice of "look before buying."

- The load cult

- Amnesia. Forgetfulness, which some doctrines declared as new had been discarded; the doctrine that adopted the managerial methods had already had a long history.

Conclusion: to understand the administrative argument:

As a final framework, the circle is closed with an analysis of those "philosophers" of the beginning, concluding that, that of military orientation sticks to the justifications lambda type, linked to security, resistance and solidity, closer to the philosophy proposed by cameralism. On the other hand the philosopher of managerial type, selected the justifications sigma type, that have to do with the competent use of the resources, and that would be represented in the NPA. Lastly the philosopher of religious orientation was defined in favor of the justifications tau type, that correspond with the concern to avoid corruption and insure justice, but the two analyzed philosophies seem to include few of these in their doctrines.

## **CONCLUSION**

The contribution of the description of administrative doctrines is important, not as from their names or times, but for the methodology already commented, the book, composed of 4 parts (in spite of the authors' suggestions "to read it") lacks an integral coherence, and it looks more like the sum of the parts than to a whole.

On the other hand, the initial effort of carrying out a serious study of why the solid and predicative advance of this discipline? failures?, science?, it loses force when introduced to the topic of fiction and metaphor. From CFR to persuasion?, where there appears to be what seems to be the background question, a mere complaint of the lack of Administration power, opposed to the "econocrats", and their power of persuasion. It gives the impression that the Administration defense in favor of the CFR, makes it "poor but honest", as the authors say.

It draws the attention that metaphor and fiction are considered in the following way "Only with these tools we will be able to put in order and to reinterpret the palpable confusion of "reality."

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Lastly, although the election of the number 99 is defined as the top of doctrines to be studied, the explanation as to why to stop when finding this numbe, is not given. The numbers 3 and 6 are repeated in the text, then 99, Coincidence?

It is outstanding how 3 reports on Public Administration are recovered from history, from different countries, because they show the vision that was preponderant at that time on this matter, allowing the comparison of the evolution of the ideas in time and how they impacted in their countries of origin and the later popularized outside them.

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