

Piotr Szreniawski

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin

ORCID: 0000-0002-3448-0298

**METHODOLOGY OF ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES
FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE THEORY
OF HIERARCHIES' RIVALRY**

Methodology of science is an issue attracting philosophers' attention for centuries, it is also of great importance in teaching. There is a noticeable interconnectedness, at an abstract level, between the way school subjects are distinguished and the way science is organized, however, achievements of sociology suggest that it is the human factor that is decisive not only when we consider the problem of teaching in schools, but also in the way scientific activity is handled. Hence, there are attempts to adjust the typology of sciences to the interests of the scientists involved. Another case relates to the attention paid by a methodologist of science to theoretical issues and disregard for more detailed aspects. On the one hand such approach makes it possible to apply clear classification criteria, on the other hand it may lead to the departure of science from social needs.

Theory of hierarchies' rivalry shows regularities related to the competition among various entities and systems. In administrative sciences one should show the rivalry of methodological concepts and the rivalry among selected entities. It is also necessary to focus on the relations between administrative sciences and other sciences. Classification criteria applied to differentiate sciences may comprise issues related e.g. to the subject matter of studies, the methods used or attempts to comprise the selected domain of science in a form of a limited number of sets. Sciences change their names, but on the other hand we can notice a continuity of names accompanied with a simultaneous change in the issues covered by a given science. Obviously scientific advancements in a way stimulate transformation in the internal order of a science and lead to changes in the areas of its focus, however sometimes the changes in the way a name is perceived may, as an example, be linked with a loss of importance or significance by a given science or with a recognition that completely different

issues should gain researchers' attention. Alchemy, in the past recognised as a very important science, later became synonymous to pseudoscience. On the other hand, metaphysics, by philosophers seen as a serious area of study, outside the world of philosophy may be perceived as a synonym of incomprehensibility. The concept of higher maths is frequently evoked with reference to self-perceived lack of knowledge of difficult issues related to greatly varied domains, not only scientific. Likewise, recognition, in literal or metaphoric terms, of phenomena in some way associated with a given discipline may be manifested by the use of their names, e.g. "there is no chemistry between us", or "biology has decided". The multitude of terms describing various sciences does not reduce the multiple meanings of the term alone; e.g. in Polish the term *nauka* is used to describe a science, as well as the process of studying by a pupil and the process of advancing the body of knowledge by scholars. The scientific world comprises both people, working in laboratories or at universities, and the culture shared by them.

Significance of specific individuals/entities in development of science may also be recognised as an important issue for methodology of sciences. Great individuals sometimes symbolise specific domains, schools or theories. People who present views of founding representatives of specific sciences, schools or theories in a way use the authority of those individuals to add credibility to their own words, however the process of conveying other people's opinions may also be perceived e.g. as a way to refer to the community whose culture we cultivate. From the standpoint of the theory of hierarchies' rivalry, the important aspects include reference to and recognition of the greatness of specific individuals, e.g. authors of theories or founders of sciences, as well as links between science and the environment, among others by ignoring or recognising accomplishments of people representing other schools, countries or cultures. Methodology of sciences, from the viewpoint of the theory of hierarchies' rivalry, relates to competition between various concepts for organising sciences.

According to the theory of hierarchies' rivalry, social life means rivalry of hierarchies. Rivalry may take forms of physical combat, discussion or be seen e.g. in the sphere of respectful behaviours; it may involve small groups of people or large empires. The processes connected with rivalry of hierarchies include establishment of new hierarchies, absorption of weaker hierarchies by stronger ones, and changes at the top of hierarchies. Changes at the top of hierarchies may take a form of revolution or invasion. The term revolution here relates to a change executed by a lower hierarchy belonging to a given hierarchy, while the term invasion relates to an impact of another hierarchy on a change at the top of the hierarchy. This is similar to a situation where a choice is between promoting a staff member to a managing position or nominating a manager from outside the organisation.

Among various opinions related to administrative sciences there are views claiming it is a single science and on the other hand there are arguments showing multitude of administrative sciences. The concept of the three pillars of administrative sciences may be considered as a middle-of-the-road idea. A comparison of the dynamic advancements in the study of administrative law, and the more modest study of administration as well as the almost completely ignored discipline most commonly referred to as science of administrative policy shows a lack of balance in the development of the specific components of the above triad. The concept of a single study of administration, sometimes referred to as theory of administration, is consistent with the opinion claiming that each and every science can be recognised as philosophy, in line with the original meaning of this word. Arguments supporting the opinion about a multitude of administrative sciences refer to such facts as the development of such disciplines as history of administration¹ and the emergence of such subdisciplines as sociology of administration and psychology of administration². Here one should point out that the good will of representatives of various sciences enables collaboration and sharing of information, despite the differences of opinions regarding methodology of sciences.

The dominance of the study of administrative law may provide an example for an analysis from the standpoint of the theory of hierarchies' rivalry. University "departments of law and administration" in actuality often are "departments of law", even though more students in these departments pursue other courses of study than law. Likewise, research in administration is not always adequately valued, and researchers many times are forced to add legal issues to their research in administration – otherwise such studies are not recognised as serious enough. In this context there is a noticeable conflict between the way administrative sciences are looked down at, and the willingness displayed by representatives of more theoretical or historical legal sciences to teach courses in administration or to hold positions in administrative courts. To avoid excessive controversy, one must point out that these phenomena alone do not have to impair e.g. the quality of teaching or adjudication if a given individual performs their duties with diligence; this however must be linked with disapproval for underestimation of administrative sciences. To be fair we must remember that certainly such reservations also apply the other way, e.g. with regard to administrative science specialists interested in the theory of law, sociology or psychology.

The decision related to the unity or multitude of administrative sciences does not have to be clear-cut and definitive, so one can sometimes look at administrative sciences as a whole, while permitting the specificity of selected sciences when conducting detailed research. This variable perspective may facilitate flow

¹ J. Malec, D. Malec, *Historia administracji i myśli administracyjnej*, Kraków 2000, p. 11.

² T. Skoczny, *Podstawowe dylematy naukowego poznania administracji państwowej*, Warszawa 1986, p. 47.

of information across administrative sciences, and make it possible to avoid duplication of studies focusing on specific problems, unless varied approach to one subject matter is required. Interdisciplinary knowledge of administrative sciences can be inspiring, provided that it does not limit development, e.g. by imposing views or terminology³.

Hierarchies' rivalry among scientific centres relates to both fame and more prosaic aspects. Various dimensions of rivalry among hierarchies tend to be interconnected; hence we may see association e.g. between recognition for significance of a given scholar and the development of a hierarchy with which the said scholar is or was linked. On the other hand, underestimation of research or even specific sciences, most commonly results from attempts to limit a competing hierarchy.

The issue of rivalry in the sphere of language is not only related to the choice of a name for a given domain or a phenomenon, but is also linked with communication in a specific language. The noticeable difficulties in translating concepts e.g. related to self-governance or even names of sciences make it necessary to choose among various ways of presenting the relevant issues. One may seek to achieve compliance e.g. with sciences in German language or to independently develop a conceptual apparatus. These two tendencies as a rule should be combined in a specific way, hence it is necessary to acknowledge accomplishments of various European countries, and at the same to promote underrated scientific centres or communities.

Imperialist tendencies in science can also be seen in the domain of methodology of sciences, for instance in developing historical perspectives covering subject matter from the standpoint of a specific facility. Lies produced by historians, as a rule, are used by the authorities wishing to impose a vision of the past which justifies specific actions or the state of affairs; later however the subsequent generations of researchers, out of ignorance rather than ill-will, propagate the untrue picture of the events. A controversy regarding existence of objective opinions e.g. related to history, should not lead to careless approach to science, and activities in the field of methodology of science should also be associated with attempts to present events based on the best knowledge. Such naive approach may also be linked to a pursuit of pure knowledge, which many times obviously led to embarrassing results. Perhaps, however, attempts to judge phenomena related to methodology in a relatively detached way, make it possible to choose solutions based on scientific rather than e.g. personal or political criteria.

The theory of hierarchies' rivalry assumes that hierarchies include systems of norms and associations. In this context the term associations should be understood in a way similar to the concept of organisation, in the subjective sense, because if we use the concept of group, this will not be consistent with achievements of sociology. Notably, a distinction into community and society, as de-

³ Z. Leoński, *Nauka administracji*, Warszawa 2004, p. 15.

scribed by Ferdinand Tönnies⁴ is not used here. Hence, associations comprise individuals acting together. Even if there is emphasis to the importance of equality-related issues, and there are no formal structures, associations can be described as hierarchies since they are linked to systems of norms, also seen as hierarchies. Importantly, systems of norms and associations are usually interconnected, but these two types of hierarchy are distinguished because rivalry between hierarchies, as a rule, takes a form more linked with the rivalry of systems of norms, or related to rivalry between organisations in a subjective sense – seen as associations.

By analogy, just as the totality of legal norms may be divided into branches, the totality of scientific knowledge may be divided into sciences, however such distinction does not depend only on the subject matter linking norms of a given branch or research in a given science; it also relies on acceptance by the society⁵. Social approval in the area of methodology of sciences, regarding the terminology and the contents, both in scientific research and in education, comprises acceptance by scientists and by the political environment. Rivalry of hierarchies in this sphere may be linked with the relationship between progress in scientific research and expertise of political decision-makers. Most commonly this relation resembles Weber-type relationship between administration and politics, which means it is linked to existing specialist expertise in sciences and less academically oriented politics. Importantly, key decisions are made in politics – as much as in business - while administration or even the sphere of science must adapt.

The extent of freedom in scientific research may be associated, e.g. with the autonomy of a university or with political pressure faced by the sphere of science. Issues related to financing or employment commonly reflect to what degree science is independent from politics. A certain degree of autonomy awarded to entities involved in science may be seen to reflect a growing importance of these entities. By perceiving these entities as a hierarchy, it is possible not only to focus on their rivalry with other entities, but also to investigate the relevant phenomena as processes occurring within a larger hierarchy, comprising e.g. a specific country.

Rivalry of normative systems with respect to methodology of administrative sciences may be perceived in various planes. Apart from the academic rivalry between countries, for instance involving emphasis to both the significance of their own scholars and application of methodologies developed by these individuals, we can point to such phenomena as coexistence of administrative sciences with organisation studies or legal sciences. It is suggested the flow of information between administrative sciences and organisation sciences is insufficient.

⁴ F. Tönnies, *Wspólnota i stowarzyszenie*, Warszawa 2008, p. 67.

⁵ S. Pilipiec, P. Szreniawski, *Akceptacja społeczna jako podstawa wyodrębniania się gałęzi prawa*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego. Seria Prawnicza” 2010, Prawo 9, p. 121.

Students taking economics courses sometimes learn about similar issues, or profiles and achievements of the same classics that are discussed in administration courses. On the other hand, detailed research in organisation sciences in many cases investigates phenomena related to administration processes, however without focus to their specificity. Hence, we are dealing with effects of subjective approach to research in administration. From the standpoint of organisation sciences, administration is an example of an organisation, or it is an organisation with specific characteristics⁶. On the other hand, according to representatives of administrative sciences, specificity of administration (obviously perceived as an organisation, however of a specific kind) is so distinctive that many observations pertain to administration only⁷. A starting point here may involve concept analysis, therefore we will achieve different results, depending on how we understand the term administration. In many cases regularities related to administration apply to other organizations as well, however due to its strong links to the public sphere, administration is a characteristic entity. Here we can notice similarities between administration and administrative law. It is well known that Romagnosi's considerations related to public law also included constitutional law, criminal law and administrative law; the latter was actually distinguished by him. Because of its associations with the authority on the one hand, and with office work on the other, administration combines that which is general with that which is specific. Administration is a well-defined mediator between a citizen and the authority. It is sufficiently interesting, so that in many countries there are administrative courts and schools providing education to future administration personnel; besides that, research in administration is carried out.

From the standpoint of the theory of hierarchies' rivalry, ordering of administrative sciences may be perceived as implementation of specific individuals' ideas; it may also be an example of how solutions adopted in other countries may be copied. In Poland there are well-known examples of foreign models implemented in practice, and frequently it is the attitude to the relevant culture that seems to determine perception of the regulations or entities imitated based on foreign models. As an example, the solutions adopted in Poland, such as courts of justice based on Austrian models, or the institution of Ombudsman, known from Sweden, are not associated with complexes; on the other hand, the Russian origins of the Supreme Audit Office sometimes are ignored. A super interesting phenomenon was the fact that Japan applied western models during Meiji reforms. As Japan's industry was developing, the initial acknowledgement of its backwardness was replaced by a sense of the country's uniqueness, and by ef-

⁶ J. Łukasiewicz, *Zasada organizacyjnej elastyczności aparatu administracji publicznej*, Warszawa 2006, p. 42.

⁷ J. Borkowski, *Określenie administracji i prawa administracyjnego* [in:] *System prawa administracyjnego*, vol. 1, ed. J. Starościk, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk 1977, p. 34.

forts to impose the adopted solutions on the neighbouring countries. Many historical examples of attempts to influence the entire world were associated not only with imposition of political power or with military action, but also with cultural influence, related e.g. to language and the area of science. Certainly, such issues may be linked to the relationship of the power of a country, the size of its cities or its financial capacities and development of culture, including science; however, it is also necessary to acknowledge the capacity of imperial powers to promote or even impose their worldviews and culture to other countries. An example of Ionian philosophy, which affects the way of thinking about the world in many different countries despite the insufficient political power of Greece, seems to contradict the association between the strength of a given hierarchy and its effect in other hierarchies; however, this example may relate not only to strength of a country, but also strength of a hierarchy of another kind, in promoting various solutions. Systems of norms, known from ethics, statutory law and in other areas, take effect not only in connection to military or trade contacts between countries. Entities at the same time belong to and represent a variety of hierarchies, although we can often point out which hierarchy affects an entity in a given situation.

The process of hierarchies' rivalry is manifested in methodology of administrative sciences at a level of authorisation, teaching and application of the results of these sciences. Education of officers, i.e. acquainting them with a specific culture, takes place both in offices, at universities and in many other places. An individual, as well as their behaviours and attitudes are affected by their affiliation to various organisations and contact with information from selected mass media. Such effects may be seen as examples connected with an individual's affiliation to specific hierarchies. The most visible dimension of rivalry between hierarchies comprises the examples when an individual must choose among various solutions suggested by the hierarchies. A conflict between a religious norm and a norm of statutory law, or a conflict between requests made by one's supervisor or family member are examples raising specific controversies, yet they are known from real life and from works of literature. Impact of the terminology and the subject matter covered by research, from administrative law to administration studies, is known and acknowledged. On the other hand, a potential for development in the numerous administrative sciences suggests one should reflect on the scope of the subject matter to be covered by the discipline referred to as study of administration.

In many cases research in administration combines approaches used in the traditionally understood study of administration and those applied by other sciences. A specific rivalry may result from deliberations e.g. related to the question whether history of administration should be recognised as part of historical studies or administrative sciences, or whether sociology of administration should be

recognised as part of sociology or as an area of research more closely linked to administrative sciences; this problem may be resolved in various ways, however it is the researcher's affiliation that is of essential importance for conclusions from such deliberations. The lack of its own research method is often brought up as an objection against administrative sciences. To resolve the problem, it is sometimes pointed out that the specificity of the subject matter covered by administrative sciences affects the design of such research, and that numerous methods, such as observation or review of documents, are in fact used in various sciences. According to the concept of general and specific administrative sciences, instead of the traditionally understood study of administration, philosophy of administration is distinguished as a science focusing on the most general and essential issues of administration, and additionally covering the issues of methodology of administrative sciences.

One might wonder if it would be justified to distinguish such disciplines as ethics of administration or aesthetics of administration, given the fact that traditionally aesthetics and ethics are recognised as parts of philosophy. Furthermore, many sciences came into being because of the progress in a specific area of philosophy. Of major importance here is the multi-dimensional independence actually achieved by such disciplines. Rather than top-down decisions establishing separate disciplines of science, here it is necessary to recognise the emerging communities of scholars mainly interested in a given area of the reality. Theory of hierarchies' rivalry suggests that the influence of the political sphere is also important for scientific life, but the political sphere usually to a certain degree takes into account the reality of scientific research. Here we encounter rivalry related to decisions made with regard to separateness of selected sciences, rather than only their autonomy or impact in the domain of politics. Philosophers' rule, envisaged by Plato, was linked with disregard for poets. It is sometimes proposed that administration emerged along with writing, hence a form in writing, rather than spoken word, is a guarantee of accuracy and expertise. The art of administration results from the process of governance, and its usefulness sets it apart from poetry and brings it closer to such disciplines as journalism or art of correspondence. Just like the principle of a written form, the principle of legalism results in the impersonal nature of administration, and its association with authority; thereby it is guaranteed that officials' operations are consistent with the ruling of a regulation or an authority in power. By explaining specific written terms to a client, administration enables communication between the authority and the citizen, as much as adequate interpretation of regulations makes it possible to realise public interest while respecting interest of an individual. From this standpoint administration is both an interpreter and a negotiator. Hence, it seems important to incorporate elements of ethics into teaching of administrative culture, both at the stage of university education and when introducing new em-

ployees to work in administration. The dilemma whether, and to what extent, administrative ethics should be taught at university or by other entities may also be perceived as an example of a rivalry of hierarchies; it may also be a starting point for a discussion about a separate discipline of pedagogy of administration⁸.

Issues related to teaching of administration tend to be overlooked in academic discussions, however the quality of education largely depends on the competences of university teachers related to sharing the knowledge connected, for instance, with application of administrative law. Furthermore, it is necessary to recognise a variety of other issues linked to coexistence of hierarchies, and therefore constituting possible subject matter of research in rivalry of hierarchies and comprising the most important aspects related to the existence of hierarchies in general. By separating subdisciplines focusing on processes, e.g. study of planning, study of managing, study of coordination or control, it may be possible to identify a number of phenomena related not only to administration but also to the functioning of hierarchies. By recognising such disciplines as study of governance, study of self-governance, study of private administration, as well as comparative study of administration and study of diplomacy, we will point to possible research focusing on and comparing various administration-related entities.

From the standpoint of the theory of hierarchies' rivalry and its application in analyses of methodology of administrative sciences, it is extremely important to distinguish educational courses connected with sharing of knowledge related to administration. Selection of specific university courses is a combined result of preferences of the academic staff, requirements defined for the universities by the relevant ministry, as well as expected needs of those graduating from university courses in administration. Teaching of administration at universities may be understood as a process of preparing a future employee of administration for work within the administration hierarchy, operating in a specific environment⁹.

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⁹ S. Ossowski, *Z zagadnień psychologii społecznej*, Warszawa 2000, p. 152.

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Summary

Social life is a rivalry of hierarchies. There are many different ideas about how to organize administrative sciences, and those ideas are contradictory to one another. On one side we have the view that one administrative science exists, and on the other hand we can show many administrative sciences. The administrative science triad can be seen as a compromise between those options. There are many factors affecting how administrative sciences are organised. One of the factors is how academic teaching at universities is divided. Another factor is how countries promote their scientists and their theories concerning administration and similar subjects.

Keywords: methodology, administrative sciences, the rivalry of hierarchies theory

METODOLOGIA NAUK ADMINISTRACYJNYCH W PERSPEKTYWIE TEORII RYWALIZACJI HIERARCHII

Streszczenie

Życie społeczne to rywalizacja hierarchii. Istnieje wiele różnych pomysłów na organizowanie nauk administracyjnych, a te pomysły są ze sobą sprzeczne. Z jednej strony mamy pogląd, że istnieje jedna nauka administracyjna, a z drugiej strony możemy pokazać wiele nauk administracyjnych. Administracyjna triada naukowa może być postrzegana jako kompromis między tymi opcjami. Istnieje wiele czynników wpływających na organizację nauk administracyjnych. Jednym z nich jest podział nauczania akademickiego na uniwersytetach. Kolejnym czynnikiem jest to, w jaki sposób kraje promują swoich naukowców i ich teorie dotyczące administracji i podobnych przedmiotów.

Słowa kluczowe: metodologia, nauka administracji, teoria rywalizacji hierarchii