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STILL THE CENTURY OF BUREAUCRACY?: THE ROLES OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

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The civil service, and public employment more generally, is often seen as stable, predictable, and frankly rather boring. The public bureaucrat has been, and continues to be, an object of scorn as well as an easy target for humorists, and the task of implementing public policy continues to be seen as largely the same as it has been for decades or even centuries. Despite that apparent predictability, the job of the civil servant, as well as much of the environment within which he or she functions, has been transforming rapidly and the public sector is nothing like it was several decades ago. Intellectually, the consideration of public administration has also remained rather stable. Despite numerous changes in the public sector Max Weber's conceptions of bureaucracy still constitute the starting point for most discussions (Derlien, 1999).

Keywords: *public servant, bureaucrat, manager, governance*

Raktažodžiai: *valstybės tarnautojas, biurokratas, vadybininkas, viešasis valdymas.*

The above having been said, the changes within the public sector have not been consistent or uniform, and indeed some approaches to change often have been internally contradictory. Just as many aspects of the public sector have been largely immutable, then paradoxically change has been ubiquitous in government. Change and continuity have existed side by side for most of the history of governing. Therefore, we need to better understand what has happened with the world of the civil servant and with the job that these individuals now perform.

One premise of this article is that the "post-modernizing" of the public sector has been associated with decline in the certainties that we associate with the modern, bureaucratic system. If bureaucracy has declined as a paradigm for the public sector,

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however, it has not been replaced with any single model that can provide descriptive and prescriptive certainty (see Peters, 2001; Frederickson, 2007). Neither scholars attempting to capture the reality of contemporary public administration, nor politicians and managers attempting to make the system work on a day to day basis have any simple model of what the contemporary reality is. Many analysts are consequently forced to examine some aspects of governing and ignore others or to develop *ad hoc* conceptions and prescriptions.

This loss of certainty about managing in the public sector is very unsatisfying for many academics and perhaps for more practitioners, but as well as reflecting contemporary agnosticism—or the presence perhaps of numerous heresies when seen from the old orthodoxy—does capture the struggle to find better ways of governing. To some extent, however, even the definition of "better" is contested about governing, and the multiple goals that have always been present in public administration have become all the more evident (Rothstein and Toerell, 2008). Thus, the contemporary period continues to juggle values of efficiency, democracy, equity probity and accountability (to name but a limited though important set) and to understand that choosing any one to maximize will tend to create problems for at least some of the others.

In this essay I will attempt to lay out at least five contending roles of the current public administrator and discuss how they describe the contemporary reality of public administration, as well as the extent to which they coexist. Any individual administrator may therefore be required to make some choices for him- or herself, and may have to select different values at different times. Likewise, politicians may be forced to choose one or more value to emphasize as they attempt to govern. Having these multiple conceptions does not have to produce chaos and indeed one of the important activities in contemporary governance may be clarifying the approaches being taken more explicitly and with that clarifying the values that any particular system of governance is attempting to maximize. The history of governance often involved masking those preferences but now they can be addressed more directly and the political choices involved can also be clarified.

The roles of public servants

As already noted, the role played by public employees in contemporary governance is not as clear as it once was. While the clarity and simplicity of "old-fashioned" government could clearly be over-stated, there was some sense of how the system would be managed and what the role of the civil servant in that system was (Walsh and Stewart, 1994). That perceived (and real) role for the civil service differed to some extent across countries (Peters, 2009) but at the core, there was some common role for public servants as well as substantial predictability. That predictability was especially evident for the lower levels of public organizations and their tasks of routine implementation seemed quite stable and often numbingly predictable.

As already noted, in Europe much of that traditional model of the public bureaucracy was based on the work of Max Weber. The Weberian model is now commonly reviled in theory and practice, but we must remember that much of the legalism and formality within the model was designed to ensure equality of services, and political neutrality among public servants. Further, the emphasis on files and rules also ensured predictability for both employees and for clients, something far different from the extreme versions of discretion that characterized pre-bureaucratic administrative systems.

The Weberian model continues to serve as the intellectual foundation for thinking about governing, and as the model against which most attempts to reform are directed. Indeed, the neo-Weberian model of the State has become important as a means of understanding what is happening with government after the reforms of the New Public Management have run their course (Bouckaert and Pollitt, 2004; Raanma-Liiv, 2009). The basic logic of the Neo-Weberian State is to retain many of the efficiency values associated with the New Public Management while recapturing some of the emphasis on probity and accountability that were more central to traditional models of the public sector.

In the United States, on the other hand, the Wilsonian model, the separation of roles between the political and the bureaucratic sectors, was applied. Wilson's model was less concerned with the internal management of public organizations than it was with the role of bureaucracy in a democratic political system. Wilson did, however, also reflect the scientific management values of his era. Although he accepted the legitimate dominance of political actors over public policy, he also stressed the superiority of administration as a science, while politics was merely an art. Thus, even then public administrators were in the somewhat ambiguous position of having to follow orders, even if they considered themselves more capable than their nominal superiors in the organizations.

The most remarkable change in the role of the public service and for governing in general is that there is much less predictability and there are often competing demands placed upon people at all stages of governing—from ministers through to the lowest level clerks. This reduced predictability represents the spread of a number of cultural and intellectual challenges to the role of the public sector, as well changes in the real policy challenges being confronted by the public sector. These changes mean that individual public servants may be in a position to define their own role, or have such a definition thrust upon them.

Choice is never easy, but is confounded in this instance because there are several roles that are available to the civil servant, and these all, to some extent, need to be played at different times by the same individuals.[1] Thus, one of the defining features of the public servant in an era of post-modernity is that he or she must constantly be moving among these different roles. Certainly their position within an organizational

[1] The roles identified by Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman (1980) in their seminal study tended to be more fixed for an individual at any one time, although that question did not appear to be addressed specifically.

structure or their specific policy area may affect the extent of change, but almost all public servants will wear several hats in the course of a week or a day, or even an hour. The need to make these choices appropriately also increases the chance of error and of some loss of job satisfaction for the individual.[2]

It is also important to remember that most of the roles mentioned below are not new.[3] These roles have been, to some extent, expected of the public servant for some time. What is different, however, is that in the "modern" bureaucratic age the majority of possible roles were subordinate to the dominant role of being a proper bureaucrat. The public servant could always resort to the law and to enforcing formal standards within the organization, and doing so was rarely incorrect. In what we are describing as a post-modern administration, that role may still be available but it is less reliable as a means of producing good results for the individual, the organization, or government as a whole. In some cases the bureaucratic response may be effective, while in many others the public will no longer accept the legalism. Even many members of the public sector itself will not want to rely on it.

Back to the future—the bureaucrat

One choice available to contemporary bureaucrats that is discussed less often than others is to return to bureaucratic styles of governing. While many observers in and out of government would consider this a retrograde step, there has been an important resurgence in thinking about the role of more formalized styles of managing within government. Reforms during the past several decades have produced a number of improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector, and the market-based logic of this approach has been widely accepted. Although successful in some ways, this approach to managing the public sector has a number of important dysfunctions for governing (see Christensen and Laegreid, 2001). Further, this approach challenges a number of understandings about what good administration in the public sector should be, especially the importance of emphasizing the public in public administration.[4]

The logic of returning to at least some aspects of bureaucracy in the public sector is that the probity and predictability of bureaucracy are no less important in the contemporary public sector than they have been in the past (Olsen, 2006; Du Gay, 2005). The public often denigrates bureaucracy but at the same time demands to be treated fairly and equally by the public sector. Most of the reforms that have diminished the formality of bureaucracy have also tended to produce greater variability in

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[2] On the one hand having a more diverse job may increase satisfaction, but on the other , the need to make complex choices may produce some frustration and indecision.

[3] The most probable exception to that statement is the role as "Democrat". That said, the egalitarian components, even within Weber's model, can be conceptualized as to some extent democratic.

[4] This is now commonly discussed in terms of "public value" and the reassertion of the public interest (Moore, 1995).

the services provided to citizens. Choice is good, provided that there is some certainty for adequate and equitable services.

The creation, or recreation, of bureaucratic forms of governing is especially important for transitional regimes, whether in third world countries, or in the still consolidating democracies of Central and Eastern Europe (Verheijen, 2009). As these political systems attempt to institutionalize new styles of governing after decades of authoritarian rule of various types, there is a need to create formal, legal styles of governing prior to considering any other styles of reform. The New Public Management and other contemporary formats for governing tend to assume the presence of an accepted ethos that will guide the behavior of public servants. Without that ethos, the emphasis on managerial freedom within contemporary public management would significantly reduce accountability and control.

The Neo-Weberian model is therefore particularly apt for transitional governments. It is also important for administrative systems that have been undergoing the rapid changes already mentioned. In many ways, this model of administration reflects some of the ambiguity that we are discussing with reference to individual public administrators. The Neo-Weberian State is, in essence, a hybrid between the managerial and hollowed out state that had been created during the reform era, and therefore may have the capacity to provide some improvements in efficiency as well as probity. Likewise, the individual public servant will have to manifest that set of skills.

The manager

A second role for the contemporary public administrator is that of a manager. As noted above concerning the New Public Management (NPM), the most important change in the public sector has been to emphasize the need for decisive and autonomous public management. NPM may not really be new, it is often not public, but it is management. In this view of the public sector, the principal means of enhancing the quality of services to the consumer (rather than citizen) is to improve the efficiency of service delivery. By providing better services the managerial approach will also reduce the total costs of government and thereby further enhance the legitimacy of government.

Most of the discussion of NPM has been directed at the roles of senior public managers, but some of the ideas associated with this movement have also affected the lower levels of the public sector. For example, the idea of empowerment (Kernaghan, 2008) has been central to some versions of NPM, and in this view it appears that the lower level officials in government are also provided with greater power over the policies they are delivering. Not only does the enhanced role for the lower echelon employee make his or her job more interesting and more motivating, but the ability of these individuals to make more decisions should also improve the quality of the services provided.

Although these ideas of empowering public employees have been to some extent successful, they also generate important management problems. In particular, if all the actors involved in the policy process believe that they are empowered, then no one really is (Peters and Pierre, 2000). The managerial role, perhaps more than even the bureaucratic role, involves the ability to provide direction to other actors. Therefore, if the role is not clearly defined then the role becomes extremely difficult to implement effectively and without conflict. The conflict from other empowered actors must also be considered in light of continued assertions of the power to rule from political actors.

The role of manager is one that is likely to be most comfortable for public servants, especially for higher level public servants. These officials have often expressed frustration when their roles are limited either politically or through formal rules, e.g., about personnel management. Acceptance of the role of manager, however, may make accepting other roles, e.g., that of democrat (see below) more difficult.

The policy-maker

Public servants have always had some role in making policy, but that role does appear to be changing. The traditional policy role for the public service was to serve as advisors for political leaders. Although this role clearly appeared subordinate to the position of the political leader, it was often crucial in the policy-making process. Politicians are rarely selected for their knowledge of policy issues so they may well be dependent upon their civil servants for making good policy. This policy focus from public servants is especially apparent when organizations in the public sector have a clear commitment to a particular policy perspective.

Although the emphasis on policy-roles played by public servants is usually at the upper levels of the system, the lower echelons also play these roles. For example, Page and Jenkins (2005) have pointed out that middle-level bureaucrats have a very significant role in shaping policy, and that they can do so to a great extent independent of the influence of their nominal political masters. Further, the lowest level of the public bureaucracy can also have a very direct impact on policy; they must make numerous decisions about individual clients and the summation of those decisions help to define the "real" nature of public policies. The logic of the bureaucratic role, and of Weberian bureaucracy, is largely to deny the exercise of discretion, although it is abundantly clear that street-level bureaucrats do have substantial discretion and do exercise it.

The policy-making role was generally seen as the major alternative to the "classic" bureaucratic role of implementer and manager of a staff. In that conception, the policy tasks were primarily giving advice to the political masters. This version of the policy making public servant remained (at least in principle) subservient to the political powers. As reforms of public administration have proceeded, however, the policy roles appear to have expanded to necessitate more direct involvement in policy mak-

ing. In particular, part of the logic of the New Public Management has been to empower managers to have more of a say in policy and thereby to reduce the policy role of the inexpert and often fractious political leaders.

The development of a more powerful policy role for public servants to some extent alters fundamentally the bargains made between public servants and their nominal political masters (Hood and Lodge, 2007). The anonymous, yet influential, public servants have been replaced by public servants with greater powers but without the job protections and security they once would have enjoyed. In many ways they have become the unelected policy-makers that critics of the bureaucracy have frequently accused them of being. This power, in turn, has produced more attempts on the part of political leaders to control those officials, and to influence the selection process of senior public officials.

The negotiator

The fourth possible role for the contemporary public servant follows rather naturally on the role of being a policy-maker. The policy role has been a central feature of the activities of the senior public service for some time, and represented the major option for the classical public servants described by Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman (1981). This role of negotiator may have been available for some time, but has become one of the major activities of public servants more recently. This role reflects the tendency of the public sector to provide fewer public services itself and to rely more on the private sector—meaning both the market and social actors—to provide those services.

Contemporary public policy delivery relies heavily on market actors, linked to the public sector through contracts and partnerships. Even before the New Public Management gained iconic status in some countries, a number of efforts were being made to out-source various rather routine functions in the public sector. The interest in using the market has only grown and now extends to much more than (relatively) simple functions such as cleaning and rubbish collection. Partnerships and contracts now involve almost the full range of public sector activities, and often include very complex issues such as financing public works (Lonsdale, 2005) or providing social services. These services are difficult enough to manage when in government, but are all the more difficult when there must be a contract that specifies both the nature of the product and the means of producing it.

The general ideological movement in the direction of contracts and partnerships has been driven by political leaders, but most of the actual work of negotiating and managing these relationships must be done by members of the public service. Not only are they more likely to have the expertise to do this well, but they are also the more enduring members of the public sector. Politicians may come and go, but the public servants tend to remain. This is especially important for the negotiator role because most of the contracting in the public sector is in essence relational contracting (Peters, 2002). Given that it is difficult to specify all the details for social services or

many other public programs, it is important to build strong relationships between the providers of services and the public servants who supervise the contracts.

The negotiations of public servants are not confined to managing contracts with market actors, but also extend to working with members of social networks who are actively involved in policy and administration. These relationships with actors in the private sector must be built on trust, more so than on relationships involving formal contracts. A contract has more specific constraints on the behaviour of the parties involved than does the membership of a social network, so the informality of the networks imposes greater demands on public servants for the ability to negotiate. The role of the public servant in these relationships is more continuous and more innovative than with contracts, so it permits a more active involvement in shaping policy and forms of democratic involvement.

Again, it is crucial to note that members of the public service will be more important than politicians in defining these relationships with social actors. In the first place, the networks often interact directly with relatively low levels of the public sector and therefore are more likely to encounter public servants than political leaders, even at the local level. In addition, if these relationships for making and implementing services are to be successful, they must endure. Therefore, public servants are on average involved in the process much longer than politicians. Finally, the role definitions of public servants are less likely to be threatened by the involvement of other political actors in the process than are those of politicians, so they can provide greater stability and a collective memory for governments.

The negotiator role for the public servant may be a means of encompassing several of the other roles, especially those of manager and democrat. As the public servant negotiates with private sector actors, he or she has the opportunity to stress public values and democratic control in contrast to the market values that have become prevalent in many policy areas. Further, he or she is also capable of achieving management goals through negotiation with market and social actors.

The democrat

Finally, although this role might usually be seen as the antithesis of being a public servant, the contemporary public servant is often called upon to play a significant democratic role in his or her government. This emerging role for the public servant reflects in part the declining efficacy of more traditional forms of democracy. In most established democracies, fewer people are voting, and many fewer people are now members of established political parties (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; Mair and van Biezen, 2001). A great deal of political participation is now being channelled into "flash" political parties, as well as into other less conventional forms of involvement with the public sector.

While many of the principal instruments of political democracy have apparently become weaker over the past several decades, there has been a shift toward using the permanent public bureaucracy (here used in the generic sense) as a locus for public

participation. The use of networks of social actors mentioned above has been one manifestation of that shift toward participation in the public bureaucracy, given that these actors now influence the choices of policy and the manner of implementation. In addition, the public appears to be more concerned with the provision of particular, often local, public services rather than with broad issues of public policy.

This change in the nature of public participation to some extent reflects a continuing shift toward the output legitimation of public action, rather than producing that legitimation through inputs into the political system (Peters, 2010; see also Keane, 2009). The traditional model of democratic legitimation has been twofold: the possibility for the public to vote reflected their choice of policy, and the retrospective judgements of the public on the programs of sitting governments further provided some legitimacy for public action.[5] As political democracy has become less central to processes of governing, this source of legitimation has also become less viable.

The alternative to conventional forms of legitimation is for the public sector to legitimate itself through its policies and its performance. This shift, and the associated role for the public service, is manifested in a number of ways. In general, governments have begun to emphasize their role as service providers rather than as political institutions that emphasize processes and deliberation. For example, one of the central components of the New Public Management has been that government should "serve the customer" rather than be concerned with the political process *per se*. This approach to governing, therefore, has explicitly transformed the public from citizens to consumers of public services, and although this may enhance services, it tends to denigrate the political role of citizens.

In a model of the State dependent upon output legitimation, the public service, and perhaps especially the lower levels of the public service, becomes even more crucial than in more conventional models of governing. The public service is in contact with the public and is responsible for the actual delivery of the public services. It is not only the quality of the services being provided that is important in these contacts. The manner in which they treat their clients influence the way the public views their government. For the average citizens, the policeman on the beat, the social worker, or the postal clerk is the State, and how they are treated does matter. The good news is that most studies find that citizens are treated well, but the bad news is that this often does not transfer into a more positive opinion of the bureaucracy, or the public sector in general.

The role of the democrat may not come naturally to many public servants, even those not steeped in traditional bureaucratic ethics. The assumption in most political systems is that politics and bureaucracy, and perhaps especially democratic politics, are to some extent opposite approaches to governing. Bureaucracies are often portrayed as placing a barrier to the exercise of democracy, but given the problems of contemporary representative institutions, bureaucracy may be an effective alternative. The underlying problem for playing this role is that citizens in many societies

[5] For a classic statement of the difficulties of using elections for steering governance, see Rose (1974).

may not yet recognize the possibilities of influencing policy through the bureaucracy, and may not "send" the role.[6]

Criteria for choice

While it is important to understand the different roles that may be available to public administrators in the contemporary public sector, that is only the beginning for gaining an understanding of the manner in which those public servants will behave while carrying out their duties. The more difficult question is how they choose to play one role or another, and when they make those choices. Although some individuals may opt for one of the roles for all or most of their working life, one important aspect of the "post-modern" public servant is that they may be changing their roles from time to time and attempting to adjust their behaviour to the multiple expectations about their performance.[7]

Some choices for the individual appear rather easy to make. When the public servant must manage a network structure, or a contract, in order to deliver a service, it is rather obvious that he or she must become a negotiator. Likewise, when called upon to advise a minister on policy, he or she must put on a policy-making hat to do the job well. A skilful public servant, as indeed would a skilful employee in a private firm, will usually be able to find the right combination of skills and approaches to the job in order to carry out the tasks appropriately and make their programs perform as expected.

Not all choices are so clear for the contemporary public servant, and even those that appear simple may not be. For example, while the public servant may think that the negotiator role is most suitable when building and managing networks, the public servant must remember that he or she also represents the public sector in these negotiations. In the end, he or she may have to revert to playing a more legalistic, bureaucratic role in order to protect the public interest. As managerial market values have permeated the public sector, maintaining the distinction between the public interest and the interest of the participants may be more difficult, but it is important to remember that distinction. This point only emphasizes the extent to which the traditional bureaucratic model of governing remains viable, and at times necessary.

These difficulties reflect the extent to which conventional models of the public sector have been eroded and no clear alternative has been institutionalized to replace them. Although we have noted that in a number of ways restoring the Weberian bureaucracy model may not have many benefits for society, this notion remains a convenient solution for the public employee, even if it is not always suited to the particu-

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[6] In role theory, the society, or the individuals with whom an individual interacts, transmits a role that the individual must perceive correctly. Of course, if the individual misperceives the role then his or her behavior will be inappropriate.

[7] One aspect of role theory is that there are a set of expectations about the behavior of an incumbent of a position. Further, any individual may have to play a number of different roles and therefore must be sufficiently flexible, and sufficiently astute, to adapt to the different expectations.

lar circumstances. Reliance on the rules of the organization and established practices is, as it has always been, an important protection for public employees and may become even more important once the circumstances of governing become more ambiguous. What may yet be missing, however, is the service orientation that has become more central to governing in the reformed public sector.

The external linkage functions that have become important for contemporary public servants provide them a source of power within the organization. Therefore, rather than adopting more defensive stances by relying on the rules of bureaucracy, public servants can take more positive stances, using their roles as negotiators with private sector actors. This gain in relative organizational power reflects the extent to which contemporary public organizations depend upon their partnerships with external actors to provide services, and as the liaison with those external actors, the relative position of the public servant is enhanced. Therefore, the ambitious public servant has an incentive to adopt that role to the furthest extent possible.

To some extent, playing the role of democrat provides public servants with some of the same internal political advantages as are available to them outside the organization. This role involves the public servant looking outside his or her own organization to serve broader political constituencies, and to promote what may be alternative values and policies within the organization. Public servants have always been in positions that span the boundaries between the public and the private sectors, but emphasizing that role and its potential for democracy does serve as a means of complementing existing democratic institutions. This is especially true when, as noted, some of the traditional political institutions are now less effective in mobilizing public support. It also functions as a means of promoting policies and values that are derived from the connections with society.

The uses of ambiguity

Describing the position and the role of contemporary public servants as ambiguous might be thought to describe a significant problem for these actors. To some extent that may be true, given that learning to be an effective public servant is now a less clearly defined task than in the past, and that the public servant will have to make more individual choices when carrying out their tasks in the public sector. This more ambiguous world may not be the most preferred by more conventional "bureaucrats", who prefer an orderly and rule-defined existence that does not involve potentially difficult interactions with clients.

Despite the inherent problems in ambiguity, there are also a number of advantages (see Christensen and Røvik, 1999) for the contemporary public servant. The most important of those advantages is that the latitude for action for the individual is enhanced. One of the common complaints by public employees is that the formal definitions of their tasks do not allow for innovation and for individual initiative. While the reforms of the last twenty years have to some extent softened the stereotype of the position of the public servant, they have by no means done so entirely and

public servants can only welcome more room for defining and redefining their own positions within the processes of governing.

In addition, the more entrepreneurial among the public service can utilize the ambiguity of roles to increase their powers relative to their nominal political masters. The conventional definition of the role of the public servant has been rather constraining and has defined that role in non-political terms. The ambiguity of contemporary role definitions allows the individual public servant to do more to define their own roles and to mobilize political support from outside the organization. This does not mean that public servants necessarily are the power-seeking, utility-maximizing actors they are sometimes assumed to be (see Niskanen, 1971), but it does mean that they are not the political ciphers that others might have them be. Public servants have ideas and they do have clients, and a more ambiguous definition of their place in the public sector will enable them to exert more of an independent influence.

Finally, ambiguous roles enable the public servant to mix and match responses to the needs of particular policy circumstances, and to provide more nuanced responses to those competing demands than would be possible with more strictly defined roles. The more conventional, uniform conceptions of managing the public sector require rather predictable responses from public employees, but the post-modern style of governing provides more options. The key point is indeed that governance is no longer a simple, hierarchical activity but rather involves more complex interactions between the public and private sectors (see Kooiman, 2003; Peters and Pierre, 2006), and among a number of organizations within the public sector itself. That complexity, in turn, creates a need for individuals who have themselves greater flexibility. With that flexibility must go a significant commitment to the integrity of the policy process in order to manage the inherent complexity of governing.

Conclusion

The task of being a public administrator has never been an easy one. Even when the role was more clearly defined, the necessity of coping with the complexity surrounding most public programs presented a number of challenges to those public servants. The shift toward a less clearly defined understanding of the role of the public administrator in contemporary society has to some extent made the life of the public administrator more difficult. There is a much wider range of possible demands on the public servant, and it is now impossible to rely on the familiar role of bureaucrat as implementer of the law. The individual public servant to some extent has always been responsible for making choices about their choices, but those choices now are even more basic.

On the other hand, after the public sector has been transformed and de-institutionalized, the working life of the public servant may be both more interesting and more effective. Having the opportunity, or even the expectation, of playing multiple roles within the governing process allows public servants not only creativity but also more capacity for solving problems. These opportunities may also enhance the

job satisfaction of public employees, given that they can define their own role, shape their own careers and also have a more active role in shaping policy than traditional models would allow them. They have lost numerous protections they may have enjoyed in the past, but have been able to replace those with a greater degree of freedom.

This changing role for the public servant must also be understood in the context of broader changes within the public sector. In particular, the decentering reforms of the past several decades have created the need to restore some control over policy arising in the centre of government. With that shift toward more power in the centre of government has come the need to empower senior public servants to play a more significant role in the process of linking the decentered processes to central political control. The linkage function will employ a range of the role options mentioned above, but perhaps most notably—the role of negotiator. The negotiations in this context require the public servants to tread a very thin line between politics and administration, and may also require them to be policy entrepreneurs in their own right.

The public servant has often been the object of scorn, but the role is being reinvigorated (albeit in a somewhat different guise) by contemporary political and administrative change. Public servants may still not be the most popular figures for the average member of the public, but they do have crucial roles to play in making the contemporary state function. And it is indeed in part because they have those multiple roles that they are becoming more important to the policy-making process. The ability to provide a range of solutions for policy and administrative problems enables these "bureaucrats" to be central actors in governing. We must be cognizant that the governing process itself also changes as a result of these changing roles for the bureaucrat, and even the notions of democracy will have to be considered in a different light.

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POBIUROKRATINIAI VIEŠOJO SEKTORIAUS TARNAUTOJŲ VAIDMENYS

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Santrauka

Šio straipsnio autorius remiasi prielaida, jog viešojo sektoriaus postmoderniai būklei būdingas tikrumo, kuriuo pasižymėjo moderni biurokratinė sistema, praradimas. Sunykus biurokratijai kaip viešojo sektoriaus paradigmai, jos nepakeitė joks vienintelis visuotinai pripažintas viešojo sektoriaus modelis. Kiekvienas valstybės tarnautojas skirtingu metu gali pasirinkti skirtingas vertybes, ir tokia vertybių bei požiūrių įvairovė nebūtinai sukuria chaosą. Vienas iš svarbių šiuolaikinio viešojo valdymo uždavinių ir būtų išryškinti tas skirtingas vertybes bei požiūrius. Šiuo tikslu straipsnyje pristatomi penki viešųjų tarnautojų vaidmenys: biurokrato, vadybininko, politikos formuotojo, derybininko ir demokrato, taip pat aptariama, kaip šie vaidmenys atspindi šiuolaikinę viešojo administravimo tikrovę, kokiu mastu jie gali egzistuoti kartu. Konstatuojama, jog šiuolaikinių viešųjų tarnautojų pozicijų ir vaidmenų neapibrėžtumas ne tik sukuria papildomų problemų, bet turi ir pranašumų – viešieji tarnautojai turi platesnę veiksmų laisvę, atsiveria daugiau galimybių inovacijoms ir individualioms iniciatyvoms.