

Review

“From the center to the periphery”: an analysis of the internationalization of the public administration education field in the U.S. context

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This paper reviews the internationalization process in the public administration education field within the North American context, from a historical perspective. The purpose is to identify different internationalization strategies used by the North American academy of public administration and how they have changed throughout time. Hence, a field survey was carried out based on document analysis and interviews with key players from main associations in the field. Initially, the article covers the context in which the field of education in public administration emerged, identifying contextual and structural factors that caused it to deviate from its object of study – the public administration field itself. The three internationalization cycles are analyzed below: the Comparative Public Administration movement; the institutionalization of internationalization processes and the creation of independent associations such as NISPAcee and INPAE. Finally, the paper presents some reflections on internationalization processes and their current institutional format, aiming at contextualizing them within the Latin American reality.

Keywords: Internationalization, Public administration, North America.

INTRODUCTION

Standards of excellence in public administration education and research recommend the adoption of internationalization strategies as a way to strengthen and consolidate the field. Nevertheless, the internationalization of education and research on public administration may manifest itself in different ways that range from implementation attempts for comparative or joint pieces of research, to the strengthening of international associations and networks that include various academic institutions. In general, all internationalization strategies of the academy are regarded as desirable and commendable for its strengthening.

However, the internationalization strategies, as well as the way they emerge in different national contexts, may veil questionable presuppositions, from the point of view of their relevance to public administration education and research, or even of the maintenance of organizational structures that have become obsolete within the historical context. The historical perspective concerning the analysis of internationalization experiences may help unveil some of these presuppositions and facilitate the contextualization of internationalization strategies and

forms, with the purpose of adjusting them, on a responsive basis, to local needs and demands.

This paper aims at analyzing the internationalization process of public administration and its education within North American context, from a historical perspective. The purpose is to identify different internationalization strategies used by the North American academy of public administration and how they have changed throughout time.

By trying to study what we call the internationalization discourse of public administration education, a field survey was carried out based on the analysis of bibliography, document and interview sources. The Executive Directors of NASPAA (National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration), in office from 1996 to 2005, were interviewed, as well as the current President and Executive Director of INPAE (The Inter-American Network for Public Administration Education) and members of NISPAcee (The Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe). At the same time, an analysis was conducted of documents provided by NASPAA, referring

to international association projects, as well as of the personal biography of Fred Riggs (1999), one of the main representatives of the Comparative Public Administration movement.

Initially, the article covers the context in which the field of education in public administration emerged, identifying contextual and structural factors that caused it to deviate from its object of study – the public administration field itself. The three internationalization cycles are analyzed below: the Comparative Public Administration movement; the institutionalization of internationalization processes and the creation of independent associations such as NISPAcee and INPAE. The Comparative Public Administration is a movement inspired by the modernist ideology, whose main purpose was the development of public administration metatheories mainly aimed at developing countries. The network of associations of public administration education, which became influential as of the 1960s, implemented the strategy of internationalization institutionalization. Finally, the current internationalization movement shows the division of networks and the creation of periphery associations, among which, INPAE and NISPAcee's role stands out. The article concludes with some reflections, including the discussion of roles that the new associations may play, especially with regard to the structures for quality certification and accreditation of education in public administration in Latin America.

The emergence context of the field of public administration education

The history of public administration education in the United States is closely related to the history of the fields of public administration and higher education.

As emphasized by McSwite (1997), the consolidation of the public administration field was characterized by:

- a) tension with politics, originated since the contribution of the field founders, such as Wilson (1898), Goodnow (2004) and Willoughby (1927);
- b) emphasis on the development of administrative institutions;
- c) establishment of an elite of specialists, guided by the principles inherent in the modernist discourse, of efficiency and science superiority.

The founding of public administration field was characterized by the tension with politics, the emphasis on building administrative institutions, and the establishment of an expert elite, guided by the symbol of science and efficiency (McSwite, 1997). The tension between the French idea of equality and the English idea of liberty, in the context of conflictive values, present within the different local identities before the Civil War, gave birth to the controversial Constitution (Dahl 2001), in which the public administrators weren't even mentioned.

However, other factors also influenced the emergence of public administration. The concurrent industrialization and urbanization process and the massive presence of corruption, of inefficiency in the government and populism, as well as the progressivist ideology, were some of the factors that influenced the outlining of the new field, whose main objective was the search for efficiency and morality within governmental actions.

Thus, the public administration developed based on the concern for corruption and scandals in the public sector; it started in the administrative problems of big cities (and not in European theories of sovereignty, nation-state or separation of powers); it was aimed at reform, but it also reflected the ethos of the Progressive era: "*a fundamental optimism that mankind could direct and control its environment and destiny for the better*" (Mosher 1975: 4). The legitimacy of the new field would take root in the Modernist doctrine of science superiority, called, by McSwite (1997), the "Man of Reason" discourse.

The Progressive era also influenced the establishment of the educational system and the emergence of professions in the United States, based on the same rhetoric about the scientific superiority. "*This was the period in which a new, professional, "white-collar" middle class developed, complete with its own distinctive class interests*" (McSwite 1997: 137). It was the period in which many of the occupations currently recognized as professions were established: accounting, business administration, planning of large cities, forestry, diplomacy, journalism, nursing, public health, postal service, engineering and many others. The development of public administration as a self-conscious field was part of a movement of greater amplitude aimed at professional qualification, whereas its experience was similar in many senses to the one in other sectors (Mocher 1975).

The increase in the number of practitioners in the field of public administration – result of the process analyzed above – was accompanied by the consolidation of the field of public administration education. Thus, a series of educational innovations were implemented, with the purpose of training new professionals in public administration. In 1911, the New York Bureau of Municipal Research founded the Training School for Public Service, which became, in 1921, the Institute of Public Administration, which offered college level education (McSwite 1997). It is interesting to observe that, like public administration, its education was oriented towards qualification needs present in city governments (Stone and Stone 1975: 17).

Notwithstanding the consolidation of public administration (especially in relation to cities) in the beginning of the 20th century, the universities' response to the public administration's educational needs was not immediate. "*Universities could not be expected to prepare students for public service in the absence of a*

definitive market" (Stone and Stone 1975:13).

Uniform increase in educational programs for public administration only started in the 1920s. During the period prior to the establishment of Roosevelt's New Deal, in 1933, several college programs aimed at this field were created. The first real "school" of public administration was built with the transfer of a great part of the programs of the Training School for Public Service to University of Syracuse, in 1924. Soon afterwards, other programs emerged in the University of Cincinnati, University of Southern California, in the University of Minnesota, University of Columbia, in the University of Chicago, and in Brookings Institution from Washington, D.C. (McSwite 1997: 160-161).

Thus, the universities started to qualify students, on a generic basis, in areas that focused on the public sector. This period of expansion of education and training aimed at public administration was also characterized by the "liberation" of the academic training and research machine, and by its concern over state and local administration (Egger, 1975).

Since then, the field of education and training in public administration started growing on a continuous basis. In 1959-60, a research project identified around 100 institutions that offered some kind of degree in the field of public administration, but the great majority of such courses consisted of small programs and not too different from the ones offered by political science departments. Between 1966-67 and 1974-75, the number of independent professional schools of public administration or subjects rose from 13 to 29; the combined schools of business (companies) and public administration, from 9 to 24; the departments of public administration, organized separately, and the institutes that issued diplomas, from 8 to 35; whereas the academic departments that offered an undergraduate degree in public administration or any designated graduate degree, from 25 to 52. In the 90s, virtually all individually-organized schools and departments offered the degree in MPA (Master in Public Administration) (Henry, 1995).

Other factors also influenced the dynamics of the field of public administration education. Among such factors, it is worth highlighting the boom in resources in the expansion of higher degrees in the 1960s and 1970s. However, while there as a "boom" in public administration education, such education was also limited by the existence of structures and values embedded in American universities (Henry 1995). Thus, Dwight Waldo (1975:187) emphasized that: *"There is a realm of less visible events and movements, of which public administration is also a part and to which it is also responsive: the world of intellectual currents and fashions, of academic economics and politics, of disciplinary shifts and fissions, of career opportunities and perceptions"*.

While these factors influenced the consolidation of

public administration education, they also contributed to "separate" it from its object, public administration properly speaking, creating some own dynamics for the field of public administration education. Consequently, some divergences started to arise and even conflicts between PA (public administration) education and PA discourse, as soon as they started to develop as distinct and "independent" fields.

In short, PA is the object of the field of PA education and, to some extent, it was used to legitimate PA, as demonstrated by McSwite (1997). However, this association between the two fields does not mean that public administrators were a result of PA programs. Just as an example, we refer to Waldo (1975:198):

Only a fraction of 1 percent of those entering the public service work each year are products of Public Administration programs – or of Public Affairs or similarly named programs. But there has never been any aspiration to put a Public Administration label on the great majority of public employees, only a hope to prepare enough able persons to male an important difference in the "administrative" component of public employment (Waldo 1975:198).

Figure 1 summarizes the factors analyzed above, whose common denominator lies in the Modernist discourse strength – and its defense of science and technique superiority - in North American society, from the end of the 19th century.

The cycles of the (inter)nationalization discourse

The experience of the Comparative Public Administration

The first great internationalization attempt of the North American academy of public administration is connected with the Comparative Public Administration movement.

The Comparative Public Administration movement coincided with the end of World War Two, when the United States stood out as the only economic superpower in the world. Within the context of a successful Marshall plan (whose programs involved more than 55 billion dollars between 1945 and 1963 for non-military assistance to allies, old enemies and underdeveloped countries), of the collapse of classic colonialism and the proliferation of recently liberated nations, the modernist ideology of the Man of Reason continued from a broader perspective, as developer of nations (McSwite, 1997). The American government and philanthropic foundations found out that they knew very little about the many countries that had recently become important objects of the foreign policy and of technical assistance programs. In order to fill this gap, a group of academics received financial support to go abroad to prepare reports on a wide range of countries, villages,

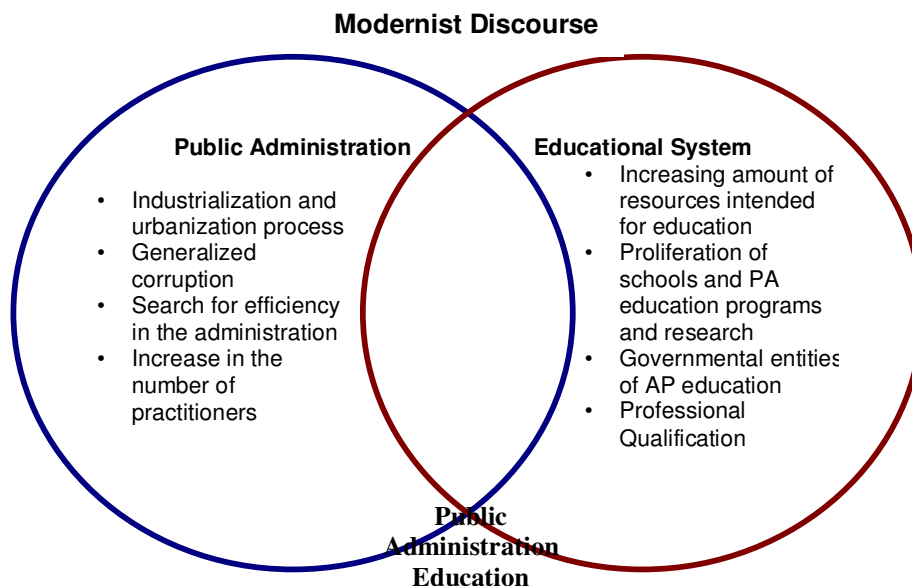


Figure 1: Emergence context of the field of public administration education

Source: Elaborated by the authors

regions and cultures (Riggs, 1999).

These reports were quite relevant in terms of the public administration education:

First, they enlisted the services of many of us, expanding our horizons (literally), enriching the experiential base for our teaching and scholarship, and laying the foundations of an “invisible college” that was to attain visibility as the Comparative Administration Group (CAG). Second, because of the foreign-aid agency often enlisted universities as agents in provision of technical assistance, “contracting-out” came into our consciousness as a new form of delegated administration. We were slow to perceive its potential significance or, in the particular case of universities, to reckon the risks entailed as well as the benefits immediately enjoyed. (Egger, 1975:98-99).

To some extent, in contrast to international economic objectives of the United States government, the period helped build the North American prototype known as “The Ugly American:” *someone who was not “beautiful”, who pitched in with natives, developed relations with them, and worked side by side with them to help them improve their lot* (McSwite 1997: 196).

A series of factors converged and provided support to the Comparative Public Administration movement. An abundance of loan opportunities, favorable political environment, personal histories, humanistic and altruistic values, curiosity, possibility of participation in “exotic” trips and trips to explore different locations, easy money and, probably, some authoritarianism, typical of the modern ideology of the Man of Reason, helped shape the internationalization strategies and may found at the base

of the international involvement of PA academics in the U.S.

Fred Riggs, one of the main proponents of CAG and a recognized theorist in Brazil, where he taught and disclosed his thesis of prismatic societies, offers a testimony, in which the personal history, the modernist ideology of the Man of Reason, the political scene, the organizational and institutional development of the PA field, as well as the evolution stage of its education, consist of important forces that were present in the origin of his involvement with the Comparative Public Administration movement:

Among our special projects was one that especially appealed to me. We referred to IT as “*Old Elephants.*” The premise was that before *international technical assistance under official auspices had been started, private agencies such as foundation and missionary societies had already been engaged in relevant activities.* Just as old elephants teach young elephants by their example how to perform assigned tasks, so the old hands in private technical assistance might be called in to advise and help the newcomers starting out under the banner raised by *President Harry Truman* in his inaugural address where he enunciated four points -- we only remember the fourth which called for *sharing American technical expertise with newly independent countries anywhere in the world.*

Since my own father had been an Old Elephant, I quickly supported this idea and recommended that we recruit someone to work on such a study. (...) I turned to an old friend (...) who had just returned to the U.S. from England where he had received a Master’s degree at the

London School of Economics and was looking for a job...He produced an excellent study and we became good friends. *Ed was a pragmatist who wanted facts and concrete examples, rejecting theories that could not easily be operationalized.* He subsequently went on to head the *Inter-University Case Program, with headquarters at the Maxwell School, Syracuse University.* Shortly thereafter I was able to write a case study (...) based on field work in Taiwan (...). I mention this because I found myself torn between the need to collect data and also to theorize about it.

Riggs's testimony elucidates not only the paradigmatic orientation of the Comparative Public Administration movement, but also its material supporting base. Indeed, financial backers limited a large part of CAG's original interest in comparative administration as focus on empirical research. Their interests focused on *development*, seen as an action program whose purpose was to offer practical assistance to people in the new national contexts.

In fact, they asked if by *comparative administration* we really had *development administration* in mind! That was more than a gentle hint. It meant that to meet the expectations of our sponsor, we had to pay a lot of attention to action formulas and "how to" questions, and we would not have received any funding if we had not agreed to this approach. We were expected to be prescriptive (Riggs, 1999).

The Comparative Public Administration movement started as an attempt to export North American public administration models, oriented towards the modernist discourse. The fact is that a good part of the movement was fostered by research, in fact conducted within the context of developing countries served to review the original presuppositions of American academics. Thus, the process for the adoption of theoretical and practical perspectives of the American academy was not linear, as Riggs (1999) acknowledges:

"Traditional" societies were expected to respond to the fresh breezes of "modernity" by embracing changes that would, sooner or later, bring them into the new world of opportunity created, with our help, on the morrow of collapsed imperial control. It struck me that most societies would adhere tenaciously to many of their most valued ancient traditions and cultural norms while simultaneously importing and accepting a facade of practices and patterns that would, hopefully, enable them to maintain their distinctive cultures while, simultaneously, benefiting from the autonomy and material goods offered by the outside world.

Simultaneously, the author continues:

I have often felt frustrated because my ideas about the prismatic model seemed unintelligible or unimportant to Americans, they were often greeted overseas as illuminating and helpful. I took that as evidence that they clarified phenomena experienced by people outside the

Western context where we have so easily assumed that the way our institutions are structured has universal validity.

The attempt of creating metatheories of public administration inspired the comparative public administration movement, materializing its modernist orientation. However, as Fesler (1975:123-124) acknowledged, the practice showed the unfeasibility of such attempt:

These beginnings held promise of building a firmly empirical foundation for generalizations. But many members of the comparative administration movement seemed responsive to the prestige rewards that attached to invention and elaboration of grand-scale theories and models. Few were the scholars who inductively developed comparisons from administrative data for a substantial set of policies and formulated middle-range theories grounded in such comparisons. Comparative-administrative scholars appeared to have adopted William Blake's motto:

I must Create a System or be enslav'd by another Man's. I will not Reason & Compare: my business is to create.

In terms of timeline definition, the origin of comparative public administration dates from the late 1950s, but the 1960s would be the most influential period of the movement, whose promise was to "strengthen the scientific reputability of our field" (Fesler, 1975:123). With the decline of the Comparative Public Administration movement, the representatives of the international public administration movement lost great part of their prestige. The involvement with networks and associations aimed at the administrative science abroad became the new priority of the main associations in the field.

Institutionalization of the internationalization in public administration

The material base for the Comparative Public Administration was also supported by the main public administration associations and their education. In fact, since their creation, the main associations of administration (ASPA – American Association of Public Administration) and of public administration education (NASPAA – National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration) were strongly involved with and committed to internationalization strategies of public administration and were responsible for the support to such strategies, even after the intellectual failure of the movement analyzed above.

ASPA was one of the first public administration associations to get involved with international activities, mainly aimed at research and education in the public administration area. GAP (Comparative Administration Group) was established within ASPA and was financially

backed by the Ford Foundation. GAP materialized the Comparative Public Administration, the most significant international experience in the field.

However, the main association responsible for keeping the institutional aspect of the internationalization strategy of the North American academy of public administration after GAP's decline was NASPAA – the main association of public administration education in the USA. NASPAA originated from a group created within the ASPA scope, aimed at public administration education. However, the entity became independent in 1970, being established as an association of institutions, schools of affiliated universities and other entities of programs of the area.

Its increasing involvement with international activities was a direct consequence of the increase in financial support opportunities and of the opening of its organizational mission, aimed at the improvement of public administration education. In 1984, there was considerable expansion of the cooperation agreement with USAID (12 million dollars). This agreement started in 1979 with the purpose of fostering the research and technical assistance to developing countries. This fund concentrated the largest part of the institution's resources. In 1986, the investment fund was converted into an appropriation fund, and an investment firm was contracted to manage it. Its value rapidly increased with the stock market's favorable situation. *“That endowment existed because NASPAA had involvement with international work. So, there was the sense that maybe some of them may be put to use in supporting international activities”* – explained its former directors (Britnall, 2002). The resources available caused the various colleges and schools associated with NASPAA to dedicate themselves to international activities in several countries throughout the world. As highlighted during the interviews with NASPAA directors, at that time, several members of NASPAA's functional body worked, on an ordinary basis, exclusively for the institution's international activities (Britnall, 2002; Tolo, 2002).

Concurrently, the expansion of NASPAA's institutional mission also consolidated the internationalization. In fact, the international strategies coincided with the most appropriate moment for the association that, in 1983, took control of the accreditation and quality certification for courses in public administration education.

These tangible factors – such as the opportunity to obtain loans – along with an adequate social-cultural and institutional environment strengthened the international involvement strategies. As stated by one of NASPAA's former directors, referring to loan priorities: *“the USAID grant created habits of being connected internationally.”* That influenced the continuity of international projects, even during political moments characterized by the emphasis on “topics of domestic interest” (Britnall, 2002).

It is important to emphasize that these “habits” materialize in a dense network of associations involved with international activities. At the base of such network,

it is possible to highlight key individuals that played an important role as institutional lobbyists. In fact, NASPAA's international activities continued – even during recession periods - mainly due to the support network of people with important international connections (Britnall, 2002; ASPA, 2002).

The internationalization strategy was based on the positive conception of benefits resulting from cooperation. As highlighted by its directors, NASPAA's international presence *“also benefits our members by providing networks with schools they can relate for their own programs priorities”* (Tolo, 2002) and, consequently, it is in harmony with the association's domestic priorities. *“We are a network and association. And if we help stimulate and strength networks and associations internationally we are playing an important role both in creating awareness of public administration education, but also in giving opportunities for our member.”*

This is one of the reasons why NASPAA's support is currently aimed at the incentive for the creation of networks and associations in the sector of public administration education, as shown in the analysis below.

The turning point: the creation of independent international associations

USAID's financial support started disappearing between the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1993, USAID financing ceased for research and technical assistance programs. However, according to the reasons analyzed above, the interest of NASPAA's members in keeping international relations remained. After the end of the Soviet Union and the communist block, NASPAA focused on new initiatives related to emerging democracies and aimed at new financing opportunities (Tolo, 2002).

NISPAcee

With loans granted by the Ford Foundation and by the *Pew Charitable Trusts* to help establish academic programs in the public administration area in Central and Eastern Europe, NASPAA started cooperating strictly with NISPAcee (The Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe).

The main focus of NISPAcee's activities is on the promotion of the development of public administration courses in post-communist countries, through the improvement in the education and research quality, along with the assistance to the development of schools/institutes at international, regional and national levels. One of the main purposes of the network (NISPA, 2002) is the development of human resources within public service, through the dissemination of professional practices for the adequate management of policies and governability conditions and, besides the provision of

assistance in the political and economic transition, by means of efficient public service.

NASPAA managed to establish a successful and lasting institutional relationship with NISPAcee. Many schools associated with NASPAA were involved with different countries of CEE (Central and Eastern Europe), but the main reason for this relation was based on the perception that NISPAcee's work in CEE's countries and in NIS (Newly Independent States) was "*an attempt to extend the values that we stood for in US*" (Britnall, 2002).

NASPAA's involvement with NISPAcee continued to exist, even with scarce financial support, mainly due to the solid individual relationships already backed by the lasting cooperation network. The priorities of USAID and NASPAA were incorporated into the New Cooperation Project for Governability Improvement (NASPAA, 2002; Tolo, 2002). Members of NISPAcee's functional body, interviewed during the research, see this as a successful project: "*The project is the only one in which project teams take part in research. There is direct influence in the praxis and there is cooperation from the government in the project. The Project (...) has direct impact on the curricular framework of the involved institutions' programs*" (Member NISPAcee, 2002).

This lasting relationship also served to generate sensitivity and awareness of the obstacles found by NISPAcee in its attempt to achieve organizational independence. Members of NASPAA's command could notice the specific institutional and cultural problems of the cooperation between the West and the East, while they obtained the proper view of NASPAA's contribution to what one could call a successful project. Instead of paying for the service of academics/consultants and underestimating NISPAcee's capacity, NASPAA helped build the infrastructure of the new association, prioritizing its independence and supporting the institution's involvement with NIS. On the other hand, the former Executive Director of NASPAA, Michael Britnall (2002), acknowledges that: "*NISPAcee it is very successful. A lot of groups came in and provided the building blocks, and we provided one of the blocks, but, by no means, it is just the NASPAA success.*"

Nowadays, NISPAcee has become an independent entity that focuses on the promotion of cooperation between the East and the West, obtaining its resources through a network of partners and organizations, to beyond NASPAA.

INPAE

Another project in which NASPAA got internationally involved is INPAE (The Inter-American Network for Public Administration Education).

INPAE was created after long discussions, since the

late 1990s, with the purpose of trying to repeat NISPAcee's experience. Its main purpose is to provide training infrastructure and support for the democratic governability and development in Latin American and the Caribbean, through the strengthening of the qualification for public administration, management of NGOs and education in public policies.

The mechanism for developing the project was the creation of an association of colleges and universities in the United States and Latin America. USAID, in association with ALO (Association Liaison Office) of the American Council on Education and the Hewlett Foundation, financed the organization (NASPAA, 2002).

INPAE's original concept underwent various changes. Initially, it was conceived as a network of wide-base training and development organizations, focused on public administration problems. However, this idea faced political opposition in other associations of Latin America with similar objectives, such as CLAD. Thus, the project focused on the generation of public administration programs at the master's degree level and kept on expanding, with the implementation of other activities, such as academic production based on North-South cooperation; technical assistance to support academic institutions, helping them create curriculums, establishing and assessing goals, getting engaged with the government and other types of assistance; policy studies, with the purpose of promoting a growth and cooperation link between national or local governments and the public administration research; curricular development workshops; strategic regional workshops and direct personal interchange, for the development of INPAE; and, relations between institutions of higher education in public administration in Latin America and the Caribbean (Britnall, 2002; NASPAA, 2002; Tolo, 2002).

The uncertainty point for the network's future was as result of the depletion of financing opportunities, which ended in 2003. NASPAA's former director, who was interviewed, defended an independent future for the association, in the light of NISPAcee's experience: "*How can we begin to get some funding so that it does become an entity whose objectives meet the needs of its members, rather than being run from some "big brothers" in Washington D.C.?"*" (Tolo, 2002).

It is important to take into consideration the fact that NASPAA's involvement with INPAE was different from its relation with NISPAcee. In its involvement with NISPAcee, NASPAA had several connections that it wished to keep. With INPAE, it was different, since it had been deliberately designated to be established in a region that was considered secondary for a long time (probably since the experience of the Comparative Public Administration). The connections were of great importance in the first case, and the lack of connections was probably INPAE's main obstacle. This is why NASPAA's strategy focused on establishing and

strengthening such relations (Britnall, 2002; Tolo, 2002).

INPAE's institutionalization format was defined in 2003, when the network was founded with NASPAA's support, joining a group of higher education institutions in the Americas, committed not only with the advance of public administration education and public policies in the region, but also with the strengthening of North-South and South-South alliances between and among its institutional members.

Currently, INPAE has 45 programs aimed at administration education and public policies and its headquarters are established at EBAPE (Escola Brasileira de Administração Pública e de Empresas – Brazilian School of Public and Business Administration).

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the present work was to analyze the (inter)nationalization discourse, of the North American academy of public administration, highlighting its main manifestation strategies throughout time. The intention is, by this reflection, to open space for the critical contextualization of the possible internationalization strategies in other concepts, such as the Brazilian and Latin American concepts.

The historical perspective helped us demonstrate the existence of non-linear relations between public administration fields and their education, and find the origins of the international involvement of the North American academy of public administration during a moment of international hegemony of the United States and national prosperity.

Throughout the work, three internationalization strategies were highlighted. The first one was characterized as a movement of intellectual nature – the comparative public administration – whereas the other two were characterized as organizational manifestations of institutions, and their differences consisted in the institutional move from the center (USA) towards the periphery (region in Central and Eastern Europe and region of Latin America and the Caribbean).

It is possible to insert the first internationalization movement in the broader context of the modernist discourse, whether due to its intellectual objectives - the attempt to establish metatheories of public administration - or to its materialization context.

The article tried not to reduce the phenomenon of the international involvement of North American academics of public administration to the abundant financial support opportunities. Despite the acknowledgment of the importance of such material base, mainly in the experience of the comparative public administration, the study tried to show other factors that were present, such as the spirit at the time, the humanist values, the prescription necessity and the relevance of formulated

theories and the international receptivity. In fact, we considered this international involvement as an interactive process, in which at least two parts were continuously involved and produced transformations: North American academics and their international academic partners. The experience of the comparative public administration was, mainly, an undertaking of the Man of Reason, but it found fertile ground abroad, especially in the academic environment. Indeed, the modernist ideology tried to consolidate even in the so-called "traditional" societies (such as Brazil), and the academic environment was one of the most prominent actors in the dissemination of such discourses.

The comparative public administration refers mainly to an ambitious project for the superiority of the modernist discourse. Even though such project failed, it still helped disclose many implied presuppositions in this discourse and it served to improve the theoretical reflection of North American academics. At least, this movement increased the level of awareness of the cultural dimension and added extra modesty to the field's (inter)nationalization discourse. In terms of international partners, it recognized the intrinsic relation of public administration theories to cultural values.

The failure of the public administration movement was overshadowed by the institutional cycles of internationalization. In the second cycle, the international involvement of the North American academy was possible due to the network of institutions and associations in the field that, whether due to the capability to obtain resources, whether due to the orientation in terms of institutional mission provided the centralization and incentive to international strategies. The search for quality education in public administration turned NASPAA into one of the main actors in the field, besides legitimizing its role in this area.

The third orientation cycle is characterized by the incentive to the creation of independent associations aimed at the education and research into public administration in peripheral regions. While the role of NISPAce in post-communist countries and its cooperation with NASPAA was legitimized by the transmission of North American values of public administration and it assumed a more missionary character, INPAE's consolidation was a more complex exercise, due to the long state of "neglect" of the Latin American and Caribbean region. In a space of reconstruction of public administration institutions and actors such as the post-communist Europe, NISPAce found fertile ground for consolidation and growth.

INPAE, inserted in a complex institutional context, has been consolidating recently as a network of programs aimed at education in administration and public policies. The North American experience shows some possible developments in terms of its role and mission, among which, it is possible to highlight the potentiality to

encourage the debates about the quality standards for public administration education, as well as about the international trends in the area's education and research.

Summing up, the international presence of the North American academy of public administration manifested itself in different ways throughout the years. However, even with various manifestations – intellectual or institutional – the North American academy always had some degree of international involvement. Since the field's emergence, and up until today, it has been possible to characterize the trends of the international involvement as remarkably cyclical (ASPAA, 1999). Obviously, these cyclical trends start in a broader national context, characterized by either greater international opening, or by some degree of isolationism. Nevertheless, even during neo-isolationism periods, there was always some degree of North American involvement in the international field of public administration education. Such continuity must be seen as a consequence of the international discourses (that is, practices), mainly arising from the experience of the Comparative Public Administration and supported by the materialization of an intense network of field associations.

Even if the institutional network is a condition necessary for the support of internationalization strategies, it ensures neither the content nor the quality of such strategies. Local readers, academics of public administration and others (including the field's own practitioners) are responsible for the construction of institutions and the debate about more appropriate criteria for a globally-connected local reality. This requires critical thinking and the reassessment of the role of public administration associations and their education.

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