Access to information of administrative officials in Max Weber's perception of bureaucracy

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'Information' is a term with many meanings depending on context, but it is as a rule closely related to such concepts as meaning, knowledge, instruction or communication. Proper access to information is particularly important in the work of administrative boards and administrative officials. Max Weber, who is considered one of the founders of the modern study of sociology and public administration, gives in his works some clues as far as access to information of administrative officials (for him – bureaucrats) is concerned.

At first we shall see the evolution of the term 'bureaucracy' and examine the major tradition of the writings connected with that problem. The focuses of analysis are connections between bureaucracy and public administration, that's why the term 'public administration' is examined as well from a point of view of history of administration. Then Max Weber's interpretation of bureaucracy is shown and his thoughts of proper informed administrative officials.

Today the term 'bureaucracy' suggests lack of initiative, routine and excessive adherence to rules. Often it is connected with inefficiency, red tape, or even more serious, an impersonal force dominating the lives of individuals. It shouldn't be forgotten that this term has different meanings and connotations. The word 'bureaucracy' steams from the French word 'bureau' used to refer a writing desk, an office, a workplace, where officials worked, and a Greek suffix 'kratia' or 'kratos' denoting power, rule[1]. This term came into use shortly before the French Revolution of 1789, and from there rapidly spread to other countries. Probably a French economist Jean Claude Marie Vincent de Gournay was its inventor. In the bureaus he saw the forth or even the fifth form of the government which he called *bureaucracy*. He used to say that in France there was an illness called 'bureaumania'[2]. Bureaucracy for him meant imperfect government of officials who wanted to cross their own roles. De Gournay started the concept that is alive to these days – a pejorative connotation of the term. On the other hand, in a letter of July 1, 1764, French Baron de Grimm declared:"We are obsessed by the idea of regulation, and our Master of Requests refuses to understand that there is an infinity of things in a great state with which a government should not concern itself"[3]. In another letter of

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1 See different definitions of ' bureaucracy': http://dictionary.reference.com/serch?q=bureaucracy, retrieved on 2007-09-24.

2 E. Littre, Dictionnaire de la langue francaise, Paris, 1959, Vol. I, pp. 1315-1316.

3 Baron de Grimm and Diderot, *Correspondence litteraire, philosophique et critique, 1753-69,* 1813, Vol.4, p.146, 508- cited by M. Albrow, *Bureaucracy*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1970, p. 16.

July 15, 1765, Baron de Grimm also wrote: "The real spirit of the laws in France is that bureaucracy of which the late Monsieur de Gournay used to complain so greatly: here the offices, clerks, secretaries, inspectors and intendants are not appointed to benefit the public interest, indeed the public interest appears to have been established so that offices might exist"[4].

On a large scale it was started to talk about bureaucracy in the 19-th century. This term was ubiquitous in Germany and there bureaucracy was a synonym of disadvantages and defects. For example, Karl Marx saw bureaucracy as a disturbing element of the modern society. In Marx's theory, bureaucracy rarely creates new wealth by itself, but rather controls, coordinates and governs the production, consumption and distribution of wealth. The bureaucracy as a social stratum derives its income from the appropriation of part of the social surplus product of human labor. Wealth is appropriated by the bureaucracy by the law through taxes, tributes, fees, levies, licensing, etc. Bureaucracy is the cost of society. Of course its cost may be accepted as it makes social order possible and maintains it by enforcing the rule of law[5]. Nevertheless there is a constant conflict connected with this cost, because it has the huge effect on the distribution of incomes. All producers try to get the maximum return from their product and minimize administrative costs. Typically, in epochs of strong economic growth, bureaucracies proliferate, and when economic growth declines, a fight breaks out to cut back bureaucratic costs. Central to Marxist's concept of socialism is the idea of worker's self – management, which assumes the internalization of morality and self – discipline among people that would make bureaucratic supervision and control redundant, together with a drastic reorganization of the division of labor in society. Bureaucracies emerge to mediate conflicts of interest on the basis of law, but if those conflicts of interest disappear, bureaucracies will be redundant[6].

Describing bureaucracy as a defective official corps was widely adopted in France. It was Honore de Balzac who contributed to such reception with his book *Bureaucracy* published in 1837[7]. This pejorative, dysfunctional understanding of bureaucracy started to be adopted by

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4   Ibidem, p.16.
5   As far as Marx conception of bureaucracy is concerned, see N. P. Mouzelis, *Organisation and Bureaucracy: An Analysis of Modern Theories*, published by A. de Gruynter, New York, 1967, pp. 8-14.
6   See Marx comments on the state bureaucracy in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, http://www.marxist.org/archive/marx/works/1843/critique-hpr/index.htm, retrieved on 2007-09-25.
7   H. de Balzac, *Bureaucracy*, 1937, http://www.intratext.com./IXT/ENG0807/, retrieved on 2007-24-09.

different languages and countries. For example in England this term came into use in the first part of 19-th century. The term 'bureaucracy' had different synonyms in different countries and many of them were of course pejorative, like French 'paperasserie' and 'fonctionnarisme', Russian 'kancelaryzm', German 'Vielschreiberei' and 'Vielregiererei', Polish 'oficjantyzm' and 'urzędomania' and English "red tape". "Red tape' was a derisive form for the excessive regulation or rigid conformity to formal rules that was considered redundant or bureaucratic and hinders or prevents action or decision – making. It was and it is usually applied to government, bat can also be applied to other forms organizations. Red tape generally includes the filling in unnecessary paperwork, having multiple people or committees approve any decision, obtaining of unnecessary licenses and various roles that make conducting one's affairs more difficult and slower. The origins of the term are obscure, but probably they are connected with the 17-th and 18-th century English practice of binding official papers and documents with red tape.

It is worth mentioning that modern sociology after Max Weber's conception of bureaucracy, tries to use the term 'bureaucracy' in a not pejorative way. Bureaucracy frequently becomes a concept in sociology and political science referring to the way that execution and enforcement of rules are organized. According to Max Weber, living in the top level of Prussian totalitarism, four structural concepts are central to any definition of that term:

1. A well – defined division of administrative labor among persons and offices.

2. A personal system with consistent patterns of recruitment and stable linear careers.

3. A hierarchy among offices, such that the authority and status are differentially distributed among actors.

4. Formal and informal networks that connect organizational actors to one another through flows of information and patterns of cooperation[8].

Bureaucracy is the administrative structure of any large organization, public or private. Ideally bureaucracy is connected with impersonal roles of bureaucrats, recruitment by competence and fixed salaries.

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8   http://e n.wikipedia.org/wiki/bureaucracy, retrieved on 2007-07-03.

It is significant that it is sometimes forgotten that the term 'bureaucracy' is very similar to the term 'administration'. Sometimes these terms cross with each other or even cover. The term 'administration' is even much older than the term 'bureaucracy'. It steams from the Latin word 'ministrare', which means service. Connecting with prefix ‚ad-' the word 'ministrare' started to mean 'manage'. 'Administration' has many meanings. It can be treated as the management of any of any office, business or organization; as the duty or duties of administrator in applying the executive functions of the position; as the function of a political state in exercising its governmental duties; as the management by the administrator of such duties; as a body of administrators, especially in government; as the period of service of a governmental administrator or body of governmental administrators; as any group entrusted with executive or administrative powers; as an act of dispensing (administration of the sacraments)[9]. Andrew Dunsire accepted fifteen different meanings of that term[10].

It shouldn't be forgotten that to the term 'public administration' is not exactly so far different from the term 'private administration', but this term is rather connected with administration of the government, and public affairs. 'Public administration' can be broadly described as the implementation and study of government policy. It is linked to pursuing the public goods by enhancing civil society and social justice.

Undeniably bureaucracy as well as public administration existed in imperial Rome and China and in the national monarchies. 'Administration' understood functionally should have existed in the different historical types of states, but not every kind of organizing activity of the state could have meant 'administration'. Literature pays attention to the fact that only such organizing activity of the state can be called administration, which is conducted by bureaucratic system and includes immense range of the social cases and is regulated by general system of law.

Problems of bureaucracy and public administration were dealt with by many scholars and thinkers, even if they didn't use these terms. Thinkers such Plato, Aristotle and Machiavelli wrote about the moral and political nature of problems connected with organization of public administration. Machiavelli wrote his book *The Prince*, which offered the guideline for

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9   Dictionary.com Unambridged (v 1.1). Based on the Random House Unambridged Dictionary, Random House, Inc.,2006, http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/%20administration, retrieved on 2007-09-27.

10   *Administration. The World and Science*, London, 1973, p.29.

European rulers. The national state was the reigning model of the administrative organization from the 17-th century in Western Europe. These states needed an organization for the implementation of law and order. The need for expert civil servants with the knowledge about taxes, administration statistics and military grew. In the 18-th century Frederick William I of Prussia established an economic and social school of thought (cameralism) in Prussia to reform a society. Johann Heinrich Gottlob Justi, the most well known professor of cameralism, linked cameralism and the idea of natural law with each other, but the leading public administration scholar at that time –Christian Wolff-wasn't a cameralist.

Lorenz von Stein is considered the founder of the science of public administration. He was since 1885 a professor in Vienna[11]. He applied new opinions concerning the science of public administration, which was considered to be a form of administrative law. His innovative opinions were connected with the point that the science of public administration was the integrating science of several disciplines, like political sciences, sociology, public finance and administrative law. According to Lorenz von Stein the science of public administration was an interaction between theory and practice. He considered the public administration as leading practically, but the theory had to form the base. For him public administration should strive to adopt a specific method.

It shouldn't be forgotten that a significant person who considered public administration was Woodrow Wilson in the United States. In 1887 he wrote *The Study of Administration,* in which he considered four modern concepts: separation between politics and the public administration; consideration of the government form a commercial perspective; comparative analysis between political and private organization and political schemes; reaching effective management by training civil servants and assess their quality. The separation between politics and the public administration, which Wilson argued, has been the subject of debates for a long time, and different points of view on this subject differentiate periods in the science of public administration. Later Luther Gulick[12] and Lyndall Urwick integrated the ideas of earlier theorists like Henri Fayol into a comprehensive theory of administration. They believed that the thoughts of Fayol offered a systematic treatment of management of

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11 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public _Administration, retrieved on 2007-07-03.

12 More about his conception see: B. R. Fry, *Mastering Public Administration: From Max Weber to Dwight Waldo*, Chatham House Publishers, New Jersey, 1989, pp.73-88.

companies as for administrative sciences. They didn't separate the two disciplines, but they believed that the administration, which exceeds the borders between the private and the public sector, could exist. Later, the science of administration would focus primarily on the government organizations[13].

William Niskanen inaugurated in 1971 an influential new stream of rational choice analysis in public administration. In his 'budget –maximalizing' model argued that rational bureaucracies will always and everywhere seek to increase their budgets, thereby contributing strongly to state growth. He took a part in the US Council of Economic Advisors under President Ronald Regan. Niskanen's model provided a strong underpinning for the worldwide trend towards cutbacks of public spending. His approach was critiqued by a range of authors who argued that official's motivations are more public interest oriented.

Maximilian Weber (April 21, 1864 – June 14, 1920) was a German politician, economist and sociologist. In his times he was viewed primarily as a historian and an economist. He began his career at the University of Berlin, later he worked at Freiburg University, University of Heidelberg, University of Vienna and University of Munich. He was very influential in contemporary German politics[14], being one of German's negotiators at the Treaty of Versailles and the member of the commission charged with drafting the Weimar Constitution[15]. Weber's political ideas have inspired controversy in Germany for decades.

Why is he so popular and widely known? Apparently he didn't organize and develop any school and didn't leave any students who would continue his work. But it should be taken into account that Weber's thoughts were extremely complicated and sophisticated, and unfortunately lack of clear and final wording could be seen. In spite of presenting extraordinary, versatile opinions, ideas, and immense productivity, he didn't build any complete system. Indisputably he resumed problems from different points of view, proposed definitions, unveiled reasonable connections, suggested explanations and formulated

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13   About development of education in public administration see: F. C. Mosher , *American Public Administration: Past, Present, Future*, University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa, 1975, pp. 11-49.

14 See e.g. W. J. Mommsen*,: Max Weber and German Politics 1890 -1920*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990, p.417.

15 More about Weber's biography see: R. Bendix, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait*, Doubleday &Company Garden City, 1960, pp. 480; Marianne Weber*, Max Weber; Biography*, translated by H. Zorn, J. Wiley & Sons, New York, 1975, pp.586; T. H. Marshall, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait by Reinhard Bendix*, The British Journal of Sociology, Jun., 1961, Vol. 12, No.2, pp. 184-188; D. Kaesler, *Max Weber: An Introduction to His Life and Work*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1989, p. 18.

provisional generalizations supported by induction. Unfortunately the products of his work are tied to loosely and do not coordinate to generate a real foundation on which Weberian school could be built.

Weber wrote his books in German and it should be noted that many of his famous works were collected, revised and published posthumously[16]. Significant interpretations of Weber's writings were produced by such sociological luminaries as Talcott Parsons and C. Wright Mills. His major works deal with rationalization in sociology of religion and government, but he also contributed much in the field of economics. His most famous work is an essay *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* which began his work in sociology of religion. In this work, Weber argued that religion was one of the non – exclusive reasons for the different ways the cultures of the Occident and the Orient have developed. He stressed importance of particular characteristics of ascetic Protestantism which led to the development of capitalism, bureaucracy and rational- legal state in the West. Weber continued his investigation into this matter in later works, notably in his studies on bureaucracy and on the classifications of authority. In these works he alluded to an inevitable move towards rationalization. In another major work -*Politics as a Vocation*- Weber defined the state as an entity which possesses a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force, a definition that became pivotal to the study of modern Western political science. His most known contributions are often referred to as the 'Weber Thesis'.

It is significant that along with Karl Marks and Emile Durkheim, Max Weber is regarded as one of the founders of modern sociology. Whereas Durkheim, following Comte, worked in the positivist tradition, Weber created and worked - like Werner Sombart, a famous representative of German sociology – in the antipositivist tradition[17]. Those works started the antipositivist revolution in social sciences, which stressed the difference between the social sciences and natural sciences, especially due to human actions, which Weber differentiated into traditional, affectional, value – rational and instrumental[18].

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16 Original titles printed after Weber's death are most likely compilations of his unfinished works. Many translations are made of parts or selections of various German originals, and the names of the translations not reveal what part of German work they contain.
17 J. K. Rhoads, *Critical Issues in Social Theory*, Penn State Press, 1991, Google Print, p.40.
18 J. Ferrante, *Sociology: A Global Perspective*, Thomson Wadsworth, 2005, Google Print, p. 21

Max Weber's writing shows immense diversity of his interests and can be divided into a few categories. The first category constitutes historical writing, the second category – sociological and economic studies. The next group consists of commentaries connected with the First World War events and articles about Russia in 1905. The forth category consists of studies on philosophy and methodology of sociology. The fifth group are historical studies focusing on civilization, uniqueness of cultural individuality, social policy, political institutions, religions and connection between these terms[19].

A few distinctive features differ Max Weber's writings from typical historical works. It should be stressed that they are not restricted to dealing with describing different aspects of the culture and society only, but they reveal how they are connected.

It is noticeable that it was Weber who began the studies on bureaucracy and whose works led to popularization of this term. Many aspects of modern public administration go back to him, and a classic, hierarchically organized civil service of the continental type is called 'Weberian civil service', although this is only one ideal type of public administration and government. An approach of this scholar differs from others views on bureaucracy, which are usually pejorative. Weber is not one of those who regard bureaucracy as synonymous with inefficiency: quite the reverse, it is the supremely efficient way of conducting administration. He is probably one of the most influential users of this term in its social science sense. For this scholar bureaucratic coordination of activities is the distinctive mark of the modern era and a dominant structural feature of modern forms of organization. Bureaucratic types of organization are technically superior form to all other forms of administration, much as machine production is superior to handicraft methods. The term bureaucracy should not be seen in an emotional, but in a neutral way.

The question is - why does Max Weber implement a neutral term, not pejorative? Here his methodology should be taken into account. One of his proposals is usage of paradigm 'Wertfreiheit' [20]. In compatibility with this paradigm, pure scientific claims are only neutral and value relevant, not pejorative terms. That is why very important is conformity with this

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19   Weber's   bibliography   and   collection   of   English   translation   see: http://www.cpm.ehime-u.ac.jp/AkamacHomePage/Akamac E-text Links/Weber.html; http:/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List of Max Weber works; http:// sociosite.net/topics/weber.php; http://www2.pfeiffer.edu/~lridener/DSS/Weber/PECAP.HTML.

20   Max Weber on the Methodology of the Social Sciences, translated and edited by E. Shils and H. A. Finch, Glencoe IL: Free Press, 1949, pp. 50-112.

paradigm and separation of verdicts connected with values and verdicts connected with facts[21]. In the great majority of cases people are different in analyzing facts. They are not absolutely objective. Of course the proposal of being neutral and value relevant can't be obtained in a full way, but individuals should try to obtain this purpose. The Weberian principle can be seen as a dividing line between scientific and non-scientific claims. Objectivity for him is being able to prevent the influence of feelings, emotions, unconscious motives, imagination and valid interpretation. For any scholar the choice of problems is always value relevant. There is no absolutely objective scientific analysis of culture or social phenomena independent of special and 'one-sided' viewpoints according to which – consciously or unconsciously – they are selected, analyzed and organized for expository purposes. What is considered 'worthy to be known' depends upon the perspective of the inquiring scholar[22].

The concept of Weber's bureaucracy is strictly connected with his methodology[23]. He sees bureaucracy as one of the most important causes of the development of capitalism. Weber developed a key conceptual tool, the notion of the 'ideal type'. An ideal type is an analytical construct that serves the investigator as a measuring rod to ascertain similarities as well as deviations in concrete cases. It provides the basic method for comparative study. An ideal type corresponds to concrete reality but always moves at least one step away from it. It is constructed out of certain elements of reality and forms a logically precise and coherent whole, which can never be found as such in that reality. Weber's three kinds of ideal types are distinguished by their levels of abstraction. First are the ideal types rooted in historical particularities. They refer to phenomena that appear only in specific historical periods and in particular areas. The second kind involves abstract elements of social reality (bureaucracy, feudalism) which can be found in a variety of historical and cultural contexts. The third kind of ideal type is connected with rationalization of particular kind of behavior reconstructions[24].Weber describes ideal type of bureaucracy in positive terms, considering it to

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21 S. Andreski, *Max Weber's Insights and Errors*, 1984 (Polish translation – K. Sowa, Maxa Webera olśnienia i pomyłki, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa, 1992, pp. 32-55). The author shows connections of Max Weber's methodology with Karl Popper's methodology, pp. 39-45.

22 More about Weber's methodology see: Moriyuki Abukuma, *A Methodology of Sociological Studies*, http://www.ne.jp/asahi/moriyuki/abukuma/moriyukis/weberian/meth/method.html.

23 E. Sokalska, *Biurokracja jako metoda funkcjonowania nowoczesnej administracji w ujęciu Maksa Webera*, Studia Prawnoustrojowe, Nr 2, Uniwersytet Warminsko – Mazurski, Olsztyn, 2003, p. 119.

24 L. A. Coser, *Masters of Sociological Thought*, 1977, p.234-237; *Max Weber – The Work – Ideal Type*,

be more rational and efficient form of organization than the alternatives that preceded it, which he characterized as charismatic domination and traditional domination. According to his terminology, bureaucracy is part of legal domination.

Weber's analysis of bureaucracy concerns the historical and administrative reasons for the process of bureaucratization and the impact of the rule of law upon the functioning of bureaucratic organizations. Very important are attributes and consequences of bureaucracy in the modern world and the typical personal orientation and occupational position of the bureaucratic officials as a status group. For Max Weber a rational and modern model of bureaucracy should function in a specific manner and its characteristic features are:

"1. There is the principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas, which are generally ordered by rules, that is, by administrative regulations.

2. The regular activities required for the purposes of bureaucratically governed structure are distributed in a fixed way as official duties.

3. Methodical provision is made for the regular and continuous fulfillment of these duties and for the execution of the corresponding rights; only persons who have the generally regulated qualifications to serve are employed. In public and lawful government these three elements constitute 'bureaucratic authority' (…).

4. The principles of office hierarchy and levels of graded authority mean a firmly ordered system of super and subordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by the highest ones (…).

5. The management of the modern office is based upon written documents (the files), which are preserved in their original and draught form (…).

6. Office management, at least all specialized office management is distinctly modern – usually presupposes thorough and expert training (…)"[25].

Here should be added that probably proper channels of information modern office management needs to be exposed to. Especially administrative boards are responsible for

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http:www2.pfeiffer.edu/~lridener/DSS/weber/WEBERW3.html.

25 M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, edited by G. Roth and C. Wittach, Bedminster Press, Vol.1, New York, 1968, pp.650-678.

transparency of the government, that's why they should have the access to 'knowledge of the matter'.

In the same way Weber describes the position and work of a bureaucratic official:

"1. In principle, the modern organization of the civil service separates the bureau from the private domicile of the official, and, in general, bureaucracy segregates official activity as something distinct from the sphere of private life. Public monies and equipment are divorced from the private property of the official (…) In principle, the executive office is separated from the household, business from private correspondence, and business assets from private fortunes (…).

2. When the office is fully developed, official activity demands the full working capacity of the official, irrespective of the fact that his obligatory time in the bureau may be delimited"[26].

It is noticeable that one of the main important aspects of bureaucracy is its personnel. The modern bureaucrat is a full-time, life-time professional. He requires a sufficient and regular salary and job security, because otherwise people will not stay in the full time job for life. Unless they do, the organization will not be efficient. Of course, it can take time and experience to learn the job, because it is difficult to perform particular task and it all has to be coordinated, an elaborate division of labour requires stability of the staff. Because of the importance of training and coordination in the job and the nature of bureaucratic work, bureaucracy needs educated officials. Because they should prove they have been educated, their education will be attested by some certificate[27]. The office work demands theoretical as well as practical knowledge of the matter and regular salary and prospects of advancement in a lifetime career will be the reward. Professional work connects with the stability of bureaucratic system in many aspects. The stability of employment was connected with state pensions which were started to be paid to people working as bureaucratic officials as well as social insurance. After the First World War social insurance and state pensions were very precious privileges.

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26 Ibidem, pp. 650-678.
27 J. Kilcullen, *Max Weber: On Bureaucracy,* Macquiare University, 1996, POL264 Modern Political Theory, p.2, http://www.humanities.mq.edu.au/Ockham/y64109.html.

One of the main issues in the Max Weber's writing is specialization of bureaucratic officials. Job placement is dependent on technical qualifications of the worker. Every task should be given according to the rank and even to special place within the rank. On the other hand, they are free and appointed to their positions on the basis of conduct. An official must exercise his judgements and skills, but his duty is to place at the service of a higher authority. Ultimately he is responsible for the impartial execution of assigned tasks and must sacrifice his personal judgement if it runs counter to his official duties. He claims that "precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction or friction and of material and personal costs – these are raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic organisation"[28].

To work in a proper way administrative officials should have a right to have access to adequate information channels. Bureaucrats need to be informed about changes in the system of law because their decisions should be unambiguous and clear. Of course particular information can't be freely and easily created, modified and distributed by them. There is no freedom to express one's opinions or ideas in this area.

The modern bureaucrat does not own his job[29] and the 'means of administration' – the computers, the files, etc. He is even removed from property, doesn't have a prebend or benefices but he is paid a salary. Bureaucrats are not allowed to charge fees for themselves or to accept gifts. If fees are charged, they belong to the government. The ideal behind this is that if the official has any source of income apart from a salary he will not reliably follow the rules. Reliable following of the official rules is one of the highest values in bureaucracy. Impersonal application of general rules is shown as another feature of the modern bureaucrat. "The Taxation Commissioner's staff impersonally, objectively applies the rules to the taxpayer, and their own duties and rights within the organization are defined by rules applied to them impersonally by their superiors"[30]. A bureaucratic official exercises the authority delegated to him in accordance with impersonal rules and his loyalty is enlisted on behalf of the faithful execution of his official duties.

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28 *From Max Weber: Esseys in Socjology*, trasl. by H. H. Girth and C. W. Mills, Oxford University Press, New York, 1946, p.214.

29 Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. Henderson and Parsons, New York, 1947, p.332.

30 J. Kilcullen*, Max Weber…*, op.cit., p. 3.

Weber's principles of administration could be shown in seven points:

1. Official business is conducted on a continuous basis.

2. Bureaucratic organization is conducted with strict accordance to the following rules: a) the duty of each official to do the certain work is delimited in terms of impersonal criteria; b) the official is given the authority necessary to carryout his assigned functions; c) the means of coercion at his disposal are strictly limited and conditions of their use strictly defined.

3. Responsibilities are part of vertical hierarchy of authority, with respective rights of supervision.

4. Officials do not own the resources necessary for the performance of their assigned functions but are accountable for their use of these resources.

5. Private business and income from office work are strictly separated.

6. Offices can't be appropriated by their incumbents.

7. Official business is conducted on the basis of written documents[31].

Max Weber sets out an ideal type for bureaucracy, characterised by an elaborate hierarchical division of labour directed by explicit rules impersonally applied, equipped with professionals, who don't own the 'means of administration' and obtain a salary directly from the performance of their job. With hierarchy it is of course connected information ladder. These features can be found in the public administration, in the offices, even in private firms.

It can be observed that his concept of bureaucracy is strictly connected with his proposal of 'types of legitimate authority'. Weber shows three types of legitimate authority: rational, traditional, and charismatic. Charismatic authority can be regarded as legitimate because followers are personally devoted to a gifted leader. He notes that the instability of charismatic authority inevitably forces it to 'routinize' into a more structured form of authority. A charismatic leader is someone whom people follow because of his individual personal qualities. 'Charisma' is a personality. Traditional authority is regarded as legitimate because everyone has always obeyed whoever was in the leader's position, and nobody thinks of

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31 See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bureucracy.

disputing his authority. Rational authority exists in a community in which there is a moral attitude of respect for law because it is regarded as legitimate[32]. Bureaucracy seems to be the most efficient way of implementing the rule of law; the legal rules are recorded, studied and applied in a reliable way to individual cases. He alludes to an inevitable move towards a rational – legal structure of authority, utilising a bureaucratic structure. He concedes that employing ideal types is an abstraction but claims that it is nonetheless essential if one is to understand any particular social phenomena, because they involve human behaviour which must be interpreted by ideal types[33]. For him the ideal types aim to construct a meaningful ordering from the chaotic flux of empirical reality.

It is worth mentioning, that Max Weber also noted the dysfunctions of bureaucracy. Modern and bureaucratized systems of law have become incapable of dealing with individual cases, to which earlier types of justice were well suited. Critics of Weber's theory point out that principles of his ideal model of bureaucracy can degenerate. For example, competences of officials can be unclear and used contrary to the spirit of law. Sometimes a decision itself may be considered more important than its effect. Vertical hierarchy of authority can become chaotic and the process of making decision can be disturbed and conflicts of competence can appear. Bureaucratic officials can try to avoid responsibility and seek anonymity by avoiding documentation of their procedures. They can create extreme amounts of chaotic, useless documents. Other features that can affect modern bureaucracy are: apathy, laziness, incompetence, not efficient subordination, bribery, corruption, too big number of personnel, not allowing people to use common sense, as everything must be written by the law. This kind of organization can be prone to overspecialization, making individual officials not aware of larger consequences of their actions. Nepotism, political infighting and other degenerations can counter the rule of impersonality and create recruitment and promotion system not based on meritocracy but rather on oligarchy. In the most common examples bureaucracy can lead to the treatment of individual human beings as impersonal objects[34].

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32 J. Kilcullen, *Max Weber…*,op.cit., p.3.
33 See comments of Moriyuki Abakuma on *Weberian ideal types as tools: A Methodology of Sociological Studies…*, op.cit.
34 See critiques of Weber's thoughts: G. Roth*, Political Critiques of Max Weber: Some Implications for Political Sociology,* American Sociological Review, April 1965, V.3, No.2, pp.214-220.

As Max Weber remarks, real bureaucracy will be less optimal and effective than his ideal type, but this process will be inevitable for the efficient functioning of an administrative machine. "From a purely technical point of view, a bureaucracy is capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency, and is in this sense formally the most rational known means of exercising authority over human beings. It is superior to any other form in precision, in stability, in the stringency of discipline, and in its reliability. It thus makes possible a particularly high degree of calculability of results for the heads of the organization and for those acting in relation to it. It is finally superior both in intensive efficiency and in the scope of its operations and is formally capable of application to all kinds of administrative tasks"[35]. Bureaucracy as supremely efficient way of conducting administration should be adopted by capitalistic firms and in every institution. Weber even argues that the bureaucratization of the modern world can led to its depersonalization, and bureaucratization and rationalization seems to him an almost inescapable fate[36]. "The needs of mass administration make it today completely indispensable. The choice is only between bureaucracy and dilettantism in the field of administration"[37]. But although Weber regards bureaucracy as supremely efficient, he regards its inevitable triumph with distaste: "No machinery in the world functions so precisely as this apparatus of men and, moreover, so cheaply (…). Rational calculation (…) reduces worker to a cog in this bureaucratic machine and, seeing himself in this light, he will merely ask how to transform himself into a somewhat bigger cog (…). The passion for bureaucratisation drives us to despair"[38].

Max Weber believes that administration and politics are very close but they operate in different aspects[39]. Bureaucracy as a part of administration should be excluded from the sphere of politics[40]. He suggests that different life spheres have different moral laws, which may come into conflict. So what is wrong in some department of life may not be wrong in politics. He even contrasts the status honour of the bureaucrat with the responsibility of

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35 M. Weber, *Economy and Society…*, op.cit., p.223.
36 About Weber's maxim of rationalization see: P. Ghosh, *Max Weber's 'Isolated Man': Marginal Utility Theory, the Protestant Ethic, and 'Spirit' of Capitalism*, Max Weber Studies, London Metropolitan University, London, 2006, p.75.
37 M. Weber, Economy and Society…, op.cit., p. 224.
38 Ibidem, p. 223.
39 More about Max Weber's theory of politics see: D. Beetham, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics, London, 1974, pp.82-89.
40 A. Sylwestrzak, *Historia doktryn politycznych i prawnych*, Warszawa, 1994, pp.395-396.

politician. If a bureaucrat's superior gives him a directive he considered wrong, he should object, but if the superior insists, he should respect it. And on the other hand, the politician can even lie and publicly reject the responsibility for political actions that run counter to his convictions and must sacrifice his office to them[41]. A genuine political leader should be ready to accept responsibility for morally dubious action. Maybe that is why the bureaucracy needs to be under the control of politicians or other charismatic leaders, and as Weber claims, at the top of bureaucratic organization an element which is not purely bureaucratic is needed[42]. In his *Politics as a Vocation* Max Weber says: "The administrative staff, which externally represents the organization of political domination, is, of course, like any other organization, bound by obedience to the power holder and not alone by the concept of legitimacy(…). There are two other means, both of which appeal to personal interests: material reward and social honour. The fields of vassals, the prebends of patrimonial officials, the salaries of modern civil servants, the honour of knights, the privileges of estates, and the honour of civil servant comprise their respective wages. The fear of loosing them is honour and booty for the followers in war; for the demagogue's following, there are 'spoils'- that is , exploitation of the dominated through the monopolization of office – and there are politically determined profits and premiums of vanity[43].

Weber's views about the inescapable rationalization and bureaucratization of the world have obvious similarities to Karl Marx's notion of alienation. They both agree that modern methods of organization have increased the efficiency and effectiveness of production and allowed domination of man over the world of nature. But Weber disagree with Marx when he sees alienation as only a transitional stage on the road to man's true emancipation. Weber doesn't believe in the future leap from the realm of necessity into the world of freedom. In the sphere of economic production Marx documented that capitalist industrial organization led to expropriation of the worker from the means of production. Weber countered with Marx's observations. Such expropriation would characterise a socialist system of production just as much as it would be the capitalist form. Being fascinated with the dynamics of social life, Weber created a more flexible interpretative system than Marx had provided. He attempted to

41 J. Kilcullen, *Max Weber on Bureaucracy…*, op.cit, p. 5.
42 J. Kilcullen*, Max Weber*, Macquire University, 1996, POL264 Modern Political Theory, p.9, http://www.humanities.mq.edu.au/Ockham/y6408.html.
43 M. Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*, p.3, http://www2.pfeiffer.edu/%7Elridener/DSS/Weber/polvoc.html.

show that the relations between system of ideas and social structures were multiform and varied, and that casual connections went in both directions, rather than from infrastructure to superstructure alone. Weber's modification and refinement of the Marxian system is likewise evident in his theory of stratification [44].

In conclusion, Max Weber is best known and recognised today as one of the leading scholars and founders of modern sociology. His work has been continued by many scholars[45]. In the field of administration Weber regards bureaucratization as one of the leading and inescapable features of modern world. According to him, the attributes of modern bureaucracy include its impersonality, proper information channels, concentration of the means of administration, a levelling effect on social and economic differences and implementation of a system of authority that is practically indestructible.

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44 L. A. Coser, *Masters...*, op.cit., pp. 227-228.
45 For example by Roberto Michels, see: J. Kilcullen, *Roberto Michels: Oligarchy*, Macquire University, 1996, pp. 1-5, http://www.humanities.mq.edu.au/Ockham/y64111.html.