

The Identity Crisis in Public Administration Revisited: Some Definitional Issues and the Philippine Setting

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Paramount to settling the identity crisis (or the issue of conceptual identity) being undergone by public administration is the resolution of its definitional boundary — if it could be defined precisely — and a coherent and systematic organization of normative theory. Previous to the description of the crisis, the concentration of studies in American Public Administration had been oriented towards specialized, applied concerns (service type) as against the construction of a general and valid theoretical framework (academic or basic type). The identity crisis, however, may not be a serious problem from the point of view of Philippine Public Administration due to three distinct features: (a) Public Administration has maintained some disciplinary independence from allied disciplines and has not been insecure about its relationships with Political Science; (b) the politics-administration dichotomy has no strong tradition and is thus inapplicable here; (c) the peculiarities of a developing country have necessitated Philippine Public Administration to give emphasis on or favor to service type researches. Thus, the identity crisis in Public Administration becomes relevant and worthwhile only if it is viewed from the perspectives of actual Philippine conditions and development aspirations.

Certainty is an illusion, and repose is not the destiny of man.

Anonymous

Introduction

In recent years, the dilemma of conceptual identity confronting the study of Public Administration has increasingly become more pronounced. Despite claimed methodological capacity to deal with standard and transient issues inherent in the conduct of governmental affairs and public policy making, Public Administration,¹ as a

disciplinary enterprise today continues to suffer — or so its scholars claim — from sheer ambiguity, if not absence of a well-defined and concrete normative and definitional theory.

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¹For the sake of conceptual convenience, I shall adopt the distinction between "public administration" and "Public Administration" used by Dwight Waldo and later adopted by

Frank Marini. The former refers to the activities "having to do with the administration of public organizations and public policies," or in effect, the applied aspects. The latter is used to denote the academic subject matter or the study of behavior in public organizations. See Dwight Waldo, "Public Administration" in Marian Irish (ed.), *Political Science: Advance of the Discipline* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968), pp. 158-169. See also Frank Marini (ed.), *Toward a New Public Administration: The Minnowbrook Perspective* (Scranton: Chandler Publishing Co., 1971), p. xiii.

To be sure, the problem is an old one. It is in fact a resurrected theme that was raised inconspicuously as early as the late forties, and is now resurfacing more prominently with a vengeance.² The problem has since become so severe that scholars and students of the field have elevated the issue to a "crisis of thought," or in Gunderson's terms, "academic public administration's self-lamented 'identity' or 'intellectual' crisis."³

At length, the literature delving into this issue has articulated various themes and subthemes, and has now grown too vast for comfort to be fused or captured in a single paper. The substance, however, of these articles conveys, more or less, the same sentiment: a scholarly discontent with the state of the discipline with an overarching concern for its normative and operational boundaries.

This paper, to begin with, does not intend to indulge in explosive theorizing along the fashion of Western scholars. Nor does it intend to join the prevailing bandwagon of dissatisfaction and skepticism over the state of the

field. The purpose rather is to re-examine the identity problem of the study of contemporary Public Administration as pointedly raised and described by various scholars and students of the discipline, and within this perspective, view its implications and significance — or insignificance — from the standpoint of Public Administration in the Philippines, where the desideratum of national development has become the "order of the day."

How does the crisis as seen from the critical eyes of Western scholars relate to or affect our problems of development, or more precisely — to put it bluntly — our day-to-day problems of survival? Faced with a theoretical crisis shaped from the searing lens of our Western counterparts, how are we to react? Or how have we been reacting? At the risk of editorializing, this paper therefore seeks to appraise the identity and normative crisis in Public Administration in relation to the development aspirations of a developing country such as the Philippines. In doing so, I have to redefine the crisis for ourselves if only to carefully review its origin and background and ascertain its nature and validity, however superficially.

For all intents and purposes, the identity crisis in Public Administration may simply be an issue bothering a handful of "disgruntled" scholars unhappy over the development of the discipline. On the other hand, the crisis may be real enough, so real indeed that it subverts systematic thinking in resolving operational problems confronting public organizations and public policy making. For this reason, it may be useful to first pin down the concept of the crisis even at the risk of neglecting some important points.

²Indeed, with the angry and disenchanted thoughts raised in the Minnowbrook Conference in 1968 catalyzing a "New Public Administration," as documented and compiled in Marini, *ibid.* References may also be made to the sober but apprehensive articles of Waldo, *ibid.*, and Vincent Ostrom, "The Persistent Crisis in the Study of Public Administration" in *The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration: The Crisis Confidence* (Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1974) Ch. 1.

³Gil Gunderson, "Epistemology in Public Administration," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XIX, No. 3 (July 1975), p. 145.

In this regard, I venture what might be a haphazard interpretation drawn from the perspectives of those who perceive it. The attempt may be an overzealous disservice to the cause of these scholars considering that I have found it convenient for the sake of conceptual economy to isolate or operationalize the problem momentarily into two overriding concerns, at least for the purpose of this paper. These are: (1) the problem of definitional boundaries which essentially deals with the resolution of the academic question of where Public Administration begins, and where other disciplines, especially that of Political Science, should end; and (2) that of the issue of normativism, or the value premises of the field.

From here, I have felt it necessary to incorporate a brief and sketchy discussion on the development of the field as it started with the Wilsonian advocacy of a dichotomy between the work of politics and that of administration. The purpose of this review is merely to set our perspectives on solid grounds.

Released from this academic responsibility, the paper then proceeds to a discussion of Public Administration in the Philippine setting, arguing in the process what it deems should be the proper focus of scholars and students in the country in the light of the identity crisis, and in the context of national development aspirations.

The Identity Crisis Defined: What is it?

In 1948, Dwight Waldo, citing John M. Gaus, paused to reflect on the

direction and thrust of Public Administration as a field of study. Specifically, Waldo noted that students of administration have become "more uncertain in recent years as to the ends, aims, and methods which they should advocate."⁴ The observation is significant considering the firm conceptual tradition inherited from the works of Woodrow Wilson, Frank Goodnow, Urwick and Gullick, and to some extent, Leonard White.⁵ The dilemma, as perceived, was one that inquired into the nature and definitional premises of the field especially where its theoretical postulates and principles are concerned. Up to that time, the discussion was confined to just that — ends and aims, or to be more specific, a reexamination as to what Public Administration really is, and what it hopes to be.

By 1968, two decades later, and in spite of the continued and determined efforts of scholars to derive a working

⁴Dwight Waldo, *The Administrative State: A Study of Political Theory of American Public Administration* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1948), p. 206. Chapter 11 of the book precisely devoted itself to a diagnostic appraisal of Public Administration research during the period.

⁵The legacies of these authors are of course contained in the following works: Woodrow Wilson, "The Study of Public Administration," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. II (June 1887), as reprinted in Vol. LVI (December 1941), pp. 493-501; Frank Goodnow, *Politics and Administration* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1900); Luther Gullick and Lyndall Urwick (eds.), *Papers on the Science of Administration* (New York: Institute of Public Administration, 1937); and Leonard White, *Introduction to the Study of Public Administration* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926).

theory of administration,⁶ the problem has reached "serious" proportions, so disconcerting that it has been elevated into the nature of a crisis, or what has now been termed as a "crisis of identity."⁷ The issue that emerged was the question of determining the scope, nature, and boundaries of the field, including the methods of studying and teaching it. As it is, the dilemma of role and mission posed in the forties was now securely amplified.

Waldo describes the problem more succinctly in the following manner:

In a period in which government is called upon to perform prodigies of administration unparalleled in history, the academic "sub-discipline" nominally charged with providing a base of ideas, education, and skills is having difficulty in defining its relations with its mother discipline, with the academic community generally, and with its external clientele.⁸

Ostrom echoes the same contention, maintaining what he calls a "crisis of confidence" in the discipline as one really symptomatic of a lack of identity, or what he simplistically defined as a "failure to know where

we are (subject matter) or how we should proceed (methods)."⁹ Ostrom, however, disagrees with Waldo's short-term solution to the crisis pending a "long-run resolution" that Public Administration as a discipline should "try to act as a profession without actually being one, and perhaps even without the hope or intention of becoming one" He (Ostrom) contends that this way of thinking leads to an even greater problem, one that may possibly affect the practice of the profession. Thus, Ostrom views the crisis of confidence in the following manner:

If the methods of studying, teaching and practicing the subject matter of public administration have become problematical, then *that profession cannot have much confidence in what it professes*. The practice of a profession rests upon the validity of the knowledge which it professes. *When the confidence of a profession in the essential validity of its knowledge has been shattered, that profession should be extraordinarily modest about professional advice it renders while keeping up its appearances.*¹⁰

In effect, to put it awkwardly, how can a discipline such as Public Administration render advice when it in itself badly needs one? One can understand and sympathize with Ostrom's view, aggressive as it is — for the simple argument that the crisis of confidence as brought about by the discipline's lack of identity has definite far-reaching implications on the field's relations to the public service profession.

⁶See, for instance, Edward Litchfield "Notes on a General Theory of Administration" in *Administrative Science Quarterly*, (June 1956). Along these lines, it may be worthwhile to mention Herbert Simon, *Administrative Behavior: A Study of Decision Making Processes in Administrative Organizations* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947) which appeared much earlier, and Herbert Simon and James G. March, *Organizations* (New York: Wiley, 1958).

⁷Waldo, "Public Administration," *op. cit.*, p. 158.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹Ostrom, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 4 (Emphasis mine).

Frederickson, in fact, has gone as far as suggesting, that for some time, public administration has been treated as a "second profession," that it "seemed to have a rather narrow definition of its purposes . . . and that most public servants, it was found, identify with one or another professional field such as education, community planning, law, public health, or engineering."¹¹ In contrast to Ostrom, Frederickson views this as a thing of the past, a reality that belonged to the fifties and the sixties. Still, he concedes an identity crisis, to the extent that he accepts Ostrom's contention of an "intellectual crisis." Thus, he observes categorically that:

. . . it is clear that there is no body of theory which presently dominates the subject. Thus it is possible to argue that there is an 'Intellectual Crisis in Public Administration.'¹²

Frederickson continues to assert that the crisis is so only if "one assumes that there must be a single agreed-upon paradigm to which all in the field are committed."¹³ Perhaps, that is precisely the first issue that needs to be threshed out: agreement as to whether there is a paradigm or a cluster of paradigms in Public Administration at all that needs to be challenged, or simply a ragtag collection of thoughts and concepts borrowed from other fields and fitted to the discipline.

¹¹George Frederickson, "Public Administration in the 1970s: Development and Directions," *Public Administration Review*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 5 (September-October, 1976), p. 565.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*

The most serious and devastating attack in recent years, however, came with the categorical pronouncement made at the Minnowbrook Conference in 1968. In advocating for a recasting of the study of public organizations, Todd La Porte, for instance, struck at the heart of the discipline by describing contemporary Public Administration as "subject to great conceptual confusion," encompassing basic underlying ambiguity in many implicit models. He goes on to lament that the discipline today exists in "a state of antique or maladapted analytical models and normative aridity."¹⁴

From this morass of issues and points, two major areas of concern can be singled out initially as distinct problems that need to be surmounted in designing a working "theory" for Public Administration, especially when theory in this sense is interpreted to be that which consists, at its barest form, of "a set of definitions, stating clearly what we mean by various terms and a set of assumptions about the way in which the world behaves," and followed by a "process of logical deductions intended to discover what is implied by these assumptions."¹⁵ At the risk of oversimplification therefore, I define two major areas that need to be resolved:

(1) the necessity of overcoming the rigors of a definitional boundary, of pinpointing what the discipline is all

¹⁴Todd La Porte, "The Recovery of Relevance in the Study of Public Organizations" in Marini, *op. cit.*, p. 17, 21.

¹⁵Richard G. Lipsey, *An Introduction to Positive Economics* (Great Britain: William Clowes and Sons, 1963), p. 14.

about, what are its terminologies, vocabulary, tools, etc., and how it differs from other fields. As it is, Public Administration has historically grown out of the "inspiration" of the wider field of Political Science, and has used, as it developed, concepts borrowed from other fields, i.e., Sociology, Engineering, Psychology, etc. In this sense therefore, it is imperative to distinguish the academic terrain of the discipline.

(2) the determination of the field's normative stance, or the what-ought-to-be aspects of Public Administration. The normative position should provide for the discipline's predisposition of what is good and what is bad in the conduct of public affairs and public policy making based on a concretized set of value judgments. Admittedly, this is a concern that cannot be settled by a simple appeal to facts or crass empiricism.

At this point, the dilemma that will linger on, and perhaps, to be malingered for some time would be the troublesome question of whether Public Administration can approximate the use of the scientific method in its inquiry. Is administration an art or a science? Already, we are bombarded with a great deal of "sciency" postulates seeking to explain administrative phenomena, and already too, the issue of whether the field is art or science has become far too disturbing.¹⁶

¹⁶I refer, for instance, to Waldo's brief but substantial discussion of the issue in "Public Administration," *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

Setting a Boundary: Where Political Science Ends and Public Administration Begins

Public Administration as an academic enterprise has to the present day continuously languished under the predicament of being referred to as a child of Political Science. Whether the child is now mature enough to be treated separately or independently of its mother is a problematical issue which scholars of the field of Public Administration hope to resolve. And in dealing with the problem squarely, the question of Public Administration's conceptual base and definitional boundaries will continue to crop up.

Someone has said, according to Dwight Waldo, that Political Science, "like Poland is open to invasion from every side." If this were at all a valid peculiarity of that discipline, then Public Administration has certainly inherited this vulnerability. The sad fact is that Public Administration has been subjected to attacks from all sides, the most persistent of which is its relationships with its mother discipline. Waldo sums up this problem more definitely:

... the critical question [now] is whether at this stage in the development of Public Administration it is proper to regard it as "field" or sub-discipline of Political Science. While for two generations it has been widely regarded as such, many persons are now of the opinion that it is or ought to be 'something else'...¹⁷

"Something else" it is, or is bound to be, if the trend in Public Administration education and the bulk of contemporary literature were to be any

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 1.

indicator at all.¹⁸ For one, Public Administration has gone, or so it is claimed, far beyond the concerns of Political Science, enlarging its horizons to include and adopt principles and concepts from Sociology, Economics, Psychology, Law, and even Engineering.¹⁹ Caiden in fact asserts that the "discipline of public administration has outgrown its niche in political science but maintains its distance from management science or any other discipline that studies the organizational society and administrative behavior in large-scale organizations."²⁰

¹⁸It would be interesting to note that a mushrooming of schools in Public Administration independent from Political Science Departments (commonly called Schools of Public Affairs) has been reported in several universities and colleges in the United States. See, for example, the discussion in Robert Presthus, *Public Administration*, 6th ed., (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1975), pp. 232-234.

¹⁹Thus, the study of Public Administration cannot be deemed complete without reference to: the works on bureaucracy by the sociologist Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947); the studies on scientific management by the engineer Frederick Taylor in *Scientific Management* (New York: Harper, 1911); the studies on the informal organization by the industrial sociologist Elton Mayo in *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933) and also in F.J. Roethlisberger and W.J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939). Such other works in behavioral psychology by Douglas McGregor, Rensis Likert, Chris Argyris, and Frederick Herzberg may also be worth mentioning.

²⁰Gerald E. Caiden, "The Meaning of Public Administration," in *The Dynamics of Public Administration: Guidelines to Current Transformations in Theory and Practice*, (Hinsdale, Illinois: The Dryden Press, 1971).

In any case, the distinction between the concern of Political Science and of Public Administration by way of standard or generic definitions of the subject matter has always been nebulous, although the dichotomy between political processes and those of administrative conduct has been considered as a potential point of delineation. Political Science, for instance, has been defined as "the science of the state," and also, as "a branch of the social science dealing with the theory, organization, and government, and the practice of the state."²¹ Public Administration, on the other hand, has been defined by its leading scholars, Leonard White, for one, as "the management of men and materials in the accomplishment of the purposes of the state."²² Simon, et al., describe it as the "activities of the executive branches of national, state, and local governments; independent boards and commissions set up by Congress and state legislatures; government corporations and certain other agencies of a specialized character."²³ At most, these representative definitions of both subject matters do not convey a marked and tidy distinction between the two fields. And this all the more makes a derivation of a suitable boundary difficult. From these standpoints, it would appear that Public Administration is indeed a specialized field of Political Science.

Earlier, I pointed out that the grand concept of the politics-adminis-

²¹Carlton Rodee, et al., *Introduction to Political Science* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967), p. 4.

²²White, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

²³Herbert Simon, Donald Smithburg, and Victor Thompson, *Public Administration* (New York: Knopf, 1950), p. 7.

tration dichotomy, for all its simplicity, would set a potential conceptual boundary between Political Science and Public Administration — that the study of political processes belongs to the former, and that of the executive administration of the state and public policy to the latter. Still, the promise of distinction offered by this conceptualization has significantly lost currency in recent years, especially with the explicit views essayed at the Minnowbrook Conference. Lambright, for example, argues that the dichotomy is no longer valid in spite of the fact that its legacies continue to intrude into the mainstreams of present thinking in Public Administration. Thus, Lambright points out:

The politics-administration dichotomy is dead, but the ghost continues to haunt us, to narrow the vision of even those who take Public Administration seriously. Virtually everyone now admits that Public Administration exists in a political environment and that the administrator must interact with forces in that environment.²⁴

If this were so, and it appears to be so, then the task of boundary setting will have to require further theoretical inquiries into other conceptual realms. The unsettling question that remains now is whether it really is possible at all to distinguish, to mark boundaries, especially given Caiden's confident assertion that "fields must overlap; [and that] their boundaries could not be defined precisely."²⁵

²⁴W. Henry Lambright, "The Minnowbrook Perspective and the Future of Public Affairs: Public Administration is Public-Policy Making," in Marini, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

²⁵Caiden, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

*The Normative Question:
Onwards With What?*

The normative stance or the value prescriptions of the field of Public Administration is another issue that deserves careful and meticulous attention. The normative dilemma in this sense may be loosely interpreted as the ethical base of the discipline, or as crudely stated earlier, the "what-ought-to-be" aspects as contrasted to "what is existing." In effect, what norms should govern the field? How should administrators behave?

Undoubtedly, most of the normative predispositions in Public Administration that have been proffered in the past were more aspirational than definitional, especially in the sense that agreement as to their validity and suitability has not been made. The truth is that these normative premises have been delivered in a cluster of abstract management aspirations couched in ambiguous terms. In fact, the initial problem might as well be the determination of whether there really is an existing normative theory of Public Administration or merely a handy collection of issues; or, to be more fastidious, whether a normative theory is possible at all.

With the politics-administration dichotomy virtually shattered by the sheer weight of the argument challenging its validity in recent years, a refinement of traditional normative issues has become compelling. To be sure, critics of the dichotomy argued vigorously that such a view avoided the realities of the governmental process, and administrators, it is claimed, are inevitably involved in political activity and should, therefore, be

aware of its subtleties.²⁶ Thus, it is now conceded that the dichotomy cannot, from the look of things, serve as a viable aspiration for the field.

At the same time this was raging, another dominant set of values traditionally upheld in Public Administration was also being challenged. This concerned the values of efficiency, effectiveness, and economy in public organizations which have figured prominently in the rhetoric of scholars of the field for some time.²⁷ The early disenchantment was first hurled by Waldo and later cited by Harmon:

Dwight Waldo, while not denying the importance of efficiency, pointed out that it can be measured only in terms of purpose and 'that the less mechanical and routine the instruments and procedures, and the more important or more nearly ultimate the purposes they serve, the less likely is their efficiency to be constant.'²⁸

The traditional norm of efficiency in public entities has lost much of its appeal not only because of the inconvenience of gauging or measuring effects and direction, but also because of the micro or organization-centered perspective that tended to leave other variables as all-embracing "givens." This means that administrators cannot

simply pursue the values of efficiency without looking into the direction and appropriateness of their efforts. Thus, it may be possible that we are doing things correctly with a considerable amount of efficiency and effectiveness, but it may be asked whether we are really doing the *correct* things. Hence, a public entity may be efficient in its output and effective in its goals of dispensing, say, medical services. But it may be that this agency may have failed to disperse its services more evenly, to make it more responsive to the needs of communities which have been habitually neglected. Definitely, these are issues that seek to go beyond the static and narrow concerns of simply being efficient and effective. Moreover, it might as well be stated here that efficiency and effectiveness, by themselves alone, cannot stand or hope to approximate the entire gamut of values that need to be incorporated in Public Administration.

The conceptual material for a normative theory in Public Administration is, however, rich and growing, and the validity of the old stock today continues to haunt our senses. For instance, Simon's positivist advocacy of a fact-value dichotomy and his contention that decision-making is at the heart of administration remain relevant and open for further exploration.²⁹

The most recent, and probably the boldest venture yet since Simon's *Administrative Behavior* in proposing a "possible" normative base for Public Administration would be found, again, in the Minnowbrook Con-

²⁶Michael Harmon, "Normative Theory and Public Administration: Some Suggestions for a Redefinition of Administrative Responsibility" in Marini, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

²⁷For a distinction between efficiency and effectiveness, see the discussion by Amitai Etzioni, *Modern Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 8-10.

²⁸Harmon, *op. cit.*, p. 175. Citing Waldo, *The Administrative State*, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-205 (Emphasis in original).

²⁹See the discussion by Waldo, "Public Administration," *op. cit.*, p. 6.

ference papers. Such aspirations as "relevance," "equity," "post-positivism," and client-orientedness have been articulated to represent a new way of thinking in the study of public organizations and its operant processes. La Porte, for example, attempts to reconceptualize what he feels should be the objective of public organizations in general:

...the purpose of public organizations is the reduction of economic, social, and psychic suffering and the enhancement of life opportunities for those inside and outside the organization.³⁰

La Porte further points out that "public organizations should be assessed in terms of their effect on the production and distribution of material abundance in the efforts to free all people from economic deprivation and want."³¹ This view represents merely a portion of the different aspirations essayed at the Minnowbrook Conference. There are many other perceptions, all bent on overhauling the customary ways of thinking on the conduct of public organizations and public affairs, each of them prescribing some normative premises. Still, while the contributions of the Conference have probably enriched the foundations for a normative theory, there is a need to organize these thoughts into a coherent and systematic whole.

Development of the Field of Public Administration

It would be convenient at this point to trace the development of Public

Administration as a field of inquiry if only to identify the various stages or patterns of thinking that shaped the discipline, and later developing into an identity crisis when its conceptual area had become too expansive to be comfortably covered under the field of Political Science. The identity crisis, to be sure, was a result of more than eighty years of conceptualizing and reconceptualizing, coming as it did at a time when the academic landscape has grown too vast to be treated simply as a sub-field of Political Science.

While this discussion could have best been taken up earlier, I found it practical to develop first the concept of the crisis, and from here, examine the lineage of that crisis. On this score, I have also taken mild liberties in incorporating a brief and sketchy discussion of Public Administration in the Philippines to set the perspective for ascertaining a prescription as to how scholars of Public Administration in the Philippines should deal with the crisis, or for that matter, behave in the light of that dilemma.

Public Administration Abroad: The American Setting

The academic heritage of contemporary Public Administration carries within itself a long and hard history of inquiry and theorizing that has been classified and reclassified into overlapping strands. Scholars, however, generally agree that Public Administration as a field of study started with Wilson's monumental essay on the subject, appearing first in the pages of the *Political Science Quarterly* in 1887.

In reviewing the academic tradition of Public Administration, Keith

³⁰La Porte, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

³¹*Ibid.*

Henderson, for instance, offers three strands, which he divided into three time periods, each having its own respective emphasis.³² These are: (1) the thesis stage which reflected concern on the structural arrangements of public organizations, covering the period from 1887 to 1945, and incorporating therein such contributions as Barnard's *Functions of the Executive* and the Hawthorne Experiments; (2) the antithesis stage which centered on the Behavioral-Environmental Analysis, beginning from 1945 to 1958; and (3) the synthesis stage which deals with the organizational system approach, beginning from 1958 to the present. Henderson's labelling of his synthesis as a stress on organizations as systems was largely influenced by March and Simon's *Organizations*.

On the other hand, Nicholas Henry asserts that the phases of the development of the field may be characterized according to whether it has a "locus" which is the institutional referent or subject (the "where" aspects), and a "focus" which he describes as the content of the field (the "what" aspects).³³ Along this line, he cites five paradigms, again segmented into specific and sometimes overlapping cells, based on the "locus" and "focus" of the literature published during that period. These paradigms, according to Henry, are:

(1) the era of the politics-administration dichotomy, 1900-1926, which

³²Keith Henderson, *Emerging Synthesis in American Public Administration* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1966).

³³Nicholas Henry, "Paradigms of Public Administration," *Public Administration Review*, Vol. XXV, No. 4 (July-August, 1975).

saw a reinforcing of the Wilsonian ethic seeking to separate the sphere of politics from administration. Henry mentions Frank Goodnow (*Politics and Administration*, 1900) and Leonard White (*Introduction to the Study of Public Administration*, 1926) as representative works expressing the conceptual mood of the era;

(2) the era stressing the principles of administration, beginning from 1927 to 1950, which witnessed the propagation of management principles applied to Public Administration as embodied in the works of F.W. Willoughby (*Principles of Public Administration*, 1927) and Urwick and Gullick's *Papers on the Science of Administration* (1937). Within Henry's discussion of Paradigm 2 are incorporated two important phases which he arbitrarily labels as the Challenge (1938-1950), involving a milieu of re-examination as to the identity of the field, and the Reaction to the Challenge (1947-1950) which saw the attempt to develop a "pure" science of administration;

(3) Paradigm 3 describes the mood of the 1950-1970 time span which he points out as an era of "continued relegation" of Public Administration as an area of interest of Political Science;

(4) Paradigm 4 sees Public Administration as part of Administrative Science and consists of attempts to break the discipline away from Political Science. This covers the period from 1956 to 1970;

(5) Finally, Paradigm 5 optimistically projects Public Administration as a growing field, separate and independent from that of Political Science.

In 1948, however, Waldo raised a critical observation on the thrust of research on the field of Public Administration, taking into account the quality and content of studies during that period. While he did not specifically refer to any material, he noted that there emerged then a tendency to engage in empirical or functional studies in which "theoretical postulates are obscure." He observed that as Public Administration literature developed, a situation where studies concentrated on specialized research became increasingly apparent. This did not in any way contribute towards the institutional development of the field. Thus Waldo states:

One of the most obvious features of recent writing on public administration is its large volume and wide scope, together with an increasing tendency to specialized, factual or 'empirical' studies. This increasing specialization is perhaps normal and desirable, representing healthy progress in the discipline. Much of the specialization, however, is in the functional aspects of administration, rather than in its institutional aspects. This fact, together with the sheer volume and increasing diversity of institutional study, poses in a very acute form the problem whether there is a study of administration 'as such'; at least whether there is a 'function of administration,' as such, in which training or specialization is possible.³⁴

In a different light, Waldo as early as 1948 has thus expressed his apprehensions about the discipline's lack of identity, which was described only in 1968 to be such. In the same vein, he also raised the issue of normative philosophy for the field:

Closely related is the problem of providing adequate preparation and a 'philosophy' for our administrators. Are training in the mechanics of administration and codes of professional ethics enough? Or should our new Guardian Class be given an education commensurate with their announced responsibilities and perhaps be imbued with a political philosophy? *The present gap between the content of our administrative curricula and what we announce to be the responsibilities of our Administrators is appalling.*³⁵

From here, the identity crisis which was described as so in 1968 became apparent. As it appeared, the literature of the field has thus been concerned with isolated areas of public affairs and conduct, and not with basic theoretical realms of great conceptual importance.

The implication here is that there occurred in the history of American Public Administration an era where concentration of studies had been oriented towards specialized, applied concerns as against the construction of a general and universally valid theoretical framework, or what Cariño has referred to in her review of researches in the University of the Philippines (U.P.) College of Public Administration as "the academic or basic type of researches" as contrasted to the service type.³⁶ Thus, studies that aspired to clear up the clutter of issues on Public Administration's academic identity

³⁴Waldo, *The Administrative State*, op. cit., p. 207 (Emphasis mine).

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 210 (Emphasis mine).

³⁶See Ledivina V. Cariño, "To Advance Administrative Knowledge: Research in the College of Public Administration, 1952-1972," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XVI, No. 3 (July 1972), p. 295.

may be classified as belonging to the academic type, while those, for instance, addressed to investigating phenomena on the effects of graft and corruption on the operations of Agency X may be formally described as service type researches.

The same distinction was made by Coleman and Stifel of the Rockefeller Foundation in a paper on Public Management Education and Training when they differentiated between the general and the functional programs of public management education. "General knowledge," according to these authors, constitutes the conceptual, theoretical elements while "specialized knowledge" provides public management with its functional, procedural components.³⁷

An Overview of Public Administration in the Philippines

It would take a whole paper to competently detail and describe the development of Public Administration in the Philippines, especially in terms of content and academic themes as styled within the fashion of Henderson's and Henry's analyses of American Public Administration. As it is, the institutional growth of Public Administration education in the country has been remarkable, with the convenient frame of reference for its inception being generally associated with the establishment of the U.P. Institute of Public Administration in 1952.³⁸

³⁷James S. Coleman and Lawrence D. Stifel, "Public Management Education and Training: Objectives and Scope," a paper prepared for the Bellagio Conference, August 11-15, 1976.

³⁸On the historical background of the Institute, see John Lederle and Ferrel Heady,

The present discussion however does not intend to examine the substance of the literature on the field in the country — a rather painstaking task deserving fuller treatment in another paper — but rather, to identify some of the peculiarities of the field in the Philippine context, and thereby set the perspectives for dealing with the identity crisis in relation to Philippine Public Administration.

It must be pointed out, as it is hereby pointed out, that Public Administration in the Philippines did not grow out historically because of any Wilsonian vision of a politics-administration dichotomy, nor because of a disciplinary fission from Political Science. If the establishment of the Institute (now College) of Public Administration were to be used as the point of reference for the genesis of the study of the discipline in the country, it could be safely assumed that Public Administration here was exported, shipped, and packaged to Philippine shores as a result of an agreement between the United Nations and the United States Technical Assistance Program, and facilitated through the technical cooperation of the University of Michigan with financial support from both U.S. and Philippine Governments.³⁹

That being the case, the identity crisis could thus be interpreted as a superficial problem from the point of view of Philippine Public Administration, filtering to the College from the apprehensions expressed in the litera-

³⁹Institute of Public Administration, University of the Philippines, "Public Administration Review, Vol. XV, No. 1 (1955), pp. 3-16.

³⁹*Ibid.*

ture of American scholars, and not from any natural insecurity directly felt by our scholars here. As such, I hasten to advance three distinct features which need to be considered here:

(1) Public Administration as a field of study in the Philippines was introduced and implanted in the U.P. through the University of Michigan, and hence, was not a result of some disciplinary mitosis or of an academic reawakening on the part of the U.P. Department of Political Science.⁴⁰ Because of this, it could be claimed that Public Administration in the Philippines, to a large extent, identifies with Public Administration, regarding in the process Political Science and other disciplines, for that matter, as allied fields while maintaining some disciplinary independence. The fact is that Public Administration here has not been insecure about its relationship with Political Science, and if there has been any insecurity at all, it was brought about artificially by American literature which has heavily influenced teaching and research in the country. It could even be asserted here that

Public Administration in the Philippines has been more interdisciplinary in approach than its Western counterpart.

(2) As contrasted to American Public Administration, we do not have a strong tradition of a politics-administration dichotomy in the Philippines, especially as viewed in the context of the realities of Philippine political life where administrators never had the illusion of being politically neutral, in spite of colorful claims to the contrary. And because the political situation did not allow much leeway for such a happy state as a dichotomy, scholars have not been inclined toward its advocacy, especially as a normative aspiration. If there were any inclination at all, I would claim that this is more because of the impact of foreign literature rather than that of the actual political and administrative experience. It is my assumption that Public Administration here has silently recognized the inapplicability of the dichotomy even before the Minnowbrook Conference.

In fact, Cariño speaks of emphasis on studies on the interaction between politics and administration rather than their separation. Thus, she states:

Issues of national development particularly the *interaction of politics and administration* have received much emphasis, perhaps bolstered by the popularity of case studies in the Philippine public administration scene.⁴¹

In the same vein, however, she argues possibly in the same manner with which Waldo did in 1948, that

⁴⁰ A handy compendium of information on the development of Public Administration education in the Philippines can be found in the collection of papers in the Anniversary Issue of the *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XVI, No. 3 (July 1972), *op. cit.* See specifically the paper of Mario Nieves, "A Survey of Schools of Public Administration in the Philippines" which shows that it was in the U.P. where P.A. education formally started. The article largely deals with an exhaustive examination of the growth of the field in terms of enrollment figures and not on the content or themes of the discipline for the past two decades. Cariño, *op. cit.*, gives a useful resume on the thrusts of research efforts in the U.P.

⁴¹ Cariño, *op. cit.*, p. 291 (Emphasis mine).

basic type of studies should also be engendered.

(3) The peculiarities of the Philippines as a developing country have necessitated Public Administration, especially from the point of view of the U.P. College of Public Administration, to give emphasis on or favor functional studies that relate to development processes and goals, which, for the most part, favored service-type researches for public organizations. For one, basic researches tended to require a longer period to accomplish, needing "dedication, interest, and concentration," not to mention the huge financial costs they usually entail. On the other hand, applied research is usually of short duration and useful in the short-run.⁴²

With these peculiarities, it could be inferred that Public Administration in the Philippines will naturally have a different view and outlook in terms of focus and thrust, something that is temporized according to local experience and pressures. To be sure, the thinking prevailing in the academic community of a society is generally conditioned by the environment that envelops it.

From all indications, the identity crisis of Public Administration may not be as serious a problem here, especially in the face of other more pressing concerns. The point that is stressed here is simply that the academic heritage of Philippine Public Administration differs from that of the United States. This difference, as a result, naturally yields a distinct kind

of thinking and looking at things and problems.

The Identity Crisis: Reaction

Much of the sentiments and arguments of this paper with respect to the treatment of the identity crisis in Public Administration in the Philippines has been hinted at in previous discussions. Earlier, I have conveyed the idea that the crisis may appear to be a superficial problem here, at least in the light of the peculiarities of the Philippine setting in general, and of local Public Administration in particular. However, it may do justice to scrutinize the issue more closely, and in so doing, assess how it should be systematically viewed in the Philippines.

As it is, a considerable amount of effort and stamina has been invested to vainly approximate a suitable definitional boundary for Public Administration, or if not, lament grudgingly on the lack of one. And from all indications, it appears that this lively preoccupation with theorizing is bound to be pursued more vigorously in the years to come, at least if the Minnowbrook Conference and the papers it generated were to be interpreted, to use Marini's words, as "more of the order of beginning ripples than cresting waves."

How should Philippine Public Administration look at the identity crisis? Is it so remarkable an issue so as to deprive meaning to the efforts of those who seriously wish to improve the conduct of government and public policy making and thereby facilitate the achievement of development goals? Does it at all hamper or obstruct efforts to prescribe solutions to

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 294.

our day-to-day problems of government and development?

To begin with, it would be convenient to approach the problem from two polar sides: either the identity crisis is irrelevant from our point of view and thus should be ignored, or it bears significance on the conduct of public administration and development processes here, so important that it needs to be resolved side by side with that of the American counterpart. At this point, it would be useful to itemize the salient issues which should be considered:

(1) To dismiss the identity crisis as simply an insignificant theoretical exercise from the viewpoint of a society obsessed with development aspirations would be a tempting move. As such, the first view rides on the argument that the Philippines, at this stage, cannot afford to indulge in a frittering race for developing a definitional and normative theory for Public Administration in the face of overriding imperatives such as the need to study development processes and goals in the country. From the disadvantaged or constraints-ridden view of scholars of Public Administration in developing nations, the resolution of the identity crisis or efforts towards it may only compete with other priority concerns. The argument here is based more on the view put succinctly by Clemente that the options for the exploited, referring to the Third World countries, would be different from that of the exploiters, or in this sense, the developed countries. He contends that "Third World scholarship pays lip service to this reality."⁴³ On this

score, the position advocated in the first view is simple and blunt: dismiss the identity crisis as a problem that belongs to United States Public Administration and therefore does not have any bearing in the Philippines.

(2) A less dogmatic alternative would be a reconciliatory one — taking the identity crisis as it is, and translating it according to our needs. This, more or less, sums up the second view advanced above, and this I would like to develop in greater detail. To be sure, efforts paving the resolution of the identity crisis must be seen from the perspectives of its potential or promise of helping us solve problems inherent in Philippine public affairs, or in essence, an appraisal of its value and usefulness to our problems. The point here is that it should be treated not simply as a pure and limited issue of disciplinary identity in its overall and universal context, but of the direction of the discipline itself within the Philippine milieu. The advocacy suggested here is that if the identity crisis, as perceived in the United States, were really an unavoidable problem bound to affect Public Administration even in developing nations, then the logical option is to reformulate or tailor it according to the realities of the Philippine setting in a manner that its resolution becomes relevant to, and consistent with, our needs and aspirations. To put it another way, the reasons why we should resolve the identity crisis need to be distinctively established. Why should that become pertinent here in terms of analysis? What is our stake in its resolution or non-resolution?

⁴³Wilfredo Clemente II, "Thinking on Trial — Observation of Think-Tanking in the

Philippines," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XIX, No. 4 (October 1975), p. 307.

The issue that becomes apparent here is that of relevance — relevance of the crisis according to the temper and pressures of the local situation. Dean de Guzman offers a description of what relevant Public Administration is, which aptly blends with the above argument. Thus, he says:

. . . A public administration academic program would be deemed relevant if it meets the educational needs for administrators equipped with the necessary perspective, knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable them to perform their various roles as expert, change agent, and modernizer in the society. The educational needs, in turn, *derive from the character of the development goals in the country*. Ultimately, therefore, we have to take into account the given goals, objectives and priorities in a society when making judgment of the question of the *relevance of a public administration curriculum* and its component courses⁴⁴

In this sense, the burden of overcoming the identity crisis in the Philippines becomes not only a question of deriving disciplinary boundaries or prescribing normative valuations for Public Administration at a “universal, high-ordered level” but more importantly of defining an indigenous philosophy for teaching and practicing Public Administration in the country.

(3) It is significant to mention here that the identity crisis is a product of attempts to restructure the direction of Public Administration in a post-industrial society such as the United States. The vision of transformation

⁴⁴Raul P. de Guzman, “Achieving Realism in Public Administration Academic Programs,” *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XVI, No. 3 (July 1972), p. 372 (Emphasis mine).

then of Public Administration in that society would radically differ from that of the Philippines, where the desiderata of development, industrialization, modernization, etc. remain high priorities. Much of the problems conceived in the United States have filtered indiscriminately to developing nations where even the academic community is known to suffer from some vestiges of colonial thinking, of empathy with issues and problems perceived by Western scholars. In a climate where the derivation of appropriate development models and systems has been most compelling, this has proven to be conceptually fatal. As it is, the practice has been largely more to fit our systems into Western concepts rather than styling these concepts to suit our systems. As Clemente validly asserts, “Westernization creates problems in the conceptualization of development in the Third World,” and that “the critical problem [now] is how to reformulate Western concepts of development to reconcile with the realities in the Third World.”⁴⁵

Thus, the identity crisis as a problem, if allowed to go “unprocessed” and therefore studied blindly in the original context as American Public Administration has posed it, will naturally go down as another statistic in the encyclopedic litany of issues and concepts that has been excellently formulated by our scholars only to be redeposited at the library shelf of some remote academe because they are lamentably useless and inapplicable to the country’s problems and needs. The fact is that the identity crisis cannot and should not be narrowly viewed from Western standards. It needs to be

⁴⁵Clemente, *op. cit.*, p. 307; p. 309.

reformulated so that it becomes relevant to us. Clemente, speaking on development standards, for instance, points out:

The misapplication of Western concepts will continue as long as Third World scholars are intimidated by the standard of Western scholarship. In terms of third world development objectives, the greater challenge is not in measuring up but in scaling down sophisticated concepts to local conditions.⁴⁶

(4) The problem waters down eventually to relating the identity crisis with our development goals. In effect, what we have been saying earlier could perhaps be best summed up by this proposition: If the resolution of the crisis can contribute towards our development aspirations, then it becomes a worthwhile endeavor. A corollary proposition would be: If the crisis is an unavoidable question that assails Public Administration of all nationalities, developed or not, then it should be formulated not only from a Filipino point of view, but from a development management perspective.

From here, the most promising, and probably most useful, concept that could be introduced here is that of development administration which has been described as a fitting counterpart of "New Public Administration" in Third World settings.⁴⁷ Najjar points out that the *raison d'être* for the emergence of both movements has been the need for giving greater attention to the role of Public Administra-

tion during periods of rapid social transformation. He further observes that "the main thrust of development administration has been the study of administrative patterns and behavior in societies caught in the midst of transition along the path from rural, agricultural, peasant life toward urban, industrial, and more advanced form."⁴⁸ In essence, development administration is the management of innovation in developing societies, while New Public Administration is the management of reform in a post-industrial society caught in the tide of sweeping social change, discontent, and turbulence. From this vantage view, one can see that the identity crisis in the United States revolves around the identity of New Public Administration, and the one in the Philippines, and probably for other developing countries as well, as a problem of the identity of development administration. As such, Development Administration has been defined in so many ways. Nguyen-Duy Xuan of Vietnam, for instance, describes it as "the administration of development progress designed to achieve nation-building objectives and promote socio-economic progress."⁴⁹

At any rate, the identity crisis should be viewed from the perspectives of development administration or, for that matter, of a field now called

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ As cited in Kenneth E. Bauzon, "Asian Processes and Development Administration in Retrospect," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XIX, No. 3 (July 1975), p. 240. This article also provides a definition of development administration from the view of other scholars from Asian countries such as India, Korea, and Pakistan, along with that of the Philippines' Jose Abueva.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

⁴⁷ George K. Najjar, "Development Administration and 'New' Public Administration: A Convergence of Perspectives" in the *Public Administration Review*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 6 (November-December, 1974), p. 584.

Development Public Administration. To now pose it in interrogative form, what is the definitional boundary and normative base of Development Public Administration? How does it differ, not only from Political Science or other discipline, but from contemporary classical Public Administration which we know now? How is it to be pursued? What are its tools, techniques, assumptions, methodologies, etc.? I contend then that this is our own version of the identity crisis, that this is how it should be posed and asked. It is therefore imperative for us to refine and recast the problem of the identity crisis instead of passively allowing it to conceptually bother us without knowing why it should bother us at all.

(5) This proposition naturally compels us to tinker with a philosophical question which, as Agpalo so fittingly described, can only be asserted or emoted, and cannot be subjected to proof or disproof.⁵⁰ This, however is an obvious consequence of our aspirations to become relevant and useful. It is important to deal with it: after all, a Public Administration that refuses to independently reflect on its philosophical stance can only be judged as irresponsible and incompetent, undeserving of its position in the academic community. In going through this problem, it becomes immaterial whether the form of research done is the basic or the service type; the only criterion is whether the research effort

is valid and relevant, or what Dean de Guzman calls as a research program that focuses on the problems in the country, looking into the behavioral dimensions of politics and administration and the accompanying factors that bear upon the governmental and developmental processes.⁵¹

What is the appropriate philosophy that should guide Development Administration? Should it be concerned with social issues as client orientedness, equity, or productivity? At length, many issues will surface, although the majority of them will hinge on such standard fares as responsiveness, equality, improvement of the quality of life, poverty, employment, etc. Such questions as graft and corruption, bureaucratic efficiency, and the issue of what President Marcos calls as the "development dilemma"⁵² or the cushioning of the negative effects of development change (social costs) will naturally come into play at the operational level. At any rate, the philosophy will necessarily cling to the determination of how administration should be conducted under conditions of development and transition.

On the whole, the identity crisis in Public Administration becomes relevant and worthwhile if it is viewed from the perspectives of our actual conditions and development aspirations. Thus, the challenge is there, and with it, the responsibility.

⁵⁰Remigio E. Agpalo, "Political Science and its Challenge to the Association," *Philippine Political Science Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (June 1974), p. 25.

⁵¹de Guzman, *op. cit.*, p. 377.

⁵²Ferdinand E. Marcos, *Notes on the New Society of the Philippines* (Manila: Marcos Foundation, 1973), pp. 83-85.