

# Public Administration: A Critical Revisitational Analysis of the Paradigm of Politics-Administration Dichotomy and its Challenge

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*A paradigm usually constitutes the framework within which theoretical formulations or abstractions about reality can be factually related to reality. As a paradigm, politics-administration dichotomy is related to the conception of both "politics" and "administration" in a practical rather than theoretical sense. The prevailing paradigm in public administration is that politics is synonymous with administration. This new thinking, however, has great implications on the doctrine of political neutrality of the civil service.*

## Introduction

Various intellectual developments have taken place within public administration as a field of inquiry over the years. One of such developments is the issue of politics-administration dichotomy particularly its genesis as a paradigm and its subsequent challenge by the paradigm of administration as politics.

The intellectual excitement which this issue has generated within the field of public administration is, undoubtedly, indispensable to the ever expanding frontiers of human knowledge, hence, it is the view in this article that certain pertinent questions should antecede the analytical discourse of the paradigmatic birth, challenge and decline of the politics-administration dichotomy which have over the years riddled the growth of public administration as a field of inquiry. Such questions include: What are the causal-factors of the respective metamorphoses in the intellectual or scholastic appraisal of the politics-administration dichotomy paradigm over the years? Are the metamorphoses mere intellectual changes aided by the ideological imperialism of various theorists, or scholars within the field of public administration? Or, are they progenies of indispensable renaissance of thoughts necessitated by the intellectual adventurism of scholars who have chosen public administration as their

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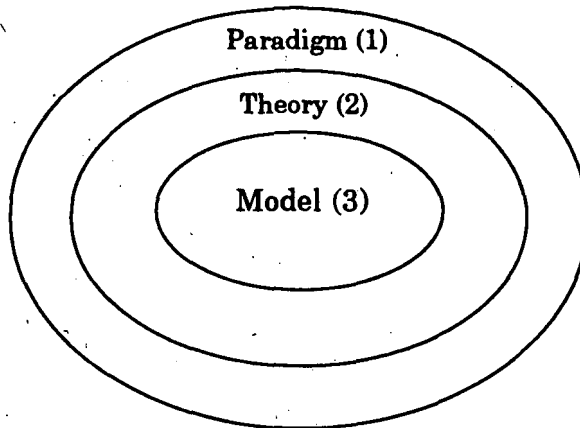
disciplinary field of calling? Or, as Waldo (1992) puts it, have we made progress in closing the gap, in repairing what is often referred to as the politics-administration dichotomy?

This article provides answers to these probing questions with a view to availing the entire academia the opportunity of understanding the excitement which the various intellectual injunctions regarding the rise, challenge and decline of the paradigm of politics-administration dichotomy have generated within the field of public administration. It equally identifies and analyzes the implications of these various injunctions or perspectives to the field of public administration and its scholars. Also, it highlights what could be done to rid the field of public administration of any damnifying conceptual dissensus or polarized intellectual philosophy.

The review of various theories and intellectual contributions regarding the paradigm of politics-administration dichotomy and its challenge is predominantly made in this article. Such review asks methodological cognizance of the evolutionary trends of the field of public administration over the years. And, in the pursuit of its goals, subsequent sections of this article provide theoretical explanation of the term paradigm as a point of departure; explains the meaning of the politics-administration dichotomy; its genesis as a paradigm; the challenge by a new paradigm (politics as administration) and the implications of this challenge to the disciplinary and practicing world of public administration.

### **Paradigm: Its Theoretical Explanation and Linkage with the Politics - Administration Dichotomy**

In its simplest form, a paradigm means a pattern or framework that gives organization and direction to a given area of scientific investigation (Holt and Richardson 1970:2). A paradigm is methodologically useful for scientific expeditions and discoveries because it usually constitutes the framework within which theoretical formulations or abstractions about reality could be factually related to reality. As a conceptual framework, a paradigm socializes students, scientists, analysts, practitioners and its adherents or believers into a consensual scientific community and this has not been less true of the orthodoxy of politics-administration dichotomy and its heterodoxy-politics as administration. A paradigm defines the kinds of research problems to be investigated, the kinds of assumptions and concepts to be employed, the kinds of questions to be asked and the kinds of research methods to be used (Holt and Richardson 1970:2). In short, it is within the macroscopic nature of a disciplinary paradigm that theoretical formulations and their relation to reality through the use of models usually take place. This is so in the sense that while a theory as a body of knowledge helps to explain facts, a model relying on the notion of isomorphism is used to discover facts within a paradigmatic influence (Isaak 1983:8). This is better explained by the diagram below:



Code: 1 Paradigm (macro)  
2 Theory (sub-macro)  
3 Model (micro)

According to the Kuhnian school of thought, a paradigm usually provides models from which springs or develops particular coherent tradition of scientific research (Nachmias and Nachmias 1985:20). This school equally emphasized that the study or acceptance of a paradigm mainly prepares its believers for membership in a particular community within which they will later practice (Nachmias and Nachmias 1985:20). Kuhn equally once explained that if and when a scientist, scholar, or an analyst joins a scientific community whose mentors learned the same paradigm or the same conceptual and methodological catechism, his or her subsequent research efforts will rarely evoke disagreement or criticism over issues or principles. This is so because scientists or scholars whose research are grounded on a shared paradigm are psychologically committed to the same rules, norms and standards for scientific practice (Nachmias and Nachmias 1985:20).

Paradigms are necessary and without them scientific research can hardly take place as a collective enterprise. And, since science or any intellectual endeavor needs an organizing principle, a shared paradigm becomes indispensable to scientific or research expeditions or any analytical orientation and this has not been foreign to the field of public administration over the years. Hence, the acquisition of a paradigm and of esoteric type research it permits is a sign of maturity in the development of any given scientific field like public administration.

The fact that a paradigm socializes its believers or embracers into a scientific community makes it almost psychological cultic and intellectually or methodologically addictive to the extent of making criticisms of it or opposition to it almost impossible prior to a paradigm change. This is further attested to by its

various elements, which include: "Conceptual elements, theoretical elements, rules of interpretation; puzzle-defining elements, criteria of admissibility and ontologic-predictive elements" (Holt and Richardson 1970:26-27).

Paradigm is a belief pattern of scientific enterprise or research orientation to change or get rejected from time to time depending on the process of verification or its verifiability:

The process of rejecting a dominant paradigm begins as the paradigm is verified, for scientists empirically test the various dimensions and implications of a dominant paradigm, its compliance with research findings becomes tenuous (Holt and Richardson 1970:26-27).

This automatically generates anomalies which become more recognizable as the process of verification or problem-solving activities continues because, at some point when a rival paradigm is constructed, conflict will evolve between the supporters of the old and the new paradigms (Kuhn 1962). And, this creates uncertainty and splits in the scientific community due to its generation of the paradigm transitional syndromes of random research, aimless verification and accidental discoveries (Nachmias and Nachmias 1985:21).

The chronology of the discussion up to this point goes to show that a paradigm creates a veridical milieu for scientific undertakings on any aspect of the psychosocial political and economic existence of people. Thus, its (paradigm) existence, vis-a-vis the intellectual and analytical orientations of various fields of study within the academia regarding many phenomena ranging from political, economic, social, comparative, international to local and others, has created a favorable or volatile climate for intellectual discourse and pursuit of knowledge, the type of which has not been alien to the disciplinary concern of social scientists who have made public administration their field of calling. In other words, the field of public administration has not been immuned from the existence of a scientific community or communities in its analytic explication of various polities and their administrative structures within the global community.

Having stated this and having explicated the term paradigm, we can now address the issue of the politics-administration dichotomy as a paradigm and what its rise, challenge and decline have done to the fabric of public administration scholarship.

### *The Paradigm of Politics-Administration Dichotomy*

Politics-administration dichotomy as a paradigm is related to the conception of both terms (politics and administration) in a practical rather than theoretical sense. It is necessary to highlight this line of thought if only to avoid the possible mystification of the issue at stake since there is another argumentative

orientation related to the issue of disciplinary autonomy between Political Science and Public Administration, a manifestation of which is the existence of different departments for both in many universities and other higher institutions of learning<sup>1</sup> within the universe. The former rather than the latter issue is at stake in this article.

Put differently, while it is accepted that "the relationship between Political Science and Public Administration has been one of tension since the 1930s" (Henry 1992), the issue of the symbiosis or otherwise of what they both study is the subject of concern here rather than the intellectual war over the disciplinary autonomy.

Having stated this, what actually is the politics-administration dichotomy? From where does it derive its roots? And, how has it permeated the physiological fiber of the field over the years? What is the present state of affairs regarding this concept vis-a-vis the disciplinary status of Public Administration as a field? Provision of answer to these questions is the subject matter of this section.

To begin with, "Politics-Administration Dichotomy" connotes the conceptualized notion of Politics and Administration as belonging to water-tight compartments. This concept has, undoubtedly, been one of the hotly debated issues within the realm of Public Administration over the years. And, its roots are traceable to the 1887 classical work of Woodrow Wilson (Santos 1969:213) in which he saw no symmetry between politics and administration:

The field of administration is a field of business. It is removed from the hurry and strife of politics. It is a part of political life only as the methods of counting-house are part of the life of society, only as machinery is part of the manufactured product (Wilson 1976:269).

To support this position, Wilson fell back on the eminent German writer Bluntschli's separation of politics from administration:

Politics is state activity in things great and universal while administration on the other hand is the activity of the state in individual and small things. Politics is thus the special province of the statesman, administration of the technical official. Policy does nothing without the aid of administration, but administration is not therefore politics (Wilson 1976:269).

This orientational disposition of Woodrow Willson, which was a manifestation of the institutional and structural paradigmatic influences of his time on the field of Public Administration, could be argued to have provided the hot-bed for the controversies which have since riddled the growth of Public Administration regarding the non-symmetrical or symmetrical nature of politics and administration.

Woodrow Wilson was not alone in this camp, some of his disciples included scholars like Frank Goodnow, W.F. Willoughby and Leonard White who accepted as axiomatic truth the paradigm of a "politics-administration dichotomy" (Santos 1969). And, the period within which this belief existed in the views of Sayre (1966:1-2) represents the orthodoxy of public administration, the characteristics of which among others included: elements of taken-for grantedness and untested assumptions. Because it was, argued Sayre (1966:2), a period when "politics-administration dichotomy was assumed both as a self-evident-truth and as a desirable goal; (and in which) administration was perceived as a self-contained world of its own with its own separate values, rules and methods." It was also a period when the scholars in Public Administration (in the United States) took for granted the responsibility of administrative agencies to popular control because:

the responsiveness of administrators and bureaucrats was not seen as a problem because everyone then understood that politics and policy were separate from administration which (to them) was concerned exclusively with the execution of assignment handed down from the realm of politics (Sayre 1966:2).

This period reached its highnoon or apex in the 1930s before it was hotly and fatally challenged by the post-world war II dissenting intellectual and research orientations which Sayre (1966:3) tagged as the "heterodoxy of Public Administration."

Pending the analysis of this paradigmatic challenge or paradigm change and its implications for the present and future status of Public Administration, it is appropriate to briefly examine some of the factors which provided a fertile ground for the maturation of the politics-administration dichotomy before it was subsequently challenged by the paradigm of public administration as politics.

Many factors have been identified. Waldo (1992) identified the liberal arts ethos; the failure of public administration to participate in the behavioral movement dominant in the 1950s and 1960s; the failure of public administration to address the area of policy early and decisively enough; and the divergence and tension between the Grecian and Roman influences as part of the major causal-reasons for the politics-administration dichotomy as we come to still know of it today. While Sayre (1966:2) and Nicholas Henry (1992) saw the events of the 1930s-depression, new deal, the rise of big government and, the "1950s' new intellectual and political developments," as part of the breeding factors of this cleft, Harold Stein (1970) tied the then embracement of the dichotomy to a series of meaningless and misleading generalizations about the two (politics and administration):

the study of Public Administration has been, and still is occasionally, confused by an attempt to define Public Administration in terms of the constitutional separation of powers. This has led to a series of meaningless and misleading generalizations, such as: 'congress creates

policy, administrators carry it out,' the good Public Administrator pays no attention to 'politics' (Harold Stein 1970:117).

Marshall and Gladys Dimock (1970) supported Harold Stein on this notion:

the theory of separation of powers seemed to suggest that there should be watertight compartments in government leading to the notion—now recognized as naive—that administrators should be excluded from the making and interpretation of the law (M. Dimock and G. Dimock 1970:128).

Explicating further, Harold Stein (1970) equally identified many (other) reasons for the (then) continuous establishment of water-tight compartments for politics and administration:

There were various reasons why the establishment of water-tight compartments for 'administration' and 'politics' persisted so long, perhaps the most important is to be found in the ambiguities of the word 'politics' itself. Naively, but honestly, it has occasionally been assumed, for example, that to admit the political nature of public administration is to abandon faith in a non-partisan civil service (Stein 1970:118).

The "nonpartisan civil service" issue, mentioned in the above quotation, which is synonymous with the concept or doctrine of "political neutrality" of the civil service was also explained by Harold Stein as one of the progenies of the intellectual currents that supported the fertile germination and fruiting of politics-administration dichotomy. The embracement and over-simplification of this concept—"political neutrality of the civil service" vis-a-vis politics and administration—was, in the Dimocks' view, a by-product of fight the "spoilsman psychology or philosophy that existed both before and after the Pendleton Act of 1883" (M. Dimock and G. Dimock 1970:128). This doctrine (greatly influenced by the British practice) emerged in the United States as an accompanying condition of the institutionalization of the merit (principle) system with the passage of the Civil Service Act of 1883 (M. Dimock and G. Dimock 1970:214). It has generally been accepted as established on two grounds:

- (1) To avoid what is regarded as a public evil of using government employees for partisan political purposes.
- (2) To maintain political impartiality in the administration of the laws (M. Dimock and G. Dimock 1970:215).

Many developing nations (Africa and elsewhere) have also embraced this concept of political neutrality on equal grounds. For example, in Nigeria, as an accompanying condition of the institutionalization of the merit system and the avoidance of political partiality and bureaupathologies, civil servants, both in the federal and state levels, are prohibited from partisan politics. This is an

unequivocal manifestation of Nigerian government recognition that the dangers of conflict of interest and abuse of power by public officers or civil servants can only be avoided through such prohibition.

The fifth schedule, particularly subsections 1 and 9 of the 1979 Federal Republic of Nigeria constitution and certain portions of the 1989 constitution, specifically stated this in addition to other codes of ethics or conduct (for public officers). Equally, there are relevant portions in the government order of both the federal and state governments in Nigeria which prohibit the civil servants from partisan politics. Even the Obasanjo regime's stipulations prior to the 1979 military disengagement from politics that civil servants and public officers like university dons must resign their appointments before going into active politics in the Second Republic and its reincarnation by Babangida's transitional philosophy of gradual disengagement go a long way to put into perspective the relevance given to the notion of political neutrality vis-a-vis the political activities of civil servants in most developing politics, particularly in Africa.

This notion of political neutrality is, in the view of Professor Santos, both a breeder and a corollary of the orthodoxy of politics-administration dichotomy which in his view has been challenged by the heterodoxy of public administration due to its conflicts with the ideological strands of the new wave of thinking (i.e., public administration as politics).

Having gone this far, it is now imperative to go back to the earlier mentioned challenge to the orthodoxy of "politics-administration dichotomy" by analyzing the various emphases on the political character of public administration which seemed to have gained momentum within the academia due to the declining embracement of the classical conception of politics and administration as to distinct phenomena.

It would be academically meaningless to dabble into the analysis of the various intellectual challenges to the "politics-administration dichotomy" without explicating what the challenges meant to the field of Public Administration. This is discussed in the next section.

### *Challenge of the Paradigm of Politics-Administration Dichotomy*

The challenge of "politics-administration dichotomy" represents at its inception a new thinking about the methodological approach in public administration. This challenge in itself seeks to propel the field of public administration in a new direction of intellectual inquiry or pursuit of knowledge in line with the kernel or creed of behavioral and post-behavioral paradigms. It has been a future-oriented view which takes into consideration the complexity of modern polity and government as well as the ubiquity of politics within the anatomy of governmental processes (be it in Legislature or Administration) with a capacity to



grapple with the intricate administrative and political phenomena of our time. And, in the view of Sayre (1966), the challenge took the form of a strong ferment or seed of dissent from the Pre-World War II principles or premises of the study of Public Administration. As a result, "practitioners of public administration (then) began to wonder about the validity of the dichotomy" (Henry 1992:4).

Even though the assault on politics-administration dichotomy was not the only challenge that emerged in Public Administration following World War II. It was undeniably a major one, in the sense that it fatally terminated the insulation of the belief or philosophy from criticism (Santos 1969:213). Not only this, the rejection of the politics-administration dichotomy as metaphysical and non-scientific paradigm by the scientifically oriented scholars and proponents of the new paradigm—administration as politics—within the field of public administration has not been without its telling impacts on Public Administration as a field of inquiry concerning the incongruent effect (Nachmias and Nachmias 1985:20) and Kuhnian anomalies of random research, aimless verification and accidental discoveries (Kuhn 1962) usually associated with any paradigm rejection.

This being the case, one had to ask the question: what created the tempo for this dissenting philosophy or development of heterodoxy or paradigm rejection and change?

The antecedent of this heterodoxy or paradigm change was embedded in nothing than the intellectual perspective that politics and administration are inseparable, that is, "all administrative agencies and their staffs seemed to be involved in politics" (Santos 1969:213-14). And, this line of intellectual thinking was not without its impact on the Public Administration fraternity (scholars) in terms of subsequent publications and researches:

After World War II, a strong ferment in the form of dissent from the accepted orthodoxy about politics-administration dichotomy started as indicated by some significant published works touching on it (Santos 1969:213-14).

Some of those influenced (then and since then) included Paul Appleby, Harold Stein, Herbert A. Simon, Donald W. Smithburg, Victor A. Thompson, Charles E. Jacob, Professor Santos, Robert Presthus, John Merriman Gous, Nicholas Henry, Dwight Waldo, Fred Riggs, and Fritz Morstein Marx.

Paul Appleby (1949), one of the front runners in the development of this heterodoxy, described administration as the eighth political process. Marshall and Gladys Dimock (1970:126) summed up their position on Public Administration as politics thus:

Public Administration is policymaking.... It is policymaking on a field where mighty forces contend; forces engendered in and by the society. It



is policymaking subject to still other and various policymakers. Indeed, Public Administration is one of several political processes by which a people achieves and controls governance.

In his book *Public Administration and Policy Development*, Harold Stein (1952) treated Public Administration as nothing but politics. To him, Politics is synonymous with administration, hence, his caption "Administration as Politics." In his view, the synonymization of Administration and Politics is:

designed particularly to refer to the administrator's understanding and pursuit of his objectives and his relations with the social environment outside his agency that affects or is capable of affecting its operations. (Stein 1970:118).

Not only this, Harold Stein went further in his challenge of the orthodoxy of "Politics-Administration Dichotomy" by emphasizing that two aspects—survival and the problems of values—of the administrator's adjustment to his sociopolitical environments go a long way to establish the obsolescence of "politics-administration dichotomy."

the problem of (administrator's) survival is omnipresent... The administrator's job may be at stake—in some positions the job-holder may not even expect to be able to hold on very long or some modification of the programme (or curtailment of funds) may be involved or both... these possible threats to what may be called survival may come from a legislature such as Congress, for instance, or from an administrative superior such as the President, frequently acting on pressure from the general public or some specialized public. Administrator, agency, program — all are subject to attack.... The other aspect of survival—values—is also basic to the whole concept.... For politics involves ethics and benefits and power.... And the Administrators must rely on his own system of values... (but) it is doubtful that any administrator can long survive, no matter how adroit a manipulator, if his decisions reflect values that are sharply at variance with the general standards of society or the goals which society seeks (Stein 1970:119-120).

In their own contribution, Herbert Simon, Donald W. Smithburgh and Victor A. Thompson exposed Public Administration as a political and group process (Sayre 1966:3). These lines of thought were reinforced by Charles E. Jacob (1966) in his book *Policy and Bureaucracy*. He asserted that "Policy and Administration, though once thought of to be two separate entities, must be viewed as two inter-related parts of the same governmental processes."

Norton Long (1949) was equally supportive of the symbiosis of politics and administration. He synonymized politics and administration through a persuasive analysis of the concept of power and the impact the struggle it has on the administrative setting and administrators.

Looking at the Eastonian and Lasswellian conceptions of Politics,<sup>2</sup> and Shafritz's concept of Netherworld;<sup>3</sup> Norton Long's stand becomes very understandable. And he stated it, thus:

The lifeblood of Administration is power. Its attainment, maintenance, increase, dissipation, and losses are subjects the practitioner and students can ill afford to neglect. Loss of realism and failure are almost certain consequences (Long 1949:80).

He equally claimed that:

Politics does not generate enough power at any focal point of leadership to provide the conditions for an even partially successful divorce of politics from Administration (Long 1949:81).

Using the American polity as a unit of analysis, Norton Long interestingly revealed why politics and administration could not be put in watertight compartments:

The weakness in the (American) party structure both permits and makes necessary the (Present) dimensions of administrative branch because it fails to protect administration from pressures and fails to provide adequate direction and support. It equally fails to develop a consensus on a leadership and a programme that makes possible administration on the basis of accepted decisional premises (Long 1949:82).

This viewpoint is not restricted to the American polity alone, it completely mirrors the porousness of the Nigerian political system. Some of the events of the Second Republic (i.e., 1 October 1979 - 31 December 1983) bear testimony to this. Even the dualism brought about by the demands of rational administrative ethnics and indigenous African culture (e.g., nepotism, kinship ties, cultural expectations, etc.) makes it impossible to separate politics from administration in a polity like Nigeria where bureaucrats are sometimes culturally expected to help influence political decisions or policies for idiosyncratic ends.

In driving home this line of thought, Long further argued that: "If public servants are to succeed, they must understand the political environment where they operate and political resources at their disposal (Long 1949:79)."

Contributing to the challenge or antagonism to the orthodoxy of politics-administration dichotomy, Davide M. Levitan (1970:427) claimed that "(a)ministrative procedural machinery is an integral part of each political ideology."

Administrative procedural machinery is a part of a system of government. Any system of government is composed of the sum total of its political and philosophical principles and the administrative procedural machinery established for their effectuation. The democratic system of government includes not only such principles as that government is based on the

consent of the governed, that the individual is the basis of all legitimate governmental authority, and individual must be preserved; but also the fundamental administrative procedural machinery to implement these principles (Levitan 1970:427).

Robert Presthus (1975:15), a contemporary scholar in Public Administration, equally abhors the erroneous partitioning of Politics and Administration into different compartments by claiming that: "Conceptually (at least), policy differs fundamentally from administration... operationally, however, policy and administration cannot be realistically separated."

Based on this inclination and, the complexity of modern society, Robert Presthus condemned as archaic, the "conservative" embracement of the classical "Separation of Powers Theory" which as earlier explained, once created a fertile ground for "Politics-Administration Dichotomy" (Presthus 1975:16):

In classical separation of power theory, the areas of policy formulation and policy implementation remain distinct, allocated respectively to the legislative and administrative sectors. The administrative role is often defined as apolitical and essentially value-free in this light. No such distinct separation is possible in the contemporary context. The size and complexity of governmental institutions in all but the most limited levels of public activity mitigate against purity in policy-formulating and policy-implementing roles unquestionably, the most distinctive and critically important quality of modern big government concerns the intertwining of legislative and administrative roles, particularly regarding the delegation of decisionmaking responsibilities to various boards.

In supporting this post-world war II assault on the classical watertight compartmentalization of politics and administration, Professor Santos (1969:214) explained that the affinity between Public Administration and Politics is easily confirmed by a close perusal or observation of the process of policy formulation:

In the task of formulating basic policy decisions, the political decisionmaker has nowhere to turn for advice and assistance except to the career public administrators who are the knowledgeable people in the subject-matter under consideration. When asked for their opinions, it is impossible for career public servants to comply without including their views on a number of matters involving value judgement, even highly political judgements. It is well known that civil servants normally present definite proposals or programmes of action to the political superior, who may or may not accept them. Unless the political superior has already arrived at some definite political conclusion of his own or is willing to ignore the warnings of the career public servants, he is likely to be greatly influenced by the concrete proposals of subordinates who are, after all, the experts in the subject-matter at issue. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that public administration, being deeply enmeshed in the realm of policy and values, is really political in character (Santos 1969:214; See Boyle *et al.* 1965:251-87).

This political character of Public Administration has equally been supported by Marshall and Gladys Dimock:

All governmental administration operates in a political milieu. No matter what is involved, from the least discretionary job in the civil service to the highest policy post in appointive office, the political setting is a central fact of administrative life for the government official. There are of course many fine shadings in the degree to which the influences of politics on administration is felt... through the influence of politics on administration governmental operations serve society's larger interests (M. Dimock and G. Dimock 1970:124).

And, on a contemporary note, Waldo (1992), his ambivalence notwithstanding, gave credence to the political character of public administration. This credence which is a reinforcement, is discernible from the title of his article "A theory of Public Administration means, in our time, a theory of politics also."

Following the chronology of the discussion in this article up to this point, it may be reasonably argued that the issue or the debate over "Politics-Administration Dichotomy" seemed to have permeated nearly all the intellectual nerves of the field of Public Administration and its growth over the years. This has been so due to the renaissance of thought necessitated by the indispensable and useful intellectual adventurism of scholars within the field who were, in the first place, neither ready nor prepared to be dormant when there was a need for a radical paradigm or reorganization of thoughts within the field of their calling. Hence, they have strived to make sure that the field does not lag behind the evolution of sociopolitical environment which it studies in conjunction with other social science disciplines. It has equally been so, as a result of the complexities of contemporaneous society which have largely outlived the moral and value premises of the classical period when the "politics-administration dichotomy" was appropriate and gained a wider currency.

To be simply put, the post-world war II intellectual and realistic challenge to the orthodoxy or traditionalism of "politics-administration dichotomy," as earlier stated, has propelled the field of Public Administration into a new philosophical direction. And, it has, in our opinion, led to the genesis of a new scientific and intellectual community which has equally jettisoned the conservative view which took for granted the moral values and other characteristics of existence of the practitioners and which treated the latter as nothing but mechanical robots clad or robed in administrative paraphernalia.

### **The Reigning Paradigm in Public Administration: Public Administration as Politics and its Implications**

This section treats what is now unequivocally considered the reigning paradigm within the field of public administration concerning the issue of politics-administration dichotomy. This is necessary in view of the fact that the preceding

sections of this article have dealt with the fatal challenge of the paradigmatic influence of the dichotomy.

It is the view here that the symbiosis of politics and administration represents the present paradigm and disciplinary trend in the field of public administration even though some intellectuals, due to the sedative impact of the radical paradigmatic transition, may still be defending the status-quo of the classical period thus making the field a conflict-ridden one.

This new position or paradigm, however, has its implications for the field of public administration. One of such identifiable implications concerns the notion of "political neutrality of the civil service" which has earlier been discussed in relation to the birth of the "Politics-Administration Dichotomy."

The notion of political neutrality represents an implication in that, despite the realistic negation of its existence by the syndromes of modernity or complexity of administrative functions, it still occupies a central place in the conception of civil service and the practitioners within it in many polities both developed and developing (e.g., United States, Britain, Canada and Nigeria, etc.). The code of conduct or ethics for public officers/civil servants, usually imbibed or made to be imbibed through swearing to the oaths of office which variously exist in these polities, puts this into focus.

Intellectuals and practitioners within the field of public administration need to address this issue and take a stand to ascertain whether there is any need or justification for the existence of the doctrine of political neutrality now that its progenitor (politics-administration dichotomy) seemed to be moribund following its hot challenge by the new-wave of thinking—public administration as politics.

This ascertainment is necessary because:

Once the axiom of Public Administration as politics is accepted, the doctrine of political neutrality of the civil service immediately loses its validity unless it can find some independent support to justify its continuance (Santos 1969:214).

In our perspective, the doctrine of "political neutrality" has no justification for existence in the light of the practical and functional strands of the doctrine of public administration as politics.

Even, some intellectuals have unequivocally castigated the rationale for this doctrine. One such castigation is from Professor Santos (1969:214):

If the effective enforcement of political direction from top to bottom of the administrative structure be the prime consideration (for political neutrality) sufficient statutory and administrative sanctions are available

to the politically responsible Chief Executive against civil servants resisting policy directions from above, such as the laws and regulations against insubordination. If the goal of impartiality in the administration of the laws be held paramount, it can be achieved through means other than the political sterilization of Public Administration.

This castigation is even reinforced by the fact that "circumstances and conditions in modern society have changed immensely towards direction favoring the political emancipation (freedom) of Career Public Servants" from the yoke of administrative and political conservatism that characterized the classical period during which the old doctrine "politics-administration dichotomy" remained unchallenged.

In other words, today's Public Administrators are entitled to political emancipation from the shackles of an old doctrine which has outlived its usefulness. This should be so because:

The triumph of the merit principles in appointment process, the professionalization of public servants, the high degree of administrative and technical competence, the rising level of education among Career Public Administrators today are characteristic trends in the public service (for many politics) that are conducive to the continuing development and growth of a new breed of politically conscious and administratively responsible Public Administrators (Santos 1969).

Having reviewed or analyzed the debate or issue of "Politics-Administration Dichotomy" as one of the intellectual developments within the field of Public Administration over the years; there is no gainsaying the fact that the conflict which this issue has generated and still capable of generating, if care is not taken, may become permanently injurious to the entire fabric of the field because, as Nicholas Henry (1992) puts it, the conflict and its tension have frequently been destructive to the value-imperatives of public administration.

This being the case, and, irrespective of the ambivalent, non-conclusive and contradictory position of Waldo (1992) on the issue, it is, in our view, necessary to emphasize the need for a consensus on the new thinking—public administration as politics. This will to a significant extent prevent the unfortunate implications of secretarianism, polarized intellectual philosophy and the indiscriminate rejection of much that is valuable in the inheritance and contemporary efforts within the field of public administration.<sup>4</sup> And, this is a necessary stamp of finality on the moribundity of the old paradigm and, rather than being utopian, it creates a challenge that could be analytically pursued within the parameters of the emerging and continuing issues (Goodsell 1992) in public administration.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife in Nigeria is a good example because Public Administration has a different Department from that of Political Science. Even to a greater extent, the University of Benin, Benin City recognized the independence of the two fields even though they are both couched in the same Department. This is so because the tag, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, presupposes the difference between the two fields. Other examples exist all over the world, particularly in the United States as stated by Waldo (1992). This situation still remains despite the claim (Henry 1992) that Political Science is the mother of Public Administration.

<sup>2</sup>Politics, to David Easton, is the authoritative allocation of values while Harold Lasswell defines it as who gets what, when and how? Since power is a key concept in these definitions, Norton Long's synonymization of Politics with Administration, due to the struggle for power, therefore, becomes meaningful.

<sup>3</sup>Netherworld of Public (Personnel) Administration is not a physical thing but a concept used in discussing a set of activities. Netherworld is an informal structure. It is a sort of invisible power or black market by which most of the criteria of Administration are circumvented. In other words, Netherworld is the informal process through which administrators fulfill their expectations, needs or mandates which could have been otherwise impossible through compliance with the rules and regulations of (public personnel) administration criteria and personal goals (or values) of the administrators (See J.M. Shafritz *et al.* 1981).

<sup>4</sup>In his article, "Disillusion and Regeneration: The Quest for a Discipline," which appeared in the *American Political Science Review*, volume LIX (December 1965), David Truman prophetically advised the Political Scientists regarding the conflicts within the field of Political Science. Since the conflict within Public Administration is isomorphic to that of Political Science on some issues, this article is recommended for those within the field of Public Administration if only to gain the wisdom it offers about dealing with disciplinary conflict or creative tensions.

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