

1. Congratulations! You have just been elected as the Chair of the Section on International and Comparative Administration of the American Society for Public Administration. Your charge is to OUTLINE an acceptance speech in which you review the history of research and theory of comparative public administration and politics and to then propose foci issues for a “revitalization agenda” for research. (Clue: Remember the elements of Wyman’s wheel as a starting point.)

I. Comparative Public Administration (CPA), like Development Administration, has its roots in Ancient times

Public administration is as old as civilization. Old empires like The Egyptians, Greeks, Babylonians, Romans, just to mention some, developed important administrative systems. Ancient empires use administration to *develop* and *operate* their empires. This practical use of administration is called Development Administration. But Public Administration as a *theoretical* exercise, as a comparative field, was a great concern of classical Greek philosophers. Plato (*Republics*) and Aristotle (*Politics*), discussing diverse forms of governance, studied public administration. Plato and Xenophon discussed comparative governments. It is particularly famous Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*, written to educate Cyrus the Great, discussed about different forms of government.

II. The CPA after WWII and the glorious 1960’s in the USA

In the USA, CPA was not consolidated as a field of study until after WWII. After the war, developing countries adopted a strategy of development (substitution of imports) based on transfer of know-how and technology from developed countries, especially from the USA. As a result, there was a huge demand for studies on economic development. The growing interest on “how to manage development” called for studies on comparative public administration. The most notable product was the creation of the Comparative Administration Group (CAG) in 1962, under the auspices of the Ford Foundation and headed by Fred Riggs. This groups was strongly linked with USA governmental

“experts.” This link and the interest of “management of development” explain the remarkable focus of comparative studies on public bureaucracy. The idea was to export American public administration to developing countries. In these countries, Russia and USA sustained an ideological war. Publication of CPA classic books by Riggs (*Administration in Developing Countries*), Heady (*Public Administration: A Comparative Perspective*) and Almond and Verba (*Civic Culture*).

III. A major decline in the 1970's

The “first oil crises” and the political crisis in Nixon’s administration (*Watergate* scandal) marked the early 1970’s. Governmental programs for technical assistance declined and developing countries had to change their strategy of development (shared growth). Funding institutions and agencies changed their research interests so funds and demand for comparative studies declined. The *Journal of Comparative Administration* was renamed as *Administration & Society* with a focus that does not reflect CPA topics. However, some key journals in the field survive. In the USA: *International Journal of Public Administration* and *Public Budgeting and Financial Management: An International Journal*. In UK: *Journal of Public Administration and Development* and *International Journal of Administrative Science*.

IV. The CPA shrinking in the 1980's and its reemergence in the 1990's

In the 1980’s, CPA was reduced to sections of chapters in basic textbooks. Meanwhile the mainstream of PA, New Public Administration, matured in the 1980’s, especially after the Blacksburg Manifesto. A technological revolution that changed the world in mid 1990’s began. The world lived economic and social years of crisis. End of communism

and fragmentation of East Europe and Russia. The globalization age begins in early 1990s.

V. CPA in the globalization age. Foci issues for a “revitalization agenda” for research

CPA is an “umbrella” of topics and subtopics that converge in the center (remember Wyman’s wheel), which is the CPA’s goal:^{*} to know governmental structures and administrative practices in diverse countries to identify causal relationships and support better theories. An inherent result should be the improvement of administration in a particular country, including ours. This by-product result answers the question: Why to compare? By looking others, we learn about ourselves. The CPA’s goal is not only the central reference for all slices of this thematic umbrella but also the “stick” that allows us to “grab” it: all points of departure and arrival converge. Any CPA analysis should be a “round trip” from this goal through the topics and return to the point of reference. This round trip in the globalization age requires a “revitalization agenda” to redesign research alternatives. A “revitalization agenda” should put more attention in non-economic factors, such as culture, ethnicity, language, community beliefs and symbols. In this agenda, it will be important to avoid ethnocentricity, include recent developments of organizational theory, and make comparisons across countries, time, and levels.

(i) **Theoretical ethnocentricity.** It is necessary to avoid imposing our concepts to other realities. In any comparative study we tend to conceptualize in terms of our national or personal experiences. It is not surprising that most CPA analysis are ethnocentric in the sense their hypotheses are not representative of other contexts.

^{*} I decided to use the CPA’s goal as a reference because Public Administration has not a center; it is an interprofessional subject looking for a discipline, as Waldo once said.

(ii) **Organizational theory.** Recent developments in organizational theory offer opportunities for pioneering work in CPA, especially those related to culture. To recognize the relevance of global culture differences in American public administration comparative research requires explicitly including the mutual interdependence at the global level and leaving the ethnocentric values approach. Some of potential topics could be on organizational structure, behavior, leadership, goals.

(iii) **cross-country studies.** We need to decolonize the present CPA thinking, empirically and conceptually. All Political Science, *ergo* also PA and all systems of government, is comparative in nature. To use the term “comparative” as a synonym of “foreign” or “somewhere else” implies we can understand American public administration without a comparative context. We have to understand that what happens in other polities is a *sine qua non* condition to understand American public administration. We can always compare but the key issue is to make sense of such comparison. Comparison across cases only makes sense knowing other people context, not exporting or imposing our ideas abroad.

(iv) **cross-time studies.** We can compare different moments within a single country. This exercise is important to identify, for example, what functions remain, have changed or have been added. These functions may be studied in terms of roles and behaviors in the governing process.

(v) **cross-level.** When we speak of “bureaucracy,” we tend to think of the federal government. However, in the USA there are other 83, 000 governments that in a way is also bureaucracy. Similar situation occurs in other countries. One level-analysis does not permit the understanding of complex systems.

2. Review and (attempt to) reconcile views on modernization and tradition in transitional countries. Include discussion whether or not Riggs' Prismatic model contributes to reconciliation.

Thomas L. Friedman and some literature on national development present modernization (represented by the Japanese car Lexus) and tradition (represented by the Palestinian olive tree) in opposing extremes. In late 1950's, the first generation of modernization studies proposed that modernization, a synonym of development, should replace tradition, a synonym of underdevelopment. To be "modern" was the goal. Riggs criticizes this "first generation" of modernization theories, especially Rostow's *stages of economic development* that most developing countries tried to follow in the sixties and early seventies. Since no social order guarantees the condition of "good," "better," or "worse" life, Riggs sees no reason to deliberately seek modernization. To illustrate his point, Riggs used the prism metaphor to distinguish three types of societies: fused, prismatic and diffracted. What happens inside the prism is a mystery, but we can clearly see what goes in and out of it. In the prism, undifferentiated (or fused) social structures are like the white light and the differentiated (or diffracted) social structures represent the rainbow hues. The prismatic society is an intermediate society that occurs in any point between tradition (fused) and modernity (diffracted). He says that "prismatic" is not synonym for "transitional" because transition implies movement and direction (towards) a modern stage, not implied in his idea of "prismatic." In Riggs' prismatic society, traditional and modern sectors overlap, co-exist and even can be complementary producing unexpected results. Riggs observes that in practice, fused societies seek to benefit from material good from the outside at the time they tenaciously keep and nurture their inherited traditions (this is the Latin meaning of *tradere*). He tries to be non-normative in the sense that he

does not see anything superior in the diffracted condition to those in the fuse society. When Riggs cannot to escape from the “horrid dilemma” (his words) of choosing between modernization and tradition he decides for both. In his insights on training, Riggs says classical or traditional training approaches social and ethical values for policy making; modern training stresses skills, knowledge, and organizational values for policy implementation. An intermediate training in a transitional society has to consider both social and ethical values for policy making and techniques and knowledge for policy implementation. This combination of modernity and tradition was considered in the “second generation” of modernization studies, one of the three main current approaches (the other two are the dependency and the world system approaches) to economic development (the “first generation” rejected tradition or considered it as a condition to be “surpassed”).

Amy Chua would say that Riggs reconciliation of modernization and tradition in the globalization age is not easy. Two major forces clash and put the *World on Fire*. On one hand, the modernization or free market policies associated to globalization often concentrate wealth in tiny business elites in developing countries. On the other hand, globalization tosses democracy in such a way the oppressed majority strikes the few rich, especially if they are easily identified as an ethnical group. Not everything is lost for these minorities that may create coalitions with autocrats to control the majority. Two major observations to Chua: (i) she sees democracy as the government of the majority. Very few policy makers will promote democracy based on this narrow definition. Democracy is more than a majoritarian phenomenon; it includes institutional reforms, open media, civil society, constitutionalism, and independent courts. Briefly, democracy

implies the existence of a set of institutions and mechanisms that guarantee the existence, participation and safety of minorities, and (ii) evidence does not support Chua's connections. Ted Gurr, tracking data since the 1970s, shows that ethnic and political conflicts have declined in all regions of the world since 1990.¹ Lets concede Chua is partially right and consider that reconciliation of modernization and tradition in the globalization age is not as peaceful as we might think from Riggs perspective.

To be consistent with the "revitalization agenda" in the answer to question 1, we have to include other non-American perspectives. Theorists of dependency would say that developing countries contain overlapped elements of both differentiated and fused societies. Using their terminology, they would say that different modes of production overlap but, unlike Riggs, the dominant mode exploits the other co-existing modes. Thus, there is a modern sector in developed countries extracting the surplus from the modern sector in developing countries that, in turn, exploits its own traditional social sector. Within the dependency school there are least three main positions providing their own version to this general idea. (i) The Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), following the ideas of the German economist Friedrich List, approaches the issue in terms of deterioration of the exchange terms in international trade unfavorable to developing countries. The economy presents a "dual structuralism," a modern and a traditional sector, (ii) the radical wing that says that underdevelopment is the flip side of development. Underdevelopment is the inherent condition of development, and (iii) Close to ECLA, and betraying the radical wing (that is what radicals say), is Cardoso's idea of "dependent development." The ECLA and the "dependent development" position sustain

¹ Available at: <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/pc03print.pdf>

that is possible a modernization process in developing countries but not as that in developed countries.

Briefly, there are at least three positions on tradition and modernization. Some people suggest that globalization inevitably threatens, destroys, or confronts tradition (Friedman and Chua, in a way). Other position is that globalization exploits tradition (radical wing in the dependency school). More optimists say that tradition not only may coexist with modernization but it may use communication technologies to spread out worldwide traditional values (new modernization theories and Riggs “updated”).

3. Reflecting the proposals of appropriate authors, discuss the need for and challenges of New Paradigm for comparative administration which includes attention to the realities of Globalism.

Something serious may be happening in CPA. This is my conclusion after “google-ing” several hours and checking all electronic databases at the UTA library. Even in the golden age of the CAG, Riggs (1997) confesses, “we were never able to focus directly on American public administration in a comparative perspective.” I found some articles to complement our class readings, but they only provide general directions.

In 1964, Riggs wrote that there are forces in the world that tend to increase the degree of diffraction (modernization). When such forces are equivalent to what we call nowadays globalization, CPA faces four main challenges: (i) American CPA has to change in some way when everything is changing, (ii) Environmental sustainability as a new paradigm in CPA, (iii) Different settings of formal and informal bureaucratic structures and behaviors, and (iv) New forms of government calling for new bureaucratic designs.

American CPA has to change in some way when everything is changing. “When the body changes, how could the coat not change?” wrote the famous Victor Hugo. CPA cannot stay as a science of administration with eternal principles of universal validity. The intense global interaction, with information flows in any direction in the information highway network, calls for a *less parochial and ethnocentric* CPA, in theory and practice. On the other hand, the convergence of communication and information technologies since 1995 increased the number of people informed in such a way they likely demand more accountability and responsiveness to their governments.

Environmental sustainability. Farazmand thinks this issue will possible become a *new paradigm* in CPA. The whole planet is an ecosystem all of us share. The balance of this system requires paying attention to natural resources regardless their location. Developed nations, if they want to remain developed and grow, have to work with developing countries for a global self-sustenance. As an example, the Amazon jungle not only concerns to Brazil but to all of us, for our survival.

Different settings of formal and informal bureaucratic structures and behaviors.

Organizational culture is a topic already in business management (Hofstede, Schein, Trompenaars and Fons) and begins to emerge in public administration. It includes shared values, habits, folklore, symbols, and rituals. It also refers patterns of speech, written language, internal governance, internal interaction, and personal life styles. Other alternatives are organizational stories, ceremonial rites of passage, logos and nomenclatures, models of heroes and villains. In the field of CPA, the study of organizational culture will help us to: (i) better understand formal structures and informal realities, and (ii) lay the basis for a deeper sense of identity and self-awareness on the part of bureaucracy members in developing countries.

New forms of government call for new bureaucratic designs. Links between bureaucratic design, democracy and governance are usually invisible if they are not framed in a comparative, historical, and ever changing context. After all, as Waldo put it, **all** countries, including the so-called developed countries, are “developing” countries. Global changes call for new bureaucratic designs and new forms of democracy and governance. Some of these global changes are:

(i) *World domination of transnational companies (TNCs) reducing the power of host and home states.* Governmental officers abroad sometimes play the role of corporate mercenaries or promoters of TNCs. There is a shift from the administrative state (Waldo's new public administration) to the corporate state (Osborne and Gaebler's new public management). Within the USA, the policy "to do more with less" implied less welfare policies, more expenditure in security and war, and in coercitive bureaucracy (police, prisons, court systems and auxiliary functions such as social work, counseling, psychological networks).

(ii) *Increasing speed of electronic money across the world* ("mad money" or "casino capitalism," as Susan Strange called it). It evades taxation in the place it profits and it is more speculative than productive.

(iii) *Fragmentation and relocation of productive processes.* TNCs, using a particular practice of outsourcing—production sharing—, engage in internalization practices (they internally determine the price of parts or products assembled abroad) to avoid taxation and increase profits. New developing countries emerge as "competitive" for labor-intensive processes of production. Because of the transnational squeeze of labor-force, the OECD had to redefine the meaning of competitive. It is not considered "competitive" a country cutting or tolerating conditions that would be considered unacceptable elsewhere (such as severe environmental degradation or exploitation of labor).

(iv) *Emergence or increasing relevance of new and powerful transnational non-governmental actors (NGA),* such as WTO, World Bank, IMF, Green Peace. What happens inside a country is not the result of diplomatic relations between countries, nor

the result between states and TNCs (triangular diplomacy), but the result of a complex setting of negotiation between states, TNC and international NGA.

(v) *Massive citizen participation in politics.* Economic globalization imposes a rational maximizing economic logic, eluding ethical and cultural values, and citizen participation. In the opposite extreme, the increasing education and participation of the masses will erode the power of centrally structured governments “democratizing democracy,” creating an effective devolution of power. New technologies may be used to increase social participation and strength cultural, social, political ties. Consensus for change is rooted in communicative ethics and social and cultural relationships, no in the other way around.

(vi) *New forms of supranational governance.* The European Union pioneers a form of transnational governance. Each country surrenders some of sovereignty and the transnational system, in turn, actively contributes to democracy within associated states.

All changes encompassed in four previous headings challenge the profession of CPA. It has to be prepared to: (i) be less parochial and ethnocentric, (ii) better understand formal structures and informal realities explaining bureaucratic identity and self-awareness in different countries, (iii) bring institutional, moral and ethical standards to the field, (iv) be more concern with masses than aim leaders in developing countries, (v) continue studies focused on bureaucracy at the time other topics such as citizenship, civic culture, community and public interest are included.

Complementary readings

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