PLENARY PAPERS

ETHICS IN POLITICS:
A REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS OF THE LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

This essay reviewed works primarily from the College of Public Administration, University of the Philippines, on ethics and politics. The first set of contributions focused on studies on bureaucratic corruption. The second set was a reaction to this thrust. It produced studies on corruption at the political level, analyses of ethical values, and case-accounts of ethical administrators in government. The review showed that the evolution of the field could also be used as an example of why and how the discipline of public administration in the Philippines has changed over the years.

In 1992, the College of Public Administration of the University of the Philippines (CPA-UP) invited the distinguished statesman, Jovito R. Salonga, to give a special lecture series on "Ethics in Politics". In the inaugural lecture, Salonga wondered aloud if our feet were on solid ground, since ethics, as the science and art of the Good, would seem to have little in common with, let alone be found in, the sordid field "where self-interest, treachery, double-dealing, trickery, and lack of candor are the prevailing trademarks". Ethics there, he thought, would only be "for losers like Salonga" (1994: 1). And then he went on to give three sterling lectures, often drawing from his own difficult decisions, to show that ethics had a place in the political realm.

Salonga's question provides a good starting point for this paper in at least three ways. First, it forces us to look into the nature of the relationship between our two main concepts. Second, it alerts us to the fact that when people think of ethics and politics, corruption and the other sordid trademarks Salonga referred to are the first foci of interest. Third, it shows us that, upon reflection, the positive

aspects of their relationship can take center stage. These will also be the three main issues around which this paper is written. I shall review principally studies of ethics and corruption undertaken in the CPA-UP. This is justified not so much by reason of my familiarity with these materials as much by two other factors: the pioneering role CPA-UP played in this field not only in the Philippines but also in Asia; and the way changes in its content and method paralleled theoretical and political developments.

ETHICS IN POLITICS: TWO VIEWS

Lasswell's politics (1936) as "who gets what, when, how" was the influential definition during the heyday of value neutrality. It was amoral and practical, and its sole intersection with ethics was that it also dealt with choices. The operative and desirable norms -- desirable in the sense of "effective" rather than "liked" "wanted" -- were technical, those that were means to a preconceived end. That end was presumably the result of balancing interests in a free market of political ideas. It was probably appropriate that the usual goal then was "development", which could be attained by an increase in production, practically without reference to the human benefits and costs that increase entailed.

The Lasswellian value-neutral approach might be contrasted with that of the classic Greek philosophers for whom ethics and politics were inextricably intertwined. The word "ethics" came etymologically from "ethos", meaning "custom" and "usage", signifying its rootedness in the notion of community. As such, a person's ethical behavioral would be based on and be validated by the custom and behavior of his or her fellows; one could not be ethical apart from society. This involvement in a common life was the realm of ethics as much as of politics. It was in a community like the Greek *polis* that "individuals secured their particular interest and realized their potentialities through adherence to common laws and customs; [and] the collective life of the city state constituted the universal ground in which individuals found the essence and meaning of their lives" (Crittenden, 1990: 238).

Plato saw the connection between ethics and politics even more directly. His philosopher-kings must in their wisdom lead the way to the Good. That would come about not through individual behavior, but through "the maintenance of the basic moral virtues in communal life". By extension, therefore, "the whole purpose of the polis [was] -- to enable [human beings] to lead the life of moral virtue and wisdom" (R.C. Reyes, 1989: 33-34).

Politics is then not just the art of the possible, as Lasswell suggested, but constitutes acts infused with values. The latter idea is not necessarily an idealistic view. Another political scientist of the behavioralist school defined politics as "the authoritative allocation of values in a society". recognizing that any political decision would be drawn into ethical conflicts and be an arena for the reckoning of the pleasures and pains of stakeholders (Easton, 1960).

The Greeks had both feet on the ground. Politics to them could encompass activities that tended to deter the flourishing of the common life as well as those which tended to enhance it. They thus suggested that an ethical evaluation of those alternatives was therefore in order. The political cum moral philosophers emphasized the positive deeds because they were unafraid of enthroning virtue and saw that it rationally could lead to the Good life. However, Plato's dialogues certainly showed awareness that people could and did choose options that were more on the side of vice and of Salonga's list of unrecommended options.

This debate on the role of ethics in politics affected the studies in the Philippines in a curious time sequence. Although the view of ethics apart from politics was formulated much later in time, it was the perspective that guided the introduction of the discipline of public administration into the country in 1952. By the mid-1970s however, the confluence of international political events (like the Vietnam War and the protest movement it spawned) and the Philippine experience under Martial Law, along with the growing acceptance of critical social science in universities around the world, pushed the discipline away from logical positivism to the development of a Philippine public administration that recognized the place of both values and objectivity in its theory and practice. This put the Greeks back in. Thus, moral philosophy joined political science, law, economics, and business administration as a disciplinal underpinning of what academics started to call "new public administration" (Kronenberg, 1971). In this light, this review of the literature of ethics in politics may also be treated as a case study of the history of this social science in the country.

A DIGRESSION: WESTERN SOCIAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public administration was introduced to the Philippines in 1952 as part of the package of technical assistance that would help the newly independent country rise again from the ravages of war and join the ranks of advanced nations. The brand of the discipline brought here was called "development administration" (DA). This was something of an anomaly because public administration as practised in the West dealt with the maintenance of peace and order and economic stability, not the management of economic growth and rapid social change which development administration was supposed to teach. DA brought propositions and practices about administration based on the Western experience. Once in the field, many foreign and local researchers saw the cultural-boundedness of propositions deemed universal in the discipline but which were arrived at only by studying Western societies.

In time, Western scholars, along with their Western-trained local counterparts, realized that they were creating the social science of the new states. They then resorted to two different and sometimes contradictory strategies. First, they

taught their own practices and propositions to their countries of assignment. This was not only because they valued their own and were most familiar with them. More to the point, these had supposedly worked in their home countries, and a further test of these propositions would be a building block to a more general theory. However, if they did not work as expected, the researchers did not rethink the propositions. Instead, they searched for cultural, political, and other characteristics of the receiving society to be reformed to provide a better fit.

Second, being bearers of value-free social science, they knew that they could not impose their values as easily and legitimately as they imposed their practices. For instance, they studied the authoritarianism in the new states but did not preach the values of democracy and liberty. Or, to cite a more relevant example, they found dishonesty and nepotism in government and reported them not as unethical practices but as the consequence of the operation of different value systems. They suspended judgment about practices they found among the natives. They did not use their value lenses and accepted what would have outraged them at home. Both these strategies, seen in their best light, were meant to develop a social science that could contribute to the universal, objective, and value-free discipline. But since administrative theory and practice were underlain by values, the two strategies would come in conflict from time to time.

STUDIES ON ETHICS AND CORRUPTION UP TO THE 1970s

Ethics was not a major topic of discussion in CPA-UP prior to the 1970s. In fact, the College moved back from an open concern for it as early as the late 1950s when it decided to drop the Ethics course from its original curriculum. On its tenth anniversary in 1962,[1] it also brushed aside any feeling of responsibility for fighting the continued prevalence of graft and corruption in the society, reasoning that it was an academic institution rather than a reform organization.[2]

The College understood its function to be the description and analysis of administrative phenomena. Following logical-positivism, the focus was on the "is" rather than on what ought to be. It accepted that politics and administration were separate realms of the Will and the Deed, respectively, to sue the felicitous phrase of Woodrow Wilson (1887).[3] As such, politics was viewed as concerned with goals and ends, and was the arena for grappling with choices among values and ethical quandaries. Administration was the implementing arm, left to tackle only technical issues or those which connected means to ends.

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[1] In the anniversary celebrations, one of the guests wondered aloud how graft and corruption could still prevail in government after ten years of the then Institute. From all accounts, the faculty then responded with a bewildered collective shrug.

[2] This should not obscure the fact that the College ran a strong extension program from its inception in 1952. These training and consultancy services were devoted to administrative and management reform, such as reorganization, streamlining, and human relations development, among others. These were not directed at changing the structure and values of the political system.

To make that division of roles work, any decision remaining at the administrative level was regarded as technical, even when it involved ultimate values. Thus, justice issues were translated into priority rules like first-come-first-served, or qualification and exclusion criteria. The success of administration then became dependent on how rules were followed, rather than on whether or not justice was served by the action (albeit based on rules) which was made. Administrators were supposed to make decisions, draft policy recommendations, and in other ways give prescriptions while remaining value-neutral, since commitment to the values underlying the prescriptions was not necessary or even desired.[4] In the discipline of public administration, this was recognized -- and often hailed -- as the process of depoliticizing decisions; it is easy to see that it was also a process of de-ethicizing them. With such processes and actions as the raw material for the discipline, public administration could ignore value questions in its field.

But there was a fly in the ointment. While the discipline, in its unconscious (but value-laden) way could preach the superiority of value-neutrality, it could not make its scholars value-free. Social science training taught them not to assess the concepts and objects they studied through the lenses of any value except truth, objectivity, and rationality, the value underpinnings of all sciences, including this social one. Nevertheless, they were animated by commitments to justice, integrity, nationalism, and other values learned at their parents' knee, in school, at church, and in other virtue-teaching groups and institutions. These values after all were what attracted most of them to the discipline of public administration in the first place.

Despite eschewing the subject of ethics for most of its early years, a College founded on the moral purpose of public service could not be completely immune to the call of values. In 1970, Raul P. de Guzman, at that time Assistant Dean of the College,[5] broached the idea of a college-wide project focusing on "the responsible uses of power." As an internal initiative, the project promised no incentives except regular salary and competed for faculty time with others with both high profile and funding support. Nonetheless, de Guzman was able to assemble a team for his idea very quickly.

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[3]This article of Woodrow Wilson is credited as the paper that gave birth to the discipline of public administration.

[4]As late as 1985, Thompson was still arguing "the possibility of administrative ethics" in a cogent article with that title (reprinted in 1992). He shot down two arguments: (a) the "ethic of neutrality" which contended that administrators are not allowed to follow their own moral principles once they are in an organization, and (b) the "ethic of structure" which stated that it is the organization and not the persons in it which should be held responsible for its actions, in effect clearing administrators of any moral responsibility. He showed that these ethics are flawed theories, and that public administrators should be held responsible and should not suppress their moral autonomy while in office.

[5]Raul P. de Guzman would later preside over the corruption studies as dean of the College, a position he held from 1973 to 1979.

On the eve of the First Quarter Storm, it was believed that there were more manifestations of power's irresponsible uses and the project became focused on corruption and what was first called "deviant bureaucratic behavior". The first two projects under it, undertaken between 1971 and 1975 but published later, attempted to describe how corruption took place (Cariño, 1975, 1977a). Concepts from sociology enriched the second study as it analyzed the interplay of status and role of the bureaucrat and the client in the performance of illegal acts. Status and role mixes and inconsistencies were hypothesized to produce different types of corruption (Cariño, 1977a). The interaction of clients and bureaucrats was further studied to determine their personalistic or universalistic orientations (Alfiler, 1975). These empirical and analytic basic research projects proceeded dispassionately, as a natural scientist would apprehend a snake without flinching at its slime.

By 1975, these studies had attracted enough attention to spawn a full-blown Asian comparative study on graft and corruption funded by the International Development Research Centre of Canada. From an initial group of scholars from twelve countries, the final project team represented seven countries. The others found the work too difficult to do empirically or met their government's resistance in allowing a project that could expose their faults to go on. The new Martial Law government decreed that the Philippine research would be limited to the bureaucratic level. The others followed suit and thus the project officially got the title "Bureaucratic Behavior and Development" (BBD).

The Philippine team described and analyzed the causes, consequences, and control measures of graft and corruption primarily through case studies in revenue-generating (Briones, 1979), regulating (Bautista, 1979), and revenue-spending (de Guzman, Viñeza, and de Leon, 1979) agencies of government. As an initial study of corruption, it created its own methods as it went along. Accepting the media perception on the prevalence of graft and corruption, it decided not to have a public opinion survey nor attempt to estimate its extent and incidence. Instead it chose agencies widely known as "snakepits" for its case studies. It then used different methods to get information on the nature and types of corruption occurring there. In the beginning, it scrupulously told all its informants about the real subject matter of the research. However, upon the advent of Martial Law and the clamming up of theretofore voluble civil servants, the project had to devise new ways of getting access to agencies. The use of the term "systems improvement" as the focus of the study proved helpful in winning the confidence of respondents. Many of them, in describing their frustrations with their systems, went on to discuss the issue of corruption without being prompted on it.

Civil servants also provided information on the informal organization spearheading corruption in their agency, frequently with the admonition that "everybody's doing it except me". From that it was possible to draw up the alternative manuals of corruptive behavior, which could be placed side by side with the standard operating procedures of their agencies. These manuals showed that corruption invaded even supposedly ministerial functions so that they became effectively discretion-

ary and invariably self-serving (Bautista, 1979; Cariño, 1975). For instance, if an employee having only ministerial powers, was inclined to be corrupt, she could absent him/herself, hide papers, put them at the bottom of the pile, or do other obstructive activities that would force the client to "come across".

The alternative manuals were submitted to other employees and clients whose confirmation of the process strengthened the team's early finding that corruption tended to be systemic in many agencies. At the same time, some bureaucrats and students criticized the manuals not for inaccuracy, but for being such vivid examples of how a person or organization may learn how to be corrupt.

The project also received a lot of help from the clients. Many of them volunteered as members of expert panels who provided information on an agency and who also validated the data the researchers were receiving from officials and employees. In addition, some of the research staff acted as clients themselves, undergoing a licensing process, for instance, to determine where and how corruption takes place.

In hindsight and not by design, the research departed from the logical-positivist tradition in two ways. First, it managed to contribute to the indigenization of a discipline theretofore imported wholesale from the West. Second, while practising objectivity in the analysis of data, it found value-neutrality as an untenable stance of a social science and of social scientists.

Is Corruption a Western Concept?

The Bureaucratic Behavior and Development project was difficult to undertake at the start. In practical terms, this was because corruption is an act of consenting adults veiled in utmost secrecy. In addition, it also faced conceptual problems, not the least of which was whether or not it was stigmatizing behavior that was acceptable in the native culture because it was using values imported from the West. The project tackled this issue in two main ways: by tracing the history of corruption behavior in the countries as far back as the researchers could go, and by concept clarification, that is, by checking the Western referent of the concept and comparing it with the way it is defined by the local culture.

Corruption in history. The historical study yielded the unsurprising finding that all societies represented in the BBD network had a set of sanctioned behaviors equivalent to what is contemporarily called "corruption". The Hong Kong team went as far back as the documentary materials of China's Ch'ing dynasty (1796-1911) to describe the corruption phenomenon and analyze its causes and consequences (Lau and Lee, 1981). It could have gone farther back in time to prove that corruption is definitely not a Western concept only, because, after all, it was China that gave the world the honorable mandarins and the merit system.

In the same vein, while pre-conquest Philippines did not have a comparable empire and bureaucracy, the legendary honest transactions between the native and Chinese traders showed that even then, Filipinos could tell the difference between

a bribe and a gift. Spain then introduced a series of laws to keep its officials accountable to the Crown, if not to the oppressed natives. The American period which was something of a golden age of rectitude (if only because anti-corruption laws were strictly enforced) was rudely broken by the Japanese interlude when stealing from the enemy became regarded as an act of high patriotism. Since Independence, graft and corruption have been high in the list of charges levelled against all outgoing governments (Endriga, 1979).

Defining corruption from the viewpoint of law and culture. The other charge was that anti-corruption laws were an imposition of Western colonial powers, or an aping of Western laws to qualify for modernization. To deal with this, the BBD project tried to study corruption from the viewpoint of law and culture. A decade before the project, Corpuz (1960) had written a provocative piece contending that corruption could be illegal and ethical at the same time. There were indeed some acts that could be characterized in that manner. The BBD project called that "favor corruption", where, for instance, a civil servant gave a license to an unqualified applicant by reason of kinship.

However, the intersection of illegal and immoral acts -- "true corruption" -- covered a wider area. In addition, many acts of favor corruption were not pure cultural transactions. Some of them located themselves in the market like true corruption. This would be the case, for instance, when that civil servant also enriched him/herself from the proceeds of his/her kin's illegal gains. Thus, in the Philippines, although some incongruencies did exist between law and ethical norms, there were values like honesty, fair play, and personal dignity which supported both legal and ethical norms, and by extension, stigmatized corruption. Thus, corruption would not find support in both realms. However, weak enforcement, the perception of government illegitimacy, societal tolerance of corruption, conferment of status on wealth even if ill-gotten, and opportunistic behavior made graft, nepotism and bribery appear to be culturally sanctioned (Cariño, 1979).

Moving Back From Value-neutrality

The BBD team had to confront the issue of value-neutrality at several points. The first one was in realizing that even the fact of defining the concept of corruption required that they recognize their values and be conscious of where they lead. The second issue had to do with withholding judgment in order for the project to proceed. The third was more involved, in that it called to question the discipline's standard in assessing effective organizations. Finally, the team had to tackle the revisionist theory, perhaps a classic case of where value-neutrality would lead social science.

Defining corruption. All social scientific studies routinely go through a clarification of concepts and a conceptual and operational definition of their key terms. Thus, the BBD project did not expect trauma in this regard. However, recognizing that people did not want to be informants about corruption in their agencies, the

team decided to use a substitute term that could denote the same thing. "Deviant bureaucratic behavior" was a nice-sounding academic phrase for that purpose. As the team formally regarded it, "deviance" was a value-neutral term, almost statistical in nature, that could be contrasted from "normality" and "representativeness". However, the implicit value actually guiding its members surfaced when respondents started describing as "deviant" the types of behavior that the researchers deemed desirable -- e.g., punctuality, integrity, compassion, responsiveness to client demands, etc. The name of the main variable was then changed to "negative bureaucratic behavior", this time contrasted to what are good and valued acts. This was clearly a value judgment. It was more understandable to the respondents, who then describe corrupt, oppressive, and abusive behavior, which was what the researchers actually wanted to study.

Another bout with value-neutrality came with how graft and corruption were to be defined. Ordinarily, a denotative exercise entailed no value traps, but not in this case. Heidenheimer (1970) had introduced three perspectives for defining corruption: the public-interest-centered, the public-office-centered, and the market-centered views. The most value-neutral of these was the last, which viewed corruption as the result of the operation of supply and demand on government goods and services. Corruption in this light was an alternative way of doing business, its use dependent on the relative demand for the service and the relative risks, cost, and benefits of obtaining it. The strength each protagonist brought to the encounter would determine what and how values would be exchanged. Rightness or wrongness did not enter into the picture. In fact, acts an ethicist might call "corrupt"could be seen only as " the most effective" or "the most practical".

The public-interest-centered view was the most value-laden since it required considerations of the public good to enter into the calculus before any act would be deemed corruptive or not. It thus labeled the effects of corruption as a priori against the general welfare. The BBD team did not take this view; it wanted to test the relationship between corruption and the public interest, not make it a beginning assumption.

The public-office-centered used law as the standard; any deviation from it constituted corruption or some other kind of negative behavior. The project chose to use the public-office view, arguing that the law was an external evaluator and would not push the researchers into using their own values as standards for identifying what to study. This stand was within the purview of the politics-administration dichotomy under which public administration recognized the role of values, but regarded it as operative only at the political realm.

However, the researchers again ran into a value issue, as certain behaviors were found to be contrary to law but were supported by folk norms (Lee, 1986) and even sometimes, by ethical norms (Corpuz, 1960). The family-centeredness of the culture and the legal prohibition against nepotism had already been cited. As already mentioned, the project handled this issue by recognizing favor corruption as a special type. But there were other more difficult cases. For instance, a lawyer in

the civil service who defended peasants in a suit against their landlord would have strong ethical support from proponents of agrarian reform, but this man was purged in 1975 because he failed to file two legal requirements: a request for limited practice of his profession, and a leave of absence during the days he was in court (Cariño, 1977b). In making exceptions of these and similar cases, the researchers found a conflict between their training in value-neutrality and their own ethical strictures.

Suspending judgment against corruption. CPA-UP ventured into a field which was thought difficult if not impossible to study both because of the secrecy and sensitivity of corruption and because, since the advent of Martial Law, of the danger posed by studies which were expected to be controversial, if not outrightly critical of the regime. To encourage the flow of information and proceed with the scientific study, the researchers had to appear strictly non-judgmental. They were especially expected not to attach a moral label on the actions of persons who cooperated with them. Many officials and employees of graft-prone agencies conducted themselves with integrity and bristled at any suggestion -- in word or body language -- that the researcher classified them with all the others. At other times, some took pains to call themselves "clean" even though their own accounts showed them to be tainted. Thus, in order to learn about the incidence and process of corruption, researchers withheld judgment on whether or not a certain activity or person was honest or corrupt.

However, this created a strain on the researchers who felt they were tolerating and probably encouraging corrupt behavior by their silence. A negative example may show the effects of this attitude. In a staff meeting, one assistant complained that her presence seemed to have made corruption cease in one agency and suggested that the project devise intricate measures to uphold scientific purity. In response, another assistant pointed out that had the BBD project enough researchers to field in all agencies of government, it might be able to stop all corruption for that period. But the project was in the business of studying the behavior, not stopping it, and the decision was made to proceed to further science and not ethics.

Appraising effective organizations. Systemic corruption tended to create a parallel informal organization or corruption syndicate within an agency. It was interesting that these syndicates had their own personnel and fiscal management systems, albeit unwritten. Their incentive structures had bigger and faster payoffs than the legal civil service. Their merit system was also quite strict. Simply put, it was "perform well or else...", a threat that has hardly worked in the formal organization where everyone is routinely given a satisfactory rating. Had BBD been dealing only with pure administrative issues, as value-neutrality required, these corruption syndicates could have served as models of management. However, once the value of integrity and rectitude was permitted to come in, these examples would be evaluated as anything but models.

The revisionist theory of corruption. This theory saw corruption as an event in the development landscape which was neither positive nor negative to that goal. The theory is called "revisionist" in that it drew away from the moralistic context in which, its proponents said, corruption studies had been mired. By withholding judgment on whether corruption was an evil or a good, they became better able to describe and analyze things as they really were, not what they ought to be. Despite this balanced approach, revisionists usually saw corruption as a tonic for many ills of developing countries. Some proponents viewed corruption as a necessary stage in the development process; others contended that, necessary or not, it played a positive role in it.

The revisionists proceeded from the market-centered view and found corruption a rational way of doing business. Among their major contentions were that corruption reduced the uncertainty in the investment climate by making government response more predictable (because paid for) (Leff, 1964), produced a new source of capital formation (the ill-gotten wealth) for the market (Nye, 1968), and provided a corrective for government rules, arguing that "governments have no monopoly on correct decisions" and their criteria would not be better than those served by corruption (Bayley, 1966).

The BBD project adopted the assumptions of the revisionists at the start. It refused to see corruption in moral terms and followed through its consequences with an open mind. Nevertheless, it found that corruption had more toxic than tonic effects on the countries in the BBD network. Its positive effects redounded on the individual who gained the illegitimate income, and on the business firm, productive or not, which profited from the misoperation of regulatory functions. These results would increase if the legitimate government consistently failed to arrive at correct decisions, and the market, fueled by corruption, hit upon the proper allocation of values. Yet the BBD findings did not show that the biggest grafters tended to be the more productive, efficient, or nationalistic, and thus would hardly be the vehicle for finding that the more appropriate allocation of resources.

On the other hand, in greasing the creaky governmental machinery, corruption did not make it more efficient and effective. Rather, by using extraneous criteria, it exacerbated unfairness and distorted the allocation of resources. Corrupt behavior entailed a rise in the price of administration through overpricing, mismanagement, and the increase of control agencies to guard the public purse, contributing to the misuse of the people's money. It created two structures of authority in many organizations, one for legal transactions, the other for corruption ventures. It displaced goals, making employees devote more time to their dishonest dealings than to, say, constructing stronger bridges or drafting better rules for investors. It decreased the collection of government revenues and increased public debt. Moreover, it eroded public confidence in government. On the whole, corruption was a disaster from the viewpoint of the public interest (Cariño, 1986b).

Why two sets of students looking at supposedly the same thing could come up with diametrically opposite findings led us to look more closely at their perspec-

tive and ours. Part of the difference stemmed from the fact that each defined corruption in a different way, one as a result of market operations, the other as a violation of law. That fact alone already showed the operation of values among both sets of researchers.

Moreover, the main problem appeared to be the implications of value-neutrality in their work. The revisionists approached the situation in the new states without condemnation. But by holding that "corruption has been a time-honored tradition in Asia and has not prevented the continent from building magnificent civilizations" (Heidenheimer, 1970: 547), they managed to imply that they knew that they were dealing with a kleptocracy for which it was necessary to find positive things so that one did not throw the whole country into the garbage heap. The most generous interpretation is that these scholars had treated the new states as indulgently as one would immature children who could not be held responsible for their actions, being unable to distinguish right from wrong. Behaving in a value-neutral way, they actually made a veiled condemnation of the governments and societies they were studying.

This was not the stance the BBD project took. Its researchers put their values up front so that their biases could be known and discounted. They saw corruption as a violation of law but recognized that some of its manifestations could be supported by the culture, and that they could also lead to development. They were more neutral about government than the revisionists who implicitly batted for free enterprise and thus almost always declared the government bad, paving the way for the idea that violating its rules would have good effects. The BBD project also openly cared not only about development but also about the public interest, and thus used it as the standard for judging the effects of corruption.[6]

In retrospect, by not accepting that they had values, that those values were affecting the way they viewed things, and expressing what those were, the revisionists missed the opportunity to really evaluate the effects of corruption. They did not fully assess its development effects since they only used the values of private enterprise and efficiency. In addition to these, they could have tackled policy distortion issues, revenue leakage, and distribution of corruption benefits, all of which had implications on development. In encouraging violations of law, they implied that corruption was an appropriate mechanism for correcting its unfairness. But there could have been other mechanisms, including revision of the law itself. One does not strengthen a political system by eroding its basis and urging people to disregard it for their own self-interest. It would not have made their work less objective if they made a clearer statement of the values they were using as a standard of judgement, rather than shrinking from a truly significant issue on the ground that it had ethical implications.

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[6]This is consistent with defining corruption as violation of the public office. The BBD project used the public interest not as a defining factor but as the dependent variable.

STUDIES OF ETHICS AND CORRUPTION SINCE THE 1970s

The completion of the BBD project in 1977 proved something of a watershed. It gave birth to other projects, such as those focusing on corruption at the local level (Oyales, 1983) and on other negative bureaucratic behavior such as inefficiency and red tape (Reyes and de Leon, 1983). The team's advice was sought on how to contain corruption, based on its comprehensive studies of corruption control measures (Alfiler, 1977, 1979b, 1983a; Bautista and Nicolas, 1983). But having plumbed the depths of negative bureaucratic behavior during the Marcos regime, the College did not return to it until the period of redemocratization when the effect of democracy on the nature and incidence of corruption became a key issue (Cariño, 1992; Enriquez and Tapales, 1994). The BBD team members and the college as a whole moved on to other ethics and corruption issues. These had three recognizable branches: (a) studies of negative behavior at the political level; (b) studies on political and administrative ethical values; and (c) studies of role models in politics and the bureaucracy. These were not simply a follow-up of one project but were in line with developments in public administration as a whole.

Studies at the Political Level

Among the seeds sown directly by the BBD project, most noteworthy is Baustista's foray (1983a, 1983b) into the analysis of political corruption, an area specifically forbidden by the Marcos government when the BBD project started. Bautista followed up on the theme of corruption as toxic to the public interest in dissecting policy decisions, this time shedding off any semblance of adherence to value-neutrality. This study showed up the limitation of the BBD's public-office-centered view since the decisions it studied and called corrupt were firmly rooted in what was then the law. Although only one in a long string of CPA-UP papers openly critical of the Martial Law regime, Bautista's was especially courageous in that her study was first drafted and submitted to President Marcos' own think-tank, the President's Center for Special Studies (Bautista, 1983a).

Raul P. de Guzman also would not be limited to the bureaucratic level. In 1984, in his capacity as Secretary General of the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration, he initiated another comparative study, this time on elections. Still using "the responsible uses of power" as the theme, the EROPA team inquired into the fairness, honesty, freedom, and orderliness of elections. The Philippine team explicitly pointed to the crisis of legitimacy then enveloping the land and called the 1984 and 1986 polls as "demonstration elections", exercises to shore up the regime rather than real attempts to discover the people's will (de Guzman and Tancangco, 1987; Tancangco and Mendoza, 1988). The 1987 and 1992 elections were also studied in line with the CPA-UP's newly found committment to deal also with ethics and accountability issues at the political level (Tancangco, 1995).

This commitment was not limited to the ethics and corruption field alone. In 1978, almost coincident with the end of the BBD project, the College started a program in policy studies. Like many other public administration units around the world, CPA-UP stressed during this period that the politics-administration dichotomy was purely an analytical distinction, that administration dealt also with policies, and that to improve it, one must study, analyze, and engage in the formulation of policies also. It did not completely obliterate the boundary drawn with political science, however. After all, the discipline of public administration still maintained that management was its core even though it now found it necessary to inquire into the policies it was implementing and the state of the State within which it worked.[7]

Studies on Political and Administration Ethical Values

The second focus of ethics and politics studies in the second period was the ethical values themselves. These were largely exercises in concept clarification, sometimes layered on by the philosophical origins of the values and changes in their definition over time. One branch of this set was a direct extension of the corruption project but the larger group was more an offshoot of other developments in the discipline. Just by coincidence, the second group also tended to be more consciously searching for the indigenous roots of the concepts they studied.

This section first describes the studies of these two branches. Then it discusses the disciplinal and political environment which supported them. A mini-case study of political neutrality, one of the major values of public administration, is then presented to show the interplay of the value studies and the environment just described.

Aftermath of the BBD project. Taking the lessons of the BBD project as a point of departure, the College faculty determined that they could not get at the responsible uses of power if they only analyzed its negative manifestations. Thus, again at the prodding of de Guzman, the evolution, meaning, and operationalization of a key ethical concept – administrative accountability – was reviewed (Cariño, 1983a). That paper also traced the parallel development of the concept and the discipline of public administration in the Philippines.[8] Tancangco (1989, 1990) provided the study of the concept at the political level. Alfiler (1995) rounded off the works by showing that political and administrative accountability were parts of the same continuum. She also connected accountability with the concern for ethics and development.

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[7]The bibliography of works on policy studies would be even longer than the ethics and corruption works. For a fuller discussion, see D. Reyes, 1995

[8]Thus, the accountability of regularity and legality coincided with traditional public administration, managerial accountability flourished under development administration, program accountability developed along with new public administration, and process accountability is supporting what is now being called development public administration. For an explanation of these terms, see Cariño. 1983a.

Studies of ethical standards from the Filipino standpoint. The College tradition of dissecting the meaning and relevance of important political values to public administration began at the same time as, and was not a resultant of, the BBD project. This was started by the thought-provoking contribution of Romeo B. Ocampo (1971) to the CPA-UP's efforts to assist the Constitutional Convention's work in 1972. In this paper, Ocampo traced the philosophical and political roots of social justice in the Philippines.

Another seminal paper was contributed by Jose W. Diokno, former Senator, who reviewed the indigenous meaning of justice for a standing-room-only seminar at Rizal Hall, then CPA-UP's home. He found it remarkable that Tagalogs used a rootword from Cebuano, *tarong,* to form their word for justice, *katarungan,* making it a Filipino, not a regional word. It also showed that Filipinos meant to encompass in katarungan not only rectitude, but also fairness and equity.

Another important study contributing to the understanding of indigenous values is that of Alfiler (1983b). The paper not only looked at the factors that promoted or deterred popular participation in development as its title stated, but significantly, also started the search for the Filipino participatory ethic.[9]

Pakikipagkapwa-tao as the core of Filipino unity was another value tackled by Alfiler, this time with Tapales (1991). Drawing from the works of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* and other nationalistic scholars, Tapales and Alfiler showed that one reason unity was so hard to come by was because the elite wanted the masses to go along with their notions of purpose, while the people were demanding a mutually defined nationalism and their own empowerment (Tapales and Alfiler, 1991: 105).

The Filipino's vision of the Good Society was tackled by Abueva (1993). As the most comprehensive catalog of the values of the Filipino, it presented the new social paradigm occasioned by the fall of the dictatorship and the consequent redemocratization. It also laid aside the technical value of development for the more encompassing and ultimate goal of social transformation.

Lower in ranking as a value but still important for ensuring that administrative services reach the poor is the notion of access. The meaning and operationalization of administrative accessibility were tackled by Alfiler (1979a), complete with a checklist for immediate use of project managers. This was followed up by an examination of social access as a means of increasing basic services to the poor (Cariño 1983b).

New public administration and the increased emphasis on values. Dealing with a wide range of topics, these studies had in common the objective of clarifying not just an important concept in public administration, but a concept with ethical

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[9]This should be read alongside Castillo's *tour de force* (1983) on the same subject, **How Participatory is Participatory Development?** The book belongs in this review because of its subject matter, although, it was sponsored by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies and not by the CPA-UP.

significance in politics and administration. They also increasingly drew from the philosophies and significations of Filipino culture. This was in line with theoretical and political developments that affected public administration from the 1970s onward.

The disciplinal changes were ushered in by the Minnowbrook Conference which published the set of papers that gave birth to "new public administration" (Marini, 1971). Aligning themselves with the widespread protests against American foreign policy in Vietnam and elsewhere, and the political and social movements advocating the liberation of women and gays as well as nations, these young critics of their own discipline raised questions about its growing irrelevance just when the whole world seemed at one with the moral reason for being of the field of public administration – democracy, justice, equity, public service. They chafed at the restrictiveness of both the boundaries of the field and the prevailing positivistic paradigm. They wanted their discipline not only to provide guidance as to what subjects to study but also how they should deal as academics, as citizens, and as human beings with poverty, inequality, racism, and oppression – the things that really matter (and not just organization charts and standard operating procedures, the preoccupation of many public administrationists). They ached to knew how to teach these so that they make a difference in and beyond the classroom. New public administration brought back moral philosophy which had disappeared even from the parent political science departments.[10] A similar rebellion took place in other social sciences. Sociology, political science, and anthropology either had "radical caucuses" or had full-fledged movements which, like public administration, called themselves "new".

New public administration found a responsive chord in the Philippines. Studies like the BBD project had also made the Filipino scholars frustrated at the narrowness of an involvement that would be only at the technical level. But, venturing into value issues, they found they had little to go on. The simple act of clarifying ethical concepts turned out to be liberating (and not so simple) as it allowed the researchers a chance to share nagging value questions with their colleagues and found that they shared similar strong commitments to the same causes. Since this occurred basically during Martial Law, the focus on what were the ultimate political values made it easier to recognize that the academic and citizen roles of social and political criticism could be integrated.

Along with the change of approach from development administration to new public administration, the College engaged in a review of its mission and goals for the greater part of the 1980s. It emerged from that exercise more consciously a

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[10]In the United States, public administration is only one of the subfields of political science and does not have the institutional and disciplinal autonomy enjoyed by the field in the Philippines and other Third World countries. This also means that public administration in the latter is less dependent on political science and has become much more of a product of multidisciplinary influences from the other social sciences and the other management fields

committed, nationalistic institution. Among the major decisions to emerge from this soul-searching was the reinstitution of the bachelor's program, since catching students in their adolescence, instead of the more mature graduate students, afforded a greater chance of molding their character. A complementary decision was to reinstitute and require an administrative ethics course at the undergraduate level.

The special case of political neutrality as a value. As new public administration became more influential, the values it espoused began to be cited more frequently in academic classes and training programs. Thus, the hold of the stance of value-neutrality weakened in academe. That situation brought up a problem of particular interest within the field: the issue of political neutrality as a value for administrators.

From the beginning of the discipline, political neutrality was a sacred value imparted to officials and employees. But if the discipline was value-centered, and its students – prospective and actual administrators of government – were being encouraged to be committed to certain ultimate values, how could practitioners still maintain political neutrality? Clearly, they were caught in what Etzioni-Halevy called a double-bind:

> A bureaucracy is expected to be under the control of politicians and yet exempt from such control; it is expected to be subject to ministerial responsibility and yet accept responsibility for its own actions; it is expected to implement the policy devised by its elected political head and yet participate in the formulation of policy in its own right; it is expected to participate in the formulation of policy and yet be politically neutral: which is another way of saying that bureaucracy is expected to be politicized at one and the same time (1985: 92).

That was the problem from the viewpoint of the division of roles of politics and administration. But there was also a double-bind relative to the content of the issue:

> Bureaucracies are expected to be subject to the control of politicians (in policy matters) and free from such control (in partisan matters): they are also expected to be political (in the policy sense) and non-political (in the partisan sense) at one and the same time (Etzioni-Halevy, 1985: 202).

There was actually an even more complex double-bind relative to ethics: administrators were supposed to be politicized so that they become advocates of justice, equity, and other ideals of the Good Life in the bureaucracy; they should be neutral and not politicized when their particular interests were affected. In other words, they were expected to be neutral when a decision would affect the welfare of their family or the political party of their choice, the point when normal people would usually be most intensely involved. But that political neutrality would not

evidence lack of involvement, but was a simple extension of justice and fairness in the treatment of all partisan protagonists in the political realm.

The issue became of more than academic interest on the eve of the presidential elections of 1986 when the Civil Service Commission Chairman declared that political neutrality for civil servants at that crucial time meant being loyal to the government of the day. That curious interpretation required a dissection of the meaning of this value, harking back to the third type of double-bind discussed above (Cariño, 1986a). After the EDSA Revolution, the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, in whose drafting some CPA-UP faculty participated, pointedly included political neutrality as an ethical standard, along with other values like nationalism, commitment to the public interest and democracy, justice, and responsiveness to the public. Its inclusion in Republic Act No. 6713 certainly showed that neutrality can in fact be a very strong value commitment (Congress of the Philippines, 1989).

I have discussed the value of political neutrality at some length in this paper first to show the specialness of this issue in the light of public administration's developing value-centeredness. I also hope that the digression would stress that the focus on values in academe was not only a response to that disciplinary development but was also called for by political and policy events in society. A similar story could be told about the career of the value of social justice, participation, and democracy. In other words, value-neutrality was only an example of how the new interest in philosophical and conceptual issues had made the boundaries of academe and society more porous and interpenetrable.

Studies of Role Models in Politics and the Bureaucracy

The increased interest in values finds reinforcement at present in a new preoccupation, the depiction of the practices of people who exemplify the values that are being enshrined. All the ethical talk had made the College too idealistic and philosophical, focused on the "ought to be" when its proper role was to be realistic training ground of professional administrators. From another view, it was also the answer to the frustration of students and alumni who complained that the College had successfully taught them how to criticize the problems of politics and the bureaucracy, but not how to make things work (Cabo, 1994). As Danilo Reyes said, the field had leaned towards bureaucratic bashing and had harbored "bias for failures" (1990: 3-4). The new thrust provides the middle ground, making the "ought" attainable after one has demolished the state of things as they are.

In a sense this is not new because most works in the College end with a section on policy recommendations about how to improve the politico-administrative situation. However, for the most part, these had not been as operational -- to answer the complaint of the second group first – nor as edifying as one might wish. Thus, discussions about how real people have coped with actual problems and still come out as worthy of emulation would seem to provide the proper mix of realism and inspiration.

The studies themselves came from different sources. The first source was studies on the development-orientedness of administrators started by Raul P. de Guzman in 1975. These were surveys of how officials scored on seven scales: concern for the nation, for economic equality, and for public participation, selflessness, commitment to economic development, action propensity, and change-orientation (de Guzman and Carbonell, 1976).[11] As may be seen, five of the values may be classified as ethical commitments, while the other two encompassed technical styles. First used on national government executives, Sajo (1995) was the last of a long list of replications made on school administrators and local government executives. Since the studies gave scale points, the administrators were not presented in a flesh-and-blood way. Thus, CPA students and alumni, as late as 1993, were still demanding that the College make studies on "the influence and impact of key leaders in their respective organizations particularly how their vision, philosophy and principles, orientation and outlook, and leadership style influence the organization's directions and behavior" (Cabo, 1994: 78) which, in many ways, the development-oriented studies had already provided.

The second source was an analysis of executive leadership in Philippine bureaucracy which was supplemented by profiles of five administrators "who have evoked enthusiasm and interest in their work and who can serve as role models for public administrators" (D. Reyes, 1990: ii). Reyes hesitated to call his administrators as "successful", demurring that they are only "interesting accounts of Filipino executives who confronted the challenge of bureaucracy" (1990: ii). His profiles described the people without providing the norms against which they were measured.

A third source consisted of term papers for the graduate class on "The Philippine Administrator", the best of which have been retained in the Library for reference by other students and use in other classes (e.g., Habana, 1993; Medina, 1993). The subjects were prominent contemporary executives in the bureaucracy and they were judged by the norms of executive leadership.

The fourth source predated all the others. Its first example is a political biography of Ramon Magsaysay (Abueva, 1971) whose charisma allowed him to transcend his American-boy origins. Unfortunately, a Leadership, Citizenship, and Democracy Program that could have followed up on this important work was set up in the College only in 1993. This time, memoirs of the leaders themselves are being encouraged. Salonga's book on his years as the head of the Senate is the first one of this genre (1995).

Although the College moved in this front independently of developments in other jurisdictions, it is interesting to note that the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) is going in a similar direction. ASPA established in 1988 a project called "Exemplars of Virtue in the Practice of Public Administration". The

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[11] The original scales were devised by the International Studies of Values in Politics, a cross-national study which did not originally include the Philippines.

Exemplars Project first engaged in identifying persons in whose lives virtue was significantly embodied. It next "called for explaining their character traits as virtues and justifying the deeming of any given administrator as a model of those qualities" (Cooper and Wright, 1992: xii). Their project deserves further study. It is more unabashed in giving the sobriquet "exemplar" to the persons it studied. At the same time it tends to be more critical in assessing them, their very high value standards being better articulated and applied.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The literature of ethics in politics in the Philippines is a vast one. What I have reviewed here already makes up a long bibliography, although I have focused only on the works emanating from the College of Public Administration, University of the Philippines. For ease of presentation, I had divided it into two time periods, even though that was not totally satisfactory on two counts -- first, because some exceptional works were either before or after their time, and second, the disciplinary and political events affecting them did not divide neatly into those periods either. It should be emphasized that when theme and time conflict, I had opted for consistency in theme. This would make it easier for the reader to see the contributions of the study to a content area.

This review has proceeded at two levels, each intersecting and enriching the other. The first level followed through the development of the discipline of public administration, with ethical studies as illustrative material. It showed that changes in the approach to ethics in politics were largely congruent with and were influenced by changes in the discipline, as it moved from the value-neutrality of Western social science, to a more value-centered discipline which is also more relevant to, and more rooted in, Philippine soil.

The second level concerned contributions to ethics in politics itself. The first thrust of the literature of ethics in politics was to develop an understanding of the negative side of ethics in politics, that is, the nature, causes, consequences, and control measures of corruption. In the bureaucracy, corruption -- defined as violation of law -- was seen by some as so pervasive that the deviant behavior was that of rectitude. In the agencies known as snakepits, one could also discern a corruption syndicate that paralleled the formal organization, having its own processes, personnel, and benefit structure. The effects of corruption on the individual, the organization, and the society -- viewed from the perspective of the public interest -- were strongly negative. This finding was different from those posited by proponents of the revisionist theory which defined corruption in terms of the operation of the market.

The next thrust of the studies was to use the public-interest-centered definition, and to look into corrupt acts which did not violate law, because the law itself was unfair. These political-level studies were followed up by a project on the

irresponsible uses of power at the realm of elections. Elections in the Philippines tended to fail against the standards of free, fair, honest, and orderly exercises in suffrage.

From using the public interest as the defining standard, it became necessary to make clear what values serve the public interest. These gave rise to a set of studies on administrative and political accountability. They joined other projects which clarified the meaning of other important values, such as justice, unity, participation, social access, and the Filipino vision of the Good Society. The indigenous sources of these ethical commitments were laid out, clearly showing that these were expressions of the native soul and not just reactions to Western imposition.

But clarification of moral philosophy needs to be supplemented by actual cases in order to make politics and administration hew closer to the ideal. At the same time, it must be shown that, after criticizing the pervasiveness of corruption, ethical improvements can actually take place. Thus, the literature also contributed a series of studies on role models whose lives teach and inspire.

It can thus be appreciated that the literature is a lot more comprehensive now than it was in the 1950s when the discipline of public administration was introduced in the country, and even in the 1970s when the studies on corruption began. Beyond focusing on the "is" and showing only how rotten politics in this country has been, it now also draws attention to what it can be, and leads the way to that through the use of exemplars in public service. It is hoped that this comprehensive approach will continue as public administration, being now more conscious of the values it must teach and exemplify, becomes also more skilled in the critical assessment of politics and administration. That would go far in showing that, as Salonga exemplified in his books and in his life, ethics and politics do mix.

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