TOWARDS GLOBAL SCHOLARSHIP IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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One can imagine two futures for public administration, public management and public service around the world. A first would be what we see as a continuation of the status quo: with public administration essentially continuing as a series of national discourses, with perhaps a bit of cross-fertilization, but with this characterized by a classic core-periphery model. The preferable model, outlined in this paper, would see the development of an integrated community of scholars of public affairs.

At least three hurdles need to be overcome to arrive at this integrated community. A first concerns the tension in the periphery between an epistemic nationalism and epistemic colonialism. The second hurdle to be overcome concerns the central role of the American literature in intellectual discourse in public administration. A third hurdle is more specific to public administration: what Canadian Iain Gow has referred to as public administration’s profile, as ‘une science empirique par excellence’.

EPISTEMIC COLONIALISM VERSUS EPISTEMIC NATIONALISM

Certainly in the Anglophone literature, the contemporary study of public administration as a separate academic discipline is generally seen as having its origins in the United States. This perspective is perhaps a bit narrow. Even Woodrow Wilson’s 19th century essay urged American engagement with the then existing European best practice (1887, pp. 200–7). Raadschelders (2008) points to centuries of European thought on public administration; Spann (1967) identifies systematic 19th century development of public administration in the United Kingdom; and Henri Fayol’s 1916 Administration Industrielle et Generale preceded the English language administrative science literature. Martin goes further, arguing that ‘virtually every significant concept that existed in American public administration by 1937 (half the history of the field since Wilson’s essay) had already been published in France by 1859’ (1987, p. 297). Caiden (1965, pp. 226–7), Chevallier (2002, pp. 12–19), Brillantes and Fernandez (2008, pp. 247–50), and Schiavo-Campo and McFerson (2008, pp. 25–31) similarly point to earlier, non-American, roots of public administration.

Regardless of its origins in antiquity, the influence of the American literature over the past century or so has been heavy (see, for example, Warlich 1965, p. 62; Gow 1990; Chevallier 2002, pp. 22–7; Reyes 2003, pp. 51–9). As the American discipline spread, questions were soon raised concerning the universal applicability of lessons learned in the US. This anti-universalistic scepticism would all appear to be very healthy. Maurício Serva, however, suggests the potential danger of particularism in the risk of ‘isolationism, romantic exaltation of our particularities, or xenophobia – characteristics of an ingenuous nationalism’ (1990, p. 20; see also 1992; see also Candler 2002).
From this one can identify three hurdles that inhibit the development of global scholarship in public administration:

1. Epistemic colonialism: an uncritical adoption of administrative structures and techniques from elsewhere, especially the former colonial, or current hegemonic power.
2. Epistemic nationalism: an undiscerning rejection of lessons from elsewhere.
3. Epistemic parochialism: self absorption to the extent that an intellectual community is unaware of lessons that might be learned in other literatures.

These impediments to the development of global scholarship in public administration are the topic of this paper.

The struggle against epistemic colonialism

If we turn to South America and look at the development of Brazilian public administration literature the tension identified by Serva has been well illustrated. In colonized countries, the question regarding the existence of a unique national intellectual life has recurred among generations of intellectuals. In Latin America peculiar conditions have influenced this process. Beyond the impacts of slavery (Freyre 1933; Leal 1948), and of the mercantilist nature of the colonial experience (Sodré 1961), another peculiarity of Latin American colonization was the imposition on these colonized people of a radical rupture in their structures of social and political power, and in their traditions and customs.

Latin American colonialism therefore was more than a political and economic act. It was also epistemic: a strong ideology that sustained an economic imperialism, operated through external agents as well as through local elites. As authors such as Sodré (1961), Faoro (2000) and Frank (1967, pp. 145–50) have pointed out, the source of these elites’ power and social position lay in part in the authority they obtained from the universities, practices, sciences and arts produced in the European metropoles. Local elites therefore supported the concepts of universalism and of the superiority of this European knowledge, to the detriment of ‘backward and archaic’ local practices and knowledge. Eurocentric knowledge became a symbol of intellectual qualification, and so uncritical and maladjusted literary, economic, political and administrative colonial models were often transplanted to the new world.

Meanwhile, considerable resistance developed to this situation. Generations of Latin American intellectuals worked toward emancipation from this colonial ideology through the construction of a national thinking more appropriate to Latin American realities. In this context, Brazilian sociologist and seminal public administration scholar Alberto Guerreiro Ramos identified these postures as (1) hyper-correct; and (2) critical-assimilative. The hyper-correct, epistemic colonized position attributed to theoretical formulations from the global ‘core’, especially from the European continent, a degree of universal truth, regardless of local context. The critical-assimilative, global scholarship advocated by Guerreiro Ramos, on the other hand, was far more conscious of contextual conditions typical of their countries, the particularities of their lands, their cultures and their environments, appropriating ‘only as relevant’ foreign ideas, theories and experiences.

In Brazil, Paulinho José Soares de Souza (the Viscount of Uruguay) was perhaps the first prominent exponent of a critical-assimilative approach to the adoption of political-administrative theories and institutions from foreign countries. He condemned the literal and mechanical transplantation of political and administrative institutions to Brazilian society, or what this paper would term an epistemic colonialism. From this came his
thesis that institutions did not have intrinsic virtues, independent of where and for whom they were elaborated and implemented. Instead, the creation of institutions in Brazil should take into account local conditions and the socio-historical environment. He referred specifically to his proposal for decentralization in Imperial Brazil, despite critics who defended a centralized government. His argument was that:

These institutions, principally those of the English, American and French, form a systematic and harmonious whole. Each of their sources assume the interaction of a certain spirit, habits, national character and circumstances, the lack of which cannot be replaced. Each one of its parts supports and is supported by the others, and functions with them. Much critical study is necessary to separate one part of these institutions and apply it to another diverse country whose education, habits, character and other circumstances are also diverse. (Uruguai 1862, p. 133)

Despite efforts like those of the Viscount of Uruguay in the area of public administration, it was in literature that a large movement first coalesced to develop a Brazilian national consciousness. Initially, for a literary work to be considered national it needed to be locally authored and full of local elements: nature, people, environment, language, and such. Meanwhile, authors such as Machado de Assis and Silvio Romero, two prominent literary intellectuals of the 19th century, argued that it was not enough to incorporate such elements into literary works. Reflecting elements of epistemic nationalism, for Romero, Brazilian literature, along with that of the rest South America, was ‘colourless’, fruit of ‘a process of adapting European ideas to the societies of the continent’ (Romero 1960, p. 59). For Romero, one of the problems in Brazil was the weakness of the spirit of the Brazilian people: ‘Brazilian spiritual life is poor and stingy...we have become a spectacle of a people who don’t think and produce for themselves’ (Romero 1978, p. 4). Romero denounced the absence of an authentic literary form for the Brazilian nation, and the lack of a political and intellectual ‘characteristic individuality’ (Romero 1960, p. 145). Romero only considered as Brazilian, the literature that expressed and contributed to the political process of national differentiation (p. 154).

These debates in Brazilian literature were both pioneering and radical. As the literary struggle against cognitive colonialism progressed, it disseminated into the sciences. In the 1930s, the movement had gained the allegiance of a substantial group who began to work to create a nation, to ‘Brazilianize’ the republic, to ‘construct a national Brazilian thinking and consciousness’ (Leão 1924, p. 9), while emphasizing, as well, their role as an intellectual political elite (Oliveira 1980, p. 39). However, rather than a single, homogeneous elite, there were two major camps. On one side were Guerreiro Ramos’s hyper-correct victims of epistemic colonization: ‘tied to the international cultural community’, preoccupied ‘in following the conquests of the civilized world’. On the other side were Guerreiro Ramos’s ‘critical-assimilativists’, conscious of local happenings, but equally aware of ‘conservative’ international currents, and interested ‘in maintaining and recuperating traditions’ (Oliveira 1980, p. 41).

To Guerreiro Ramos, Brazilian social science of the era was more pathology than science. It suffered from an alienation syndrome, characterized by a number of defects. These would include a mimicry of the European and North American social sciences, while ignoring incompatibilities in this adoption; the acceptance of ideas, concepts and experiences of foreign authors as absolutely valid; the dogmatic application of often inappropriate foreign categories and concepts too often incompatible Brazilian realities; and personal discomfort with these domestic realities (1957, pp. 19–23).
This did not necessarily effect all of Brazilian social science, but only the strongly (and dominant) dogmatic-deductive strain of the epistemically colonized, hyper-correct Europhiles. The other perspective, which Guerreiro Ramos termed that of the critical-pragmatists, provided part of the remedy that would help in the process of epistemic decolonization. It was from this tradition that the author developed his methodological proposal called ‘sociological reduction’: not a naïve, epistemic nationalism that rejected the outside, but the ‘critical assimilation of the foreign sociological patrimony’ (1965, pp. 14–15; see also Azevêdo and Albernaz 2006, pp. 504–5; Ventriss and Candler 2005, pp. 349–52).

It was this perspective that Guerreiro Ramos (1970) elaborated, for example, in his critique of Modernization Theory, which presupposed a law of historical necessity that required so-called ‘underdeveloped’ or ‘developing’ countries to pass through the stages through which the ‘developed’ or ‘modern’ countries had themselves passed. These deterministic dichotomies also applied to postulates such as ‘obstacles to development’ and ‘prerequisites of modernization’, suggesting determinism, or a rigid archetype of modernization. Instead, Ramos emphasized ‘possibilities’. This critical-assimilative Theory of Possibilities would have two characteristics:

1. it supposes that modernity is not located in any specific part of the world; that the process of modernization is not to be oriented to any Platonic archetype;
2. it holds that any nation, whatever its contemporary configuration, always has its own possibilities of modernization, the implementation of which can be disturbed by the superimposition of a frozen, normative model, extrinsic to those possibilities. (1970, p. 23; see also pp. 37–9)

Before moving on it is worth noting that this Brazilian process of epistemic decolonization was not unique, since the tension between Guerreiro Ramos’s redução sociológica, epistemic colonization and epistemic nationalism has been evident in numerous other contexts. Fijian Tupeni Baba (1987), for instance, notes the potential for ‘neo-colonial’ ‘academic buccaneering’ in otherwise well-intentioned Australian assistance in the South Pacific. Frantz Fanon is perhaps the best known writer on the impact of French cultural imperialism, citing the tendency of colonial domination to ‘disrupt in spectacular fashion the cultural life of a conquered people. This cultural obliteration is made possible by the negation of national reality’ (1963, p. 190). Echoing Guerreiro Ramos’s ‘hyper-correct’ model, the indigenous elite:

Discovers its historical mission: that of intermediary. Seen through its eyes, its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists, prosaically, of being the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism, rampant though camouflaged, which today puts on the masque of neo-colonialism. (Fanon 1963, p. 122)

GLOBAL SCHOLARSHIP IN CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

This raises the question of whether the international public administration epistemic community is characterized by epistemic colonialism, epistemic nationalism, or a ‘critical assimilative’ global scholarship. By way of obtaining a snapshot, the first author of this article did content analysis of the major journals in nine countries. Journals analysed included the Australian Journal of Public Administration, Revista de Administração Pública (RAP) (Brazil), Canadian Public Administration/Administration Publique du Canada, the Revue
Towards Global Scholarship in Public Affairs

Française d’Administration Publique (RFAP), Public Administration (United Kingdom), the Philippine Journal of Public Administration (PJPA), the Indian Journal of Public Administration, Revista de Administração e Políticas Públicas (RAPP) (Portugal), and three US journals: Public Administration Review (PAR), the Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, and the Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory. All references over a 2-year period between 2002–03 were analysed for the country of origin (operationalized as the country of publication), and for the language of references, with exceptions as outlined below.

First, since critically assessing the US literature is an implied hypothesis of this research, three US journals were analysed to reduce the likelihood of a single journal being unrepresentative of the US discipline. To avoid an unnecessarily large US sample size, only every third article in the US journals was analysed, and each of the three US journals were weighted equally to construct the composite US figures. In the Canadian case, since Canadian Public Administration (CPA) publishes articles in both English and French, articles in these two languages were analysed separately. To produce an adequate number of references for the French language articles (which generally average one per edition of CPA) the analysis was extended to two additional years on either side. Similarly, to gather adequate references, PJPA was analysed from 2000–2003. In order to gather data for Portugal, the analysis used a collection of 2000–02 articles from RAPP, along with chapters in two edited volumes published during the same period: Mozzicafreddo and Gomes (2001) and Mozzicafreddo et al. (2003). Descriptive statistics are presented in table 1.

In terms of getting ‘a snapshot of the nature of the international public administration epistemic community’, there are limitations to this method, especially since the country of publication may not necessarily reflect those of the members of the editorial board. The ‘lumpiness’ of special editions in an analysis that covers as few as eight editions of Canadian Public Administration might also bias the analysis if a special edition is on a particularly parochial topic. For this reason, two editions were omitted: a RAP edition on public and private health, and a PAR special edition on the first anniversary of the mass murders of 11 September 2001. Many seminal works in the field have also been translated into numerous languages, so a Brazilian who cites Adam Smith’s 1776 A Riqueza das Nações is coded as having cited a Brazilian source. Through counting many domestically published, translated, foreign sources as domestic, this should overestimate the parochialism of non-English literatures, therefore biasing the analysis against an implied hypothesis of this paper: that the comparative parochialism of the English language literature makes its preponderant influence on the field damaging. The same coding was applied to all cases, so these peculiarities are at least held constant. For more discussion of the logic of this sort of content analysis, especially focusing on ‘premier’ national journals, see Candler (2006a, pp. 346–7, 2008, pp. 295–8). The data are also available online [http://www.unf.edu/~gcandler/data.htm] and results are presented in table 2.

Interpretations of the data may vary dramatically. The parochial American, confident that the US literature is universally relevant, superior to others, and so at the centre of global academic public administration, may interpret the data as verification of this belief. From this perspective, the lack of non-American sources in US journals is explained by the inferiority of these other national literatures, while the strong presence of US citations elsewhere demonstrates the universalistic relevance of the US literature, a subject which is discussed further in the section that follows.
EPISTEMIC PAROCHIALISM

Contrary to what might be termed an American triumphalist view – similar to that presented at the end of the previous section – those who fear epistemic colonization may, on the contrary, worry about the especially strong penetration of the American literature. Any Brazilian worried about epistemic colonization (see also Cunha 1981; Pimenta 1990) might worry that RAP features the highest percentage of US sources of any non-US journal in the survey. Any Filipino concerned about epistemic colonization (see De Guzman 1993; Reyes 2003) may similarly worry about the weak Filipino literature: domestic sources are used in PJPA at nearly half the level of any other national journal and, as shown in table 1, nearly half the articles surveyed in PJPA in 2002–03 had no Philippine references. Perhaps most important in terms of the present paper’s search for global scholarship, Boaventura de Sousa Santos has lamented the lack of south–south engagement (also evident from table 1):

The south is the idea that negates imperialism, that separates us from the North, and which speaks for us and with our own voice, overcoming the bias of being trivial, backward, and barbarous societies and cultures, that allows us to arrive as our own authentic, different cultures. (2001, p. 346, see also Fernandes 1990)

This is especially evident in table 2. Whatever one’s views regarding the engagement of scholars in Brazil, the Philippines and India with European and North American scholarship, the lack of south–south engagement is less easy to justify. Other limitations to the vision of ‘global scholarship in public affairs’ are evident in the data in table 2: Brazilians are the only ones to cite Portuguese or Latin American sources, and Australians are the only ones to cite New Zealand sources in appreciable numbers. Other than articles in PJPA, no one engages the Asian or African literatures, respectively the world’s most populous continent, and probably the continent most in need of administrative reform. A European intellectual community is also readily apparent. RFAP authors are unique in favouring fellow European British sources over American and, along with the British and Portuguese, cite fellow Europeans more than authors writing in these other journals. Brazilian authors are also notable for engaging the French literature in particular (see also Fachin and Cavedon 2003).

The Anglophone literatures also appear to be extremely parochial. This is reflected in a 3-country concentration index (presented at the bottom of table 2). For Australia, the index is 90.3, for the United States 94.0 (over 92 per cent come from the US and UK), and for English-speaking Canada a whopping 97.1 per cent of sources cited in English-language articles in Canadian Public Administration come from Canada, the United States

| # articles | 88 | 72 | 31 | 21 | 79 | 102 | 53 | 63 | 73 |
| # citations | 2447 | 2227 | 1279 | 579 | 1317 | 1128 | 1313 | 1658 | 3658 |
| Avg. citations | 27.8 | 30.9 | 41.3 | 27.6 | 16.7 | 11.1 | 24.8 | 26.2 | 50.1 |
| Zero citations | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 13 | 24 | 5 | 7 | 1 |
| All domestic | 11 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 24 | 14 | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| All foreign | 5 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 23 | 8 | 1 |
## Table 2: National sources of citations in major national journals (average number of citations per article)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Australia AJPA</th>
<th>Brazil RAP</th>
<th>Canada CPA</th>
<th>Canada APC</th>
<th>France RFAP</th>
<th>India IJPA</th>
<th>Philippines PJP</th>
<th>Portugal (various)</th>
<th>United Kingdom PA</th>
<th>United States (various)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oceania</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>13.48</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>1.36</td>
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<tr>
<td>NZ</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.04</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.11</td>
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<td>6.28</td>
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<td>0.03</td>
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<td>1.28</td>
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<td>8.88</td>
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<td>5.00</td>
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<td>31.2</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>10.9</td>
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<td>% Largest</td>
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<td>43.2</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>37.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>(country)</td>
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<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 2nd largest</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>16.2</td>
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<td>3 largest %</td>
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<td>65.6</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>85.2</td>
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</table>
and the United Kingdom. Among the Anglophone journals, only the British journal *Public Administration* has avoided this extreme concentration.

A second dimension of the ‘global’ nature of these various literatures might be gleaned from the languages used in the references in the various articles surveyed. Candler (2006b) has addressed this in previous research comparing the US to Brazilian and French scholars, and raised concern about the monolingualism of the US literature:

Given that multi-lingual Brazilian and French scholars have found work worth referring outside of both their own, and [the English] language; that Americans rarely cite anything not written in English would appear to be a result of monolingualism – the failure to develop linguistic research tools critical for cross-cultural research – rather than the lack of relevant work in other languages. (2006b, p. 551)

The journals listed in table 2 were therefore also analysed for the language of sources cited. The results are presented in table 3.

The results are striking. With the British journal *Public Administration* again an exception, scholars from English-speaking countries, especially, are woeful in their lack of engagement with non-English literatures. The contrast between francophone and anglophone Canadians is equally striking, something also noted by Cameron and Krikorian (2002) in a content analysis of Canadian articles on federalism, and especially noteworthy given the importance of language in Canadian federalism. The authors find ‘a serious engagement on the part of francophone scholars with English-language political science discourse. This is not true of the other side of the language divide. The English-language articles under review contain very few French citations’ (Cameron and Krikorian 2002, pp. 337–8).

**American hegemony?**

The American data are, again, especially worrying here. The data in tables 2 and 3 suggest that the American literature is serially parochial: rarely looking elsewhere, looking only to the United Kingdom when doing so, and unwilling or unable to engage work in languages other than English. One can fairly ask, though, whether this matters. While the term ‘superpower’ is often applied to US global economic and military influence, in terms of international scholarship, the United States is also a superpower. Leaving aside the more debatable question of quality, this academic superpowerdom is certainly a function of its quantity, and America’s willingness to invest especially in graduate education. One source indicates that the United States accounts for around one-quarter of the world’s

### TABLE 3  Languages of citations in major national journals (average number of citations per article)

<table>
<thead>
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<td>41.2</td>
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universities (Förster 2008). The result is a mass of research equalled (we will hazard what we think is a safe guess) by no other country. Language constitutes a second source of this American intellectual hegemony, as English has (in a widely noted irony) become the global lingua franca.

So the point is that there is certainly a global public administration epistemic community in the sense that all are aware of the others, and people from one country publish in another from time to time. But as tables 2 and 3 show, a global public administration epistemic community does not exist in the sense of a homogeneous group of scholars who consistently draw on the work of others, and who therefore share consistent values, perspectives, and approaches (see also Candler 2006a, 2008). More importantly, as is shown in the tables, American scholarship is not at the centre of this global public administration epistemic community, nor does it lead this community. Instead, the global public administration epistemic community is multi-centric, with distinct communities in Latin America, Europe, and North America, and at least a couple of dozen national literatures within these, both part of these communities and also with their independent links to other national literatures.

Yet while there is no American hegemony in this global community, America’s literature does exercise a preponderant influence. As this analysis has suggested, this is not a good thing since America and its academy are woefully insular. America and its academy still has far too much of the ‘manifest destiny’, neo-colonial arrogance, and parochialism that Alberto Guerreiro criticized in the 1950s, followed by voices as diverse as Boyacigiller and Adler (1991), Ventriss (1991), Peters (1994, p. 70), Riggs (1998), Tummala (1998), Henry (2001, pp. 37–9), and Jreisat (2002, p. 123).

**Pragmatism and epistemic parochialism**

Beyond the influence of parochial American scholarship on other communities of scholars, a second problem inherent in the field of public administration lies within each community. The history of university education in public administration has long been seen as a response to inefficient, unaccountable government. In the 1920s, American Leonard White noted that ‘In every direction good administration seeks the elimination of waste, the conservation of material and energy, and the most rapid and complete achievement of public purposes consistent with economy and the welfare of workers’ (1926, p. 3). In the United Kingdom, Gibbon similarly noted ‘the growing complexity of modern conditions and the increasing difficulty of modern problems make it imperative to attain still higher reaches of administrative ability’ (1926, p. 434). In Brazil, pragmatism has been evident in scholarship at least since a 1943 article on ‘Taylorism and unity of command’ (Rodrigues 1943), with this then reinforced by the early work of Alberto Guerreiro Ramos (1946, 1956). Michel Crozier in France defines bureaucratization as ‘the rationalization of collective activities’ (Crozier 1964, p. 3), and countryman Jacques Chevallier links the development of administrative science to the pragmatic needs of the modern state through 300 years (Chevallier 2002, pp. 10–19) pursuit of the ‘bien-être collectif’ (p. 11).

While this pragmatic focus has made for a more directly useful field, Curt Ventriss has argued that this led to administrative theory and practice that is not ‘pragmatically useful’ being seen as ‘dangerously close to folly’ (1989, p. 174), and warned of the parochialism of an American public administration ‘dominated by domestic concerns’ (1991, p. 9). Filipino Danilo Reyes put it equally bluntly, as ‘... the Philippines, at this stage, cannot afford to indulge in a frittering race for developing a definitional and normative theory for Public Administration in the face of overriding imperatives such as the need to
study development processes and goals in the country’ (1993, p. 301). As has been said, Iain Gow perhaps best summed up the result of these metaphysical musings of public administrationists by declaring ‘La science administrative est une science empirique par excellence’ (Gow 1993, p. 87). He terms this focus ‘pragmatic institutionalism’, which ‘combines a conviction that institutions are important with a strong desire to keep up with the evolving scene and to “get it right”’ (2009, p. 11).

This pragmatism has, though, presented at least two problems. The first, which has been well discussed, has contributed to the often tense relations between public administration and the other social sciences. In the United States, this has especially been the case with its mother field of political science (Peters 1994, pp. 68–71; Brewer et al. 1998, p. 123), probably more especially as more practitioner-oriented Masters in Public Administration (MPA) degrees developed. These MPA programs are typically professional programs, aimed to produce managers for public and nonprofit agencies, rather than scholars theorizing about public and nonprofit management.

Pragmatism has also created a fundamental tension ‘within’ academic public administration. As Robert Denhardt has put it:

If the tension between politics and administration is central to the field of public administration, then the tension between theory and practice is central to public administration education. (2001, p. 527)

Public administrationists themselves have therefore often been harsh critics of the pragmatic focus. Adams and White analysed doctoral dissertations in public administration in 1992, assessed the state of research in the field as characterized by ‘mindless empiricism’ (1994, p. 573), and declared the field a ‘theoretical wasteland’ (pp. 573–4). Other evidence of pragmatism in public administration scholarship was provided by a content analysis of articles in the major journals in the field (Candler 2008). This found that while pragmatic, ‘POSDCORB-like techniques’ have been in ‘slow slide’ over the past few decades, Australian, Brazilian, Canadian and US scholars ‘have retained a strong commitment to this pragmatic emphasis’ (2008, p. 298).

The second problem with the pragmatic focus of public administration scholarship concerns the impact of a pragmatic drawing on multiple disciplines on knowledge-building in the field. Ventriss has warned of the danger of degradation ‘into a state of babel, confusion, and bewilderment’ as a result of ‘public affairs education... left to an amalgamation of scholars... without a substantive connection to the normative content of the field’ (1991, p. 9).

Ventriss (1991, pp. 9–10) also questions whether this pragmatic focus on domestic concerns, in an increasingly interdependent world, is realistic any longer, and Guy Peters points out that this pragmatism-induced parochialism is not unique to the US (Peters 1994, pp. 70–1; see also Reyes 1993, pp. 30–1). Candler has made the case for universalism in the Brazilian context, pointing out that many Brazilians who express fears of American epistemic colonization paradoxically seek administrative reforms consistent with the values emphasized in the American literature (2002). The Filipino literature provides another example of this contradiction. A discussion of the relevance of culture theory to Philippine public administration identifies as Weberian values rationality, efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness, equity and participation (Varela 2003, p. 438). These are then shown to be incompatible with Filipino cultural traits of personalism, familism and particularism; yet in a public administration setting these Filipino traits result in debilitating patronage, bureaucratic mediocrity, bureaucratic ambiguity, inequality, graft
and corruption (pp. 453–66). Again, it is precisely the negative influence of these ‘non-Western’ values that administrative reform seeks to lessen (see also De Guzman 1993; Ricote 2008, p. 173; Brillantes and Fernandez 2008, pp. 265–83). Similarly, Brillantes and Fernandez offer Gawad Kalinga [which translates as ‘to give care’] as a model of Philippine public administration, a ‘distinctly Filipino invention’ (2008, p. 283), yet describe this as embodying ‘three key concepts of New Public Administration, Reinventing Government, and Governance’ (Brillantes and Fernandez 2008). The point here is not that Gawad Kalinga reflects epistemic colonization, but rather that its universal nature reflects some epistemic nationalism on the part of its advocates when they assert its uniquely Filipino nature.

Still, beyond the existence of universal principles and values of public administration, Crozier argues that

as soon as one embarks on the study of the pathology of organizations, cultural analysis becomes an indispensable tool which permits the delimitation of the global theory and its application in different cultural contexts. (1964, p. 7)

Crozier is probably right, and both Candler (2002, p. 303) and Varela (2003, p. 466) would agree with this. However, this pragmatic localism focus works against efforts to develop ‘global scholarship in public administration’, creating another tension that needs to be addressed.

THE END OF ‘COMPARITIVISM’?

Before concluding we would like to briefly suggest one more key element in the quest for global scholarship in public affairs. Tongan novelist and social commentator Epeli Hau’ofa (1987) has argued that an under-appreciated dimension of social inequity involves the mapping of domestic class relations onto the international system. Economic inequality within societies is well appreciated. Yet for Hau’ofa, class transcends national boundaries. Rather than domestic elites dominating their societies, or rich countries dominating the poor, Hau’ofa argues that an international elite (or perhaps better: elites) has developed that while not necessarily repressing the poor, can be largely divorced from them. For Hau’ofa, speaking within his native South Pacific:

Among the privileged there is homogeneity throughout the region through the sharing of a single dominant culture. Variations among these homogeneous groups are minor in character: the differences largely add spice to social intercourse as Chinese, Indian, Lebanese and other exotic dishes make bourgeois dinner parties more interesting. (1987, pp. 3–4)

David Rothkopf has noted the same phenomenon at the global level. In his Superclass, Rothkopf identifies a global elite who, while neither a conspiracy (2008, p. xv) with one set of interests, nor a wholly closed and inherited group (p. xiv), exercise inordinate influence in the world. More importantly, this superclass is defined in large part by (especially elite) university education, yet in many countries less than one person in a thousand has access to university; indeed, as many as one-third have not attended primary school (p. 309). Inequality therefore takes on a global dimension. As in Hau’ofa’s South Pacific, Rothkopf describes some members of the Chilean elite with ‘a desire to separate themselves from [their] native roots to cast themselves as something different – residents of a piece of Europe that had somehow drifted westward, perhaps, or young
globalites representing a culture without a country’ (p. 51). Hau’ofa’s point would be
that the discussion in this paper of the global public administration epistemic community
has been two dimensional, sweeping the globe to look for links between these various
national academic communities. What is missing is a vertical dimension, or a focus on
links between these communities and their own societies.

If one accepts the diagnoses offered in this paper, cures will be less easy to implement.
Even a seemingly simple solution – like requiring language classes in doctoral programs
to overcome the linguistic failings of Anglophones – has proven surprisingly difficult
to implement despite at least 40–50 years of recognition of the problem (Candler 2006b,
pp. 542–3). Still, a correct diagnosis is surely critical to overcoming these maladies. At
a fundamental level, the roots of these problems are probably more normative than
technical, requiring first an acceptance of the problem, and commitment to overcome
it. So to paraphrase Oldfield’s response to the problem of classism in academia (2007,
p. 228), a primary step towards global scholarship in public administration would be to
engage literatures outside one’s own, especially developing the language skills necessary
for scholarship in a multilingual world.

Perhaps the most disturbing finding of this research concerns the odd contrast between
the American literature, being (1) that most drawn on by other scholars; yet (2) itself
being so myopic. We would like to suggest that the solution within America is not
more comparative research, but rather the end of the concept of comparativism, so
that its parochial alternative, the ‘Americanist’ wholly unaware of other experience,
loses this implicit legitimacy as an acceptable scientific approach. As Jreisat has argued,
‘comparison is central to the evolution of knowledge in all social sciences, especially

Finally, to return to the data in tables 2 and 3, there are signs of global scholarship in
public administration that the responsible scholar might emulate. Whatever ‘epistemic
colonization’ concerns some scholars may have about the heavy penetration of inappro-
priate foreign theory into their literatures (perhaps like the 28 per cent of articles cited in
RAP from the United States?), as well as the effect of this in inhibiting the development of
a national literature (like the barely 25 per cent of articles in PJPA from the Philippines?),
the data show what appear to us to be relatively ‘global’ literatures. This is especially
evident in contrast with the more parochial literatures: that of the US, Australia and
English-speaking Canada.

From this discussion, global scholarship in public affairs would seem to require the
following characteristics, characteristics that are very similar to the ‘critical assimilation’
advocated by Alberto Guerreiro Ramos:

• Rather than an epistemic colonization, this would include engagement with the local
  reality, and so a robust domestic literature.
• Rather than an epistemic nationalism, this would include engagement with the
  international literature.
• To again avoid epistemic colonization, this international engagement should avoid
  over-reliance on any one foreign literature.
• Finally, this international engagement should include like countries, especially within
  the south.

On this last point, the data in this paper show considerable north–north exchange, but
Boaventura de Sousa Santos’s earlier concerns about the lack of south–south exchange
remain. Until these concerns are addressed from within the south, whatever concerns Brazilians may have about the relatively high level of penetration of American sources in Revista de Administração Pública, the journal shares with RFAP, and the sources analysed from Portugal, both an admirable multilingualism, and the incorporation of at least a variety of influences from the developed ‘core’. These literatures may therefore offer the closest approximation to ‘global scholarship in public affairs’ in the world today.

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REFERENCES


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