

Chapter 11

Hurdles to an Asian Century of Public Administration¹

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Modern public administration (PA) scholarship is dominated by Western scholars, theories, and concepts (Gulrajani and Moloney 2012). This influence extends to non-Western states, pervades international organisations, and influences relations among states, citizens, and civil society. It reflects the economic and political power of its two key actors: the United States and Western Europe. In the last five decades, however, Asian economic growth and socioeconomic progress has increased the power and influence of its states. In an altered global environment, this chapter explores whether there has been a concomitant rise in Asian PA influence. The unfortunate answer is “not quite”. This answer is explored across space and time to unravel “how we know what we know”, where knowledge is created, and how it is diffused.

The chapter framework is focused on the *structure* of knowledge and its intellectual histories and the *values* espoused in administrative life. This involves asking whether administrative models are largely Western² and if the intellectual histories, model choices, and methodological tools are “decolonised”. The “not quite” answer indicates which knowledge is prioritised and how training, hiring, and publication opportunities influence knowledge creation. Barriers which limit a full bi-directional influence between Western- and Asia-based administrative scholarship include language, methods, concept relevancy, editorial space limitations, and questions about which scholars (e.g., by gender, ethnicity) dominate the intellectual discourse.

¹ This chapter was initially prepared for a two-day symposium at The University of Melbourne in which participants explored the question of whether we are witnessing an “Asian Century” in Public Administration and Public Policy. The Symposium basis was a call by then-PM Julia Gillard to create an ‘Asia-literate’ and ‘Asia-capable’ Australia. The chapter was later modified for presentation at the 2017 Fred Riggs Symposium at the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) Conference in Atlanta GA (16-20 March 2017). The chapter benefitted from audience comments and an extensive review by two anonymous reviewers along with this volume’s editorial team. Any errors are my own.

² For the purposes of this chapter, “Western” models are assumed to be relatively similar. In reality, however, there is no monolithic “Western” administrative model (refer Raadschelders, 2008).

[a] Space, Time and of Whom We Speak

This section has three tasks. The first is to select a geographic boundary to Asia. The second explores the limits of evaluating a century as “Asian” before the end of this century. Each task prefaces the third: an incomplete decolonisation of what is “Asian” public administration. The “Asian” label (and its Western counterpart) requires definition. We cannot know from where our intellectual currents emanate if we do not clarify to whom we are making geographical reference. This is more important than asking any “big” questions of public administration (Behn, 1995, p.26; Kirlin, 2001), whether public administration is an art or science (West 2005), or whether New Public Management (NPM) is indeed “new” (Rosenbloom 2001). It is not that each question is unimportant but rather, the questions are often asked in an ahistorical manner and often do not consider geographic location. The structural (and value-based) assumptions behind what is knowledge or a “big question” (in the West) are assumed to exist across time and to be relevant to all regions. This is unlikely to be the case.

[b] Assigning Geographic Boundaries

This geographic exercise begins by defining the West to include Western Europe, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. It is a narrower categorisation than the OECD’s inclusion of Japan and South Korea. This “West” does not refer simply to wealthy and democratic states but the states from which the dominant intellectual currents of twentieth century PA largely originate.

Less clear are the boundaries of Asia. Should it include Australia, as per the former Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating? Perhaps it should include South Asia and the Pacific island states, or extend westward along the path traveled by Marco Polo to Baghdad and the Western Mediterranean. It might also include the Silk Road through Kazakhstan or the sea trade routes running throughout Indonesia, the sub-continent, Madagascar, and East Africa. The inclusive answer is that all are Asia. The narrower answer might include Northeast Asia, South Asia, Southeast, and Southwest Asia - none of which include the South Pacific or Australia and New Zealand. Given word limits, chapter discussion limits “Asia” to China, South Korea, Japan, and to a lesser extent, India. This limitation creates its own bias since each country often dominates

“Asian” PA intellectual exchanges. Since global intellectual dominance need not equate to “right” or “appropriate”, this observation must also be extended as a cautionary note to each of the four countries discussed here.

This geographic boundary simplifies the chapter task via a narrower scope of countries, cultures, and histories. However, complication also arises since Asia, like the West, lacks a singular administrative history or even identity (Cheung 2015; Painter and Peters 2010). If Asia has “no settled identity” (Ibrahim 1996, p.186) and there is no “collective actor” called Asia, then claiming an “Asian Century” is nearly impossible (Cox 2012, p.379). It is to this question of “century” to which attentions now turn.

[b]Assigning a Century Boundary

Answering the “what is a century” question also appears simple. A century begins at Year 0 and stops at the end of Year 99. Using 1900 as a start-point, European PA scholarship has dominated the twentieth century even as its focus changed from domestic and colonial administrative concerns to a literature that incorporates multilevel governance and the European Union. In contrast, early twentieth century scholarship in the United States infrequently travelled across borders and instead, was informed by European ideas. It was not until the second half of the twentieth century that US (and European) PA scholarship would jointly dominate the PA discipline. This chapter goes to press just before the end of the first fifth of the twenty-first century. Just as a student essay cannot be evaluated with just two of its ten pages, caution is required if labeling a century as either Asian or even Western. The folly of such an early characterisation is discussed in the next paragraphs. At the start of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, US scholarship for the twentieth century, and Asian scholarship for the twenty-first century, did not yet dominate their centuries. As illustrated below, this changed for the United States shortly after the end of WWII. For Asia, this may also happen if some of the hurdles discussed in this chapter are overcome.

If the question of whether the twentieth century would become a century of US public administration had been asked in 1920, the answer would have been “no”. It was still too early in 1920 to foresee the United States’ later influence. WWI had just ended, the Bolshevik

Revolution was only a few years old, the Germans were in flux, and Australia had just begun to internalise Gallipoli. The British, French, Portuguese, Dutch, and Spanish were at or near their height of colonial power. Global administration experiments at the League of Nations and the International Labor Organization were less than a year old. The 1929 stock market crash, escalating tariffs, and the Depression were not on the horizon. In the aftermath of WWI, the US slipped back into its pre-war isolation. Few could have imagined how the “war to end all wars” would somersault within a generation into WWII. Atomic bombs, a Western Europe in disarray, a rising Soviet threat, and the Cold War were unfathomable in 1920.

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In 1920, US-based public administration scholarship was dominated by European trends (Heady 2001). The US had just extended women the right to vote. Labor concerns, a new taxation system, progressive debates, meritocracy, and Taylorism were shaping US public administration theory and practice. Concepts that anchor current administrative scholarship were not fully articulated, for example: the politics-administration dichotomy; satisficing; the importance of implementation; the interaction of social justice with public administration; street-level bureaucracies; neoclassical economic influences on development administration; public service motivation, NPM; networks; and collaborative governance, among others. Unlike Western Europe’s development (colonial) administration studies (Gulrajani and Moloney 2012), US administrative scholarship infrequently reflected its (neo)colonial forays (e.g., regarding the Philippines). The exportation of a still-developing US administrative model was a generation away.³

What was already occurring in Europe by 1920, however, was a reframing of perspectives to recognize (what was known about) local values, expectations and responses as uniquely US contributions. Within three decades, this history included the progressive and orthodoxy eras, the *Administrative State*, debates among Waldo, Appleby, and Simon, and the tensions between Friedrich and Finer; each defined and redefined American public administration for generations to come (see Appleby 1946; Finer 1941; Friedrich 1940; Simon 1946; Waldo 1984 (1948)). Shortly after WWII, and in parallel with the increased global importance of the US economy, bi-

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³ It is arguable that PA still has not cast a critical eye on the colonial period (Haque 2007). This limits the West’s understanding and interpretation of its past and ultimately, limits knowledge generation and the historical basis upon which we create our theories and frameworks.

directional US and Western European administrative interaction was on the rise. This coincided with an increased US interest in the administrative development of post-colonial societies (Gulrajani and Moloney 2012), the Marshall Plan, and a US desire to strengthen security arrangements in Western Europe.

In contrast to the United States' early twentieth century, many parts of Asia in 1920 were either colonised and/or had not yet formalised their modern-day borders. Much of the Asia-focused PA research that gained international (e.g., Western) attention was written not by Asian scholars but by Westerners. The directionality of who created twentieth century administrative knowledge and how it was distributed was largely unidirectional to Asia, from the West.

In the first fifth of the twenty-first century, this chapter asks if Asian PA is bi-directional influence. The answer is “not quite”. This answer **rings** true (and disappointingly so) despite the comparative youth of US administrative life against a millennium of documented administrative writing in India and China. The historical and intellectual importance of the latter has not translated into diffusible “lessons learned” for Asian and non-Asian societies. While the colonial yoke has been legally dismantled, a modern and internationally dominant Asian century of public administration has not arrived. Before illustrating the hurdles that prevent a bidirectional Asian administrative influence, the next paragraphs reference the ongoing decolonisation of the Asian administrative experience.

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[b]The (De)colonisation of the Asian Experience

Scholars of Asian PA have published within Western-based academic journals for more than half a century. Publication, however, need not imply that Asian administrative models and concepts have substantively influenced Western scholarship or its practice. Before unpacking this troubling situation, the next paragraphs highlight typical Asian PA scholarship.

Outside of multiple colonial administration studies or post-colonial studies carried out by former colonial powers (see Cooke 2003 for a critical perspective), early Western-written examples include Fred Riggs' book on Thailand (Riggs 1966), his *sala* model⁴ (Riggs, 1964, 1967), or his

⁴ Based on Riggs' comparative work on the United States and Thailand, he developed an administrative model in which developing country societal views are altered by the arrival of bureaucracy. The prismatic society or *sala*

editorship of a 19-chapter reflection on development administration in 1969. This edited book, which was largely written with contributions by Western-born administrative scholars, included two chapters on pre-Nixon Communist China (Barnett 1969; Vogel 1969). Other early examples include reflections on India (Appleby 1953; Merriam 1928), as well as Malaysia and Pakistan (Braibanti 1966; Esman 1972).

Among the many Asian PA scholars with substantial scholarly legacies, there are those who focus on Thailand (Bowornwathana 2000; Burns 2013), write on Japan's civil service reforms (Kim et al. 1995), explore Singapore and other ASEAN states (Quah 1980, 2003), and focus early on Indian public administration (Ruthnaswamy 1956). Recent examples include work on China by Hon S. Chan or on India by Krishna Tummala (e.g. Chan 2004; Tummala 1999, 2003), as well as edited collections highlighting diverse administrative experiences (Berman et al. 2010; Kim 2009, 2010, 2011; Sabharwal and Berman 2013).

By expanding the time horizon beyond a century, the US' comparatively short administrative history becomes clear. With dynastic origins as early as 1600 BCE, the Chinese administrative state predates Athens by more than 800 years. One of the earliest public administration texts is not Western, but Chinese. *Wan Yan Shu* (published in 1058) addressed Chinese civil service challenges, encouraged public sector reform, and considered human resource management issues (Drechsler 2013). India's fourth century BCE *Arthashastra* text focused on how to govern a (largely autocratic) state. Broadly speaking, most Chinese and Indian *administrative* histories (as opposed to a broader political and economic history) are condensed into text not yet translated or made accessible to readers unfamiliar with Mandarin or Sanskrit. Western unfamiliarity with a discoverable Asian administrative canon extends beyond China and India. The translation of pre-twentieth century Korean and Japanese texts is increasingly discoverable but infrequently distributed across Asia and the world.

Western public administration builds upon several early history documents. One such document is the Athenian Oath, written in the fifth century BCE. The Oath is an honor code and a call to

(living room) model describes a mix of formality and informality as the bureaucracy (and state) negotiates its developmental path.

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serve the public good. Its creation existed alongside the Athenian decision to pay its civil servants, a radical decision for its time (Gilman 2005). An Asian PA not built upon its earliest works nor shared across languages creates a “missing” history inhibiting the placement of Asia-specific administrative events into a larger global timeline. The outcome is an under-emphasis on what was administratively known in Asia, an overemphasis on the Western experience, and a narrowed discourse. Given that many of the ideas Western scholars ascribe to their own civilisational development may originate from Asia (Turner 2002), any under-emphasis is troubling. In other words, it is not Asian PA that is in its infancy but rather a Western understanding of Asian PA. This includes also an insufficiently deep comparative effort among and between Asian PA scholars on country-specific administrative differences. The existing (but still suppressed) Asian PA tradition sits in flux. The next section explores whether an Asian model exists and how Asian PA scholars interact with Western PA ideas.

[a]Structure and Values: Which Model for Asian PA Research?

The earliest US public administration scholars reflected both European scholarship and early US history (Heady 2001). Asian public administration scholarship also reflects its history, the selective insertion of non-Asian intellectual currents, and the modification of foreign currents to suit its state-driven development practice. But whereas Western PA scholarship may infiltrate Asian PA and its scholarship, there has been minimal infiltration of broadly Asian ideas into Western PA theories, concepts, or practice.

[b]Western Model and Asia

Western PA scholars, aid agencies, and international organisations frequently recommend Western administrative ideas for Asia (Turner et al. 2013). Scholars have explored the applicability of Western ideas to an Asian context (e.g. Kim 2009; Samaratunge et al. 2008; Turner 2002) and/or what happens when Western ideas do not apply to Asian contexts (e.g. Bowornwathana 2000; Kilby 2004; Manning 2001). While some scholars accept that what works in Bangladesh may not work in Bhutan, many scholars infrequently question whether what works in the West *should* apply elsewhere. In addition, Western administrative history often reflects its earlier origins while Western-written scholarship on Asian PA infrequently incorporates dates or administrative histories earlier than colonial reinterpretations of its past.

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Some academics might suggest that Western models *need not* apply even if their base values do not change, that is, the West's market-based democracies are not just desirable but perhaps also an *End of History* (Fukuyama 1992).

[b]An Asian “Developmental State” Model?

Western characterisation of Asia's public sector describes the region as administering a “developmental state” model (see, Pierre, Chapter 13 of this volume). This model emphasises a state- and export-led growth along with limited democratic commitments and a downplaying of Western prescriptions for transparent and accountable administrative practices (Haque 2007). Using the narrowest Western characterisation of this “Asian” model, the Asian Financial Crisis (AFC) rattled many of its assumptions (Haggard 2000). Subsequent model modifications have occurred as Asian countries democratise or, as in the case of China, publicly tackle corruption and to a lesser extent, financial opacity (Tu 2016; Wang 2014). Despite Western condemnation of Asia's “crony capitalism” and despotism (Philippi 2003; Woo-Cummings 2005), this model persists as a descriptive tool for Western scholars. This includes Korea's state-industrial complex (*chaebol*), its export-ready “New Village” (*saemaul undong*) agricultural modernisation (e.g. Kim 1988; Park 2009) or studies that extol a Chinese *nomenklatura* (Chan, 204).

In the aftermath of the AFC, scholars questioned whether East Asia's “spiritual features” (Philippi, 2004, p.292) influenced the crisis onset. Such features were said to influence public sector institutions and state-government relations and include “loyalty, faithfulness, and obedience to the ruling party as well as adherence to party decisions and policies” (Chen, 2010, p.371). From the Western perspective (including traditional PA and NPM), such values may undermine individualism and encourage corruption. This includes the Weberian assumption that Confucianism is not “conducive to the individual achievement to fuel a capitalistic system” (Rarick, 2007, p.26). Others, such as the late Prime Minister of Singapore (Lee Kuan Yew) believed that that “cronyism and corruption” occurred due to a broad “debasement of Confucian values” and not as an outcome of Confucianism itself (Milner, 2000, np).

Certainly the classification of this model as “developmental” is itself contested. Asian administrative practices are amalgams of national and Western practice. The Meiji administrative

state (and its restoration), its partial exportation to Korea, and its influence on other Asian states is one such example. Model developments are autonomous and innovative and they reflect the coexistence of local tradition, modernity, and increased regional and global engagements (Cheung 2005; Painter and Peters 2014). Turner et al., (2013) argue that an Asian developmental state “does not simply dominate society but interacts with it, sometimes intimately and at other times aggressively in pursuit of the joint project of socioeconomic transformation” (p.486). The resulting Asian “model” is less a reflection of a single influence but instead, many.

[b]An Asian “Amalgamation” Model?

Just as there is no single Western model (Raadschelders 2008), there may also be no single Asian administrative model. Instead, its frequently state-driven characteristics are both reflections of its past and its vision for the future. Asia has incorporated and adopted external influences while seeking to redefine its differences from the West. In Korea, for example, the Japanese occupation altered the Korean administrative landscape by its method of linking law with public administration. The 1950s occupation of South Korea by the US furthered encouraged a borrowing of ideas (Kim 2012). This occurred alongside an indigenisation drive that sought to revise Western concepts for the Korean experience. This indigenisation rhetoric was (and is) often pitted against a separate “Koreanisation” effort. In contrast to indigenisation, Koreanisation seeks to understand and study its past, to question Western influence, and to create Korean-specific theories. Counterintuitively, indigenisation and Koreanisation may over-emphasise border importance while limiting the development of an Asian PA capable of crossing Asian and non-Asian borders (Kim 2012).

Nonetheless, there are key administrative differences between Asia and the West. As noted by one Chinese observer, “authoritarian” in the Western sense “implies that the state controls society through coercion. It assumes that the state and society are separate... [t]his is a western dualist view of state-society relations” (Wu 2008). In contrast, there is no clear politics-administration dichotomy in China (Wu et al. 2011). The “good” Chinese civil servant is loyal to the Communist Party and as such, is political (Chen 2010). This “reform with Chinese characteristics” with a “crossing the river by feeling the stones” shares one goal: economic growth (Aufrecht and Bun 1995; Wu et al. 2011). At the local level, economic growth was paired

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with “conducting ideological indoctrination and recruiting new party members” (Chan and Gao, 2013, p.367). The resulting administrative reforms were to be non-political in order not to upset the larger political structures (Wu et al. 2011). Others use a Western-derived Weberian model to justify existing practice. The Chinese perceive the creation of a “modern state in the terms defined by Max Weber. That is, China created a centralised, uniform system of bureaucratic administrative that was capable of governing a huge population and territory” (Drechsler, Chapter 2 of this volume, 2013, p.327 citing Fukuyama 2011, 2012; Jacques, 2011, 2012; Tao, Chapter 4 of this volume).

An Asian reframing of Western trends is also found elsewhere. Under Mao and the Cultural Revolution, administrative reform did not diminish state importance but instead, strengthened the Party and its state (Cheung 2005). The creation of a neoliberal urban class is less a reflection of Chinese direct incorporation of Western values than an output from a Chinese indigenous modernisation or “capitalist restoration” project (Wu, 2008, p.1094). Even the efficiency-first focus of NPM is reframed for Asian states. Rather than such an emphasis leading to the “dispensing with bureaucracy altogether,” Asian scholars reframe efficiency as an important value for *retaining* bureaucracy. In this perspective, efficient practices strengthen the state and not, as Western scholars assert, weaken or “hollow out” the state (Cheung, 1997).

In the West, scholars focus upon how impartial administrative structures may increase state efficiency. In contrast, Korea’s cultural and structural hierarchies may require the opposite. Korean civil servants’ “non-substitutability” and individualised jobs means that in a “Confucian understanding of government workers... [they are] defined not by the range of tasks that they have mastered but rather by the underlying general character of their education and the presumption that they are aligned with the public interest” (Im et al., 2013, p.293). The links among employee non-substitutability, hierarchy, a highly-bureaucratic structure, and a civil service rooted in their duties and a societal meaning of bureaucracy imply that a West-based PA focus on responsibility, motivations, incentives, and performance measurement many have little direct application (Im et al. 2013).

In many Asian states, the “rule of man” refers to the values espoused by **man’s** relationship with the state and society. Just like pre-modern China emphasised a “society of acquaintances” under a benevolent and paternalistic state, both ancient and modern civil service exams reflect societal expectations of its bureaucracy. In China, this included requiring applicants to be familiar with the Four Books and Five Classics of Confucianism (Rarick 2007). Similar requirements were emphasised during Korea’s five-century *Joseon* dynasty (1392-1897). Latter-day Korean exams “tested both a scholar’s learning as well as their ability to apply the principles of the Neo-Confucian philosophy to the practical affairs of government” (Im et al., 2013, p.287). In addition, the learned civil servant and his importance reinforced a weak monarch who served as both “master and student” of his civil servants (Im, 2013, p.289).⁵ In other words, meritocracy or the entrance into civil service life through qualification is not a Western invention (see, Drechsler Chapter 2 of this volume, 2013).

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Further indigenisation and assertion of Asian concepts and claims is underway (Frederickson 2002; Kim 2012). One example links Confucianism, family elder relations, and favor exchange (*quanxi*) to ask what is administratively discussed in Asia and how such discussions influence Asian politics and economic development (see, Pierre, Chapter 13 of this volume; Jun and Sherwood 2007). This includes efforts to define an Asian identity that is more nuanced than is often asserted. Ongoing intellectual, ideological, and political debates are working to marry modern states with their pasts, re-conceptualise national identities, and potentially, an Asian identity (Milner 2000).

[b]Limited Bi-directionality of Asian Models

Asian PA is deepening and broadening its administrative scholarship. It is a field increasingly reflective of its pre-colonial past and its efforts to adopt or partially internalise external influences. This engagement is the opposite of the minimal adoption or even adaptation and internalisation of any Asian administrative ideas into modern Western theory or practice. A key barrier to the incorporation of Asian administration into non-Asian models is a frequent assumption that modernisation equates to Westernisation (see, Drechsler, Chapter 2 of this

⁵ This late *Joseon* pattern stood in contrast to China where “imperial governments without limits on their powers” reigned from 1368 to 1912 (Im et al., 2013, p.289).

volume). Unfortunately, this assumption “delegitimize[s] the former in those contexts in which Westernization is at least an ambiguous concept for many” and as such, simply acknowledging that “modernization is not necessarily Westernization, would be a major accomplishment” (Drechsler, 2013, p.322).

Discussions of Asian administration by either Asian or Western scholars infrequently suggest that what is learnable in Asia is potentially transferable to the West. It is highly unlikely that what is learnable in China or Pakistan has no potential policy transferability. Just as medicine has benefitted from the discovery and use of indigenous plants or the Zulu’s *indaba* helped climate change negotiators find solutions previously considered unachievable (Zimmer 2015), Asia-to-West policy ideas transfer could offer new pathways. But still-limited Asia-to-West transfer hampers administrative theory developments. The application of selected Asian histories and ideas to Western understandings of administration would symbolise an end to colonisation. The next section explores in greater detail many of the hurdles to bi-directional learning and practice.

[a]Structure and Values: Education, Publication, Language, and Methods

Several hurdles prohibiting deeper exchanges between Asian and the West are inseparable from which administrative histories are deliberated or shared across contexts . This includes from where scholars receive their training, academic hiring practices, publications, language, methods and concept relevancy, and gender and ethnic balances. This section discusses each hurdle and its implications for an Asian Century in PA.

[b]Terminal Degree Location and Hiring Practices

Many of the contemporary Asian-born scholars who publish in top-ranked journals obtain their terminal degree at an American, Canadian, Western European, or Australian universities. Within this cohort, the greatest prestige is often reserved for scholars with a terminal degree from the highest-ranking US/UK public administration, public management or public policy programs. The choice of where to obtain a PhD influences where a scholar is hired, which conference papers are valued, publication preferences, and ultimately, the promotion practices that may harden a perception of what is considered valuable or legitimate administrative knowledge.

If an Asian PA student desires a career at a Western or top Asian university, terminal degrees obtained at Western universities are more likely to lead to academic employment. This bias reflects the location of colonial and neocolonial knowledge hubs, as well as the academic hiring preferences of Asian and Western faculties. Variation may exist for Asian scholars who obtain PhDs from the top four or five Asian universities. Regardless, the general perception exists that terminal degrees obtained in Asia are more likely to lead to employment at a low- or mid-level Asian university than either a top-ranked Asian university or even less likely, a Western university. If the desire is to work in the West or land a job at a top Asian university, West-based PhDs are a near necessity.

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Despite an offering of PA courses in many countries, the prevalence of graduate-level Master of Public Administration (MPA) programs remains low. An important exception is South Korea. Korea has the highest number of PA programs as a proportion of its universities (Kim 2012). At the PhD level growth is harder to ascertain. India offers nearly 30 PhD programs in PA and many more at the MPA level. China's first PhD in PA was created in 1998 (Wu et al. 2013).

Specific to the "Social Policy and Administration" category within which Public Administration sits, twenty Asian universities were in the world's Top 100 in 2016-2017. Two universities were Top Ten: University of Tokyo and University of Hong Kong. Four of China's seven top 100 universities in this subject area were not from mainland China but from Hong Kong (QS 2017). More broadly, there is a centering (or perhaps, insufficient de-centering) of knowledge in Asia. In this landscape, only universities in China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan were found in the top 100. Despite two Malaysian universities placing in the bottom half of the "Social Policy and Administration" top 100, universities from other Asian countries are not in the top 100. In a university-wide evaluation, and as noted by Cox (2012), China only has five universities among the top 100 in the world with three of those five based in Hong Kong. This statistic compares unfavorably with the US and the UK who were home to 76 of the top 100 while Asia, as a whole, only had 13. By 2017, the number of Asian universities in the top 100 increased to 19. Four of the eight Chinese universities in the Top 100 were based in Hong Kong (QS 2017).

The University of Hong Kong, University of Tokyo, Seoul National University, Yonsei University, and the National University of Singapore are not just respected Asian universities but also universities with two or more decades of international collaboration. But crucial to an intellectual tradition and its regional or international transmission are graduates capable of securing jobs in countries outside their own. Current knowledge colonisation suggests that Asian students are best served (in terms of employment, publishing capacity, theoretical and methodological training) in their study of Asia *by leaving Asia* to earn a PhD in the West.⁶ The intellectual colonisation which results may devalue (or often, infrequently discuss) the Asian experience (Haque 2007). A hiring preference for Western-educated PhDs creates a river of Asian administrative intellectuals leaving Asia, entering Western PhD programs, and in most cases, not returning to Asia (Haque 2013; Jun 2006).

This reality also reflects not just the language utilised in one's terminal degree but also the historic relationship among Asian states, their civil service exams, and the universities that graduate individuals capable of passing such exams. In a cultural environment that attaches prestige to civil servant employment, many Asian-based universities focus less on doctorate-level PA training than ensuring their undergraduate students pass the civil service exam. In 2016, nearly a million Chinese took the civil service exam for the chance at 27,000 jobs (Liu and Wang 2016). In India, nearly a half million test-takers recently sought approximately 1,000 federal-level jobs (Agarwal 2016). Similar to China and India, civil service appointments also earn prestige in Korea. In the last 20 years, Korean test-takers numbers more than doubled despite acceptance rates infrequently higher than two percent (Park 2017).

[b]Publication Outlets

No matter whether one utilises a global Thomson-Reuters Journal Citation evaluator or an Australia-specific "Excellence in Research" guide, Asia-driven PA journals infrequently hold an impact factor higher than their global peers. This includes journals with forty or more years of publication experience such as the *Asian Journal of Public Administration*, *Asia Pacific Journal*

⁶ This need not imply that other options do not exist. With over 4,000 accredited Asian universities, it is likely that the majority of PhDs are locally-earned. Nonetheless, a perusal of highly rated Asian PA programs indicates that significant numbers of faculty (with top journal publications credited to their name) earned their terminal degree in the West.

of Public Administration, Indian Journal of Public Administration, and the Hong Kong Journal of Public Administration. Nearly twenty years into this century, Asia-based journals are not first-choice locations for a scholar who desires a journal with a high impact factor. Greater reputational, promotion, and career rewards may accrue when scholars publish in a top-ranked US- or UK-based journal. In some Asian universities, such publications may also pay financial rewards such as a congratulatory fund to an Asia-based scholar who publishes in faculty-identified “top” journals.

If Asia’s administrative knowledge is neither decolonised nor creating strong bi-directional flows of influence, it is not a leap to suggest that journal editors and reviewers may also show discomfort or an inability to evaluate (value-free) an Asia-dominant perspective. The impact of this implicit bias may push Asia-focused scholars to research what is understood, and not what reflects Asia-driven intellectual histories, theories, and trends. The outcome of journal impact factor pressure and a Western bias may be an altered intellectual agenda and a limiting of theoretical and practice-based developments. Living and working in a non-Western context inevitably poses contradictions between the literature familiar to Western editors and reviewers and the reality in a particular Asian country. Examples include asking whether public service motivation indices (e.g. Perry 1996), as constructed in the US, should apply without modification to another country (see Appendix of Moloney and Chu 2015) or why NPM struggles in developing country contexts (Schick 1998).

Journal location and intellectual preferences are not unrelated to where conferences are held and which abstracts are procured and accepted by conference committees. Excluding recent efforts by top universities to host more administrative conferences, most conferences remain outside the region. With more than 60 percent of the world identifying as Asian and one-third of the globe identifying as Chinese or Indian, this trend will need to reverse if Asia is to claim its (modern) century of PA.

[b]Language, Methods, Concept Relevancy, and Space

Knowledge creation is a difficult enterprise regardless of a scholar’s origin, theories, or methods of analysis. However, what is difficult for Western scholars may be *even more difficult* for Asia-based scholars. This is not due to the brilliance (or lack thereof) of one group or the other but that

Asian scholars face additional hurdles. One such hurdle is language. Language reveals its importance in three ways. The first relates to the prior argument about where Asia-focused knowledge is created. If the dominant disciplinary journals are written in English and draw upon Western constructs and methodological preferences, then scholars wishing to publish in such journals will require an advanced familiarity with the English language. One method of inserting oneself into such “elite” scholarly circles is attainment of a PhD from an English-language university in the West.

In addition, much of what the English-speaking West knows about Asian administration is written in English. Nearly all top-ranked PA journals use English as their method of communication. One exception is the mid-ranked *International Review of Administration Sciences* that translates its articles into French and Chinese. Certainly English-language academic journals are not the only academic outlet. In one analysis, three Chinese journals produced nearly 2,500 Chinese-language articles (Wu et al. 2013), whereas only fifty or so articles were published on Chinese administration within English-language journals between 1999 and 2009 (see, Bice, Chapter 10 of this volume; Walker et al. 2013). The Chinese journals are not unique. There are dozens of local journals published across Asia in a language other than English. But without translation, or an explicit agreement by local-nonlocal co-author teams to share non-English articles, the result is a missed opportunity for English and non-English language scholars to engage in a bi-directional dialogue.

Second, and looking specifically at Chinese-language administrative scholarship, insufficient methodological engagement in Chinese public administration journals “cannot be overstated” (Wu et al., 2013, p.269). Chinese public administration journals were less likely than their Western peers to include rigorous methods. The authors found an empirical analysis in less than five percent of reviewed Chinese-language articles between 1998 and 2008. Even “more disconcerting” was their finding that 90 percent of published articles contained *no* research methods (Wu et al., 2013, p.272). Explanations include Chinese-language journals with article word limits as low as 4,000 (Wu et al. 2013) or more broadly a problem of conducting survey research in which the “conflation of politics and administration” in Chinese administrative life may challenge academic surveyors (Chen 2013; Su et al. 2013). Questions about Chinese rigor

and its insufficient methodological depth may “perpetuate archaic and highly inefficient bureaucratic practices in Chinese institutions” and ultimately, threaten the intellectual engagement between imported Western practices and China’s administrative history (Wu et al., 2013, p.262).

Values are not removed from this discussion. In one interpretation, the “positivist-empiricist research in American public administration... is inappropriate for the inter-subjective and context-based analysis need for understanding the sociocultural milieu of public administration in Asian countries” (Haque, 2013, p.270). Most damning of all is that while other social science disciplines may actively discourage anti-Western biases, in “PA, this is certainly not the case” (Drechsler, 2013, p.323).

In addition, a conflation of politics and administration in some Asian contexts reflects both a systemic choice and a (lack of) robustness in a state’s accountability and transparency pressures. Censorship, in particular, will alter what might be questioned and what is knowable. Local or regional Party leaders may be as prominently displayed on a university website as its professoriate. Government limitations of social media discussions (e.g. Communist Party removal of Panama Papers analysis) or even ministerial declarations on what is not a “no speak” and thus what is researchable⁷ shall limit publication depth and variety.

Another barrier is the relationship between article space and which knowledge is valued. Scholars of under-researched countries often must use 1,000 or more words to familiarise their journal audience with public sector context. The relative injustice of this requirement becomes clear if we ask whether Western authors must deliver similar summaries for each of their publications. The implication for an Asia-focused scholar is even less space from which to position and defend an argument. In addition, the effort to politely engage reviewers that an “accepted” Western theory or concept may not, and perhaps should not, apply in their specific case is often more arduous and word-consuming than the application of a likely inapplicable Western concept to Asia. Asia-focused research questions are often more intellectually costly in their design and risk to the scholar. Deviation from Western constructs (and without the space

⁷ The “seven no speaks” in China include “universal values, citizen rights, civil society, judicial independence, freedom of the press, the privileged capitalist class, and past mistakes of the Communist Party” (Anderlini 2015; Clark 2013).

from which to deviate) may raise the rejection risk. It takes significant time to modify Western constructs along with their infrequently-tested cultural assumptions. With few article translations and limited Asian scholar participation within top editorial boards, it is no surprise that “serious challenges” remain (Candler et al. 2010; Gulrajani and Moloney 2012; Haque, 2013, p.271).

[b]Gender and Race

The above discussion was largely written without specific gender or ethnicity identifiers. This is problematic. Simply stated, knowledge creation within public administration is dominated by white men from the West (Feeney 2015). This chapter has not asked whether there is a Black or Chicano century of public administration or if we are in a “female century” of administrative scholarship. Instead, the chapter questions whether we are in a century dominated by an “Asian-ness”. Such distinctions are about more than geography. It is about race, gender, and the intersectionality which arises from boxing a region or country into one characterisation. A failure to critically reflect about who researches and teaches Western and Asian administrative life risks overemphasising what is “known” and devaluing voices less frequently heard.

Feeney (2015) observed that few female public administration scholars become journal editors, sit on editorial boards, or serve in associational leadership positions. Potential explanations such as insufficient numbers of female faculty members or female faculty without seniority were dismissed upon her empirical review. While Feeney (2015) does not explore ethnicity or scholarly origin, the perusal of faculty pages at top Asian public administration faculties suggests a strong majority are men. Many of these Asian men (like their female colleagues) will also not hold a majority of the top positions explored by Feeney (2015) even if the dominance of such men within Asia will alter what is knowable.

Explored less frequently than gender are questions about whether Asian PA is dominated by men of a particular ethnic origin, caste (as in India), economic class, or geographic origin. It may be that placement of universities from only a few Asian states in the world’s Top 100 may also create questions of whose voice is heard. Just as scholars have explored whether Western university faculty reflect diverse experiences, similar questions must be asked in Asia. The “American century” of PA was and is a century dominated by a particular gender and ethnicity. The discouragement of diverse voices limits knowledge creation and its reflections. As Asia

moves towards (or returns to) an Asian century of PA, consideration of who speaks and from where they originate will become increasingly important.

[a]Conclusion

Asian PA has existed for more than a millennium. But unlike its Western peers, this scholarship has infrequently received the attention it deserves. The present hurdles suggest that we are not yet in a modern Asian century of public administration scholarship. This answer is disappointing. It is uncomfortable to suggest that an administrative history extending over a millennium has not reached its “century” of global influence. Defining the Asian space, clarifying the boundary of time, and understanding its incomplete intellectual decolonisation is a contested terrain. The hurdles faced by Asia-based scholars of PA are largely structural. This includes the location of a scholar’s terminal degree and university hiring practices. It also includes value-influenced variables such as language, methods and concept relevancy, journal space, and the gender and ethnic characteristics of Asian faculty. The reasoning behind this chapter’s “answer” has as much to do with the West, its neocolonial and parochial histories as its global power over the last several centuries to impose its perspectives upon Asia.

Looking forward, we must be cautious in our model identification and utilised concepts. If the current structures and values have created a largely unidirectional arrow of intellectual engagement, then we have short-circuited the opportunity to engage each other. If the Western scholar asks why Asia is not like the West, and if the answer is because they (Asia) are not yet enough like ourselves (West), then there is a missed opportunity to sufficiently question assumptions, directionality, and the dynamics that limit the reward offered by translating, interpreting, and publishing Asia-driven administrative histories.

To infiltrate and critically engage assumptions and to encourage a global bi-directional and multi-directional engagement among PA scholars, we must expect to be challenged by alternative perspectives, to not assume that modernity equates to Westernisation, and to constantly reassess how knowledge is created, distributed, and rewarded. A reflective and critical administrative historicism will deepen engagement and improve intellectual understanding. It is certainly true that the desire to “constantly question oneself” is “not too high a demand... of the

university” and must be honed (Drechsler, 2013, p.338). By being aware of our assumptions and willing to question “how we know what we know”, the first step may be taken toward both a global and context-specific PA practice. If done, this will create a space for a modern Asian century of PA to not only rise but to also influence and engage Western administrative theory and practice.

[a]References

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