

Editorial Note

This current issue of BPA Journal is also an overdue labor of love and endurance. We are still exploring both ways and means to expand the Regional Editors. We have lost our China Editor, who accepted a fulltime position at a major university. We are actively seeking a replacement. Our other major goals include: grow more active readership and contributions from policy makers, professionals and aspiring academics.

The first and feature article was written by Michael Novak who passed away in February 2017. Michael was a mentor, friend and my very first employer in America, at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) in Washington DC when I was still a student. Novak was a prominent writer, poet and diplomat. His life and career warrants a separate treatment. In fact, just three years ago, Novak wrote an engaging, honest and fascinating autobiography titled: "Writing from left to right".

My brief review of his book was published by an online Chicago journal: http://www.realclearreligion.org/articles/2014/09/04/michael_novaks_moral_compass.html

I attended Novak's classes on Ecology and social Justice at the Bush School of Business at the Catholic University of America in DC last Fall, 2016. He loved to teach and interact with students. And students loved to listen and argue with him. After one of the first seminars I asked him if he would be willing to join our Journal and he agreed immediately. He gave me the copy of the article printed herein. (Also, expanded and longer version is available online in the proceedings of 2016 CUA Napa Conference with the same title. See: <http://business.cua.edu/res/docs/Human-Ecology/Novak.pdf>

For Novak, moral ecology enhances Kierkegaard's ethical standards. It includes its wider cultural, social and political dimensions. It comprises a tripartite system. For the free and creative society functions at its best when clear moral preconditions are in place. From one point of view, he says that socialism (as in the Soviet Union) built around itself a distinctive moral ecology. It was quite different from the moral climate and the moral habits inculcated by free societies. Still deeper, should the moral ecology of the free societies deteriorate into moral relativism, they would debilitate their own vitalities. Thus, moral ecology is a multifaceted term for analyzing the overall moral prospects of societies. What is the moral ecology of Europe today? What is the moral ecology of the United States? What is the moral ecology of Sub-Saharan Africa as of this decade? Are the cultural mores of each of these continents more predictive of economic decline or economic progress, of moral decadence or of moral awakening? Novak challenges us to note that there are normative methods of analyzing moral ecology. But his main assignment is to set forth the proper meaning of social justice. His argument transcends that of Thomas Aquinas and makes it relevant for our current era.

Charles Bingman in his piece titled, "China vs. Itself: The Perpetual War Against Corruption" describes China after Mao's great reforms. How the structures of all Chinese governments had to be thoroughly reorganized from top to bottom. How they did eliminate hundreds of thousands of obsolete and incompetent collectives, communes and other economic units and activities. The subsequent waves of structural reform were initiated in the early 80s and later

in 90s. Some still continue until current time. Author maintains that harsh reforms were justified politically because the Maoist structure was not efficient. Also, it was no longer necessary to “guard the revolution”. The shift to a market economy meant that whole ministries that controlled sectors of the economy (e. g. Coal, or Electric Power, or Machine Building) were now obsolete and redundant and could simply be eliminated, or folded into a general organization called the State Economic and Trade Commission, which dealt with policy and not operations. Structural rationalization in turn justified and facilitated the purging of the public workforce, keeping the competent where possible, but weeding out the uneducated, or totally inexperienced.

Another crucial principle of reform involved a total shift from the communist/socialist philosophy of “cradle to grave” government to place more emphasis on individual self-reliance-- and thus less reliance on government. This system lacked almost any effective management controls, and it continued to be driven by the active efforts of both politicians and managers to perpetuate and enlarge their empires and steal from the public purse. In addition, this bureaucracy was also effectively in charge of another dinosaur: the thousands of state owned enterprises (SOEs). A high proportion of which were running at deficits, and most of which were hot beds of corruption. Faced with these prodigious problems, it became politically attractive simply to deny responsibility for them. Both individuals and institutions like SOEs and local governments were being told to practice self-reliance.

Excuses to justify corruption? A big number of governments in the world are bad: they are corrupt, incompetent, or destructive. Authoritarian, self-serving leaders misallocate national resources, steal elections, and line their own pockets. Thus, corruption has many meanings, and it becomes far more widespread and poorly resisted. Regulations, instead of protecting the public, become instruments of petty bureaucracy. How do these things happen?

Why do governments become corrupt? Lots of people have invented lots of excuses to “justify” corruption, or explain it away. The author, who is retired professor does not mince words. His controversial statements and conclusions may not convince everyone, but he is asking bold and difficult questions that our global leaders need to address.

Nicolas Kotschoubey’s article on “Rehabilitation of the Ecological Functions of the Senegal River Delta”. Provides an important introductory report aiming to evaluate the options for rehabilitating the Ndiaël. It is the result of a study and a field mission. The findings serve as a preparation for the Environmental Management Component of the Long Term Water Sector Project. It also includes a management plan for the Lac de Guiers and the rehabilitation of the Baie de Hann (Dakar). The work was researched in the context of two other World Bank projects: the Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Management GEF project and the Senegal River Basin project. The report provided the scientific basis for further action. Case studies of the rehabilitation of wetlands worldwide were examined and the importance of estuaries for fisheries confirmed. Over 70 persons with relevant academic experience were contacted. Of these, ten experts were identified as highly relevant. The first field trip aimed to get a comprehensive lay of the land; an update of the situation as it has evolved over last two decades. The second trip focused on identifying physical rehabilitation channels. The information gathered included: cataloguing the activities in the delta (human and natural conditions), identifying the concerns and agendas of local participants, obtaining qualitative and quantitative field data, uncovering the opportunities for rehabilitation.

William J. Mea, in his article focuses on transformative leadership. He asks: “What Transformative Leaders Can Do to Initiate and Institute Effective Federal Change?” His paper examines why achieving major change and transformation in the public sector is seeming so difficult. While the public expects the Fed-

eral Government to resolve issues quickly, there are many barriers. The author analyzes how barriers to making rapid change are woven into the fabric of the governing process. He also examines factors that have emerged over time, such as the role of associations, that make it surprising for the government to accomplish as much as it does. He also explores challenges to transformation and reviews relevant examples. The main questions posed are: “Why is change so difficult in U.S. Federal organizations?”, “What are the foundational and constitutional factors that make government so difficult to transform?”, and finally, “What are the factors and principles to consider when attempting to implement transformation or change projects?”

The second section discusses other factors that have emerged in government over the course of time that make transformation difficult. The next section looks at some positive examples of government transformation and change projects. The final section explores some of the key principles that public-sector leaders can apply to make government transformation and change possible. By public sector leaders we mean staff in Federal, state, county, or local municipalities who are in a position to have a positive influence. They could be elected officials, appointees, or career civil servants. A few important themes are elaborated in some detail, and this includes a consideration of the role of information technology as a critical enabler. Another key theme is the importance of correctly measuring change while offering insights into the common errors

in misreading change results.

Management consultants of that period typically valued rapid decision-making, decisive action, analytical precision, and simplicity – values that drive business profitability and that reflected the most profitable markets. The author noted that government contains significant restrictions on action and noted that a different set of values and skills may be needed to make change achievable within the public sector. Other assumptions, competencies, and wisdom, need to be brought to the table when helping government organizations transform themselves.

Developing a CSR Strategy: 5 Steps to Get Started by Andrea M. Pereira concludes the current issue of BPA Journal. The author states that corporate social responsibility (CSR) makes perfect business sense. The company does financially do well if it does good. On this point, a number of empirical studies have found a positive relationship between corporate social responsibility and financial performance. The authors of these studies conclude that CSR is cost effective, makes businesses more sustainable, and improves the image of the company, making it more attractive to investors, employees and consumers.

In fact, this is a very point than Novak liked to repeat so frequently: that bad people would make bad business. So then we are wishing you a pleasant reading. Please send us your comments and criticism so that the ideas that are worth debating might become well worth sharing.

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