

## KAKISTOCRACY: RULE OF THE UNPRINCIPLED, UNETHICAL AND UNQUALIFIED

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### Introduction

*People train for the lofty aim of the common good,  
and then act out in life on the basis of common greed!*  
- Saul Alinsky (1909-1972)

The Italian philosopher Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) saw it coming as early as the 1500's when he declared: "what are we in power for!" This was not a question, but a pragmatic pronouncement about the skill of acquisition and utilization of power that leaders ought to learn, perpetuate and protect, by creating what Bolman and Deal acknowledge as 'over-bounded systems.'<sup>1</sup> Profoundly, Machiavelli's evocation depicts the downfall of many great leaders across the globe - among governments, corporations and even cause-oriented social movements. But more than 400 years later, the English Baron Lord Acton (1834-1902) unleashed his popular dictum against Machiavellian pragmatism: "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely!"

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<sup>1</sup> Overbounded systems denote concentration, control and monopoly of power, as opposed to underbounded systems where power is diffused and distributed in the organization. Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2008.

The use of cunning and deceitful transactions in politics and society in general, aimed at protecting and propagating vested interests (can be personal interests, class interests, party interests, business interests) has become a major source of tension as management and leadership theories evolve. The basic tension arises from the lacuna of an operational ethical framework that could have served as one of the firm foundations of effective managerial and leadership styles. This lacuna explains the many controversies and scandals that hound the world's leaders. Thus, there is a need to privilege ethical leadership as an urgent theoretical and practical tool – a kind of ethical leadership philosophy that promotes integrity, credibility and ascendancy, and that which provides a meaningful normative function for effective managerial and leadership skills. In resonance, Bolman and Deal fittingly espoused in *Reframing Organizations*:

If we choose to banish moral discourse and leave managers to face ethical issues alone, we invite dreary and brutish political dynamics. An organization can and should take a moral stance. It can make its values clear, hold employees accountable, and validate the need for dialogue about ethical choices. Positive politics without an ethical framework and moral dialogue is as unlikely as bountiful harvests without sunlight or water.<sup>2</sup>

I strongly adhere to the belief that intelligence without integrity will result in impunity. Without integrity, intelligence and competence will just become effective instruments for undesirable conduct of managers and leaders. On the other hand, integrity without intelligence will simply yield to mediocrity. Mediocre people cannot serve as good and inspiring leaders. Integrity flourishes best when it works with the other ingredients for effective managerial functions and leadership skills. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) in *The Prince of Abyssinia* declared: "Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful!"

John Kopchinski – the complainant against the world's biggest drug company, Pfizer – commented in his whistleblowing lawsuit: "In the Army I was expected to protect people at all costs... At Pfizer I was expected to increase profits at all costs, even when sales meant endangering lives." Patrick Burns of the Washington-based Taxpayers Against Fraud wailed of the Pfizer case: "What you see here is a company which essentially had a culture of corruption!" This is a modern case study of leaders of the highest acuity and dexterity bereft of ethics and integrity. The US government found and charged Pfizer for false marketing practices, unethical drug

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<sup>2</sup> Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2008, 228.

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promotion and large kickbacks. As part of systematic corporate fraud, Pfizer invited doctors to big-time conferences, brought them to lavish resorts, bankrolled their expenses and provided perks, and even fabricated doctor requests for medical information in order to send unsolicited information about unapproved drug uses and dosages. The company was fined a record figure of \$2.3B. Meanwhile, the Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) exhorted its member-drug companies from sponsoring domestic and foreign travel perks and golf games in posh resorts for medical doctors to help curb unethical promotional activities in the industry.

Kenneth A. Shaw underscored the imperative in his book, *The Intentional Leader*:

Make no mistake about it – ethical leaders are good leaders... most sought after and admired leaders around the world were honest, forward-looking, confident, and inspiring. In most international surveys conducted over the past thirty years, honesty is valued first... because we don't want to be lied to; we want to be told the truth. We want a leader who knows right from wrong...when we follow someone we believe to be dishonest, we come to realize that we've compromised our own integrity. In time, we not only lose respect for the leader, we lose respect for ourselves.<sup>3</sup>

Leadership without intelligence or integrity gives rise to kakistocracy – a government or organization that is ruled by the most unprincipled, unethical and unqualified managers and leaders. It comes from the Greek *kakistos* (worst) or *kakos* (bad) + *kracia* (rule, power or government). If unchecked, kakistocracy results in kleptocracy, from the Greek *kleptos* (theft) + *kratos* (rule). Kakistocratic and kleptocratic leadership behaviour explains the world's woes in government corruption, citizens' misconduct, corporate scandals, misdemeanour in the Church, anomalies in civil society, spousal indiscretion and infidelity, the desecration of rule of law, and even the persistence of illegitimate authoritarian states and despotic rulers.

This [article](#) is all about kakistocratic behaviour of leaders and managers in positions of trust, both in the public and private sector. If corruption is betrayal of public trust, it is kakistocracy that breeds acts of betrayal. Kakistocracy is thus the cultivation of corruption in society.

## Methodology

*Why dig deeper?*

The intellectual history of anticorruption movement in the Philippines needs to be written. While the country is replete with

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<sup>3</sup> Kenneth A. Shaw, *The Intentional Leader*, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005, 157.

innovations and experiences to curb corruption, it has shown a serious lacuna of scholarly discourse and theoretical analysis that will greatly help in elevating the rudimentary into higher discussions. While the anticorruption movement is still making history, it will be greatly influenced by several factors: (1) media reports of public scandals and misconduct; (2) investigative reports published by the Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ); (3) various perception surveys and approval ratings by the Social Weather Stations (SWS), Pulse Asia and Transparency International (TI); and (4) a few academic manuscripts and commissioned publications with grants from donor agencies. Volumes of chronicles and documentaries on the abuses and excesses of the Marcos and Estrada administrations also circulated in the publication industry. But despite these, there is not much model-building efforts, designing of conceptual and theoretical frameworks, and writing of journals, annotated bibliographies and analytical case studies.

This paper desires to help pave the way for a scholarly contribution to the making of the intellectual history of the anticorruption movement in the Philippines.

In my first book – *Fixing Society*<sup>4</sup> – I made use of the dark side of social capital as a framework to explain the phenomenon of fixing in the Philippines, as well as explain the collusive networks of fixers inside and outside the Philippine government bureaucracy. The framework was developed based on the experiences of fixers in various government agencies, using various illustrative case studies built and analyzed through years of undercover ethnography. Bureaucratic reforms have been proffered which led to the adoption of anti-red tape and anti-fixing programs in selected government offices.

This research is a sequel to the *Fixing Society*. And this time, I am analyzing corruption and the betrayal of public trust using a lens of a betrayal theory built and developed through illustrative case studies of people in middle- and high-level positions of trust in government and the private sector. These new case studies are especially selected and culled from various anticorruption workshops that I have been involved with for the past 10 years in the Philippines.

It is imperative to sustain and scale up the efforts in understanding the intractability of corruption in the country. While much is exposed, much needs to be known. The Philippines has been perceived as one of the most corrupt countries in the world, but it is not wanting of

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<sup>4</sup> Ronnie V. Amorado, *Fixing Society: The Insider World of Fixers in the Philippines*, Davao City: Ateneo de Davao University-Research and Publication Office, 2007.

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anticorruption reform initiatives. In fact, the country has been recognized by its world-class anticorruption programs. The problem lies in the fact that crooks and kakistocratic networks are also growing and expanding their insidiousness in form and substance. As anticorruption innovations are designed, new corrupt behaviours and crooked modus operandi are likewise bared. Corruption indeed grows faster than population. Thus, those in the anticorruption movement cannot afford to slacken and extinguish the torch that carries the flame of reform and vigilance. Complacency certainly breeds corruption. In *Investigating Corruption*, Coronel and Kalaw-Tirol warned that “while much more is known about corruption now than in the past, a lot more needs to be found out; unearthing information about corruption is the first step toward preventing it.”<sup>5</sup> Relentless efforts with candour, intelligence and integrity are imperatives *sine qua non* – necessary conditions for a country that is struggling in times of deceit and treachery.

#### *Contention to conviction*

This research regards corruption and the betrayal of public trust in serious contention. And as a matter of conviction, it generally aims to dig deeper and understand the intractability of corruption from the lens of a betrayal theory. It sets at documenting and theorizing betrayal experiences to articulate a discernible framework of notions and conceptions of betrayal of public trust, including elements, techniques, and modus operandi drawn from the pains and struggles from the point of view of the betrayed. Reina and Reina affirm that betrayal is an experience determined by the betrayed, and the betrayer may not even know about it.<sup>6</sup>

The second aim is to design a long-term citizenship-based country strategy for the various Philippine stakeholders which espouse to curb corruption in the Philippines. And as a matter of an emancipatory objective, this **article** seeks justice by immortalizing – by writing and analyzing – the betrayal experiences of the betrayed for others to learn.<sup>7</sup>

Three general questions served as the thematic guide in conducting this research:

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<sup>5</sup> Sheila S. Coronel and Lorna Kalaw-Tirol, ed., *Investigating Corruption: A Do-It-Yourself Guide*, Quezon City: Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Dennis Reina and Michelle Reina, *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*, San Francisco: Berret-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 1999.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas H. Schram, *Conceptualizing Qualitative Inquiry: Mindwork for Fieldwork in Education and the Social Sciences*, University of New Hampshire, USA: Pearson Education, Inc and Merrill Prentice Hall, 2003.

1. What is betrayal in the context of corruption in the Philippines? What are the various experiential notions and conceptions of betraying public trust?
2. Are there elements and techniques of betrayal? Are there discernible patterns of acts of betrayal?
3. What is citizenship and how is it able to challenge corruption and betrayal? How can citizens take stock of betrayal experiences and adopt citizenship as a countervailing power against corruption?

By answering these questions, this article hopes to (a) generate theoretical frameworks on corruption and betrayal that add value to various literature on corruption studies and anticorruption initiatives in the Philippines; (b) develop integrity programs to enhance the initiatives created by the *Fixing Society*<sup>8</sup> as part of the Ehem anticorruption movement in the country; and (c) help in expanding the space for anticorruption discourse in the Philippines to bolster the emerging critical mass against widespread corruption in the country.

This initiative is a result of my year-long research in the US as part of my fellowship program as a Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow from 2009-2010. The research is primarily a mini-tracer study and investigative case analysis using a combination of key informants' interviews, participant observation and non-participant observation techniques, and archival research. The respondents are all Filipinos based in the Philippines and the United States and who have been victims of betrayal and corruption in various degrees. Most of the illustrative case studies are also selected and culled from the various anticorruption workshop results for the past 10 years of my involvement in anticorruption movement in the Philippines. The research likewise employs investigative case study approach for analytical application by researchers and students of anticorruption and kakistocratic leadership behavior.<sup>9</sup> The use of case studies in anticorruption research effectively establishes how corruption stories evolved and developed.<sup>10</sup> Analytical case studies also allow to giving "special attention to totalizing in the observation, reconstruction and analysis of the cases under study."<sup>11</sup> The advantage of case studies is

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<sup>8</sup> Ronnie V. Amorado, *Fixing Society*.

<sup>9</sup> Jacques Hamel, Stephane Dufour and Dominic Fortin, *Case Study Methods, Qualitative Research Methods Series 32*, USA: Sage Publications, 1993; Marsha Bertrand, *Fraud! How to Protect Yourself from Schemes, Scams and Swindles*, USA: American Management Association, 2000; Ronnie V. Amorado, *Fixing Society*.

<sup>10</sup> Sheila S. Coronel, ed., *Betrayal of Public Trust: Investigative Reports on Corruption*, Quezon City: Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism, 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Jacques Hamel, Stephane Dufour and Dominic Fortin, *Case Study Methods*, 1.

that they are dramatic and illustrative in vividly presenting events and analyses.<sup>12</sup>

## Results and Discussion

In *Betrayal and Betrayers: The Sociology of Treachery*,<sup>13</sup> Malin Akerström made the profound location of betrayal in the private and public spheres and articulated the intimate connection between the betrayal of relationships on one hand and the betrayal of the country on the other. The latter often manifests in issues of corruption and betrayal of public trust. These spheres are the boundaries that shape the bond between and among actors and stakeholders entering into a relationship or social contract. For betrayal to occur, one first has to belong to a boundary. Boundaries are norms which can be anything explicitly and implicitly conceived such as shared values, experiences, information, beliefs, principles, territory, family, organization and in the broader sense, the society and the country as a whole. Thus for Akerström, betrayal is defined as the crossing of boundaries. Breach of trust also means the violation or breach of entrusted boundaries, which make up the so-called fiduciary (entrusted) trust. So for Friedrich,<sup>14</sup> betrayal is indeed a violation of trust.

Akerström showed the profound link upon asserting that betrayal not only consists of treachery toward the country but experiences of betrayal are often entangled in relationships with family and friends. She identified four important features of the concept of boundary: boundedness (setting and milieu), belongingness, sharedness and sacredness (a norm to be honoured and respected). Betrayal of trust implies breach of any of the four features.

## Anatomy of Betrayal

Betrayal is an adversarial contention and a creeping conflict situation between and among the betrayed and the betrayers. Indirectly involved are the spectators – colleagues, co-employees, friends and other stakeholders – who are constrained by neutrality, acquiescence, self-preservation or simply by their position as disinterested party (no direct stakes or involvement in the betrayal situation). Akerström described these constraints as the predicament of middle positions. This is how the players and stakeholders are located and related in the various case studies. Their behaviour is greatly influenced by

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<sup>12</sup> Malin Akerström, *Betrayal and Betrayers: The Sociology of Treachery*, USA: Transaction Publishers, 1991.

<sup>13</sup> Malin Akerström, *Betrayal and Betrayers*.

<sup>14</sup> Carl J. Friedrich, *The Pathology of Politics*, USA: Harper and Row Publishers Inc., 1972.

their location and intensity as the betrayal situation unfolds. Wittingly or unwittingly – deliberately or not – spectators' behaviour has a way of reinforcing the betrayal perpetuated by the betrayer upon the betrayed. The case studies have proven that inaction and neutrality of middle positions unfortunately encourage the unfolding betrayal. Middle-positions are also a form of betrayal when specially exercised with self-preservation motives.<sup>15</sup>

There are several acts – or forms – of betrayal that transpired and explicated by various sources in the case studies of this paper: buck-passing; doublespeak; extortion; relocation; reprisal; workplace mobbing; negligence; fall guy; scapegoating; leakage; battering; infidelity and philandering; and abandonment.

Buck-passing aims to evade responsibility and parry the blame for self-preservation, even at the expense of other people. Doublespeak or doubletalk is a deliberate, calculated misuse and distortion of language with the intention to mislead, pretend, avoid responsibility and accountability, conceal one's intentions or agenda, give false hopes, and even commit fraudulence and corruption. Relocation is a euphemism for removal or elimination of someone who gets in the way. It comes in different derivatives – reassignment, floatation, rotation, exile posting, constructive termination or preemptive promotion. Reprisal is for retaliation against legitimate whistleblowers. Workplace mobbing is the systematic and malicious attempt by superiors, co-workers or subordinates to force a person out of the workplace through unjustified accusations, humiliation, general harassment, emotional abuse and terror. It also comes in various derivatives such as bullying, mistreatment, pressure, emotional abuse and incivility. Negligence suggests carelessness and disregard. A scapegoat and fall guy refer to a person who is easily or conveniently blamed or accused to divert attention away from the real culprits or problems. Leakage is the process of diversion that causes deprivation. Battering is beating (often wife beating) while infidelity and philandering all connote spousal unfaithfulness (often committed by men). Abandonment occurs as a result of deserting or leaving behind one's duty to family and children, support to friends and even professional obligation.

All of these forms and acts are effectively used to breach the boundary by which trust is suitably located and cultivated.

In the backdrop of these forms or acts of betrayal are reinforcing dimensions that likewise emerged in the case studies: familial

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<sup>15</sup> Malin Akerström, *Betrayal and Betrayers*.

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betrayal (betrayal in the family), political betrayal (betrayal in political arena), pastoral betrayal (betrayal in the Church) and bureaupathy that provides the bureaucratic environment conducive for betrayal to transpire.

Bureaupathy is corruption and betrayal reinforced by organizational systems and culture.<sup>16</sup> Bureaupathic organizations exhibit excessive and perfunctory emphasis on hierarchy, policies, procedures, routines, ranks and positions, authorization, signatories, protocols and a multitude of complex bureaucratic arrangements that impede people's initiative, creativity and exercise of professional judgment.

### **Bearing with Betrayal**

How do the players conduct themselves in a betrayal situation? The betrayers behave with impunity as they make use of the power inherent in their position (formal) or temerity (informal) to betray. It is my belief that deliberate betrayal – or intentional betrayal in Reina and Reina – committed by betrayers is an abuse of power.<sup>17</sup> The abuse becomes more repulsive when done on somebody who is in a weaker position to defend. This is the reason why betrayal is almost often committed by those who are positionally, physically or emotionally advantaged.

Logically, the betrayed always feel intensely hurt<sup>18</sup> and demonstrate deep emotions such as indignation, contempt and revenge.<sup>19</sup> As shown by the various experiences of the betrayed in the case studies, this is part of a whole package of behavioural coping mechanism known as bureausis in response to a bureaupathic environment that encourages and sustains betrayal in organizational context.<sup>20</sup>

Bureaupathy results in aloofness of people, mechanical relationships brought about by the strict norms of formality and impersonality, repression of personal interest and informal associations, bureaucratic layers (often overlapping or disintegrated), difficulty to move around, displacement of goals, delays in transactions (red

<sup>16</sup> Martha J. Hanson, "Rape of the Mind: The Corrupting Force of Workplace Mobbing on Public Sector Capacity," Unpublished Graduate Paper in Public Administration. Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, New York, March 22, 2004.

<sup>17</sup> Dennis Reina and Michelle Reina, *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*.

<sup>18</sup> Malin Akerström, *Betrayal and Betrayers*.

<sup>19</sup> G. Bateson, *Stress to An Ecology of Mind*, New York: Ballantine, 1977, as cited in Malin Akerström, *Betrayal and Betrayers*.

<sup>20</sup> Victor A. Thompson, "Bureaucracy and Bureaupathology," in Hampton et al, *Organizational Behavior and The Practice of Management*, USA: Scott Foresman, 1968, as cited in Martha J. Hanson, "Rape of the Mind."

tape), and oftentimes resistance to change by those who are in authority positions.

The other manifestations of bureausis especially among the betrayed include withdrawal (apathy and resignation), silence and acquiescence. Thompson suggested that the betrayed seriously suffer from bureausis when they fail to adjust to the organizational systems, procedures and culture, and such that the inability to adjust is not so much a factor of human qualities and competencies, but more so of the rigidity of the bureaucratic organization.

Maybe because of bureausis as well, the spectators often find themselves - with or without choice - in middle positions like neutrality because of the risk of being disadvantageously identified with the betrayed. The spectators have to endure a deep predicament in being caught in middle positions. Akerström presented several dangers of middle positions: (a) wittingly or unwittingly, they reinforce bureaupathy as well as the betrayal of the betrayed; (b) they become a form of betrayal when exercised in self-preservation motives; and (c) they result in apathy, indifference and total inaction. The sum total of these dangers only encourages the betrayer without mercy and restraint.

Solomon and Flores also elucidated on the widespread problem of cordial hypocrisy or pretended trust which is a consequence of cynicism, resignation, distrust or loss of trust.<sup>21</sup>

Bureaupathy and bureausis are effective breeding grounds of cordial hypocrisy because of the behavioural manifestations of withdrawal (apathy and resignation), silence and acquiescence of people. Neutrality and middle positions - when they reinforce betrayal - also become a cause of cordial hypocrisy.

Cordial hypocrisy is a "strong tendency of people in organizations - because of loyalty or fear - to pretend that there is trust when there is none, being polite in the name of harmony when cynicism and distrust are active poisons, eating away at the very existence of the organization."<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, cordial hypocrisy comes as a "kind of poison that corrodes relationships even as it seems to hold them together; [and] much the same can be said about cordial hypocrisy in

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<sup>21</sup> Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores, *Building Trust in Business, Politics, Relationships and Life*, USA: Oxford University Press, 2001.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores, *Building Trust in Business*, 4.

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an organization, where feigned politeness and team spirit may mask resentments and inefficiencies that are destroying the organization.”<sup>23</sup>

Trust in a cordial hypocritical pretension is a consequence of lack or loss of trust. This is the predicament of middle positions, when cordial hypocrisy becomes the pervading conduct among individuals relating in a distrustful environment. As a matter of perfunctory function, people will do their jobs, but they will not offer their ideas, or their enthusiasm, or their souls; without trust, corporations or organizations become not a community but a brutish state of nature.”<sup>24</sup>

### Inciting Insights

Without being absolute and comprehensive, the case studies of this research reveal some provocative insights and discernible patterns on betrayal of trust:

1. Those who are in positions of trust have increased their capacity to betray. People in authority are effective betrayers. They are also in the position to defend themselves better if they are to be the betrayed.
2. In a kakistocracy, betrayal by those who are in power is thus a form of subjection and subjugation. At the individual and organizational levels, the betrayed are subjected to various breaches, harassments and violations. At the higher level – i.e. organizational to societal – the betrayed are forced to submit and subjugated – or dominated – by the rule of the betrayer.
3. Corruption and fraudulent acts are best executed by betrayers in positions of trust because of the influence inherent in their positions. It is a perfect formula for disaster when people of dubious characters are placed in positions of trust. They are effective betrayers of public trust.
4. Betrayers in private spheres (betrayal of friends or family) illustrate the same behaviour in public sphere (committing corruption in organizations or offices). There is no logical or moral deterrence to make a difference. Thus, a philanderer who betrays his wife and children will most probably resort to rent-seeking commissions and kickbacks to support his philandering trysts. It is also difficult to entrust a person who reputedly cheats.
5. There is asymmetrical power in number. Betrayers in group are most effective when they collude. But this is not true in reverse on the

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<sup>23</sup> Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores, *Building Trust in Business*, 19.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores, *Building Trust in Business*, 5.

part of the betrayed. Numbers immediately work in favour of the betrayers, but not among the betrayed.

6. Self-preservation is a very strong motivating force among the betrayer, even at the expense of other people (betrayed).

7. The abuse and misuse of words and rhetorics, especially in doublespeak and buck-passing, are effective communication tools in betrayal. This is the evil of double meanings found in what Key described as “double entendre.” Deception is married to betrayal.<sup>25</sup>

8. Betrayal is more intense when the betrayer and the betrayed share intimate boundedness. Betrayal among people in personal relationships is most hurtful. Thus, emotional betrayal is worse than physical betrayal.

9. The use of physical force, especially in battering and beating of the defenceless (women and children), makes betrayal more evil. A combination of emotional betrayal and physical betrayal leaves a harrowing mark on the betrayed.

10. The betrayed are losing faith in the system but in God. Interestingly, those who are betrayed and hurt show signs of losing faith in organizational or societal facilities (offices, government, courts, law enforcement agencies), but they have demonstrated an increasing sense of spirituality for a coping mechanism. It is worth mentioning that almost all of the betrayed have seriously turned to prayers – even the not so prayerful – as their last resort of defence or survival.

11. Complementing this spirituality is the philosophy that betrayal is having a redemptive value for the victims of betrayal through the so-called *karma* (providence) or a poetic justice where resilience and patience are virtues to be rewarded and betrayal to be punished sooner or later. This kind of philosophy helps explain why and how the betrayed as victims sustain their strength in the case studies.

Apart from the concept of a fiduciary trust, a theory of personal attachment can be developed from the case studies. Betrayal is most felt and painful when there is attachment. Betrayal becomes more intense when there is more personal attachment, and becomes less tumultuous when there is less personal attachment. This explains why betrayal among friends, in the family or intimate relationships, or even in one's profession is very passionate because they are characterized by personal attachments.

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<sup>25</sup> Wilson Bryan Key, *The Age of Manipulation: The Con in Confidence and the Sin in Sincere*, USA: Madisson Books, 1989.

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Reina and Reina also advanced the concept of intentional and unintentional betrayal as a breach of trust or the perception of a breach of trust.<sup>26</sup> “Intentional betrayal is a self-serving action done with the purpose of hurting, damaging or harming another person, [while] an unintentional betrayal is the by-product of another person’s self-serving action that results in people being hurt, damaged or harmed.”<sup>27</sup> When juxtaposed with fiduciary trust and personal attachment, deliberate intent makes betrayal very intense and possibly intractable. Intentional betrayal fatally combines with breaches of fiduciary trust and personal attachment.

The case studies also resonate with my observations as well as the various anticorruption workshops I have conducted for the past 10 years. They have become dangerous patterns of organizational and societal betrayal and corruption:

1. Appointments in government positions are made to repay political favours or give political accommodation; they also undermine meritocracy and further sacrifice public service when the appointed is not qualified.
2. Government agencies are held hostage in their annual budget hearings (General Appropriations Act) if they do not accommodate political agenda and caprices of many – if not all – legislators.
3. Career officials are undermined, bypassed, sacrificed, floated or re-assigned to far-flung areas if they do not “toe the line” of politicians.
4. Just to be secure in their position, some government officials – under duress – have to “donate” portions of their RATA (monthly operational allowance) to politicians; this is a new form of political extortion.
5. Public funds intended for development projects are used to gain political mileage; projects are given to supporters only, or used as concessions in exchange for political support; this is a new form of political parochialism.
6. Development projects are over-priced or implemented in sub-standard quality due to systematic kickbacks, commissions and cuts.

In all of the above, political corruption and betrayal are very widespread and pervasive. They all contribute to the increasing and intensifying public cynicism and distrust towards the government.

In kakistocratic behaviour, the betrayal comes as an abuse of power – the abuse in the use of position for profit, preferment or prestige. This is the private gain at public expense.

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<sup>26</sup> Dennis Reina and Michelle Reina, *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*.

<sup>27</sup> Dennis Reina and Michelle Reina, *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*, 10.

With an acquiescent populace reinforcing corruption and betrayal of public trust, the general public is also largely part of the problem. Apathy among the citizens is likewise a betrayal of public trust. This is especially true when people sell their votes during elections, or when they do nothing when they witness anomalies in public transactions, or simply by committing misconduct.

### Thrusting Trust

The locus of betrayal of public trust is not about betrayal itself. It is all about trust. Citing a basic dictionary definition of trust, Bracy used trust as a firm reliance in the virtues of honesty, dependability, and strength of character of someone.<sup>28</sup> Invoking the standard Aristotelian formula of virtue as a trait rather than a passion or faculty, Solomon and Flores looked at “trustworthiness as a trait of character and therefore a plausible candidate for virtue.”<sup>29</sup> For Reina and Reina, “trust is the tendency to view others as dependable and reliable in fulfilling expectations.”<sup>30</sup>

Thus trust is almost always equated with virtue, and the lack of trust (or betrayal of trust) actually means lack of virtue (or betrayal of virtue). Friedrich again argued for this and cited Machiavelli’s notion of a *virtu’* or the virtue of the good citizen. For Machiavelli, corruption is the process by which *virtu’* is undermined and eventually destroyed, since most men have become weak and lacking in the *virtu’*.<sup>31</sup>

But in *Building Trust*, Bracy likewise cautioned against the reductionist use of trust as mere virtue.<sup>32</sup> For him, trust is not just virtue, it is also competence. Virtue alone does not earn trust. A good and trustworthy person does not automatically qualify him to be an effective governor. One needs skill and capability. On the other hand, skill and capability without virtue does not also make one trustworthy. Covey supported this view when he advanced the concept of balancing character and competence:

Once you become aware that both character and competence are vital to trust, you can see how the combination of these two dimensions is reflected in the approach of effective leaders and observers everywhere. People might use different words to express the idea, but if you reduce the words to their essence, what emerges is a balancing of character and competence.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Hyler Bracy, *Building Trust*, USA: Heppner & Bourque, Inc., 2002.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores, *Building Trust in Business*, 79.

<sup>30</sup> Dennis Reina and Michelle Reina, *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*, 16.

<sup>31</sup> Carl J. Friedrich, *The Pathology of Politics*.

<sup>32</sup> Hyler Bracy, *Building Trust*.

<sup>33</sup> Stephen M.R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust*, USA: The Free Press, 2006, 31.

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Covey was thus more upfront in his integrated definition. "Simply put, trust means confidence. The opposite of trust - distrust - is suspicion. When you trust people, you have confidence in them - in their integrity and in their abilities. When you distrust people, you are suspicious of them - of their integrity, their agenda, their capabilities, or their track record."<sup>34</sup>

Bracy's and Covey's views support my introductory claim about integrity (character) and intelligence (competence). Without integrity, intelligence is impunity. Without intelligence, integrity is mediocrity. Thus to be trusted - one must gain intelligence and integrity; one must cultivate character and competence.

While virtue and character form the normative aspects of trust, competence is located in its context or specificity. Bracy advanced the idea of the use of trust in specific area, where trust is the faith placed upon a person's ability or word in some specific context. We may trust an honest medical doctor to cure our illness, but we doubt if he can be helpful in solving engineering problems. The contextuality or specificity of trust emerges when we decide when to give trust to the medical doctor. And if the doctor is dishonest - applying the universal normative character trait (virtue) - we can never trust the medical doctor even if he is good in medicine, even if he is also good in engineering. Bracy's formula helps explain why it is difficult to trust clergymen - who are assumed to have virtue and live in virtue - to run for elective positions without the proper training in public governance. This is also very true in other professions which have very specific context forming their competence.

Trust is also dynamic, not static. Its dynamism is characterized by another principle - that it thrives in relationships. Using four components of trust (capacity trust or readiness to give trust, contractual trust, communication trust and competence trust), Reina and Reina espoused healthy relationships based on integrity and character, as well as on openness (capacity trust) which is a reciprocal process. As trust begets trust, mutually trusting relationships grow with more sharing of information (communication trust), keeping agreements (contractual trust), and respect for people's abilities (competence trust). For them, "trust is a relationship of mutual confidence in contractual performance, honest communication, expected competence, and a capacity for unguarded interaction."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Stephen M.R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust*, 5.

<sup>35</sup> Dennis Reina and Michelle Reina, *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*, 10.

For Csorba, trust is a constant work in progress.<sup>36</sup> Like Solomon and Flores, to understand trust is to build trust into everyday practices and relationships and to develop institutions in which such practices and relationships are not only possible but necessary. Trust is not just a means or medium or social glue for cohesion, it is something that we do and something that we make, build and maintain, we sustain with our promises, our commitments, our emotions, and our sense of our own integrity.<sup>37</sup>

### Trust in Types

Reina and Reina earlier advanced four types: capacity trust, contractual trust, communication trust and competence trust. Capacity trust is the readiness and willingness to trust others.<sup>38</sup> Contractual trust is trust for character in interaction with others. Communication trust is trust in conversations and rhetorics, the use and disclosure of information, and respect for words. Competence trust is trust of ability, capability or competence of people. When all of these types are present, they form what Reina and Reina called transactional trust. It is incremental and mutual; one has to trust in order to be trusted, and one has to earn trust in order to gain trust.

Reina and Reina also distinguished transactional trust from transformational trust. The former serves as the necessary minimum condition to establish trust. But transformational trust occurs "when the amount of trust within a team or organization reaches a critical point and increases exponentially, becoming self-generating and synergistic."<sup>39</sup> This kind of transformational trust is characterized by conviction, courage, compassion and community (cooperation). Reina and Reina's notion of transactionalism departs from the classical debate on transactional and transformative trust in leadership theories, where the former is seen as more used for self-serving accommodation and encouraging dependence while the latter for empowerment and emancipation.

Several other authors also make use of low-trust and high-trust relationships, and betrayal of trust easily occurs in the former.<sup>40</sup> High-

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<sup>36</sup> Les T. Csorba, *Trust: The One Thing that Makes or Breaks a Leader*, USA: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2004.

<sup>37</sup> Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores, *Building Trust in Business*.

<sup>38</sup> Dennis Reina and Michelle Reina, *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*.

<sup>39</sup> Dennis Reina and Michelle Reina, *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*, 155.

<sup>40</sup> Bernard M Bass, "The Future of Leadership in Learning Organizations," *The Journal of Leadership Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, (2000); Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores, *Building Trust in Business*; Hyler Bracy, *Building Trust*; Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership Theory and Practice*. London: Sage Publications, 2004; Danine Manette, *The*

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trust relationships or high-trust societies exude great amounts of virtue and competence among the populace.

Solomon and Flores characterized low-trust societies as trust generally limited within the boundaries of family (or clan and tribe) only and others beyond the family are suspicious. High-trust society occurs when people's trust goes beyond and outside just the family members and extends towards institutions and organizations, which in turn cumulates as trust bestowed upon society as a whole. Low-trust is dangerous to society in general because it will result in people losing a sense of community and care for other people. "A distrustful family tends to raise distrustful children,"<sup>41</sup> and one can imagine the kind of society inhabited by distrustful people. Sociologists are completely correct to say that the family is the basic institution of society. Theodore Roosevelt once quipped on the importance of trust and integrity in the family: "It is the tasks connected with the home that are the fundamental tasks of humanity. If the mother and father do not do their duty, there will be no next generation, or a generation that is worse than none at all."

Furthermore when there is betrayal of trust even in and within families – through battering, infidelity, philandering and abandonment – resulting in not a few broken families, low-trust societies are further imperilled. At the very least, low-trust societies still assume and hold on to some amount of trust of family institutions. But with family break-ups, spousal betrayal and all the forms of familial betrayal earlier explained, what will happen to the smallest remaining amount of trust and integrity in low-trust societies? As Theodore Roosevelt invoked, it will indeed be worse than none at all.

Solomon and Flores pursued further in their conception of basic trust, authentic trust and blind trust. Basic trust is the simplest kind of trust; it is a perfunctory and assumed trust based on thinking habits. Basic trust is based on and formed via reasonable assumptions. People just trust the pilots – simply and perfunctorily –when they take on their flights. There is an assumed trust of character (that pilots are not drinking while flying) or competence (that pilots are

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*Ultimate Betrayal: Recognizing, Uncovering and Dealing with Infidelity*, USA: Square One Publishers, 2005; Kenneth A. Shaw, *The Intentional Leader*; Stephen M.R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust*; Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*; Warren Bennis, Daniel Goleman and James O'Toole, *Transparency: How Leaders Create a Culture of Candor*, USA: Jossey-Bass, 2008.

<sup>41</sup> Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores, *Building Trust in Business*, 39.

well trained in flying). Rarely do people check and ascertain about their pilots before taking on their flights.

On the other hand, authentic trust is more than perfunctory trust. People behave and judge in evidence, discernment, evaluation and conscientiousness. People in the grocery stores normally check on their merchandise before actually doing the purchase. Corporations also require applicants to submit their credentials for screening and validation before hiring.

Simple trust is reflexive and unreflective, while authentic trust is reflective and builds on and goes beyond simple trust. But a blind trust is irrational (no reasonable assumption) and at times deceptive and neither acts in the interest of simple trust and authentic trust. Cults often conduct themselves in blind trust.

In the case studies, there are several types of trust according to layers (thus several layers of betrayal): personal, relationships, familial and friendship networks, organizational and societal. These types or layers nearly correspond with Covey's five waves of trust acting like ripples in the ocean: self trust (at the core), relationship trust, organizational trust, market trust, and societal trust. Each type is characterized by key operative principles.

As described by Covey in his bestselling book, *The Speed of Trust*, self trust deals with confidence we have in ourselves – in the ability to achieve goals, to keep commitments, to walk the talk, and to inspire trust in others. The key principle is credibility (from the Latin *credere* to mean to believe). Relationship trust is to establish and increase trust with others; it is “learning how to interact with others that increase trust and avoid interacting in ways that destroy it.”<sup>42</sup> The key principle is consistency in behaviour. Organizational trust is the ability of leaders to generate trust in all kinds of organizations (including families as institutions), and all the so called micro-units of organizations (organizations within organizations). The key principle is alignment. Market trust is also trust dealing with various publics (customers, clients, partners, investors, etc); and the key principle is reputation. Societal trust is the over-all trust value for the society at large, as the sum effect of all the other waves of trust. The key principle is contribution, meaning the ability to “give back” for societal development and nation-building.

In sum, Covey's typology of trust brings out the importance of the five principles: credibility, consistency, alignment, reputation and

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<sup>42</sup> Stephen M.R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust*, 125.

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contribution. These are the same operative principles necessary to reducing betrayal and restoring trust. In Machiavelli's *virtu'*, these principles can serve as the virtues of good citizenship at various levels: individual, relationships among individuals, organizational, markets and societal.

Self trust appears as the most important foundation in all types of trust. Without self trust, it will be difficult for the other types or waves to flourish. Self trust is the first wave of ripples necessary to create more ripples in relationships, organizations and the society as a whole.

At the core of self trust is another very important concept of credibility, or believability. Covey identified four components in building one's credibility: integrity, intent, capabilities and results.

Covey's concepts of integrity and capability similarly subscribed to the notions of other authors as earlier explained. Integrity is more than honesty. It means integratedness or wholeness (French *intégrité* and Latin *integritas*; also coming from the root word integer to mean as whole). For Covey, the integratedness and wholeness are demonstrated in the congruence inside and outside (attitude and behaviour) as well as in words/rhetorics and actions. This is in accord with Aristotle's peripatetic philosophy - to walk the talk (to act in accord with words, rhetorics or promises), and not just to talk the talk (words without actions). Capabilities - as means to produce results (behaviour) - include talents, attitudes, skill, knowledge and styles. Without capability, integrity and intent are difficult to develop (capabilities are actualization of potentials). Aristotle also referred to *ethos* or ethical appeal for credibility.

But he added two more that shape a deeper kind of credibility: intent and results. Intent deals with motives, agendas and the resulting behaviour. Motives are very important in establishing trust, as Mahatma Gandhi exhorted: "The moment there is suspicion about a person's motives, everything he does becomes tainted." Results include track record, actual performance or getting the right things done. Good results come from the congruence of integrity, intent and capabilities. Results serve as the evidence, the demonstrated behaviour of credibility.

Both integrity and intent are matters of character. Integrity without good intent is useless; good intent without integrity (of people) is difficult. For their part, both capabilities and results are matters of competence.

It is the assertion of Covey that the four principles should be present and acting in accord with one another. The lack of one principle

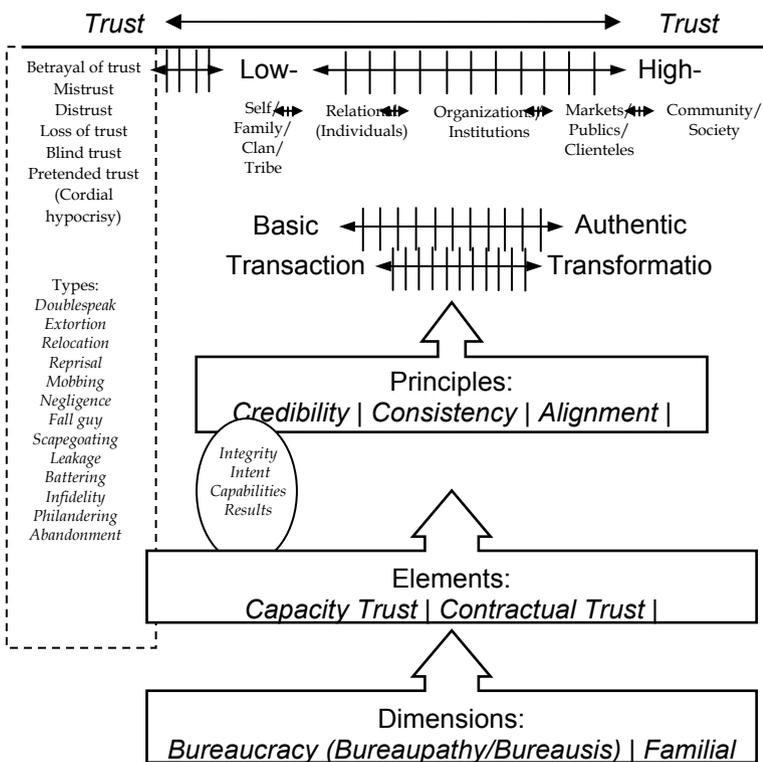
erodes credibility. Using these four principles as benchmark, Covey correctly observed:

The problem in organizations, however, is that many ‘ethics’ solutions focus on compliance. The compliance definition of ‘ethics’ is not one of integrity or integratedness; it is a watered-down, devalued definition that essentially means ‘follow the rules.’ Congruence is when integrity means there is no gap between intent and behaviour; seamless, generally the same inside and out. It is congruence, not compliance, which will ultimately create credibility and trust.<sup>43</sup>

But Covey also cautioned against these principles arrogating upon others. “Integrity also includes humility as a virtue.”<sup>44</sup>

Figure 1 shows the schematic amalgamation of the relationships of various types of trust discussed thus far in the first part of the paper.

Figure 1: Schematic amalgamation of trust typologies



<sup>43</sup> Stephen M.R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust*, 61-62.

<sup>44</sup> Stephen M.R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust*, 63.