Building from Below
Local Initiatives for Decentralized Development in Asia and Pacific

Volume 3

Editors

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DECENTRALIZATION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN PAKISTAN: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Abstract

A comprehensive overview of Pakistan's experience with decentralized rural development is presented in the context of the four different political regimes in the country during (a) 1947-59, (b) 1959-71, (c) 1972-77, (d) 1977-85. The overview is based on the proposition that "rural development occurs more rapidly within a decentralized framework ' it is further argued that "authentic decentralization" would provide the necessary framework for self-sustaining, self-reliant and participatory development which is initiated from below while non-au then tic decentralization, based on centralized authority, inegalitarian social structures and dependent development, is unable to tap the reservoir of creative energies of the people. In the case of Pakistan, there is some historical evidence to confirm the hypothesis that the centralized framework of different regimes, which introduced manipulative and "non-authentic" decentralization, has produced "non-authentic" rural development. Participatory and more equitable development of the rural areas has lagged behind despite impressive development of agriculture and industry as well as rapid economic growth The proliferation of bureaucracy in rural areas and predominance of feudal elements led to resources being pre-empted and diverted from the reach of an unorganized and powerless peasantry. However, substantial development of physical infrastructure in the countryside took place through formal decentralization and devolution, which emphasized local government institutions and the implementation of integrated rural development as well as works programmes.

DECENTRALIZATION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN PACISTAN: A CEITICAL REVIEW

Inayatullah

Introduction

The basic proposition to be investigated in this study is whether rural development occurs more rapidly within a centralized or decentralized framework. The proposition will be tested against evidence from six historical *phases* of Pakistan's development, starting from pre-colonial society up to the Martial Law period beginning in 1977. The main proposition can be broken down into two further components:

1. That rural development occurs more rapidly within a decentralized framework, and conversely

2. That a centralized framework of power slows down the pace of rural development.

Before the proposition is tested, the concepts of rural development and decentralization need to be clearly defined. Furthermore, the critical variables determining the effect of decentralization on rural development need to be identified and the research methodology followed in this study specified.

Conceptual Framework

Rural development cannot be conceived independently of and different from the general concept of development as app1ie to a society. The viability and utility of the concept "rural development" lies in its focus on the development of a certain class of people, groups and communities located in certain areas of society which receive a smaller share of the benefits of development, have less access to urban—based public services and generally have a greater concentration of poor people. Therefore, in order to alleviate the poverty of these people, bring them into the mainstream of development as well as promote balanced development of the larger society at an accelerated pace, special efforts and commitment of resources are required. However, such a focus should not divert attention away from the important linkages which exist between rural areas and the larger society, and between rural areas arid the world system. This is particularly so when the level of interdependence between different parts of the world is now increasing and economic and political decisions taken at the centres of the world system vitally affect the fate of people in the rural areas of the world.

Definition of Authentic Development

During the last half-century, as man's intervention in determining the direction in which society or the world system moves has increased, the concept of

“development” has received considerable theoretical and intellectual attention. Controversies and debates have raged over its definition, content and indicators. However, despite these controversies, and perhaps as a result of them, certain elements of what may be called real, genuine and authentic development can be identified. These are summarised below:

1. Authentic development is a process which leads to maximum realization of the potentialities of all human beings in society. Such potentialities have a greater chance of being realized when human beings are the subject of and active participants in development, rather than the object to whom benefits of development are delivered by others. To succeed, development must, therefore, be participatory.

2. In participatory development, costs and benefits are equally and equitably shared. Development of some is not to be achieved at the expense of others. Participation and equity ensure adequate motivation for sustained development efforts. Authentic development, therefore, is a negation of the functional inequality and “trickledown” theories. These prescribe that an enterprising few arid fortunate should get a greater share of benefits as this supposedly enlarges the development pie more quickly. The majority should wait until this enterprising minority allows the benefits of development to trickle down to them.

3. Authentic development requires the total transformation of society and not merely marginal adjustments. To achieve this, the institutions and structures which hamper or retard the full realization of human potentialities need to be changed or abolished and new institutions and structures set up to facilitate such a realization.

4. Authentic development aimed at the full realizaion of human potentialities requires that development be a balanced and even process, both at the level of the individual as well as society. For the individual, this means his material, social, moral and spiritual needs are met simultaneously arid not his basic material needs alone. A system or society which does not permit this blocks the realization of human potentialities and, therefore, generates maldevelopment. At the level of society, development should be balanced across all dimensions of social life, that is, economic, social, cultural and political. Such development should also proceed evenly in a spatial sense, that is, at the local, regional and national level.

5. Authentic development is self-sustaining and self- reliant. When it is not self-sustaining, this implies some elements of it are weak and unbalanced which could lead to a breakdown, regression or maldevelopment. When it is riot self-reliant but sustained instead through external props, it can collapse when these are withdrawn. Self-reliant development sustains itself by ‘relying on the internal capacities and strengths of the individual and institutional resilience of the society. Authentic development is also endogenous in the sense that it is

culture-specific and built on the previous accomplishments of society, with full awareness of its weaknesses.

6. Authentic development is a creative process. It is a negation of existing models of development and requires striking out to find new solutions and routes to development in the full knowledge of the limits and merits of other models as well as one's own specific situation.

Within the framework of such a broad conception of what has been called "authentic development", one can distinguish two types of rural development:

1. The authentic.
2. The non-authentic one.

The first combines the essential characteristics aimed at the maximum realization of potentialities of all human beings through self-reliance, creativity, endogeneity participation and the equitable sharing of benefits.

Decentralization and Development

A further concept which needs to be precisely defined is decentralization. The concept has traditionally meant changes in the distribution of administrative power, that is, from t1e centre to the periphery of an administrative system. Increasingly, however, the definition has been broadened to include political power. This study follows the broad definition of "decentralization" as the process of diffusion and transfer of power from an authoritarian and unaccountable central and local elite to the people. The process involves changing authoritarian administrative and political structures which inhibit local initiative and thus peoples participation in decision-making at various levels. It also requires building new structures which facilitate, reward and re-inforce grassroots initiatives and through it people's organizations.

Transfer of power from the centre to the periphery can take several forms:

1. Emergence of people's organizations such as peasant, youth and women's organizations. They conscientize, organize and mobilize members to protect and advance their interests and thus assume power when it is transferred from the centre.

2. Strengthening the autonomy of local government institutions which become responsive t the needs of the people and their organizations, thus gaining their support. They also become beneficiaries of the power when transferred from the centre.

3. Deconcentration of administrative power from the central administrative offices by creating new offices at the local level as well as delegation of power to parastatal organizations. When these offices and parastatal

organizations become responsive to the needs and demands of people's organizations and local government, a certain degree of transfer of power from the centre to the rural periphery takes place.

4. Emergence, existence and development of political party branches in rural areas which articulate and protect the interests of rural people at the central level, as well as exert pressure on central party organs to use their power for the benefit of the rural periphery.

One need not assume that the above forms of decentralization are necessarily mutually compatible or facilitative per se. Their positive or negative impact on rural development depends upon the conditions within which decentralization takes place. For instance, deconcentration and delegation may enhance the power of local officials who use it for promoting their own interests if countervailing people's organisation do not exist. Only the existence of such organizations can ensure that decentralization would be used for the benefit of the people and not the self-aggrandisement of officials. Similarly, creation of local government may not, by itself, facilitate authentic rural development if such institutions are weak or controlled by the local bureaucracy or elite. Finally, in the absence of political parties at the local level which can articulate the people's interests, conscientize and organize them, delegation and devolution of power may not be effective.

It should be pointed out that the concept "decentralization" is also used as a smoke screen by rulers in a cenrralized system to *camouflage* their real intention of preserving their power by introducing what can be called manipulative decentralization. A facade of decentralization n be built to maintain centralization.

From the above discussion it can be seen that only authentic decentralization would facilitate authentic rural development. Manipulative decentralization can produce only non—authentic rural development.

STRUCTURE OF THE STATE AND ITS EFFECT ON DECENTRALIZATION

The issue of transfer of power or decentralization cannot be studied independently of the structure of the state and its relationship with the local power structure which stands between the state and the people. The state cannot be assumed to be an autonomous agency which exercises power on behalf of a mythical collective interest. Those who control the state apparatus have their own interests to serve and form alliances and coalitions with other dominant interest groups to maintain, consolidate and enlarge their power. This makes the authentic transfer of power contingent upon two fundamental factors:

1. That the state structure is controlled by those who are genuinely committed to promoting development. Such a transformation of the state structure, however, is difficult in societies where economic and

political power is monopolised by a minority protecting its own interests.

2. Even when the state structure is under the control of rulers responsive to the people, they may not be able to accumulate enough power to direct the state apparatus to carry out the policies and programmes they propose, and transform the local power structure to make it responsive to the needs and demands of the people. The problem is compounded when conservative and traditional elements within the state apparatus form an alliance with local elites to resist policies emanating from the state, and suppress the emergence of people's organizations or programmes

There is a certain degree of mystique attached to the concept of decentralization and its relationship to rural development, suggesting that decentralization by itself can produce and stimulate authentic development. But decentralization is not a sufficient condition for development. Remote and isolated communities, particularly those with tribal, structures, cannot by themselves initiate development unless they have access to modern scientific knowledge, develop the capacity to understand and analyse their problems, and organize themselves on a basis different from their traditional structure. All this is possible only by establishing linkages with the larger society. This, however, leads to a certain degree of centralization. Besides, there are limits to the degree of decentralization possible, beyond which disintegration of society and anarchy can be created.

In contemporary states characterized by centralized and bureaucratic structures and the existence of traditional exploitative local elites (a legacy most Asian countries have inherited from their feudal and colonial past), there is a concentration of power at the centre and paralysis at the extremities. Thus, there is need for authenthic decentralization to promote rural development. But the degree of decentralization needed should be determined keeping in view the social structure and cultural conditions of the rural people. Decentralization risks leading to isolation, stagnation and apathy.

PRE-COLONIAL SOCIETY

The nature and structure of contemporary Pakistani society can be understood in relation to the character of the pre-colonial Indian state and society, and the impact of British colonialism.

The pre-colonial Indian state combined the characteristics of a patrimonial and bureaucratic empire in which rulers exercised power through a civil and military apparatus. The higher echelons were tied to the ruler by personal loyalty acquired through kinship ties and rewards such as land grants. Rulers and the aristo-bureaucracy were urban-based and exercised little direct control over rural areas. State intervention in rural areas was minimal, being limited to the maintenance of law and order, collection of revenue and occasional conscription. The internal organization of rural communities was hierarchical with a large degree of correspondence between

power/status and land ownership. Though the upper echelons of the rural community were linked to the rulers arid state apparatus, internally it was mainly self-regulating. Conflicts were occasionally resolved through deliberation and consensus reached based on custom and traditional practices, as well as' through coercion by the upper strata. Economically, pre-colonial rural communities were self—subsisting, carrying out little exchange with urban centres

The limited contact between the state and rural community, the low level of economic and cultural exchange between the urban and rural areas, and widespread illiteracy laid the foundation for a bifurcated society, dual economy and weakly connected culture. In short, pre-colonial society was characterized by a proto-centralized state and highly decentralized society. Frequent external invasions and changes of dynastic rule only marginally affected the rural community. (Moore, 1973).

THE COLONIAL PHASE

British colonial rule profoundly transformed pre-colonial. Indian society, particularly the relationship between the state and the rural community. The initial hesitation of the colonial rulers and desire to preserve traditional Indian society with minimum intervention, gave way to extensive intervention. This change was dictated by their interests in enlarging and extracting the economic surplus, maintaining a protected market for their manufactured goods -and ensuring political stability and loyalty. This active penetration into Indian society, particularly the rural community, was achieved through the creation of a centralized bureaucratic system. Initially confined to recruits from Britain, it was later partly opened up to Indian upper and middle classes. A hierarchical system of administration was established. The system was characterised as “elitist, centralized and paternalistic” (Khan, A.H., 1978, p.3). The most important level in this system affecting the rural people was the district, run by a member of the elite and generalist Indian Civil Service - variously known as the Deputy Commissioner, the District Magistrate or the Collector. He was the repository for all legal powers combining the executive, judicial, revenue collection, policing, co-ordination of various field departments as well as control of nascent local government institutions which emerged in the early twentieth century. Most significantly, he was the powerful symbol of imperial power. As the Deputy Commissioner was not accountable to the people he ruled, district administration was essentially an authoritarian system. Thus, India became a highly centralized and bureaucratic colonial empire emerging from a proto-centralized patrimonial-bureaucratic system in pre-colonial times.

In their attempt to transform India into a full-fledged colony tied by centralized and authoritarian rule to metropolitan imperial interests, the British were caught in a web of contradictions. To win loyalty and ensure stability, at first, they attempted to retain the hierarchical rural social structure and land tenure system in which the upper classes and castes owned most of the land. Such land was partly retained from the pre-British era, and partly given 4 to them by the British as gifts and jagir (land lease) pre-existing

intermediary structure was thus reinforced and strengthened. This structure was exploitative and retarded rural development, particularly agricultural productivity. The rapaciousness of landlords and moneylenders led to further destitution of the peasantry. This was the source of both peasant disaffection disguised as apathy (Khan, A.H., 1978, p.5) and agricultural stagnation. Import of British-manufactured goods destroyed traditional rural j industry. All this led to increased poverty, unemployment, malnourishment and occasionally famine, a phenomenon common in pre-British Indian society.

To overcome these problems and maximize surplus extraction, the imperial rulers developed new policies and strategies towards the "development" of Indian society. The transport and communications network, initially established for effective troop mobilization and transporting raw materials and manufactured goods to and from ports, was extended to the hinterland. This helped open up new lands on which some of the unemployed and destitute were resettled. In certain parts of India, canals built provided employment to the poor rural classes, raised agricultural productivity, reduced extreme poverty and ensured the peasant's loyalty. Through the extension of the judicial and administrative system (whose lynchpin was the Deputy Commissioner) to rural areas, a certain degree of control was exercised over the rural aristocracy and landed gentry, containing their rapaciousness within tolerable limits. In some parts of the country, the non-landowning moneylenders were prevented through legislation from acquiring the lands of peasants in repayment of their debts. These measures, to some extent, were mutually reinforcing and stabilized the Raj.

Besides the above measures, four programmes affecting rural areas were introduced.

1. A local government system.

2. Creation of raifaissen credit societies at village level.

3. Initiation of dehat suddhar (village reconstruction) in some provinces, particularly Punjab.

4. Provision of rudimentary agricultural extension services.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The new system of local government which created district boards and panchayat in some villages, served several purposes. It provided "a democratic facade to the authoritarian district administration" (Tinker, 1961, p.70). The rural gentry was brought into more formally structured relations with the raj, ensuring their loyalty and immunising them against national political consciousness and the nationalist movement. It diverted the energies and activities of the newly emerging urban middle classes and, to a lesser extent, rural upper and middle classes from national political issues to local issues — strategies to be re-employed by the military rulers of Pakistan in the late l950s and early 1980s. The ideology of local government was to teach

democracy at the local level, enabling the people to be fit for “democracy” at the national level.

In view of the “ideological” and political role of local government, it remained essentially an appendage of the district administration “not as a functional part of the steel frame but as its trim”, (Khan, A.H., 1978, p.9), without any autonomous powers and with only a limited role. It served almost no developmental role except for starting a school or dispensary and maintaining a few village roads usually going to the villages of larger landowners who were members and, in some provinces, chairmen of district boards. It was, indeed, manipulative decentralization for promoting “political” ends and consolidating the Raj through formalizing the existing hierarchical power structure.

CO-OPERATIVES

The co-operatives were started in the first decade of this century as a means of reducing rural indebtedness which, as noted earlier, was depriving the small owners of their land, reducing productivity and breeding political discontent. They were modelled after the German raiffaissen credit societies. Within a centralized, paternal and authoritarian colonial regime, they were neither intended as nor did they become a mechanism for decentralization of power and popular participation — a terminology not yet popular or even known. Under the tight supervision of bureaucracy, like local government, they remained an appendage to the district - administration. The lack of enthusiastic response from rural people, the depression of the 1930s and other factors crippled the amorphous structure of co-operatives.

RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

The Rural Reconstruction movement of F.L. Brayne attributed the underdevelopment of rural people to the habits, customs, attitudes and values of rural society, ignoring structural factors such as the feudal agrarian system, rapacious local bureaucracy and most of all the existence of exploitative colonialism. In the words of Khan, Brayne’s prescription for the peasantry was “.... reform yourself, help yourself and follow the official leader&’ (Khan, A.H,, 1978, p.11). This prescription was to become part of rural development policies and programmes in independent Pakistan.

The Rural Reconstruction programme functioned within the framework of a centralized district administration and paternalistic bureaucracy. It was, therefore, unable to create an institutional framework for popular participation.

Given its inadequate analysis, diagnosis and prescription for rural underdevelopment, Brayne’s programme was doomed to failure leaving almost no impact except a conceptual legacy and ideology with the Pakistani bureaucracy for its later application in the country.

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

The Department of Agriculture, agricultural colleges, research institutes and a limited agricultural extension programme were also instituted during the colonial period. But given the framework of colonialism, centralized bureaucracy and feudalism in the countryside, their impact was to increase the productivity of large landowners rather than eradicate poverty and improve the distribution of income. Thus, major beneficiaries of agricultural extension programmes were the relatively larger landowners rather than the peasantry.

By the end of the colonial period, strong foundations for a centralized and authoritarian state had been laid. Between this state and the peasantry existed an exploitative intermediary power structure offering loyalty to the Raj and later, to any effective ruler in Pakistan in exchange for full control over the countryside and maintenance of the rural status quo.

Within the state structure, a number of rural development programmes were initiated. These were essentially conservative in approach and limited in scope. Its benefits were pre-empted by the intermediary power structure and the problems of rural underdevelopment, inequity, exploitation and oppression of the peasantry remained unresolved.

Pakistan from 1947-59

The colonial bureaucratic empire had brought rural areas, hitherto enjoying a certain degree of self-regulation and autonomy, under its limited control through the district administration and by instituting local government as an appendage of the latter. It strengthened the feudal class loyal to it, which, in turn maintained an inegalitarian social and agrarian structure. In this way the interests of the rural upper class meshed with the colonial state. To achieve its goal of maximizing the economic surplus extracted, stability and political loyalty, it built infrastructure, productivity-oriented economic programmes and local government institutions.

Immediately after its creation, Pakistan was a centralized state with a decentralized society. The relationship between the state, and various sub—sectors and regions differed and was rather weak. In the three provinces of Punjab, Sind and the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), the traditional authoritarian structure of administration, from the centre to province to district, operated with additional representative institutions, namely, Parliament at the centre, provincial legislatures and district boards at the district level. At the two higher levels, this made the government and administration, to a limited degree, accountable to these institutions. However, at the district level, the Deputy Commissioner was not accountable to the district boards.

Several states enjoyed special status and were internally autonomous, meaning that the normal administrative structure did not operate there. The Baluchistan was under the Political Agent, directly accountable to the Governor-General. Its administration was not patterned along the model of the other three provinces. The tribal areas near the borders of NWFP had

relative autonomy and a special type of administration called “political agency”. This diversity of social and administrative structures had various implications for the rural people. In tribal areas, the domination of the tribal Sardar and Khan was total, obstructing social change and development. In the semiautonomous states, an oppressive and conservative partrimonial-cum-bureaucratic structure prevailed.

In the remaining three provinces, the political and administrative framework changed only marginally. Firstly, the structure of the state was federal only in a formal sense and operated more like a unitary state. The “imperatives” of maintaining cohesion in the newly created and multi-ethnic state of Pakistan, the centralized organization of the only political party then in existence, the combining of executive and political powers in the charismatic and trusted leader of the nation, reconstitution of the Indian Civil Service in the form of the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) which operated both at the centre and in the provinces, all served to emasculate the federal character of the state. The various political institutions were dominated by the landlord class which was more interested in seeking favours from the bureaucracy and government than fighting for the provinces’ rights and autonomy.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The district administration in all three provinces maintained its traditional authoritarian character. Indeed, the CSP Deputy Commissioners were not as aloof from their subjects as the colonial rulers. But as more members of the CSP came from among the migrants from India and the province of Punjab, a certain degree of ethnic aloofness and alienation did persist in the two smaller provinces. The changed political environment, however, put the traditional efficiency and effectiveness of the Deputy Commissioner under strain. The provincial Chief Minister, his cabinet colleagues and members of provincial assemblies subjected him to severe cross currents of pressure. The unfolding political process allegedly had a corrosive effect on his authority and the district administration system. If the choice was between restoring the authority of the Deputy Commissioner and stopping the political process, the elite bureaucracy preferred the latter, as articulated by one of its senior members who, by 1954, had become Interior Minister at the centre.

The weak structure of local government inherited from the British was merely an appendage to the district administration in the provinces. In view of the lack of political interest and involvement of national and provincial political rulers in solving more difficult and pressing problems, reorganization of local government did not receive any special attention. However, acceptance of the principle of popular sovereignty and its implications for restructuring local government was incorporated in the Manifesto of the Muslim League. This served as a reminder to the political elite that something needed to be done in this area. Indeed, some half-hearted measures were undertaken which included the introduction of adult franchise in local government elections, abolition of the practice of nominating members to the district board, throwing open the position of chairmanship of district boards in Punjab and widespread reconstitution and election of rural

and urban local governments in the early 1950s (Inayatullah, 1964, p.24). The Punjab and Sind governments also appointed committees in 1950 and 1953 respectively to make proposals to further strengthen local government.

The community development programme in Pakistan began in 1953 with substantial financial and technical assistance from the US. The programme was named Village Agricultural and Industrial Development or V.AID. The Community Development (CD) approach was evolved by experts in the British colonial office who were exporting technical assistance to their African colonies as well as by American technical experts and social scientists:. These experts thought that rural communities of developing countries could be reconstructed and their economic conditions improved by following the prescription of Brayne's Rural Reconstruction programme and agricultural extension as in the US. However, since they had no experience or adequate knowledge of the socio—economic conditions in rural Pakistan, they could not determine the relevance of their country's experience.

The policy-makers in Pakistan hurriedly accepted the CD approach without critically examining its relevance to Pakistan's rural problems. The programme promised to bring American funds and opportunities for senior and junior bureaucrats to visit and be "trained" in the United States. It offered the prospect of employment for the semi-educated rural youth. The Planning Commission and other relevant ministries, therefore, accepted the programme without reservation and without any clear conception of what it proposed to achieve. Furthermore, as noted earlier, the CD approach placed the responsibility for underdevelopment of the peasantry on their customs and values and not the agrarian structure or bureaucratic domination. Such a diagnosis was consistent with the bureaucratic elite's own perception of rural underdevelopment. Moreover, the V.AID urged the bureaucracy to guide and direct rural development.

The programme was conservative in essence and liberal-reformist in appearance. It sought to change and modernize the traditional and presumably retarding attitudes, beliefs and values of the peasantry. It attempted to reconstruct the declining traditional community along democratic lines without eradicating antagonistic economic and social relations. It tried to promote a "new democratic leadership" without fully taking into account the fact that it could enhance the power of the traditional elite and reinforce the status quo. It attempted to organize voluntary groups of youth, women etc., without imparting to them a critical consciousness, or explaining what keeps them oppressed. It advocated the principle of self-reliance and self-help which would bring matching grants.

The doctrine of self-help to the poor rural classes was of no help. They needed access to productive assets, employment and educational opportunities, which the programme did not provide. The matching grants went to the better-off rural classes or were used for projects which mainly benefitted them. The performance of V.AID as a vehicle of agricultural extension was, therefore, quite limited and so was its impact on agricultural production.

CO-OPERATIVES

The voluntary organizations sponsored by other government departments were generally weak To the 9,000 primary cooperatives inherited from the colonial period in 1947, only 2,000 were added by 1958. Rather than becoming autonomous, the co-operatives remained essentially under the control and supervision of the Department of Co-operatives. The impact of co-operatives on raising agricultural production by providing credit or improving income distribution was negligible (Inayatullah, 1972, p.92). Voluntary organizations at the village level sponsored by non-governmental organizations were generally absent or, where in existence, they were weak.

Thus, during 1967-58, the participation of the rural middle and lower classes in provincial and national political processes was minimal. Only a few elections were held. Even in such elections, these classes voted along nonpolitical lines either pushed by factional and clan linkages or according to the wishes of the landlords.

The absence of political parties, independent political groups and social welfare organizations as well as control of co-operatives, the V.AID, and local government by the bureaucracy did not create a participatory structure in the rural areas of Pakistan. The social, economic and political conditions to develop such a structure and promote grassroots initiative had not emerged.

The Ayub Period: 1959-71

THE EMERGENCE OF THE MODERNIZING BUREAUCRATIC STATE (MBS)

From 1947 to 1958, Pakistan functioned as a centralized state with the bureaucracy sharing powers with politicians. As the civilian bureaucracy and military became more powerful, and the political process more chaotic due to manipulation by the bureaucracy arid internal ethnic, provincial and ideological cleavages, the bureaucratic rulers terminated this increasingly unequal partnership, when the military staged a coup.

The new military rulers wanted to build a strong centralized state which could contain what they called fissiparious tendencies; they sought legitimation of their political power in the name of political stability, national integration, economic development and overall modernization of the society, as well as with the promise to usher jn a “true democracy suited to the genius of Pakistani people” (Ayub Khan, 1967).

The emerging bureaucratic state now fully took on the role of directing and guiding the process of modernization - a role which it always assumed rightfully belonged to it, but could not be performed efficiently due to the corrosive influence of politics and corrupting role of politicians. Under. modernization, the government adopted Western capitalist strategies of

development, with the modification that market imperfections should be corrected through the intervention of bureaucracy. The capitalist doctrine of "functional inequality", "trickle-down theory" and "produce first and distribute later" was accepted as the country became more integrated into the world capitalist system on the advice of the Harvard Advisory Group. Acceptance of this doctrine was facilitated by the infusion of technical knowledge from the US, particularly in economics and management and through the training of higher-level government servants, both bureaucrats and technocrats. Adoption of this strategy was due also to the support given by the emerging capitalist class to the military for their policy of creating a bureaucratic state in exchange for freedom to pursue profit maximization.

The modernizing bureaucratic state, to an extent, correctly diagnosed one major cause of rural underdevelopment, that is, the existence of feudalism. Bureaucrats had either worked under ministers, most of them from the same class, at the national and provincial level or experienced their intervention in and manipulation of district administration. To some extent the feudal class also limited the power of the bureaucracy at the village level in order to maintain its power and influence. Therefore, the two groups, though occasionally coalescing on certain issues, had antagonistic interests. Consequently, the rulers, consistent with their policy of modernization and attempt to transform the rural power structure, sought to weaken the feudal class but not to completely liquidate it. They also wanted to stimulate productivity in the hitherto stagnant agricultural sector. To achieve these goals, the regime moved on various fronts. Some major policies and programmes are analysed below.

LAND REFORMS

The regime appointed a Land Reform Commission whose members were all civil servants. Consistent with the modernization policy, the Commission was more concerned about abolishing tenancy and imposing a low ceiling lest a higher ceiling caused the landlord an abrupt "break with the past making it difficult for him to adjust to the new way of life which the change, in the form of a sudden reduction in income from land, will impose on him". This compassion for the landlord, however, was not extended to tenants arid the landless, with the argument that even much lower ceilings would not yield enough land for the tenant subsistence unit, that "the end of social justice for the landless in the form of access to land was not attainable", and that it would disturb the social edifice and harmonious change-over, and reduce the incentive among landowners to produce more (Land Reform Commission Report pp.30-31, quoted in Khan, M.H., p.165).

The modernizing bureaucratic state's land reform did not have a serious impact on the rural economy or restructure agrarian relations (Khan, M.H., 1981; Naseem, 1981; Akmal Hussain, *1983).* The hopes of the majority of tenants to own the land tiey cultivated were frustrated. However, land reforms had some secondary effect. Some of the landlords started shifting capital from land to industry. Some mechanised their cultivation leading to tenants being evicted or rotated to avoid loss of land through future reform.

This led to pauperisation of tenants, a process hastened by the Green Revolution. The new technology, the high rate of subsidy on labour-displacing machinery and other inputs as well as price subsidies on output made land more profitable. In fact, land reform, together with the Green Revolution, created a new class of capitalist landlords, who were much less concerned with the fate of their tenants and other clients from the poor classes. This introduced new tensions into rural society that were skillfully used by the populist leader, Bhutto, to gain power.

BASIC DEMOCRACIES

The second line of action by the MBS in the modernization of rural areas was the introduction of Basic Democracies (BDs) in the country. The system was introduced with the avowed objective of achieving "true democracy suited to the genius of Pakistani people", in place of the allegedly "false democracy" which was suited only to people living in temperate climates (Ayub Khan, 1967).

The four-tier BDs system was hierarchical, starting with the lowest tier of union councils and ending with divisional councils at the top. At two intermediate levels were the tehsil council and the district council. Thus, the BDs, while involving larger numbers of the rural and urban elite, was essentially an appendage of the district administration, as was local government during the colonial period. It represented both the failure of the ruling elite to restructure local government on a more representative basis, and its success - in removing the threat to the authority of the Deputy Commissioner which the bureaucracy always felt undermined law and order as well as in bringing about orderly "development" under bureaucratic tutelage.

Thus, consistent with its character and goals the rulers of MBS introduced a system of decentralization which fortified the bureaucracy's control at the local level, removing, at least initially, the large landowners whose access to the political elite at the national and provincial level was becoming an increasing irritant. The system, while limiting access to the district administration by members of the lower tier and establishing communication links between the rural middle class and the bureaucracy, did not significantly change the rural power structure (Nicholson and Khan, 1974, p.48). It formalized the informal hierarchical power relations already existing in rural society (Inayatullah, 1964, p.66).

Although the BOs system, particularly at the union and district level, was given a long list of regulatory and development functions, they were unable to achieve much due to a lack of resources. Unable to mobilize local resources which rural upper and middle classes were unwilling to provide, they were highly dependent on grants from the government. The union councils' attempt to procure cheap and expeditious justice under the powers conferred on it by the Reconciliation Ordinance was also mixed (Inayatullah, 1964, pp.165-172; Rizvi, 1981, pp.112-114).

The BDs system was assigned many local functions. Interestingly, however, they did not have responsibility for the implementation of land reforms. However, even if such a function had been assigned to them (which would have been against the interests and policies of the bureaucratic state) the BDs system would not have been able to carry it out. Only a few tenants were elected to the union council (Inayatullah, 1964; Nicholson and Khan, 1974, p.45). With most membership of BDs coming from middle level landowners and most chairmen being landowners, expecting the union councils to protect the interests of the tenants against the landlord would have been unrealistic.

After functioning for nearly twelve years, the BD system was abolished by the Bhutto regime. The seeds of its destruction lay in the military regime's decision to make the union council an electoral college for the election of the President and national and provincial legislatures. When President Ayub was able to defeat opposition candidates by what the opposition alleged was manipulation of members of the union councils through coercion and corruption, the opposition committed itself to abolishing: the system. The Bhutto regime fulfilled that promise as soon as it came into power.

CO-OPERATIVES

The military regime initially showed interest in the languishing co-operative "movement" which, as noted earlier, mainly consisted of primary credit societies covering only a small portion of the rural population, mostly medium and small landowners. Functioning under the supervision and control of the Co-operative Department, most of these societies were moribund. The regime appointed a Credit Enquiry Commission which studied the co-operatives and made certain recommendations. This led to a. policy declaration by the regime, stating that it wanted to build economic democracy through co-operatives as it was building a new democracy through Basic Democracies (Inayatullah, 1972, p.90). But the only innovation introduced was the creation of service co-operatives providing and popularising the use of fertilisers. However, this did not increase the utility or popularity of co-operatives (Nicholson and Khan, 1974, pp,81-84). Even their potential for helping small farmers own machinery such as tubewells was not explàited. For the landless, the co—operatives offered no services nor hope.

As the military regime banned political parties and trade unions initially, political organizations at the village level, which were already almost absent, received a further setback. Even when political parties were revived after the introduction of the 1962 Constitution, this did not stimulate grassroots political parties or even pressure groups. Social welfare organizations were also more or less non-existent. Therefore, there was an organizational vacuum in rural areas, except for the bureaucracy-controlled union councils and co-operatives in about eighteen of the villages.

This type of local organizational structure lacked the necessary elements for authentic participation by the people and their autonomous

development. The BDs and co-operatives were geared towards the maintenance of law and order, executing minor projects and increasing agricultural production. Such production increased due to the use of new seeds, fertilisers, tube wells, provision of market and various price support and other subsidies. The Green Revolution, however, also led to a worsening of income distribution, landlessness and pauperisation of the poor classes.

This uneven development in rural areas was not, by itself, a major cause of the overthrow of the military regime, but together with uneven development in the rest of society, it paved the ay for the emergence o Bhutto' regime.

RURAL WORKS PROGRAMMES

With help and support from the Harvard Advisory Group, the Planning Commission and funds from US Public Law 480, the Pakistan Academy for Rural Development, Comilla initiated an experiment in rural works programme (RWP) to build rural infrastructure, utilize under-employed and unemployed rural labour and mobilize the rural people to work for their own benefit. The objective also included strengthening the institutional capacity of the BDs system. Keynesian economics and American experience of the 1930s, provided the tool of analysis and model respectively.

The pilot project in some areas of the then East Pakistan was considered successful and convinced the Academy that rural people were capable of planning and implementing projects under RWP without the intervention of exploitative contractors. The programme was first expanded in the whole of East Pakistan and then West Pakistan.

In West Pakistan the programme had to be adjusted to' the prevailing administrative environment. A position of director of projects was created in the provincial secretariat to co-ordinate it, but actual power to co-ordinate and implement the programme at the district level was given to the already overburdened and overly powerful Deputy Commissioner, assisted by a selected team of district officials (Siddiqi, 1980, p.20).

The programme did achieve some of its physical targets - building of roads, schools etc., but its impact on rural production was marginal. It provided short-term employment for a section of the population but was not a solution to the problem of long-term unemployment. Most of the secondary benefits went to large farmers and only marginally to the rural poor. Thus, while the programme achieved some of its objectives such as creating rural infrastructure, opening up the rural areas, mobilization of some voluntary local resources, a degree of political awakening and training of a middle class leadership, its overall impact on the rural sector and rural poor was negligible.

The Bhutto Period 1972-77

Bhutto and his party, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), was brought to power by the urban classes disaffected with the policies of the

Ayub regime. Bhutto promised to restructure society along the “Islamic Socialist Pattern”. From being - the second major party, it became the majority party with the separation of East Pakistan arid defeat of the Pakistan military. Bhutto became the first civilian Chief Martial Law Administrator, then President of the country and finally Prime Minister till he was overthrown by the military in July 1977.

Bhutto’s coming to power raised hopes that there would he a significant departure from previous development policies, particularly in the field of rural development. There was to be a transformation of the intermediary structure of power - the “end of feudalism” in Bhutto’s own words, greater participation of the deprived and poor in decision making processes and decentralization of power. As the analysis below indicates, these promises and hopes were only partially realized. The basic power structure in Pakistani society remained more or less intact with only marginal changes.

LAND REFORMS

As discussed earlier, the Ayub reforms had almost no impact on the distribution of land. Out of the 2.5 million acres of land which was resumed (6.8 per cent of the cultivated area), only 3.8 per cent was redistributed. Twenty percent of the land surrendered could not be utilized and about 183,000 tenants (6.4 per cent of all tenants) received the resumed land. No new significant measures were enacted to regulate tenancy or provide a legal basis to determine the distribution of produce and inputs between the landlord and tenants. The number of tenants has declined since land reforms were undertaken due to eviction of tenants and the practice of entering them in land records as field labourers.. The percentage of the landless has increased by 43 per cent. Both land reforms and the Green Revolution generated pressures towards proletarianization. Thus, by the end of the Ayub decade, the conditions of the poor classes had worsened (Irfan and Amjad, 1983, pp.38-39. For a contrary argument see Chaudhry Ghaffar, 1982, pp.73-74).

One of Bhutto’s first measures affecting rural development and supposedly to end feudalism was the introduction of land reforms in 1972. However, the land reforms were neither radical in conception nor effectively implemented to yield enough land to affect the economic conditions of the rural poor.

For an apparently radical party, the PPP did not employ any new mechanism for effectively implementing the reforms. Indeed a federal land reform commission was created with a minister presiding over it and the commission was given the judicial power of a court (Qayyum, 1980, p.77), But no significant change was made in the implementing machinery nor was responsibility given to a new machinery independent of the power, influence and occasional intimidation f the landlords. No organization of the peasants was created which could educate the potential beneficiaries about the law and their rights. Indeed, in some areas, the tenants waged a struggle mostly on their own to get their rights, but their nascent organizations were no match for

the power of the landlord, particularly when he had the support of the local bureaucracy (Nigar Ahmed, 1984). This struggle acquired more coherence and support with the emergence of a new political conscicisness (Nigar Abmed, 1984, p.36; Rouse 1983, p.263). Nigar Ahmned's findings about the struggle of the tenants in a few villages may be worth quoting.

> During the Bhutto period, the peasant (within the villages studied) became much better organized, they took collective action across the village boundaries; they joined together to fight cases at all levels of the administrative hierarchy, they made joint collection of funds, employed lawyers and fought cases through the court system right up to the Supreme Court. A new consciousness had thus emerged and greater self-esteem (Nigar Ahmed,),984, p.36).

For the first time in the history of Pakistan, a political party, the PPP, had reached down to the village, established party branches in some villages and stimulated rural political activities. But, the party being loosely organized, did not monitor the implementation of land reforms, nor did it act as a pressure group-in favour of the tenants except in few cases. The result was that the 1972 land reforms, which in any case were not intended to make the tiller of the land its owner, produced only negligible results.

PEOPLES WORKS PROGRAMME

The PPP regime continued the RWP and renamed it Peoples Works Programme (PWP). It became a supporting activity for the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), providing infrastructure in rural areas. This meant the building of roads, schools, dispensaries, small irrigation dams, drinking water facilities, adult education centres etc. (Siddiqi, 1980, p.24).

Implementation of the PWP was the responsibility of the provincial government, which created an organizational structure from the province down to the village - associating local members of the National Assembly with the formulation and implementation of projects. Association of the elected representatives was a new feature of rural development, which did not always produce positive consequences (Waseem, 1984, p.230). The Deputy Commissioner and field bureaucracy dominated the programmes. The Deputy Commissioner, as Chairman of the District Council, wielded discretionary powers and diverted funds arbitrarily, subjecting development activities to administrative convenience and political expediency (Siddiqi, 1980, p.25). Privileged groups such as landlords, contractors and traders diverted programme benefits to themselves which consequently cid not reach the poor. The strong, district bureaucracy and vested interest groups did not pe'mit effective participation in the programme by the poor who benefitted least time from it. In some places the programme used, capital rather than labour-intensive methods thus partly defeating the purpose of providing employment to the unemployed (Siddiqi, 1980, p.27).

INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The second programme of the regime evolved from two indigenously developed projects - the Shadab Project near Lahore and the Daudzai Project in Peshawar. The main hub of rural development was the markaz (centre), where offices of various nation-building departments and the federation of cooperatives were established to facilitate mutual interaction, planning and implementation. The primary purpose of the programme was to promote agriculture by the provision of extensive services and inputs through the markaz and field agencies located there, thus improving the lot of the middle and small farmers and the rural poor. The regime provided about Rs194.2 million for the programme during the period 1972-78, out of which about 75 per cent was utilized (Siddiqi, 1980, p.29). During this period, 137 centres were opened rather hastily without adequate facilities and staffing. Only twenty three had federations of co-operatives with about 2,322 village based multi-purpose societies. The societies and federations were dominated by local businessmen, retired officials and middle class farmers appropriating whatever little benefits the IRDP offered (Siddiqi, 1980, p.30).

The IRDP during Bhutto's regime had only limited success. It did manage to facilitate the distribution of improved agricultural inputs to the farmers and, thus, to some extent stimulate agricultural development. But the programme faced many difficulties. The commitment at the highest level was weak and sporadic. In spite of the weakening of control by the district administration on the programme, a new bureaucratic hierarchy was created which could not fully mobilize other agencies. The proclaimed advantage of creating the markaz, where most offices of the bureaucracy would be located, was not realized and traditional rivalries, inefficiencies, and bureaucratic bottlenecks continued to affect the programme (Wienbaum, 1978, pp.50-51; Qadeer, 1977, p.63). Abolition of the Basic Democracies system and failure to induct a new system of local government also worked as a severe constraint on the IRDP (Dilawar Ali Khan, 1985, p.212; Siddiqi, 1980, p.33).

After abolishing the BDs system, there was an attempt to build a new local government. But the proposed system was never fully established and elections were not held confirming the earlier pattern that politicisation at national level was followed by the atrophy of local government and vice-versa. As a result, there was no political system at the grassroots which could articulate and resolve local problems, and support national and provincial governments' rural development programmes. Consequently, all local problems either remained unattended or were thrown up to higher echelons of the PPP, particularly the Chairman who was the centre of political power, or the bureaucracy. This retarded both political and economic development for which the PPP apparently had considerable potential. Why did the Bhutto regime fail to put into existence an effective local government system, even though all the provincial governments had enacted legislation or introduced through ordinances, local government structures.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Bhutto introduced dramatic reforms of the civil service, what Burki appropriately called "bending the steel frame" (Burki, 1980, p.98). By the time

Bhutto came to power, he found the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) powerful and well entrenched.

The PPP manifesto promised radical administrative reforms including abolishing the CSP, which it considered a part of the colonial legacy. A new service structure with a different orientation was to be created. This would play a pliant and instrumental role rather than the political role which the CSP had assigned itself. For Bhutto himself, such reforms were necessary if he was to break up the competing centres of power in the polity and become an effective, if not absolute ruler. The main thrust of the reforms was to abolish constitutional guarantee provided to services, the service labels and quota system reserving important posts for the CSP. A system of gradation in a unified service structure was created which theoretically permitted mobility from the lowest to the highest grade. A number of financial groups were created such as the District Management Group, Secretariat Group etc., permitting horizontal mobility. Lateral entry was also permitted. Bhutto removed several CSPs who he considered had treated him unfairly when Ayub Khan was persecuting him for his political insubordination and challenge. Some were removed or forced to resign for opposing Bhutto and policies of the PPP (Burlci, 1984, pp.99-102).

The effect of these measures on the economic reforms and programmes the PPP sought to implement, has been evaluated as doubtful at best and negative at worst (Burki, 1980, p.103).

The effect of reforms on rural development seems negligible. Firstly, concentration of power with the Deputy Commissioner remained intact. In the absence of an elected local government no accountability of the Deputy Commissioner and officials of other departments was built in. The reforms made no significant contributions to 'the implementation of land reforms as the link between the landlord and the local bureaucracy, particularly the crucial revenue section, could not be broken. Neither cid reforms add to the efficiency of delivery services to the farmers, speed of justice and reduction in litigation and corruption of the local bureaucracy. Dextrous in playing the survival game, the bureaucracy which eulogised the Ayub regime's programmes of rural development, equally praised some of Bhutto's programmes. The centralized framework and centralizing tendencies inherent in the previous service structure were not modified or checked. Neither did 'the reforms introduce a framework for decentralized development. Any change in the attitudes and orientation towards the people permitting them to face the bureaucracy in an organized form, was marginal and rhetorical. The bureaucracy's distrust of such organizations, particularly if militant or "political", remained as strong as ever.

With a centralized bureaucratic structure almost intact, provisions of the 1973 Constitution for provincial autonomy did not make significant progress towards political decentralization Bhutto' quest for absolute and unrestrained power, his dismissal of the Baluchistan government of Attaullah Mengal, his success in creating People's Party governments in

Baluchistan and NWFP, arid his despatch of the military of Baluchistan further centralized the system and process of development in Pakistan.

ROLE OF PAKISTAN PEOPLES PARTY

The history of development of political parties in Pakistan shows that most of them were urban-.based. They rarely developed their roots in villages and had no direct access to the middle and lower rural classes (Alavj, 1971, pp.112-120). Moreover, almost all political parties always reached the rural population through the feudal class which was unwilling to limit its power by creating or tolerating the existence of local party branches.

Once the PPP came to power at the end of 1971, quite a new4an complex situation arose. Gradually over a period, the rural-based party leadership called by Jones “politicals” (1980, p.129) became increasingly powerful. This was because a large number of them were members of National Assemblies, Provincial Assemblies, Provincial and National Cabinets (for Punjab) (Jones, 1980, p.138), Provincial Chief Ministers (at different times) arid Bhutto himself, with his feudal background, found greater affinity with them, (Jones, 1980, p.130). Secondly, even some of those among the feudal chiefs who had earlier opposed the PPP, rushed to join it in conformity with their well-established political orientation to safeguard their power and influence with local bureaucracy or through the new government. Thirdly, the left-leaning and urban-based intellectual middle class leaders whom Jones calls ‘Ideologicals’ (1980, p.129) and who envisioned a rapid transformation of rural society and creation of various political groups including party branches, lost influence in the party and by 1974 were almost routed (Burki, 1984, p.143). This may possibly have resulted in the rural party leadership becoming alienated from the rural common people who were disillusioned with the non-fulfillment of party promises and found the traditional power of the feudal class intact. In most villages of Pakistan, therefore, there were PPP “leaders”, a few party activities but hardly functioning party branches. Consequently, the vision of the “Ideologicals”, that is, of elected and functioning branches emerging from below and organizations of students, women and labour groups affiliated to the party imparting political education to the people, soon evaporated. With this the chance of the PPP emerging as a vehicle for authentic decentralization ended, particularly after the defeat of the “ideological” or the PPP radical urban intelligentsia which performed the organizational work.

As the PPP met street power with state power in certain industrial areas at the beginning of its rule, similarly, in conflicts between tenants and landlords, it frequently sided with the landlords. Thus, the PPP’s role in protecting the rural poor from the excesses and violence of the traditional power holders was ambiguous. But in view of the fact that it did not significantly change the rural power structure nor organize the poor classes to become self—reliant to protect their rights, the PPP did not usher in the revolution which it had promised the poor nor did it make substantial contribution to political development in rural areas.

ASSESSMENT OF THE BHUTTO REGIME

If emergence of political consciousness, organization and participation in decision-making is itself taken as indication of development, which indeed it is, then obviously the Bhutto regime's record is a mixed one in this respect. Indeed, it stimulated political awareness but was unable to mobilize and organize the rural masses for social transformation. The rural social and power structure changed only marginally, leaving the feudal class in control. The power of the local bureaucracy and its exploitation of the rural people and the latter's dependence on it, did not significantly decrease. The classical social division between the higher and lower "castes' remained more or less intact and vertical mobility was limited. The Bhutto regime, however, contributed to the removal of psychological fear of the upper classes, without significantly changing the power structure itself and thus, nay possibly have unleashed revolutionary forces in rural areas. These were apparently suppressed but not eliminated by the imposition of Martial Law, and may break out at opportune moments.

Though some illiterate rural women who had endured a life of drudgery, boredom, ignorance, superstition arid domination by men were attracted by Bhutto's socialistic and personal appeal, the regime was unable to do anything significant for them. Thus their fate remained unchanged. Provision of representation for women in provincial and national legislatures did not affect their material or social position. The male-dominated social structures remained intact. /

The Zia-ul-Haq Period: July 1977-85

The coup of 5 July, 1977, marked the end of a short interregnum of ascendancy, of politicians in the national political process and restoration of a military-bureaucratic complex which the Bhutto regime attempted to challenge and depoliticise.

While the Zia regime differed from Ayub's in some respects, the effect of Zia's coup was similar to the earlier coup in centralizing effective power in a military-dominated centre and excluding from power those regions and provinces which were not adequately represented in the military and bureaucracy. Provincial governments under military governors became only instruments of the central government or, when some of them were strong, they wielded absolute power. The distribution of power set out in the 1973 Constitution which had become unfavourable to the provinces in practice even under Bhutto, became even more so under the new military regime.

Before the introduction of local government in 1979, there was no avenue of participation even at the local level. By opting to introduce local government, the Zia regime followed the old colonial and Ayub strategy — depolitization and curtailment of political participation at the national level, and it substitution with controlled participation in local government to pacify the politically and economically discontented and win the support of the economically privileged rural classes.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY PLANNING

While a certain degree of concern for the rural poor was • shown in the Fifth Plan which stated that "about 35 per cent of the rural population has to survive in conditions of poverty and squalor" (The Fifth Five-Year Plan 1978-83, p.421), the diagnosis of this 'poverty was rather narrow Consistent with the regime's conservative orientation, the Plan attributed it merely to "substantial under-employment" in the rural economy, ignoring much more significant factors such as lack of access to assets and public services, and bureaucratic and feudal domination of the countryside. The Plan's objectives in the field of rural development were consistent with its diagnosis - integrating rural development, increasing the density of services, improving infrastructure, providing social amenities to target groups and creating an institutional framework for community participation. The problems of equity, social justice and elimination of exploitation had disappeared from the agenda.

The achievements of the Fifth Plan were not outstanding according to the evaluation in the Sixth Plan. Though the estimated expenditure slightly exceeded the Plan outlays in nominal terms, in real terms there were substantial shortfalls. Social infrastructure suffered the most. Except for rural electrification and, to some extent, roads, most of the targets fixed for rural social development could not be achieved (The Sixth Five-Year Plan, 1983-88, p.142).

The Sixth Plan adopted a romantic, utopian and "harmonious" view of rural society and moved away from confronting problems of poverty and social injustice. The villages were seen to possess a "value system" which has helped their survival with dignity (emphasis added) and development of a rich culture (emphasis added) in the midst of poverty (The Sixth Five-Year Plan, 1983-88, pp.141-142). The Plan proposed the following guidelines for rural development:

> The task is to provide modern amenities as an aid for bringing into motion the internal dynamics of rural society onto the path leading to increase in productivity and self-help, changing the overall surroundings while preserving the coherence of the integrated structure and rich cultural heritage of the rural society.

PROGRAMMES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Sixth Five-Year. Plan's chapter entitled "Rural Development-Massive Transformation", which has a quotation from the Quran stating that God wanted to make the "depressed in land", 'leaders and heir', did not propose any programme for social structural transformation such as making the tenants and landless, owners of the land or any other programmes which made a direct assault on poverty. In. fact, the military regime suspended implementation of Bhutto's 1977 land reforms and tax on agricultural incomes, which, of course, Bhutto himself did not seriously implement during the six months he was in power after announcing the reforms (Qayyurn, 1980, pp.77-

78). Two programmes of rural development were inherited from the previous regime -, the Peoples Works Programme and Integrated Rural Development programme. In 1979, both these programmes were merged into one programme called the Rural Development Programme.

INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The programme being predominantly oriented towards technocratic and infrastructural changes and having a limited participatory component, fitted well with the regime's orientation. It was continued until merged with the Peoples Works Programme. IRDP was nominally expanded by raising the number of markaz, the central hub of the programme, to six hundred. This was done by declaring all police stations in the country as markaz. But expansion did not raise the performance of the markaz. A new structure was created in which village headmen (government-appointed hereditary village officials) were grouped into a rabita (co-ordination or liaison committee) at the union level and all Chairmen of the committees were made members of the Mrkaz Rabita Committee. The IRDP during this period lost its participatory dimension and reverted under the control of the district administration.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Improving agricultural production and productivity through technical change and better inputs received much more emphasis than problems of equity and a fairer distribution of income (The Fifth Five-Year Plan, Pt II, 1978, p.5). The Sixth Plan, while noting that,

> Economic growth cannot benefit the poor unless it reaches the poor and unless the majority of the population participates in economic life,

also used the standard ideo1oical cliches that,

> Economic growth is crucial for Pakistan's future, without it we can only redistribute poverty.

To realize its political goals, the regime adopted or co-ordinated certain programmes and policies in support of them, such as price support for farm output and subsidies for fertilisers and other inputs. However, these benefitted mostly the large and medium farmers and not the small owners, tenants and the landless who did not have much to sell (Khan, M..H., 1985, p. 320). The fact that the Zia regime did not implement the 1977 reforms and agricultural income tax law or undertake any new land reforms, lends credence, to such an interpretation, indeed, these policies did increase agricultural growth. During the Fifth Plan period, agricultural growth averaged 4.4 per cent per annum against a planned target of 6 per cent. This exceeded the rate achieved during Bhutto's period and was above the population growth rate of about 3 per cent (Sixth Plan, p.104). The average growth rate during the last three years of the regime was erratic registering 6 per cent decline in 1983-84 arid a 12 per cent increase in 1985-86.

One of the major policy instruments used by the regime to modernize agriculture was large-scale infusion of credit through several agencies including the Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan (ADBP), nationalised banks, the Federal Co-operative Bank and Taccavi Loans. Being the single largest lender, the ADBP's credit policy is analysed below to evaluate its impact on rural development.

From 1972 to 1985, the ADBP loaned Rs19,657 million to the rural people, 11 per cent of it during Bhutto's period and 60 per cent during the Zia regime. The relevant question here is who have been the beneficiaries of this credit. One way of finding this out is to accept the Bank's classification of beneficiaries according to the size of their holdings.

It would appear that the distribution is skewed in favour of those owning more than 50 acres of land. Although they constituted only 3 per cent of all owners, they received 18 per cent of all loans.

This still does not give an accurate picture of the actual beneficiaries as it has quite often been observed that loans entered in the name of the borrower in official documents may not actually be received by them because large landowners obtain credit in the name of small-holders and their tenants. A better indication of the beneficiaries would be provided by examining the purpose and size of the loans. According to ADBP (1986, p.11) 5 per cent of the loans were for tractors, 18.53 per cent for seasonal output, 3.35 per cent for tubewells and the remaining for other purposes.*

* *It may be noted that the percentage of loans given for tractors out of total loans was 8.43. during Bhutto's regime and 91.57 during the Zia period; for tubewells, 35.88 per cent during the Bhutto period and 64.12 er cent during the Zia period. In view of the fact that tractors are generally used by large landowners, most of the loans have gone to them*.

Table 1

Distribution of ADBP Loans* according to
Size of Land Owned by !3orrowers, 1972-86

Category of Landowners	Amount (millions of rupees)	Percentage of Loans received	Percentage share of total owners
Tenants	925.439	4.71	—
Less than 12.5 acres	*4,990,286*	25.39	73.4
12.5-24.9 acres	5,767.820	29.34	17.4
25-49.9 acres	4,485.00	22.82	6.5
50 acres and above	3,489.00	17.74	2.7
TOTAL	19,657.545	100.00	100.00

* excluding loans to corporate bodies

Source: Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan

Furthermore, if it is correct to assume that in general, defaulters of government loans are the large landowners against whom ADBP is

helpless or in a collusive relationship, then it would be correct to assume that the ADBP loan policy of financing tractors may, in fact, have brought a lot of dividends to the large landowners,

Several studies indicate that the situation is not much different with other government credit institutions. In view of the fact that credit from public institution helps create assets for the rich and only provide temporary relief for the poor, Qureshi et al., suggest that “lasting improvement cannot be expected unless production relations are equitably restructured”.

The policy measure introduced by the Zia regime specifically aimed at the small farmer was the introduction of interest-free loans in 1979 for owners of farms below subsistence holding. The limit originally set at Rs6,000 was raised to RslO,000 in 1985. Loans were to be provided in kind arid repayable within two months of the harvest. If in default, payment would be required at the normal lending rate. Special features of this policy were that loans could be given on personal surety. This would entitle property-less farmers to avail of these loans. From 1979 to 1986, Rs14,481 million were advanced as interest-free loans. This amounted to 29.7 per cent of all loans advanced by all public institutions. As is obvious from the above data, the interest-free loans are a small percentage of total loans advanced by government institutions. But, regardless of this, the important question is how much of such interest-free loans actually reached the intended beneficiaries. Unfortunately, no systematic study has been done to answer this question. However, several points should be noted.

Firstly, as interest-free loans are quite lucrative, the more knowledgeable landlords who have access to loan agencies get the relevant papers signed by their tenants and small farmers but secure the loans for their own use.

Secondly, as the loans are generally given in kind, for example, in the form of fertilisers, some of the clever farmers negotiate with the fertiliser distributors to pay them their share of profit, take the cash and use it for other purposes.

No doubt, in theory, interest-free loans should exert a positive influence on agricultural production, improve living conditions of small farmers and contribute to rural income re-distribution in favour of the small farmer. However, these loans reach a small number of farmers and meet only a part of their credit needs compelling them to depend on non-institutional sources. There are also considerable leakages. Consequently, the impact would not be substantial.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Introduction of local government by. the Zia regime in 1979 can be explained at two levels (1) for its manifest development function, and (2) for its latent political function. The function of promoting local development is generally stressed in official documents and some of the studies conducted under

government auspices. This approach emphasizes that abolition of Basic Democracies and the failure of Bhutto to install n elected government created a vacuum at the local level for managing rural development. Thus, a new local government system was needed to accelerate rural development as well as educate people and their leaders to manage development and make local bureaucracy responsive to them.

But this manifest rationale to introduce local government is insufficient for understanding the timing of its introduction in l979, and its particular structure which the Zia regime claimed was a significant .departure from the previous structure. It is suggested here that local government was introduced to meet a political need. The Zia coup was staged in violation of the 1973 Constitution and justification for it was sought first in holding fresh and fair elections within 90 days and thus allegedly avoiding a civil war. The judiciary "legalized" it under the doctrine of necessity with the provision that promised elections should be held. But the regime did not hold the elections and instead sought other legitimation of its power such as questioning the "accountability" of the previous regime and introduction of Islamization.

Holding party less elections of local government on an adult franchise basis and permitting district councils to choose their own chairmen - two of the characteristics of the new local government - were not new. Both these provisions for district boards existed during the period 1947-59 as well as for union councils, under Basic Democracies. Indeed, the new system is less controlled. "formally" and legally compared to BDs. But given the environment into which this new system was introduced and the reasons (discussed above) for introducing it, the military regime had to install a system which in appearance looked "autonomous" to the class it was trying to attract. It could not be a mere replica of BDs which earned much disrepute during the second half of the Ayub regime.

The "formal autonomy" granted to local government was considerably constrained by several factors inherent in the system, by the power of the bureaucracy arid the class of people elected to the system. Firstly, although the Deputy Commissioner was no longer the chairman of the district 'council, he was expected to attend the meetings of the council. In the presence of this powerful civil servant heading three main branches of the district bureaucracy-police, revenue and judiciary - and being a representative of military government at the district level, it was unrealistic to expect that members of the district council, most of them belonging to the feudal class, would feel free to express themselves adequately given the prevailing Martial Law framework.

Secondly, the Chief Officer of the district council was an employee of the provincial government and not of the council itself; consequently district councils' control over them was limited. The same applied to the Secretary of the union council. Thirdly, the provincial Department of Local Government and Rural Development .set up a hierarchy 'of officials to look after the affairs of local government. Though it is reported that these officials show supportive attitudes towards local government

(Cheema, 1984, ‘p.66), they know they are there to supervise the system. Fourthly, in all provinces except Punjab, there are divisional co-ordination committees consisting of officials and elected members from lower levels and chaired by the Commissioner. The Divisional Commissioner on occasions has suspended some of the resolutions of the district councils “in his individual capacity” (Cheema, 1984, p.24). Due to these constraints, the formal autonomy for local government has lost much of its significance in practice.

However, the system has some innovations to its credit including the creation of district co-ordination committees (DCCs) which in Punjab are headed by the chairman of the district council. Other new features include the appointment of the chairman of the district council as project manager for development projects in his district, and power given to the district council to appoint local employees to the nation-building department in NWFP (now withdrawn) and provision for the representation of women, peasants, labourers and minorities.

No serious evaluation of the functioning of DCC in Punjab has so far been made but general observations about its effectiveness are not promising. Cheema’s impressions are that more educated and younger elements have come into the local government system and that they belong to the well-to-do groups (1984, pp.3,63). Besides, given the pattern of land ownership in rural areas, the concentration of economic and political power with large landowners, the large amount of money sent by candidates to buy votes regarding which an unpublished government report on the 1983 elections concluded “... only the rich could afford”, it will be safe to affirm that the traditional feudal class captured the district councils and the medium and small. farmers generally became the chairmen and members of union councils.

One innovation of the system was that it provided special seats for women, peasants and minorities both at the union and district councils (the exception was in NWFP where no provision was made for women’s seats at the union level). Women and peasants in union councils and workers in the district councils were directly elected by the respective councils. Non-muslims were elected by a constituency of non-muslims on the basis of a separate electorate.

Given the percentage of these groups and classes in the general population, their representation is indeed low, particularly those of women who should constitute about 50 0 per cent of all members rather than 10 per cent. But given the patriarchal structure of Pakistani society, and the extreme underdevelopment of rural women in particular, it cannot be otherwise.

Table 2

Representation of Special Interests Elected Directly or Indirectly in the 1983 Elections of Rural Local Government

	Peasant No.	%*	Workers No	%	Women No.	%	Minorities No.	%
Union Council	3825	6	—	—	6496	10.25	2951	4.65
District Council	103	0.16	57	0.9	227	0.36	89	0.14

* Percentages are of the total membership of union councils and district councils combined.

Source: Data taken from an unpublished report of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Islamabad, on the 1983 elections.

In the 1983 elections, women elected to district councils in general belonged to the rural upper class and tended to be educated. But nowhere were they elected as chairpersons of these councils, except in the case of Jhang district. Almost no information is available on women in union councils.

Not much information is available on peasant members. However, one can guess that they are not usually from the landless class, so-called menial classes, but are either small landowners or tenants belonging to the so-called zamindar class.

One of the achievements attributed to the present local government is its ability to mobilize financial resources (Cheema, 1984, p.1). Indeed, the increase in their income from 1978 to 1983 (for which data is available) seems to be impressive. Rural councils increased their income from Rs.223 million to 970 million (Cheema, 1984; Chaudhry, M.A., 1984, p.20). However, one should take into consideration the share of government grants in the income of rural councils which has increased from 4.85 per cent to 20 per cent and the share of taxes which has declined from 69 per cent to 62.55 per cent. This suggests that such an increase may not be entirely due to the effective mobilization of resources per se.

One of the objectives of local government was to encourage, plan, and implement development projects as well as mobilize resources for them. Several studies give the impression that the relative share of development expenditure in overall annual expenditure, is increasing (Cheema, 1984, p.53; Chaudhry, MA., 1984, p.21) which is indeed a healthy trend.

The Punjab government has initiated two schemes, the Small Village Level Scheme (SVLS), and Matching Grants Scheme (MGS). In SVLS, the self-help component provided by the villagers ranged from 20 to 28 per cent of expenditure in 1978-79 to 1982-83. Under this scheme, projects like the building of drains, streets, pavements, culverts, schools and water supply are included. Under MGS, larger projects of similar type are included (Cheema, 1984, p.40).

Measured in terms of their budgetary performance and degree of self-reliance, it appears that development of local government has been uneven. Of the four provinces, Sind and Punjab are leading while NWFP and

Baluchistan are falling behind. This may partly be due to the nature of the social structure and level of development of the province. It is not clear whether central government has a positive policy of strengthening local government in the less advanced provinces, although it appears that the latter receive larger government grants.

It may also be noted that the portion of union council income derived from their own resources is much less than district councils'. Therefore, if self-reliance is an indication of development, union councils in general, are a weaker tier of local government compared to district councils.

The fact that the upper and middle classes have generally entered local government has contributed to their becoming the main beneficiaries. Most of the projects executed by local government directly benefitted them. The poor may, in fact, have been further disadvantaged by having to provide free labour to the self-help component of SVLS and MGS launched by Punjab. But this aspect needs further study. Cheema has indicated that to derive the benefits of development and safeguard their interests, the poor may have to develop their own organizations as "elected local councillors who, in most cases, belong to well-to-do groups might not be able to safeguard their interests" (1984, p.63).

It is too early to evaluate the impact of local government introduced by the Zia regime to achieve authentic development. The lack of participation of the poor classes and women in local government means that one cannot consider the present structure as a vehicle of authentic decentralization and development. Indeed, it has produced some development in terms of building schools, drains, roads, etc., but, as yet, has not effected changes in the rural social and power structure in favour of the poor, nor produced development which benefits them. It has not helped either the realization of human potentialities by imparting genuine political education, competence and awareness organizational capabilities,, self-reliance nor opportunities for self-improvement.

OVERSEAS MIGRATION AND ITS IMPACT ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Migration of labour to foreign countries, particularly the Middle East as noted earlier, started during Bhutto's , period. To some extent, the Bhutto regime facilitated it. The phenomenon continued under Zia. From 1977 to 1986, Pakistan earned US$18 billion in eight years, with an annual 41 average of about US$ 2.2 billion dollars (Gilani, 1984, p.28).

Much more data is now available with regard to the impact of migration on rural areas, particularly on the rural social and power structure, and changes in attitudes of the returning migrants. Most of the migrants were young males belonging to upper lower classes and were skilled or unskilled workers with less than high school education (Gilani, 1984, p.43). Their earnings were spent on food, buying land, improving the quality of housing and education of children. The share of productive investment did not significantly change. Therefore, in terms of the direct multiplier effect on

economic development of rural areas, the remittances did not have a major impact.

Indirect economic effects, however, have generally been beneficial, that is, reducing unemployment and raising rural wages (Gilani, 1984, p.62-68). It lead to new skills being learnt by the migrants which could be usefully applied when they returned. The impact on distribution of income and assets may be somewhat mere complex and mixed. While migration improved the lot of one-sixth of the families belonging to the upper lower class, it has generated inequality of wealth and income within the same class. However, if one compares the change of income of migrants in relation to the income of the traditionally better-off middle and upper classes, remittances have somewhat narrowed economic inequality between them (Gilani, 1984, p.69).

Case Study

The case study of Afzal Neseem (1987) describes and analyses the extent of rural development in two villages in the district of Gilgit, located. in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. The two villages fall within the purview of the programme known as the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP), launched in 1982 with the financial support of Aga Khan. Gilgit district has a considerably higher proportion of his' followers compared to the rest of Pakistan. The AKRSP Is headed by Shoaib Sultan Khan who resigned from the powerful and prestigious elite service of Pakistan to join UNICEF as a rural development expert in Sri Lanka. Earlier, he worked as Director of Pakistan Academy for Rural Development, Peshawar, and initiated the Daudzai Project patterned along the well-known Comilla Model 2 (now in Bangladesh) with advice and support from Akhtar Hamid Khan, the founder of the Comilla project*.

The Northern Areas in which the two villages are located have a harsh climate, hilly terrain and have traditionally been less developed compared to villages in the rest of Pakistan. During the last fifteen years, these areas have undergone considerable changes. Their traditional rulers were abolished and local government was incorporated in the normal administrative structure. The construction of the Karakarum Highway opened up these isolated areas and exposed them to external influence as well as integrated them into the Pakistani economy and society. In terms of social and political structure, the Northern Areas are in a rather fluid situation While the traditional and decaying political system marked by elements of feudalism was abolished in 1974 by Bhutto, the traditional local power structure which was rather egalitarian remained intact. However, some of the recent changes noted above has brought into existence a privileged rural class which does not, as yet, fully control and exploit the rural areas as is the case with many villages in the rest of Pakistan (AKRSP Report, 1985, p.2).

As a consequence of the abolition of traditional rulers in the Northern Areas, there emerged a social and political vacuum (Khan, A.H., in personal discussion; AKRSP, 1983, p.18; The World Bank, 1986, Section VII).

Under traditional rule, there had not developed a well-entrenched bureaucratic structure or what the World Bank report euphemistically called “lack of institutional competitors” (The World Bank, 1986, Section XI) which could control and exploit the rural people, resist the formation of people’s organizations or suppress grassroots initiative as was happening in villages in other parts of Pakistan. While

* *About the Comilla project, see Raper (1970). For a description of Daudzai, see Shoaib Khan (1974) and Minhajuddin Khan (1978). For a comparative evaluation of the Comilla and Daudzai projects, see Akbar’ S Ahmed’s rather controversial article (1986) whose conclusions about the failure of Daudzai are contested by both Khans; see A.H. Khan (1986), pp.106-117).*

their traditional co-operative system remained intact, such a system was not suitable for large-scale co-operation and development.. Within this framework, AKRSP has met a fair degree of success in achieving its goals during a short period of four years. By 1986, .t had established village organizations (vo) in 526 villages out of a total 1,030 villages. During the last four years, these organizations have accumulated Rs14,5 million worth of social capital, built considerable infrastructure arid achieved a certain degree of modernization in agriculture (AKRSP Reports from 1983-85). The above case study documents these achievements in two villages. A World Bank study confirms the AKRSP’s evaluation “that major components of the programme are highly profitable for the participants” (The World Bank, 1986, Section IV).

The success of AKRSP, however, should be understood within the social, administrative and economic conditions prevalent at the time of its launching and as the result of factors like the relationship between the rural people and Aga Khan, external financial support and the quality of leadership of the programme.

As noted above, AKRSP was launched after a decaying traditional and, to some extent, oppresive political system had been dismantled. Though the Northern Areas were incorporated into the normal administrative structure of Pakistan, bureaucracy had not yet taken firm root, at least at the local level. The programme received financial support from Aga Khan whose association with the project ensured that followers of the spiritual leader would trust that AKRSP must be for their good (The World Bank, 1986, Section VII). This is an advantage which many government-initiated programmes do not usually have.

Secondly, the AKRSP has pumped considerable amount of b money, Rs.l27 million in four years, out of which 67 per cent was a grant to the villagers for building productive physical infrastructure, 27 per cent was spent on staff salaries and 26 per cent on operating costs. Each beneficiary, according to the The World Bank’s calculations, received US$192. These funds have mainly come from the Aga Khan Foundation but other foreign donors such as CIDA, Alberta Aid, the Netherlands Government, USAID, ODA, Ford Foundation and OXFAM have also contributed to it (The World Bank, 1986, Section III). Furthermore, both management and the rural people knew that AKRSP assistance would be forthcoming for a definite period of time and the commitment was not expected to change (AKRSP, 1985, p.1),

as has happened with some other rural development programmes in the country whose rise and fall was associated with changes in regimes, their erratic policies and uncertain support of foreign donors.

Thirdly, the leadership of the programme has certain advantages over the normal bureaucratic leadership of rural development programmes in Pakistan. Both Akhtar Hamid Khan and Shoaib Sultan Khan, have considerable experience in innovative rural development. The Comilla programme initiated by A.H. Khan won world fame and Western donors' trust. Its replication in Daudzai near Peshawar, where both Khans worked together, again brought them considerable fame and external support. In fact, they remained socially linked and identified with the higher bureaucracy even after their resignations. Their removal by the Bhutto regime earned the hostility of the higher bureaucracy. Consequently, the younger Khan's diligence and commitment combined with the elder Khan's vast knowledge and experience proved a valuable asset to AKRSP gaining the support of the Zia regime and the rest of the bureaucracy. In addition, the autonomy and quality of the organizational structure of AKRSP, reflected in its positive co-operative relations with village organizations, "continued innovativeness, its free and flexible procedures, (spirit of) experimentation and adaptation" (The World Bank, 1986, Section VII), further helped AKRSP in functioning effectively.

The relative success of AKRSP, as pointed out in the case study, confirms our basic hypothesis that when rural people are not frustrated, controlled, manipulated and exploited by bureaucracy and the local elite, they tend to respond enthusiastically and work co-operatively for their individual and collective welfare. Authentic decentralization which apparently is being introduced by AXRSP through the creation of village organizations and the bottom-up approach, is producing, to some extent, authentic development. However, this development is only partly self-reliant and only partly the result of grassroots initiative, as considerable funds are being channelled into the project froth outside and stimuli for development is coming from the AKRSP management and not from within the rural communities. At this stage, people are responding positively but are not yet in charge of the programme itself. Whether the programme will move away from this dependent phase and run on its own initiative cannot be determined at this stage of its operation.

Conclusions

Authentic decentralization based on the emergence of strong people's organizations, viable local government institutions and substantive devolution f power has not occurred in Pakistan since its inception. In fact, the power of the centralized bureaucracy has been further fortified in the absence of the countervailing presence of political parties and other political institutions. The frequent imposition of Martial Law has stunted political development arid consequently, authentic decentralization.

Effective political power since the inception of the country has been in the hands of the military-bureaucratic complex which has exercised it over rural areas either directly or through the intermediary feudal structure.

Even during the two short interregnums when elected politicians were in office, real power was usually exercised through and by the bureaucracy and not the party apparatus or local institutions. Such an apparatus and institutions were either weak or had not developed, Consequently, though sporadic and ad hoc participation of rural people in national and local affairs and in the formulation and implementation of development policies occasionally occurred, they were not able to exercise systematic and organized pressure on national and local decision-making processes. Rural development policies have essentially been formulated by the military-bureaucratic complex in their own interests or in the interests of the dominant feudal class.

Between the state and rural masses stood an intermediate structure of power, feudalism, which performed a dual function. The feudal class generally supported the rulers and the state apparatus which, in turn, allowed them to influence rural development policies and their implementation through the local bureaucracy, and to pre—empt most of the benefits of rural development. In return for this support, the central rulers permitted them to freely control the rural society and maintain the status quo thus stabilizing and immunizing it from significant structural transformation. The feudal -class prevented the emergence of autonomous rural organizations and captured and controlled local government institutions whenever they were introduced and the small number of co-operatives that existed. Thus this intermediary structure increasingly became a formidable force in preventing the process of authentic decentralization, that is, transfer of power to the rural masses.

Attempts at weakening or dismantling this intermediary structure have been vague in conception and ineffective in implementation. The four land reform attempts in the fifties and seventies have only marginally affected this structure. The economic and political power of the land-lords has remained more or less intact.

In Pakistan, rural development policies and programmes have so far not strengthened the organizational base and capacity of the rural peoples to undertake and sustain development projects on their own. Given the thrust of rural development policies and programmes, a predatory local bureaucracy and an exploitative feudal class intent on maintaining the status quo such a capacity could not be generated. A certain degree of political awareness as a result of access to the mass media, contact with urban areas and the influence of some political parties has certainly developed. But this political awareness has not been converted into organizational and political competence. Consequently, traditional, caste divisions, biradari, factional fighting and quarrels persist and may possibly have increased due to, besides other reasons, the party less elections of 1985.

Formation of what economists call human capital has not increased to make rural development self-sustaining and self-reliant. Literacy, which in its present form is not a vehicle to promote social and political awareness, has stagnated, if not declined. The more ambitious, talented and educated rural people have migrated to urban areas leaving the less

ambitious, enterprising and literate behind. Due to the lack of participation in development programmes and political processes, rural peoples' skills in planning, formulating and implementing development projects and influencing government policies in their favour have not developed. Half the rural population, the women, lack most of these qualities and skills due to persistence of the feudal structure and patriarchal values. Some new skills such as the repairing of tubewells, tractors, etc., have indeed spread to the village, but they do not affect the local occupational structure and its human capital significantly. The backwardness of human capital is also reflected in what are traditionally (and, wrongly) ca4.led social indicators of development. Access to clean-Water, preventive cure, health facilities, hygienic conditions and adequate housing for a considerable part of the rural population is low. Infant mortality and malnourishment of both children and adults from poor classes is high while life expectancy is low.

There has been no significant change in the rural social structure, the true indicator of social development. The traditional division between the zarnindar and kami castes, wadera and han, rnalik and raiyat (subject), persists with an almost complete lack of vertical mobility. Thus many talented young men from poor classes cannot realize their potentialities and stagnate in their traditional roles and Occupations. The traditional positive correlation between ownership of land, wealth and social status and human rights also persists. Those who do not own land are low in social status and have almost no rights.

The crucial issue with which this study has dealt with is the relationship between decentralization and rural development. It was hypothesized that "authentic" decentralization would provide the necessary framework for self-sustaining, self-reliant, participatory and endogenous development, while manipulative, non-authentic decentralization would promote non-participatory, uneven, inegalitarian and dependent development thus failing to tap the reservoir f creative energies of the masses. As authentic decentralization has not occurred in Pakistan, preventing the conscientization, organization, mobilization and participation of the rural masses, it cannot be affirmed with confidence that Pakistan's experience corroborates or confirms the positive relationship between authentic decentralization and authentic rural development. However, there is some evidence to confirm the obverse hypothesis that a centralized framework or manipulative and non-authentic decentralization has produced non-authentic rural development. To identify the casual linkages between the two would require further analysis. Leaving aside the pre-colonial period, a brief discussion would b limited to four periods of Pakistan's history: the period 947-59, 1959-71, 1972-77 and 1977-85.

During the period 1947-59, authentic decentralization was almost totally absent. The rural masses were under the direct control of what we have called the intermediary structure or indirect control of bureaucracy or their joint collusive control. There were no people's organizations and local government was weak and under the control of feudal lords and the district administration. The central and provincial bureaucracy was oppresive, exploitative and predatory. The rural masses could not influence the

policymaking process at the central, provincial and local levels where political institutions were controlled by the bureaucracy and feudal lords. Consequently, policies were made to consolidate the power of these two groups. Efforts to break the power of the feudal class through land reforms were defeated by feudal-dominated legislatures. Whatever emasculated land reforms introduced were not implemented. Consequently, within this political and administrative framework, the limited rural development that occurred improved the lot of the better-off rural classes. The common man remained caught in the web of poverty, misery and exploitation.

From 1959-71, political and administrative structures became more authoritarian and in some ways more centralized. Basic Democracies and Rural Works Programme permitted only limited local participation by the rural middle and upper classes. The benefits from these programmes accrued to these classes. Land reforms introduced in 1959 did not break the economic and political power of the feudals who, in fact, became more powerful. Thus development policies during this period increasingly served their interests. Policies such as support prices, subsidies for fertilisers and other agricultural inputs and imports of duty-free tractors at low exchange rates raised agricultural production, but made rural development uneven and inequitable as more small land-holders and tenants lost security of tenure. The landless received only limited employment opportunities and their real wages did not significantly improve.

The period 1972-77 though saw a rise in political consciousness among the masses, but their participation in local, provincial and central policy-making institutions remained limited. The traditionally powerful classes mono-polised power in spite of limited land reforms. In fact, they increasingly captured power in the political party and wielded it at the local level. The rural people's energies were not mobilized for rural structural transformation. As a result, rural development remained slow, inegalitarian, non-participatory and dependent. Due to extraneous factors such as the rise in prices of imports, unfavourable weather and the reluctance of the landed classes to further invest, agricultural growth also declined compared to the previous period.

From 1977-85, the military ruled the country with the assistance of the bureaucracy and feudal class. All the three classes fortified the traditional local power structure, provided a limited local government framework for the participation of the rural upper and middle classes and token participation for women and peasants. Indeed, during this period there was greater emphasis on infusion of credit into rural areas, subsidization of farm prices and inputs, greater access to extension services, the opening of bank branches by the nationalized banks and larger credit operations by the Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan. Due to these and other factors, agricultural growth rose. But proliferation of the bureaucracy in rural areas and an increase in its power led to greater exploitation and corruption in the absence of rural organizations which peasants were forbidden to form under Martial Law. Consequently, the powerful local bureaucracy dealt on unequal terms with the unorganized and powerless peasantry. During this period, more villages were electrified, rural roads built and schools and health clinics

opened. But most of the benefits of this rural development went to better-off classes. Thus, while a type of growth and development did occur, the benefits were not distributed equitably to the poor classes and a considerable part was pre-empted by the local bureaucracy.

Thus, the Pakistani experience seems to confirm the proposition that a framework of centralized power or manipulative or non-authentic decentralization is either not conducive for authentic rural development or produces non-participatory, inegalitarian, dependent and non-self sustaining development.

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