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Developmentalism as a Disciplinary Strategy in Bangladesh

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Abstract

This article focuses on the working of developmentalism as a disciplinary strategy in Bangladesh. The formation of groups or cooperatives of traditional agriculturists/peasants may be seen as the first attempt in establishing the 'development gaze' over the peasants of Bangladesh. An examination of various techniques used in the cooperative formation process reveals that they are clearly interventionist in nature and are based on the modernist approach to *development*. *Development* deployed in the rural villages in Bangladesh resembles the deployment that took place in European societies when what Foucault (1991a) refers to as 'disciplinary power' was established.

I. Development Deployment and the Working of Disciplinary Power—An Historical Outline

Starting from the early twentieth century up to the present, *development* deployment in Bangladesh begins with the idea that peasants should be brought into various cooperatives, which will operate as primary units or catalytic agents to disseminate the ideology of *development* (Haq 1978). Initially, the agriculturists were categorized on the basis of land ownership, such as large, small, sharecroppers, marginal and landless farmers; later, this categorization was extended on the basis of caloric intake, extent of poverty, and gender. The objective of these categorizations was to create effective homogeneity

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among the categorized group members to increase management and surveillance efficiency. Various operation manuals used this configuration, which focuses on the manageability or governmentality of the rural population. The following discussion will enable the reader to understand the forms of governmentality of various rural populations and the effectiveness of surveillance in the transformation of disorderly peasants to orderly, self-disciplined modern subjects.

II. Organizations Created by the State Apparatuses

Village agricultural industrial development (V-AID): 1953–1961

V-AID was the first organized attempt by the then Government of Pakistan to re-enact the Western mode of governmentality in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan); it encompasses disciplinary power within the post-colonial context. After the Second World War and particularly after the formation of the United Nations and the Trumanian invocation of 'point four' programs (Truman 1949; Bekker 1952), *development* deployment began through 'community development' projects, and for the first time, post-colonial societies were formally involved in this process.[2]

Firstly, *development* deployment in Bangladesh began in rural areas through reconfiguring the administrative structure in line with Western governmentality. The V-AID administration introduced modern agricultural and rural industrial policies. This program was designed and assisted by the US and the Ford Foundation. The philosophy of V-AID can be comprehended from the following statement:

> V-AID was specially designed to train development organizers at village level, who would act as catalysts for social transformation. For this purpose V-AID

[2] The idea of 'community development' has grown out of the concept of 'mass education' used by the colonial policy planners for African societies in 1944. The idea behind mass education was to focus 'on the whole community as a unit to be educated, to be aware of, to understand and take part in, and ultimately to control the economic and social changes which are taking place among them' (quoted in Community Development 1960: 1). More than a decade later the UN stated, 'Community Development implies the integration of two sets of forces making for human welfare, neither of which can do the job alone: (i) the opportunity and capacity for co-operation, self-help, ability to assimilate and adopt new ways of living that is at least latent in every human group; and (ii) the fund of techniques and tools in every social and economic field, drawn from world-wide experience and now in use or available to national governments and agencies' (United Nations 1955: 6).

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training centres were set up. After receiving training the village organizers worked with the village communities to convey messages promoting development. Village Councils were formed to discuss village problems identified as symptomatic of underdevelopment. The V-AID organizer acted as a liaison between government agencies and the farmers. Organizers also mobilized the development techniques provided by the state and made these accessible to the farmers (Conversation carried out with an ex DG of BARD on 4 February 2000).

V-AID was a comprehensive community *development* program that was designed by the West and accepted by the Pakistani officials who incorporated it into the First Five-year Plan. Below is an example of what was stated in the Plan.

> Village Agricultural and Industrial Development—Village AID—is the agency for uplifting and developing the rural community. The economy of the country is based on the village. Over eighty per cent of the population lives in the 100,000 villages whose manpower is the country's principal asset. The *tremendous reserves of energy, which lie virtually dormant in the villages, must be stimulated and released*. Millions of rural people can do more to *improve their lives* than can be done by the Government through a few large-scale schemes. The Government can assist by providing specialists in agriculture, health, construction and community organization, by making available physical resources not available in the villages, and above all, by supplying [in] the Village AID workers, a readily accessible adviser, who can maintain continuous contact with the villagers and help them to understand their problems, appraise their opportunities and take advantage of the services of the specialists and government funds. The basic concept of the Village AID program is to provide a means by which technical and financial assistance from the Government can be used to draw forth the resources of skill, energy and money which exist in the villages, to channel them into productive uses, and to create means by which they can be progressively enlarged. (GOP 1956, Ch.13: 1; emphasis added).

V-AID was instituted to operate as an agency whose purpose was to transform traditional underdeveloped rural communities into rational, modern, democratic and developed '*gemeinschaft*'-like societies. By the time V-AID was instituted, the post-colonial administrators (both civil and military bureaucracy) had implanted in their own minds that *development* was not simply inevitable, but also most desirable. It was argued that, as the country depended on the village economy, it needed to improve and to utilize village-based resources. To introduce and to increase the capability of techno-culture in production and everyday life, the Government assisted through a range of practices. For example, better methods of farming, creation of 'a spirit of self-help' and 'cooperation among the villagers',

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expansion of community services, and construction of an environment for a richer and 'higher' life were all utilized. For the *development* leaders, the program was 'so important that it should receive the continuous and energetic support and active participation of the public officials, political leaders and social workers from the highest to the lowest' and accordingly the program strategies were formed (GOP 1956, Ch. 13: 2).

Strategies of V-AID: Microphysics of Practices

V-AID started its operation in 200 selected villages that had a population of about 100,000. After demarcating the area, the program proceeded to deploy a number of trained *development* makers comprising village workers, supervisors, *development* officers and technical personnel in various fields of *development*. An organizational structure was set up to implement the V-AID project. Accordingly, a cluster of five to seven villages were given to a village development worker for management, and villages administered by thirty workers were formed into a Development Block. Village development workers were the main agents disseminating *development* knowledge to the villagers. They were trained by the technical personnel of *development* to spread new knowledge about society and the mechanisms of intervention. It was the village workers' job to maintain continuous contact with the villagers and the technical personnel in various fields who were assigned to work within the demarcated Development Block. In terms of administrative accountability, the village workers were accountable to their supervisors, supervisors were accountable to the *development* officer of the block, and the Development Officer was accountable to the Sub-division or District Officer. Three supervisors, two male and one female, assisted the Block Development Officer in overseeing project implementation.

The Development Officer functioned as a focus personality of *development* within the area. The Development Officer was responsible for preparing an annual report, describing the status of *development* of the area he or she managed. In addition to the status of *development*, achievement and performance of the experts in the different fields were regularly evaluated. The organizational structure for governing the V-AID is presented in the diagram (Figure 1).

Villages, as a local community, received *development* knowledge through the Development Officer, Supervisor, Village Worker and

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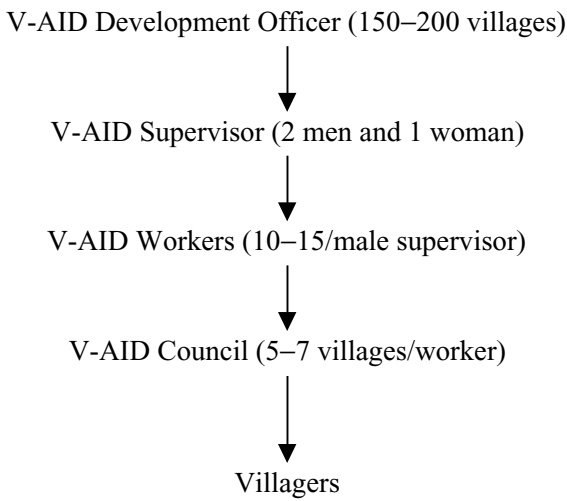


Figure 1. Organizational Structure of a V-AID Development Area.
Source: Obaidullah 1995: 32 (restructured).

finally the Village Council, a top-down mechanism that disseminated information and managed the whole operation. There were also people of specialist knowledge and training institutes in development making.

The Specialists

The specialists and technicians, who were trained people belonging to the various technical departments, were responsible for disseminating technical knowledge of *development* to the villagers and were assigned to work within the V-AID administration. They formed the *key link* between the village workers, organizations and the *development* officer on the one hand, and the department's technical division on the other. The First Five-year Plan of Pakistan proposed:

> In the development area the specialists belonging to the various technical departments will work the whole time under the operational control of the Development Officer. . . . The specialists under the Development Officer will continue to belong to their own departments and be responsible to their respective departmental officers for technical guidance and control. . . . The specialists will form a key link in the chain between village workers and Development Officer on the one hand, and the rural development departments on the other. They will work [at] formulating and implementing the rural development program (GOP 1956, Ch.13: 3).

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The specialists designed plans in their respective fields of expertise and accordingly procured materials to teach the village workers to carry out effective demonstrations and supervise the operation of their deployment.

Training Institutes

Following the advice of the policy makers and planners of the central government, the V-AID administration set up at least nine training institutes by mid-1955, of which three were in East Pakistan (Bangladesh). The purpose of the institutes was to train three categories of personnel: village worker, organizer and administrator. In 1953 the first institute was set up with the assistance of the Ford Foundation and it was intended that by the end of the First Five-year Plan (1955–1960) a total of 79 *development* areas would be brought under the V-AID program in East Pakistan.

The role of trained experts was crucial to making the program a success. The experts were assigned to serve and guide the farmers in almost all aspects of *development* knowledge so as to improve agricultural performance. The farm practices were designed to reconstitute farming in the light of modernization, and acceptance of these new practices was intended to materialize the desires for production and its attendant prosperity which farmers were *taught* during the whole process.

As we mentioned earlier, three types of personnel were trained to carry out the program: village workers—usually well-informed young men and women from the respective *development* areas—who were assigned to train the farmers in improving their agricultural practices and to teach the villagers to organize themselves so as to reach their goals; and organizers and administrators, who were both to be provided with knowledge of how to co-opt the villagers and observe their everyday activities.

After the V-AID program had been in existence for about eight years, it was officially abandoned in 1961 based on the claim that the project was ineffective in improving the material life of the masses (GoP 1960; Hussain 1996).[3] Nevertheless, although the first V-AID

[3] Failures of V-AID have been recognized in different literature in different ways. The Food and Agricultural Commission Report states, 'It cannot, however, take the place of a supply service or technical agricultural extension service and it has too

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program was dumped the *development* pulse in Bangladesh did not stop. Rather developmentalism re-emerged more vigorously than ever before.

In this context, though, it does seem fair to ask why developmentalism re-emerged more strongly despite the V-AID becoming 'unsuccessful'. In our judgement, most contemporary critics of development failed to notice the significance of *developmentalism* or the disciplinary power that this project implanted to direct and establish control over the future of *development* in Bangladesh. There were two things that the V-AID did in this regard. First, in configuring *development*, it institutionalized a body of knowledge and expertise, which firmly established its own legitimacy in the society. Secondly, V-AID created a large body of bureaucrats or managers of *development* whose future became tied up with the perpetuation of development projects. In short, the V-AID was able to establish in Bangladesh the importance of *development* as a dominant form of ideology, socially, culturally and politically. It was also able to create bureaucratic machinery, whose members' fortunes became dependent on *the development industry*. They were indeed very powerful people in the Bangladeshi power structure.

Thus we believe that although the program of V-AID was identified as a failure within *development* literature, in fact it was only the initial intervention intended to bring the villagers under 'the gaze' of new control and productive mechanisms (both individual and social). The program, of course, produced a myriad of elements concerned with the everyday life of the villagers. In other words, the V-AID program was not a total failure but rather identified a number of issues to be considered in order to make the recipients more productive, as well as more controlled subjects. The evident inner contradictions it revealed between knowledge and deployment produced the space to formulate a more productive and disciplinary mechanism. The village-based cooperative movement seemed to provide such a possibility. The next section examines how the village-based cooperative movement created

many responsibilities' (GoP 1960: 352); and Hussain in his recent article states, 'The V-AID workers could not become the extension agents of the other nation-building departments. Neither of these functions was accepted. It, therefore, could not exist' (Hussain 1996: 104). Abedin, a modernist, makes a more acute statement in his recent article. To Abedin, 'corruption, misuse of authority and resources, bureaucratic dominance, and politicisation of the process for partisan benefits and self interest, undermine its credibility, reduce its effectiveness and erode people's trust in any program' (2000: 167).

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more efficient procedures to bring the villagers into a proliferating and more pervasive institutionalization.

Village-based Cooperatives: Development after V-AID

Senior and politically powerful members of the defunct V-AID now began to search for patrons in the Western developed world to help them in reviving their industry—propagating developmentalism. Soon money and advice became available to set up a research institute to investigate the causes of 'failure' of the V-AID; this was accompanied by an assurance from the donors that they would support an experimental development project to be built over the sarcophagus of V-AID. The outcome was the BARD (Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development).[4] This Academy did not have any specific project other than continuous experiments directed towards making the farmers' cooperatives more efficient and goal oriented. The Director and some other researchers of the Academy already had some experience with the practices of *development* during their involvement with V-AID. The central aim of the Academy was to inform the administrators working in various *development* programs in rural Bangladesh about various aspects of *development*. Initially, the Academy started with six working hypotheses regarding the functioning of cooperatives. These hypotheses were centred around establishing viable economic organizations through which modernization of agriculture would be

[4] After the failure of the program to produce 'Welfare Administrators' who would work between the rural masses and the state machinery, it was decided to establish a rural academy to disseminate *development* ideas and train civil servants as *development* practitioners from an administrative point of view. It was discussed on January 18, 1955, in a meeting held at Michigan State University. The working paper for that meeting stated: 'For some time the Village-AID Administration has felt the necessity of establishing training academies not only for the higher level administrative staff in the Project Development areas, but also for training and for reorienting the provincial extension staff generally and such staff of the nation-building departments as would be operating within the *tehsils* [a local unit of government] in which Village-AID Project Development areas are located. The necessity of such Academies is also felt because it is hoped ultimately to provide to the Government Administration through the operation of the Village-AID Program, a bias for welfare . . . especially in the rural areas. To implement this idea, it is necessary to train fresh batches of Civil Service of Pakistan and Provincial Service officers for at least a period of six months at these Academies and subsequently to get a selected few of them to assume charge of Project Development areas for a period of say one year and thus prepare them as Welfare Administrators' (Quoted in Raper 1970: 23).

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carried out. Villages would be the unit of deployment; linkages between the village (as a *development* unit) and the Academy were to be established; training for the organizers and the 'model farmers' would be provided; technical inputs and their use in villages would be made available with the help of international experts hired under the Colombo Plan; and finally, the farmers would be educated in modern techniques of agriculture, such as line sowing and improved fertilizer use. Stress was also placed on creation of a cooperative mentality among the farmers (Raper 1970: 46–47). After a series of experiments, the Academy recommended ten standard conditions that would apply for cooperative development. These were that the newly formed group should:

> Organize itself and later become a registered cooperative society; hold weekly meetings with *compulsory attendance* of all members; select a *trusted* man from the group and send him to the Academy once a week for training; keep proper and complete records; join production planning; use supervised production credit; adopt improved agricultural practices and skills; make regular cash and in-kind savings deposits; join the central cooperative federation; and hold regular member education discussions (Fairchild & Hussain 1962: 14–15, quoted in Raper 1970: 49, emphasis added).

New mechanisms that were devised for the functioning of village-based cooperatives were believed to deliver a new art of governance, which would orient the peasants towards *development*. The village-based cooperatives proposed a mechanism to monitor peasants' attendance at weekly meetings and also their progress. In regard to selecting a leader, the question of trust was brought into the domain. The leader of the group was also expected to attend the weekly meetings conducted by the Academy where issues on 'new knowledge' of *development* would be discussed, and become the basis of new policies being formulated. Regular saving, and maintaining records were made compulsory for the members. Discussions among the farmers of the new technology and its use at every weekly meeting were recommended. In other words, the village based cooperative became instrumental to the intrusion of the state in the everyday life of the villagers. It also became a new surveillance technique. In the process of surveillance, reformations were to take place within the inner laws of the cooperative which would strengthen its controlling mechanisms, whereby peasants were brought under more disciplinary practice. The director of the Academy perceived that were they not brought under control through administrative mechanisms, they would be an 'explosive force', soon to get out of hand. Khan, one of the votaries of

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early stage of *development* deployment, states in one of his interviews in 1963:

> Landless people ... are a most explosive force. Once these people get out of hand you will not be able to maintain any kind of *discipline*. Since the agitation is confined to the cities, it is easy to *control*. When it gets out into the villages then it is very difficult. [Control] takes [an] enormous mobilization of force (Khan 1983, vol. I: 50; emphasis added).

Further, the purpose of the village-based cooperative is clearly stated by one of the experts working to develop the 'model', in the following words:

> It proposes to change rural East Pakistan [Bangladesh] *from tradition bound society to a modern technological society through methods of reform*. ... The model assumes that the future of the nation is with the common man, the cultivator and craftsman, and, supposes that this common man, *if placed in right educational and decision making situations*, can lead himself and his group towards improvement in general welfare. ... This model does not break strongly with the past but *moves slowly but firmly* into the future, merging social and economic institutions which are compatible with the introduction of modern technology, with the older institutions which have given South Asia the culture it is famous for (Fairchild 1961, quoted in Obaidullah 1995: 105–6; emphasis added).

In the course of creating a New Society

Based on predetermined conditions, the Academy organized several cooperatives within the 'laboratory area' and set basic policies.[5] In a new village-based cooperative mechanism, any peasant of a village, if agreeing with the conditions, could form a *Shamity* (cooperative society), which could be either agricultural or non-agricultural. In an agricultural *Shamity*, the organizer was the key person, making the link between the village and the Academy. He or she worked as the liaison to transfer knowledge about *development* from the Academy to the village society and report its impact back to the Academy. The experts of the Academy reformulated policy based on the new information supplied by the organizers.

[5] Since 1960, Comilla *Kotwali Thana* has been used as a social laboratory of the Academy for conducting research and pilot experiments on the subjects so as to create a new social theory in the field of *development*. The idea was that the correct identification of the problem would be possible if no other organization intervened (Raper 1970: 43).

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The next key person within the village-based cooperative was the 'model farmer'. Usually the 'model farmer' was a member of the *Shamity* who was residing in the village and elected by the other members of the cooperative, thereby maintaining a constant link between the farmers and the Academy, and serving as the innovator within the group and receiving a constant flow of ideas from the experts of the Academy. Academy members discussed the problems with the experts of Michigan State University (MSU) and reformulated policies according to their adaptability. Production of *development* knowledge operated as follows: from the experts of MSU to Academy, then to organizer, model farmer, village society and farmer, and then back through the same pathways to the advisers at MSU. The exercise produced new sites of power, where the peasants of rural Bangladesh were brought under the institutional 'gaze' (refer to Foucault's *panopticon* in eg, 1991a); that is, they began to be managed by Western knowledge and developmentalism. During the process, not only are the industry experts brought under control, but the local *development* élite and recipients are also transforming themselves into the active agents of deployment.

By the end of May 1960, about ten village-based cooperatives were in operation and were proving to the experts that the new *development* strategy was a 'success'. In the exercise, emphasis was placed mainly on training, regular weekly meetings, compulsory small deposits of money as growing capital, adoption of new technology like High Yielding Variety (HYV) seeds, use of chemical fertilizer, irrigation and so on. At one stage, the Government wanted to make the practice compulsory. After much debate and discussion among the various policy-making bodies and experts, the idea of a compulsory cooperative was abandoned (Raper 1970: 53–7). Nevertheless, the model that was produced out of the Comilla experience was recommended to be expanded from village level to *Thana* level. *Thana* would work as the central association of the village-based cooperative societies. To expand the program, the Government selected *Kotwali Thana* of the Comilla district and the Director of the Comilla Academy was given the responsibility for developing the *Thana* Central Cooperative Association (TCCA). The TCCA became the centre of *development* which controlled and managed the supply of 'inputs', such as credit to farmers, technology for modern cultivation, and training for the farmers in every field of production. Interrelations among the variables of *development* that are activated within the structure of the TCCA are demonstrated in the diagram (Figure 2).

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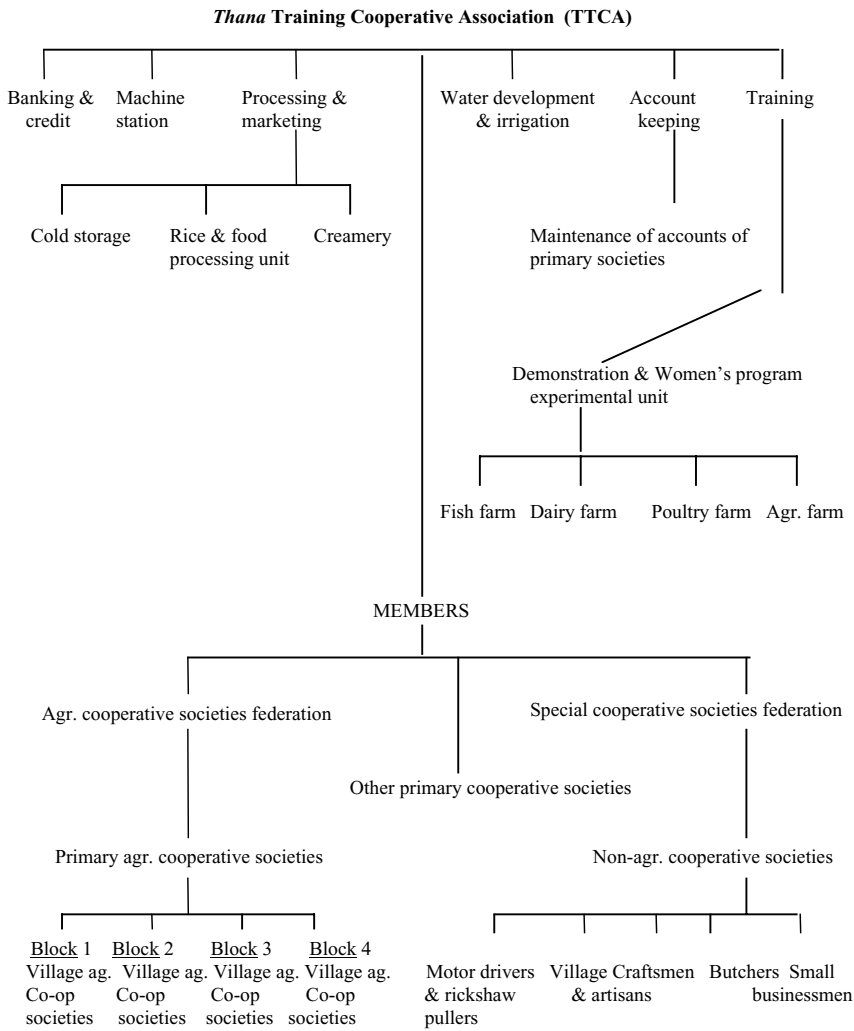


Figure 2. Structure of Village-based Cooperative Societies.
Source: Paper 1970: 64.

After experimenting with village-based cooperatives and TCCA for more than a decade, in 1972 the Government included in its plan both village-based cooperatives and TCCA as a two-tier cooperative for *development*. The program was executed through BRDB (formerly IRDP). Out of 490 *Thanas* of Bangladesh, 465 were brought under the activities of TCCA, and about 63,000 village-based cooperative societies (i.e. KSS) with 2.2 million members, and 57,000 cooperative

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societies for the assetless (i.e. BSS) with 1.5 million peasants were being managed (BRDB 1998: vii).

Following its success the village-based cooperative or *Comilla model* for development, which became known as the Comprehensive Village Development Program (CVDP), was adopted as a development strategy for the whole nation.

The setting up of the CVDP highlights another thrust of governmentality—to bring the life of the poor villagers under the *development* gaze. The operation manuals of CVDP reveal how the life of the villagers was to be ordered, disciplined and oriented towards *development*. Insights developed through disciplines such as Economics, Sociology, Social Anthropology, Population Science, Public Administration and Psychology—regarding the working of the human mind, and social organizations—were used in CVDP. These resembled clearly what Foucault discussed in *The Order of Things (1973)*, *Discipline and Punish (1991a)*, 'Governmentality'(1991b), and *The Birth of the Clinic (1994)*. For example, the idea of 'one village, one organization' and 'laboratory areas' for *development* comes directly from the above-mentioned disciplines, and their deployment is directly illustrative of Foucault's insights.[6]

CVDP Activities

In light of CVDP's objectives, the main activities that are performed by the organization are the formation of a *Shamity* (with a prescribed structure); formation of capital by every family; weekly, monthly, yearly and other relevant meetings; training seminars and workshops;

[6] The Comprehensive Village Development Program (CVDP) experiment started in 1975 with the idea of 'one village, one organization'. After fourteen years of experiments on the subjects of *development* were carried out within the 'laboratory area', the Academy approved the program as a success and in the Third Five-year Plan of Bangladesh it was accepted for further experiment. Objectives of CVDP were to involve people of all classes and professions within the existing village-based cooperative institutions to cooperate in poverty-alleviation and multidimensional *development* activities; encourage a participatory approach to *development*; create their own capital through savings; strengthen the village institute as the receiving point for all kinds of services; create employment opportunities; improve the status of women through appropriate education and training; reduce population growth through continuous education, motivation and training; and finally eradicate illiteracy, ignorance, social stagnation and frustration through various social awareness programs (Obaidullah 1996: 251–2).

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activities involving agricultural production, health, population control and nutritional programs for the village people; and educational reform in line with *development*.

In forming organizations, CVDP used previous village-based *development* units and expanded their operation by introducing the idea of 'one village, one organization'. In each CVDP area more than two-thirds of the households on average were brought under the influence of its practices. Weekly meetings, monthly meetings at various levels, training on several *development* issues, organizing seminars, and preparing annual reports are the major organizational and educational activities performed by CVDP. An annual report is prepared to describe achievements for the most recent year, and a policy document for the next year is presented to the members. Reports are structured in two ways: the incorporation of economic activities, and social *development*. At the practical level, like the previous *development* organizations, CVDP also includes all aspects of agricultural modernization, population control, and knowledge of *development* through training and education.

Compared with the previous organization and practices, CVDP involves itself more intensely in the everyday life of farmers in its area irrespective of class, groups and other characteristics. In terms of controlling mechanisms, CVDP is a *development* unit, which holds and exercises extreme power over other organizations. The first controlling mechanism is that the farmers who work within CVDP practice have to obey decisions about cultivation and other activities made by the organization. Every family shares, or is expected to share, their individual ideas on social, political and economic events with other members of their *Shamity* in their weekly meetings. In a way, the practice encourages discussing private issues in a public sphere, and has brought the farmers' everyday lives into public life—thus, we are here dealing with the power of a control mechanism which exerts itself (deploys) in everyday social life.

The experiment of CVDP is still continuing, as village-based cooperatives are deployed, and it has yet to materialize into a nationally replicable program. Besides cooperatives, V-AID, village-based cooperatives (or TTCA) and CVDP, there are other experiments being carried out and ideas being tested on the subjects of *development* within the 'laboratory area'. These programs include 'Small Farms and Landless Labourers Development', 'Ecological Farm and Environmental Considerations in Development', 'Women's Participatory Development', 'Women's Education, Income and Nutrition

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Improvement Project' and 'Community Empowerment for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program' (BARD 1997). All these experiments started with the formation of a group that was included in a specific categorization. Categorization of the peasantry is an exercise which isolates the subjects from each other and produces space for new interventions to construct an environment where an operation of normalization will continue. It is an exercise of power whereby the villagers are increasingly brought under the surveillance gaze. When *development* plans fail, new fictions are constructed to justify new interventions.

III. Non-Government Organizations

In addition to government-assisted *development* through various institutions and experiments, *development* is also deployed by a number of non-government organizations (NGOs). At present more than fifteen hundred non-government *development* organizations are working in Bangladesh with the aim of eradicating poverty from society.[7] Of the NGOs, the Grameen Bank, BRAC and PROSHIKA are well recognized nationally and internationally for their involvement in *development* and for the effectiveness of their projects in helping and empowering the poor. Like the government-initiated projects, NGOs also follow the technique of mobilizing the poor in groups. As has been pointed out already, several NGOs also deploy *development* strategies in village, as well as urban, areas initiated through the formation of groups at the local level, and it is worthwhile here to show how the NGOs come to accept group formation as the beginning of intervention.

NGOs have formed more than two hundred thousand centres/groups covering about 60,000 villages and slums (BRAC 1998: 1; PROSHIKA 1999: 1; Grameen Bank 2002). Each centre/group covers ten to twenty participants who operate under the surveillance of a centre/group. Participants are observed and monitored by the centre/group and governed by set rules deployed centrally by the non-government (deployment) agencies.

[7] As of May 16, 2000, 1525 non-government *development* organizations working in Bangladesh are fully or partially dependent on foreign assistance. Of the total foreign funded non-government *development* organizations, more than 150 are directly controled by international agencies (GOB 2000; data collected and computed by the authors).

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At village level, almost every peasant family has been brought under *development* practice through participating in either micro-credit activities or agricultural modernization. Each practice operates through a system of organization where farmers are observed from above and are managed by the *development* institutions. The 'project' of developmentalism in Bangladesh is a successful production of Western knowledge and power. *Development* starts with planning at top levels, where Western-trained élites are the spokespeople. Development has produced, in them, a huge *development* clan (the élite of *development*) connected with the world *development* 'tribe', as Hannerz (1990, cited in Cooper & Packard 1997: 6) notes, which operates within, and controls, everyday culture and imagination of the local inhabitants.

Following *The New Nation* (14 May 2001), we want to stress that *development* has became very handy in helping the élite to be rich and powerful in the name of eradicating poverty. The poor and the *development* élite have become mutually interdependent. In this sense, there would be no need for *development* if the poor did not exist. But, nevertheless, in preparing their plans, the clan considers the rules and norms set by the organizations where they operate—fulfilling the demands of the Western intellectual domain—without taking cognisance of those for whom the plans are prepared. As an organized and skilled body, the élite of *development* produces poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy, under *development* and much more, while it circulates within the international market proposing policies to eradicate these abnormalities. Empowered with their Western knowledge and rationality, they construct policies based on local variables and then take charge of deploying these new policies and strategies. In the process of deployment, the experts either become involved with government or non-government *development* organizations or achieve new social positions that allow them to observe peoples' lives more closely. Thus, the production of *development* discourse continues as stories of poverty, malnutrition, under *development* and illiteracy persistently appear in texts and practices.

People in power, either in government or outside, become actively involved in promoting *development*. *Development* also becomes a vehicle for protecting the images of knowledge, or more precisely, the 'codes of knowledge', formed by a systematic structure. *Development* reports from the local—all the way up to the national—level are packed with words and statements that enabled the shaping of the everyday intellectual climate towards developmentalism. They produce the

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unquestionable acceptance of deployment policies that make possible the wide range of techniques of implementation operating under the rubric of modern science and rationality, which in turn enabled practitioners to construct normalization and disciplinary techniques. As each one of them has failed, still newer rationality has been invented to continue the deployment.

That is, the practice of *development* produces a system of knowledge that is exercised through preparation of annual *development* plans, yearly budgets, structured macro-economic policies, and liaison with Western policy-making bodies (e.g. WB, IMF, UN). In the process, it also produces more dependency and control, and creates a trend towards more isolation from the indigenous culture and norms. Deployment of *development* techniques in agriculture (for example) produces new practices, systems and rules at everyday level but also creates a more stratified society in terms of wealth, knowledge and dependency, and more disciplinary norms. The other alarming and dangerous trend observed in agricultural production is that the destinies of indigenous culture, for example, in their seed and water use—the power of the local people—affects the environment and, even more significantly, is destroying bio-diversity (Ullah 1999; UBINIG 2000).

IV. Conclusion

Development, in both rural and slum areas, starts with educating people into specific norms that are considered important to *development*. Thus the villagers/slum dwellers are brought under the disciplinary gaze of developmentalism. The process of transformation effects immense disciplinary power that not only incorporates the lives of the rural and slum population but shapes and manages their lives. *Development* in Bangladesh began with the introduction of the mechanism that ultimately brought the subjects under the domain of disciplinary power.

Theoretically, we have been able to show how the 'power of normalization' operates to bring the subjects under a régime of disciplinary norms. This has not only brought the people under the management of normalization but has also changed the foundations of their imagination. For instance, when a farmer says: 'whatever the seeds provided, I'll use them as long as they produce more' or 'we don't have to think for ourselves, the development organizations do that', he clearly indicates a crude subjectivization. He's a subject who does

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not belongs to himself, but to the organizations that produce, manage and control the domain. The process of subjugation continues through the execution of never-ending normalization techniques structured or formed in light of Western rationality and science.

We do not wish to provide specific policy prescriptions, which surely would jostle to station our position as another statement within the culture of universal truth. However, in these few concluding paragraphs, we will provide some ideas intended to encourage more critical observation in the domain of *development*, which, in the long run, may contribute to orienting the policy-making process so that it will ultimately free (liberate) the subjects from the **burden of development**.

This process of normalization will continue forever unless a qualitative change occurs in the intellectual climate of The Clan leaders and their recipients. And that would be possible only through increasing their capacity to reconsider the foundations of knowledge—for both clan members and their recipients—which will in turn enable them to appreciate where they stand in contemporary humanity. This would empower them with a new insight to dismantle the existing control mechanisms of dependency and constructed notions of *development*.

If this dedication of the *development élite* can be reversed—with planning becoming based on the needs of the recipients—the amount of project preparation will be reduced, which in the long run will contribute to freeing (liberating) the masses from the burden of *development*. Before getting a sense from the masses of their 'needs', a process of information dissemination should be developed which would empower them with education about what they need where they currently stand. Thus, we contend it is education, in the real sense of the term, which will free the *development*-dependent subjects and turn them into *development*-free citizens.

Although they are relevant for *development* discourse analysis, two crucial theoretical issues—why the process of normalization continues to operate and why there isn't any significant effort to dismantle its exercise—have not been examined in the present study. In our view, these are issues which should be examined in future analysis to continue to contribute in the domain of critical knowledge. The formation of civil society, human rights, democracy, problematization of legitimation and corruption in post-colonial underdeveloped countries remain suitable areas to examine social formations using discourse insight.

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