

In most developing countries, there exists an “overdeveloped” bureaucratic apparatus inherited as a colonial legacy and expanded through imitative postcolonial reforms, while the political, economic, and cultural realms remain largely underdeveloped. As a result, there is a certain incongruity between bureaucracy and society in these countries, which has serious implications for their socioeconomic progress. However, the existing literature focuses mainly on the structural and procedural issues of postcolonial bureaucracy, and contains very limited discourse on this mismatch between the bureaucratic apparatus and the overall social formation. This article attempts to explicate the nature and dimensions of this bureaucracy-society incongruity, analyze its adverse implications for socioeconomic development, and offer some remedial policy alternatives for consideration.

INCONGRUITY BETWEEN BUREAUCRACY AND SOCIETY IN DEVELOPING NATIONS: A CRITIQUE

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In developing nations, one of the most dominant features of state bureaucracy is its inherited colonial legacy, in spite of the postcolonial rehabilitation and reforms in the administrative superstructure.¹ Although the recent pro-market reforms under structural adjustment programs, including privatization, deregulation, and liberalization, have created certain challenge to bureaucracy, especially in terms of its size and scope, there has been minimal change in its inherited structural, normative, and behavioral formations. In these countries, bureaucracies still reflect their respective colonial heritage, including the British, French, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and American traditions.² While the British administrative legacy remains prominent in countries such as India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, and Botswana, the French tradition is dominant in the former French colonies such as Chad, Cote d’Ivoire, Gabon, Upper Volta, and Senegal, and the Spanish system is reflected in the former Latin American colonies. In other words, the demise of colonial rule in these Asian, African,

PEACE & CHANGE, Vol. 22 No. 4, October 1997 432–462
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and Latin American countries has not ended the former metropolitan traditions in bureaucracy with regard to its structure, function, classification, socialization, norms, and attitudes.³

The colonial legacy is evident even in the inherited pejorative features of bureaucracy such as elitism, paternalism, despotism, distrust, centralization, secrecy, formalism, aloofness, hierarchical rigidity, and urban bias.⁴ Regarding such inherited features in African bureaucracies, Asmerom mentions that "the most essential traits of the colonial bureaucracy, left behind by the British almost a quarter of a century ago, still form the part and parcel of the state bureaucracies of Tanzania, Kenya and Zambia."⁵ The traits of colonial bureaucracy are also observed by Jack Hopkins in Latin American countries, and by Jamil Jreisat in the Arab states.⁶ Countries that were not under direct foreign rule, such as Nepal and Thailand, were also affected by the administrative reality of the neighboring colonized nations, postcolonial technical assistance programs, and governmental use of foreign experts to modernize bureaucracy.⁷

The formation of such colonial administrative legacy involved certain historical stages: first, the pre-independence "preparation" for self-government based on colonial education and orientation; second, the postcolonial administrative "training" to modernize the public service; and third, the contemporary devices of administrative "reform."⁸ The continuation of the colonial legacy resulted from the fact that many of the postcolonial ruling elites themselves were products of colonial education and orientation. This legacy was perpetuated further through the arrangement of foreign study programs, establishment of administrative training institutions, employment of foreign experts, and adoption of bureaucratic reforms based on Western, especially American, technical assistance. All these components constituted the so-called "development administration" field, which remained distinctively Western in terms of a practical policy guideline and intellectual paradigm, and it allegedly became the mechanism to preserve Western dominance over developing countries and prevent them from being influenced by communist ideology.⁹

Thus, unlike the evolution of administrative system in advanced capitalist nations which accord with the changes in their extra-

bureaucratic societal realms such as the mode of production, class relations, political structure, cultural beliefs, and behavioral patterns, the administrative systems in developing countries were mostly imposed under the colonial rule and reformed in the post-colonial period by imitating the same Western model. In Western nations, the modern state bureaucracy emerged within a socio-historical context based on the scientific and industrial revolution, the rise of capitalist production, the separation of the state from religion, and human behavior guided by impersonal reason and competition. However, most developing nations adopted such Western bureaucratic models without experiencing similar socio-historical events and contextual realities. Due to the aforementioned colonial origin, imitative postcolonial reform, and exogenous nature of state bureaucracy in developing countries, there emerged a significant degree of incongruity or incompatibility between bureaucracy and society, which has serious implications for the perpetuation of various administrative, political, economic, and cultural problems in these countries. In this paper, the major dimensions of this incongruity between bureaucracy and society are explained, their major implications are examined, and their possible remedies are explored.

THE NATURE AND DIMENSIONS OF BUREAUCRACY-SOCIETY INCONGRUITY

In developing countries, the above incompatibility between the bureaucratic superstructure and the remaining social formation is manifested in three major dimensions of incongruity, including the incongruity between bureaucracy and politics, between bureaucracy and economy, and between bureaucracy and culture. In the following discussion, the nature of these three dimensions of incongruity is critically analyzed.

Bureaucracy versus Politics

The Western model of bureaucracy, adopted in many developing countries, is based on certain politico-administrative

presuppositions: the existence of an advanced and stable political system, a considerable degree of political neutrality of bureaucracy, an effective mechanism of bureaucratic accountability based on public representation and participation, and an ideological atmosphere of liberal democracy. But the socio-historical realities in most of these countries are such that often these presuppositions have little relevance.

First, it has been emphasized by various scholars that in developing countries, bureaucratic modernization and expansion led to political decay or underdevelopment in terms of the absence of competitive political parties, lack of interest articulation, limited political participation, and the existence of military rule.¹⁰ Some scholars also argue that state bureaucracy in postcolonial societies is “overdeveloped” and has overwhelming power in relation to the political realm. The origin of such overdeveloped bureaucracy alongside of an underdeveloped political system can be traced back to the colonial rule that downgraded or marginalized politics, discouraged political control over bureaucracy, fused politics into bureaucracy, expanded bureaucratic power based on ethnicity and communalism, and thus, established an ideological basis for a centralized and elitist bureaucratic state.¹¹ As found in the case of African countries, the resultant political system became fragmented, disorganized, and largely underdeveloped, while bureaucracy accumulated power beyond political control.¹²

In the postcolonial period, these inherited conditions led to a political vacuum that was soon filled by an increasingly powerful civilian and military bureaucracy, which in turn, further reinforced the obstacle to political development. In fact, most postcolonial states focused on the modernization of bureaucratic institutions (both civilian and military) at the expense of extra-bureaucratic structures such as constitutions, legislatures, and judiciaries.¹³ In many Latin American, West African, Middle Eastern, and Asian nations, “bureaucratic authoritarianism” replaced popular mobilization and mass politics. Such political demobilization by the bureaucratic-military oligarchy was observed by J. Nef, particularly, in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay since the 1970s.¹⁴ On top of

this, during the cold war, the ideological rivalry between the two superpowers was extended to almost all developing nations which led to the alignment of these countries with either of the ideological camps, the suppression of local political concerns, and most importantly, the subordination of political institutions to the bureaucratic apparatus.¹⁵ The superpowers often preferred a bureaucratic oligarchy based on rigid hierarchical structures and rule-bound norms to a democratic political system that would involve popular voices and unpredictable changes. The point here is that because of the colonial and postcolonial processes of political underdevelopment, we cannot assume that an advanced political formation underlay the rational bureaucratic model in developing countries. Extra-bureaucratic, political institutions remained too weak to counter-balance the bureaucratic power. Such a situation reflects the inherited incongruity between bureaucratic development and political underdevelopment in these societies.

Second, the overwhelming power of bureaucracy, its frequent intervention in politics, and its expansive control over state activities reflects another manifestation of the disparity between the overdeveloped bureaucracy and the underdeveloped political system. In regard to such excessive bureaucratic power, it has been pointed out that in many African and Asian countries bureaucracy represents a new class whose power is not based on the ownership of the means of production but on its position in the state apparatus and its access to various state agencies that regulate and control scarce resources.¹⁶ In recent years, the power of bureaucracy has expanded further due to the emergence of instrumental and quantitative state policies, the recruitment of specialized and professional experts, and the growing emphasis on information, expertise, and technical language which the people and their representatives can rarely comprehend.¹⁷ As a result, the political representatives have become more dependent on bureaucratic experts, leading to a form of incongruity between the expansive power of bureaucracy and the diminishing power of political representatives.

It is the military bureaucracy, however, that has undermined representative political institutions most severely in developing

countries. Within a decade after achieving independence, many of these countries came under varied forms of military rule such as indirect-limited intervention (to secure certain objectives), indirect-complete intervention (with a puppet civilian regime), civil-military alliance (between civil and military bureaucracies), open direct military rule (military rule without much legitimacy), and quasi-civilianized direct military rule (military rule with a tendency to seek legitimacy).¹⁸ This military intervention in politics created a vicious cycle of political underdevelopment because the military emphasized strong state apparatus, order, professionalism, and discipline, but undermined political mobilization, pluralism, and spontaneity. While the context of a weak or underdeveloped political system encourages and enables military bureaucracy to intervene in politics, it is such military intervention that leads to the perpetuation of political underdevelopment by disbanding political parties, suspending political institutions, discouraging freedom of the press, and dismantling mass associations.¹⁹ This condition reinforces the incongruity between bureaucratic development and political underdevelopment.

Third, within the above contexts of weak political institutions, political instability, and strong bureaucratic forces (both civilian and military), it is hardly possible to ascertain the political neutrality of state bureaucracy in developing countries. In opposition to the principle of such political neutrality that emerged in Western nations, the line between politics and administration in these countries is relatively blurred. In Africa for instance, Ladipo Adamolekun finds that "there is no country where the civil service norms of anonymity, impartiality and political neutrality are wholly respected."²⁰ For the author, although all regimes (parliamentary, military, and presidential) in Nigeria emphasized the norms of civil service impartiality and neutrality, in reality, such norms have always been violated. Kofi Ankomah goes further to mention that the colonially inherited notion of civil service neutrality in Africa was "a last ditch innovation designed to camouflage the reality of an administration which throughout its history had by definition been far from politically neutral."²¹ Similarly, in the Filipino case,

the premise of political neutrality has been explained as “the American desire to replicate its experience in the Philippines rather than upon a reasoned assessment of the socio-economic needs and political aspirations of the Filipino people.”²² The purpose of citing these examples is to make a point that in developing countries, there is incongruity between the rhetoric of political neutrality of state bureaucracy and the reality of its politicized nature and role.

Fourth, the very ideological basis of the Western model of bureaucracy is liberal democracy characterized by provisions such as regular elections, freedom to choose representatives, government by elected institutions, and the realization of public accountability. This tradition of liberal democracy assumes the neutrality, anonymity, and impartiality of state bureaucracy and its accountability to elected politicians (including the executives and legislators).²³ But as mentioned above, the principles and institutions of such democracy are often abrogated by the military regimes, the authoritarian states, one-party rule, monarchical powers, and patron-client relationships in developing countries.²⁴ Although there are countries that have recently adopted the British, American, or French models of democracy, such postcolonial, post-authoritarian, or newly emerging democracies are often unstable and fragile, dominated by a single political party, replete with rigged elections and unrepresentative legislatures, weak in terms of equality before the law, prone to antidemocratic forces, and considered as imitative or frozen democracies.²⁵ For W. Oyugi, the liberal theory of political anonymity of the civil service is a myth in East Africa; and for Jan N. Pieterse, the very assumption of the universality of Western political ideas (such as nation, state, civil society, and representative government) is increasingly proven invalid in Asia and Africa.²⁶ Thus, the basic politico-ideological foundation of Western bureaucratic model (i.e., liberal democracy) is absent, weak, or unrealistic in most developing countries.

From the above discussion, it is possible to conclude that there is serious incongruity between the administrative realm and the political realm in developing countries, including the disparity or inconsistency between bureaucratic overdevelopment and political

underdevelopment, between the power of bureaucracy and that of the political institutions, between the rhetoric of political neutrality and the reality of politicization, and between the existence of Western bureaucratic model and the absence of its politico-ideological context. Such disparity between bureaucracy and politics is largely due to the exogenous (both colonial and postcolonial) origin and formation of bureaucracy as such.

Bureaucracy versus Economy

In advanced capitalist nations, the economic context of public bureaucracy is predominantly characterized by strong market forces, the institutions of free economic competition, the tradition of limited state intervention, and a complementary relationship between the state and private capital, although the increasing concentration of capital and the rise of corporate capitalism have weakened these conditions to a certain extent. In most developing countries, however, the economic contexts are quite different: The market forces are weak, free economic competition is limited, state intervention is expansive, and relationship between the state and indigenous capital is often conflicting.²⁷ Such economic circumstances imply the incongruity between the administrative and economic realms in these countries, because although they have adopted a Western model of bureaucracy, their economic contexts remain significantly different from Western economies.

First, the social formation in most postcolonial developing nations is such that they inherited an advanced administrative system and a relatively backward economy at the same time. The very process of colonialism required an advanced bureaucratic apparatus to expand control over raw materials and cheap labor, maintain law and order, and ensure tax collection. Thus, bureaucratic advancement and economic backwardness went hand in hand. This colonial formation of an advanced bureaucracy and a backward economy continued in most developing countries after their decolonization. Hamza Alavi reflects the current disparity between the administrative and economic realms when he argues that in

postcolonial societies, the overdeveloped state apparatus, especially its bureaucratic-military oligarchy, exercises power over and is relatively autonomous from the major economic classes whose interests it mediates.²⁸ For Ziemann and Lanzendorfer, because of the dependent, fragmented, and unstable class structures in peripheral societies, the state apparatus holds overwhelming power by mediating the interests of various classes and groups. On the other hand, for Shivji, the state elites play a crucial role in transforming the weak petty bourgeoisie into a proper “ruling class” in postcolonial societies.²⁹

The point here is that in developing countries, the underdeveloped socioeconomic formation “enables” the bureaucratic state apparatus to accumulate more power in relation to various economic forces. On the other hand, this underdeveloped formation “requires” such a powerful state apparatus to mediate various economic interests and to overcome the underdeveloped status of economic structure as such. Thus, unlike the relatively complementary, instrumental role of state bureaucracy in serving the interests of private capital or its fraction in advanced Western nations, the state bureaucracy in developing societies becomes the dominant power, plays the role of a mediator, and, thus, often comes into conflict with various competing economic forces.³⁰

Second, the aforementioned power and role of state bureaucracy in the economic realm is evident in its expansive economic activities related to almost every sector in developing societies in the name of development, self-reliance, poverty eradication, and better living standards. The size of overall government expenditures reflects this economic intervention. Despite the recent initiative of privatization, for various reasons, the central government expenditure in 1992 was 21.7 percent of the GNP (Gross National Product) in Pakistan, 28.2 percent in Sri Lanka, 29.4 percent in Malaysia, 25.6 percent in Brazil, 22.1 percent in Chile, 22.4 percent in Venezuela, 30.7 percent in Kenya, 34.8 percent in Zimbabwe, and 40.4 percent in Botswana.³¹

The economic role of state bureaucracy has been rationalized on the grounds such as to reduce foreign domination over the

economy, substitute for weak private sector, induce entrepreneurship, and regulate natural monopolies. But except for the relatively positive economic role played by bureaucracy in a few newly industrialized countries, in most cases, this bureaucratic intervention often diminished the scope of market competition, restricted the opportunity for private investment, and constrained the formation and expansion of indigenous capital.³² For instance, the growth of indigenous private capital and entrepreneurship is inhibited due to the expropriation of national wealth by the bureaucratic elite in Nigeria, the subordination of money capital by the “bureaucratic-capitalist state” in Indonesia, bureaucratic restriction on market competition in most Latin American countries, and bureaucratic monopoly over the economy in Arab countries.³³ In addition, the expansion of indigenous capital and entrepreneurship is hindered by the collaboration of bureaucracies with foreign capital that usually competes with the domestic capital. In Africa, the mutually beneficial collaboration between state bureaucracy and foreign interests generally takes the following form: the transnational subsidiaries offer business partnership, board membership, and illicit payments to these bureaucrats, who in return, provide the regulatory advantages, profit protection, and access to local public finance to the subsidiaries.³⁴ Even the postcolonial reorientation of bureaucracy towards socioeconomic development failed to change its collaborative role to serve the interest of international capital.

Lastly, the extensive bureaucratic intervention in developing economies has been condoned also to achieve various social objectives, such as the generation of employment, redistribution of income, and provision of welfare, which have largely failed to materialize. In fact, through bureaucratic control over various enterprises, income has been often transferred from the common public to the ruling elites. In many developing countries, the state agencies have served the interests of various social elites, but for the urban underclass and the rural masses, these bureaucratic agencies remained unreachable, inaccessible, and indifferent.³⁵ In addition, the bureaucratic dominance over national resources and

socioeconomic activities, strengthened further by international development assistance, has expanded the economic dependency of the common masses on state bureaucracy.³⁶

In short, in most developing countries, the advanced nature of state bureaucracy has been quite inconsistent with the relatively underdeveloped economic context. Moreover, the role of this interventionist bureaucracy has been in conflict with the interest of indigenous private capital, and it has been often contradictory with the well-being of the common people. Such circumstances constitute a form of incongruity between the administrative realm and the economic sphere, although the nature and intensity of such incongruity may vary among these countries.

Bureaucracy versus Culture

The contemporary Western model of bureaucracy emerged and expanded within a cultural context that embodied certain values and norms such as secularism, individualism, rationality, competition, profit motive, and achievement orientation. This cultural atmosphere has been conducive to the advancement of Western bureaucracy distinguished by its features of merit, competition, specialization, impersonality, and achievement orientation. All societies, however, do not universally possess such values and norms that are compatible with Western bureaucratic model; there are always cross-cultural differences in bureaucratic attitudes and behavior.³⁷ In this regard, scholars such as Martin, Monavvarian, Dwivedi and Henderson, Bjur and Zomorrodian, and Lammers and Hickson have attacked the "myth" of value-free administrative system, emphasized the role of cultural values in shaping the state and its bureaucracy, and highlighted the ineffectiveness of the borrowed Western administrative model in societies with different sets of value system.³⁸

Most developing nations have inherited or borrowed the Western administrative framework, although the patterns of their local cultures remain significantly different. According to Linda K. Richter, most bureaucracies in developing nations continue to

possess the roles and attitudes inherited from the colonial heritage; and for R.P. de Guzman and others, various Western management techniques and procedures have been adopted in these countries without considering the consistency of these techniques and procedures with local customs, values, and norms.³⁹ There are sufficient studies which stress that cultures in developing societies are unique and have different sets of values such as ritualism, ascriptive norms, patron-client relations, reciprocity, caste structure, informal interaction, seniority-based authority, extended family, and collective responsibility.⁴⁰ For instance, P.S. Bhatnagar discovers the norms of caste and ethnicity in Nepal, Nasir Islam identifies the norms of kinship and tribal structures in Pakistan, Ledivina Carino and Grossholtz recognize the norms of strong family ties and patron-client relations in the Philippines, Ali Farazmand and Ayman Al-Yassini detect Islamic religious values in Iran and Saudi Arabia, and Denis-Constant Martin observes the primacy of family value in African countries.⁴¹ The point here is that in regard to the nature of relationship between the cultural and administrative realms, there is considerable disparity in developing countries between the values that are immanent in their indigenous cultures and the values that are inherent in their borrowed bureaucratic models.

First, at a macro societal level, since the overall norms or principles of bureaucracy in developing nations mostly represent various foreign sources, including the colonial administrative heritage, the post-independence administrative reforms based on Western designs, and the knowledge of local experts trained in Western countries, such normative standards are usually inconsistent with the indigenous social norms. In other words, due to their exogenous origins, the administrative values and norms are different from, and often incompatible with, the deep-rooted traditional values of the common masses. It is quite evident in the incongruity between the normative basis of traditional authority (i.e., ascriptive criteria) and that of the Westernized state bureaucracy. It is also evident in the impact of kinship, geographic affinities, ethnic identity, and caste system on the Western principles of merit and open competition. It

has been found that the bureaucratic norms of impersonality, merit, rationality, and neutrality are not always compatible with the sectarian and particularistic local norms in the Middle East, tribal affiliation in Africa, ethnicity in Southeast Asia, and personalism and patronage in Latin America.⁴²

The racial, ethnic, and religious heterogeneity in many developing countries has important implications for public policies and administration. In multi-ethnic countries like India, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka, various forms of preferential policies are often practiced to redress economic, political, and social inequalities between ethnic groups and to promote national integration.⁴³ Although such policies are in use in Western capitalist nations like the U.S. to rectify the inherited socioeconomic discrimination in bureaucracy, in developing countries it may go beyond this socioeconomic rationale to incorporate more emotional issues such as the special preference in bureaucracy based on ethnicity and to encompass almost every administrative issue. For instance, in Malaysia, the affirmative action program is based on the rationale to rectify inter-ethnic economic disparity, it also reflects the principle of Special Rights for *Bumiputras* ("princes of the soil"), including the Malays and other indigenous communities.⁴⁴

Second, at the organizational level, the above incongruity between the exogenous administrative norms and the indigenous social culture is reflected in a gap between the formal official rules and the actual bureaucratic practices, which has been commonly described as "formalism."⁴⁵ In other words, there is often a disparity between the formal administrative rules and codes of conduct representing Western model and the actual behavior of bureaucrats influenced by societal norms and expectations. It is often mentioned that in postcolonial societies, the colonial administrative habits, styles, and values unrelated to local traditions continued to reproduce the symbolism, not the substance, of a British, French, or American bureaucracy.

This formalism, implying a gap between official norms and actual practices, can be discovered in various administrative functions in developing countries. For instance, although these

countries have prescribed recruitment and promotion policies based on merit and achievement, in practice, many of them tend to use ascriptive criteria such as race, class, caste, language, and status in this regard. In Latin America, despite the merit reforms, only few countries (Brazil, Costa Rica, Argentina, Peru, Panama, Colombia, and Ecuador) are said to have some “elementary” features of a merit-based recruitment system.⁴⁶ In most of these countries, the formal criteria of merit coexist with the criteria of nepotism and friendship. Similarly, although many developing countries have formal provisions to determine job performance and compensation based on impersonal job criteria, the actual practices are often guided by personal loyalty, seniority, and status; while they have established an extensive network of administrative training, such training is structured and conducted to acquire knowledge and skills that are often imitative rather than need-based.⁴⁷

Third, at the individual level, the top bureaucratic elites in developing countries are usually accustomed to Western values and lifestyles, which they acquire through Western or Westernized education, training, and upbringing. It has been observed that the Western colonial rule and education led to the emergence of an elitist educated class, creation of “diploma disease,” dominance of mental work as opposed to physical work, and secularization of the state elite (especially the top civil servants) in South and Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Near East, and Latin America.⁴⁸ But these imitative values and elitist lifestyles are often incompatible with the cultural beliefs and modes of life of the common masses, not to mention the incapacity of the masses to afford such expensive modes of living. In brief, while in Western capitalist nations, the cultural beliefs and norms of the top public servants are not that different from those of the common public, in developing countries there is a significant cultural gap between the ordinary people and the high ranking public employees. It is largely due to the endogenous origin of bureaucracy in Western nations and its exogenous source in most developing countries.

THE MAJOR IMPLICATIONS OF BUREAUCRACY-SOCIETY INCONGRUITY

In the above discussion, various dimensions of incongruity or incompatibility between the administrative realm and other societal realms, including politics, economy, and culture, have been examined. It is also imperative to understand the implications of this incongruity for various social forces and interests. First, the disparity between the overdeveloped bureaucratic apparatus and the underdeveloped political system led to the formation of bureaucratic elitism and paternalism under colonial rule, which continues to exist in the postcolonial contexts. In fact, in many Asian and African countries, the power of bureaucratic elites, established during the colonial rule through the elitist structure of cadre, recruitment, and training, has expanded further in the postcolonial period due to the emergence of modern organizations, various coercive techniques, intelligence and information networks, and professional expertise.⁴⁹ In many of these countries, since democratic political institutions such as parliament, political parties, and interest groups remain relatively weak and too underdeveloped to counter the power of bureaucracy, it is quite difficult to ensure public accountability of the bureaucracy through these representative political institutions.

Second, in terms of the impact of incongruity between the administrative and economic realms, the expansive economic intervention of state bureaucracy and its rigid control over economic activities have undermined the formation of indigenous private capital and entrepreneurship, and thereby, constrained the overall socioeconomic development. This bureaucratic intervention and control have also expanded the economic dependence of the poor on state bureaucracy for employment, health care, education, agricultural inputs, and other goods and services, while the affluent classes have been able to avoid such bureaucracy by purchasing goods and services (often at higher prices) from the open market.⁵⁰ In addition, the goods and services provided by bureaucratic agencies are often unequally distributed: while the affluent social elites can manipulate and form alliances with bureaucrats to divert public programs in their favor, the powerless common

people rarely benefit from such programs due to their inaccessibility to bureaucracy, inadequate knowledge about the state welfare system, and maltreatment by bureaucrats. In the cases of Bangladesh and Nepal, it is found that through rural development programs, bureaucracy has served the interests of local elites rather than the poor peasants.⁵¹

Expansive control over public resources also enables bureaucrats to enrich themselves through various forms of corruption. It is simply because, the more control a bureaucracy exercises over public resources, the more opportunity it has to engage in corrupt practices, especially when the political mechanisms of bureaucratic accountability are relatively weak and ineffective (discussed above). Another implication of excessive bureaucratic control over developing economies has been the transnationalization of these economies and their subordination to foreign capital.⁵² The alliance between state bureaucracy and transnational corporations leads to the further impoverishment of indigenous capital and entrepreneurship, especially when the government rules, policies, and infrastructures in developing nations are directed towards the interests of foreign capital but against those of the indigenous capital.

Third, the incompatibility between the indigenous cultural norms and exogenous administrative values and lifestyles often creates a communication gap between the bureaucratic elites and the public in developing countries.⁵³ The top civilian and military officials, who have been educated and trained in Western knowledge, skills, and language, and accustomed to Western modes of life, are often out of touch with the masses whom they want to change or "modernize." This social isolation creates bureaucratic indifference towards societal problems (especially those of the rural poor) and leads to the misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the nature of such problems. The misunderstanding of social problems, in turn, results in unrealistic or impractical public policies and programs based on the imitative models of modernization.⁵⁴ Moreover, the biases of Third World bureaucrats for the Western rather than indigenous cultural forms and products become a motivational source for their corrupt behavior: they are

induced to acquire additional incomes through corrupt means to maintain their expensive Western lifestyles. Thus, while expansive state control over the economy provides these bureaucrats an “opportunity” for corruption as mentioned above, the biases for Western lifestyles reinforce their “willingness” to commit such corruption.⁵⁵

Fourth, in many developing nations, due to these bureaucratic shortcomings (including unaccountability, unequal accessibility, foreign-capital bias, social isolation, public indifference, unrealistic policies, corrupt practices) emerging from the aforementioned incongruity between bureaucracy and society, public confidence in bureaucracy has diminished.⁵⁶ Such low public confidence stems from different sources for various social groups and classes. For instance, many political representatives feel insecure because of their past experience of bureaucratic (especially military) intervention and the current reality of expansive bureaucratic power; the rural poor feel neglected due to bureaucratic indifference and inaccessibility; and private entrepreneurs feel stifled by excessive bureaucratic control or regulation. In the case of India, the colonially-inherited lack of public confidence in bureaucracy still persists: despite its Indianization, bureaucracy is often viewed with suspicion and distrust.⁵⁷ Thus, although bureaucracy exercises overwhelming power in developing countries, it suffers from a legitimation crisis or a crisis of public confidence.

Last, these three major dimensions of incongruity between administration and society in developing nations have eventually led to the perpetuation of their underdevelopment. In this regard, it has been pointed out by some scholars that the postcolonial bureaucratic systems, instead of being the agents of development and change, have maintained the existing structures, benefitted the affluent class and foreign capital, and exacerbated the dependence and underdevelopment of the poorer classes and nations.⁵⁸ This relationship between bureaucracy and underdevelopment, however, can be explicated more specifically in terms of how bureaucracy has affected the political, economic, and cultural realms in developing societies. As explained above, in many of these societies, the

overdeveloped bureaucratic apparatus is inseparable from political de-institutionalization. Expansive administrative control over economic activities is responsible for the fragility of indigenous capital and the misappropriation of public resources by the vested interests, including foreign capital. The preference of bureaucratic elites for Western lifestyles and cultural products is related to the erosion and impoverishment of indigenous cultural forms. In other words, for most developing nations, underdevelopment in the economic, political, and cultural realms cannot be isolated from the state bureaucracy characterized by its colonial origin, elitist nature, expansive power, interventionist tendency, foreign alliance, imitative values, and indifferent attitudes.

CONCLUSION: EXPLORING THE REMEDIES

In order to overcome these problems resulting from various dimensions of incongruity between bureaucracy and society, public administration scholars and experts have prescribed different remedial measures such as administrative reform, structural decentralization, and various means of bureaucratic accountability. However, these strategies, being mostly related to the administrative realm, have largely failed to overcome these problems, because the roots of such problems often go beyond the administrative sphere and emerge from the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of society. For instance, various administrative reforms (structural, procedural, attitudinal) in Asia, Africa, and Latin America have been quite ineffective, because these reforms are often imitative of Western experiences, detached from the indigenous societal context, aloof from local power structure and political culture, and uncritical of the vested interests attached to the existing system.⁵⁹ The adoption of Western administrative techniques, such as management by objective, organizational development, and program implementation system, have been quite unsuccessful in developing countries.

Similarly, the measure of administrative decentralization recently adopted by many Third World regimes has been relatively

unsuccessful in creating a closer relationship between bureaucracy and people, enhancing bureaucratic responsiveness, or facilitating public participation, because this measure tends to discount the reality of inherent social conflicts, elitist rural power structure, and unequal administrative access.⁶⁰ For instance, in Chile and Tanzania, administrative de-concentration has centralized power in the hands of municipal bureaucracy, and in Indonesia and Bangladesh, the opportunity for participation has been limited mostly to the rural elite and local bureaucrats while the issue of mass participation remains an unreality.⁶¹ With regard to bureaucratic accountability, many developing countries have adopted various executive, legislative, and judicial mechanisms which have been proven inadequate because these mechanisms of accountability do not address the reality of expansive bureaucratic power resulting from the dominance of bureaucracy over modern organization, professional expertise, information networks, economic resources, and various means of coercion.⁶²

Given these limitations of the existing measures to overcome various problems originating from the incongruity or discrepancy between bureaucracy and society, it is necessary to adopt alternative policies or strategies to resolve this discrepancy itself. First, the discrepancy between the power of an overdeveloped bureaucracy and the fragility of the underdeveloped political system, which accentuates problems such as bureaucratic intervention in politics and the lack of bureaucratic accountability, has to be overcome by changing the current bureaucracy from a caste-like hierarchical structure to a more team-oriented structure. The overcentralized decision-making process should become a more participative decision mechanism, and an impersonal mode of communication should become more interpersonal. It is also imperative, according to authors such as Gladstone Mills and M. Umaphathy,⁶³ to expand political control over bureaucracy by allowing the elected political party to appoint public employees (i.e. the provision of political appointees), by establishing a structure of elected political representatives parallel to the structure of regular bureaucracy at various levels, and by making bureaucracy committed to the ideological

objectives of government, especially when the ideology is people-oriented.

The examples of such endeavor to expand political control over bureaucracy include some African countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, and Ghana, where the principle of bureaucratic neutrality was de-emphasized and efforts were made to subject bureaucracy to the control of political parties. The outcomes of this strategy varied: while Tanzania and Zambia were more effective in exercising political control over bureaucracy due to the existence of an organized single dominant party, Kenya was less effective because of its weak political party structure and the localized nature of politics.⁶⁴ There is concern that such control of elected political parties over bureaucracy might lead to the politicization of bureaucracy and violation of its political neutrality. However, in the long run, it might have positive implications in terms of curtailing bureaucratic power, enhancing the power of political representatives, ensuring bureaucratic accountability, deepening representative political institutions, and eventually, reducing the developmental disparity between bureaucracy and politics. Anyway, as discussed above, the political neutrality of bureaucracy in most developing countries has been a mere facade under which bureaucracy has accumulated too much power.⁶⁵

Second, for mitigating excessive bureaucratic control over the economic realm, which constrains indigenous capital and entrepreneurship and tends to subordinate the economy to foreign capital, it is essential to reduce the scope of governmental economic activities run by bureaucracy. In this regard, one of the main objectives of the recent pro-market policy of privatization in Asian, African, and Latin American countries has been to reduce the scope and power of bureaucracy and eliminate its alleged inefficiency, misallocation, inflexibility, and unresponsiveness. But for many of these countries, privatization has increased poverty and inequality as subsidies were withdrawn and wealth became more concentrated. It shifted economic power from small producers to big ones allied with the new pro-market regimes, subordinated the national economy to foreign capital through the international sales of public

assets, and expanded the transnational corporate bureaucracy worldwide.⁶⁶ Therefore, it is essential to explore alternative strategies to reduce the dominance of state bureaucracy over the economy without exacerbating the conditions of poverty, inequality, and international dependence.

In this regard, it is necessary to shift economic power from both the state bureaucracy and the corporate capital to the common people through the formation of economically self-reliant organizations at the grass-roots levels for both rural and urban population, for both agricultural and industrial workers. Such a change must go beyond the current rhetoric of decentralization that focuses mainly on "administrative" structures without much consideration for the "economic" dependency of local structures on the state bureaucracy. The proposed local organizations should have maximum autonomy from the economic influence, control, and regulation of both state bureaucracy and corporate management.⁶⁷ This restructuring will have positive economic outcomes in terms of minimizing bureaucratic intervention and corporate influence, creating local-level entrepreneurship, ensuring economic self-reliance, and reducing the influence of foreign capital over the local economy.

Third, the problems of bureaucracy that emanate from its disharmony with indigenous culture, including its social isolation, indifference, and misunderstanding, require serious rethinking beyond the existing administrative training that often expands the bureaucracy-culture gap further. In this regard, it is essential to adopt administrative indigenization by critically examining the origins of the existing bureaucratic norms and attitudes, evaluating their relevance and implications, and establishing a new set of normative and attitudinal standards based on the indigenous cultural context. However, indigenization does not mean the total rejection of anything that has exogenous origin or the endorsement of all local cultural norms as some of these norms might be less desirable to certain groups and classes than to others (e.g., the caste system in India). Administrative indigenization should rather imply a creative process of determining appropriate administrative norms and attitudes through critical dialogue between various indigenous

groups, communities, and classes, so that such norms and attitudes become innovative rather than imitative, accommodative rather than exclusive, emancipatory rather than subjugating.

At an individual level, indigenization would require a basic change in the values and attitudes of bureaucratic elites by providing them with appropriate training and motivation, reducing their locally irrelevant foreign studies, and engaging them in an intensive re-education process, so that these elites can comprehend and empathize with the indigenous cultural context, so that they become less oligarchic, less technocratic, and more sympathetic and responsive to the norms and aspirations of the common people.⁶⁸ In terms of composition, it is necessary to ensure ethnic, racial, and gender representation,⁶⁹ and to ascertain a minimal degree of class representation in bureaucracy (especially in the higher ranks), so that public employees can interact with various groups and classes more effectively and understand their problems better.

In this paper, it has been explained that due to various socio-historical factors, different forms of incongruity have emerged between the realm of state bureaucracy and the realms of politics, economy, and culture in developing countries. Such discord, in turn, has led to the perpetuation of administrative, political, economic, and cultural problems, which represent an overall condition of underdevelopment. It has also been suggested that it is necessary to go beyond parochial administrative measures and undertake more comprehensive policies to overcome the existing incongruity between the bureaucratic and extra-bureaucratic realms of society by restructuring their interrelationships. The proposed remedial policies basically represent a tentative outline that might require further revision depending on the concrete socio-historical conditions that exist in various developing nations.

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51. See Westergaard, *State and Rural Society*; Harry W. Blair, "Rural Development, Class Structure and Bureaucracy in Bangladesh," *World Development* 6 (January 1978); Florence McCarthy and Shelley Feldman, "Administrative Reforms in Bangladesh: Incorporation or Democratization?," *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* 24 (July-October 1987); Nasir Islam and Georges M. Henault, "From GNP to Basic Needs: A Critical Review of Development and Development Administration," *International Review of Administrative Sciences* No. 3 (1979): 265; Henry Bienen et al., "Decentralization in Nepal," *World Development* 18 (January 1990).

52. For instance, the Nigerian bureaucratic elite has cooperated with transnational corporations in areas such as oil sales, monetary policy, import permits, profit repatriation, and credit repayment, and thereby, perpetuated the international subordination of Nigeria's economy. See Koehn, "Development Administration," 241; Gana, "Public Bureaucracy," 146.

53. This gap between bureaucracy and the average citizens, established under the colonial rule, still continues in the postcolonial developing societies. For an analysis of this cultural and communication gap, see Schaffer, "Administrative Legacies"; Baker, "The Role of the State"; D.K. Emerson, "The Bureaucracy in Political Context: Weakness in Strength," in *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia*, ed. Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Pye (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1978); Lucian W. Pye and Sidney Verba, eds., *Political Culture and Political Development* (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press, 1965); R.B. Jain and O.P. Dwivedi, "Bureaucracy in India: The Development Context," in Jain.

54. For further analysis of this cultural isolation of bureaucracy and its impact, see Keshav C. Sharma, "Public Bureaucracy and Political Leadership: A Pattern of Partnership

in Development Administration: The Case of Botswana," in Jain; Goodnow, *The Civil Service*; Heady, *Public Administration*; Dennis A. Rondinelli, "The Dilemma of Development Administration: Complexity and Uncertainty in Control-Oriented Bureaucracies," *World Politics*, 35 (October 1982): 57; Smith, *Decentralization*; Paul Harrison, *Inside the Third World: The Anatomy of Poverty* (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979), 46.

55. In African countries, the conflict between the indigenous norms and exogenous standards and the inadequacy of compensation are considered to be major causes of bureaucratic corruption. See Dele Olowu, "Roots and Remedies of Governmental Corruption in Africa," *Corruption and Reform* 7 (1993): 228–229; Oyugi, "The Impact," 122.

56. In relation to such a lack of public confidence caused by the society-administration disparity in Africa, Martin suggests that "the superimposition of European administrative systems upon African societies has caused the state to be considered foreign by African citizens." See Martin, "The Cultural Dimensions of Governance," 331.

57. Dwivedi and Jain, *India's Administrative State*.

58. See Peter H. Koehn, *Public Policy and Administration in Africa: Lessons from Nigeria* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990); Dwivedi and Nef, "Crises and Continuities"; Gana, "Public Bureaucracy"; Jain, "Bureaucratic Politics."

59. A.F. Leemans, "Overview," and Roderick T. Groves, "Administrative Reform and Political Development," in *The Management of Change in Government*, ed. A.F. Leemans (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976); Bernard E. Brown, "The Politics of Developing Nations," in *Government and Politics*, ed. Bernard E. Brown et al. (New York: Random House, 1966), 214; Shriram Maheshwari, "Administrative Reforms: Towards Theory-Building," *Indian Journal of Public Administration* 31 (July–September, 1985): 487–513; Ruffing-Hilliard, "Merit Reform in Latin America"; C. Rakodi, "State and Class in Africa: A Case for Extending Analyses of the Form and Functions of the National State to the Urban Local State," *Society and Space* 4 (December 1986); Dwivedi, "Structural Adjustment," 360.

60. See J. Samoff, "The Bureaucracy and the Bourgeoisie: Decentralization and Class Structure in Tanzania," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21 (1979) and "Decentralization: The Politics of Interventionism," *Development and Change* 21 (July 1990); Smith, *Decentralization*; Herbert Werlin, "Linking Decentralization and Centralization: A Critique of the New Development Administration," *World Development* 12 (August 12): 224; Cyril E. Black and John P. Burke, "Organizational Participation and Public Policy," *World Politics* 35 (April 1983): 394; John D. Montgomery, *Bureaucrats and People* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 8.

61. Alfredo Rehren, "Local Government in Authoritarian Chile," in Farazmand, *Handbook of Comparative*; Joel Samoff, "The Bureaucracy and the Bourgeoisie: Decentralization and Class Structure in Tanzania," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21 (January 1979); Karl D. Jackson, "Bureaucratic Polity: A Theoretical Framework for the Analysis of Power and Communication in Indonesia," in *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia*, ed. Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Pye (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1978); Blair, "Rural Development"; Barbara Ingham, "Decentralization and Development: Theory and Evidence from Bangladesh," *Public Administration and Development* 12 (October 1992).

62. See David E. Apter, *The Politics of Modernization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 166–167; Haque, "The Emerging Challenges," 267–272; Marcos Kaplan, "Recent Trends of the Nation-State in Contemporary Latin America," *International Political Science Review* 6 (1985): 90–93; Markovitz, *Power and Class*, 307.

63. Gladstone Mills, "The English-Speaking Caribbean," in Subramaniam, 317-351; Umapathy, "Designing Bureaucracy."

64. Gelase Mutahaba, "Controlling the Power of Public Bureaucracies: Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia in Comparative Perspective," in Jain; Gyimah-Boadi and Rothchild, "Ghana."

65. According to R. Baker, the colonial public administration, "under its guise of neutrality and objectivity, became an instrument of system maintenance rather than any substantial change." See Baker, "The Role of the State," 357.

66. M. Shamsul Haque, "Globalization of Market Ideology and its Impact on Third World Development" (paper presented at the IIAS (Brussels) International Congress, Dubai, 1-5 July, 1995); Baker, "The Role of the State"; Brendan Martin, *In the Public Interest: Privatization and Public Sector Reform* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1993); Walden Bello, Shea Cunningham, and Bill Rau, *Dark Victory: The United States, Structural Adjustment, and Global Poverty* (London: Pluto Press, 1994); Henry Veltmeyer, "Liberalisation and Structural Adjustment in Latin America: In Search of an Alternative," *Economic and Political Weekly* (September 25, 1993).

67. For analysis of a self-reliant model, see J. Ann Tickner, "Local Self-Reliance Versus Power Politics: Conflicting Priorities of National Development," *Alternatives* 11 (October 1986); Rajni Kothari, "Masses, Classes and the State," *Alternatives* 11 (April 1986).

68. See Umapathy, "Designing Bureaucracy"; David Hirschmann, "Development or Underdevelopment Administration? A Further 'Deadlock,'" *Development and Change* 12 (July 1981).

69. From various studies, it has been found that public bureaucracies in Malaysia, India, Zambia, and Lebanon are overrepresented by the dominant racial, religious, or language groups. In India, for instance, Muslims constitute 12 percent of the population, but they occupy only 4 percent of the total civil service and 2 percent of the higher civil service. See Peter Harris, *Foundations of Public Administration: A Comparative Approach* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1990), 197; Peters, *The Politics of Bureaucracy*, 101.