


**Sohail Zaman<sup>1</sup>, Inam Ullah<sup>2</sup>**

1. M.Phil. Scholar, Department of Political Science, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KPK, Pakistan.
2. M.Phil. Scholar, Department of Political Science, Abasyn University Peshawar, Pakistan.

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**Corresponding Author:**

**Sohail Zaman**

Email: [sohailzaman104@gmail.com](mailto:sohailzaman104@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:** *This research examines the socio-political dynamics and social effects of the Mazdoor Kissan Movement (MKM), or the Workers/Peasants' Party, in Northern Hashtnagar (Charsadda), Formed in 1968 as a revolutionary response to the exploitation of landless laborers by Khawaneen (feudal lords), the movement sought to challenge the traditional landlord-tenant relationship through the implementation of tenancy laws and rent control. Drawing on Marxist-Leninist theory, the study explores how variables such as poverty, marginalization, awareness, and landlord attitudes served as catalysts for peasant mobilization. The methodological framework employs a qualitative interview strategy to capture the perspectives of a predominantly illiterate or rudimentarily educated population, focusing on the movement's evolution from radical struggle to institutionalized political participation. The findings reveal that the MKM significantly enhanced social, economic, and political awareness, leading to the establishment of peasant courts, the abolition of forced labor, and the redistribution of land to the landless. However, the movement also faced considerable challenges, including bloody conflicts, internal factionalism, and the complex merger with the Communist Party of Pakistan following the ban on leftist politics and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union. Ultimately, the research highlights how the movement empowered the peasantry to demand state accountability and transformed the rural hierarchy, transitioning from an underground revolutionary force to a recognized entity within mainstream electoral politics in the area.*

**Introduction**

The Mazdoor Kissan Movement (MKM), also known as the Workers/Peasants' Party, represents a transformative revolutionary phenomenon in Pakistan's agrarian history, particularly within the Northern Hashtnagar region of Charsadda, established in 1968. The movement arose as a radical response to a deeply entrenched feudal system where landless laborers, or Kissan, faced systematic exploitation by the landlord elites, known as the Khawaneen. For generations, these tillers occupied a social structure defined by severe class divisions and traditional housing patterns, cultivating land they

did not own. The genesis of the movement was not merely a local grievance but a structural revolt guided by Marxist-Leninist theory, aiming to establish "Kissan Raj" (Peasant Rule) based on the conviction that the land should belong to those who plough it.

The emergence of the MKM can be understood within the broader context of Pakistan's historical and political vacuum. Following independence, the Communist Party of Pakistan was banned in 1951 by Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, primarily due to shifting geopolitical alliances and the "Pindi conspiracy case". This ban forced left-wing activists underground or into alternative political vehicles. The MKM flourished because it addressed the immediate, tangible grievances of the peasantry—such as evictions, unfair tenancy laws, and rent control—which formal political entities had largely ignored. By empowering the rural poor to resist the state apparatus and demand accountability, the MKM transformed from a local grievance group into a formidable political force.

Theoretically, the MKM aligns with the tradition of peasant movements, which scholars like Dhanagare (1983) define as significant variations of community movements. While Karl Marx initially doubted the radical potential of the peasantry, Lenin and Mao Zedong later assigned them central roles in revolutionary struggles. In Hashtnagar, the MKM adopted these socialist ideals, viewing the working class as the vanguard against socio-economic subjugation. This radicalism was fueled by conditions identified by Donald Sagoria as ideal for revolution: high profitability for owners, land scarcity, and cheap, labor-intensive cultivation.

A major catalyst for the MKM's emergence was the persistent failure of state-led land reforms. Efforts under Ayub Khan in 1959 and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in 1972 and 1977 failed to dismantle the dominance of large landowners. Under Bhutto's 1972 reforms, only roughly 600,000 acres were acquired, compared to nearly 9 million acres in 1959, leaving the fundamental feudal structure intact. This failure left landless tenants vulnerable to debt, slave-like exploitation, and the constant fear of eviction. For the farmers of Charsadda, the MKM was viewed as a "grace of God" to alleviate their poverty and provide a shield against feudal atrocities.

The socio-political landscape was further shaped by the colonial legacy of the British Raj, which allocated land to Jageerdars (feudal lords) in exchange for loyalty and military recruitment. This system created a class of "primitive rulers" who maintained dominance long after the British left. The MKM challenged this legacy by establishing alternative institutional structures, most notably the Peasant Courts (Kissan Jirgas). These courts were designed to settle disputes without the corruption and bias found in state-run legal tribunals, empowering peasants to abolish forced labor (Begar) and illegal expulsions.

The struggle involved high human costs and frequent bloodshed. Violent confrontations between peasants and the private militias of the Khawaneen were common, with leaders like Afzal Bangash becoming "terrifying ghosts" for the feudal lords. Furthermore, peasant women in Northern Hashtnagar faced a double burden of exploitation. Characterized by low literacy rates, they were often forced into unpaid domestic labor for landlords and suffered from sexual harassment. The MKM's efforts to raise awareness were essential in bringing these marginalized voices into the political fold.

However, the movement was also marked by intense factionalism and ideological evolution. Rifts over strategic decisions, such as participation in government-led reform committees, led to major splits, most notably between Afzal Bangash and Chairman Adam Khan in 1975. This internal rivalry culminated in a bloody battle at Yarjan village, where former allies turned their guns on each other. Additionally, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 dealt a psychological blow to left-wing politics in Pakistan, leading to a strategic merger in 1992 between the Pakistan Mazdoor Kissan Party and the Communist Party of

Pakistan.

This research aims to examine the socio-political dynamics and social effects of the MKM in Tehsil Tangi, Hashtnagar. By utilizing a methodological framework focused on variables such as poverty, marginalization, and awareness, the study explores how the movement improved social relations and transformed the rural hierarchy. The paper analyzes the MKM's transition from an underground revolutionary force to its eventual integration into mainstream political entities like the Awami National Party (ANP). Ultimately, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of the movement's history, its lasting impact on political consciousness, and the broader struggle for land rights and social justice in post-colonial Pakistan.

## Literature Review

### Agrarian Resistance and the Mazdoor Kissan Movement

The study of peasant movements occupies a critical space within the broader discourse of social and political transformations. Historically, these movements have been conceptualized not merely as spontaneous "mass riots" but as structured, transitional processes that reshape community identity and challenge entrenched power hierarchies. In Pakistan, the Mazdoor Kissan Movement (MKM) serves as a quintessential case study of agrarian resistance, born of a confluence of theoretical ideals, historical grievances, and systemic state failures.

#### 1. Theoretical Frameworks of Agrarian Radicalism

The radical potential of the peasantry has long been a subject of intense academic and political debate. While Karl Marx initially expressed skepticism about the peasantry's revolutionary capacity, later theorists such as Lenin and Mao Zedong reassessed their role, positioning them as the vanguard of struggle in agrarian societies. In Northern Hashtnagar, the MKM adopted these Marxist-Leninist ideals, operating on the conviction that "the land belongs to those who plough it".

Scholarly contributions by Dhanagare (1983) and Singh Roy (2004) distinguish between "radical" movements—unofficial groups seeking status changes—and "institutionalized" movements that establish formal structures to secure lasting change. The MKM transitioned through both phases, starting as a radical front before developing its own internal judicial and political mechanisms. Furthermore, Donald Sagoria identifies specific environmental factors that catalyze such revolutions: high profitability for owners, extreme land scarcity, and reliance on cheap, labor-intensive cultivation.

K.C. Alexander (1981) identifies three primary drivers for the expansion of peasant organizations: deteriorating monetary conditions, the presence of a motivating radical party, and the realization among tenants that their exploitation is illegal. This is complemented by Hamza Alvi's (1988) observation that while poor farmers are initially dependent on landowners, heightened hostility eventually builds the self-confidence necessary for organized conflict.

#### 2. Colonial Legacy and the Structure of Inequality

The structural inequality in Pakistan is deeply rooted in the colonial strategies of the British Raj. To maintain imperial control, the British allocated vast tracts of land to military officers and loyalists, known as Jagirdars. This created a class of "primitive rulers" who functioned as intermediaries, recruiting warriors for the British army in exchange for socio-economic dominance.

This legacy persisted post-independence, as these local feudal lords—the Khawaneen—continued to exert absolute authority over landless laborers, or Kissan. This relationship was defined by a rigid hierarchy where traditional housing patterns reflected deep class divides. The resulting system fostered a profound sense of alienation, a state where peasants felt like "strangers" in their own environment, separated from the fruits of their labor.

### 3. The Failure of State-Led Land Reforms

The Pakistani state has consistently failed to address land inequality through legislative means. While the 1959 reforms under Ayub Khan acquired nearly 9 million acres, they did not dismantle the fundamental power of the landed elite. Subsequent attempts under Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in 1972 and 1977 were even less effective; for instance, the 1972 reforms secured only approximately 600,000 acres.

These failures left landless tenants vulnerable to extreme debt, slave-like exploitation, and the constant threat of eviction. The MKM emerged in 1968 precisely because formal political entities had failed to provide a shield against these feudal atrocities. For the farmers of Charsadda, the movement represented a "grace of God" that addressed immediate grievances like unfair tenancy laws and rent control.

### 4. Conceptualizing Alienation and Gender Marginalization

Marxist theory, particularly the concept of "alienation from oneself," explains the psychological toll experienced by the peasantry. Workers were forced into low-wage, casual jobs that had no connection to their personal temperament or collective well-being, leading to a state of estrangement from their own environment.

This marginalization was acutely experienced by peasant women, who faced a "double burden" of class and gender exploitation. Women in Northern Hashtnagar were often forced into unpaid domestic labor for landlords, such as cleaning, serving food during holidays, or sweeping wheat. They also suffered from high rates of illiteracy and frequent sexual harassment. The MKM's awareness-raising efforts were critical in bringing these marginalized voices into the political sphere, though patriarchal structures remained a significant barrier.

### 5. Institutionalization, Factionalism, and Political Mergers

The evolution of the MKM from a grassroots uprising to an institutionalized force is marked by the creation of Kissan Jirgas (Peasant Courts). These alternative judicial bodies were designed to settle disputes through negotiation, bypassing state courts, which were viewed as corrupt and biased toward the elite. These courts were instrumental in abolishing forced labor (Begar) and illegal expulsions.

However, the movement's history is also characterized by intense factionalism. A major rift occurred in 1975 between Afzal Bangash and Chairman Adam Khan over participation in government-led reform committees. Bangash feared that government mediation would sap the movement's revolutionary energy, while Adam Khan sought legal recognition. This split resulted in a "bloody battle" at Yarjan village, where former allies fought each other, significantly weakening the movement's impact.

The political landscape changed further after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, which led to a general impression "that Marxist ideologies had failed". In response, the MKM underwent a strategic merger with the Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP) in 1992. This merger aimed to preserve socialist ideals but also triggered further internal disputes, such as the 2004 decision to remove "Communist" from the party's name to increase public accessibility in Pakhtunkhwa.

#### Research Questions

1. What were the primary socio-political catalysts and ideological foundations that led to the emergence of the Mazdoor Kissan Movement in 1968?
2. To what extent did the MKM succeed in transforming the socio-economic status of landless peasants and marginalized groups in Northern Hashtnagar?
3. How did internal factionalism and strategic political mergers influence the longevity and organizational stability of the Mazdoor Kissan Movement?

## Methodology

### Study Area and Research Design

The primary geographical focus of this research is Tehsil Tangi, situated within the Hashtnagar region of the Charsadda district. This specific locale was selected for its historical significance as the birthplace of the Mazdoor Kissan Movement (MKM) in 1968 and its unique social configuration. The region is characterized by a high concentration of villages and hamlets defined by traditional housing patterns that mirror centuries-old class divisions.

The research design was specifically tailored to investigate the social effects of the MKM, focusing on how the movement altered social relations and addressed systemic issues such as law and order, legal disputes, and the historical friction between the landed elite (Khawaneen) and the peasantry (Kissans). Given the complexity of the movement's evolution from a radical revolutionary front to its eventual integration into mainstream politics, the study employs a qualitative methodological framework. This approach allows for a nuanced exploration of the socio-political dynamics that transformed the rural hierarchy in Northern Hashtnagar.

### Operational Variables

To provide a rigorous analysis of the movement's trajectory, the study utilizes a structured framework of operational variables. These are categorized as follows:

- **Independent Variables:** These include poverty, marginalization, awareness, landlord attitudes, displacement, agricultural productivity, and politics. These factors were systematically analyzed to determine their role in influencing the intensity, mobilization, and eventual institutionalization of the peasant struggle.
- **Dependent Variable:** The primary dependent variable is the peasant movement itself. The research aimed to measure how fluctuations in the independent variables—such as an increase in political awareness or shifts in landlord-tenant power dynamics—affected the overall development and sustainability of the MKM.

### Data Collection Tools and Strategy

The demographic profile of the target population necessitated a specialized data collection strategy. Because the majority of respondents in the rural settings of Hashtnagar were either illiterate or possessed only a rudimentary education, traditional written surveys or complex questionnaires were deemed impractical. Consequently, a detailed, structured interview strategy was developed as the primary tool for data collection.

The interview schedule was meticulously planned to capture a wide range of qualitative data, including personal accounts of alienation, the specific marginalization of women, and the perceived impact of leadership decisions on the movement's success. To ensure the integrity of the data, the interview tools underwent a rigorous evaluation and pre-testing phase. This process was essential for identifying and eliminating ambiguities, correcting potential errors, and ensuring that the questions were culturally and socially relevant to the specific context of Hashtnagar.

### Sampling and Participant Demographics

The sampling strategy was designed to provide a holistic view of the agrarian population. The primary participants were Kissans (tillers), many of whom have cultivated land owned by the Khawaneen for multiple generations. Furthermore, the research prioritized the inclusion of peasant women, who have historically faced a double burden of exploitation, including unpaid domestic labor and sexual harassment.

In addition to the peasantry, the study engaged with current and former members of various MKM

factions. This includes individuals associated with the groups led by Afzal Shah Khamoosh, Amjad Ali, and Kamil Bangash. By interviewing these diverse stakeholders, the researcher was able to document the internal strategic logic behind various political mergers and the nature of the factional disputes that have marked the movement's history.

### **Historical and Qualitative Context**

Recognizing that the MKM cannot be understood in isolation from its historical roots, the methodology incorporates a significant archival and qualitative dimension. This involved a comprehensive review of historical records and party documents, such as the resolutions passed during the 1992 Provincial Conference at Nishtar Hall, the outcomes of the 1998 Mandani Congress, and the 2004 Lahore Congress. This historical analysis was crucial for tracing the movement's transition from an underground revolutionary force—following the 1951 ban on the Communist Party—to a recognized political entity.

### **Methodological Framework and Reliability**

The sequence of the study and the statistical techniques applied during data analysis were derived directly from the research's conceptual framework. This structured approach ensured that the findings regarding the movement's achievements—such as the establishment of Kissan Jirgas (Peasant Courts) and land redistribution—were grounded in rigorous academic standards. The methodological foundation of this work is supported by the established theories and techniques for social science research as outlined by Nachmias and Nachmias (1992), and Babbie (1998). These scholarly references provided the necessary guidance to maintain validity and reliability throughout the research process.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **1. Socio-Economic Outcomes and Peasant Empowerment**

The research findings indicate that the Mazdoor Kissan Movement (MKM) functioned as a transformative force in the lives of the people of Northern Hashtnagar, fundamentally altering the socio-economic landscape and instilling a high degree of political awareness among the marginalized. One of the most significant results of the movement was its success in empowering the landless peasantry to challenge a state apparatus and feudal structure that had exploited them for generations. The movement was directly responsible for the abolition of primitive practices, most notably forced labor (Begar) and illegal expulsions. Before the rise of the MKM, the peasantry existed in a state of extreme bitterness, performing arduous labor while the Khawaneen (landlord elites) seized the vast majority of agricultural profits.

Specifically, the movement facilitated a tangible increase in worker wages and the redistribution of land to those who had previously been landless. The findings reveal that the radical pressure exerted by the MKM was so potent that many landowners were forced to flee Hashtnagar entirely, abandoning their farmlands. To this day, much of this land remains in the possession of the landless farmers who occupied it during the height of the struggle. Beyond land rights, the movement addressed the physical living standards of the working class by securing better housing for farm workers, thereby providing a degree of security that had been nonexistent under the traditional feudal hierarchy.

However, these socio-economic gains were not achieved without a high cost. The struggle was characterized by frequent bloodshed and intense political constraints imposed by both the feudal lords and traditional politicians. The "red banner" of the movement, featuring a single white star, became a vital symbol of protection across Peshawar, Mardan, Swat, and Malakand, attracting support even from members of the upper class, such as Faridun Khan, who abandoned a life of luxury to join the peasant cause.

## 2. Alternative Judicial Systems: The Kissan Jirga

A critical institutional result of the MKM's development was the establishment of the Kissan Jirga (Peasant Court) system. These internal judicial bodies were created as a direct alternative to state-run legal tribunals, which the peasantry viewed as corrupt, biased toward the elite, and characterized by bribery. The findings demonstrate that these peasant courts were effective because they provided a corruption-free platform for resolving disputes through mutual negotiation.

The Kissan Jirga system was a strategic response to the "black laws" and traditional Jirgas where landlords dominated and frequently humiliated farmers. By preparing their own decrees and legal framework, the MKM provided a sense of justice and institutional security that the state had failed to provide. This marked a shift from a radical grassroots front to a more formal political entity capable of governing its own internal affairs.

Despite its initial success, the discussion of these results must also acknowledge a "darker side" to this autonomy. The sources reveal that in later years, some farmers who had acquired land through the movement began to adopt "feudalistic thinking". This led to internal evictions and personal enmities within the peasant class, as some individuals treated their own laborers with the same cruelty they once fought against. This internal "feudalization" suggests that while the movement changed the players in the power dynamic, the underlying structures of exploitation proved difficult to fully eradicate.

## 3. Resistance Against Evictions and State Violence

The results highlight a persistent pattern of armed resistance against land evictions, illustrating the movement's radical resolve even in the face of state violence. In January 2002, a joint operation by police and border guards in South Hashtnagar attempted to evict farmers who had occupied land since 1970. The resulting clash was violent: peasants torched tractors belonging to a senior police official who owned the land, leading to gunfire, injuries to a rancher, and the arrest of 16 farmers.

Similar incidents occurred more recently, such as in September 2011, when eight tenants were injured in the Gangodher area while resisting eviction by a gang of "gangsters" associated with a former London-based landlord. These findings underscore the continued vulnerability of landless tenants despite decades of activism and signify that the struggle for land rights remains an active, often violent, confrontation between the state and the peasantry. The movement's legacy is defined by this refusal to submit to state-sponsored displacement.

## 4. Institutional Evolution and the 1992 Merger

The political trajectory of the MKM underwent a significant shift following the collapse of the Soviet Union, which dealt a severe psychological blow to left-wing politics in Pakistan. This event created a general impression "that Marxist ideologies" had failed, prompting leaders like Imam Ali Nazish and Afzal Shah Khamoosh to seek strategic alliances to preserve socialist ideals. This led to the 1992 merger between the Pakistan Mazdoor Kissan Party and the Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP).

The 1992 Provincial Conference held at Nishtar Hall, Peshawar, was a landmark event that transformed the MKM from a local agrarian front into a politically sophisticated party with a broad national and international agenda. The resolutions passed during this conference reflect a deep ideological commitment to global social justice and anti-imperialism, including:

- **Condemnation of American Imperialism:** The party denounced the "poisonous propaganda" against socialism and argued that capitalism only brought hunger, war, and illiteracy.
- **Opposition to the New World Order:** The MKM viewed the US-led "New World Order" as a mechanism for exploiting the third world and blackmailing emerging capitalist countries.

- **Critique of Domestic Policy:** The party condemned the Nawaz Sharif government for economic bankruptcy, inflation, and playing a "hideous game" with the country's destiny.
- **Demands for Justice:** Resolutions included calls for the protection of women's rights, the release of political prisoners like Asif Ali Zardari, and the restoration of reserved seats for women.

These findings show that the MKM successfully integrated its local agrarian struggle into a wider critique of global capitalism and state mismanagement.

### **5. The Pathology of Factionalism and Leadership Rifts**

A major point of discussion in the research is the internal fragmentation that consistently weakened the movement's impact. The most tragic milestone in this regard was the 1975 "bloody battle" at Yarjan village, where the factions of Afzal Bangash and Chairman Adam Khan—who were once united against the landlords—turned their guns on each other. This split originated from a disagreement over a government-proposed tripartite reform committee; while Adam Khan saw participation as a path to legal recognition, Bangash feared it would weaken the movement's revolutionary momentum.

This factionalism persisted into the 21st century and was often driven by personal egos and "bargaining mindsets". Following the death of Imam Ali Nazish in 1999, the 2004 Lahore Congress saw a major rift over the party's identity. The decision to remove the word "Communist" from the party's title to make it more accessible to the public in Pakhtunkhwa led to further revolts and the departure of key leaders to other platforms.

Furthermore, attempts to unite factions led by Kamil Bangash (son of Afzal Bangash) and Amjad Ali were frequently fraught with difficulty. These groups often merged only to strengthen their bargaining positions against one another rather than out of a shared ideological commitment. Kamil Bangash's refusal to cooperate with Amjad Ali, whom he accused of using his father's name for non-political gains, illustrates how leadership disputes superseded the collective goals of the working class.

### **6. Alienation and the Gender Gap: The Unfinished Revolution**

The concept of alienation remains central to the Hashtnagar context. The findings confirm that peasants were alienated from the land they worked and, as the movement matured, occasionally from each other due to the aforementioned internal disputes. The "alienation from oneself," where workers are forced into low-wage, non-temperamental labor, was the primary catalyst for the initial 1968 uprising.

However, the results regarding peasant women reveal a significant gap in the movement's success. While the MKM secured land for many, women in Northern Hashtnagar continued to face severe atrocities, including unpaid domestic work for landlords (washing clothes, serving food during holidays like Eid) and sexual harassment. The high rate of illiteracy and a lack of educational resources for girls in rural areas suggest that the movement's revolutionary benefits did not always penetrate the domestic sphere or challenge deep-seated patriarchal structures. Peasant women faced a double burden of class and gender exploitation that the MKM's male-dominated leadership was often unable or unwilling to fully address.

### **7. Integration into Mainstream Politics and the Loss of Radical Identity**

A major point of contention in the movement's history is Afzal Bangash's decision to move toward integrating the MKM into the Awami National Party (ANP) in 1977. This involved a return to the leadership of Wali Khan, whom Bangash had previously broken away from. Critics argue that this move was a historical error that "pushed back the movement" and caused the MKM to lose its distinct radical identity.

The eventual expulsion of Salar Amjad Ali and the resignation of Kamil Bangash from the ANP suggest

that this mainstream merger failed to provide a sustainable home for peasant interests. Following Bangash's death, the movement's "Shiraz" (organizational fabric) was temporarily disintegrated. This transition from a radical grassroots front to a mainstream political ally was fraught with strategic errors that diluted the movement's revolutionary purpose.

In summary, while the MKM successfully dismantled the feudal status quo in Hashtnagar and provided land and dignity to thousands, its long-term stability was undermined by external state pressure and internal divisions. The failure of state land reforms in 1959 and 1972 provided the initial vacuum for the MKM to fill, but its later integration into mainstream politics and its internal "feudalization" created new challenges.

The Hashtnagar experience serves as a vital case study in the power of organized peasant resistance to fundamentally alter the power dynamics of a feudal society. Its history warns of the dangers of personal ego, factionalism, and the loss of radical purpose through premature political integration. For the farmers of Hashtnagar, the struggle continues as contemporary leaders attempt to reconcile different factions and restore the movement to its former glory. Ultimately, the MKM remains a testament to the enduring human struggle against socio-economic and political subjugation.

### **Conclusion**

The Mazdoor Kissan Movement (MKM) represents a transformative chapter in the agrarian and political history of Northern Hashtnagar, Charsadda, marking a departure from centuries of feudal subjugation towards a revolutionary consciousness. Established in 1968. The movement successfully shifted the socio-political landscape by challenging the deeply entrenched authority of the Khawaneen (feudal lords) and replacing it with a collective identity for landless laborers, by adopting Marxist-Leninist ideology, the MKM provided a theoretical and practical platform for the peasantry to challenge their "underdog" status and demand that the land rightfully belong to those who plough it. This conclusion synthesizes the movement's successes, the institutional innovations it birthed, and the internal pathologies that eventually led to its fragmentation.

The movement's most significant achievement was the dismantling of primitive forms of exploitation that had been protected by both colonial legacies and the post-independence state apparatus, through organized resistance, the MKM successfully abolished forced labor (Begar) and illegal expulsions, while securing land redistribution and higher wages for thousands of tillers. These successes were not merely economic; they provided the peasantry with a sense of dignity and ownership that fundamentally altered the rural hierarchy of Hashtnagar. For many Kissan, the movement served as a "shield" against feudal atrocities, filling the vacuum left by the consistent failure of state-led land reforms in 1959 and 1972.

A critical pillar of this empowerment was the development of alternative institutional structures, most notably the Kissan Jirga and peasant courts. These bodies functioned as a corruption-free alternative to state-run legal tribunals, which the peasantry viewed as biased toward the elite and characterized by bribery. By creating their own decrees and resolving disputes through mutual negotiation, the MKM demonstrated that a grassroots organization could govern its internal affairs and provide a sense of justice and security that the formal state had failed to deliver. This transition from a radical front to a formal political entity capable of self-governance remains one of the movement's most sophisticated legacies.

However, the research also highlights the significant internal and external challenges that hindered the movement's long-term stability and revolutionary potential. Externally, the MKM faced persistent state opposition and violent confrontations, with private militias and state forces often attempting to evict

farmers from occupied lands. Internally, the movement was plagued by intense factionalism and leadership rifts that frequently superseded its ideological goals. The tragic battle at Yarjan village in 1975, where the factions of Afzal Bangash and Chairman Adam Khan turned their weapons on each other, serves as a poignant reminder of how internal divisions could destroy working-class unity and serve the interests of the feudal elite. These rifts were often driven by personal egos and "bargaining mindsets" rather than ideological differences, weakening the movement's organizational fabric.

The political evolution of the MKM was further complicated by shifts in the global ideological landscape, particularly the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. This event led to a strategic but contentious merger with the Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP) in 1992, as leaders sought to preserve socialist ideals in a changing world order. While the merger produced sophisticated political resolutions condemning American imperialism and domestic economic mismanagement, it also triggered further splits regarding the party's name and radical identity. Furthermore, the controversial decision to integrate the movement into the Awami National Party (ANP) in 1977 is viewed by many as a historical error that caused the MKM to lose its distinct radical identity within the mainstream political fold.

One of the most profound findings of this study is the persistent gender gap within the movement's successes. Despite the rhetoric of universal liberation, peasant women in Northern Hashtnagar continued to face extreme poverty, illiteracy, and a "double burden" of exploitation. They remained vulnerable to sexual harassment and were often forced into unpaid domestic labor for landlords, suggesting that the movement's benefits did not always penetrate the domestic sphere or challenge deep-seated patriarchal structures. Additionally, the "feudalization" of some peasants who acquired land—leading them to treat their own laborers with cruelty—indicates that the psychological state of alienation was difficult to fully eradicate.

In final analysis, the Mazdoor Kissan Movement proves that organized peasant resistance can fundamentally alter power dynamics, yet its history warns of the dangers of factionalism and premature political integration. While the movement's "Shiraz" (organizational fabric) may have disintegrated following the death of leaders like Afzal Bangash, its legacy remains a living force in the political awareness of the people of Charsadda. The MKM's story is a testament to the enduring human struggle against socio-economic subjugation, providing vital lessons for future movements seeking social justice in the post-colonial world. For the farmers of Hashtnagar, the struggle for a united front continues as they attempt to restore the movement to its former glory while navigating the complexities of modern electoral politics.

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