

The Arab Future: Socialism as an Inevitable Alternative. A Materialist Analysis¹

ADEL SAMARA AND MASAD ARBID

ÍNDICE

| | |
|---|----|
| I. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| II. THE ARAB HOMELAND: AN EARLY TARGET FOR THE CAPITALISM OF CORE COUNTRIES..... | 2 |
| 1. AN AREA DELIBERATELY TARGETED..... | 3 |
| III. ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION | 6 |
| IV. MARXISM AND NATIONALISM | 6 |
| V. OTHER ISSUES RELATED TO THE ARAB NATION | 9 |
| VI. ATTITUDES ON THE ARAB NATION | 10 |
| VII. POLITICAL ISLAM..... | 10 |
| VIII. ARAB NATIONALIST MOVEMENT | 11 |
| IX. THE ATTITUDE OF CAPITALIST IMPERIALISM | 11 |
| X. THE SCHOOL OF TRADITIONAL ARAB COMMUNISTS..... | 13 |
| 1. TOWARDS A NEW THEORY FOR ARAB NATIONALISM: ANALYSIS AND VISION. HOW DID THE RULING AQLIMI ARAB COMPRADOR CALSSES DEEPEN UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT OF ARABS | 15 |
| XI. TWO ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ARAB NATIONAL DIMENSION | 15 |
| XII. THE 'RULING ARAB NATIONALISM': <i>THE NATIONALISM OF THE RULING CLASS</i> | 17 |
| XIII. THE 'LATENT ARAB NATIONALISM': THE POTENTIAL, BUT OBSTRUCTED NATIONALISM | 18 |
| XIV. THE PATH OF ARAB BOURGEOISIE: DEEPENING OF UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT | 19 |
| XV. THE DEEPENING OF UNEQUAL ARAB DEVELOPMENT | 21 |
| XVI. THE FIRST PATH OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB HOMELAND | 22 |
| XVII. THE SECOND PATH | 23 |
| XVIII. AN ECONOMIC STRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS DEEPENING OF UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT.... | 24 |
| 1. SELF—BLOCKING OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT..... | 25 |
| 2. THE DECLINE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION..... | 27 |
| 3. THE INTER—ARAB TRADE AS A CAUSE AND A RESULT OF UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT | 28 |
| 4. DEFORMITY OF DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE AND THE DEEPENING OF UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT | 29 |
| 5. THE DEFORMED STRUCTURE OF ARAB LENDING..... | 29 |
| 6. ARAB CAPITAL ABROAD LOSES ITS NATIONAL IDENTITY AND 'DEEPENS' UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT | 30 |
| XIX. THE POSSIBILITY OF A SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE..... | 30 |

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The following is a discussion of two parallel issues of class struggle in the Arab Homeland. Firstly, is the struggle against capitalism from its colonial/imperialist eras to its present global one. This struggle started more than two centuries ago and remains ongoing. The second issue is the struggle against the ruling Arab merchandise, bourgeois and more

¹ Some of the basic concepts and parts of this paper appeared previously in *Epidemic of Globalization: World Order, Zionism and Arab Nation* by Adel Samara, Chapter Two, pp. 26—62. Palestine Research and Publishing Foundation, USA, 2001.

recently the comprador capitalist classes. These regimes launched and continue a ‘civil war’ of oppression against the popular classes in the Arab Homeland. These two forms of struggle are interrelated and connected. The ruling Arab regimes were created and continue to receive full support and protection from the Western capitalist regimes. That is precisely why these regimes primarily serve the interests of the Western capitalist ruling classes in the countries of the capitalist core (COCC). In addition to this special relationship and interests between the Arab ruling classes and the ruling classes in the Western COCC, both are also allies and support the Zionist settler—colonial Ashkenazi entity²—Israel (ZSCA—I)³. It will be beyond the scope of this paper, to go into details to further demonstrate how each of these two forces had designed and established its relationship with and in support of ZSCA—I, i.e. directly or indirectly...etc. The struggle of the various currents of Arab liberation movement has always been (and remains) directed against these three allies: ruling classes in the COCC, the ruling Arab classes, and the Zionist Entity.

II. THE ARAB HOMELAND: AN EARLY TARGET FOR THE CAPITALISM OF CORE COUNTRIES

2. Since the early stages of the emergence of western colonial powers, the Arab Homeland⁴ has been a primary target on its agenda. The two principal reasons behind the colonization of the Arab Homeland are: its strategic position for the trade routes in the Ancient World (Asia, Europe and Africa), and its enormous wealth and resources, as well as the markets that it provides which was the traditional goal for classic colonialism.

3. The colonization of the Arab Homeland, in comparison to that of India, and China, was delayed due to its subjugation to the Ottoman Empire. The western colonization of the Arab Homeland coincided with:

a) *The gradual weakness of the Ottoman power.*

b) *The gradual, but arbitrary, integration of the Ottoman Empire into the World capitalist order which was led and dominated by western capitalist powers, mainly Britain and France.*

4. As a part of the Ottoman Empire, the colonization of the Arab Homeland took place in two stages. The first part was colonized before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire such as

² Ashkenazi: The dictionary defines *Ashkenazi* (plural *Ashkenazim*) as a member of one of the two divisions of Jews comprising the eastern European Yiddish—speaking Jews. The counterpart of this sect in Israel is the *Mizrahi*, who are the Eastern Jews. The political implication of the term Ashkenazi refers to the white European Jews who, by the end of the nineteenth century, created the Zionist movement as a settler colonial ideology and organization. The founders of this movement realized the great benefits and services that a settler Jewish state can provide to the colonial—imperialist center.

³ The reader will notice that the terms: Zionist settler—colonial Ashkenazi entity—Israel (ZSCA—I), Zionist state, Zionist entity, and Israel are used interchangeably in this text.

⁴ Arab Homeland: This term refers to all Arab countries. It deliberately rejects the incorrect and imposed term the ‘Arab World’. We understand the Arab World as those Arab countries (in Arabic *aqtar*) that are neighboring countries but not necessarily one nation. Arab World is a colonial term that was coined to negate Arab nationalism through a gradual and long—term re—education process of Arabs themselves that they are not one nation, rather several ones. By using the term ‘Arab Homeland’, the authors confirm that it is the adequate and proper term: the one that is reflective of the aspirations and the interests of Arabs. While colonialists and imperialists (mainly British) invented the term “Arab World”, they later proceeded to fabricate other deformed terms for the Arab Homeland such as the “Middle East” and “North Africa”.

Egypt, Algiers, Aden and the Sudan, which were colonized during the 19th century. The second part that represents the remainder of the Arab Homeland was colonized following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire during and after the First World War.⁵

1. AN AREA DELIBERATELY TARGETED

5. As in the history of colonialism, the Western powers designed their plans and strategies to conquer and maintain the Arab Homeland under their domination. Our discussion does not evolve around drawing the history of colonialism in the Arab Homeland. Our intent is rather to demonstrate how keen were the western colonial/imperialist powers in maintaining their domination over the region.

6. In a report to the foreign committee which was appointed by the Terman government (1907), and which consisted of professionals and experts in the history of empires from the universities of London and Paris, it is mentioned that: "The future of the two British and French empires in the region is under threat from the area which faces the Mediterranean from its East and South because it is inhabited by 35 million people, and it contains the necessary endowments and the power needed for awakening".⁶

7. The well known British officer in Arabia, Lawrence, wrote in a secret report to the British intelligence services in January, 1912: "Our main goal is the fragmentation of the Islamic unity and the destruction of the Ottoman Empire. If we know how to treat the Arabs, who are less conscious of stability than the Turks, then they will remain within the circle of political chaos in small states, hating and competing with each other and unable to unite...I took the adventure because I believe that the standing of the Arabs our side is a vital factor in achieving our hope for a fast and priceless victory in the East. It is better for us to achieve a victory without standing behind our commitments, than to be defeated".⁷

8. Lawrence also wrote: "If we behave properly towards these countries, it will stay as pieces of small colored chess stones composed of small areas competing with each other and unable to have any cohesion".⁸

9. The Commission of Campbell Banerman (1907), which was composed of experts in geography, economics, and military affairs, from various colonial countries, recommended that: 1) Who dominates the Mediterranean East coast is able to control the World, and (2) It is necessary to create a foreign and strong human barrier to separate the Asian part from the African part of the Arab region. This barrier must be an ally to the colonial powers and in enmity to the region's people.⁹

10. The colonial/imperialist powers were never satisfied by the simple domination of the Arab Homeland. They, additionally, planned to dismantle it culturally and obstruct its scientific and technological development as well. Anwar Abdulmalik, summarized British

⁵ To secure the domination of the western colonial powers over the Arab Homeland, resolve the constant tension between the two major colonial powers of that time, Britain and France, protect France's claims to Syria (at that time still under Ottoman rule), and also to protect France's colonial interests in the Arab region from the alarming growing British military power, a secret agreement known as Sykes—Picot was signed in May 1916 between the two countries with the presence of the Foreign Minister of Tsarist Russia. The agreement and its details of dividing Arab countries between France and Britain remained secret until unveiled by V.I. Lenin after the triumph of the Bolshevik Revolution (1917).

⁶ See Joseph Hajar, *Europe and the Fate of the Arab Mashriq*, Beirut, 1976, p. 2.

⁷ Zuhdi Fateh, *Lawrence on the steps of Herzl*, dar al—Nafees, Beirut, 1971.

⁸ Mahmoud al—Himsi, *Plans of Arab Development*. Center for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, 1980.

⁹ Salih Zahr al—Din, *Oil and the Zionist Entity*, in Strategy Journal, no 102, p.9. quoted in Ismail Milhim book, p 28.

colonialism in Egypt as follows: “Dunlop, the British consultant for education during the rule of the British High Commissioner in Egypt Lord Cromer, believed that maintaining the colonization of Egypt can not entirely depend on military and economic occupation only, but on the destruction of the underlying Egyptian culture and thought and to render this thought unproductive and unable to contribute and thus to remain dependent on the other. This goal can never be materialized unless education is deformed in all its stages towards *hifz* (to memorize by heart) rather than discussion, repetition rather than critical thinking, imitating the source and the teacher without the debate and creativity of the independent opinion, to respect the written word but without further examination or theoretical debate”¹⁰.

11. What is mentioned in the above quotation shows the intensity by which the colonial/imperialist powers have targeted the Arab Homeland. According to their interests, the British and French colonial/imperial powers designed a plan for the subjugation of the Arab Homeland. This plan did not depend only on the military power of the two countries. The two countries designed an agreement known as the Sykes—Picot agreement, which bears the names of their foreign ministers who signed it. The agreement states that the two countries agree to divide amongst themselves the Arab countries, and to place Palestine in a special category under the British Mandate, which will enable the Zionist World Organization and the world Jewry to create a Jewish state there.

12. This agreement contains mainly two dangerous decisions against the Arab nation:

13. First: The two imperialist powers, especially Britain, betrayed its commitments to the Arab leaders who assisted Britain in the war against the Ottomans. This was the promise that Britain made to al—Hussein bin Ali (then the King of the Arabs), to allow him to unite the Arabs in one state as a reward and a token of gratitude for his support.

14. Second: The decision was to materialize the recommendations (aspirations) of colonial leaders like, Napoleon Bonaparte of France, Palmerstone of Britain, the Campbell Banerman Commission, and several others for the creation of a foreign state in Palestine to be an enemy and in a continuous war against the Arab nation.

15. This reminds us of at least two important issues:

16. Firstly: That the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine was a capitalist strategic demand before the creation of the World Zionist Organization (Herzel, 1897). This emphasizes the fact that Zionism and the Zionist state is the creation of capitalist colonialism and later imperialism.¹¹

17. Secondly: It implemented the recommendations of Lawrence of Arabia which stated that the British prefer not to respect their promises and commitments.

18. To maintain the fragmentation of Arab countries, the colonial/imperialist powers appointed Arab rulers, thus creating the new Arab *iqlimi*¹² regimes that consisted of social notables, merchants, land lords, tribal leaders...etc. Each one of these appointed ruling

¹⁰ Anwar Abdul—Malik, *Studies in National Culture*, Dar al—Talia’ ah, Beirut, 1967, p. 219.

¹¹ See Mohameden Ould—Mey, *The Non—Jewish Origin of Zionism*, *The Arab World Geographer* 5(1):35—53, 2002

¹² *Iqlimi* in Arabic is an adjective of *iqlim* and *qutri* is an adjective of *qutr*. Both terms in Arabic mean ‘a country or a part of a county’, a district, or province. In modern Arabic political life and discourse, *iqlimi* signifies an area (such as Syria and Iraq) that was artificially severed from the rest of the Arab Homeland as a result of occupation by European colonial powers (Britain and France) then became politically and geographically ‘independent’ and isolated from the collective of Arab countries. The term also refers to the underlying fragmentation of the Arab Homeland into *aqtar* (plural of *qutor*).

groups found that it is in its own interest to keep his small state separated from the other states, hence the division we witness nowadays among Arab countries. What enabled these groups to stay in power is the protection of the imperialist powers and the role of imperialism in blocking the development of each of them. As a result of maintaining backwardness, it was impossible for any Arab regime to be sufficiently strong enough to annex other smaller countries by force, i.e. as was the case of Prussia under Bismarck.

19. To protect these interests and to guarantee their share, the trickle—down reward, the Arab regimes suppressed all forms of liberties, marginalized the popular classes from political, economic, and national affairs, and strengthened male domination in the society.

20. For financial gains, many Arab intellectuals and academics accepted the role of ‘propagandists’ for these regimes. The success of these regimes in recruiting these intellectuals to ‘market them’ in the society meant that the ruling capitalist comprador had to breed its own intellectual compradors.

21. Until the imperialist—Zionist aggression against Egypt, Syria, and Jordan in 1967, there was hope that some form of political development might take place in the region. The defeat of the nationalist Arab regimes in Egypt and Syria in 1967 paved the way for a total compradorization of the Arab Homeland. The first consequence of that was the formal ‘Internalization of Defeat’ (IOD)¹³ by the Arab ruling classes, which surrendered the national struggle to liberate the occupied land and the larger goal of Arab unity and was transformed into compradoric ruling classes. This meant that a segment of the society had abandoned the national struggle and aligned itself with the enemy.

22. During the period between 1967 and 1991 (the second imperialist aggression against Arab nationalist regimes — the aggression against Iraq), it became obvious that a significant number of Arab political parties and organizations have internalized defeat and became mere allies and tools of the ruling classes. This meant that a new socio—political sector of Arab societies has internalized the defeat and abandoned their role in the struggle. This explains why when several Arab regimes sent their armies to attack Iraq in 1991 under the leadership of U.S imperialism; these political parties did not lead a single mass demonstration against the regimes. On the contrary, many of them supported their regimes.

23. The most dangerous development since 1990 is that the enemy camps, the imperialist—Zionist and Arab comprador, started the final, perhaps the most destructive campaign — to drag the Arab popular classes to internalize defeat. This means that the enemies of the Arab nation have taken the battle to a direct confrontation with the Arab popular classes.

24. This leads one to conclude that the contradiction between Arab popular classes on the one hand, and the imperialist—Zionist and Arab comprador on the other, is an antagonistic one. It is a mixed national and class struggle.

25. Here lies the importance of the Arab national dimension (pan—Arab, *qawmi*¹⁴) of the popular classes. Nationalism here is a mechanism for liberation, unity, development, and

¹³ Internalization of Defeat (IOD): It is a case or situation when a social class, political party, or even an individual is defeated and succumbs to thinking, behaving, and communicating as defeated. Defeatism, in this case, is deeply accepted by the people. The reason of defeat is not an external one only; it is mainly a subjective one. It is a condition when a class adapts to defeat and ceases to resist even when it has a just cause.

¹⁴ In the Arabic political life and discourse, the term *qawmi* (the adjective of *qawm* meaning community) is used to signify that the Arabs constitute one nation and strive for a united Arab Homeland.

socialism and not the chauvinistic nationalism of the reactionary classes. This is what the following discussion will attempt to analyze.

III. ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

26. While the national question has been raised in many European countries early in the 16th century, the 19th century is considered the century of nationalism. The 19th century can be called such because nationalism was dominating Europe as one of the manifestations of Eurocentricism. Other parts of the World were colonies for the same European nations! It is important to note that the same European countries that experienced the century of nationalism and accumulated a rich rhetoric on nations' right to self—determination, applied exactly the opposite on other nations. Most of these European countries were already colonial, motivated by capitalist development, the dynamism of the capitalist mode of production and the 'national interest' of the capitalist class. These European nationalist ruling classes expanded and strengthened their colonial role to the level of imperialism: to colonize other nations in the periphery of the World Capitalist Order and to suppress their national aspirations. This capitalist colonialism blocked both: capitalist/democratic development and national unity in the peripheral countries, including the Arab nation.

27. This colonial heritage of European nationalism opened the door to the vulgar and fundamentalist forces to attack nationalism as if it were a European phenomenon or invention, and to render it unsuitable for non—European countries. Thus, nationalism in the Arab Homeland was attacked and the nationalists were smeared and accused of being tools and missionaries for the West.

IV. MARXISM AND NATIONALISM

28. Despite the fact that Marx wrote on the national question, it is obvious that Marxism did not develop a theory on nationalism. That is why the issue of nationalism is still debated in Marxism. In turn, this explains why many Marxists found it easy to attack any nationalist movement as an excuse for not confronting the social complexities and challenges that took place during the national liberation era.

29. In fact, we don't believe that Marxism should develop a 'complete' theory on nationalism. Such an important and sensitive issue should remain open for further analysis, development and critique.

30. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels wrote: "As long as the proletariat of each country is committed in the first place to seize political power and to build by itself a leading class to the nation and to become itself as a nation, accordingly, it is still nationalist but not by the bourgeois meaning of the word".¹⁵

31. Additionally, Marx and Engels wrote: "The interests of the proletariat are considered in an urgent manner the final unification of Germany in one nation. This unification is the only way to eliminate all inherited obstacles from the past from the battle field where proletariat will challenge the bourgeois"¹⁶. One might say here that Marx and Engels

¹⁵ The Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels, , Lebanese Book company, Beirut, p. 63.

¹⁶ See Fredrick Engels, The Revolutionary Program in the Question of German Unity.

considered nationalism as a stage in the development towards socialism. This is right; however, our argument is that in the era of a national struggle for development and unity, communists must struggle for that and by doing so they, in fact, make the road to socialism shorter.

32. On the other side, Marx and Engels opposed the Czech, Croatian and the southern Slavic national movements, because Slavic nationalism was an ally of Tsarist Russia. They considered these peoples reactionary because their national struggle strengthens the main enemy of democracy and socialism, and because these nationalisms were ‘advanced police stations’ to the Tsarist Russia”.¹⁷ It is an irony of history, that today part of these nations in the same area use the slogan of national independence, to support NATO and especially the expansion of the global Empire, the United States.

33. The deducted lesson here is that many classic communists and Marxists dealt with nationalism according to its role in a certain era of history and struggle. However, in another era of their theoretical development and political class struggle, they attacked nationalism claiming that it’s a ‘weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie’, which provoked many wars for its own interests by exploiting the national sentiment of the people. They followed Marx’s writing against nationalism in Europe.

34. The point of departure in Marx’s writings is the class, not the nation, specifically the working class as the class that represents humanity’s socialist future. The working class will transcend the nationalist era of social and political development by conducting a socialist revolution. However, many communists did not understand that Marx failed in his analysis, not theory, of this area for the following reasons:

35. First: In *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), Marx expected that the capitalist countries or nations, will capitalize on the non—capitalist nations.¹⁸ But history proved that the developed countries hampered and even deliberately blocked the capitalist development in the peripheries of the World Order. The cost of blocking development to humanity was millions of victims through the national liberation struggles. During their rule of the colonies, the capitalist—colonial—imperialist powers supported local merchants, feudal remnants, and westernized intellectuals. This culminated in the competition for power among these forces in the post—colonial era. As colonial formations or agents, these social groups maintained their relations with the center of imperialism and eliminated the radical economic and political changes that were initiated by the national liberation movements and replaced them with their comprador capitalist regimes.

36. Second: Based on his expectation that the center will develop the periphery, Marx failed to grasp the importance of nationalism in the national liberation struggle in the countries of periphery (COP) even when the center used nationalism as a weapon in the hands of the bourgeois. He did not consider the fact that at certain times, nationalism in the COP, as he believed in the role of nationalism in European countries can play a progressive role, and one that does not contradict socialism.

¹⁷ al—Mdaini Tawfiq, Lectures in the National Democratic Consciousness, al—Yanabia’, Damascus, 1995.

¹⁸ “...The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese wall, with which it forces the barbarians’ intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In a word, it creates a world after its own image” Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, ed by Samuel H. Beer . CROFTS Inc, New York, 1955. p. 14.

37. As we noted above, Marxists should develop Marx's stand on nationalism in view of the major developments in the world. They must advance the analysis from its pure theoretical level and the classic analysis that was applied to a certain period of time, to practical developments on the ground. Only the Chinese revolution under Mao Tse Tung, grasped the importance of nationalism in the march towards socialism.

38. The traditional Marxist attitude towards nationalism attributed to the emergence of modern nations of the capitalist system, the domination of the capitalist mode of production over the society, the development of the national market, and the rule of the national bourgeois.

39. Stalin was the first Marxist who attempted to elaborate a 'theory on nationalism'. His theory on nationalism provoked many debates. But, in the Arab case, Stalin's opinion on Arab nationalism posed a real problem, as discussed in detail later. Stalin wrote: "The nation is not an abstract historical concept, but it is a historical concept in a certain age, the age of capitalism renaissance. The process of liquidating the feudal system and the capitalist growth is at the same time the process of human beings coalition in nations".¹⁹ He adds: "The nation did not exist nor was able to exist in the pre—capitalist era since the national market did not exist yet. At the same time, there wasn't a national economic or cultural center. Accordingly, the factors that were able to end the economic fragmentation for a society and to gather, in each individual country, its fragmented parts did not exist yet".

40. But what about the objective human existence of nations before capitalism, and what about a prolonged existence of a joint Arab market during the Arab Islamic empire? What Stalin had failed to consider is: Why did the Arab nation, during the colonial/imperialist era, fail to have a united market? What are the reasons behind that? Are they internal reasons or external ones? In fact, he failed to realize that the main reason behind the absence of a united Arab capitalist market is the same world capitalist order. Being the leader of the USSR, which was the main opponent to the world system, Stalin should have understood that.

41. Marxists should understand the role of the world capitalist order, before it can be determined whether certain people can become a nation. The analysis of history from a materialist approach proves that old nations and old markets existed before capitalism. This is the case of nations such as India, China, and the Arab nation.

42. The adoption of this approach, the existence of old nations and fully developed markets and economic systems before capitalism, enables us to understand the national question in a different light from the orthodox Marxist paradigm, which places nationalism versus socialism and attributes as well as limits nationalism to Euro—centrism and capitalistic development.

43. The classic components of nations: language, land, economy, history and market were present in the old nations. It is true that capitalism gave the national question a more clear discourse and culture. However, what is most important is that while the bourgeoisie were preparing and educating the masses to 'fight' for the national cause, its real aim was to exploit their struggle against other nations for the pursuit of capitalist economic interests. These interests are those of the ruling bourgeoisie whose goal is to expand its colonial base

¹⁹ Joseph Stalin: Marxism and the National Question. Foreign Languages Press, Moscow, p. 11

and exploit the colonies. Traditional and orthodox Marxism, however, failed to demonstrate the role of comprador capitalism in protecting the national market, or, one might say, that the orthodox Marxist analysis could not be applied in the case of comprador nationalist regimes. The orthodox Marxist argument that socialism is a possible alternative in the countries of the periphery (COP) is out of the question, remains an open choice. A main problem in the formation of the countries of the periphery is that they failed to conform to capitalist or socialist formations. This is the case of the Arab nation that spent the entire 20th century in a long transitional period.

V. OTHER ISSUES RELATED TO THE ARAB NATION

44. Based on the above—mentioned theoretical assumptions, the notion of whether the Arabs constitute a nation was intensely debated. The debate centered on how ‘real’ is the Arab nation. Some argued that the Arab nation never existed at all, while others argued that after the failure of the Arab nationalist regimes of the 1950s and 1960s, Arab nationalism ceased to exist. Others argued that there are four geographical Arab nations: the Nile Valley, the Arab Peninsula, *Al—Maghrib Al—Arabi* (the Arab countries of North Africa), and *Al—Mashriq Al—Arabi* (Iraq and Great Syria that includes today’s Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the entire historic pre—1948 Palestine). Some went even further and argued that there isn’t anything in common between these blocks. Others suggested that the common relations between a remote Arab country like Sudan and its neighboring African countries are more than the common relations between Sudan and Syria as an Arab country. Some argued that there is no ‘Arab joint market’ to create a united Arab nation, and that this united nation needs to be unified by a joint capitalist market, which is not the case even today.

45. Although Palestine is very close to Lebanon and both are parts of Greater Syria, the Falangist Party in Lebanon supported Israel against the Palestinians, while in far away Algeria, in *al—Maghrib al—Arabi*, the political parties and masses supported the Palestinian struggle. Additionally, as the Algerians sacrificed one million martyrs to liberate their land from the French colonial capitalism, the Falangists considered France their ‘mother land’.²⁰

46. One of the arguments against the development of an Arab nation is the fact that the capitalist mode of production did not dominate the Arab social formations. Relatively speaking, the capitalist mode of production did not dominate spheres of production, consumption, distribution, and culture. It did not totally surpass other non—capitalist modes of production and social structure(s) like the patriarchy. Due to this ‘deformity’, some argue that Arab nationalism will never develop properly, or that it does not exist at all.

47. The most crucial issue is capitalist transformation. It is important to note that the slow and deformed capitalist transformation in the Arab Homeland was not caused originally or solely by internal factors. The lagging capitalist development in the Arab Homeland started and is maintained by European and later U.S capitalist powers in their colonial, imperialist

²⁰ Since the liberation of South Libanon from the Zionist army, the Falangist party is undergoing some changes. Its Secretary General, Karim Baqradoni seems to adopt a more Arab nationalist discourse.

and finally global manifestations. Since the capitalist transformation has been hampered by external powers, this should not negate or minimize the Arab nation as an old nation. In the Arab case, while the economic factor is artificially hampered, the factor of culture played an important unifying role. This factor of culture expressed itself in the continuous support of the popular Arab classes for Arab unity. The most recent referendum in this context, are the demonstrations that took place all over the Arab Homeland in support of the Palestinian *intifada II*. The same is true for the stance of the Arab popular classes against normalization with Israel. Certainly, the ‘transformation by domination’ of the capitalist mode of production and capitalist relations of production is more profound and lasting than the mere cultural one. This, however, doesn’t lessen the importance of a joint culture. The experience in the Arab Homeland proved that the comprador capitalist classes developed a self-contained culture based purely on their economic interests. These interests are different from those of the national bourgeoisie in Europe of the industrial revolution. In the case of Europe, the bourgeoisie, which controlled the national surplus, placed the law of accumulation to work for the internal and national affairs. These Arab comprador classes surrendered the control over their local and national markets to the western productive capitalism. By doing so, these comprador classes not only lost their markets, but also stood firmly against Arab unity (more details to follow).

48. These same ‘capitalist’ classes contradict the traditional Marxist economic theory, which states that each bourgeoisie struggles to protect and monopolize its national market. This theory is applied also to the independent and productive nationalist bourgeoisie. The Arab comprador classes sabotaged the national unity by strengthening the *qutri* over the *qawmi*, and by imposing the fabricated *qutri* culture over the *qawmi* culture. In other words, the comprador exploited and weakened the national culture in the same way it weakened and exploited the Arab economy.

VI. ATTITUDES ON THE ARAB NATION

49. The early beginnings of the Arab modern national expression started in the last decades of the 19th century. This trend was the father of the Arab national movement from that period until the collapse of the bourgeois national movement by the end of the 1960s. From its inception, Arab nationalism was torn among four attitudes: the Arab Nationalist movement, the Political Islamic movement, the Arab Communist movement, and the colonial—imperialist project.

VII. POLITICAL ISLAM

50. The school of the Movement of Moslem Brotherhood was, and still is, the father of all Political Islam (PI) attitudes toward Arab nationalism. The Arab national school of thought, however, considered religion, mainly Islam, a main component of Arab nationalism. The Christian Arabs in the Arab national movement also consider Islam as a main component of Arab nationalism, and emphasize that their culture, as Christians, is part of the Arab Islamic culture. Nevertheless, the PI never considered Arab nationalism less than an enemy of Islam.

51. This reflected an animosity between the Arab nationalist movement and the Political Islamic movement. Accordingly, the political and ideological currents in the Arab Homeland failed to achieve a dialogue or debate between these domestic schools about Arab nationalism. The last decade of the 20th century witnessed some promising signs of dialogue between these two currents, and it is hoped that this will continue. Until the failure of the modern Arab bourgeois nationalist movement in 1967, the PI allied itself or at least had a ‘relationship of understanding’ with the so—called ‘moderate’ Arab regimes that were either appointed, protected, or allies with colonial and later imperialist capitalist powers. The contrary was the case of the Arab nationalist regimes, which were always in the center of struggle against imperialist powers.

VIII. ARAB NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

52. By the 1960s or precisely in 1967, the challenge against the Arab nationalist movement, represented by the Nasserist regime in Egypt, reached its peak. The Zionist Israeli aggression, financed, trained, and armed by the imperialist powers (mainly the United States, France and Britain), defeated the Arab ruling national regimes which put an end to this current for that period of time.

53. After the 1960s, most of the Arab regimes declined and became more harmonious, in terms of economic cooperation (but not integration since they are dependent). The capitalist comprador classes seized power, (in Egypt for instance), and opened the rest of the Arab economies to the imperialist world market. As a result of the absence of the nationalist current, the conflict took place between the old allies: the moderate dependent regimes and the PI.

54. The imperialist—Zionist aggression wasn’t the only cause of the collapse of the nationalist ruling regime of Egypt. The main reason behind the failure of the regimes was its inability to enact a program of development since most of its resources were consumed in a defensive war against the imperialist—Zionist aggression. The collapse of the Nasserist regime after the defeat in the 1967 Arab—Israeli war, laid the structural defect of the Nasserist socio—economic project.

55. While the popular classes were the only true supporters for Nasser, his regime was benefitting the middle class and did not represent itself as the leadership for the popular masses nor did it gain their confidence. This is why when the internal renegade faction from inside the ruling elite, motivated by its interests, decided to betray the progressive regime, the popular classes found themselves totally un—armed, in terms of weapons or having their own revolutionary leading party to defend the regime and the gains it achieved through that period.

IX. THE ATTITUDE OF CAPITALIST IMPERIALISM

56. Another school of thought in Arab nationalism, discussed earlier, is that of capitalist imperialism. Imperialism started planning to colonize, fragment, block the development, and fight against Arab unity even before the rise of the early Arab nationalist consciousness in the late 19th century. This is why, as soon as the Arab Homeland got rid of the Ottoman

rule, the western capitalist regimes brought in their ready—made plan to fragment the Arab Homeland using the method of ‘divide and conquer’. The British—French secret agreement of Sykes—Picot (May 1916) was designed to divide the Arab Homeland between the two imperialist enemies, and to prepare Palestine to be the last white settler state in history, in addition to creating an artificial Jewish Zionist Ashkinazi entity on the soil of the evicted Palestinian Arabs.

57. It seems, that in the era of globalized capitalism, there is a plan to ‘Cantonize’ Arab countries: divide each to several tiny dependent cantons. This resembles the early mentioned recommendation by Lawrence, and a repeat of what was implemented according to the Sykes—Picot Agreement.

58. The importance of this capitalist imperialist school lies in the fact that it was a ‘practical’ step that was materialized, while the other schools did not come to full fruition due to the success of the imperialist project. This same project continues to operate and renew itself today. While Syria was the only Arab country which was fragmented to four entities (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Transjordan), the capitalist imperialist powers are working today to substitute the ‘divide and conquer’ method by a new one, which is the further fragmentation of each country of the periphery on the one hand, while strengthening the centralization in the countries of the capitalist center. That is why the United States and Britain are trying deliberately to disintegrate Iraq, Egypt, Sudan, and *al—Maghrib al—Arabi* to several states either on a geographic, ethnic or religious basis.

59. It is understandable that underdevelopment in the periphery in general shouldn’t be attributed to colonialism and imperialism only, especially now. It is important, however, to realize that the emphasis of the imperialists differs from one area of the world to another. For instance, the Arab Homeland is still highly controlled and targeted by capitalist imperialism. This explains why the ruling classes that were appointed by the capitalist imperialist powers are still protected by the imperialist center.

60. With the above in mind, it is important to note that the colonial—imperialist era witnessed the strengthening and deepening of the backwardness of the Arab Homeland. This underdevelopment blocked democratic development in the region. Under the rule of the elite in non—capitalist, pre—capitalist, or peripheral capitalist formations, the need for democracy is less vital since there was no productive industrial machine that could be harmed by the protest of workers. For instance, the political democracy that the working class gained in the developed capitalist countries was primarily due to the struggle of the labor movement. This led the capitalists to understand that without this political democracy, workers will go on strike and, therefore, the machine of production will cease to function properly.

61. What really needs to be studied today is the trend and race among many, if not all, countries of the periphery, which is, in fact inviting the multi—national corporations (MNC) to ‘invest’ in their countries. By doing so, these regimes avoid the need for democratizing the political life of the people and keeping the police power in the domain of control to repress the workers!

62. So to be able to create its own form of hegemony and ‘iron fist’, the Arab ruling comprador socio—economic systems created their own ‘intellectual comprador’ which will

always 'market' the theory and the culture of affirming and deepening dependency on the capitalist center .

63. The present period is the peak of the imperialist domination over the Arab Homeland. For instance, an Arab regime participated with the imperialist invasion of Iraq in 1991. When events reach this level and take this form, it means that the imperialist powers are in fact ruling the Arab Homeland.

X. THE SCHOOL OF TRADITIONAL ARAB COMMUNISTS

64. The fourth school of thought is that of the traditional Arab communist. Although the founders of this school were native Arabs, it depended to a large extent, on the Soviet interpretation and definition of Arab nationalism. Most, if not all, Arab Communists based their attitude towards the Arab nation on Stalin's theory that the 'Arab nation is a nation in the making'.

65. This theory lacks an understanding of the World Order. It is a theoretical myopia since it failed to grasp several fundamental facts, such as the existence of old nations, (which do not need proof of their national identity), nationalist aspiration, and consciousness. Stalin's analysis also failed to grasp the fact that the Arab Homeland was divided artificially and forcefully by colonialism and imperialism, as mentioned earlier in this paper. Accordingly, it is a nation in the era of hampered development due to external factors. Ironically, the same Soviet Union under Stalin recognized the Jewish Zionist Ashkenazi entity—Israel in spite of the fact that it is an artificial settler colonial state in Palestine, supported by the capitalist imperialist powers.²¹

66. Unfortunately, many Arab Communist parties accepted the Stalinist analysis to the extent that they stood against the idea of Arab unity. They were misguided by two theories: (a) the Marxist attitude against nationalism in general, and (b) the Stalinist attitude against Arab nationalism in particular.

67. That is why, the Communist Party of Egypt as the first Arab communist party, and the Sudanese Communist Party, continue their denial of the existence of an Arab nation when the unity between Egypt and Sudan was raised (1953—58).²² The Algerian Communist

²¹ The same is the following false quote, which injects Israel in an evident biased manner as if it was one of the ancient nations. "Corruption has been ubiquitous in complex societies from ancient Egypt, Israel, Rome, and Greece down to the present. Dictatorial and domestic politics, feudal, capitalist, and socialist economies, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist cultures and religious institutions have all experienced corruption but not, of course, in equal measures" (Corruption Culture, and Markets, by Seymour Martin Lipset and Gabriel Salmon Lenz, in *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, edited by Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel Huntington, Basic Books, 2000, p.112—113). As the quotation deals with corruption, it is itself an example of 'academic and scientific corruption' of intellectuals motivated by bribery and/or ideology.

It is well known that "Israel" as a state did not exist before the Jewish settler's occupation of three quarters of Palestine in 1948. What existed in the ancient world was called "Yahuda" and lasted for nearly 70 years. Even its place and geographical boundaries are debatable. The last scientific research shows that the Bible and the Hebrew tribe were in the Arab Peninsula, not in Palestine. This is in addition to the fact that there is no proof that the Ashkenazi Jews (who created the Zionist movement and the Zionist entity—Israel) have any 'blood or tribal' relations to the ancient Jews in the Arab Peninsula. The Ashkenazi Jews came into existence about 1200 years ago when a tribe people known as the Khazars... chose Judaism. (Jack Bernetein, *In Racist Marxist Israel*, The Noontide Printing, 1991, p.p. 5—6.

²² It was until 1958 that these parties published a little pamphlet recognizing the Arab nation, titled "The concept of Arab nationalism". See al—Hakam Darwazah, Dawr al—Shuyoiyah; (al—Arabiyah fi Ma'arakat al—Arab al—Qawmiyah) " *The Role of Arab Communism in the Arab Nationalist Struggle*", Beirut, dal al—Fajr, 1962, p.108.

Party followed the French communists who argued for the unity of Algeria with France.²³ The positions of other Arab communist parties, especially in Syria, are almost identical.²⁴

68. Arab communists fell into the trap of the ideological comprador that imported the Stalinist analysis, but failed to create and develop their own Marxist analysis of the Arab reality and nation. This wasn't the case of the communists in Mao's China, Vietnam and many experiences all over the world. They also failed to realize that the policies of the Soviet Union, especially since the 1950s, became those of a superpower rather than a socialist revolution.

69. One cannot ignore the fact that Jewish settlers in Palestine pretended that they have a socialist base represented in the so-called *Kibutz*. In fact, the *Kibutzim* were always related, in terms of their raw material and products, to the capitalist market. The socialist center should not have been misled by this 'false socialism'. This 'deception' may have taken place due to several factors:

70. The influence of Zionist Jews in the Soviet Communist Party in particular, and international Communism in general.²⁵

a) That the newly created state, the Zionist entity (1948), even if it is 'socialist', was created through brutal occupation of Arab land in Palestine and the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Arab Palestinians who were forcefully and violently evicted from their own homes and land.

²³ In this context, a member of the French Communist Party — Central Committee, Marcel Agrno Tab says: "...Since the end of the 19th century, some currents rise in the Near East especially in Egypt, aimed at renewing Islam and adapting the Arab civilization and language according to the modern awakening. These currents breeds the ideas of pan-Islamism and Arabism, they are ideologies based on wrong historical concepts like the concepts of the Arab nation". "*The Truth of Algerian Nation*" Published in July 1957 Quoted in Ilias Murqus, "*The French Communist Party and the Algerian Question*", Quoted in al-Mdaini, 1995, p. 199.

²⁴ Khalid Bikdash, the first General Secretary of the Syrian Communist Party, wrote, : "...Nations emerge in parallel with the emergence of capitalism. Before the emergence of capitalism, there were no nations. Accordingly, we realize that what Stalin wrote in definition of nation and the determination of its characteristics is of great importance to enlighten Arabs minds about the issues they are facing". Khalid Bikdash, in the introduction of, "The Road for Independence" cited in "Unkuown Pages in the History of the Communist Party of Syria and Libanon," by Mohamad Ali al-Zarqa and Ilias Murqus, p. 62.

²⁵ The following quotation is a good example on the Zionization of the left even until today: The authors of the Blackwell Dictionary wrote:

"*Kibbutzim* in Israel may be regarded as a specific form of workers' council, and although their mandate is much wider, since they encompass all spheres of social and economic life, their basis is the production community which is organized in a direct democratic way (Rosner. M 1976, *The Kibbutz as a Way of Life*. State of California: Institute for Cooperative Communities, quoted in (The *Blackwell Dictionary of Twentieth—Century Social Thought* edited by William Outhwaite & Tom Bottomore Ernest Gellner, Robert Nisbet, Alian Touraine 1994 p.718). It is worth noting here that, a Marxist like Bottomore still consider the Zionist *Kibbutzim* in Israel as workers councils today, in the era of globalism with the Zionist Israel is in its very center. While most of the capitalist regimes from center to periphery consider Zionism in 1976 as a racist ideology and movement (see UN General Assembly resolution # 3379 of 10 November 1975). In fact, the liberal Gordon Marshal was more honest in this issue: "Agricultural settlements inspired by socialist and anarchist ideas are established by Jewish settlers in Palestine, in which working and domestic arrangements, including child—care are shared by members. They later came to employ wage labor and to form a small part of the Israeli economic system. They are interesting to sociologist primarily as experiment in egalitarian communal living" (*Oxford Dictionary of Sociology*, Gordon Marshal, 1998, p.340). The same is for the Oxford Dictionary of politics:

"*Kibbutz* is a Hebrew word meaning 'gathering'. A collective farm in Israel whose members works co-operatively and do not hold private property. *Kibbutzim* were set up by Jewish settlers in Palestine, before the establishment of the state of Israel. In the 1960s and 1970s they were popular among idealistic non—Jews in the West, but their popularity has faded" (*Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics*. Iain McLean, Oxford, 1996, p.268).

b) *The role played by the Jewish members in the Israeli Communist Party, who were Zionists more than communists.*

c) *The dependent Arab communist parties that failed to reject or resist the Stalinist recognition of the Zionist entity—Israel. Even if the settlers were considered ‘communists’, one must ask how could communists be settlers? The fact that they are settlers, they become de facto racists and the communist support for them is, simply, racism.*

1.TOWARDS A NEW THEORY FOR ARAB NATIONALISM: ANALYSIS AND VISION. HOW DID THE RULING AQLIMI ARAB COMPRADOR CALSSES DEEPEN UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT OF ARABS

71. The aim of this analysis is to explore a number of destructive events that affected Arab popular—nationalist classes as a result of the deliberate process of Deepening the Unequal Development, (DUD), among Arab countries. In addition, this section will assess and critique the socio—political and class factors that motivate the social classes that are the reasons as well as the product of this process.

72. The reality is that unequal development does not occur accidentally. It is an antagonistic project aimed at strengthening the *iqlim*'s economic policy to transform the fragmented economies of Arab countries from the stage of pre—capitalist, non—capitalist and/or peripheral capitalist formations to one that is dependent on the capitalist center. The *iqlimi* trend, is in fact, an antagonistic contradiction to the concept of Arab nationalism and Arab unity that views Arabism as a cultural belonging and Arab unity as a socio—economic development project in the service of the struggle of the popular—nationalist classes to achieve a better future. A future where prime movers are the material interests of the majority of the population in Arab countries, the popular masses for development. Additionally, real and sustainable development is impossible in small and fragmented areas, *iqlimi* in the case of the Arab countries. These *iqlimi* areas lack one or all necessary components of development, such as adequate market capacity, natural resources, skilled labor, know—how, and finance.

XI. TWO ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ARAB NATIONAL DIMENSION

73. To maintain its national integrity, any nation needs a strong, prosperous, internally articulated, unified economy, and a certain level of military might to protect itself and its achievements. Economic power has the ability to merge and unify nations even if they are historically at odds. In the case of the Arab nation, it is one nation, but not a unified one.

74. In spite of the fact that Nasser's Egypt failed to unify the Arab nation, he maintained the position of Egypt as a central Arab State. The mere existence of this central state obliged the separatist and isolationist powers, the *iqlimi* and *qutri*, in the Arab Homeland to conceal their separatist agendas. When the national center, Egypt, however, fell into crisis in 1967—1970, the separatist *iqlimi* capitalists actively worked against unity and continued their project of DUD aiming at replacing the national state by the *iqlimi* state (*al—dawlah al—qutriyah*). These social and class struggles tell us that unity, development; interests of popular classes, as well as national dignity are not just romantic clichés. They are rather material needs and mechanisms which are able, if employed, to achieve unity or polarize

most of the people of the Arab nation. Since the Soviet Union lost its economic periphery in the African and Asian countries during the 1970s and its direct periphery in Eastern Europe in the 1980s, it was not surprising to see how this accelerated its own disintegration at the beginning of the 1990s. The advanced military power of the USSR failed to support its political regime.

75. People's position towards unity, is in fact, determined on the basis of class analysis. The attitude of each class towards unity is determined according to the size and extent of its interests in that unity. Unity, as a process, is always a challenge to all social classes. The response of each social class to national unity is based on its own interests. In times of prosperity or growth, under a central national regime, more social classes support unity as a slogan or a project. The role of the central state is to challenge or to terminate the interests of classes that are opposed to unity. These classes are the *iqlimi* and dependent capitalists, or the supporters and beneficiaries of *iqlimi* state (*al—dawlah al—qutriyah*), recently called the comprador class.

76. Since the late 1960s, the Arab nationalist movement faced a prolonged series of defeats. During that period, Nasser's regime in Egypt, which was defeated by the imperialist—supported agent in the region, Israel, collapsed following Nasser's death (1970). The new Egyptian regime signed a 'peace' agreement with Israel (Camp David 1978), which was still occupying the West Bank, the Gaza Strip (WBG) and the Golan Heights of Syria. Iraqi military and economic forces were destroyed by the US led aggression in 1991. Following the Madrid—Oslo negotiations and Accords, the PLO recognized Israel and accepted a self—rule regime under the Israeli occupation. In 1994, Jordan signed a peace agreement with Israel, the *Wadi Araba* Agreement. According to all these developments, the Arab *iqlimi* comprador capitalist forces were, in fact, regarding imperialism and Zionism as their masters and the protectors of their *iqlimi* regimes.

77. The experience with the *iqlimi* Arab capitalism reveals clearly that the commitment to Arab unity is limited to the popular nationalist classes, since unity is its only way for achieving development and dignity. Generally speaking, in any society unity and harmony among most, but not necessarily all, social classes and their integration into one national economy is a process that takes place in exceptional periods of history, such as when a country is subjected to a colonial or settler—colonial regime. Under ordinary circumstances, however, class interests are the leading factors that determine the relationship among social classes and main ingredients in the class struggle. Class struggle shouldn't be understood as a class war only, since class differences in any society may have various levels of class struggle.

78. This is why the obstruction of Arab unity is a natural result of the role of Arab ruling classes that subjugate the development of the national economy to the interests of a class, which represents the interests of the minority. This might help explain why the *iqlimists* and separatists insist on maintaining fragmentation of the Arab Homeland, as long as that enables them to control the economy and realize their own interests. In doing so, these separatists are, in fact, launching a class and civil war against the Arab popular classes.

79. Arab intellectuals and writers are also divided with respect to the nationalist question into two main currents: one is committed to the realization of the interests of the popular classes, while the other is, indeed, a tool in the hands of the ruling comprador class. The

first is based on the theory that the Arab national dimension exists objectively and *a priori* argues that the existence of this dimension has nothing to do with the current politics of the fragmentation and *iqlimi* ideology that are imposed by the ruling Arab classes. This current represents the classic Arab nationalists, the nationalists in general and the Arab Communists whose conceptualization of Arab nationalism is based on the historical materialist analysis — class analysis.

80. The second current stems from the understanding that the present situation is mainly a condition of weakness and fragmentation. The intellectuals of this school are, therefore, re—positioning themselves and their analysis in accordance with the interests and demands of the rulers, which translates into dependency and the adaptation to the interests of the world capitalist order. This assessment of Arab nationalism stems from its own conceptualization of the Arab comprador capitalist (*iqlimi*) ruling classes. The ‘intellectual comprador’ of the capitalist comprador denies the historical and cultural existence of Arab nationalism. The argument of these intellectuals against Arab nationalism is based on recent developments and does not take into consideration the historical process through which the Arab nation has evolved. Their analysis fits into the bourgeois political functionalist analysis.

81. The social classes in Arab societies can be divided into two blocks with regard to Arab nationalism, Arab unity, and economic and social independence. These two blocks are the ruling and the latent nationalism.

XII. THE ‘RULING ARAB NATIONALISM’: THE NATIONALISM OF THE RULING CLASS

82. This is mainly represented by the ruling block of the social classes. These classes have been tied to foreign forces since the end of the Ottoman rule, but particularly during the European colonial era. During this period, the younger generations of these classes were educated and trained to become the ruling apparatus of rule in the post—colonial state. Those post—colonial states were either brought to power directly by the colonialists or, as in the case of those that ‘liberated’ their countries, they became dependent on technocrats in establishing and operating the state apparatus.

83. The economic, social and political structure of these regimes was determined by the position of each regime or ruling class towards its former colonial power. Despite the end of the colonial regime, it should be noted that the internal dynamics of change in these countries, were not limited to the force for economic changes. Following the destructive fragmentation of the Arab Homeland under the Ottomans, the European colonial powers further fragmented the Arab countries to support their own interests. The fragmentation into districts was consistent with the policies of the central Ottoman State in Istanbul and in harmony with the nature of the eastern military form of feudalism.

84. The Ottoman rule in the Arab Homeland was a colonial one. This explains the intensive plunder of the surplus that was generated by Arab land and production that was, in turn, transferred to Istanbul.

85. Under the Ottoman rule, the Arab Homeland was divided into districts that remained open and unified; while under the European colonial rule the Arab Homeland was

fragmented into several small separate districts (*aqtar*). These *aqtar* (plural of *qutr*) were able to become separate states in spite of the fact that they were dependent on colonialism, and later imperialism. The aim was to negate the possibility of Arab unity. Most, if not all of these newly formed countries, due to division, have poor and fragile economies.

European colonialism realized to which extent Arab nationalism and unity threaten their interests in the region. For this reason, they appointed rulers in these newly created Arab countries whose interests would be linked to European colonial countries. Therefore, what European colonialism did was create new states with appointed rulers to govern and control the will of the people.

86. The distinction between the two eras of colonialism (the Ottoman and the European) stems from the internal Arab structures. Local capitalism in the *iqlimi* entities had more control under European colonialism than it had under Ottoman rule. However, the power of local capitalism was still too weak to be independent from the imperialist support. In other words the situation was somewhere between total integration, yet without fragmentation (the case of the Ottoman rule), and formal independence that serves the interests and will of a dependent class (the case of European colonialism).

87. Following the capitalist colonial imperialist division of the Arab Homeland, the class and economic seeds of *iqlimi* were planted. That is why every Arab ruling class found its interest in separating its territories from other Arab countries and integrating itself with the world capitalist market, dominated by the capitalist center. It is since that time that the DUD started, perhaps not deliberately. This orientation of the dependent merchant *iqlimi* Arab regimes was motivated by their own interests, which included economic integration with the world market from the position of a small entity which represents the interest of a certain segment of the society. What we are talking about here is a social segment that subjected the interests of the overwhelming majority of its people to its limited and selfish interests as a ruling one. This policy lacks national, political, and economic consensus and the articulation between the economic sectors of the local economy.

XIII. THE 'LATENT ARAB NATIONALISM': THE POTENTIAL, BUT OBSTRUCTED NATIONALISM

88. The other block is the latent nationalism, which consists of the popular—nationalist social classes and factions. These classes were subjected, exploited, and their surplus was drained by foreign powers and the ruling comprador capitalist classes whose share was, and still is, that of trickle—down economy. This front is under continuous attack by the ruling comprador that launches systematic class and civil war against the popular classes.

89. The nationalism of the popular classes is the Arab nationalism that strives for development, unity, and socialism. Essential components of a nation such as language, history, geography, culture, and heritage are important to Arab nationalism. However, the new and important component and discourse of this nationalism is the common interest of all Arab societies in a joint Arab development. A project for a joint Arab development necessitates unity, since its interests require the availability of a large market. The process of development adds a new dimension to the traditional components of nationalism. It is a modern, practical, as well as a recruiting factor. The vast Arab market is strong with a great

potential got growth and development. Without the existence of a unified state, however, the development of a large united market is impossible. Unity is not limited to one form. At the very least, a policy for joint Arab development is necessary to begin with. The underdevelopment caused mainly by fragmentation and dependency of Arab countries is making the Arab unity an urgent matter. So, the DUD by the ruling nationalism is deliberately directed against the interests of latent Arab nationalism.

XIV. THE PATH OF ARAB BOURGEOISIE: DEEPENING OF UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT

90. The emergence of the Arab bourgeoisie coincided with the beginnings of the Ottoman Empire's integration into the world market in the 1850s. While the Ottoman integration into the world order was a gradual one, it was also a controlled one due to its centralized eastern military feudal nature. This integration wasn't the choice of the merchant class in the Ottoman society. The central Ottoman authority fell under merchant pressure motivated by profits, and so they started a contraband trade of agricultural products to the West. Another reason for the Ottoman openness was that the central Ottoman government needed to import western industrial products.

91. The integration of the Ottoman Empire into the world order hardly completes the picture. It should be also noted that the Ottoman formations were impotent; that is, they lacked the ability of self—transformation to capitalism even during the peak of the Empire's power. The main reason for that was the nature and content of the eastern military feudal mode of production, which consumed the extracted surplus for the military machine and the luxury consumption of the ruling class. This theory is highly applicable to the underdevelopment of Arab countries, considering the fact that the relationship between the Ottoman center and the Arab periphery was that of plundering. This made the process of primitive capitalist accumulation impossible or, in other words, the Ottomans abdicated to the Europeans a poorer and disintegrated Arab Homeland.

92. This is, incidentally the main distinction between the experience of China and India on the one hand, and that of the poor Arab Homeland on the other. The pre—capitalist formations in China and India were different since their colonization wasn't continuous, and even then, they remained unified under colonial rule. This is why there was one Indian and one Chinese bourgeoisie, while the fragmentation of the Arab Homeland generated artificially an abundance of Arab bourgeoisie. Due to their inherit weakness, the various Arab bourgeoisie became totally dependent on the colonial powers. This ultimately facilitated the domination of western colonial capitalism over the Arab Homeland. The fragmentation of Arab countries wasn't only geographic, demographic, and national, but it was a fragmentation of social classes as well. Accordingly, a unified Arab bourgeoisie class failed to develop in the Arab Homeland. A unified Arab Homeland with a strong economic base constitutes a threat to the western capitalist colonizers, as well as to the separatist local bourgeois. This explains the organic relationship between the colonizers and the puppet bourgeois regimes.

93. The rise of the Arab productive—nationalist bourgeoisie was hindered by the Ottoman rule. When western colonialism invaded the Arab Homeland, it found an ally in the

commercial and parasitic bourgeoisie, which was ready to facilitate the colonialist's mission in plundering and blocking the development of Arab countries. While the unequal development in Arab countries is mainly attributed to the post—colonial era, the role played by the Arab separatist bourgeois regimes for an entire century was, indeed, a continuation of the colonialist nature and goals. Before explaining the role of the Arab bourgeois, it is necessary to examine the era of development that preceded the present stage.

94. On a world scale, the Arab Homeland witnessed three major developments in the first four decades of the 19th century:

95. First: The weakness and beginning of disintegration of the Ottoman central state, which paved the way for several countries to dissolve the Ottoman rule.

96. Second: The struggle for independence of some Arab countries that had the potential to achieve development. Muhammad Ali in Egypt and Daoud Pasha in Iraq attempted to establish modern independent states. Ali's ambition was to establish a modern state, a la the European model in Egypt. To secure the success of his project, Muhammad Ali unified Egypt, Syria, and Sudan. Contrary to claims of many Western and Arab writers, Muhammad Ali initiated several major reforms in Syria,²⁶ which provoked the worry of his foreign and regional enemies as well as western capitalism and the Ottoman *Multazimin* (the locals who were appointed to rule, exploit, and transfer taxes to Istanbul). Daoud Pasha in Iraq (1817—1832) on the other hand, adopted essentially the same reforms. He declared that: "Europeans have no rights in Baghdad".²⁷ He imposed a system to protect domestically produced goods from the British ones. This provoked the representative of the East India Company in Baghdad who urged the British to fire Daoud Pasha. One year after his fall in 1832, the representative of the East India Company in Baghdad wrote: "The people of Baghdad, despite of all their misery, had their dreams and hopes in Ibrahim Pasha... The merchants of Baghdad feel bitter because Palmerstone [the British Foreign Secretary] opposed the annexation of their country with Syria that is ruled by a new ruler, called the "Egyptian Caliphate".²⁸

97. While the nationalist movement started first in more developed countries like Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, the religious movements (Sanousi and Wahhabi) rose in the poorer Arab countries, those countries that generated little surplus, like Saudi Arabia and Libya, which became rich only after the exploration of oil.

98. Third: The gradual integration of the Ottoman Empire into the world market meant the opening of the first Ottoman gates for the western colonizers. The economic agreement between the Ottomans and Britain in 1838 abolished customs imposed on the trade between the British and Ottoman Empire.²⁹ This left the local Ottoman products under the mercy of

²⁶ Jalal Amin, *Al—Mashriq Al—A'rabi Wal—Gharb* (The Arab East and the West). Published by The Center for Studies of Arab Unity (*Markiz Dirasat Al—Wihdah Al—A'rabiyyah*), Beirut, 1983 p. 23.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.19.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.19.

²⁹ This was the first time that the Ottoman Empire had to borrow money from European countries. In his opposition to these loans, Rashid Pasha stated that if the Ottoman Empire does that, it will never rise again. What he feared was, precisely, what happened.

a fierce European competition.³⁰ The signing of this agreement was soon followed by a British loan to the Ottoman Empire and, thereafter, the British occupation of Eden in 1839. 99. Following the western capitalist interest in the region, especially after the signing of 1838 agreement between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, the British exports to Syria, Palestine and Egypt increased three times between 1826 and 1850. By the 1880s, trade exchange with Syria, Iraq, and Palestine collectively amounted to one fourth of the total Ottoman imports, and one fifth of its exports.³¹

100. In fact, the reason why the western alliance wanted to destroy Muhammad Ali's aspirations was to maintain the continuity of this 'unequal exchange' between his territories and the dying Ottoman Empire. This meant that the weakness of the Ottoman Empire 'opened' the door for the dominance of the European capitalist colonial rule. Accordingly, the Arabs faced two enemies at the same time. These two enemies decided, in certain stages, to resolve their differences and minimize their rivalry so to be able to control the Arab Homeland. This explains why Palmerstone, the British Secretary of State at the time, said in 1840: "The Turkish control over the road to India is much better, from our point of view, than to subjugate this road to a strong Arab ruler."³²

101. The final result of these developments was blocking, prematurely, the development of the Arab Homeland through the termination of its industrial beginnings. This is why the Arab Homeland became an importer of essential goods, which it used to produce earlier, and were, for a certain period of time, of much better quality than their European counterparts. On the other hand, the Arab Homeland became an exporter of agricultural crops and was subjected to a mercantile leadership, whose interests lay in the expansion and deepening of dependency like Sa'id Pasha and the Khedive Ismail of Egypt.

102. The reason for the fall of Muhammad Ali was not limited to colonial aggression. Muhammad Ali, additionally, failed to create the class carrier and social incubator for his progressive project. This is why the marvelous effects of his project vanished following the collapse of his military capitalist bureaucracy. In turn, this might be the same reason behind the collapse of Nasser's regime after more than a century.

XV. THE DEEPENING OF UNEQUAL ARAB DEVELOPMENT

103. As noted above, the uneven wealth endowment and resources among the various parts of the Arab Homeland were not different from those of other countries. For instance, the Southern portion of the United States of America is less endowed and developed than its north, while the same is true for Italy. Similarly, there is no equal development among all areas of China and India. However, the political unity of these national states permitted the integration of all parts of the country into a single structure. Therefore the provisional uneven levels of development among those parts were not exploited by separatist tendencies and *iqlimi* political factions and classes, which led to their fragmentation into

³⁰ Jalal Amin, *Al—Mashriq Al—Arabi Wal—Gharb* (The Arab East and the West). Published by Markiz Dirasat Al—Wihdah Al—A'rabiyyah, Beirut, 1983 p. 27. And Islamuglo Huri and Keyder Caglar, *The Ottoman Social Formation, in the Asiatic Mode of Production*, ed by Anne . M Baily and Joseph Lloberla. London Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981.

³¹ Vladimid Lutski, *History of Modern Arab Countires* (Tarighk al—Aktar al—Arabiyyah al—Haditha) , al—Farabi Publications, Beirut, 1980, p.83.

³² Amin, Jalal Opcit, p. 1983 p. 26.

several 'independent' states. This doesn't negate the fact that class exploitation existed in India and China before and after Mao Tse Tung.

104. The central and unified states in India and China played a major role in maintaining their geographic unity. In this regard, they are different from the Arab Homeland, because they are able to maintain their own central states. It should be noted that the unification of Arab countries took place only in periods when Arabs had a central and strong state. This continued even under the Ottoman Empire that maintained, by military force, many nationalities and all Arab countries under its rule.

105. The last episode of fragmenting the Arab Homeland into smaller entities was achieved at the hands of western colonial powers. This led to the creation of dependent regimes whose existence and survival were based on maintaining the state of fragmentation and obstructing the rise of a central Arab state. This laid the corner stone to institutionalize the deepening of unequal development among Arab countries. Through its ties with the world order, every ruling class in the Arab Homeland protected its own interest at the cost of the national one. This form of dependency and integration into the world capitalist order played a role in the failure of the Egyptian—Syrian unity in 1958—1961 (United Arab Republic). The secession of Syria from the unity with Egypt could not have taken place without the existence of imperialist influence, local allies and the Zionist Ashkenazi entity—Israel in the region. The Jordanian regime, supported by the US and Britain, also played a major role in this secession, while the possibility of an Israeli military threat halted Nasser from conquering the separatist military junta in Syria by military force.³³ This explains Israel's role in fragmenting the Arab Homeland, and preventing the rise of a central and strong Arab state that is able to conquer any secession with a defensive or preemptive strike.

106. In its course to achieve its own interests, the *iqlimi* capitalist Arab ruling class betrayed the aspiration of the popular—nationalist classes for Arab unity and development. The aim of the separatist Arab capitalism is to reinforce, as much as possible, the concept of deepening the unequal development that already existed among Arab countries. By doing so, these capitalist classes aim to terminate, for good, any possibility for Arab unity. While the center of the world capitalist order was, and still is, supporting the Arab dependent classes in their policy of fragmenting the Arab economies, the center itself was, in fact, embarking on several efforts to unify its countries, forces, and markets. The EU, NAFTA, FTAA are good examples of such.

107. The continued degradation of the Arab Homeland under the rule of the *iqlimi* capitalists placed it on the brink of marginalization.

XVI. THE FIRST PATH OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB HOMELAND

108. During the eras of pre—independence and independence, the Arab *iqlimi* capitalism maintained and strengthened the natural inequality between one country and another. This made the inequality among the Arab countries an obstacle to transcend.

109. The first path of Arab development represented by Egypt, Iraq and Syria is naturally rich countries (mainly in agriculture). Their similar structures breed similar political developments between them.

³³ This does not mean that Nasser was right. He must protect the first Arab modern unity by force.

110. Egypt, Syria, and Iraq have fertile lands that can generate agricultural surplus. The availability of surplus made it possible for Muhammad Ali (in Egypt) and Daoud Pasha (in Iraq) to lay the cornerstone for a modern state as the main step towards independence. The possibility of building a modern and developed state in Egypt was strengthened further when Muhammad Ali restored Syria and Sudan. These early plans, as it is well known, were destroyed by the European capitalist colonialist aggression 1840.

111. The natural ability of these countries to generate surplus enabled them to start development and paved the way for an Arab nationalist movement to emerge. This early version of Arab nationalism contained a mixture of secular and religious elements. Muhammad Abdo and Al—Afghani were the pioneers of this movement in the last quarter of the 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century. Later, the modern Arab nationalist movement emerged with the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, Arab Nationalist Movement and Nasserism. All these unionist tendencies and independent movements started in the countries that had the potential of fulfilling the role of central states: Egypt, Syria and Iraq. Under the leadership of progressive nationalist regimes, the three countries enthusiastically embraced Arab unity. Their economies were orientated towards independent development economies and not towards deepening the unequal development. In fact, the non—democratic practices of these regimes were one of their main weaknesses. Other Arab countries followed the dependent trajectory and did not achieve their independence through struggle, coup de tat or revolutions. The countries whose independence took place too late did not become democratic or liberal. This does not mean that the progressive Arab nationalist regimes were democratic. The aim of raising this point is to reject the imperialist propaganda that the comprador reactionary monarchies are liberal and democratic. Once again, one of the main reasons for the failure of the progressive nationalist regimes was their lack for democracy.

112. Finally, the progressive project of the first trajectory was suppressed by the direct imperialist—Zionist aggression in the 1967 war against Egypt and the 1991 aggression against Iraq.

XVII. THE SECOND PATH

113. Due to poverty and the lack of natural resources of the second trajectory (including Jordan, Tunisia, Somalia, Sudan, Arab Peninsula and Libya), the struggle of these countries against colonialism was latent, whether in terms of struggle for independence or the beginning of a national movement. The inherently poor structure of the second trajectory became an objective justification for its dependency as long as they remain divided and separated from other relatively developed and endowed Arab countries. The only solution for this objective inclination for dependency is a united Arab Homeland. On the economic level, the poor agricultural land in these countries was the reason behind their lack of adequate surplus that could be invested in creating a modern economy. In addition, the sparse population of most of these countries made it difficult to carry out a development project even when some of them became rich as oil exporters.

114. The reason why religious movements started in these countries might be due to their poverty and their dependency on agriculture. Since their beginnings, these movements stood against colonialism, but failed to carry on an organized national struggle.

115. It was necessary for part of these countries to wait for the exploration of oil, in commercial quantities, to communicate with the modern world and to have its share in Arab politics. Due to the fragility of the social and political formations of these countries and the dependency of their ruling semi—feudal elite, these regimes were and still are tied to imperialism against the Arab nation in general and their peoples in particular.

116. With some exceptions, the countries of the first path led the struggle against imperialism, even after their independence. They continued the struggle for industrial development and Arab unity, while the countries of the second path, with some exceptions (Libya for instance), maintained their reactionary role, remained strongly tied to imperialism and opposed to Arab nationalism and unity. The countries of the second path remained strong and protected by the imperialist—Zionist camp. In either case, it is evident that the development of the Arab Homeland on a nationalist base will remain a difficult task.

117. At the same time, the policies of import—substitution and 'socialism' in the countries of the first trajectory were greatly needed for the rest of the Arab market and their oil revenues, the resources and economic capacity of the countries of the second trajectory were strengthening their ties with imperialism. This suffocated the project for development in the countries of first path that must have access to the rest of the Arab wealth and markets. The development policy of the first path has failed. One of the reasons for this failure was the defeat of Egypt in the imperialist—Zionist aggression in 1967. The new regime in Egypt, beginning with Sadat in 1971, surrendered to the imperialist world order. These events paved the way for the rich Saudi regime (the wealthiest due to oil rent) to lead what was called later the 'Arab regime' and to strengthen its policy of deepening unequal development.

XVIII. AN ECONOMIC STRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS DEEPENING OF UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT

118. During the rule of the Ottoman Empire, most of the Arab countries were considered one united trade region. Their trade took place without custom barriers, until the first imperialist war – WWI (1914—1918), were no less than 45 percent of the Syrian exports were going to other parts of the Empire; half of this amount was going to Egypt alone.³⁴ Until 1910, twenty percent of Egypt's imports were coming from Arab countries, excluding Sudan. By 1939, during the European colonialism, this percentage went down to three percent.

119. As mentioned above, Arabs, mainly in Egypt and Iraq, gained industrial experience during the 19th and 20th centuries. The first in the 19th century (Muhammad Ali and Daoud Pasha) took place during the first decline of the Ottoman central rule in Egypt and Iraq. A pioneer liberal bourgeois, however, led the second in Egypt, under a dependent

³⁴ Amin, Jalal 1983, opcit, p. 39.

political regime, which occurred during the weakened imperialist grip era, 1920—1940s in the countries of the periphery (COP). The goal of both experiences was to build a modern capitalist system. The difference between them is that the first (Muhammad Ali of Egypt, 19th century) took place in an era when it was relatively possible for a country in the periphery to develop independently, even in a capitalist manner. The second experience, however, took place when such a development was impossible, even if it started during the decline of the imperialist fist and failed to understand the lesson of the first experience. The second experience operated within the boundaries that the imperialists had drawn, and that is why it was a process of adaptation rather than of de-linking. It took place in conjunction with the fragmentation of the Arab Homeland, which is why the competition over trade between Britain and France spread to become a trade war among Egypt, Palestine, Iraq and Syria.

120. This is a striking example of the blocked development. It is industrialization adjusted to colonial policy, a policy that works against an auto-centric capitalist development in periphery. Accordingly, by the year 1938, only 5 percent of Syria's exports were channeled to Egypt, in comparison to 17 percent in 1928, and the Syrian share from Egypt's exports in 1938 was reduced to half of what it was ten years earlier.³⁵ During the period of independence, the Arab regimes officially signed many economic and trade agreements amongst themselves.³⁶ The reality on the ground was that of strengthening different economic structures, deepening unequal development, and decreasing natural integration of Arab countries.

1. SELF—BLOCKING OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

121. Arab economies of the 1980s and 1990s were mostly of an import nature, exporting some raw materials and agricultural products, with a parallel decrease in the manufacturing exports.³⁷ In general, those economies suffered from two forms of deformity; both were expressions of 'deepening of unequal development' among themselves. The first deformity is the deliberate lack of plans for integration on the national scale, and the second is the adoption of contradictory *iqlimi* policies.

³⁵ Ibid, pp. 38—9.

³⁶ However, reviewing all attempts of cooperation, alliances or integration among Arab or Islamic countries in the last four decades we find big projects at the beginning and very little or nothing was left at the end. (Toye, J., Dilemmas of Development, Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1987) Some of these projects are:

1. The emergence of new centers of development and investment finance;
2. Arab fund for economic and social development
3. Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development
4. Abu Dhabe fund for Arab economic Development
5. Council of Arab Economic Unity
6. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)
7. Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
8. Arab Maghreb Union: Algeria, Libyan, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia (AMU)
9. Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), 1976
10. Arab Trade Financial Program (ATFP)
11. Arab Common Market, 1964
12. Arab Free Trade Zone

³⁷ Abu al—Naja, Hamdi, (al—Taqanah al—Munasibah li—Muwajahat Iktinaqat al—Tanmiyah al—Arabiyah. in al—Mustaqbal al—Arabi, year 16, no:175, Sep 1993, p. 3—55.

122. In the program of industrial growth until 1985, the petrochemical industries in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman (in the beginning), Libya, Iraq, Algiers, and Jordan, were competing with each other, and their *iqlimi* markets were unable to consume their local production. The same applies in the fertilizer, cement, steel, and aluminum industries.³⁸

123. The total Arab steel production was only 8 percent of its needs, while the recession in the construction sector forced 105 cement factories to work with 70 percent of their capacity, in the years, 1992—1993.³⁹

124. The Arab industry was concentrated in light industries that did not employ more than one hundred workers per industrial unit. The manufacturing industry employed 20—21% of the workforce. This lags behind the 49% average of developed countries. It lags even behind countries whose per capita income is parallel to the world average. In these countries, the manufacturing industry absorbs 28% of the labor force.⁴⁰

125. The late 1970s witnessed a number of dangerous indications in the development of the Arab economies. The most important development is the relative shift from the agriculture to the manufacturer sector. This led to a relative decline in the agricultural sector resulting in a dangerous problem of food shortage facing all Arab countries. Another aspect is the substantial increase in the share of extracting industries and the service sector. The share of the agricultural sector in the Arab GDP declined from 16.6 percent in the year 1970 to nearly half of that in 1977. The share of transmutation industry declined from 11.9 percent to 8.6 percent, while the share of the extracting industry rose from 23.7 to 34.7 percent for the same period.⁴¹

126. Due to the inability of Arab agricultural and manufacturing sectors to absorb the surplus of labor power, their regimes resorted to artificial expansion of the service sectors, especially the bureaucratic ones. The bureaucratic apparatus integrated the labor power into the ruling regime, not in a productive manner. That is why the marginalization of the role of labor force at the level of production led to their marginalization at the economic, social, political and democratic levels. This huge bureaucratic apparatus in the rental and non—rental economies was financed by the surplus of oil revenue for over three decades. The ‘countries of oil rent’ financed this service sector in the non—oil producing countries as well to maintain social stability there. While, what is really needed is to finance the development strategy so to transcend unequal development.

127. The assistance donated by the Arab ‘countries of surplus’ to subsidize ‘the countries of deficit’ led the other to neglect the development of agriculture as their most productive sector especially for food security, in the absence of an industrial sector. The result was more disarticulation among economic sectors within every single country and more food imports. Unfortunately, the role of the oil rent was that of terminating the productive sectors in the Arab economies. This is a very short—sided redistribution of oil wealth.

³⁸ Hussein, Adel, *Arab development and the Oil Factor* (*Al—Tanmiyah al—Arabiyah wa—A’amil al—Mal al—Nafti*), in *Dirasat al—Tanmiyah Waltakamul al—Iktisadi al—Arabi*, Arab Unity Research Center, Beirut, 1985, pp. 105—106. 1985: 1985, pp.105—106.

³⁹ "Summary on the Economic Development in the Arab World in 1993", quoted in the yearbook published by the German center for the East, by *Al—Quds* daily Jerusalem 20 October 1994.

⁴⁰ *Al—Taqrir Al—Iktisade Al—Arabi Al—Muwahad* (Arab United Economic Report), Arab League Publications, Cairo, 1984, p.296 (Arabic).

⁴¹ Hussein, 1985, opcit, p. 142

128. The oil rent regimes were guided by an imperialist strategy in the area to circumvent social tension in the 'Arab countries of deficit'. In retrospect, this was a policy of aggression against the Arab peoples and a preemptive campaign to eliminate any opportunity for social mobilization in the region. The limited redistribution of income was designed to support the ruling classes, not the popular classes.

129. Another aspect of the limited and formal redistribution of oil surplus is the employment of Arab workers in the countries of the Arab Gulf (known in the western media as the Persian Gulf). Those Arab workers were treated as foreigners. The Gulf War against Iraq led to the termination of the employment contracts of millions of Arab workers in the oil-producing countries in the Arab Gulf. As a result of this discriminating policy and treatment, the Arab workers in the oil-producing Arab countries were prohibited from contributing to the process of developing a united Arab labor movement as a step towards Arab unity.

2. THE DECLINE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

130. The agricultural land in the Arab Homeland is estimated at 133 million hectares (a hectare is 10,000 square meter). It constitutes about 9.4 percent of its total land, while the cultivated land is only 42 million hectares. The percentage of those working in agriculture of the total labor force declined from 46% (1980) to 42% (1985) and continued to decline to 38% in 1990. The share of investment in the agricultural sector and livestock declined drastically in 1990 to 1991.⁴²

131. After being self-sufficient in providing crops until the early 1970s, the Arab countries witnessed a shortage in those crops estimated at \$14.1 billion in the year 1980, and \$16.6 billion by 1989. The amount of combined total exports and imports of food for all Arab countries increased from 11.9 in the year 1980 to \$14.3 billion by 1985 and to \$14.35 billion by 1990 in favor of imports.⁴³ The direct reason for the Arab food crisis is the increase in consumerism and a higher birth rate, which transcended the increase of the local agricultural production, especially since the early part of the 1970s.

132. While the annual agricultural rate of growth in the Arab countries never surpassed 2.5 percent a year during the period 1970—1985, the average increase of demand on agricultural products was nearly 6 percent a year. This led to a food gap that increased, on average, from an annual \$1.2 billion for the period 1970—1974 to \$21 billion by the year 1985.⁴⁴

133. Following are the percentages of the food imports out of the total food consumption for some Arab countries in the period 1969—1971: Saudi Arabia 63.3, Syria 32, Jordan 60.8, Tunisia, 40.7, Algeria 32.1, Morocco 18.2, Egypt 16.6, Yemen 28.7, Sudan 9.8 and Somalia, 13.1 percent. In the period 1986—1989, the situation changed as follows: Saudi

⁴² Al—Afandi, Nazira, Talkhis al—Taqrir al—Iktisadi al—Arabi (*Summary of the Arab Economic Report*), al—Ahrām al—Iktisadi, 22 March, 1993, p12. Cairo.

⁴³ Ibid, p.19

⁴⁴ Al—Alwan Abdul—Saheb, Azmat al—Tanmiyah al—Zira'ayah al—Arabiyah wa—Maazaq al—Amn al—Ghizaa'I al—Arabi (*The crisis of Arab Agricultural Development and the Impasse of Food Security*) in al—Mustaqbal al—Arabi, Vol. 11, no 117, November, 1988, p.92.

Arabia, 81.8, Syria 29.1, Jordan 85.2, Tunisia 59.3, Algeria 70.7, Morocco 28.8, Egypt 45.2, Yemen 62.1, Sudan 14.5 and Somalia 23.7 percent.⁴⁵

134. These results seem astonishing when we consider the other part of the equation, which is the availability of a large area of uncultivated agricultural land and millions of unemployed workers. Arab workers from *al—Maghrib* emigrated to the west to face racism and discrimination, at a time the Arab oil—producing countries “import” millions of workers from Asian countries.

3. THE INTER—ARAB TRADE AS A CAUSE AND A RESULT OF UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT

135. The weakness and failure of the numerous Arab trade agreements were due to the different policies of their regimes, which rendered these agreements meaningless. In 1953, a group of Arab countries agreed to minimize customs between them. In 1957, members of the Arab League signed an agreement of Arab Economic Unity, and established, in 1964, the Arab Common Market. The Council of Arab Economic Unity was established in 1965 and from which the Organization of the Arab Oil Exporting Countries (OAPEC) was enacted. These agreements did not improve the pan—Arab trade or economic relationship.

136. The inter—Arab exports (among Arab countries) increased from 5 percent in 1981 to 7.3 percent in 1982 while the inter—Arab imports increased from 7.3 percent to 9.1 percent of total world trade by 1982. The percentage of inter—Arab exports to total exports was 8 percent in 1988, but decreased to 7.3 percent by 1990, while the percentage of the inter—Arab imports reached 9.0 percent by 1990.⁴⁶

137. For the sake of comparison, the exports among the countries of EC in the early 1990s were 56—60% of their total exports. Among the United States, Mexico and Canada, the members of the NAFTA agreement, it was 14 percent and among the countries of league of East Asia (ASEAN), it was 18 percent for the same period.⁴⁷

138. The share of Arab countries of the world trade was 3.3 percent in 1970. It jumps to 4.1 percent in 1989. This is not proportionate the percentage of its population to the total world population, despite the increase of oil exports. The same is true for the international commercial lending, in which the share of the Arab countries was 1.5 percent in 1970, and increased to 2.4 percent by 1989. Their share in international investments was 9.8 percent in 1970, and jumped to 13.2 percent by 1989,⁴⁸ while their contribution to the total donations was the highest in the world! According to the economic policies of the Arab countries, it is not difficult to imagine that foreign investments in the Arab countries were not in productive sectors.

139. It should be noted that the deformed inter—Arab trade was deliberately designed by the Arab regimes to deepen the unequal development among their countries and to make the exchange among these tiny entities and fragile economies poor to the extent that it will obstruct pan—Arab development.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ U.N.D.P. 1992:152—15).

⁴⁶ Al—Afandi, 1993:22.

⁴⁷ Arabs between the Arab and Middle East Markets, Muhammad Kamal Mansour, in *Al—Nahar* 21/1/1995. Beirut.

⁴⁸ U.N.D.P. 1992:37.

⁴⁹ Some Arab countries impose customs of up to 100 per cent on imports from other Arab countries. This is something which even Israel or any other country does not do. The US—GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) bilateral trade and other

4. DEFORMITY OF DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE AND THE DEEPENING OF UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT

140. In 1960, Arabs constituted 3.9 percent of the total world population. By 1989, this number increased to 5 percent. Arabs' share of the total world GNP increased from 1.5 percent in 1960 to 2.5 percent in 1989, a percentage that is below their annual population growth. This increase is mainly due to the rise of oil prices in the 1970s.

141. Regarding the uneven natural endowment of the Arab countries, there is a significant unevenness in per—capita income among them. The per capita income from the GDP in US dollars in many Arab countries was as follows: 15,984 in Kuwait, 11,800 in Qatar, 10,804 in Bahrain, 10,440 in Saudi Arabia, 7,250 in Libya, 1,934 in Egypt, 1,560 in Yemen, 1,042 in Sudan, 861 in Somalia, and 730 in Djibouti.⁵⁰

142. The deformities in the economic sectors impacted the social structures of Arab societies. While some Arab countries are over—populated, (Egypt), others have low population to the extent that they have large communities of expatriate labor. In the countries of Gulf Cooperation Council, there are 8.6 million expatriate workers, or 37 percent of total population.⁵¹

143. Forty nine per cent of the population of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The Indian community is twice as big as the native Arabs. In 1999, the native Arabs constituted 19 percent of the total population of the UAE.⁵²

144. In 1990, the population in the following Arab countries was as follows (in millions: 2.0 in Kuwait, 0.4 in Qatar, 0.5 in Bahrain, 1.6 in United Arab Emirates, 14.1 in Saudi Arabia, 12.5 in Syria, 4.5 in Libya, 1.5 in Oman, 18.9 in Iraq, 4.0 in Jordan, 8.2 in Tunisia, 2.7 in Lebanon, 25.0 in Algeria, 25.1 in Morocco, 52.4 in Egypt, 11.7 in Yemen, and 25.5 in the Sudan".⁵³

5. THE DEFORMED STRUCTURE OF ARAB LENDING

145. Arab foreign aid, of course available only when oil revenues are high, is oriented towards foreign countries and is deformed. Also, Arab donations and loans to foreign countries have been directed according to an imperialist strategy that was designed by the World Bank and IMF. Despite the fact that Arab countries are developing countries, the percentage of donations to poor countries compared to their GNP was much higher than their imperialist counterparts. The share of donations of the US is 0.24 percent, the EC is 0.51, while that of Saudi Arabia was 3.53 and Kuwait was 4.46 percent.⁵⁴

146. During the period 1962—1983, the aid distributed by Arab countries to poor countries amounted at \$ 9,426,730 billion. The break down is as follows: 51 percent to other Arab countries, 19.7 percent to African countries, 27 percent to Asian countries, 1.9 percent to Latin American countries, and 0.6 percentage to other countries.⁵⁵ In view of the fact that several Arab countries are in desperate need for aid, there is no justification for the fact that

investment and business relations are stronger than those between the GCC and other Arab countries (Tanai Vassallo, U.S. GCC Economic Dialogue, www. Tradeline/960315.

⁵⁰ U.N.D.P. 1993:152—153.

⁵¹ "The Gulf States Discover Unemployment". *Al—Quds*, Jerusalem 2 May 1995.

⁵² *Al—Quds Al—Dawli*, London, 22 June, 2001.

⁵³ U.N.D.P 1992:170—171.

⁵⁴ The Unified Arab Economic Report, 1985, opcit, 399.

⁵⁵ The Unified Arab Economic Report 1984, opcit, 296.

half of Arab financial assistance goes to non—Arab countries. Additionally, this assistance did not crystallize into a real support for Arab development. This irrational donation policy is one of the means used by the rich Arab regimes to avoid assisting development in Arab countries. It is part of the policy of deepening unequal development.

6. ARAB CAPITAL ABROAD LOSES ITS NATIONAL IDENTITY AND ‘DEEPENS’ UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT

147. Capital outflow from Arab countries to western banks puts an end to the possibility of re—investing the surplus on a national scale. This externally oriented surplus kept the wealthier Arab countries that are able to generate surplus, increasingly disconnected from those that are poorer or unable to generate surplus.

148. The Arab capital deposited abroad is estimated at \$ 750—800 billion. Forty seven percent of it belongs to public and 53 percent to private sectors. The percentage of money liquid assets is 61 percent such as banks deposits, governmental and commercial banknotes, and IMF credits, in addition to the short—term investments the remainder is invested in acquiring shares, buildings, and loans. Approximately 74.5 percent of them are invested in the OECD. Arab debt to international commercial banks reached an amount of \$ 95 billion by the end of 1991.⁵⁶ Official figures for the balance of payments of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Saudi Arabia show that the combined deficit of these countries was \$55 billion in 1991. Within four years (1991—1994), this deficit rose to about \$100 billion.⁵⁷

XIX. THE POSSIBILITY OF A SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

149. It should be noted that in the Arab countries the gap between the social classes that control the surplus and the popular classes, continues to widen each year. The interests of those who control surplus are more and more articulated with those of the world capital. This is in harmony with the same policy of deepening unequal development which means that the same old alliance remained unchanged. Accordingly, the social classes that control the oil rent remain a tool for capital drainage. Through the process of deepening unequal development, financial capital has moved more freely to the world capitalist center. In this case, financial capital is different from other forms of capital regarding its ability to move abroad fast. Once controlled by the center, financial capital loses its ‘national identity and roots’, and becomes a part of the so—called ‘international capital’. In the final analysis, this financial capital is controlled by the capitalists in the countries of the capitalist core. It will also be subjected to the center's administrative financial decisions. It is known, for instance, that ‘Arab credit(c)’ in the capitalist center was used to finance the center's aggression against the Arab people of Iraq, Libya, Palestine, South Yemen, Somalia and other countries. This represents a worse consequence than the deepening of unequal development.

150. In summary, the 20th century was a century that witnessed the rule of the Arab *iqlimi* bourgeois capitalist and comprador classes. These classes failed to realize any of the focal

⁵⁶ Al—Afandi, 1993:26.

⁵⁷ Saudi Arabia Economy Faces Problems. Douglas Davis, in *The Jerusalem Post* 28/10/1994.

aims or aspirations of the Arab peoples. They failed to achieve Arab unity, democracy, secularism, and development. Neither a socialist nor a capitalist development has been achieved in the Arab Homeland. The ruling Arab comprador classes remain in the camp of capitalist imperialism and Zionism against Arab nationalism. This *iqlimi* capitalism has betrayed the people's goals of development, socialism, Arab unity, and the liberation of Palestine and it has facilitated the drainage of surplus to the imperialist center and the deepening of unequal development in Arab countries.

151. Simply put, the capitalistic class in the Arab Homeland is in a stage of re—arranging the class order. It is inevitable that popular classes follow the same path. That path is Development by Popular Protection (DBPP). In this context, it is necessary for those who struggle for national goals to avoid the adoption of the bourgeois capitalist content of Arab nationalism, the ‘nationalism of the ruling classes’ which follows the capitalist modernization approach for development. Such a duplication will keep the Arab nation dependent and under the domination of international capital. If those who struggle for the national interest insist on repeating the same bitter experience, the results will be, to a large extent, the same failure as their predecessors. The failure of such an experience will follow shortly because current Arab capitalism is already compradorized, meaning is 'ready for the betrayal of national cause and national interests'. The Arab comprador is not a productive nationalist bourgeois and still needs to ‘develop’ its own class interests. In either case, the result of repeating the bourgeois experience will further hinder the socialist project of the popular classes.

152. To counter the obstructed development in the Arab Homeland it is necessary to challenge the social class and national alliance behind it: the Arab ruling comprador capitalist classes, the ruling classes in the globalized capitalist core countries and the ruling class in the Zionist entity—Israel.

153. The recent years, especially during the Palestinian *intifada II* (September 2000), the Arab Homeland has witnessed a re—arrangement of the popular classes in a relatively slow, but profound manner. This movement of popular classes was mainly crystallized in two levels of activities that engaged most of the popular classes, various social segments, males, females, children...etc. The first, is the movement of boycotting US products as a of world capitalism. The second, is the movement of anti—normalization with Israel. Boycotting foreign capitalist products presupposes an orientation towards real development. At the same time, this is a struggle against the comprador capitalist classes that have always opposed and obstructed development. The same is the result of anti—normalization activities. If these popular activities were to be grasped and conceptualized by a communist movement, the boycotting and anti—normalization will establish a solid and wide base for a socialist Arab Homeland.