

Capitalism's Impending Dangers for Global Humane Development

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The author suggests that development models influenced by the capitalist model of development overlooks nonmaterial dimensions of development and underdevelopment. As a consequence of this, social sciences, which are shaped by capitalist concerns also, do not examine the negative consequences of colonization on underdeveloped societies. The problem is not just ideological it is also epistemological. Positive social science, according to the author an offshoot of capitalism, is also unable to comprehend the most important consequence of colonization — other underdevelopment — the underdevelopment of the cultural symbols, psychology, and language of the colonized societies. The author advances a model that will help include an analysis of cultural-symbolic underdevelopment in the study of development and underdevelopment of societies.

Development in the Third World

In the last three decades, most Third World countries had unimpressive, disastrous, or even tragic development experiences. The burden of underdevelopment, in Ali Mazrui's terms, is probably most felt and experienced in black Africa.¹ The human misery in countries like Somalia, Ethiopia, and Sudan has become all too familiar to the whole world, especially through television news reports. Droughts, internal conflicts, and the AIDS epidemic have certainly contributed to the deteriorated state of many African countries. These factors, however, are hardly adequate to account for the ugly state of affairs that prevails in several African countries in the last few years. Their grim situation could have surely been otherwise had development achieved some measure of success. Nation building has been anything

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but a success story in these countries. Nevertheless, the pessimistic image of development in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Sudan represents the extreme case of failure in the development of the Third World.

On the other extreme, there are a few developing countries whose development performance has been impressive. Geographically they are situated in Southeast Asia. South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Thailand have embarked on serious economic and industrial growth. In fact, in the near future they are expected to become rivals to Japan in the Pacific.

In general, however, the state of development in the Third World is very bleak. Those who have seriously studied developing countries believe that the experiences in those societies have been largely unsuccessful. The following quote is a good description of the situation:

In the early 1990s, the community of scholars devoted to the study of Third World development resembles in many respects its 1960s counterpart. The decade of the sixties began thirty years ago with a pervasive sense of optimism that in the new and modernizing nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the processes of enlightenment and democratization will have their inevitable way, but it gave way increasingly to disillusionment and loss of theoretical direction. Coups d'état, once thought of as a Latin American phenomenon, become regular occurrences in other parts of the world, particularly Africa and the Middle East. Rates of economic growth in many countries were unimpressive despite foreign aid, and even in rapidly industrializing states such as Brazil, South Africa and Iran, long-term prospects for social equality and political democracy appeared poor.²

With the state of Third World development as briefly described, an intellectual crisis of development theorists of different social science orientations and schools has surfaced. Modernization and dependency social science theorists, in particular, whose credibility has been challenged, have embarked on a fundamental reevaluation of their paradigms.³

Capitalism's Leading Posture in Global Development

The collapse of socialism as an ideology and socioeconomic political system in its place of birth (the former Soviet Union and the socialist block of eastern Europe) has opened the way for Western capitalist domination throughout many societies, both as a superstructure and an infrastructure.

The apparent victory of capitalism as a Liberal socioeconomic and democratic political system has prompted Francis Fukuyama to describe this critical historical system shift as the "end of history."⁴ According to this American author, modern Western industrial capitalist Liberal and democratic societies have proven now, beyond any doubt, that their economic sociopolitical system is superior to the socialist system that was in practice in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. History has ended in the sense there is no more room for large ideological battles. Liberal democracy is not merely triumphant, it is simply what there is, and all there can be. Literally, there is no more room for debate over fundamentals. The crystallization of the so-called New World Order has put an end to the cold war between the two major superpowers, the United States and the former Soviet Union. These historical global transformations have favored capitalism as the economic sociopolitical system to become the model to be imitated and adopted, not only in the former socialist eastern European block, but also in many of today's developing societies. Though in the last few years democracy has been gaining ground in many Third World countries, the democratization process has not been smooth. Democracy has known many setbacks here and there in the developing nations. For example, in January 1992, fearing a victory by Le Front Islamique de Salut (FIS), the Algerian government cancelled the second voting phase of the legislative election. This notoriously undemocratic event in Algeria is just one among many that have occurred in the newly independent nations that have been experimenting with democracy.

On the economic front, socialist-oriented or state-run economies of the Third World have increasingly given way to the practices of market economy. This enhanced position held by capitalism since the collapse of socialism requires a reassessment of the relationship between capitalism and development. This relationship can be examined through the formulation of two questions:

1. Is capitalism the ideal model that best promotes the development projects that societies really need?
2. Can the capitalism of today's advanced Western societies help the cause of development in less developed countries?

Jointly put, the two questions add up to this question: How promising, credible, and safe is the use of capitalism as a promoter of development on a more or less worldwide scale?

Capitalism and Development from Within

The term "capitalism" refers to the economic system that has been dominant in the West since the sixteenth century, following the breakup of feudalism in Europe.⁵ With the numerous sociopolitical transformations that the West has known as a result of the French and American Revolutions, as well as the industrial and scientific revolutions, capitalism has become strongly associated with democracy and social Liberal policies. Thus, we use here the term "capitalism" to refer specifically to the western Liberal socioeconomic and democratic political system that has evolved in contemporary western advanced societies.

More than four centuries of experience with capitalism as the dominant development model in the West constitutes an adequate period of time for the evaluation of the capitalist system. Like any social system, capitalism is bound to have its positive and negative accomplishments. Therefore, what matters in this assessment is how the pluses and the minuses balance out. Because of space limitation, we intend to offer only a brief analysis of capitalism's development achievements within western frontiers. On the brighter side, capitalism has a great record of development achievements in the West in the few centuries of its existence. On the economic development front, the West has been seriously challenged only lately by Japan's growing economic muscles. An argument can be made here that the Japanese economic development has been more self-made than its western capitalist economic development counterpart. The latter has often been accused of exploiting other nations around the world.⁶

In the domain of industrial and technological achievements, the capitalist West has indeed achieved some milestones. Never before has man been able to manipulate, control, and transform his world as he is now able to do using the West's industrial and technological products. In this area, the Japanese are either catching up or are overtaking their Western capitalist counterparts, particularly in the fields of electronics and information technology (e.g., computers and robots). It remains true, however, that the capitalist West is uncontestedly the pioneer in the development of modern technology in the broader sense of the term.

In the development of knowledge and science, there is no doubt that the capitalist West stands alone in its unique role as catalyst of the scientific revolution and the formidable explosion of knowledge in modern times.⁷ These events have brought about a radical revolution in mankind's cogni-

tion of himself and the world around him. With the new knowledge and science he has considerably strengthened his mastery both here on earth and in space. The entire planet could not have become, in McLuhan's words, a "small village," without the development of sophisticated information science and technology.⁸

Parallel to these remarkable accomplishments, western capitalism has institutionalized the practice of political democracy and guaranteed the free expression of ideas and thought. In our view, this political-cultural development is the greatest achievement of capitalism. On this level, the western capitalist system is superior to any past or present socialist/communist system. What good are scientific/technological achievements if the system that has produced them suppresses what distinguishes mankind from other species? Regardless of their scientific and technological importance, the development projects of totalitarian and tyrannical political regimes will always remain unimpressive, unappealing, and ultimately dehumanizing to the average human being.

As pointed out earlier, the capitalist system has its own negative points and contradictions.⁹ To begin with, at an accelerating pace over the past four centuries, capitalist development has done great harm to the ecological system of western advanced societies and of the world at large. Pollution of the environment is a major concern today in many western and nonwestern cities. In most industrial and technologically advanced western societies, the rivers, lakes, seas, and oceans have been polluted beyond repair. Health risks from toxic chemicals are hotly debated in those societies. Deforestation, diminishing diversity of life, and global warming constitute great threats to the Earth. The Earth Summit in Rio in June 1992 bluntly warned of impending danger. The watchword in Rio was "sustainable development."

There are limits to the earth's resources and its capacity to absorb the waste products of industry; this must be taken into account in the process of economic development so that the legacy we leave our children is not a planet in a worse state of health than we inherited.¹⁰

Clearly, the Earth is increasingly becoming uninhabitable. The major role played by western capitalism in the damage to the Earth's natural resources and ecology is more than obvious. The picture of our present and future planet becomes grimmer and more desperate when we consider the ever increasing piles of destructive armament of all kinds (nuclear, biochemical)

in whose production and possession the capitalist West still leads. With this, the complete destruction of our planet and all living things has become a distinct possibility. The West's use of its military might constitutes an imminent threat to the very survival of mankind. In this century, two world wars were fought in which capitalist superpowers played central roles. Japan was defeated by a capitalist superpower's monopolistic development and use of nuclear weapons against it. The building of a capitalist nuclear arsenal did not stop with the bombardment of Hiroshima or Nagasaki. Rather, it has continued unabated. It has become the development model to be imitated since World War II by big and small nations alike. It is certainly the most terrifying development model the capitalist West has set for itself and for others to imitate in modern times. On the social scene, capitalist societies have had their share of social problems. Their rates of crime, divorce, suicide, alcohol/drug addiction, AIDS, and premarital pregnancy are considerably higher than the rest of the world's. Within the fold of capitalism, individualism has run wild. In the nineteenth century, de Tocqueville had already expressed observed the beginning of the weakening of collective social ties in America in favor of the individual's growing assertive freedom and independence. A more recent sociological study¹¹ on postmodern American society depicts a frightening portrait of its decaying "social ecology." The authors of the study argue that the harm done to nature's ecological system under rampant expanding and exploitive capitalism finds its equivalent in the damage inflicted on the web of social solidarity among Americans. It is as urgent and important to save and repair social ecology as it is to save and repair environmental ecology.

This worrying pattern of development under capitalist rule calls for serious reflection upon the principal forces that stand behind the capitalists' domination of the West and the rest of the world. Three factors appear to be at work here: capitalism's obsession with economic/materialistic growth; the capitalist's passion for and fascination with the conquest of nature; and the capitalist's lack of a cosmic and religious frame of reference. This appears to be the result of the hostility of the expanding ethical power of materialism toward the Church and the religious/spiritual conceptions/ideas it stands for.

With these three forces orienting the behavior of western capitalists, it is easy to understand the state of development the West and the world at large have come to experience. For the capitalist, economic/material growth has become an end in itself — even if this requires twisting/adapting sacred

religious beliefs to fulfill this end. Weber's Protestant ethic is a good illustration of this in the rise of capitalism.¹² When economic/quantitative development becomes the target, then all efforts and all strategies have to be used to get it. That is, the ends justify the means. For capitalists, an exploitive worldwide colonization is not something to be ashamed of, nor is it considered shameful to pollute one's own environment and to overuse its natural resources, as long as the action is done for the sake of achieving economic/material growth.

This unprecedented massive collective manipulation and exploitation of the Earth's resources is sanctioned by the capitalists' relation with nature. They have been known for their strong passion and desire to subdue nature. Since the Enlightenment western man has conceived of himself as the only master here on Earth. Everything has to submit to his will, by force if necessary. Nature's conquest is but the capitalists' fulfillment of this perception of themselves and the world around them. Tension, hostility, and conflict are expected to prevail in relation to nature. The horrible consequences of the capitalists' interactions with nature on Earth's well-being have just begun to be graphically and statistically told.

The western Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the scientific revolution shattered the capitalist's cosmic vision of things. The confrontation between the Church and the men of the new science and knowledge ruptured the relations between science/knowledge and the spiritual dimension of human existence. Contemporary capitalist science cares little, if at all, about the religious/spiritual/cosmic manifestations that earlier scientists, from eastern civilizations in particular, had given to this realm. Heavily confined to the so-called objective and empirical research tools and methods, today's typical scientists care very little about the mysteries that lie beyond the reach of their narrow scientific outlook and their materialistic worldview.

A comparison of the place of science and knowledge in Muslim civilization and contemporary western civilization is in order. In Islam, knowledge and science are the human means of salvation par excellence. The ambition of the Muslim scientist and scholar is not limited to the narrow discovery of Nature's laws and their use here on earth. The access to more knowledge and science only makes the Muslim scientist and scholar fear God more. The Qur'an states plainly: "The erudite among His bondsmen fear God alone" (35:28).

While Islamic knowledge and science draw the Muslim scientists and scholars closer to the cosmos, contemporary western knowledge and science have almost done the opposite. They have done away with the spiritual connections that result from acting upon human knowledge and science. The practice of the latter is far from being a salvation for the great majority of contemporary western scientists and scholars.

In other words, secularized western knowledge and science have inflicted a damaging blow to the role of knowledge and science as the most distinct and privileged means for humans to communicate with the larger cosmos. Consequently, the horizons of contemporary western scientists and scholars have considerably shrunk to become confined to those phenomena they can see and measure with their five senses. From an Islamic point of view, the interruption of communication between the First Spring (God) of all knowledge/sciences and the individual scientists and scholars is an aberrant state that goes against the nature of things in the acquisition processes of knowledge and science. It is as unnatural as putting obstacles in space in order to prevent raindrops from returning to where they had evaporated from (rivers, lakes, oceans).

Based on these briefly described negative aspects of the contemporary capitalist system, one can hardly recommend it as the ideal model for worldwide development. The thesis of Shumacher's *Small is Beautiful* is clearly anticapitalist.¹³ Capitalism is commendable only for lending itself to free political expression and democracy. On the economic and technological front, capitalism's development has proven very costly — depleting the Earth's natural resources and harming its ecology. The development of all sorts of destructive weapons risks the survival of the entire planet. In terms of social justice and social ecology, the record of advanced capitalist societies is far from impressive. As mentioned above, contemporary western capitalist development of knowledge and science is cosmically underdeveloped. And last but not least, western capitalism can hardly claim innocence from the exploitation of other societies since its birth. Its development can then be seen, at least partially, as the result of the underdevelopment of others.

Capitalism and the Underdevelopment of Other Societies

The picture of capitalism, as briefly outlined, permits one to adequately know in advance what to expect from its model of development when it has the opportunity to interact with other societies and civilizations. Capitalism has had the opportunity of leaving its place of birth and making itself present on all five continents. It is now interacting with all societies as a dominant and powerful actor. With the West's unequal relation with the subdued Other, the scene has been set to obtain greater benefits from this long and continuing encounter. The long period of contemporary western colonization of countries around the globe constitutes the peak of exploitation by the great western capitalist powers led by Great Britain and France. This is hardly difficult to imagine. On the one hand, we have a capitalist West that is strongly obsessed by the idea of achieving an ever-expanding economic/material growth. On the other, many of the countries that fell under capitalist colonization were quite rich in natural resources but helpless to defend themselves and protect their own wealth from a powerful enemy. Within this historical juncture, according to dependency theorists, the development process of the underdevelopment of the colonized and dependent societies began.¹⁴ Arguments have been made by the opponents of the dependency theory that the underdevelopment of contemporary Third World countries is due mainly to internal factors. The mainstream paradigm of western developmentalist social scientists asserts that the causes of Third World underdevelopment have to be sought in the cultural value system and the social structures of those societies.¹⁵ This kind of argument remains weak as long as it denies that colonization is a crucial variable that has to be taken into account in any genuine attempt to understand the dynamics of development/underdevelopment in contemporary societies. In the objective assessment of development and modernization carried out by contemporary western capitalism, the social scientist must seriously address the roles of both the spirit of capitalism and the industrial and scientific revolutions in that process of global change since the sixteenth century. Obviously, scientific objectivity would not obtain if the role of the western colonization factor is dropped altogether from the analysis. Empirically, it is utterly unacceptable to do away with the impact of something as concrete, as observable, and as widespread as contemporary western capitalist colonization. In denying or marginalizing the impact of west-

ern capitalist colonization on Third World underdevelopment, the social scientists put themselves in an unenviable situation. If they deny the potential impact of western colonization as an empirical social fact, they put the scientific ethics of neutrality/objectivity in real jeopardy. However, if they admit it while continuing to marginalize its role in the underdevelopment, then they can be accused of lacking the ability to comprehend (*verstehen*) and explain the wide range of damaging implications of contemporary western capitalist colonization on the state of development in the Third World.

Three aspects of the former western capitalist colonization of developing societies can be outlined: the political, the economic, and the cultural colonizations. The act of contemporary western occupation of countries, especially in Africa and Asia, means in political terms the weakening of the capacity of the occupied people to fully run their affairs independently. The ruler of colonized territories is often either a colonial national appointee or a cooperating native designated by the colonizer. Policies and decisions in the running of the affairs of people under occupation can hardly be done without the consensus and the approval of the colonizers. Likewise, the administration is largely run and controlled by colonial staff who widely use the language and the administrative culture of the colonizer in dealing with the local people. In legal matters, the colonial authority appoints its own judges and magistrates and introduces its own law into the legal system. Furthermore, the security forces put in place, like police, are usually nationals of the foreign occupier. The same is true also of the army.

In social psychological terms, these aspects of Western contemporary colonization mean the political deprivation of the occupied people from fully running their own affairs. Modern research in socialization has shown the devastating effects of social deprivation on human behavior.¹⁶ The colonization experience entails a collective deprivation of the diverse potentials of the colonized. The dominant/dominated relation that prevails between the colonizer and the colonized during occupation creates in the latter a sense of helplessness, dependency, and inferiority.¹⁷ Such a political experience can hardly claim to teach the dominated party self-respect. Under colonization, political deprivation means ultimately a collective decapacitation that hinders people from growing toward full natural political development. In other words, the experience of political colonization imposes an extended period of political immaturity upon the occupied. The Third World's widespread imitation of the West during and after occupa-

tion is to be accounted for, in part, by its continuing immaturity in the domain of conducting successful independent political governance and development projects. The stage of immaturity for both individuals and societies appears to be strongly correlated with a disproportionate tendency of imitation of those who have grown older, more mature, and more developed. Capitalist western powers' contemporary occupation of foreign territories far from home was hardly an end in itself. In sociological terms, it had wider functions to accomplish for the interest of the colonizer. The British occupation of Egypt, for instance, was very important for Great Britain as far as her maritime and military strategy for a worldwide effective expansion and domination. Once political and strategic colonial domination is secured, the scene is set for the exploitation of the occupied party from within.

Economic exploitation of the colonized is bound to be high, if not the most important item, on the agenda of contemporary Western capitalist colonizers. The dependency-based research program on development/underdevelopment has provided ample details of the various ways that capitalist economic exploitation was used to underdevelop the occupied territories.¹⁸ It is not the aim of this work to fully restate them. Rather, it is sufficient to refer to some aspects of capitalist Western economic exploitation of former colonies. Cheap raw materials needed by the industrial revolution were shipped from the colonies to Western industries. Capitalist industrial development and production depended considerably on cheap material booty from abroad.¹⁹ Growing agricultural crops in the colonies for consumption by the citizens of the colonial powers became a common practice. This exploitative practice, when widely and intensively implemented, endangered (underdeveloped) the colonies' autonomy in food production. In connection with this plausible food supply underdevelopment, one can hardly underestimate the crucial role of colonial farmers. Often, the colonial authorities gave these farmers large tracts of fertile land to cultivate and export much of their crops home. Andre Gunder Frank sees the underdevelopment of the Third World as the outcome of what he calls the "metropolis-satellite structure" which "serves as an instrument to suck capital or economic surplus out of its own satellites and to channel part of this surplus to the world metropolis of which all are satellites."²⁰ In other words, the satellite status of colonized countries during and after occupation becomes the key factor for understanding the continuing capitalist exploitation and the subsequent phenomenon of worldwide underdevelopment. In contrast,

societies which were not satellites of capitalism have developed very well. Frank writes, "Japan was not satellized either during the Tokugawa or Neyi period and therefore did not have its development structurally limited as did the countries that capitalists so satellized."²¹

Contemporary capitalist Western political domination and economic exploitation (specifically by Great Britain and France) of African and Asian societies is inconceivable without a concomitant cultural domination. The concept of cultural domination means that once the capitalist Western powers have occupied their targeted foreign territories, they carry out policies that spread their cultural symbols among the colonized. The cultural symbols refer here to such things like language, thought, religion, science/knowledge, and cultural norms and values. Unlike in the economic domain, the capitalist Western colonizer's exportation and diffusion of his cultural symbols does not in any way underdevelop his ongoing development. On the contrary, cultural symbols strengthen the exporter's grip on the colonized and often underdevelops the vitality and the functioning of its own cultural symbols. The role of language into this process of cultural underdevelopment in colonized societies is most crucial and decisive. Usually, the occupying capitalist power introduces the use of its language in its colonies in many important sectors like education and administration. The extent of linguistic colonization can go from marginal to a total use of the occupier's language in those sectors. A clear consequence of this process is a minor to a major underdevelopment of the national local language(s). Language is alive; either it grows and develops its potentials with intensive use, or it weakens and underdevelops its capacities with decreased use.

With the wide diffusion of the colonizer's language, the scene is set for an extensive spread of the rest of the cultural symbols among the occupied people. They are introduced to Western ideas, science/knowledge, mores, and customs. Through Christian missions, they are also exposed to Christian religious beliefs, which sometimes lead to their eventual conversion. In sociological terms, a collective process of acculturation of the colonized population is put in place once the foreign language has gained a stronghold. Within the capitalist Western colonial educational settings, students are taught Western languages, history, geography, philosophy, and ideas. As a result, knowledge of their own language(s) and cultural heritage suffers and becomes distorted. While this imbalanced educational system favors the development of the colonial cultural symbols in the occupied ter-

ritories and the promotion of a positive and a quasi-reverent perception of the dominant colonizer,²² it also leads to the underdevelopment of the cultural symbols of the colonized and the emergence of the phenomena of cultural conflicts and negative self-esteem.²³ Cultural underdevelopment, as described above, often appears to be associated with self-degrading psychological manifestations²⁴ among the larger population of the world who fell victim to capitalist Western occupation. We have invented the concept "other underdevelopment"²⁵ to describe this state of psychocultural underdevelopment that is widely experienced throughout the Third World.

The Forgotten Other Underdevelopment

From Michael Harrington's term the "Other America,"²⁶ I coined the term "other underdevelopment." Harrington's "Other America" refers to the blacks, hispanics, and other nonwhite Americans forgotten by the larger white American population, while, "other underdevelopment," refers to the kind of underdevelopment, particularly widespread in the Third World, that has been hardly studied by social scientists concerned with the issues of development and underdevelopment. Western Liberal capitalist and Marxist social scientists and their followers in the Third World have tended to confine themselves to the study of the socioeconomic aspects of underdevelopment, neglecting the study of other underdevelopment. That other underdevelopment has been ignored by mainstream modern social sciences in the study of development/underdevelopment constitutes in itself a phenomenon which has to be understood and explained.

The absence of other underdevelopment in modern social science literature puts into question the credibility of the enormous quantity of social science articles, books, reports that have been written and published since World War II on the issues of development and underdevelopment. By not paying attention to other underdevelopment, modern social scientists appear to have a rather narrow concept of underdevelopment. They don't seem to have seriously looked at development/underdevelopment as a complex social reality whose many components ultimately make up a social system.

An Operational Definition of Other Underdevelopment

As mentioned earlier, other underdevelopment has two dimensions: the cultural and the psychological. Other underdevelopment is, therefore, a psychocultural underdevelopment whose two dimensions interact with each other and produce ultimately a psychocultural system.

Cultural Underdevelopment

As conceived through our concept of other underdevelopment,²⁷ cultural underdevelopment can be measured by three manifestations:

1. Linguistic underdevelopment: defined as the widespread use of one or more foreign languages in a given society and the underuse (the less than full use) of society's own native language (spoken/written or both).
2. Knowledge/science underdevelopment: defined as the acute dependency of developing countries on Western science and knowledge and the poor (underdeveloped) knowledge that Third World intellectuals and scientists of Western educational background have of their own civilization and culture's past contributions to the fields of science and knowledge.
3. The underdevelopment of the cultural value system: defined as the erosion and breakdown of the cultural value system of dominated Third World countries as a result of their contact with the dominant West in the contemporary period.

Psychological Underdevelopment

Psychological underdevelopment implies the deterioration of the basic foundations of the psychological well-being of the Third World country's individual personality, which is mainly the outcome of Western cultural domination. This psychological state can be measured by two major syndromes:

1. The inferiority complex: due to contemporary Western domination of the Third World, its citizens tend to manifest an inferiority complex toward the West. Often the complex is associated with damaging attitudes and behavior to one's psychological well-being like the loss of faith in oneself, the strong desire to imitate the West, alienation, and stress.
2. The disorganized personality: the acute state of cultural conflict between the traditional cultural value system and its modern Western counterpart is bound to have certain negative side effects on the personality structure of the Third World acculturized (to Western culture) individual. Znaniecki and

Thomas have referred to this type of personality as "disorganized personality."²⁸

Other Underdevelopment as a Psychocultural System

Having operationalized the other underdevelopment concept as cultural and psychological underdevelopment, we now need to show how they interact with each other and produce a system of their own. Our study has shown that the two components of other underdevelopment do mutually interact in a reciprocal manner.²⁹ We have demonstrated, on the one hand, that linguistic underdevelopment and knowledge/science underdevelopment are likely to lead to the development of an inferiority complex (psychological underdevelopment) in the personality of the Western acculturized individual of the Third World. On the other hand, psychological underdevelopment predisposes the Third World individual personality to be eager to learn and use the language(s) and cultures of Western dominant societies. Furthermore, the inferiority complex becomes a compelling force causing the development of a negative perception of one's national language and culture. In this sense, a psychological inferiority complex (psychological underdevelopment) appears, thus, to harden the two dimensions of cultural underdevelopment and, consequently, contribute to the making of cultural alienation, a phenomenon which is widespread in underdeveloped countries, especially among groups with a Western educational background.

To complete the description of the dynamics of other underdevelopment as a psychocultural system, we need to look at the impact of the disorganized personality (psychological underdevelopment) on what we have called cultural underdevelopment or the cultural values system of the individual. The disorganized personality seems to contribute significantly to the breakdown of the cultural value system. In other words, conflicts of cultural values are likely to make the personality structure of the individual of the Third World more vulnerable to further breakdowns and, thus, more receptive or less resistant to the adoption of Western cultural values. Ultimately, this leads to a deepening disintegration of the personality and, consequently, to confusion in one's cultural identity. Table 1 illustrates the main components of the phenomenon of other underdevelopment and the nature of their interaction.

Table 1

The psychocultural nature of the phenomenon of the other underdevelopment in the Third World			
The components of psychocultural underdevelopment	1. Third World inferiority complex toward the dominant West	1. Linguistic underdevelopment 2. Underdevelopment in modern science and knowledge	The components of psychocultural underdevelopment
	2. Disorganization personality and abnormal behavioral and mental symptoms	3. Cultural values system disorganization	

Social Sciences' Underdevelopment on Cultural Symbols

The long silence in modern capitalist and noncapitalist social science literature of development/underdevelopment on other underdevelopment in the Third World has deprived this science of applicability and usefulness. To put this in perspective, we focus our analysis on the component of cultural underdevelopment in other underdevelopment. As defined earlier, cultural underdevelopment encompasses language, knowledge/science, and cultural values. All human cultural symbols in Edward Tylor's sense of culture, which he defined as that "complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom and other capacities and habits acquired by man as a member of society,"³⁰ are to be referred to in this study as cultural symbols. The latter are fundamental to the human species; through them humans are most distinct from both artificial intelligence machines and other living creatures. There is a consensus among modern scholars of culture that the use of symbols is the most striking feature of culture. The symbolic abilities of humans are the yardstick by which Leslie White defines the nature of humans. He writes, "We thus define man in terms of the abilities to symbol and the consequent ability to produce culture."³¹ White points out that language contains the most important cultural symbols: "But perhaps the best example of all is articulate speech or language; at any rate, we may well regard articulate speech as the most characteristic and the most important form of expression of the ability to symbol."³²

The importance of cultural symbols for the shaping and the ultimate making of the human entity and identity enables one to strongly assert that the human species is decisively cultural-symbolic by nature. In our own words, cultural symbols constitute the cultural-symbolic soul of individuals.³³ Thus, any credible scientific attempt to comprehend and explain human behavior, be it individual or collective, must give priority to the compelling weight of symbolic ability in the determination of the behavior in question. Modern behavioral social science theories and paradigms that fail to seriously consider the crucial role of cultural symbols are doomed to discredit themselves in their assessment of the dynamics of social action.

Against this epistemological perspective on the nature of human cultural symbols, silence on the issue of other underdevelopment by both capitalist Liberal and dependency social scientists of development/underdevelopment becomes unacceptable and can hardly be defended on genuine solid scientific grounds. Social scientists' disinterest in dealing with the Third World's widespread other underdevelopment is bound to be the outcome of narrow-minded and ideologically biased approaches to the study of development/underdevelopment in contemporary societies at large. Western capitalist Liberal social scientists and their Marxist colleagues have different reasons for their lack of concern for the study of Other Underdevelopment. The causes behind this fall into two categories; each is discussed below.

Causes Inspired by Western Ethnocentrism

Among Western capitalist Liberal social scientists of development/modernization/underdevelopment there is an implicit or an explicit tendency to view the general cultural heritage (values, traditions, and religions) of Third World societies as largely representing obstacles to the development/modernization process in those countries.³⁴ This should explain why cultural underdevelopment has hardly any place in the massive quantity of academic studies that have been produced since 1945.

Western capitalist Liberal social scientists in the field of development/modernization/underdevelopment have had the strong conviction that the capitalist West is the only real maker of contemporary history. Thus, success in development/modernization projects by underdeveloped societies always needs a helping hand from the capitalist system. The wide diffusion of modern Western languages (in particular, English and French) and Western cultural values into Third World countries is expected to be

endorsed by modern capitalist Liberal social scientists like Lerner, Inkeles, and Smith.³⁵ For them, it is quite obvious that the diffusion of Western cultural symbols into underdeveloped societies is a process that helps the promotion of cultural development and is not a process leading to other underdevelopment, as we have defined it.

As we have pointed, Western capitalist Liberal social scientists have hardly made any direct link between the phenomenon of Third World underdevelopment and Western capitalist colonialism. When that underdevelopment in all its forms (economic, social, and psychocultural) is not related somehow to imperial capitalist Western classical or new colonialism in the last two centuries or so, then other underdevelopment, seen by us as resulting basically from capitalist Western domination of the Third World, is unlikely to be recognized and, subsequently, studied by those social scientists.

It is only natural for Western capitalist social scientists' conceptualization, understanding, paradigm, and theory building of development/underdevelopment to be West-oriented. The social scientists, whatever their nationality may be, are often inclined to rely heavily on the realities of their own social/civil milieu in analyzing societal phenomena and theorizing on them. Thus, they are bound to be, at least in part, biased in their choice of what dimension (economic, social, or psychocultural) of Third World underdevelopment to focus upon. In other words, contemporary advanced capitalist and socialist societies, to which the vast majority of modern social scientists belong, are not known to have seriously suffered, if at all, from the other underdevelopment syndrome as described by us here and elsewhere.³⁶ Consequently, other underdevelopment has remained an alien phenomenon that has failed to attract their scientific curiosity.

Causes of an Epistemological Nature

On the whole, both Western Liberal capitalist and Marxist social scientists have tended to externalize the development/underdevelopment phenomena in a materialist/quantitative way. If development/underdevelopment is conceived in terms of quantifiable economic, social, scientific, and technological indicators, then it is easy to understand why psychocultural underdevelopment (other underdevelopment) has received practically no attention. It is well known, in this regard, that Marxist social scientists have produced enormous analytical academic and scholarly works on Third World economic exploitation by the capitalist West. But in contrast to this,

they have given no more than lip service to Third World cultural exploitation by capitalist colonial powers.³⁷

By its nature, other underdevelopment appears to lie beyond the reach of mainstream traditional contemporary sociologists and economists. While traditional economists are interested in the analysis of the economic forces that work for or against development/underdevelopment, traditional sociologists are interested in social structures. Thus, the study of the psychocultural dimensions of underdevelopment belongs rather to "radical" sociology.³⁸

By neglecting, for epistemological or ethnocentric reasons, the study of other underdevelopment as a principal feature of Third World development/underdevelopment dynamics, modern Western capitalist and Marxist sociologists and economists have seriously damaged the integrity and validity of their paradigms and theories about development/underdevelopment in the Third World.

Cultural Symbols Research and the Enrichment of the Social Science Theoretical Scope

The marginalization or the total disinterest in the study of other underdevelopment has impoverished not only modern social science literature on the issues of development and underdevelopment, but it has also deprived their theoretical scope from being more credible in dealing with the comprehension and explanation of diverse societal phenomena. Our own work in the last three years on cultural symbols,³⁹ which has a direct theoretical implication and concrete application on the cultural development component of other underdevelopment, has allowed us to revitalize the use of cultural symbols in modern social sciences. Our ultimate goal has been to put forth a new theoretical framework on the nature of cultural symbols. As emphasized before, cultural symbols are central to the social actor's own identity and action. In other words, they constitute his/her cultural-symbolic soul.⁴⁰ Their impact on individual and collective behavior is long lasting and powerful. Their imposing influence on social action seems to be triggered by quasi-supernatural forces. Thus, I view cultural symbols as being impregnated with transcendental dimensions.

Two examples are sufficient to illustrate this new theoretical vision of cultural symbols. The two case studies are cultural dependency's danger

and longer life span and William Ogburn's theory on the slow pace of cultural change (cultural lag) in societies.

Cultural Dependency Is Most Dangerous

The widely quoted saying "The cultural conquest of people is more dangerous than its military counterpart" is an assertion that is almost uncontested. One must, however, admit that there is a great deal of fuzziness and inaccuracy in the use of such terms like "cultural alienation," "cultural imperialism," and "cultural dependency" in the contemporary worldwide context of dominant/dominated societies. These various terms do little more than indicate the presence of imperial foreign cultural symbols in dominated countries. The scientific analysis of the potential dangers of cultural conquests cannot be adequately analyzed scientifically with the mere proliferation of such general labels. A mature scientific endeavor requires no less than the identification of the principal foundations of the phenomenon in question. Our reference to the notion of cultural symbols in this study falls within our attempt to go beyond the philosophical and ideological levels of cultural imperialism and dependency to a more scientifically grounded analysis, which could ultimately help deal with cultural symbols' universe of the human species. Accordingly, the ever-increasing complaints against so-called "American cultural imperialism," by both developed and developing societies,⁴¹ have to be understood through a credible scientific framework and not through a narrow demagogical/ideological perspective. The fear of those societies of the American cultural invasion can only be legitimate when viewed through the perspective of the thesis we have summarized in the second part of this article, which refers to cultural symbols. The propagation of foreign cultural symbols in societies means, as we have stressed, that the impact of those cultural symbols will be of lasting effect once the cultural symbols are deeply implanted into the culture of the dominated societies. Thus, in the future, liberation from them will be difficult. Past and present evidence shows that when a country spreads its language, cultural values, and religious beliefs into other societies and civilizations, it cleverly secures permanent relations with those countries. At this level, there is no doubt that the cultural strategy is far superior to military, geographic, political, and economic strategies. Ultimately, it is the key to securing other societies' dependency on all fronts.

Contemporary researchers concur that French colonization has given more importance than its English counterpart to the cultural colonization of occupied peoples in Africa and Asia.⁴² Consequently, it can be said that Maghribi societies (Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania) suffer more than their Mashriqi (Middle Eastern) counterparts from colonial cultural dependency.⁴³ Cultural dependency means the dependency of one's cultural-symbolic soul to the outsider, who may even be one's enemy. The dependency of one's cultural-symbolic soul constitutes a direct assault on the basic foundations of the cultural identity of the individual and society. Accordingly, one should have no great difficulty in seeing the credibility of the statement: "The cultural conquest of people is more dangerous than its military counterpart." Based on this broad analysis, the Third World countries' condemnation of modern Western cultural imperialism — be it American, English, or French — is hardly unfounded. Today's widespread official and unofficial use of English (American) and French in many African and Asian societies has contributed to the impoverishment (underdevelopment) of those societies' native languages and dialects, and the struggle to win linguistic-cultural independence will not be easy. As stated before, when cultural dependency has been going on for a long time, it takes a longer time to get rid of it, even when all the appropriate conditions are present. Cultural imperialism, whatever its origin, is considered negative when it triggers and amplifies the disintegration of the native cultural-symbolic systems of either developing or developed societies. Third World countries that suffer from national (or local) cultural alienation, disintegration, and loss of collective self-esteem are countries which are bound to experience profound adverse effects in the very foundations of their cultural collective identity.⁴⁴

Ogburn's Cultural Lag

The concept of cultural lag, defined by American sociologist William Ogburn, is another model that is enriched by applying our own theoretical framework of cultural symbols to it.⁴⁵ Ogburn's thesis contends that the pace of cultural elements change much slower than the material elements of society's social structure. The thesis underlined earlier in our study on the nature of cultural symbols helps explain the reason behind Ogburn's cultural lag. He did not say a lot about it, however, and therefore his notion is rather a descriptive one. The explanation of cultural lag can be framed as

follows: The most profound and fundamental dimension of human beings is their cultural-symbolic identity. As pointed out earlier, cultural symbols often have transcendental dimensions. While cultural symbols appear to resist change because they occupy all that is most central and strategic in the entity of the social actors, the enormous resistance that the cultural symbols deploy in the face of change seems to draw its strong force from their transcendental aspects which are ultimately quasi-supernatural in nature.

Modern sociology and anthropology have just begun to identify the cause(s) behind the great difficulty that societies experience in changing their cultural-symbolic systems (see Table 2). The centrality of cultural symbols and their transcendental input into the making of the identity of the social actors helps, in our opinion, explain why the pace of change of cultural components drag behind their structural-material counterpart (cultural lag).

It is time to call upon researchers in the behavioral social sciences to seriously integrate the distinct nature of cultural symbols and their transcendental weight, not only into their analysis of cultural change but also into their general attempts to capture the underlying meanings of individual human behavior and the dynamics of human societies.

Table 2

Explanations of the slowness of Cultural change (cultural lag):

- The cultural symbols constitute all that is most profound and central in social actors' identity.
- The cultural symbols entail transcendental dimensions whose powerful force of resistance to change and their longevity are originated in a quasi-supernatural universe.

The Need for *Verstehen* Sociology of Cultural Symbols

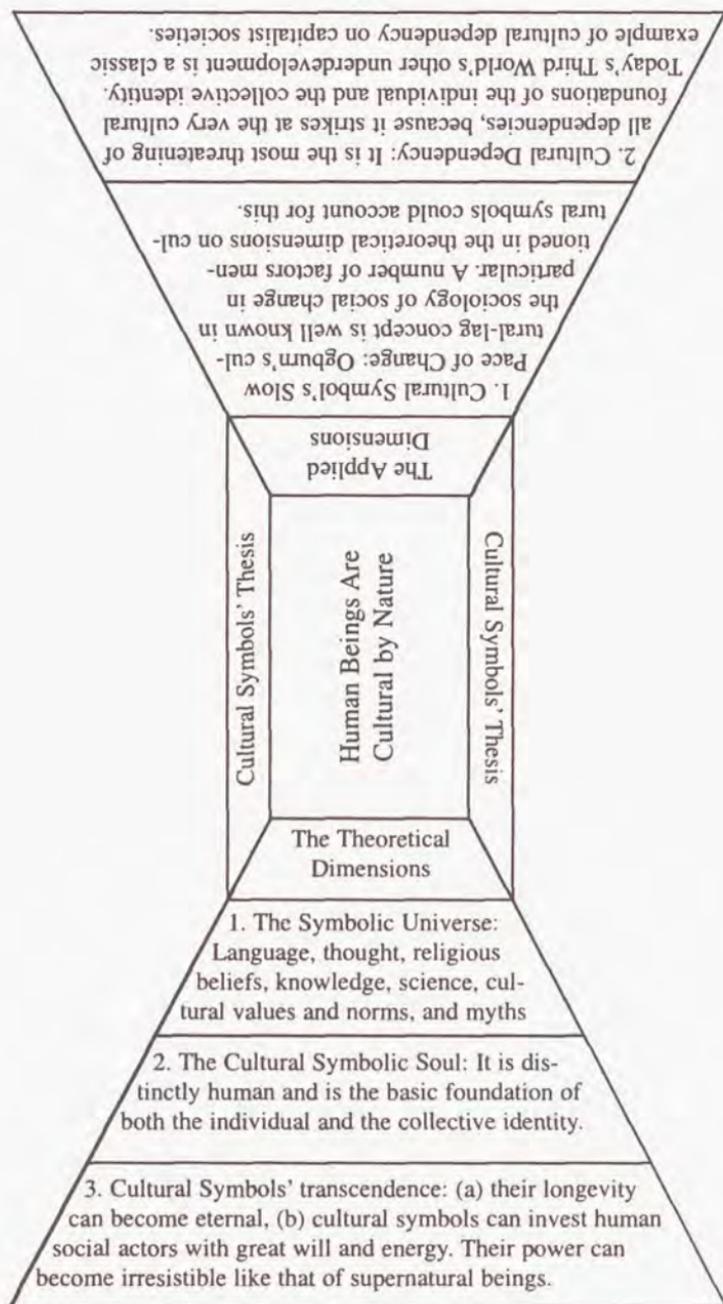
Against this broad background of analysis one can come to grips with the difficulty that positivist social scientists have had in understanding the larger implications that cultural symbols place in the dynamics of human

groups, communities, and societies. In general, the discipline of modern sociology has rejected the idea of an alliance with a subjective methodology that allows the sociologist to focus on the human dimension of the social actor and not on the social structure surrounding him. Through the use of our concept of the cultural-symbolic soul in the second half of this article, we have shown that it is time for sociology to fully reintegrate subjective-transcendental components into every study with the aim of advancing the field's understanding of individual or collective behavior.

The study of the cultural symbols by anthropologists and sociologists cannot be done adequately without comprehending and assessing them. The need is urgent indeed for the invention and establishment of some sort of *verstehen* sociology fit to deal with the complex maze that the human cultural symbols entail.

Figure 1 below summarizes some of the ideas, concepts, and theories that have been outlined and expands upon the implications of cultural symbols and ultimately other underdevelopment in societies today.

Figure 1



Notes

1. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) Ideas Program, Oct. 15, 1992.
2. K. Mano, "Modernist Discourse and the Crisis of Development Theory," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 26, no. 2 (Summer 1991): 3-4.
3. *Ibid.*, 4.
4. F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1990).
5. D. Dillard, "Capitalism," in Charles Wiber (ed.), *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment* (New York: Random House, 1979), 69.
6. H. Madoff, *Imperialism: From the Colonial Age to the Present* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978).
7. D. Boorstin, *The Discoverers* (New York: Random House, 1983).
8. M. McLuhan and P. Fiore, *The Medium is the Message* (New York: Bantam, 1967).
9. D. Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (London: Heinemann, 1976).
10. "Preserving the Earth: Beyond Ideology," *The World and I* (July 1992): 20.
11. R. Bellah, et alia., *Habits of the Heart* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
12. M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1980).
13. E.E. Schumacher, *Small Is Beautiful* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976).
14. G. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969).
15. D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1964).
16. T. Williams, *Socialization* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 163-74.
17. A. Memmi, *Portrait au Colonisé* (Paris: Payot, 1960).
18. G. Frank, "The Sociology of Development or Underdevelopment of Sociology," *Catalyst* 3 (Summer 1967): 20-73; and P. Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1957).
19. While the modern wealth of some Arab countries is usually linked to their oil resources, early Arab imperial economic expansion after the spread of Islam outside Arabia's frontiers is explained by their military invasions of new territories. See our book review of the "Arab Political Mind" by M. Al-Jabri in the coming issues of *Contemporary Sociology*. Likewise, there is good reason to consider Western capitalism's enormous contemporary economic growth as partially the result of worldwide colonization and its subsequent exploitation of the colonized.
20. Charles Wiber, *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment*, 91.
21. *Ibid.*, 109.
22. M. Dhaouadi, "An Operational Analysis of the Phenomenon of the Other Underdevelopment in the Arab World and the Third World," *International Sociology* 3, no. 3 (September 1988): 228.
23. *Ibid.*, 229.
24. *Ibid.*, 230.
25. *Ibid.*, 219-234.
26. M. Harrington, *The Other America* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963).
27. Dhaouadi, "An Operational Analysis of the Phenomenon of the Other Underdevelopment in the Arab World and the Third World," 219-34.
28. F. Znaniecki and W. Thomas, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (New York: Dover, 1958).
29. Dhaouadi, "An Operational Analysis of the Phenomenon of the Other Underdevelopment in the Arab World and the Third World," 229-30.
30. E.B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (London: Murray, 1871).
31. L. White, "The Evolution of Culture as Cited in Theories and Paradigms," in S. Denisoff et al. (eds.), *Contemporary Sociology* (Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1975), 224-25.
32. *Ibid.*, 220.

33. M. Dhaouadi, "The Culturo-Symbolic Soul: An Islamically Inspired Research Concept for the Behavioral and Social Sciences," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 9, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 153–72.
34. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*.
35. A. Inkeles and D. Smith, *Becoming Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975).
36. Our first conceptualization of other underdevelopment was published in Arabic in the *Journal of Al Mustaqbal Al Arabi* 47 (January 1983): 20–41. See also our article (in Arabic), "The Other Underdevelopment as a Research Notion both in the Arab World and the Rest of the Third World," *Toward an Arab Sociology*, 163–84.
37. Writings on development/underdevelopment of Marxist authors such as S. Amin in *Le Développement Inégal* (1973), P. Baran in *The Political Economy of Growth* (1960), and Frank in *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* reflect their silence on the psychocultural underdevelopment as an integral component of the greater phenomenon of underdevelopment in the Third World.
38. J.S. Howard and J.L. Wood, *Sociology: Traditional and Radical Perspectives* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989).
39. M. Dhaouadi, "The Other Face of Cultural Symbols as Reflected in a Special Sociological Analysis" (in Arabic), *Al-Wahda* 8, no. 92 (May 1992): 75–89. This study is expected to be published in English in coming issues of *International Sociology*. See also note 34 above.
40. Dhaouadi, "The Culturo-Symbolic Soul."
41. The prestigious medical French journal, *Les Annales*, has adopted English as the language of its published scientific articles. This has raised a lot of protest in France. See interview with its editor in *Le Monde*, April 14, 1989, 12. See also "L'influence culturelle américaine en France," *Le Monde: Dossiers et Documents*, May 1981.
42. L.J. Calvet, *Linguistique et Colonialisme* (Paris: Payot, 1977), 84–85. See also Y. Eudes, *La conquête des esprits* (Paris: Maspéro, 1982).
43. W.K. Ruf, "Dépendence et aliénation culturelle," in *Indépendance et interdépendance au Maghreb* (Paris: CNRS, 1974), 233–79.
44. G. Kisber, *The Disorganized Personality* (London: McGraw Hill, 1982).
45. W.F. Ogburn, *On Cultural and Social Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 86–95.