



NEWSLETTER

Institute of Global Cultural Studies, Binghamton University

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MESSAGE FROM THE IGCS DIRECTOR PROFESSOR ALI A. MAZRUI

THE FLORAL GAP:

WHERE ARE THE FLOWERS IN AFRICAN CULTURE?*



The Green movements of recent decades have also been inspired by the aesthetics for conservation. The concept of "endangered species" has been a deference of biodiversity, rooted in the belief that a world with fewer species of animals and a smaller range of plants was a less beautiful world.

On this issue of natural beauty one question which has arisen is whether the love of flowers was culturally relative. Jack Goody, the distin-

guished Cambridge anthropologist, has strongly argued that although Africa is rich in plants, African culture is not fascinated by flowers.

... the peoples of Africa did not grow domestic flowers, nor yet did they make use of wild ones to any significant extent in worship, in gift giving or in the decoration of the body... But what is perhaps more surprising is that flowers, neither domesticated nor wild, play so little part in the domain of design or the creative arts.¹

Jack Goody goes on to observe that African sculpture provides no striking floral designs. And even in African poetry, songs and proverbs, flowers are relatively absent unless there is a prior stimulus of Islam or some other external aesthetic.

George Bernard Shaw was once visited by a flower-loving aristocratic fan. The lady visitor observed that there were no flowers inside Shaw's home. "Mr. Shaw, I am surprised to see no flowers in your beautiful home. Don't you love flowers, Mr. Shaw?" Bernard Shaw responded: "Indeed I do love flowers, dear lady. I also love children. But I do not go around chopping off their heads for display in my living room!" Shaw was asserting that a genuine love of flowers required our leaving them to prosper as plants in the soil. There is a sense in which African attitudes to flowers are *organic* in the same sense.

Yet this does not explain the more limited use of the imagery of flowers in either African plastic art or African verbal arts. Where are the African poetic equivalents of William Wordsworth and his fascination with daffodils, or his sense of wonder about:

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... THE FLORAL GAP: WHERE ARE THE FLOWERS IN AFRICAN CULTURE?

*A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky*

Shakespeare urges us not to attempt to beautify what is already naturally beautiful:

*To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
To throw a perfume on the violet
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the rainbow...
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.¹*

In African poetry and song is there an equivalent use of flowers as metaphors "to point a moral or adorn a tale?"

If it is true that African culture underutilizes flowers for either art or ritual, what are the underlying social and aesthetic reasons? One possible explanation would take us back to Bertrand Russell's assertion that "civilization was born out of the pursuit of luxury." It is possible to see civilization as a relentless quest for beauty. It is a sense of "civilization" which produced the Taj Mahal, the sunken churches of Lalibela, the Palace of Versailles, and the spectacular temples of Abu Simbel at Aswan built by Ramesses II. Such splendor illustrates what Bertrand Russell regarded as "the pursuit of luxury."

Before European colonization, were the cultures of equatorial Africa inadequately motivated to pursue luxury? Was that why there were so few indigenous palaces and monuments outside the Nile Valley? Was the psychology of not constructing beautiful structures related to the psychology of inadequate attention to flowers?

Another possible explanation for the deflowering of African cultures is that so many flowers on the equator were potential fruit in the process of formation. A planted seed begins to germinate into a plant; the plant produces a bud; the bud blossoms into a flower, and the flower culminates into a fruit. Africa celebrates the end product (the fruit) rather than the intermediate stage (the flower). Africa may be poor in names for flowers. In most indigenous cultures there is no tropical equivalent of such range of names as, the lily, the violet, the tulip, the orchid, the daffodil. But African languages are fully competitive in names of fruit—*chungwa, chenzi, embe, bungo, kitoria, nazi, kanju, ndizi, kunazi, fenesi, buyu and many others*. More recent African loan words for fruit (usually borrowed from Arabic) include *nanasi* (pineapple) and *tufaha* (apple).

In the history of Islam the garden and ecological beauty were initially assigned to paradise in the Hereafter where rivers, lakes, flowers and beautiful women awaited the faithful. However, in the history of Islam and Planet Earth the heritage of flowers initially came more from Persia than from the Arabian Peninsula. The heritage then spread to North Africa. What came to be regarded as distinctively Islamic gardens developed in Tunisia in the ninth century of the Christian era. Jack Goody refers to the evidence of a Flemish traveler in about the year 1470, who seemed to have counted four thousand individually owned, irrigated gardens around the city of Tunis—"full of fruit and with flowers perfuming the air."²

A cost-benefit analysis needs to be done as to whether Islam's encouragement of gardens and discouragement of organic representation is compatible with the ecological pillar of the Global Ethic. Similarly, is Africa's coolness towards flowers and Africa's warmth towards fruit ecologically friendly? Such aspects of Islamic and African cultures need to be studied and evaluated from the perspective of the Fifth Pillar of Wisdom (Ecological). ▼▲

NOTES

1. Shakespeare, W. *King John*, Act IV Scene I.

2. Goody, J. *The Culture of Flowers*. (Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 105.

* This summary is a work in progress. The short essay is indebted to Ali A. Mazrui's Oxford Amnesty Lecture "Strangers in Our Midst: In Search of Seven Pillars of Wisdom," delivered at Oxford University, England, February 27, 2004, co-sponsored by Oxford Astor Lectureships.

ARCHAEOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE IN ALI A. MAZRUI'S SCHOLARSHIP

By

Seifudein Adem

Associate Director of IGCS &

Associate Research Professor of Political Science



From left to right: Dr. S. Adem, Prof. Ali A. Mazrui and Dr. Jayman
(San Diego, California, 2012)

Can we classify the master-classifier Ali A. Mazrui? Mazrui has a special liking and gift for classifying different concepts, events, and processes in original ways. This intellectual fascination of his has occasionally brought him into a collision course with some of his colleagues who were less impressed by his colorful typology of particularly such phenomena as African-ness, slavery, racism, miscegenation, terrorism and sexism. Some of these men (and women) saw (and rejected) implicit (and sometimes not so implicit) hierarchy in his classifications. But for the indefatigable Ali Mazrui nothing is unclassifiable, almost everything must be classified. It is also quite ironic that his scholarship itself defies classification—a defiance I also wish to defy to accomplish the challenging task I set myself in this essay.

Let me begin by clarifying the concept of classification and its place in social inquiry. Positivism is premised on classification and categorization. As Michel Foucault observed, "sciences always carry within themselves the project, however remote it may be, of an exhaustive ordering of the world."¹ In the natural sciences, objects needed to be grouped into different classes before generalizations were made about their behavior or attribute. In the positivist social sciences too, the necessity of classification, even its possibility, is almost taken for granted.

A related issue which arises is this: if classification occupies such a central place in the positivist project, and if Mazrui's scholarship is anti-positivist in its orientation, then how can we resolve the apparent tension between his scholarship and positivist social science? Let me start, first, by stating the three reasons why I say that the scholarship of Ali A. Mazrui is anti-positivist. *Mazrui does not believe that* a knowable reality exists out there which is driven by immutable natural laws and mechanisms. *He does not believe that* inquiry takes place through a one-way mirror in which values are prevented from influencing outcomes. *And he does not believe that* manipulative and experimental method of inquiry is the ultimate path to knowledge. Mazrui's scholarship is thus an anti-positivist, or even post-positivist, body of knowledge.

Now to the tension between classification and Mazrui's scholarship. The crucial difference is that positivism employs classification as a tool of explanation, which is ultimately bound up, in turn, with expectability and prediction. But Mazrui employs classification as a tool of understanding and intelligibility.

The difference between explanation and understanding is significant in this context as each is based on markedly different assumptions. Those who pursue explanation and prediction, the positivists, start from the precept that human behavior is determinate and repetitive. But understanding pledges no such commitment partly out of recognition of the problem of reactivity.

Mazrui "predictions" are thus more intuitive than scientific and they may even be described in some ways as being closer to fortune-telling than scientific prediction.

Ali A. Mazrui's fertility of mind has been often commented upon both by his admirers and by his critics. By early 2014, he has published more than 40 books and a large number of essays, and it is this vast scholarship, which I would like to make sense of by classifying it on the basis of its shifting thematic trajectories over the past fifty years. As it is said, Ali Mazrui does indeed change his themes, if not his tunes, even if one can dispute the claim that he does this as often as some of his critics suggest.

Borrowing a schema from the distinguished Canadian Philosopher of Science, Ian Hacking, I would classify Mazrui's scholarship (Mazruiana, for short) into six overlapping categories or phases: historical, unmasking, ironic, reformist, rebellious and revolutionary.²

Historical Mazruiana is explicitly a non-evaluative piece about the object of narration. A good example of such a piece of Mazrui scholarship is his "Africa Entrapped: Between the Protestant Ethic and the Legacy of Westphalia," a chapter in a book edited by Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, once the two most influential scholars in the English School.³ In his chapter, Mazrui narrates the historical evolution and the predicaments of the African state in a seemingly detached way. Historical narrations form the bulk of Mazrui's early writings, especially those whose subject-matters were Africa.

The second category of Mazruiana is concerned with refuting a hegemonic idea and undermining its authority by exposing the function it serves. This is unmasking Mazruiana. "Ancient Egypt in African Political Thought" represents this type of Mazruiana.⁴ In his quest for unmasking the hidden structures of power relations, Mazrui puts "the allegedly self-evident truth into the limelight of criticism."⁵ I would also classify Mazrui's "Pretender to Universalism: Western Culture in a Globalizing Age" in the same category.

Thirdly, we have ironic Mazruiana, which not only narrates the historical object, but also suggests that the object would have been different if it had been conceptualized differently. In this vein, Mazrui once asked: "What is Africa?" His elaborate answer included: "... although the scholarship has paid greater attention to the artificiality of the borders of African states, the borders of the continent themselves were not much less artificial." He then contested the notion that Yemen, which is separated from the African landmass by a 'stone's throw,' was regarded not part of Africa while Madagascar

(continued on page 9)

LEO NI SHANGWE, MWALIMU ALI!*

By

Micere Githae Mugo

Meredith Professor for Teaching Excellence

Department of African American Studies

Syracuse University

Call Response/Refrain:

Poet: *Leo ni shangwe!*

Audience: *Leo ni shangwe!*

Poet: *Leo ni shangwe, Mwalimu Ali!*

Shikamoo, Mwalimu Mkuu!

Shikamoo, Mzee Maalum!

Shikamoo, Mheshimiwa!

This is celebration day
A day bubbling with jubilation
A day giddy with happiness
in commemoration
of a beauty-full elder
born in Mombasa
on the twenty fourth day
of February
the month of the dry season
when torrents of rain
drenched the parched soil
showering blessings upon
the Mazrui homestead
the Mazrui family
epic breed of the uprising tradition
The day was clothed in splendor
as the sun shone brightly
upon the land of Kenya

Poet: *Leo ni shangwe!*

Audience: *Leo ni shangwe!*

Poet: *Leo ni shangwe, Mwalimu Ali!*

Leo ni shangwe, NYASA!

On that day of the dry month
on that day of the rain of blessings
the expansive waters of the African ocean
they call the Indian Ocean
seemed to swell with forceful fullness
then suddenly, the waters stood still
no more lapping the shore
but holding back
their aggressive surge
to greet the child
The waters sat peacefully
in spectacular expansive blueness
the ancient ocean splendidly calm
absorbing the news of the day
welcoming the new arrivant

Then, as suddenly, they broke
Into a dance
of twirling ripple rhythm
wildly dancing, dancing, dancing
in circular formations of royal
blue splendor
embracing the brand new arrivant.

Poet: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Audience: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Poet: *Leo ni shangwe, Mwalimu Ali!*
Leo ni shangwe, wenzangu!

... Five trills of ululation to you
Mwalimu Ali Alamin, son of
Mazrui as the croaking poet
implores the ancestors to oil them
with the balm of soothing
beauty ...

For, that night
after showers of rain
had blessed the earth
on the month of the dry season
above, multitudinous stars
lit the expansive sky
till it shone with stardom
bright stars lit the expansive sky
winking knowingly to each other
before darting wildly
as if tipsy with happiness
In approval, the moon smiled back
with a wide enchanting grin
laying a spell on the marveling sky
The day after, dawn broke
with a softness never witnessed
in Mombasa, *mji wa pwani*,
gently touching the eyes
of the awaking town

with a caressing tenderness
that whispered: embrace this birth!

Poet: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Audience: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Poet: *Leo ni shangwe, Mwalimu Ali!*
Leo ni shangwe, Binghamton!

As we remember how the sun
burst through the clouds
adorned with dazzling rays
that struck Fort Jesus
with the force of their brightness
as if to warn
the colonial fortress that
Another Mazrui
of the uprising epic dynasty
had been born
The branches of the trees in
the hinterland
trembled
But the palm trees along the coastal line
stood erect
their leaves swaying in
rhythmic harmony
ready to bid the sun good morning
and to greet the child
Ali Alamin Mazrui
declaring: arrive well!
Then all the baby palm trees
from Mombasa to Malindi
from Mombasa to Zanzibar
woke up chuckling and giggling
in childish merriment
their little ukuti leaves
whispering to each other
from branch to branch
spreading the fiery news
that another Mazrui
of the uprising epic dynasty
had been born.

Poet: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Audience: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Poet: *Leo ni shangwe, Mwalimu Ali!*

But where shall I find the words
to narrate the epic?

The artist in me had prayed
for possession
by the spirit of eloquence
but the words shriveled like mushrooms I
in the desert
The word crafter in me had begged
The ancestors
to fan the imagination with creative
genius
to power Nommo, the breath of utter
dance,
with such forceful eloquence
that the poem would
never be forgotten
This orature artist had wanted
to weave bouquets
of words, and thoughts, and feeling,
and love
and place them before you:
one, at the banquet's high table
and the other, a garland
to decorate the scholar
of the orate and written word
This singer of songs had planned
to compose a song

so captivating and luring that it would
make our orate-literate scholar
intoxicated with sober pride
But my tongue is shorn of words
like the lizard born without hair
The voice that used to sing praise songs
has cracked with age and become
frog-like
Yet, the poet in me
must find the voice
to ululate this birth

Poet: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Audience: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Poet: *Leo ni shangwe, Mwalimu Ali!*

for I will not wait till you have
crossed the border of life
to tell you this:
In Mombasa, *mji wa pwani*,
eighty years ago
'the beauty-full one was born'
and now sits on the golden stool
of an Africana elders' authority
occupying the stool splendidly:
Mazruically.

Poet: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Audience: *Leo ni shangwe!*
Poet: *Leo ni shangwe, Mwalimu Ali!*
Mungu akulinde, uwe na maisha mafetu!



Five trills of ululation to you
Mwalimu Ali Alamin, son of Mazrui
as the croaking poet implores
the ancestors to oil them
with the balm of soothing beauty
voice bouquets
to lay on your feast table

*This is an African orature-inspired epic poem in commemoration of Professor Ali Mazrui's 80th Birthday, delivered at the Mazrui Birthday Banquet during the 38th Annual Conference of the New York African Studies Association (NYASA), Binghamton University, April 6, 2013.



*Professor Ali A. Mazrui surrounded by relatives and friends at his 80th birthday celebration
(Binghamton, New York, 2013)*



CULTURAL AND NON-CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN AFRICAN POLITICAL VIOLENCE: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION¹

By

Thomas Uthup

Senior Research Associate of IGCS

INTRODUCTION

For many observers of the African conflict landscape, it would appear that cultural elements—principally religion and ethnicity—are always present in these conflicts, especially after many countries became independent in the 1960s. This interpretation is particularly popular with those who would promote the “clash of civilizations” thesis and those who see Africa in terms of “tribes”/ethnic communities. In addition, it is also popular for those who view Africa as one of the spheres of competition between what Professor Mazrui has termed as the universalist and competitive religions of Christianity and Islam.

While there is no denying that religion and ethnicity play major roles in conflict in Africa, there are three cautions to bear in mind.

First, there is a tendency to overstate the emphasis on religion and “tribe,” as described by Al-Jazeera, for example, in the case of the latter:

When fighting broke out a month ago in the world’s youngest country, South Sudan, the story was framed as just another tribal power struggle coming out of Africa . . . when it comes to Africa, all too often international news outlets resort to the same formula—reducing just about any conflict to the tribal level, which seems to explain everything without actually telling us anything.²

Second, there is often the well-known social-scientific fallacy of confusing “causation with correlation.” In other words, the mere *presence* of cultural elements or even their *utilization*, for example, as motivators to stoke hatred between warring groups, is not the same as saying that the religious or tribal element is the *reason* for the conflict. Thus, in the South Sudan case referenced above, “the conflict is really political in nature—a fallout between the president and the vice president, with some ethnic elements fighting it out on the ground.”³

Third, there appears to be a tendency, particularly in the media but also academic and policy arenas, of emphasizing conflict in which religion plays a role. This has been particularly true in the post 9/11 era, when clashes between Muslims and Christians have gained more prominence. However, Africa also has conflicts in which non-religious factors, such as ethnic, economic, and political elements are more important. Indeed, all over the world, cultural elements (religious, ethnic, and linguistic) are major elements of conflicts. Note that when I say that a cultural element is *present* in a conflict, it is not the same as saying that it is the *cause* of the conflict.

The analysis that follows examines the prevalence of interstate versus intrastate conflict and then merely looks at the presence or absence of cultural versus non-cultural elements in intrastate conflicts. For reasons of space, I am not including the lists of all conflicts but interested parties may contact me at tuthup@binghamton.edu for copies of tables, comments, corrections, and suggestions or for invitations to speak on this topic.

METHOD

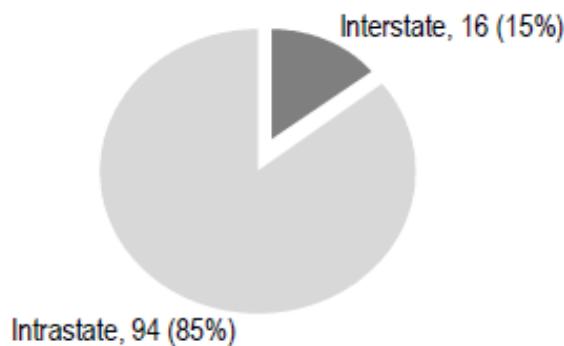
One of my tasks at the United Nations between 2008 and 2011, where I worked for the Secretary-General’s project on the Alliance of Civilizations as Research and Education Manager, was to annually produce summary numbers on the proportion of serious conflicts in the world that had cultural elements. Unlike other conflict analysts who use well-known databases such as the Correlates of War project or Minorities at Risk, I used a lesser-known database from the University of Heidelberg, Germany for my analyses. *The Conflict Barometer*, produced annually by the University of Heidelberg’s Institute for International Conflict Research is easily accessible, fairly up-to-date, and does not require the use of cumbersome codebooks and statistical manipulations. Further, its classification of conflicts by intensity levels allows one to prioritize those conflicts that are more serious, and its accessibility allows for easy replication for other regions. For these reasons, *The Conflict Barometer* lends itself to policy analysis, which often needs to be done in a short period of time with limited resources and juggling other demands on time.

In the analysis for this article and an earlier paper on conflict in Africa, I used *The Conflict Barometer 2012*⁴ for the 2012 conflicts in Africa. The report lists conflicts on an intensity level from one through five, with “ones” and “twos” being non-violent and three through five being the violent conflicts. In this analysis of conflicts in 2012 in Africa, I first looked at the total number of interstate versus intrastate conflicts. Then I concentrated on the violent intra-state conflicts (for reasons that will become evident in the discussion below under “Contemporary Conflicts”) from levels three through five. The level “3” corresponds to “violent crisis” with “a tense situation in which at least one of the parties uses violent force in sporadic incidents.” Level “4” refers to a “limited war” where “violent force is repeatedly used in an organized way.” Finally, level “5” conflicts are those where “violent force is used with a certain continuity in an organized and systematic way. The conflict parties exercise extensive measures, depending on the situation. The extent of destruction is massive and of long duration.” Geographically, since the report treats sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa as separate entities, I combined the former list with conflicts from North Africa. The primary cultural elements I focused on are religion and ethnicity (or “tribe”). Therefore, I attempt to identify whether there are inter-religious or intra-religious and/or ethnic differences between the combatants, or whether the differences are purely political (contests over power between people of the same ethnic group) or economic, where groups may be contesting for resources or land.

CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS IN AFRICA: NON-VIOLENT TO VIOLENT

At the outset, I should point out that in 2012 in Africa, as in other parts of the world, *inter-state* conflicts were much less common than *intra-state* conflicts. When the former did occur, they rarely rose to the level of violent conflicts, apart from the cases of South Sudan versus Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo versus Uganda. As Figure 1 shows, just 16 of the 110 conflicts, or 15 percent, have been between states, while 94 or 85 percent of the conflicts have been within states.

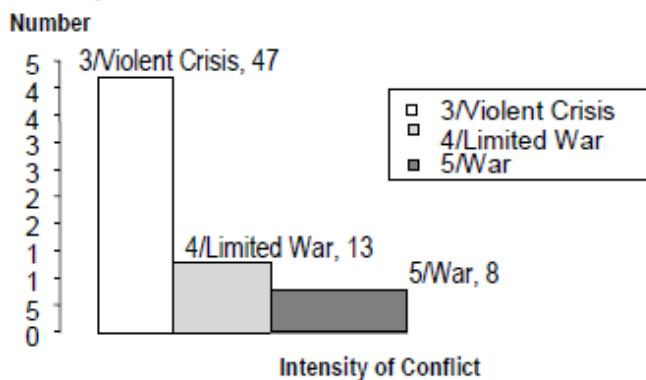
Figure 1
Interstate versus Intrastate Conflicts in Africa, 2012



Source: *Conflict Barometer*, 2012

Given the prevalence of intrastate conflicts, it made sense to concentrate the analysis on the violent intrastate conflicts. There was both bad news and good news to report on the 2012 intrastate conflicts in Africa. The bad news was the sheer number of violent intrastate conflicts: 68. Keep in mind that the African Union has 54 members (including suspended and/or withdrawn members). The good news was that there were lesser numbers of the *more intense* conflicts. As Figure 2 below shows, while there were 47 interstate conflicts categorized as "3/Violent Crisis," there were 13 conflicts classified as "4/Limited War" and eight classified as "5/War."

Figure 2
Intensity of Violent Intrastate Conflicts in Africa, 2012



Source: *Conflict Barometer*, 2012

Finally, we turn to contemporary violent intrastate conflicts to determine whether these conflicts have ethnic or religious elements. Again, we must reiterate that the presence of these elements does not necessarily mean that they are the *cause*; it merely means that these elements need to be factored in. A pattern that clearly emerges from conflicts in Africa, as opposed to say in South Asia, is that the religious elements may often be reinforcing the ethnic elements. This also leads to the difficulties in some cases of distinguishing between religious and ethnic elements (as for instance, in the case of several conflicts in Nigeria). In my list, detailed in Table 1, conflicts with religious elements can include not only the traditional conflicts between Muslims and Christians (as in Egypt and Nigeria, for example) but also conflicts

within religions or conflicts by more radical religious groups against governments which belong to the same religion (as for example in Libya and Tunisia).

TABLE I: CONTEMPORARY VIOLENT INTRASTATE CONFLICTS IN AFRICA BY TYPE OF CONFLICT IN AFRICA

No.	Conflicts with Religious & Ethnic Elements	Conflicts with Ethnic Elements	Conflicts with little or no ethnic and religious elements
1	Algeria (AQIM, MUJAO)	Burundi (FNL)	Angola (UNITA)
2	Egypt (Islamists)	DR Congo (M23)	Algeria (Opposition groups)
3	Egypt (Muslims-Christians)	DR Congo (FDLR)	Burundi (opp. Groups)
4	Libya (Salafists)	DR Congo (inter-militant)	CAR (Rebels)
5	Mali (Islamists—MNLA)	DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi)	Chad (rebels)
6	Mali (Islamists v. govt.)	DR Congo (Ituri)	Cote D'Ivoire (opposition)
7	Mali (MNLA, AED/Azawad v. govt.)	Egypt (Bedouin)	DR Congo (opposition)
8	Mauritania (AQIM)	Ethiopia (ARDUF)	Egypt (opposition groups)
9	Niger (AQIM, MUJAO v. govt.)	Ethiopia (OLF/Oromiya)	Ethiopia (opposition)
10	Nigeria (Boko Haram)	Ethiopia (ONLF/Ogaden)	Gabon (opposition)
11	Nigeria (Christians/Muslims)	Kenya (mungiki)	Guinea-Bissau (coup plotters)
12	Nigeria (Christian farmers' v. Muslim pastoralists)	Kenya (inter-ethnic)	Guinea-Bissau (opposition)
13	Nigeria (north v. south)	Libya (inter-ethnic)	Kenya (MRC)
14	Senegal (MFDC/Casamance)	Nigeria (IJaw; MEND)	Libya (opposition)
15	Somalia (Islamist Groups)	Nigeria (MASSOB/BZM Biafra)	Libya (Federalists/Cyrenaica)
16	Tanzania (Uamsho)	Rwanda (Hutu)	Mali (coup plotters)
17	Tunisia (AQIM)	South Africa (KwaZulu-Natal)	Morocco (opposition)
18	Uganda (ADF, NALU)	South Africa (xenophobes-immigrants)	Senegal (June 23)
19	Uganda (LRA)	South Sudan (inter-ethnic)	Sierra Leone (APC-SLPP)
20		Sudan (Darfur)	Somalia (Somaliland-SSC)
21		Sudan (SPLM/A-North v. govt.)	Somalia (Puntland-Somaliland)
22			South Sudan (militias)
23			Swaziland (opposition)
24			Tanzania (CUF-Zanzibar)
25			Togo (opposition)
26			Tunisia (opposition)
27			Uganda (opposition)
28			Zimbabwe (MDC-T, MDC-M-ZANU-PF)

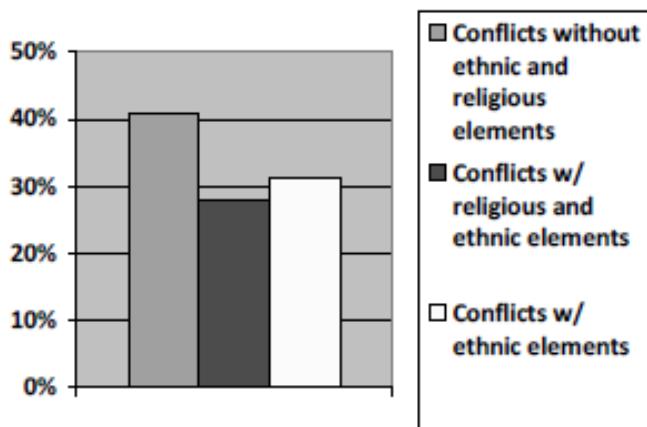
In 2012, the number of conflicts with religious and ethnic elements (19) was actually the least, and was marginally exceeded by the number of ethnic conflicts with no religious elements (21). There were far more conflicts with little or no ethnic and religious elements (28). In percentage terms, as Figure 3 shows, there were fewer conflicts with religious elements (28 percent), than with ethnic elements (31 percent). More conflicts (41 percent) had little or no ethnic and/or religious elements.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions may be drawn from this preliminary analysis. As in many regions of the world, Africa is not an exception to the preponderance of intrastate conflicts. Also, intrastate conflicts in Africa have religious,

Figure 3

Contemporary Violent Intrastate Conflicts in Africa,
by Type of Conflicts, 2012



Source: Recorded by author from list in *Conflict Barometer*, 2012

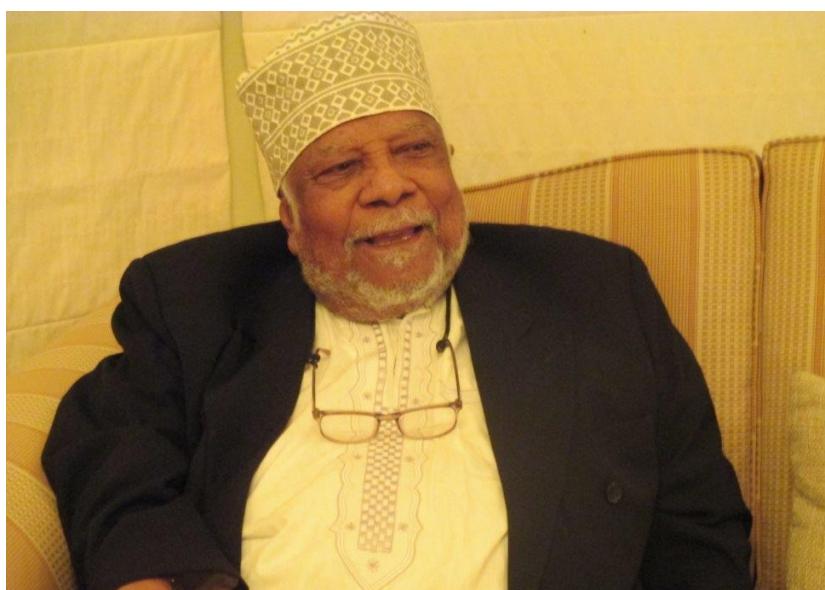
ethnic, and political and economic elements. Contrary to many perceptions, religion may not be the major element of most intrastate conflicts in Africa. Further, even American conflicts with purely ethnic elements are not as prevalent as conflicts with purely ethnic elements are not as prevalent as conflicts that are reflective of parties and/or individuals contesting for power. On the other hand, from a culture perspective, most conflicts in Africa do have religious and/or ethnic elements (59 percent) and even conflicts that may start without cultural elements—such as the conflict in the Central African Republic—can mutate into conflicts with cultural elements.

What are the implications of these conclusions from a policy perspective? I believe these conclusions demand heightened attention to emphases on literacy education, dialogue and conflict resolution education among different cultural groups, and citizenship education. Literate individuals are less likely to fall prey to leaders who may otherwise manipulate news and media to promote sectarian thinking. Dialogue and conflict resolution education will enable people to solve their differences through talking rather than fighting. Finally, citizenship education enables people to be aware of their rights and responsibilities, and would promote systems of governance in which people do not have to resort to extralegal means to participate in politics.

From an academic point of view, more research is needed to precisely identify the causative versus corollary roles that religion and ethnicity plays in conflicts, as also distinguishing between the two wherever possible. I welcome collaboration on this issue with people with far more on-the-ground expertise. ▲▼

NOTES

1. An earlier expanded analysis, incorporating a historical dimension, was presented at the Mid-West World History Association annual conference under the title: "Conflict in Africa Post-Independence: Is Culture Always a Factor?" September 28, 2013, at Wittenberg University, Springfield, OH.
2. "South Sudan and the Media of Conflict," Al Jazeera Listening Post (January 18, 2014) (<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/listeningpost/2014/01/south-sudan-media-conflict-201411151539555750.html>)
3. Ibid.
4. Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, *Conflict Barometer 2012* (Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research: Heidelberg, Germany, March 2013), available online at http://www.hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer_2012.pdf.
5. Recorded by author for types of conflicts from lists in *Conflict Barometer* 2012.



Professor Ali A. Mazrui
(Muscat, Oman, 2013)

(continued from page 3)

... ARCHAEOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE IN ALI A. MAZRUI'S SCHOLARSHIP

or Mauritius with their respective distance of 250 and 1200 miles from Africa's coastline qualified as parts of Africa.⁶ Mazrui continued: "How much of this Euro-centrism of geography is reversible?" And his answer was: "Much of the Euro-centrism of contemporary geographical knowledge is beyond repair."⁷ In other words, Mazrui was saying we are stuck with it. Mazrui employs a similar line of reasoning with his characteristic eloquence, but with greater subtlety, when he analyzed the dilemma of African nationalists between "the insult of being unknown" and "the dignity of being unfamiliar," and their ambivalence about "whether to be pleased that the European explorers 'revealed' so much, or to be insulted at the presumption that there had been so much to 'reveal'.⁸

Reformist Mazruiana also perceives the existing state of affairs as a product of social, cultural and political forces, but also states, usually implicitly, that something needs to be done about it.⁹ There is then rebellious Mazruiana which actively maintains that the constructed "reality" is not only undesirable but also unacceptable. Many of Mazrui's writings in the last decade, especially those dealing with US foreign policy under President George W. Bush seem to reflect revolutionary Mazruiana,¹⁰ which represents a move from the level of ideas to that of action in order to actually undermine or demolish the received truth.¹¹

Much of Mazrui's scholarship in the first half of his active professional life shows historical, unmasking and reformist orientations; and in the second half, increasingly rebellious and even revolutionary tendencies are clearly discernible in it.

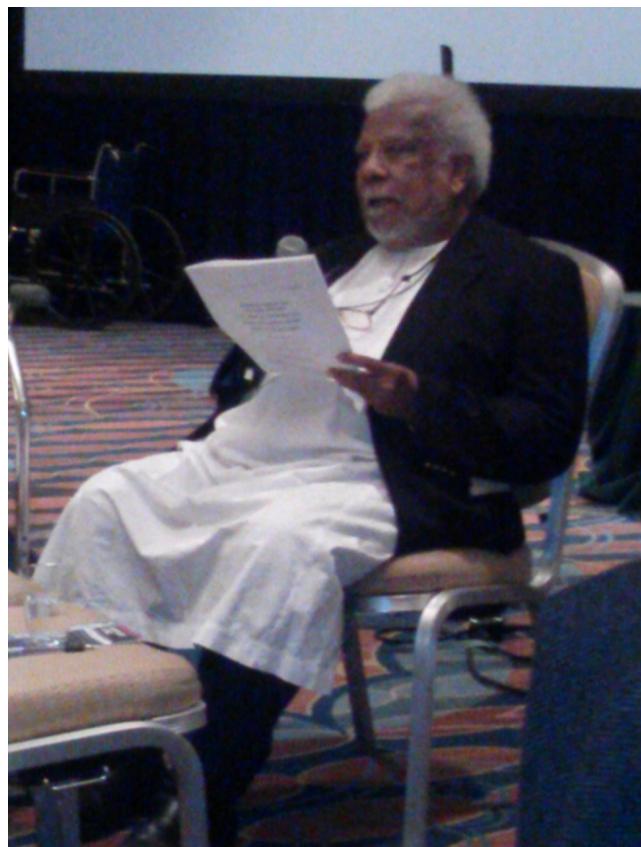
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1. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things. An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), p. 74.
2. Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2000).
3. Ali A. Mazrui, "Africa Entrapped: Between the Protestant Ethic and the Legacy of Westphalia," in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds.), *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 465–486.
4. Ali A. Mazrui, *Ancient Greece in African Political Thought*. (Nairobi, Kenya: East African Publishing House, 1967), p. 95.
5. Stefano Guzzini, "Strange's Oscillating Realism: Opposing the Ideal—and the Apparent," in T. C. Lawton, J. N. Rosenau and A. C. Verdun (eds.), *Strange Power: Shaping the Parameters of International Relations and International Political Economy*. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 216.
6. Ali A. Mazrui, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*. (Boston and Toronto: Little Brown, 1986), p. 28.
7. Mazrui, *The Africans*, p. 105.
8. Ali A. Mazrui, "European Exploration and Africa's Self-Discovery," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 7, 4, 1969, pp. 661–676.
9. Ali A. Mazrui, "Beyond Dependency in the Black World: Five Strategies for Decolonization," in A. Y. Yansane (ed.), *Decolonization and Dependency: Problems of Development of African Societies* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), pp. 84–87.
10. For a fine example see, Ali A. Mazrui, "The Ethics of War and the Rhetoric of Politics: The West and the Rest," draft of paper presented at the Conference on Global Public Relations and Managing Cultural Diversity, Berlin, Germany, October 14–17, 2001.
11. For example, see, Ali A. Mazrui, "Has a Clash of Civilizations Begun? Islam and the West," paper presented at the Gannett Lecture Series, Rochester Institute of Technology, College of Liberal Arts, March 24, 2005.



Prof. Ali A. Mazrui enjoying a free time at IGCS office
(Binghamton, 2011)



Prof. Ali A. Mazrui — presenting at the Roundtable: The Study of Islam in African Universities at the 55th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2012)

THE LOVE OF BEAUTY AND THE BEAUTY OF LOVE: THE SONG OF RUMI*

By
 Professor Ali A. Mazrui,
 Director of IGCS

I am truly honored to be receiving the Distinguished RUMI Award at this elegant ceremony. I am particularly pleased that my Award is for dedication to education and for the quality of my contributions to the world of learning.

In the past I have been honored by universities, by the media, and by Heads of State primarily for academic endeavors and for my scholarship. What is different about this RUMI Award is its focus on education and my role as a teacher.

I am honored to have taught in four continents—Africa, Europe, North America and South America. I have also taught students of various races, religions and nationalities. I am grateful to have that educator's role recognized today, especially by this RUMI Award.

But I would also like to salute Rumi by introducing poetry in our deliberations tonight. One of the short poems is by Rumi himself. The other is drawn from English literature.

The two poems have been chosen mainly because they are inter-related in their celebration of the fundamental beauty of nature.

Let us begin with a short poem by William Wordsworth.

*Through primrose tufts in that green bower,
 The periwinkle trailed its wreaths,
 And it's my faith that every flower,
 Enjoys the air it breathes.*

*The birds around me hopped and played,
 Their thoughts I cannot measure,
 But the least motion which they made,
 It seemed a thrill of pleasure.*

*The budding twigs spread out their fans
 To catch the breezy air,
 And I must think, do all I can,
 That there was pleasure there.*

*If this belief from heaven be sent,
 If such be Nature's holy plan,
 Have I not reason to lament,
 What man has made of man.*
 [lines written in Early Spring].

Here in Wordsworth is the unintended Rumi mood, hundreds of years beyond the Rumi era. Rumi's own voice sings as follows in his poem "All Through Eternity."

*Wherever Beauty looks
 Love is also there;
 Whenever beauty shows its magnetism
 Love lights her fire from that flame.*

*When beauty dwells in the dark folds of night,
 Love comes and finds a heart entangled in tresses.*

*Beauty and love are body and soul;
 Beauty is the mine, love the diamond.*

*They have been together
 Since the beginning of time—
 Side by side, step by step
 The love of beauty and the beauty of love.*

Here is Rumi in the unintended future mood of William Wordsworth hundreds of years later. The following abbreviates the beauty of Nature:

*Behold the rose, the lily, the violet—
 Behold the peacock.*

* Acceptance Speech upon receiving the RUMI Award, presented by the RUMI Forum at the annual ceremony held at the National Press Club, Washington, DC, October 2013.



Prof. Ali A. Mazrui and Lady Pauline Mazrui at
 the RUMI Peace and Dialog Awards
 (Washington DC, October 2013)

ALI A. MAZRUI: ALWAYS FIGHTING FOR THE LITTLE GUY*

By

Samuel Ebow Quainoo

Professor of Political Science, East Stroudsburg University

It was a weekend in the middle of the week in August 1991 in Liverpool, England when I received a mail from Binghamton University, USA with Prof. Ali A. Mazrui's name and address on the back of the envelope. I had never met or had any communication with this great man prior to this letter so it was a big surprise when I received this letter from him. I opened it and found out to my amazement that Prof. Mazrui had offered me an Albert Schweitzer Graduate Assistantship to study at Binghamton University for a doctorate degree in Political Science and work under him as his Graduate Assistant!

I was beyond myself with excitement. I had just been offered a dream job barely two weeks ago as the Administrative Officer at the Highway Management Division of Liverpool City Council, England. Nevertheless, I went to the office the next day, resigned my job immediately after I shared my good news with my boss, and started preparing for my trip to Binghamton University in the US.

Exactly three days after my resignation at Liverpool City Council, another letter came through from the Political Science Department of Binghamton University, withdrawing the Albert Schweitzer Assistantship. One could imagine my confusion and immediate depression at this rather abrupt change in my fortunes. I spent the next two days brooding over what was going on and what my next step should be. I sadly decided to go back to Liverpool City Council to plead for my job back. And then, I received a second letter from Prof. Ali A. Mazrui, re-instating my Assistantship and expressing his interest to work with me as his Graduate Assistant.

I arrived on January 15, 1991 at a heavily snowed-in Binghamton University and met a very warm, jovial and welcoming Prof. Ali A. Mazrui for the first time. He immediately apologized to me profusely about the confusion with regard to the letters but never offered details about what actually precipitated the three different letters I received about the Assistantship when I was in England.

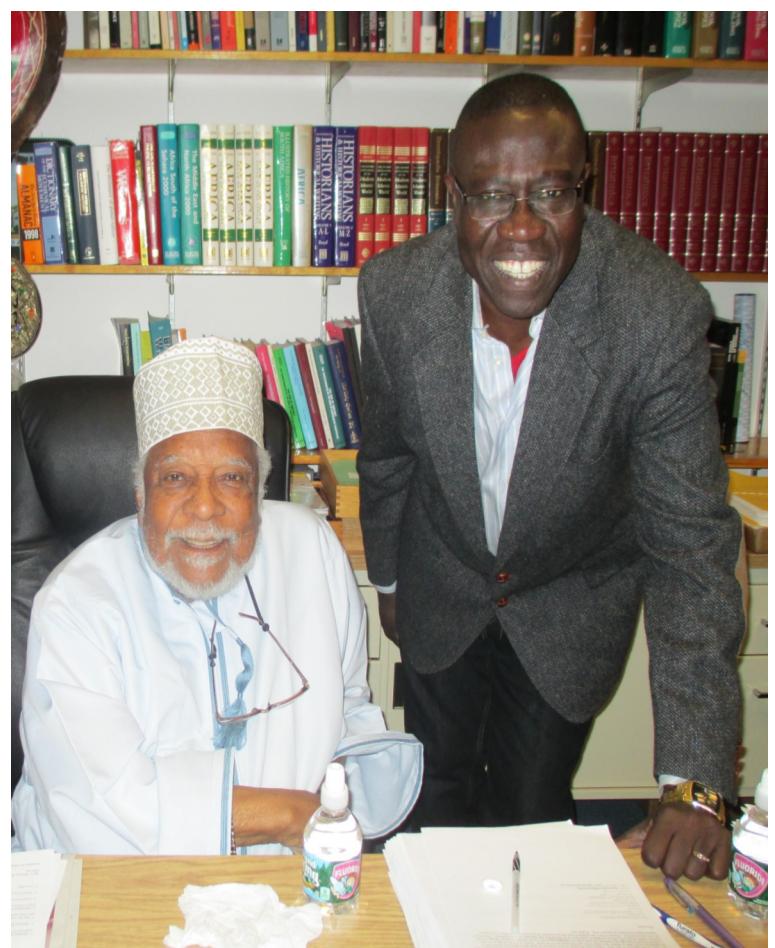
I was later to learn from other faculty members of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies, about how Prof. Mazrui had come back from his travels to find out about the recession of the Graduate Assistantship offer to me and his anger and fight for its immediate re-instatement.

My four years at the Institute showed me the side of Prof. Mazrui that most people do not get to see; fighting consistently for the little guys ... graduate assistants, junior staff, students, etc. I found out my case was not an isolated one and that Prof. Mazrui had come through on several occasions for people like me in similar situations. My graduate student colleagues would on several occasions sit back and compare our similar stories and experiences and marvel at how this big guy would quietly fight on behalf of people like us without even offering to tell us what he goes through to make it possible for us to pursue our ambitions, etc.

Prof. Mazrui was more than I had envisaged him to be before I came to Binghamton University. He treated me as a colleague in spite of my student status and the obvious vast difference between us in accomplishments. The same warm treatment was extended to all the other Graduate Assistants,

Faculty and Staff of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies of Binghamton University. From the day I set foot in Binghamton University, Prof. Mazrui became a father to me and his Institute became my family in America and that has not changed all these years even after my graduation, employment and professorship. May he live for another eighty years! ▼▲

*Speech given at Professor Ali A. Mazrui's 80th Birthday Banquet and the 38th Annual Conference of the New York African Studies Association (NYASA), Binghamton University, April 6, 2013.



*Prof. Ali A. Mazrui and Prof. Samuel Ebow Quainoo in IGCS Director's office
Binghamton, NY, 2013*

JULIUS NYERERE: BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND SHAKESPEARE*

*By
Professor Ali A. Mazrui*

Of all the Mandates and Trusteeships of the United Nations in Africa, I believe Julius K. Nyerere's Tanzania became the most successful. In the very struggle to end the Trusteeship status and Great Britain's administrative control, Nyerere and his political party were developing new skills. The Tanganyika African National Union became a considerable political force in East and Southern Africa as a whole.

Although Tanganyika was quite a poor country it became very influential in world affairs mainly because of the brilliant leadership of Julius Nyerere. He moved in high circles, and exerted diplomatic influence on North-South relations out of proportion to the country's size and resources.

Nyerere wanted to be remembered for his experimentation with African Socialism, which he called *ujamaa*. This turned out to be a case of *heroic failure*. Tanzania abandoned *Socialism*, and returned to market forces.

Post-Nyerere's Tanzania also abandoned the one-party state—and joined the multi-party democratic transition.

The real achievements of Nyerere's Tanzania were the following:

- (a) The promotion of Kiswahili as a national language. He raised the language to respectability and efficacy.
- (b) This language policy contributed to impressive cultural nation-building.
- (c) A side linguistic contribution was Nyerere's translation of William Shakespeare into Kiswahili. The plays he translated were *Julius Caesar* and *The Merchant of Venice*.

Nyerere had a sense of humor about his skills of translation. In jest I once asked him why he did not translate *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx, instead of a play by Shakespeare. After all, both Nyerere and Marx were Socialists, though of a vastly different orientation.

Nyerere replied that there were elements of anti-capitalism in *The Merchant of Venice*, one of the plays of Shakespeare which he had translated. The demand of "a pound of flesh" in that play was the height of Capitalist greed.

Indeed, Nyerere translated the title of the play into *Mabepari wa Venisi* [the Capitalists of Venice]. Nyerere and I both laughed. This was just before

- (d) *Ujamaa* had in any case generated a lot of popular concepts in Kiswahili. The national ideology of Tanzania was available in intelligible Kiswahili.
- (e) Another achievement of Nyerere's Tanzania was the unification of Tanganyika and Zanzibar into the United Republic of Tanzania. Most other unions in postcolonial Africa had collapsed. The original Federation of Mali with Senegal collapsed rapidly. There was also the separation of Eritrea from Ethiopia which was preceded by 30 years of war. The secession of the new South Sudan created a separate sovereign country. But it was preceded by two civil wars. Only the United Republic of Tanzania has endured since 1964 as a single country, though not without tensions and separatism.
- (f) The legacy of Julius Nyerere in Tanzania has also been to minimize tribalism, as well as combat racism.
- (g) The rotation of the Presidency: *Christian Nyerere, Muslim Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Christian Benjamin Mkapa, Muslim Jakaya Kikwete*. Presidential rotation without constitutional requirement.

CONCLUSION

The last time I saw Mwalimu Nyerere was in Abuja awaiting the Presidential Inauguration of General Obasanjo as Head-of-State. Because the Nigerians were busy running around in preparation for the Inauguration, they put Mwalimu Nyerere and me in a comfortable room by ourselves to converse in Kiswahili.

I had no idea on that day how ill Mwalimu Nyerere was. I discovered later that he had been hospitalized with a life-threatening disease. I remembered our last conversation in Nigeria with sadness. He ailed in a hospital in Britain with courage. He left a legacy of resolute nation-building in Tanzania, and left echoes of Shakespeare in the national language of his beloved African country.



* Presentation at the *Dual Launching* of Julius K. Nyerere Day at the United Nations and the launching of the book, *Julius K. Nyerere: Africa's Titan on a Global Stage*, by Ali A. Mazrui and Lindah L. Mhando at the same UN ceremony on October 14, 2013.

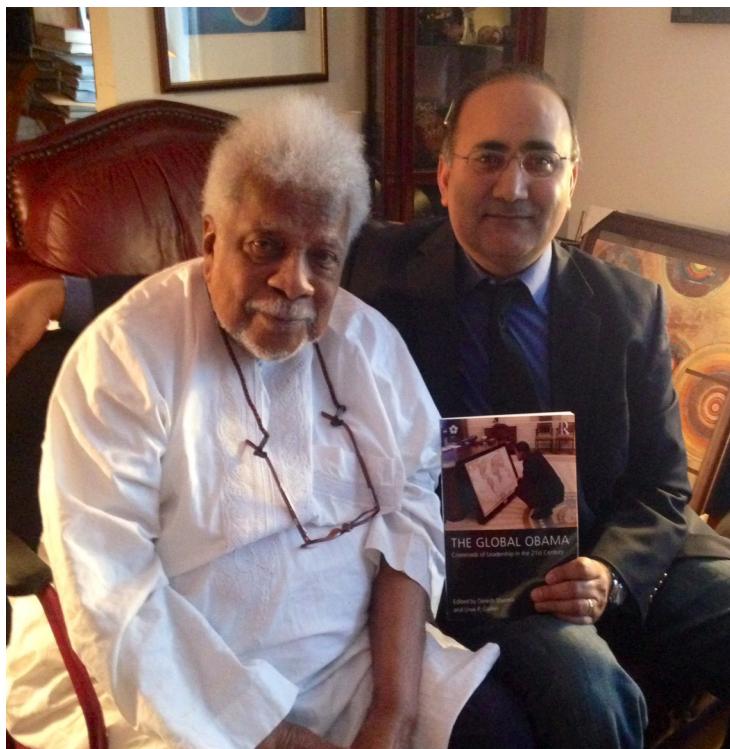
...Nyerere translated the title of the play into *Mabepari wa Venisi* [*The Capitalists of Venice*].

Nyerere and I both laughed. This was just before we started filming Nyerere for my

TV Series *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*...

INTERVIEW WITH DR. DINESH SHARMA

*By
IGCS Reporter*



Dr. Dinesh Sharma presenting a copy of his book to Prof. Ali A. Mazrui, (Vestal, NY, February 2014)

1. Dr. Sharma, you have an impressive academic career. You are a well-known author with a Doctorate in psychology and human development from Harvard University, a columnist for *Asia Times Online*, *Al Jazeera English* and *The Global Intelligence*, and you have written a critically well-received book on President Obama. Could you tell us what have been the important issues or topics that have guided and inspired your career?

DS: Actually, I have not been in the academic sector full-time, as I have been working in the private sector for almost ten years before returning to research and writing at the Institute for Global Cultural Studies at SUNY-Binghamton. I have been writing for several online and print newspapers for about five years, while authoring and editing a couple of books on the President. I was inspired by President Obama's landmark election in 2008—as were millions of other people around the world—to author a cultural biography of his multicultural and international years in Hawaii and Indonesia. I wrote this book while still consulting in the healthcare sector. And now we have another book coming out titled, "The Global Obama," in December 2013, where Professor Mazrui also has a chapter on the president's historical roots in Africa.

2. You edited a book on the nature of sociocultural change in India and its relevance for the scientific study of childhood, family environments and the process of human development. What led you to take on this project?

DS: This book was directly a result of my dissertation work in North India. I did fieldwork in villages outside metropolitan Delhi for my doctoral thesis at

Harvard University. I was studying the impact of demographic change on family institutions, maternal schooling and child development among North Indian Jat, Brahmin and working class families. While I did my doctoral work in human development and psychology, I studied with anthropologists, sociologists and development experts who were part of the interdisciplinary department. Even though I am a trained cultural psychologist, my advisors included anthropologists who had worked in Africa, Asia and Latin America. I really got the best of the social science training by learning from the leading thinkers across many disciplines. This is what I appreciate about the multi-disciplinary approach developed by Professor Mazrui at IGCS.

3. How and when did you start to have an interest in researching and writing about President Obama?

DS: It really started during the 2007 primaries and then continued from there. Now, I am able to cover the President at the White House when he makes an important speech, or initiates a significant policy shift. I am able report on his speeches as a journalist. In fact, I covered his speech and town hall meeting he conducted here at Binghamton as a press member.

4. Do you plan to continue writing about President Obama, and if so, could you give us a preview of what will be the focus of your upcoming writing?

DS: Yes, we have several projects underway that look at President Obama's leadership in different parts of the world. Professor Mazrui likes to call it "Barack Obama—The Man of Three Continents." The three continents are Africa, Asia and the Americas. Maybe a fourth continent can also be added—Europe—given the President claims he has Irish roots from his mother Anne Dunham's family lineage. Sometimes, he has pronounced his name as "O'Obama" with an apostrophe rather than the African pronunciation "Obama."

5. An interesting feature of your background, which you mention on your web page and your CV, is that you also have experience as a marketing consultant. How did you become a marketing consultant?

DS: Yes, I did market consulting for about ten years for pharma, healthcare, biotech and medical device clients. This work grew out of my interest in globalization, industrial and organizational psychology, and the post-doctoral fellowship I did in public health at Columbia University.

6. Is your marketing experience also related to your healthcare industry consultancy? What is your view of the Obama healthcare reform based on these experiences?

DS: Yes, healthcare is something I care about and have written about for several important publications, including the journal *Health Affairs*. The US needs some form of healthcare reform to bend the cost-curve, which remains very high, especially given the fact that so many millions of people are uninsured or underinsured.

(continued on page 17)

KING'S DREAM LIVES ON

By

Dr. Dinesh Sharma

Honorary Associate Research Professor of IGCS

Was Martin Luther King, Jr., the icon of the civil rights movement, aware of his "global impact?" Did he anticipate he would develop a world-wide following in a short span of time, spawning other movements for social justice around the world? Importantly, did King use this "global awareness" to put pressure on the US government through media and other means of communication to push for the passage of the civil rights laws?

Steve Spence, who studies media and communication, has argued recently that King made the explicit connection between the larger social and technological forces stemming from the modern "jet-age," today we call "cultural globalization," and the spread of the civil rights movement.¹ Delivered on May 21, 1961, at a rally in support of Freedom Riders, King opened with a rhetorical flourish:

The words that I will utter tonight were written this morning as I flew at an altitude of 38,000 feet on a jet plane from New York to Atlanta, Georgia. As that gigantic instrument stretched its wings through the air like an eagle and moved smoothly toward its destination, many thoughts ran through my mind. On the one hand I thought of how the technological developments of the United States had brought the nation and the world to an awe-inspiring threshold of the future. I thought of how our scientific genius had helped us to dwarf distance and place time in chains. I thought of how we had carved highways through the stratosphere, and how our jet planes had compressed into minutes distances that once took days. On the other hand I thought of that brutal mob in Alabama and the reign of terror that had engulfed Anniston, Birmingham and Montgomery. I thought of the tragic expressions of man's inhumanity to man that still exist in certain sections of our country. I could not help being concerned about this glaring contrast, this tragic gulf. Through our scientific and technological developments we have lifted our heads to the skies and yet our feet are still firmly planted in the muck of barbarism and racial hatred. Indeed this is America's chief moral dilemma. And, unless the Nation grapples with this dilemma forthrightly and firmly, she will be relegated to a second rate power in the world. The price that America must pay for the continued oppression of the Negro is the price of its own destruction. America's greatest defense against communism is to take the offense for justice, freedom, and human dignity,² King said.

In just a few lines, King internationalized the fight for civil rights at home by linking it with the fight against communism abroad, embracing the Freedom Riders as patriots. Within two years, he would lead the March on Washington and the rest, as they say, was history. King's words delivered 50 years ago on August 28, 1963, at the Mall in Washington, DC, have echoed through time and space. For new immigrants, who migrated to the US after the passage of the immigration act of 1963, these words may carry special historical meaning. King rooted his speech in the very founding of the nation, while sending out a clarion call to the future generations. Nick Burns in a recent Op-ed has called King America's "modern founding father" because his dream still lives on.

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.' I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood," said King on that historic day.³

Today, King's powerful words resonate through many cultures and societies—in South Africa, Burma and the Arab world—that have embraced the process of democratization and equality, and deal with minorities or underserved populations within their own borders.

On the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington, August 28, 2013, President Obama echoed the words of the Black preacher, also known as "the American Gandhi," who used the means of non-violence and civil disobedience to arouse the conscience of the oldest constitutional democracy. It is a story of Biblical proportions:

America changed for you and for me. And the entire world drew strength from that example, whether it is young people who watched from the other side of an Iron Curtain and would eventually tear down that wall, or the young people inside South Africa who would eventually end the scourge of apartheid. Those are the victories they won, with iron wills and hope in their hearts. That is the transformation that they wrought with each step of their well-worn shoes. That's the depth that I and millions of Americans owe those maids, those laborers, those porters, those secretaries—folks who could have run a company, maybe, if they had ever had a chance; those White students who put themselves in harm's way even though they didn't have to, those Japanese-Americans who recalled their own internment, those Jewish Americans who had survived the Holocaust, people who could have given up and given in but kept on keeping on, knowing that weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning on the battlefield of justice, men and women without rank or wealth or title or fame would liberate us all, in ways that our children now take for granted as people of all colors and creeds live together and learn together and walk together, and fight alongside one another and love one another, and judge one another by the content of our character in this greatest nation on Earth.⁴

It is often asserted that Barack Obama is the first African American President of the United States, but the progressive arc of history, which supported Obama's rise from the streets of Jakarta to Johannesburg and from Shanghai to Chicago are truly global, as I have argued in my books.

Obama's election as "the first multicultural head" of the most powerful Western democracy is partly a reflection of the global economic shift from West to East; from the developed economies in the US and EU to the emerging economies; and the rapid pace of globalization that will truly transform the developing world, including Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) in our lifetime.

In addition to most biographies that locate Obama narrowly within the civil rights discourse in the US, I have argued that Obama was motivated

by—and has followed in—the footsteps of social reformers like Gandhi and Mandela, in addition to King, and other global progressive leaders. Always striving to reach the high bar set by these men, from a very young age Obama was socialized to extoll his African roots from his father's side of the family and idolize the African-American heritage over and above the mainstream American values dominant at the time.

As Susan V. Bosak of the Legacy Project has said, "Our dreams as individuals and communities are built on the work and ideas of people who have come before us in history. And most big, world-changing dreams evolve over a long period of time—sometimes generations."⁵ Thus, the modern progressive arc of history which spans many continents, races, cultures and nations begins with the fall of colonialism and marches on today through the former colonies and the newly emerging economies, in no small measure to King's inspiring dream of equality.

At the Civil Society Event at the UN General Assembly on September 23, 2013, President Obama repeated Dr. King's words, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."⁶ Douglas Rutzen, President of the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, who has worked in more than a hundred countries to develop legal institutions, talked about one of King's speeches delivered at Oberlin College in 1965 and urged civil society activists to "achieve a world perspective," develop a "coalition of conscience" and work tirelessly to help democratic transitions.⁷

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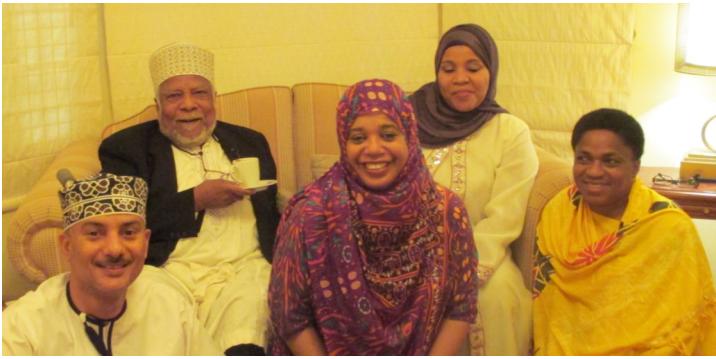
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5. Bosak, Susan V. "A Dream Realized from Ghandi to King to Obama." <http://www.legacyproject.org/activities/gandhikingobama.html>
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7. See <http://www.icnl.org/about/bios/rutzen.html>

*This article was previously published on October 11, 2013, in *The Global Intelligence. Analyzing the World of Affairs* (<http://theglobalintelligence.com/category/the-intelligence-13-04>)



Professor Mazrui and Ibrahim Noor Sharif Al-Bakri
(Muscat, Oman, February 2013)



Professor Mazrui and Lady Pauline Mazrui sharing good times with family
(Muscat, Oman, February 2013)



Professor Ali A. Mazrui at "Tribute to Chinua Achebe" held at the Nigerian Embassy
(Washington, DC, April 25, 2013)



Prof. Ali A. Mazrui delivering a speech at the International Meeting organized by Sultan Qaboos Higher Center for Culture and Science Diwan of Royal Court, Sultanate of Oman—The Rapprochement and Human Harmony Week Forum (Muscat, Oman, 2013)



Professor Ali A. Mazrui exchanging ideas after the International Meeting organized by Sultan Qaboos Higher Center for Culture and Science Diwan of Royal Court, Sultanate of Oman—The Rapprochement and Human Harmony Week Forum (Muscat, Oman, 2013)

(continued from page 13)

... INTERVIEW WITH DR. DINESH SHARMA

The Obama administration has made a very serious effort at reform, which is facing some glitches and obstacles at the moment, but the effort is salutary and historical. Both parties have tried to reform the system for almost 100 years.

7. You have a wide experience working as a freelance writer. Your articles and opinions have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal Online*, *Eastern Economic Review*, *Middle East Times*, and *Al Jazeera English*, among other publications. Could we have a preview of forthcoming articles?

DS: You can expect more articles on "the Asian Pivot" and the Obama administration's policies in Africa (in collaboration with Prof. Mazrui).

8. How did you come to know about Professor Mazrui and his work?

DS: I discovered his writings in graduate school, but I had seen his BBC series "The Africans" as an undergraduate. Parts of that series are still fresh. Professor Mazrui's vibrant use of the English language and his talent for telling "deep truths" about the continent with a poetic flare are unforgettable. As I mentioned, my graduate school advisor was also an Africanist, who had done his anthropological research in Kenya among the Gusii tribe. So when I

started to research President Obama's African lineage, I rediscovered one of Professor Mazrui's key ideas about the "triple heritage," which I think also applies to President Obama in some uniquely distinct ways. Then I asked him to contribute an article to the edited book, "The Global Obama," which was released in early 2014.

9. What led you to be interested in being affiliated with IGCS? Are you planning to write about Professor Mazrui?

DS: My affiliation with IGCS was motivated by another book project on President Obama, as mentioned earlier, but I think IGCS has rare expertise in Africa, Asia and the Islamic civilization. I have an interest in the democratization of civil societies and open dialogue. I will be writing about Prof. Mazrui and the Rumi award for peace and dialogue that he recently received at the National Press Club, Washington, DC.

10. In which IGCS projects will you be involved? What are your goals for your time at IGCS?

DS: My goals include: (1) book writing, (2) grant making and perhaps (3) some lecturing and teaching.



Prof. Ali A. Mazrui being interviewed by Zehra Yaman from Anadolu News Agency
(Istanbul, Turkey, September 2013)

A NEW PLAYER IN INTERCULTURAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS ISSUES - (KAICIID)

By

Thomas Uthup

Senior Research Associate of IGCS

Intercultural issues are very much within the scope of the work done by Professor Ali A. Mazrui and that of many of us associated with the Institute of Global Cultural Studies. Our emphasis on *Cultural Forces in World Politics*—the title of a book published by Professor Mazrui in 1990 which I was privileged to proof-read—began well before Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis and 9/11 resurrected an interest in culture.

At the international level, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had always played a preeminent role in examining issues relating to culture, although paying somewhat less attention to religion. A "dialogue among civilizations" proposal, first mooted by Hans Köchler to UNESCO in 1972, became prominently identified with Mohammed Khatami, the reformist Iranian president leading to the year 2001 being declared as the UN "Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations." Completely unrelated to the "Dialogue Among Civilizations"—although some right-wing organizations in the US like to think so—the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) emerged in 2005 as a project of the UN Secretary-General, sponsored by Spain and Turkey. The UNAOC was able to bring heightened attention to issues of religion in education, media, and migration as well as highlighting the positive role of youth, religious actors and interfaith efforts in peace and development. Between 2008 and 2011, I was privileged to work at the UNAOC as its first Education and Research Manager.

The latest entrant in the field of intercultural and interreligious issues¹ is the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID), established in Vienna in 2012. Saudi Arabia, Austria and Spain are the Founding States, while the Holy See (Vatican) is a Founding Observer. The Board of Directors consists of representatives of major world religions, and KAICIID is headed by a Secretary-General, currently Faisal Bin Muaammar. Within a few months after its launch, KAICIID, in collaboration with Religions for Peace, launched an interfaith project in March 2013 aimed at the well-being of children in Uganda. Its second major programme, "The Image of the Other" was launched in May 2013, with a focus on education. Earlier, in March 2013, I had contributed a mapping report on interreligious education to KAICIID. Following regional meetings in Vienna, Addis Ababa, New Delhi and Buenos Aires on best practices in intercultural education, an international meeting was convened November 18–19, 2013 in Vienna on "Image of the Other in Interreligious and Intercultural Education."

I was honored to be invited to the November conference as a special KAICIID guest and interact with experts, policy makers and religious leaders. From the mini iPads distributed (on loan) to the delegates to the enchanting intercultural performance of songs from around the world by the Vienna Boys Choir and the outstanding organizational efficiency of hospitality, it was clear that the Forum would be uniquely efficient and enjoyable.

Freed from the pressures of presenting a paper, I was able to enjoy going from session to session and discuss the need, challenges, and opportunities of educating people about different cultures. In addition, I was also able to learn some very practical lessons from professors, religious leaders, and professionals on subjects ranging from the use of social media for intercultural education and religious dialogue to monitoring and evaluation. Some notable concrete outcomes from the Forum included:

- 1) The formation of a Global Policy Network, a network of experts and governmental focal points from Ministries of Education, Religious Affairs and Integration around the world, who will convene to discuss key interreligious and intercultural issues in formal and non-formal education.
- 2) KAICIID partnership agreements with the African Union, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the World Scouts Foundation, and UNESCO.
- 3) The Saudi Education Minister requested KAICIID input on reviewing Saudi curricula.

Perhaps the most profound lessons from the forum—too rarely seen in the world today—was to actually see rabbis, imams, priests, pundits, and monks—as well as experts and professionals sitting next to each other in harmony. For instance, at a dialogue table I attended—facilitated by a woman from Lebanon—a young man from Iran and a rabbi from Israel were seated next to each other! The informal connections made in these kinds of settings, are some of the most valuable outcomes of such meetings. While in the modern era intercultural dialogue can happen across oceans and thousands of miles, the first encounters need to happen face-to-face—and the KAICIID conference provided an incomparable opportunity for such an encounter.



NOTE

1. These two terms are often seen as being distinct; my brief discussion of possible reasons for this may be found in "Bringing Communities Together: The Role of the Alliance of Civilizations," *CrossCurrents* (September 2010), pp. 404–405.



The Vienna Boys Choir Performing at the Opening Session of the KAICIID Forum, Vienna, November 2013. (Photo by T. Uthup)

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN LATIN AMERICA

By
F. Sonia Arellano-López
 Research Assistant Professor IGCS

Usually, when we hear and talk about violence against women, we immediately associate it with domestic violence, sexual assault, and how these issues are handled in the criminal justice system. Without doubt statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean suggest that, across the region, domestic violence has increased. For example the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) estimates that up to 40 percent of women in the region have been victims of violence at some point during their lives. And that femicide—the killing of women—has reached alarming levels. Recent figures, for example, showed that, in Guatemala, two women, on average, are murdered each day. In São Paulo, Brazil, a woman is assaulted every 15 seconds. As the rate of violence against women has risen, governments have implemented policies and passed legislation to address the situation. In Chile, Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, Argentina, and Venezuela legislation has been passed specifically to address the violence against women.

There is no doubt that governments have been keen to address violence against women. But instead of focusing on the description of policies and laws, and assessing their efficacy, I want to focus on how non-governmental organizations and grassroots women activists have been addressing the situation.

Latin America and the Caribbean non-governmental organizations dedicated to addressing women's issues have played a fundamental role in pressuring their governments, at the local, regional and national levels to extend equal rights and offer legal protection from violence. For example, in Peru, a well-known women's non-governmental organization, *Flora Tristan*, played an important role in organizing Amazonian indigenous women. They helped indigenous women to organize their own associations, and through workshops on legal issues for male-dominated indigenous organizations, they were able to open political spaces for women. Through legal assistance, they also provide guidance for indigenous women to obtain identification cards, which are key to requiring the government to recognize indigenous women as citizens, and extend basic rights and protections to them. As a result, indigenous women were able to exercise their rights in courts in cases of domestic or political violence. They played an important role in providing indigenous Amazonian women with an identity within the legal system, as they say a legal face to the forgotten people. In Bolivia, non-governmental organizations such as *Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Mujer* (CIDEM), not only opened legal offices for advising peri-urban and rural women on legal issues related to domestic violence or advising them on their rights, but they also organized marches and petitions to press the government to address violence against women.

In Colombia, the *Centro de Apoyo Popular* (CENTRAP) created safe spaces for women to talk about violent experiences, developed the information collected into a comprehensive map of the risks women face in the city, and successfully persuaded the municipal government of Soacha to incorporate changes in its municipal development plan, such as a special police station for family issues. There are many more examples of the critical role played by non-governmental organizations in successfully influencing policies and laws on behalf of women than we have time to mention here. The point is that non-governmental organizations whose mission is to address

women's issues have played a key role in putting women's issues on the governments' agendas, and helping women, poor and rural women, to navigate through the governments' legal system in order to exercise their rights and access legal protections from political, domestic and psychological violence.

At the same time that we recognize the role played by non-governmental organizations, it is also important to recognize the role of grassroots women activists, who take substantial risks and pay very high prices to organize their friends and neighbors to respond collectively to violence. When we talk about violence against women, we tend to see the victims as individual actors, who are in situations that make them powerless to respond to abuse, much less take proactive steps to stop it. Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, women at the grassroots level have organized to claim their rights as women and citizens. A classic example is the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, in Argentina, who did not rest until their voice was heard by politicians and international organizations. These women were subjected to daily physical and psychological violence, as they demanded that the government be held accountable for the disappearance of family members during the period of military dictatorship.

Similarly, women in the slums of Lima, Peru, organized themselves to counter the daily domestic violence in their households. They carried a whistle to raise an alarm in case one of the women was being beaten. When someone blew their whistle, all of the women in the neighborhood came running, wielding their pots and pans, to stop the violence against a neighbor.

Probably one of the most dramatic cases of how women have organized and pressured the authorities to acknowledge violence against women occurred in Juarez, Mexico. Mothers of women who had been killed organized the *Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa A. C.* (May our Daughters Return Home, Civil Association). Through their organization they marched, rallied, and demanded that local and national government arrest and prosecute the perpetrators of such crimes. They took their case to the Interamerican Court of Human Rights.

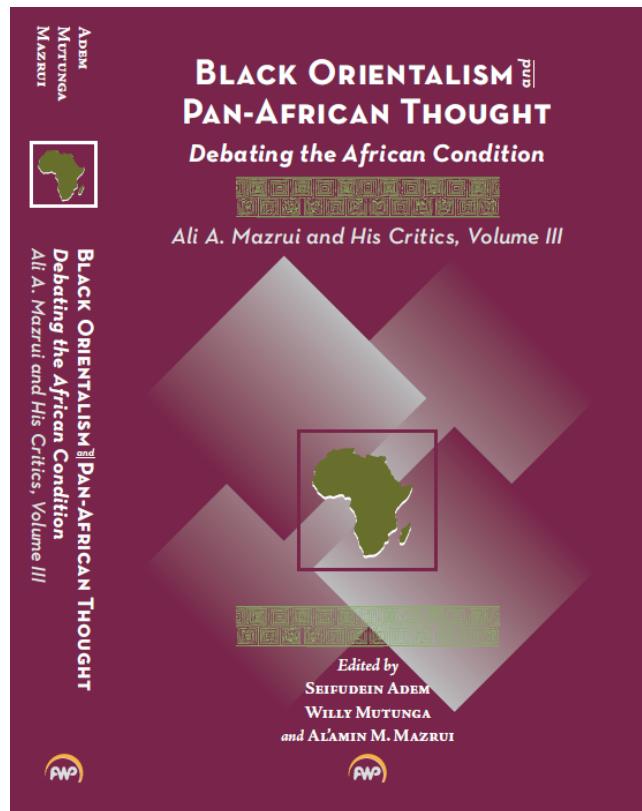
Thus, the increase of violence against women, in the face of action by many governments to provide women with greater protection is a fact in much of Latin America and the Caribbean. In such settings, civil society, in the form of non-governmental and grassroots organizations has played a critical role in situations where violence against women has been reduced. Their activism has forced authorities to enact and implement policies and laws that grant women equal rights and provide protection against gender-based violence. While it is very tempting to see violence as an aggregation of individual cases, like other social activities, violence is organized along lines of class, ethnicity and gender, and can be addressed through collective action organized with this awareness.



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IGCS PUBLICATIONS



BLACK ORIENTALISM AND PAN-AFRICAN THOUGHT

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Ali A. Mazrui and His Critics, Volume III

Edited by

Seifudein Adem, Willy Mutunga and Al'amin M. Mazrui

At a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, Ali A. Mazrui once described his entire professional life as one long debate. In the last half-century he has indeed publicly debated such Heads-of-State as the late Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzania, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Milton Obote of Uganda. Mazrui also crossed swords with such Nobel Laureates as Wole Soyinka of Nigeria.

This book reproduces some of those debates word-for-word. The topics of contestation have included Defining "Black Orientalism," Evaluating Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law, The Global Impact of Pan-Africanism, and the Causes and Consequences of Terrorism. Mazrui's radio lectures and television series have reverberated around the world. They have contributed to his stature among the top one-hundred public intellectuals alive in the world today.

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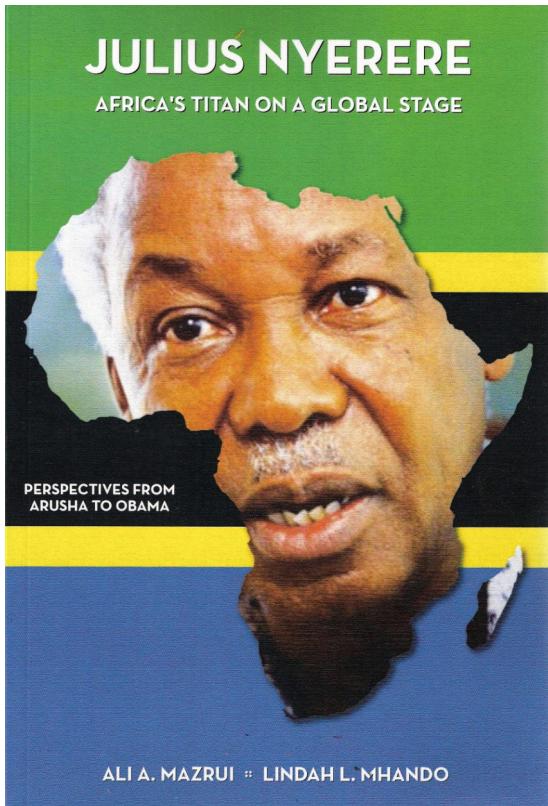
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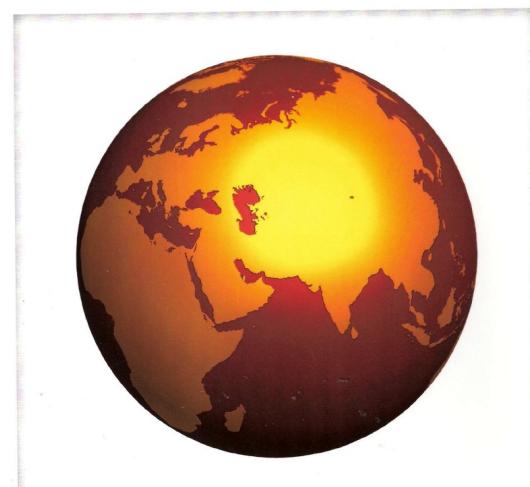
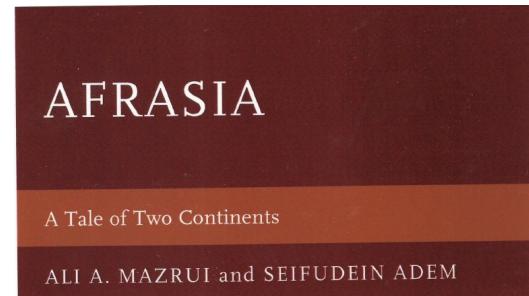
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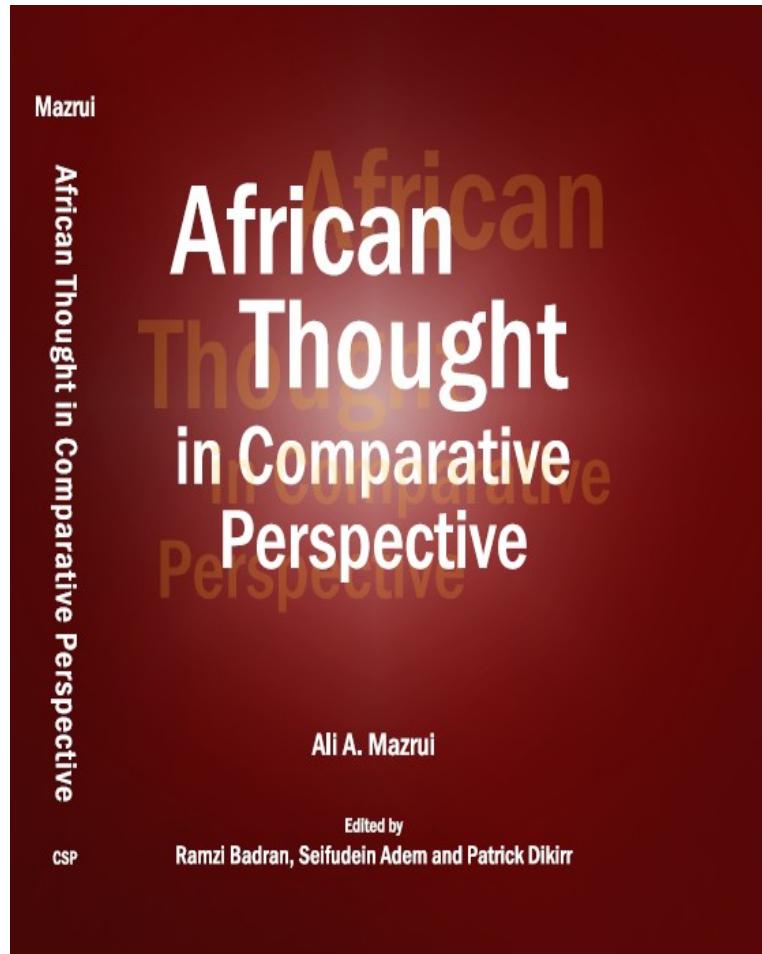
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PROFESSOR ALI A. MAZRUI

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS IN 2013

Professor Ali A. Mazrui has been recognized again as one of the World's 500 most influential Muslims. *The Muslim 500: The Worlds' 500 Most Influential Muslims 2013/14 Edition*—The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, Amman, Jordan.

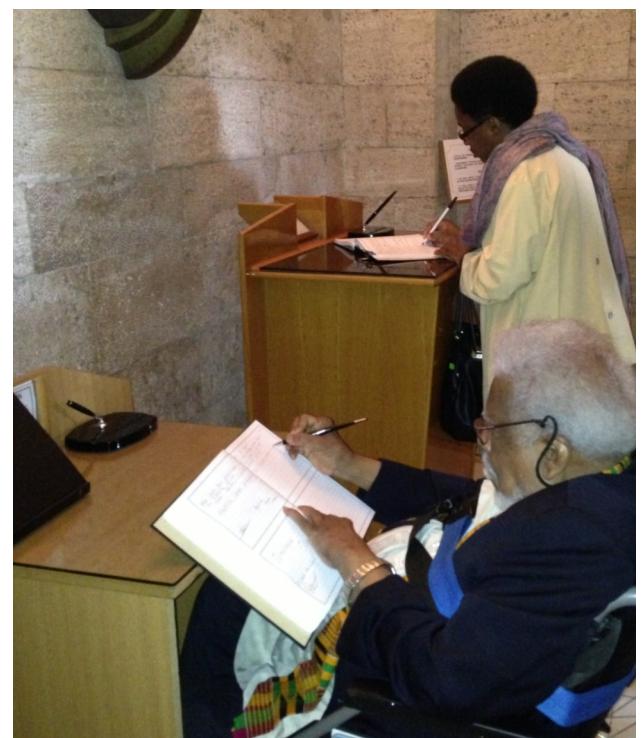
Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU) Building Bridges Award was presented to Professor Ali A. Mazrui in Washington, DC, April 24, 2013.

The New York African Studies Association (NYASA) created the Ali Mazrui Outstanding Book Award in March 2013.

The Binghamton University Ali Mazrui Award for an International Graduate Student was established by Professor Samuel Ebow Quainoo in conjunction with the Binghamton Foundation, December 2013.



*Left: Professor Mazrui being greeted
(Muscat, Oman, 2013)*



*Right: Professor Ali A. Mazrui and Lady Pauline Mazrui
(Ankara, Turkey, 2013)*



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