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ANNUAL MAZRUI NEWSLETTER NO. 25

General Theme:

ON BOUNDARIES AND THE BLOODLINE

Sub-Themes:

	PAGES
I. Family Bloodline: Death, Rebirth and Beyond	1-6
II. A Centennial of Excellence	6-11
III. Africa's Dynasties of the Muse	11-13
IV. Libya: Between Pan Africanism and Pan Arabism	13-18
V. Nkumba, Harvard, and the House of Lords	19-21
VI. Between Tutu and the Tutsi	21-23
VII. Crossing Boundaries in Nigeria	24-26
VIII. Nigeria, Religion and I	26-29
IX. From Robert Mugabe to the Washington Summit	30-33
X. Between the Personal and the Princely: A Conclusion	33-36

APPENDIX

By

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This Newsletter is written for friends, relatives and colleagues. My home address in this period is as follows:

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This Newsletter has an Appendix (newspaper clippings) relevant to the general theme.

This Millennium Newsletter is my longest ever. The year 2000 was fundamental. This was the year when I lost a beloved sister in Mombasa and celebrated the arrival of a grandson in California. It was the year when my youngest children (seven and eight years old) visited their Nigerian family in Jos for the first time. But it was also the year when their aunt Caroline, my wife's sister, died within a couple of months of our departure from Nigeria. Caroline was only 40 years old.

These were issues of the bloodline at the level of family. We shall return to them later. But the new millennium was also a period of the bloodline in the sense of clan, tribe and race. In Zimbabwe I had occasion to dialogue with president Robert Mugabe about issues of race, citizenship and rights. In Libya I conversed with Muammar Quddafy about the competitive demands of Pan-Africanism and Pan-Arabism. In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, we explored the issue of reparations for the enslavement of Africans across the centuries. And in the United States I grappled with issues of race, religion and social tensions. These subjects are part of the agenda of this year's Annual Mazrui Newsletter.

1. Family Bloodline: Death, Rebirth and Beyond

I was in Oxford, England, when I first learnt about the death of my oldest sister, Salma. I was attending a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Oxford Center for Islamic Studies. One instinct was to catch the next plane out to Mombasa, Kenya, where my sister had died. But there were two inhibitions. One was the voice of my sister's father (who was of course also my own). Sheikh Al'Amin Mazrui (who died in 1947) had a fatwa which disapproved of abandoning major obligations "in the service of grief."

I had long standing obligations in Oxford, London, and Tripoli, Libya. Was I to abandon them because I was suddenly grief-stricken?

The second dilemma concerned the simple fact that I would not be in time for my sister's funeral in any case. Islamic funerals are normally expected to occur within twenty-four hours of the person's death. It is believed that the deceased would not find peace unless he or she was laid to rest in the grave as soon as possible. Was it necessary to fly home at all in an age when condolences and mutual consolations could be done by telephone and on the Internet?

First and foremost, I heeded the advice of Salma's father (and mine) not to abandon major obligations in the service of grief. I completed my work at Oxford, and then went to London to give a lecture at the Ibn Rushd Centre at Westminster University on the subject of "Globalization and the Future of Islamic Civilization." I then flew to Libya to give two lectures under the auspices of the African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development. My Libyan topics were on (a) Pax Africana and Conflict Management and (b) Globalization and the African Renaissance. My main host was Dr. Ahmed Fituri, whose PhD was from the University of Michigan where I once taught. We had known each other from our Michigan days.

From Tripoli could I cross African borders and fly directly to Nairobi, another African capital? No such luck! For thousands of dollars, I had to return to London before I could proceed to Nairobi, and then onwards to Mombasa (can you imagine?) I was of course much too late for Salma's funeral but in plenty of time for mutual family consolation, for love and healing. Salma's younger son, Alamin M. Mazrui, flew in from the United States (he is a professor at the Ohio State University). He was not in time for

the funeral either. In his case, perhaps it was just as well. He was particularly devastated by his mother's death, and might have been overwhelmed at her funeral.

What about the borders between the newly departed and the newly born? As we were mourning Salma's departure, one of her granddaughters gave birth to a girl – who was promptly named Salma! And my own second son, Al'Amin and his wife Jill, gave me a grandson – and they promptly called him Ali! I now know that there will be another Ali Al'Amin Mazrui long after this old Ali Al'Amin Mazrui is truly gone! May the next Ali A. Mazrui have the strengths of the old one and be spared the weaknesses. Amen!

Pauline, my wife, managed to be in California on the night of the birth of our grandson, Ali. I then joined them to admire and salute the next incarnation of the dynasty, Insha Allah! We had a good time together in Castro Valley, California.

The biggest tragedy of the Utu boundary of the family (my wife's family) was the death of Pauline's sister at the age of forty. I woke up one morning in Binghamton to find Pauline in tears. Between sobs she explained to me what had happened – a sudden death, seemingly due to an asthma attack. Caroline left behind a widower and four children. Had Pauline not just arrived back from Nigeria herself, the temptation to fly home would have been great for her. But a second trip to Nigeria so soon would have disoriented our own small children (seven and eight years old) – whether Pauline left them behind with me and Goretti or took them with her to Nigeria. (Goretti is our Ugandan-Canadian friend who lives with us with her daughter, Maria).

We found other ways of consoling each other with the family in Jos – through telephone conversations and through gifts of bereavement in the usual African way.

Caroline's death was particularly poignant to us since we had seen her and her family just a few weeks earlier. In June I had taken Pauline, Farid and Harith to Jos and left them there. I arrived back in Jos in August in preparation for our departure. My children and Caroline's children spent many hours playing together. The shock was that much greater when we learnt of Caroline's death a few weeks after our departure. A special mass organized by Goretti Mugambwa for Caroline was held at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Binghamton. It was a great comfort for Pauline and me to see so many friends at the service in Binghamton.

However, the tragedy should not diminish the prior happiness. Pauline and our children were enthusiastically received by Caroline and her husband and by other members of the Nigerian family. Pauline's mother was already a familiar figure to our children because she had spent some nine months in Binghamton in the 1990s. Caroline's other siblings rose to the occasion, and especially Jane, her husband and her kids. (Incidentally, Jane has been spoiling me and all my five sons with splendid Nigerian shirts which she makes herself. She is a gifted dressmaker in Jos.)

Jane has had twins, who played well with our children in June, July and August 2000. Pauline herself is one of twins. The Uti's are a twin-oriented family. One reason why Pauline and I have not attempted to have a third child might have been a nervousness about getting twins. What if the third child was accompanied by the fourth child in the same package from the gracious stalk? Pauline's cousin Frank and his wife Shonett spent Christmas with us in Binghamton! Guess what? They had delightful twins – Chinelo and Chiwe - as well as Chioma, their first-born. The twins were so delightful that Pauline and I began to wonder whether or not we "should review the situation"!!

The Mazrui side of the family had an unusual reunion at the Georgetown Conference Center in Washington DC. I was a keynote speaker at a fundraising Ramadhan Iftar for the Centre for the Study of Islam and Democracy held at the Georgetown Center. The next day I was joined by my sons Jamal and Kim and by Molly (my first wife). It was a wonderful opportunity to catch up not only with each other's news, but also with each other's concerns! One of the highlights was a superb family dinner at an Indian Restaurant in Georgetown. India was a familiar cuisine-boundary in the Mazui family!

In American academia, a vital professional boundary is between the non-tenured and the tenured professors. Kim Forde-Mazrui, my third son, continued earnestly with his career as Associate Professor of law at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. In order to get tenure (permanent confirmation), law professors in the U.S.A. do not have to publish as much as professors in Political Science (in terms of quantity), but Kim has definitely embarked on an active publishing career. This has stood him in good stead in his tenure review. The tenure sub-committee has recommended him for tenure unanimously (9 to 0). The family is of course cheering him on! We are naturally optimistic that he will soon be confirmed by his Law School as a tenured (meaning permanent) professor. The law as a profession is perhaps part of Kim's bloodline. After all, my own father (his grand-Dad) was the Islamic Chief Justice of Kenya in the 1940s. Kim's grand-Dad also taught law - though more in the mosque than on campus. As if that was not history enough, Kim's university in Charlottesville, Virginia, was established by Thomas Jefferson, the main author of the American Declaration of Independence and the third president of the United States.

My nephew Alamin M. Mazrui (a professor at the Ohio State University) continued to collaborate with me on joint conference papers and joint articles. He went to Okinawa, Japan, on behalf of us both at a conference which linked religion with technological change. I went to the University of Westminster in London, on a comparable mission, again on behalf of us both. Our next joint article will probably be published in THE HARVARD INTERNATIONAL REVIEW. All three presentations are closely related, seeking to link religion, language and technology.

My first-born, Jamal Mazrui, continued to amaze people by being an expert on computers in spite of being blind. When somebody asks me to explain, I simply say “JAMAL-ENTARY, MY DEAR WATSON!” Remember Sherlock Holmes’ response? “Elementary, my dear Watson!”

For a boundary back into colonial history, I have been trying to persuade my elder brother, Harith A. Mazrui, to write his memoirs. His memories of Kenya’s colonial period would be particularly fascinating. Harith was a civil servant within the British colonial order, and rose quite high at the Kenya Coast. What he remembers about Provincial and District Commissioners during the colonial period, and about Liwalis, Mudirs and Kadhis (Coastal titles) could enrich our knowledge. Harith must hurry up before he gets too tired to put pen to paper or even to dictate for an hour at a time. He is a whole decade older than me. I have yet to convince him that memoirs are important.

II. A Centennial of Excellence

The novelist Chinua Achebe celebrated his seventieth birthday in the same year in which “PAN AFRICANISM” as an intercontinental concept celebrated its centennial

anniversary. Halfway through that century Chinua Achebe picked up his pen to start a manuscript pregnant with destiny. By 1958 THINGS FALL APART was in print, perhaps in perpetuity. I was privileged to participate in Achebe's 70th anniversary at Bard College in the State of New York, in November. The year 2000 did not only mark the conclusion of the second Christian millennium. It also marked a century of Pan Africanism.

It seems likely that the term "Pan Africanism" was born at a London Conference convened by H. Sylvester Williams, a Trinidadian lawyer, in July 1900. Africans who attended included those from Liberia, the Gold Coast, Ethiopia, and of course the African Diaspora in England, the Caribbean and North America. Out there in a British summer (probably rainy) the concept of Pan-Africanism was born. I returned to Sylvester Williams repeatedly in the course of my lectures in the year 2000.

A century is a border across time. Since Sylvester Williams, hundreds of African books have either celebrated Pan-Africanism or been influenced by it. These books have ranged from Nnamdi Azikiwe's **Renaissance Africa** (1937) to books of poetry affirming the virtues of Africanity and Negritude. I personally have added to this corpus of Africanist literature, for better or for worse!

There have also been books of the African experience rather than books of African solidarity. Among the best of these books which have explored the African experience are those which have come from the pen of Chinua Achebe. When the author of Renaissance Africa (Zik) met the author of Things Fall Apart (Achebe) at Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, in the 1990s, history came full circle – and became poetry. At the Achebe celebration I was on the same panel as Wole Soyinka and Ngugi wa

Thiong'o. Was each of us an echo of "Things Fall Apart"? Other long-lost friends at the Achebe celebration included Nuruddin Farah (just arrived from South Africa) and Niara Sudarkasa (just about to leave for South Africa)!!

But was the rest of the literary world paying attention in any case to the voices of Africa? Was anybody listening to us in the wider universe? In 1998 the Modern Library Board (Random House) in the USA chose the 100 great books in English of the 20th century and RANKED THEM. ULYSSES by James Joyce was ranked first and foremost. And THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS by Booth Tarkington was No. 100. The majority of the books were from the Commonwealth and almost all the rest from the United States.

No African novel in the English language made the first 100 - not even Chinua Achebe's work or the works of Nobel Laureates Wole Soyinka and Nadine Gordimer. Was this linguistic apartheid combined with racial apartheid? Not quite. While Africa was completely out of the league, the African Diaspora did make it. Ralph Ellison's INVISIBLE MAN made it for No. 19, Richard Wright's NATIVE SON made it as No. 20 and James Baldwin's GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN made it for No. 39.

Muslims like me were relieved that the list did not include Salman Rushdie's SATANIC VERSES, but the list did include Salman Rushdie's MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN (No. 90). Books about Africa by non-Africans which made the list included Joseph Conrad's HEART OF DARKNESS (No. 67) and V.S. Naipaul's A BEND IN THE RIVER (No. 83), both of which also feature in Commonwealth literature.

Should we be alarmed that none of the Great African writers had made the list of the top 100? It would have been nice if Chinua Achebe's novel THINGS FALL APART

(1958) was included in the list of the 100 top novels of the 20th century. It certainly deserved to be. Other Achebe enthusiasts might vote for ARROW OF GOD (1964) as Achebe's most profound novel. But none of his works made the list. Was this linguistic apartheid verging on the racial?

There was a consolation. The only authors who made the list of the top 100 of the century whose mother tongue was not English were Joseph Conrad, Vladimir Nabokov and Salman Rushdie. All the rest were native products of Anglo-Saxon linguistic culture in one degree or another. This included V.S. Naipaul. They were native speakers of English.

This means one of two things: either writing in English when English is not one's native language is a far bigger handicap than we had all assumed or that the judges of the top 100 novels of the 20th century were simply too Anglo-Saxonic themselves. On balance I prefer the latter explanation. The judges were probably too Anglo-Saxonic in their prejudices, even if some judges were from the wider Commonwealth.

Now Africans have embarked on our own search for 100 great African books of the last 100 years. The search was launched by the Zimbabwe International Book Fair in July 2000. The idea originally came from me in a speech I gave at the Zimbabwe Fair in 1998. The publishers decided to run with my idea. The Zimbabwe Book Fair invited me back to Zimbabwe in the year 2000 to launch the project.

The relevant languages of the competition are English, French Arabic, Portuguese, Afrikaans and African Languages. What have been the one hundred best African books of the last one hundred years in these languages?

The relevant type of books are fiction and non-fiction, poetry and prose.

Each nomination needs at least half a page making a case for it.

The measurement of greatness is either the quality of the work or the positive impact of the work. Those who go by quality may decide that Chinua Achebe's novel ARROW OF GOD (1964) is the highest among his works. Those who go by impact may decide that THINGS FALL APART (1958) has been the most influential.

In Western music those who go by quality believe that Beethoven's 9th Symphony is his best. Those who go by impact choose Beethoven's 5th Symphony whose influence has been not only on other Western composers but also on composers from other cultures, such as Muhammad Abdul Wahab of Egypt.

Those who go by profundity salute Kwame Nkrumah's CONSCIENCE. Those who go by impact would turn to Nkrumah's AFRICA MUST UNITE.

Our Project "AFRICA'S 100 GREAT BOOKS OF THE LAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS" invites volunteers from different African countries to responsibly encourage nominations of the best works from their countries, or authors of other African countries admired in their own societies. The Zimbabwe International Book Fair's email is:

zibf@samara.co.zw

Independent post colonial Ghana started off with a philosopher king Kwame Nkrumah, who still remains one of the two or three most prolific rulers that Africa has ever had. He remained a prolific writer both in office and out of power. I first met Nkrumah in New York in 1960 when I was still a graduate student. Even then we admired his writings, though they were then still few in number.

In post-colonial Africa the only other Heads of State in the same league as prolific authors were Senegal's Leopold S. Senghor and Tanzania's Julius K. Nyerere. Augustino

Nheto of Angola was more poetic than Nkrumah but less prolific. I met Senghor a number of times, and knew Julius Nyerere well. But I was never privileged to meet Nheto.

Kofi Abrefa Busia was also a philosopher-king in Ghana's post-colonial history. He was less prolific than Nkrumah but more of a scholar than Nkrumah. Busia and I were both molded by Oxford University. Busia became a professional politician and part-time scholar. I became a professional scholar and part-time politician.

One question arises whether the Busias are a literary dynasty – a bloodline of multiple authors. Do they constitute a lineage of literature, a dynasty of the Muse?

III. Africa's Dynasties of the Muse

One measurement of the consolidation of the written tradition in Africa is indeed the emergence of writers in the same family across more than one generation. The Busias in Ghana have been developing into a literary dynasty in that sense – and they are not the only ones in post-colonial Africa.

Along the East African Coast, dynasties of poetry have a long history across generations. Lamu in Kenya is the Garden of Eden of the Swahili language and certainly the fountain of the very best of classical Swahili poetry. To the present day one discovers among Lamu families both men and women who are descended from many generations of poets. A bloodline of poetry?

Somalia --- despite all its agonies, and sometimes because of its anguish – is a nation of poets. In the history of Somalia their Shakespeare was fused with their Winston Churchill in Seyyid Muhammad Abdilleh Hassan. In a fit of self recognition the mad

British called him “ the Mad Mullah”. (“Mad Dogs and Englishmen go out in the mid-day sun”)

With regard to literary dynasties in prose in East Africa, let me refer you to a puzzling anecdote about my own bloodline, the Mazrui. Two Western scholars, R.S. O’Faley and Ann Biersteker, were working in 1999 on the Writings of the Muslim Peoples of Eastern Africa. Their chapter 6 discussed the Mazrui family, examining our history briefly from 1698, and studying our writings from 1840. These included the works of my father, my grandfather and my great grandfather. The authors also planned to include the works of my nephew, Professor Alamin M. Mazrui.

Quite surprisingly, what the authors were not planning to include was any reference to the works of Ali A. Mazrui. I did not mind whether they included me or not. I assumed they were either overwhelmed by the magnitude of the output, or had a specific disqualification in mind. What was the flaw in this interrupted bloodline?

Had Ali A. Mazrui been excluded because he wrote primarily in a European language whereas the Mazruis they had chosen had written in either Kiswahili or Arabic? When I raised the language question, I was told that that was not the issue.

Did the authors think I was an American and no longer qualified as an East African? But the earliest year I could have become an American was about 1980, when I had already published about ten books and about a hundred articles. Why did they not include those pre-American books at least?

In any case, I have never been an American in that legal sense, although I have fathered five US citizens! I have always been a Kenyan. So why was I not included

among the chosen Mazrui of R.S. O' Fahey and Ann Biersteker? (I regard myself as an American African, which is different from an African American.)!

Whether Ali A. Mazrui is included or not, does the Mazrui family constitute a literary dynasty in prose for East Africa?

Although my father died as far back as 1947, his book, THE HISTORY OF THE MAZRUI DYNASTY OF MOMBASA, was published by Oxford University Press and sponsored by the British Academy as recently as 1995/6 (translated from the Arabic and annotated by J. Mc L. Ritchie). Even from his grave my Old Man seems to be still publishing! Not "publish or perish" but "perish and continue to publish"! My Old Man is defining ultimate borders, God bless him.

IV. Libya: Between Pan-Africanism and Pan-Arabism

When I was in Libya as a guest of the African Center for Applied Research (ACARTSOD) I was told that there was a possibility that the Libyan Leader, Muammar Qaddafi, would give me an audience. But the leader went further than that. He invited me to dinner at his famous tent. His other guest for that evening was a Minister of Defence from a Francophone West African country. Three languages were in use in the course of the dinner – the Libyan Leader used Arabic, the West African Minister used French and I used English. There were two interpreters by the side of the dining table. The food was excellent, and the flow of conversation was smoother than one might expect. The whole visit to the Tent lasted some three hours.

Libya cuts across Arab, Islamic and African boundaries. The Libyan leader had been briefed about the controversy in the United States which had accompanied my

television series, The Africans: A Triple Heritage, when it was first shown in 1986. It had been Lynne Cheney, the wife of Dick Cheney, who had first blown the right-wing whistle against my television series. When I was dining with Qaddafi in October 2000, George W. Bush had already chosen Dick Cheney as his running mate in the U.S. presidential elections. But at the time Lynne Cheney was denouncing my TV series in 1986 she was head of the National Endowment for the Humanities and her husband was the Secretary of Defense in the administration of George Bush Senior.

What did Lynne Cheney have against The Africans: A Triple Heritage? She described it as 'pro-Qaddafi and anti American.' In reality the TV series devoted only about three minutes to Qaddafi in nine hours of television! But that was enough to arouse the ire of the Cheneys' in 1986! Mrs. Cheney demanded the removal of the name of the National Endowment for the Humanities from the credits, although the Endowment had contributed some \$600,000 to the making of The Africans. She stopped short of demanding the money back, which would have plunged the Endowment into an acrimonious and professionally damaging law suit.

In population, Libya was small. But was it crossing international boundaries in a dangerous way? My TV sequence about Qaddafi caused problems for the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) in the US. The producing channel in Washington DC asked me to make my commentary on Qaddafi more of a denunciation than I had done in my original BBC version. I declined to change my commentary. Then I was asked if we should remove the pictures which humanized Qaddafi, such as the leader visiting a hospital or playing with a child. I objected to purposeful dehumanization of Qaddafi's image. A third proposal was whether we should add negative pictures to the sequence

about Qaddafi. The relevant PBS channel finally added a picture entitled "ROME AFTER A TERRORIST ATTACK" but without specific attribution of the attack to Qaddafi. This is the version which went out U.S. television viewers, but the picture of "Rome after a Terrorist Attack" did not go out to any other viewers in the world, whose version came from the BBC, London.

In Tripoli at dinner I crossed boundaries between Africa and the West. We recapitulated this entire 1986 story when I was having dinner with Muammar Qaddafi in October 2000 in his tent in Tripoli. Yes, talk of crossing boundaries!! Qaddafi was quite amused – until I mentioned the unkindest cut of all! This twist in the story was what fellow Arabs had done to my sequence about him when they got hold of it!

The Africans: A Triple Heritage was translated into Arabic outside Libya. Whoever was responsible for the Arabic version deleted the entire sequence about Qaddafi altogether. While Americans had debated with me about whether my commentary should be more hostile, or my pictures less friendly towards Qaddafi, those in charge of the Arabic version were more drastic – they deleted Qaddafi altogether!!

When we got to this point in the dinner conversation, Qaddafi regarded it as further vindication for his decision to demote Pan-Arabism as a plank of Libya's foreign policy. His original decision to demote Pan-Arabism was because fellow Arabs had abandoned him to swing against the winds of the United Nations' sanctions sponsored by the United States and Great Britain. The sanctions had been imposed because the United States and Britain especially regarded Libya as the culprit behind the bombing of the Pan-American airline over Lockerbie in Scotland in December 1988.

It was African States and the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U.) which came to the rescue of Libya. By the last year of the 20th Century the African members of the O.A.U. were no longer convinced of the fairness of the UN sanctions against Libya, and threatened to ignore them if they were not lifted. This ominous possibility accelerated the quest for solutions to the crisis. The West at last agreed that the two Libyan Lockerbie suspects could be tried by a Scottish court located outside Britain. Nelson Mandela eased the process of resolution. The UN sanctions were suspended. Libya's Pan-Africanism shot up, while Libya's Pan-Arabism drastically declined.

In my dinner conversation with the Libyan leader I referred to my trans-boundary concept of "AFRABIA", which was an attempt to come to grips with the implications of the fact that Africa itself was an Afro-Arab continent – with the O.A.U. consisting of both Black African members and Arab members. I am also on record in my plea that the Arabian peninsula should be regarded as part of Africa for geological, cultural, linguistic and religious reasons. I made that case in The Africans: A Triple Heritage (both the book and the television series).

In a trans-boundary ambition, I suggested to the Libyan leader that perhaps Pan-Africanism and Pan-Arabism should be forces in alliance rather than forces in rivalry. Before the evening was over he seemed to share that vision. We were jointly exploring boundaries of convergence rather than boundaries of divergence. Between Arabs and Africans the bloodline was never entirely absent.

In the course of the evening we also discussed language as a different kind of boundary of communication. Muammar Qaddafi was convinced that every African child should be required to learn three languages apart from the child's mother tongue. The

three continent-wide languages should be English, French and Arabic (the three languages of our dinner party). We discussed how children in Switzerland were expected to learn German, French and Italian – with English as the preferred foreign language. Why should not the children of Africa learn English, French and Arabic – with their mother tongue as the fourth language where appropriate? It could help soften the boundaries between African states.

I drew the Libyan leader's attention to the fact that his vision had omitted Portuguese. He felt that his linguistic vision for Africa should not impose too many foreign languages on Africa's children. In agreement, I offered the statistic that there were more speakers of Kiswahili, Hausa and Yoruba separately in Africa than there were speakers of Portuguese. Perhaps Portuguese-speakers were also outnumbered by speakers of Amharic and Igbo. At their most expressive these were boundaries of bombast and the Muse rather than of blood and the womb. But as a strategy of region-building, and the consolidation of Pan-Africanism, was Qaddafi justified to espouse a continent-wide language policy even if he himself had not approximated it? Was Qaddafi ahead of his own bureaucracy in implementation?

Partly in response to the West African Minister's concerns, we also discussed Muammar Qaddafi's shift from a policy of exporting revolution to a policy of exporting peace. His involvement in the Philippines at the time was in the direction of promoting peace between the Muslim separatists and the Central Government. Quaddafi's role in the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone had also been in the direction of seeking a peaceful solution to those conflagrations. Libya also tried to make its good offices available for Ethiopia and Eritrea in their fratricidal military confrontation. Quaddafi in

the year 2000 was consciously seeking a reputation as peacemaker, rather than an exporter of revolution.

Whether Muammar Quaddafi can sustain for long such a major shift in orientation from revolution to peace-making is something which remains to be studied and observed with care. Can he be a peacemaker abroad while oppressing his own people at home? Is the gun in domestic policy compatible with the olive tree in foreign policy?

At home in Libya Muammar Quaddafi was faced with a deteriorating confrontation also between Libyans and sub-Saharan Black Africans working in Libya. Their relations had been deteriorating drastically between 1998 and the year 2000. Talking to sub-Saharan Africans who were working in Libya when I visited, I was told that one cause of the tension was ironically that Qaddafi's Pan-Africanism was too far ahead of the opinions of his own population. Many Libyans resented the resources which Qaddafi was devoting to Black causes seemingly at the expense of Arab causes. United Nations' sanctions on Libya over the Lockerbie affair had hurt the living standards of ordinary Libyans. Looking for scapegoats, they sometimes turned on the foreigners in their midst – especially non-Arab foreigners.

And yet Qaddafi realized it was Black Africans more than the Arab brothers who had turned against the United Nations' sanctions over Lockerbie. For once the leader was truly more sensitive to the fundamental forces than his population. Ordinary Libyans turned against Black Africans while Qaddafi tried to lead a movement towards continental African Union.

V. Nkumba, Harvard and the House of Lords

In the course of the year 2000, I was honoured by one of the youngest institutions in Africa. I was also honoured by one of the oldest institutions in the Western world.

The young African institution was Nkumba University in Entebbe, Uganda. Nkumba is the first private university in Uganda which is completely secular. Earlier private universities in Uganda were denominational (Catholic, Protestant or Muslim).

The Vice Chancellor of Nkumba University in the year 2000 was Professor Senteza Kajubi, who had once served as Vice-Chancellor of Makerere University, the premier institution of higher learning in the country. The Chancellor of Nkumba University in the year 2000 was Dr. Suleiman Kiggundu, former Governor of the Bank of Uganda and one of the most distinguished economists of the country.

How did Nkumba University honor me in the year 2000? At their third graduation ceremony they awarded me the Doctor of Letters with all the pomp and ceremony. Although Nkumba University did not realize it, they were in reality the first African University to honor me with a *doctorate honoris causa*. I was delighted that my first honorary degree in Africa was awarded in Uganda! An old frontier revisited!

Some would say that ideally my first honorary degree should have been awarded by Makerere University (the cradle of my professorial career). But the people who gave me the honour at Nkumba University were formerly at Makerere. In any case, Makerere is free to consider its options for the year 2003 (the 40th anniversary of my joining Makerere) or the year 2005 (the 40th anniversary of my becoming a full professor at Makerere)!!

Deeply honoured as I was in the year 2000 by one of Africa's youngest institutions, I was also honoured in the same year by the House of Lords, London, one of the oldest institutions of the Western world. The initiative was taken by Lord Ahmed of Rotherham, probably the first Muslim member of the House of Lords. Lord Ahmed decided on a celebration of my writings within the House of Lords. The keynote speakers were himself, Chief Emeka Anyaoku (former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth) and General Yakubu Gowon (former Head of State of Nigeria). The longest distance had been covered by Abdul S. Bemath, who had traveled from South Africa to attend the ceremony at the House of Lords.

General Gowon read out to the audience a special tribute to me from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan. Lord Ahmed read to the audience a special tribute to me from the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Salim Ahmed Salim. Baroness Uddin of Bethnal Green spoke on behalf of her fellow members of the House of Lords, and congratulated me on my "gender sensitive writings". Fuad Nahdi did not utter a word, yet without his organizing skills the event might not have occurred at all.

Other tributes to me in the House of Lords came from such organizations as the British Association of Islamic Social Sciences and such individual scholars as Mohamed Bakari (Turkey), Colin Leys and Margaret MacPherson (U.K.), and Christopher Davis and Taha Jaber Alalwani (USA). Olara Otunnu, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, sent his tribute from the battlefields of Afghanistan!

The third significant honour in the year 2000 were the three McMillan-Stewart Lectures that I delivered at Harvard University under the auspices of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute and under the Chairmanship of Henry Louis Gates Jr. (Skip Gates to his friends).

I had been invited by Skip Gates to give these lectures many months before he and I publicly disagreed about his television series "WONDERS OF THE AFRICAN WORLD". After I had attacked his TV series, was Skip Gates going to dis-invite me from giving the McMillan-Stewart lectures of the year 2000? Afterall, thousands of dollars were involved. Was Skip Gates going to punish me for leading the pack against his own TV Series?

In reality Skip Gates scrupulously played according to the rules of the game and encouraged other players to be similarly "constitutional". He was a most courteous host at Harvard. What is more, he was genuinely friendly.

My Harvard lectures were entitled "THE AFRICAN CONDITION AND THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: A TALE OF TWO EDENS." My three lectures may be published by Oxford University Press, hopefully in the year 2001. The lectures are partly about the bloodline - - and about boundaries of space and time in the Black experience.

VI. Between Tutu and the Tutsi

But in the year 2000 I was not only receiving tributes – I was also paying them. Particularly memorable was my modest role in awarding the Delta Award for Global Understanding to Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The money for this annual award comes from Delta Airline, but the selection is made by the University of Georgia, complete with a special Board created by the University. I am proud to say that I serve on that Board.

In 1999 we awarded the Delta prize to former President Jimmy Carter and Mrs. Carter; in the year 2000 we awarded the Delta Prize to Archbishop Desmond Tutu; and in the year 2001 we are awarding it to Mikhail Gorbachev. The awards are presented in Atlanta, Georgia.

In the case of the Prize to Archbishop Tutu I played one additional role – I gave the keynote address about him at the symposium in his honour on the day of the award. My comparison of Tutu with Martin Luther King Jr. as “the black world’s most famous moral activists of the last one hundred years” received substantial publicity in parts of Africa.

In the year 2000 I and my Africana colleagues were also delighted to welcome the Archbishop to Cornell University at long last. We, at Cornell, had been trying for years to get him to come.

Talking of tributes and counter-tributes, every year there is a “Mazruiana event” which has now become virtually institutionalized at Cornell University, led by the Institute for African Development (IAD) and supported by the Africana Studies and Research Center at the University (ASRC). Every year the IAD at Cornell hosts “an Evening with Ali Mazrui”. Those who come are encouraged to arrive with an African dish to contribute to the evening’s banquet, but it is not a condition. There is usually plenty of food to go around.

After the feasting I then stand up to address some African issue of the day. In the past, such topics have included President Bill Clinton’s tour of Africa, or the NATO war in Kosovo as contrasted with Western apathy towards the Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda, or race and land reform in Zimbabwe. Nothing is more flattering than an annual event at

a distinguished university like Cornell entitled "AN EVENING WITH ALI MAZRUI." God bless all those who organize this salute annually – especially Dr. Joan Mulondo and Dr. David Lewis of the IAD at Cornell.

A final word of gratitude for all those who have honoured me must include those who have changed their travel itineraries at considerable inconvenience to include a visit to Binghamton to see me. In the year 2000 such people included the distinguished political scientist from India, Professor Rajni Kothari, who went out of his way during a brief visit to the United States to include visiting me in Binghamton. In the year 2000 we were also delighted to welcome to Binghamton the distinguished Egyptian scholar, Dr. Nasr Arif, who came specially to bid me farewell on his way back to the Middle East after his temporary period in the United States.

Some old friends who modified their travel arrangements to visit me in Binghamton included William P. Mayaka, who had just retired as a Permanent Secretary in the Civil Service of Kenya, and Abdalla Bujra, who had served as Chief Executive Officer of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities appointed by the Heads of State of Africa to investigate the anti-Tutsi genocide in Rwanda in 1994. In the year 2000 the International Panel issued their devastating report entitled RWANDA: THE PREVENTABLE GENOCIDE. In 1994 Africa had indeed witnessed the politics of the bloodline on their most horrendous scale.

Researchers who made a special effort to contact me at Binghamton included Dr. Chris Kifindi-Bunketti with his fascinating concerns about Congo (Kinshasa) and its neighbours. The cultures of the Great Lakes Region featured large in his research agenda.

VII. Crossing Boundaries in Nigeria

In the year 2000 I spent more time in Nigeria than in any other African country. (So what else is new?). I kept on going in and out of the country, but under different Nigerian auspices.

While this going in and out of the country was indeed a literal form of crossing borders, much more significant were the other borders that I crossed when I was within Nigeria. On my first visit in March 2000 one border that I crossed was between the economic and political condition of Nigeria. My official hosts were the First Securities Discount, who were involved in banking and investments. My topic was itself a trans-boundary theme in political economy – “Economic Development and Political Reforms in an Emerging Democracy: The Case of Nigeria”. The Bello-Osagie family could not have been more charming and protective.

Attendance at the lecture was relatively modest, perhaps partly because the Mazrui Seminar was advertised as “ATTENDANCE STRICTLY BY INVITATION ONLY”.

On the other hand, perhaps no lecture I have ever given in Africa has ever got more newspaper publicity than this one – with the possible exception of my Anniversary Lecture for THE GUARDIAN newspaper in Lagos in 1991! In the year 2000 the First-Securities House Managing Director, Rilwan Bello-Osagie, succeeded in mobilizing the print media of Nigeria to cover extensively what I had to say about politics and economics.

On my next visit to Nigeria my hosts were the Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization in Lagos. This was the first time that the Centre had covered both cities

with one lecturer. Within the two lectures I grappled with issues of conflict of civilizations and prospects for an African Renaissance.

Yet ironically the most irrepressible conflict at both lectures was not between whole civilizations but between Wole Soyinka and myself!! Questions from the audience and preliminary speakers at the outset kept on referring to the brutal Internet exchange between Soyinka and myself, ostensibly disagreeing about Skip Gates' television series, "WONDERS OF THE AFRICAN WORLD". Nigerians were disturbed that two senior African intellectuals should be abusing each other in public. Quite frankly, I agreed with our critics. The brutal Internet exchange between Wole and myself was not of my choosing. One of President Olusegun Obasanjo's advisers reprimanded Wole and me publicly at one of my lectures.

At Chinua Achebe's 70th Birthday extravaganza at Bard College in New York State, Wole Soyinka and I were put on the same panel, as I have indicated earlier. This was the nearest Wole and I had come to mutual civility. Skip Gates might have torn Wole and I apart; Chinua Achebe was bringing us together. Skip could not be blamed for the tension; but could Achebe be credited with the healing?

My third visit to Nigeria crossed other borders altogether. Originally my Institute of Global Cultural Studies (IGCS) and Jonah Isawa Elaigwu's Institute of Governance and Social Research (IGSR) had wanted to bring together the military in Latin America with the military in Nigeria to exchange views on "Civil-Military Relations and the Politics of Democratization".

My colleague, Dr. Ricardo Laremont, and Dr. Jonah Elaigwu, together convinced the Ford Foundation to finance such a get-together among Nigerians,

Brazilians and Argentineans on civil-military relations. The conference was held in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria.

While the Atlantic border between Africa and Latin America was indeed fascinating, much more impressive was the breaking down of barriers between the military and the civilian politicians among Nigerians themselves. Our conference in Abuja turned out to be the first-major exchange of views between the military and parliamentarians in Nigeria since democracy was restored the year before. Ultimately this was a trans-boundary crossing between soldiers and civilians.

My fourth boundary that I had to cross within Nigeria was between the secular and the religious. In Kano I gave a lecture at Bayero University. While in my March lecture in Lagos for the First Securities Discount House I had poor attendance at the lecture but highly sophisticated newspaper coverage; my lecture in August in Kano had a vast and overflowing audience but inadequate control over the print media.

In Kano I had crowds running after me and demanding photo-opportunities. The audience at the lecture was vast. And yet the newspaper coverage was so poor that earlier reports alleged that I had used the occasion to urge Northern Nigerians to rebel against their increasing marginalization. Let me now turn to these allegations.

VIII. Nigeria, Religion and I

I have always had a high regard for the Nigerian Press. Even under the difficult conditions of the military dictatorship of General Sani Abacha, the Nigerian Press remained perhaps the liveliest and most independent in Africa.

But the Nigerian Press sometimes goes over the rails. This time I was one of the casualties of such excess. It is totally untrue that in my lecture at Bayero University in Kano in August I described the shift of political power to the South as "a terrible blunder committed by the North." That would have meant that I disapproved of Northerners voting for a Southern Presidential candidate. Nothing could be further from my point of view. I have always believed in one Nigeria, and I also believe in democracy. Voting across ethnic, religious and regional lines is healthy for Nigerian democracy. President-Elect Olusegun Obasanjo must have known that when he urgently invited me to come to Abuja in May 1999 to address the President-Elect's new legislators about "Development and Good Governance". I spoke before President-Elect Obasanjo and his political party on that subject within days of his Inauguration as Head of State in May 1999.

General Obasanjo and I had known each other for many years, and I was one of those who had publicly protested his imprisonment under Sani Abacha. Why should I have begrudged him the votes of his Northern compatriots in 1999? Democracy is a matter of free choice and free rotation of power. A healthy democracy involves crossing electoral borders.

My lecture at Bayero University did have a huge and enthusiastic audience. The university was very gracious and the audience very responsible. One or two of the questions asked by students at the end were, however, truly angry that "the Northern elites had surrendered power to the South" and that this was a great "blunder". I said something to the effect that there was nothing wrong with surrendering power to the winners in a democracy. Even if power had crossed the North-South border, the Obasanjo administration had only had fourteen months in office, and it was too early to

judge whether or not Obasanjo was good for the North and the country at large. I believe the Bayero proceedings were recorded, and therefore my general position can be ascertained.

All this came out in questions and answers and was not part of my main lecture at Bayero. The central thesis of my lecture was that redistributing political power in Nigeria was not enough; we also needed to share more equitably economic prosperity and economic skills. The North in Nigeria continues to be economically disadvantaged even now that political power is being more democratically redistributed. Solving regional political inequalities (previously favouring the North) without solving regional economic inequalities (continuously favouring the South) is a prescription for further instability.

Incidentally, this is a position which I first articulated when I was a guest of Southerners in Lagos in March 2000. My position was widely publicized at the time. Just because I was now saying the same thing to a Northern audience in August 2000 did not justify the distortions of my position by sections of the Nigerian Press.

I make no apology for my being a Muslim, but most Nigerians who know me personally know that I am a cultural bridge-builder. My only novel, The Trial of Christopher Okigbo, was published some twenty years ago. It is a classic case of cultural bridge-building. Bridges cut across borders. The publishers, Heinemann Educational, sent the manuscript in 1969 to Chinua Achebe (before publication) since Achebe was a special Editor of the Heinemann African Writers' Series. Although the book was about the Nigerian civil war, and Achebe's people were being damaged by the war, Achebe did not find my approach offensive to the Igbo. The civil war was about national borders, but my novel was in part a bridge.

Today I am married to a Nigerian who comes from a Christian tradition. What is more, her father was killed in the Northern anti-Igbo riots of 1966. The remarkable thing is not that I am married into a Christian family, but that she is strong enough to be married into a Muslim family. Our families on both sides are cultural bridge-builders. We would like all Nigerians and all Africans to be ecumenical across the religious line and to become Pan-African across the ethnic and national boundaries. Two of my children are Nigerians, by my Nigerian wife, Pauline. All my in-laws are Christians. All the in-laws of Pauline are Muslims.

Yet, in the United States I am nevertheless the founder-Chair of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy in Washington, D.C.. And, in Britain, I am a member of the Board of Trustees of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Oxford, England, having been elected unanimously. In Washington I have been a member of the Board of the American Muslim Council for years. In California I have collaborated extensively with the Council on Islamic Education.

I am also a member of the Council of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.. I was confirmed by a Roman Catholic Dean.

What all this tells us is that I can be ecumenical and a Muslim at the same time; that I can be an African cultural bridge-builder and loyal to my own Muslim upbringing. I recognize borders but I do not regard them as impenetrable.

Apart from Wole Soyinka and his peculiarities, most Nigerians who know me have accepted me on that ecumenical basis. Every time I have visited Nigeria they have

helped me feel truly Nigerian. I am an African child of a mountain called Kenya, a river called Niger, and a lake called Victoria.

No mistaken reporter, however well-meaning, should be allowed to destroy these ideals. The Press has been my friend most of the time. But its power to destroy reputations unfairly must always be kept in check. That is perhaps what democracy is partly about -- reconciling Press freedom with individual justice.

IX. From Robert Mugabe to the Washington Summit

Let me now turn to issues of freedom elsewhere in Africa. When I met President Robert Mugabe in August 2000, I reminded him of a conversation he and I had had in the 1980's. In those earlier years of Zimbabwe's independence, white racism was still often overt. In major restaurants in Harare it was not uncommon to hear white customers abuse Black waiters in racist terms. I therefore had occasion to say to President Mugabe in the 1980s' "I have heard more racist remarks in Harare in one week than I normally hear in the United States in a year. Why do you permit it?"

The Robert Mugabe of the 1980s' answered as follows: "There are two ways of improving the behaviour of people short of using force. One way is by constructive persuasion; the other is by positive example. In the new Zimbabwe we shall try those two methods first."

By the year 2000 had Robert Mugabe changed his mind? When we met again at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair in August 2000, I asked him why he was using violence by proxy as a method of land reform? Even if he felt force was necessary in order to redistribute European-held land to African farmers, why had he not used the

power of the state directly, instead of letting loose violent ex-combatants onto the farms of Europeans? Why had he not simply nationalized the particular European-owned land, and then redistributed it to African peasant-farmers?

President Mugabe pointed out that my question was based on the assumption that the veterans and freedom-fighters (ex-combatants) had invaded European farms on his orders. Dr. Mugabe insisted that the veterans had taken the initiative themselves. He as Head of Government had therefore been faced with the following choices:

- either send the Police to expel the veterans from the European farms at the risk that the Police would be overwhelmed and humiliated;
- or order the Zimbabwe army to oust the veterans at the risk that the army might either refuse (and thus mutiny) or obey the order and cause a blood-bath;
- or support the veterans since their cause of land reform was just even if their methods of forceful occupation were unorthodox.

President Mugabe spoke forcefully. I was moved by his eloquence, but I was not convinced that the organs of the state were impotent in the face of the initiative by the veterans. After all, the power of the state consisted of carrots as well as the stick. The Zimbabwe state could have reasserted its authority, upheld the law, and still taken steps towards a more just basis of land redistribution. However, I was delighted to have had another discussion with Robert Mugabe in the changing circumstances of his country.

It was a privilege to meet other prominent Zimbabweans, including my old friend Nathan Shamuyarira (former Foreign Minister) whose family entertained me to dinner.

Yash Tandon, a former colleague from my Uganda years, and his wife Mary were also most gracious.

Having engaged in political discourse in Nigeria, Libya and Zimbabwe was I also politically engaged in the country of my birth, Kenya, which I visited in October? Quite frankly, I was quite appalled by the worsening economic and environmental situation in Kenya. In more than twenty years in power the Moi regime had done incalculable harm. There were terrible shortages of water and electricity in Nairobi and Mombasa, and the threat of famine in other parts of the country.

This was the period when there was rioting and civil disobedience in Europe over the price of oil and petrol. I called a Press Conference in Mombasa and urged Kenyans to follow the Europeans' rebellious example. I argued that it was time for Gandhian-style civil disobedience in the streets of Nairobi and Mombasa demanding better standards of governance and accountability.

On the positive side, I was delighted that the Kenyan Press was now open enough to publish even such a provocative clarion call for pro-democracy civil disobedience. On the negative side there were the usual snide remarks against me from spokesmen of the government and the governing party. More numerous were the cartoons at my expense! Basically the Kenyan cartoonists portrayed me as an orator standing near an aeroplane urging Kenyans to rebel, as I was boarding a plane to return to the United States!

As most cartoons anywhere in the world, these had a germ of truth! But I hope some Kenyans gave me credit for caring enough about Kenya to stick my neck out on Kenyan soil! Many Kenyan intellectuals resident in Kenya were far less vocal in defending the rights of the Kenyan people.

My role as a Kenyan within the United States was a little different. I joined forces with other Kenyans on the east coast of the United States to try and raise money for famine relief in Kenya. And as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Summit on Africa, I participated behind the scenes in the preparation for welcoming both Kenya's President Daniel arap Moi and the American President Bill Clinton to the National Summit. These two presidents were the only Heads of State who attended the National Summit on Africa in Washington D.C., in February 2000.

X. Between the Personal and Princely: A Conclusion

Prior to the National Summit on Africa I participated in a televised Roundtable Discussion, moderated by Charlyne Hunter-Gault, South Africa's Bureau Chief for CNN. In addition to Charlyne and myself the panel consisted of Andrew Young, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations; Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, former presidential candidate against Charles Taylor in the 1997 Liberian elections; Paul Simon, former U.S. Senator for Illinois; Susan E. Rice, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs under President Bill Clinton; and Lord David Owen, former Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom and a major figure in European diplomacy over Bosnia in the 1990s. The Roundtable Discussion had its moments of high drama and controversy -- as it roamed over issues which ranged from debt relief to reparations for Black enslavement; from the Clinton administration's attitude to genocide in Rwanda in 1994 to the NATO war in Kosovo in 1999. Ethnic cleansing was the politics of the bloodline gone mad!

The Roundtable Discussion was before a large live audience. It was televised on C-Span soon after, and has since been distributed as a video by the Southern Center for International Studies, Atlanta, Georgia.

In the year 2000, I was also involved with another African Head of State. However, this one was deceased and greatly missed. I am referring to the memory of Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, the Founder-President of Tanzania, who died in 1999 – just a few months short of the new millennium. Since he died I have been called upon repeatedly to reflect on his significance for post-colonial African history. In the United States I have lectured about Julius K. Nyerere from Cornell New York to Columbus, Ohio. On the radio I have discussed him on the Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Corporation. In newspapers I have analyzed him in the Sunday Nation (Nairobi), Business Week (Dar es Salaam) and elsewhere.

In the year 2000 there was also the lecture that I gave at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, in Canada, sponsored by the Friends of Makerere in Canada. Indeed, the Friends of Makerere in Canada is an organization. It was launching with me what was intended to be an annual lecture named after Nyerere. Julius K. Nyerere will forever remain one of the most distinguished alumni of Makerere University in Uganda. Makerere was honouring him in Canada.

You will remember that in 1999 I had been involved in issues of monarchy (hereditary privilege) and debates about slavery (hereditary servitude). Heredity is the bloodline of inheritance. Some of that dichotomy was carried over into the year 2000. At the University of Liverpool in Britain, I was able to discuss afresh the issue of slavery in the Black experience. Indeed, Liverpool is one of the historic ports for the trans-

Atlantic slave trade, and one of the few places in the Western world which have acknowledged that role with a special museum on the slave trade.

Prior to Liverpool I had participated in West Virginia in a conference concerning a slave-ship called the Henrietta-Marie, the only slave ship whose remains were discovered within the territorial waters of the United States. My presentation at this conference raised the issue of whether the entire origins of the United States were a tale of two ships – the slave ship and the Mayflower.

Later in the year I was in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to discuss the issue of reparations for Black enslavement and exploitation. Professor Jacob Ade Ajayi of Nigeria, Ambassador Dudley Thompson of Jamaica and myself are among members of the Group of Eminent Persons appointed by the summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1992 to embark on a crusade for reparations. In the year 2000 we were at the OAU headquarters to take stock and plan the next phase of the crusade. My stay in Ethiopia was enriched by my old friend, Abdalla Bujra, who virtually co-hosted my visit. My only regret was not being able to get together with the OAU Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim – also an old friend. Our schedules could not be synchronized in Addis Ababa.

On the monarchical side in the year 2000 my newest Royal encounter was Prince Hassan Ibn Talal of Jordan, the brother of the late King Hussein of Jordan and the Uncle of the present King Abdullah. Prince Hassan graced our 7th Congress of the International Association of Middle Eastern Studies (IAMES), which was held in Berlin, Germany, in October 2000, and co-sponsored by the Free University of Berlin. As one of the senior members of the Association, I played host to the Prince at his lecture and at the

luncheon. Once again Prince Hassan won the hearts of his hosts by his informality and charm.

The politics of the bloodline affected my family also in the year 2000. Since I am also descended from a ruling family (the Mazrui) in East Africa, some of my critics elsewhere assumed that I had succeeded in the academic field because of family connections! This issue was raised in some of the Internet debates among East Africans such as the “MWANANCHI” Internet Circle. Was Ali Mazrui famous because of his ancestral bloodline connections?

I had to point out on the Internet that by the time I was growing up the Mazrui family was neither politically powerful nor economically affluent. My academic rise was on the basis of scholarships – a Kenyan government scholarship (BA), a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship (MA), and the Oxford University (Nuffield) Studentship (D.Phil.). My professional rise and academic ascent had nothing to do with family connections or my bloodline. Let us hope the rise was due in part to hard work and serious application. It was also due to good luck, as so often happens.

The struggle continues in the search for the ultimate equilibrium between the claims of merit and the demands of justice in our professional performance. And in the wider world a new accommodation is needed between the bonds of shared boundaries, the frontiers of shared freedom, and the parameters of shared partnership.

APPENDIX

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF PROF ALI MAZRUI

PROFESSOR ALI AL-AMIN MARUI, A LEADING AFRICAN ACADEMIC AND INTELLECTUAL, MADE HISTORY ON WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE 2000 BY BECOMING THE FIRST AFRICAN TO LAUNCH A BOOK AND ADDRESS A DISTINGUISHED AUDIENCE AT THE MOSES ROOM, HOUSE OF LORDS.

If the Moses Room in the House of Lords can hold one hundred guests then Lord Ahmed's enthusiasm could easily to accomodate many more. It was a unique celebration of a great African thinker and intellect but judging from the nationalities of the crowd it was clear that Prof Mazrui's appeal extends far beyond his native continent. A

former graduate from Oxford University he was received back in England with a warm and hearty welcome.

One thing that became apparent in the historic evening was that Prof Mazrui had won not just the minds but also the hearts of those who have valued his immense contribution to the study of Africa and its people. What

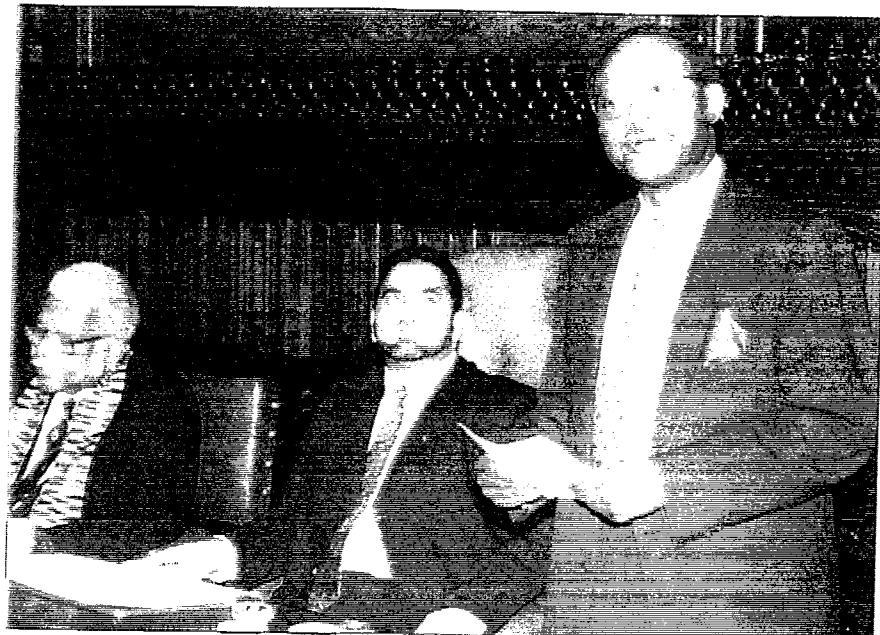
united the many respected figures paying tribute to the Professor was their genuine respect for him not just as an academic but as a compassionate human being. It is this deep passion that Prof Mazrui has for the African people and humanity at large that is evident in both his writings and his persona.

The evening function at the House of Lords was a well

deserved tribute to a man held in high esteem by many people the world over. Lord Ahmed's warm reception for Prof Mazrui was a memorable gesture which conveyed the powerful message lying at the heart of Prof Mazrui's work, that people from different continents are united by something much greater.



Prof Mazrui is awarded for his distinguished academic achievement by Dr Anas Shaikh Ali, Chairman of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists



Chief Emeka Anyaoku pays a special tribute to the Professor



Lord Ahmed: Will your next book be on Kashmir?



His Excellency Dr Yakubu Gowon reads a speech by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who could not attend in person



Baroness Uddin congratulates Professor Mazrui on his gender sensitive writings



HONOURING MAZRUI, HONOURING AFRICA

TRIBUTE: LORD AHMED OF ROTHERHAM

Your Excellency, Dr Yakubu Gowon, M'lords, Your Excellencies, friends. It is my pleasant duty this afternoon to welcome all of you to the House of Lords. It is also my privilege to host this historic event which is to honour Prof Ali Mazrui, one of the most renowned scholars of our time.

Today is a proud, joyous and historic moment for Africa. Prof Ali Al-Amin Mazrui is not only one of the continent's most accomplished sons but also one of

its best ambassadors. During the last four decades Prof Mazrui has epitomised the best of Africa: full of vibrancy, bravery, enthusiasm and hope.

His works, his fears, his vision and his achievements have made Prof Mazrui a true global citizen. Proud of his triple heritage Prof Mazrui's works have had an influence in all the five continents. For a man who is ever contemplating his Abrahamic roots it is only befitting that such an occasion is held in the Moses Room.

Like all great people Prof Mazrui is difficult to define. Mazruiana, if anything, is mostly in the eyes of the beholder: to some, Prof Mazrui is the political scientist par excellence - a man who thrived on making political science out of Africa's political chaos.

To others Prof Mazrui is the perfect *agent provocateur*: a man who had so much room in his writings and thinking for sacred cows.

Others, including myself,

believe that if anything Prof Mazrui is a visionary - a man who - rightly or wrongly - refused to be held hostage by fashionable trends of the time and had the courage - and the talents - to articulate a perspective of not what life is all about now but what it should be like tomorrow.

Prof Mazrui hails from a noble family, was raised in the best academic tradition of the times and now is at the peak - and some would say - master of all he surveys.

But he continues to both frustrate and confound his adversaries, excite and inspire his fans, and, in the name of his beloved Africa and heritage find new vantage points from which he could point a new direction - a new destination or, even a new turn.

I have to admit that my association with Prof Mazrui has been, unfortunately, very limited. I first met him last year when I visited Washington. From the moment we met we hit it off: the internationally acclaimed academic from Africa and a member of the House of Lords who was born in Kashmir.

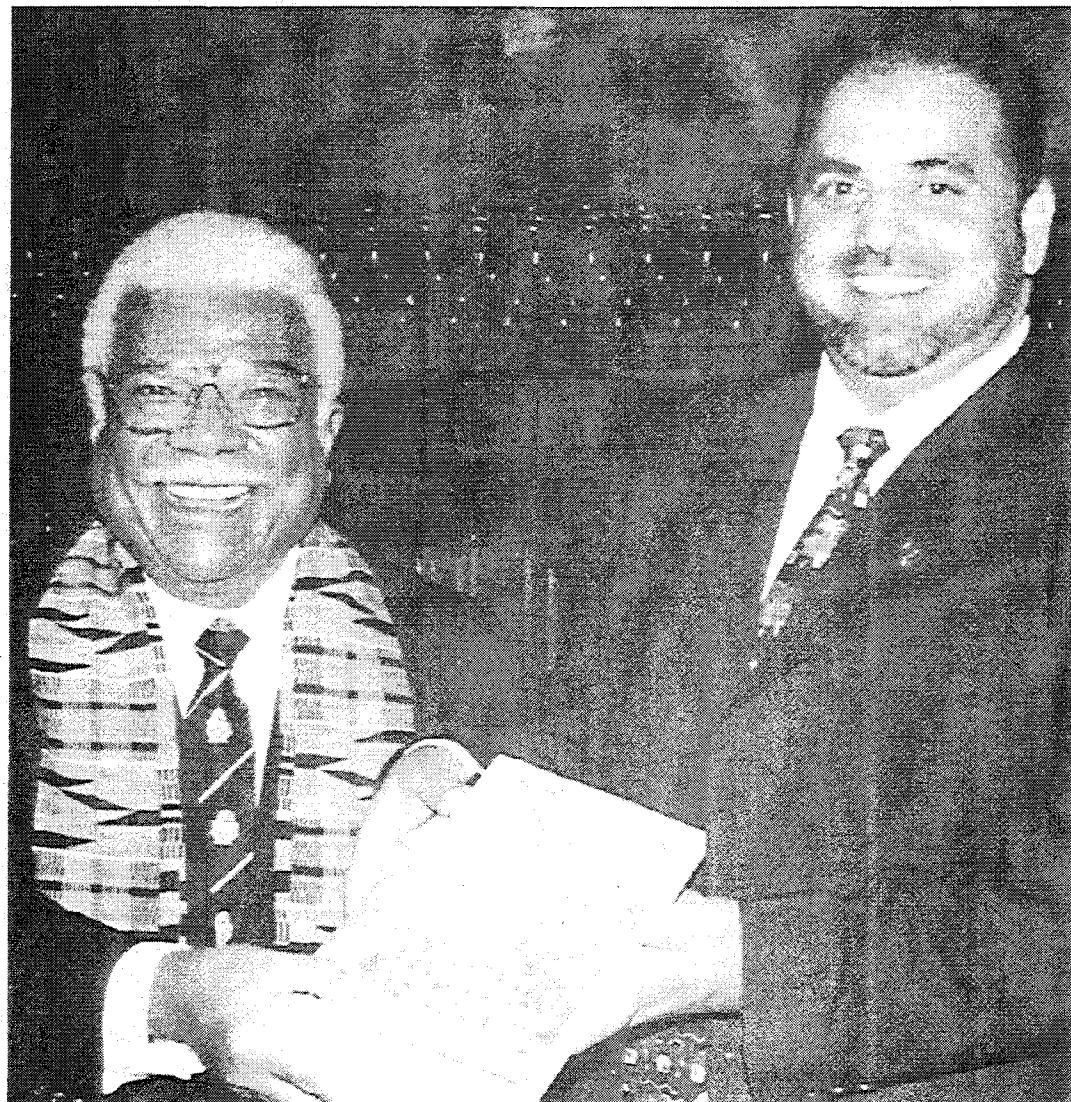
During this meeting in Washington I was to share a platform with the Reverend Jesse Jackson. Somebody on my table commented on the widely-known talents of Rev Jackson to perform on stage. I kept a British aloofness to the discussion going on around me. My ears only twitched when one of the people around the table said:

"Well, you are lucky: it could be Prof Mazrui up there with you and that would be real trouble".

Today that dreaded day has arrived! Honouring Prof Mazrui is honouring us all who are committed to a world of peaceful co-existence and tolerance.

It is also about honouring a wonderful continent, its beautiful people and their dreams.

Again I welcome all of you. Thank you.



BRIDGING THE GAP

TRIBUTE: CHIEF EMEKA ANYAOKU

Our excellencies, my Lord, ladies and gentlemen, I must confess that I regarded the invitation from Lord Ahmed as a special treat and one which I found irresistible. I couldn't resist coming to join what I would rather describe as a celebration of Ali Mazrui's huge achievements.

My most recent reading has been the *Mazruiana Collection*, compiled by Abdul Samed Bemah who I see is here with us today. I would recommend this as an undoubtedly useful introduction to Mazrui's prolific writing. I take great pride in the huge literary achievements of this outstanding archetype of our generation.

Ali Mazrui grew up in east Africa in a period when physical contacts between regions of Africa were very limited. In fact in the early sixties even within some of the regions of Africa, a telephone call from Lagos to Cotonou - a distance of only 147 miles - would have to be routed through London and Paris. Telephone calls at that time between Mombassa and West Africa were quite unknown. Journeys between east Africa and west Africa had to be routed via Europe. That was the situation when Ali Mazrui and I were growing up.

But Ali Mazrui's writings started to bridge this gap. His writings were very amicably read by a good many of us in west Africa. Ali Mazrui's writings are very truly prodigious. I was recently reading one of the introductory essays to the *Mazruiana Collection* and the author told me that Ali Mazrui's writings, over 500, have been published in all the major continents. How truly prolific.

I do not pretend nor indeed even aspire to be a literary critic of Ali Mazrui, but I would like to say one or two things about the tremendous impact which his writings have had on policy and opinion makers, not just in Africa but beyond. His many prestigious academic appointments outside and within Africa bear eloquent testimony to the wide acknowledgement of the value of Ali

Mazrui as a serious and outstanding political and social thinker. Ali Mazrui is without any doubt not only one of our first outstanding Africans but an African who thinks and writes about African affairs with deep passion and knowledge.

I remember how enthralled I and a good many others who listened to your Reith lectures of 1979 were at your discussion of the African condition at the time. I remember well that series of six lectures. In the first you discussed Africa in its state of decay. In the second that black people are the most humiliated and dehumanised in the history of mankind. In the third that Africa was stealing cultural transitions while experiencing the impact of Christianity and Western violence. In the fourth you traced the reasons for Africa's under-development. In the fifth you identified the cleavages of ethnicity, ideology and nationalism among the African regions. In the sixth lecture, which I thought was probably the most controversial, you talked about the marginalisation of the African cultures and the implication of the acquisition of nuclear capability.

It is of course the hallmark of deep and visionary thinkers that they provoke controversy, but I am sure that Ali Mazrui himself is quite used to his writings and lectures provoking some controversy. But the truth is that most authentic deep thinking Africans and non-Africans genuinely interested in understanding the reality as against the perceived notions of African affairs have always valued his contributions even when they do not share his views.

I do not think there can be any doubt that from all the continents Africa and its people remain the most susceptible to perceptions that are often far removed from reality. For example, how often do we see in the media here, images of African leaders and events that bear little resemblance to reality. One of the many reasons for this is that Africa and its people are only studied and commented upon without much effort to do so

through the perspective of the people as the real inhabitants of the African countries.

I believe that one of Ali Mazrui's greatest achievements is that unlike some of Africa's elites, he has succeeded in broadening his perspective without adulterating his African perspective. One of the ways in which he not too long ago sought to do this was by marrying across the region, to a west African lady!

Ali Mazrui has indeed become a global African. He

writes, analyses and interprets African affairs with authority and credibility. He genuinely relates African cultures to the cultures of other parts of the world and he specifically states his vision of the role of Africa and Africans in the increasingly inter-dependent parts of our common humanity.

May I once again thank you all for giving me this opportunity to join in celebrating the achievements of not just a great African but a truly great human being.



Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Leading African Diplomat and former Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat

MAZRUI: THE TRIBUTES

NOT EVERYBODY COULD MAKE IT TO THE HISTORIC EVENT AT HOUSE OF LORDS. BELOW ARE A SELECTED FEW OF THE MANY MESSAGES SENT TO MARK THE OCCASION.



Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations

Global African

"It gives me great pleasure to join you in paying tribute to Prof Ali Mazrui, a visionary African scholar and intellectual whose writings I have long admired.

At the dawn of the new millennium, Africa is still struggling to overcome the daunting challenges of poverty, instability and conflict. These old problems are compounded by new ones, such as the AIDS crisis, which is devastating African economies and societies, and which last year claimed more lives than all the region's

conflicts combined.

But, if these problems are all too-familiar, what is less known is that Africa is changing, and in that change Africans themselves are taking the lead. Over the last decade, more than 25 African countries have undertaken far-reaching structural economic reform, and the era of coups d'état, single party monopoly on power, and winner take-all politics is giving way to more democratic forms of government based on transparency, accountability, good governance, and respect for fundamental human rights.

Professor Mazrui's work is a

wonderful illustration of how Africa - for all its struggles - thrives as a complex and fascinating place. His work in developing the concepts of "global Africa" and "Africa's triple heritage" - ideas which explore the interaction of indigenous and Western cultural and religious forces on the African continent and beyond - have not only helped reshape the perception of Africa by the rest of the world, but among Africans themselves.

This moment in history is ours. The International community is showing a growing interest in helping Africa realise its potential. At the same time, Africa is growing increasingly aware that the key to many of its problems can be found only among Africans themselves.

African scholars like Prof Mazrui are at the vanguard of this renewal. Their work holds the key to what we all want and need: African answers to African problems.

MR KOFI ANNAN, SECRETARY GENERAL, THE UNITED NATIONS - MESSAGE READ BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR YAKUBU GOWON

Distinguished African

"I would have very much liked to be present at this historic occasion in order to witness this well-deserved honour bestowed upon one of the leading luminaries from Africa. Regrettably however, due to other pressing commitments, I will not be able to do so. I wish, nonetheless, to make use of this occasion to pay special tribute to

Professor Mazrui and to acknowledge this highly deserved recognition.

Prof Mazrui has earned the respect of fellow scholars, policy managers, and the people of Africa in general for his independent thinking, creative articulation of ideas, and a profound elucidation of the African condition. His books, articles and presentations in various media have been inspiring and have stimulated intensive debate. Indeed, he is a towering scholarly figure whose contribution to knowledge has remained topical and stimulating throughout his intellectual life.

His analytical capacity to traverse historical time, to capture the subtleties of multicultural dynamics, and at the same time to remain concrete and comprehensible is, indeed, outstanding. He has contributed immensely to the projection of a positive image of Africa, particularly through unravelling the Continent's heritage and its diverse assets. He has effectively deployed his knowledge of world civilisations and the trends of global development in exposing Africa's reality.

Prof Mazrui is indeed a scholar of world stature who has, in both his academic endeavours and personal life, contributed to the multicultural understanding which is critical to the peaceful co-existence of diverse peoples of different cultures from different Continents.

It has been for me a pleasure to know Prof Mazrui and to have interacted with him on various issues of common concern and interest to our Continent. In many ways he has been a source of inspiration. His

role as a distinguished African, as a scholar and as a human being has rightly earned him the respect of generations of Africans from all corners of our Continent. As a teacher, he has contributed immensely to the intellectual development of many, both within and beyond the African Continent.

In honouring him you are also honouring his achievements and recognising his immense contribution.

DR SALIM AHMED SALIM, SECRETARY GENERAL, ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, ADDIS ABABA, MESSAGE READ BY BARONESS UDDIN OF BETHNAL GREEN

Legendary Communicator

"I deeply regret not being able to join you today for the book launching ceremony by Professor Ali A Mazrui. No words can truly capture the full measure and multiple dimensions of Professor Mazrui. As a teacher, beginning at Makerere University in early 1960s, he has guided the intellectual formation of generations of students, scholars and leaders all over the world. As a scholar and writer he has been prolific, broad and influential; his books and articles on Africa, world cultures, and international and comparative politics have been disproportionately influential.

He is a great and legendary communicator; few people have used the written and spoken word, television, radio and public lectures to popularise knowledge, generate debate and shape ideas. In the process he has also made an extraordinary contribution to the fortunes of English language - inventing a particular usage, texture and idiom - Ali Mazrui has made the English language a truly exciting medium of communication.

Ali Mazrui is Africa's *griot* and Africa's gift to the world. Many people owe their knowledge and ideas about Africa to his lifetime of work and

communication.

Ali Mazrui is a man of great generosity, charisma, good humour and warmth. He is a person of tremendous courage and intellectual audacity.

I feel most fortunate to be among the legion of people who have been deeply touched, inspired and blessed by knowing Professor Mazrui, since my secondary school days and King's College, Budo, in Uganda."

OLARA OTUNNU, UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT, MESSAGE READ BY RICHARD DOWDEN

First Professor

"It gives me great pleasure to be able to contribute a personal note in honour of Ali Mazrui.

When I was appointed in 1962 as a very young professor of politics at Makerere University College, Uganda, my mother, who was a Scotswoman with a strong sense of the ridiculous, said: "Oh, it's like being a colonial bishop, it doesn't really count".

I thought she was probably right, and that my job should be immediately to find a real professor, an African from East Africa, to do the job.

I wrote to several universities in Britain and the USA and received half a dozen replies. They all said the same thing: "there is a young Kenyan called Mazrui you should be trying to get." So we tried, and we were lucky enough to get him.

Ali Mazrui came to Makerere as the first African professor and head of a department of political science in East Africa, and indeed one of the first African professors in any subject at any East African university. He built up that department and put African politics on the academic map in a new way.

He also fought some hard battles for intellectual freedom. And he found time to write - not just on politics but on a huge

range of issues, and in due course he gained a world-wide reputation as a speaker and broadcaster and playwright as well.

I once asked his secretary at Makerere how he did it and she said: "I don't know, he writes faster than I can type!"

Ali later moved to the USA where he has graced a number of prestigious chairs. Now he graces this special occasion in the House of Lords. I am very sorry to be on the wrong side of the Atlantic today, but I am grateful for the chance to send my warm congratulations and best wishes for this happy and special event."

PROF COLIN LEYS, SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, AN OLD COLLEAGUE OF PROF MAZRUI, MESSAGE READ BY PROF MOHAMED BAKARI

Provocative African

"The very best of good wishes for the book launch. I'm sorry I can't be there. Picture me leading a group of some 30 elderly people around Winchester and its environs - which is why I can't be with you.

I believe you will be speaking? I have always found what you have to say fascinating. Most vividly I remember your coming to Makerere shortly after the removal of Amin to give a most provoking lecture in which you urged Uganda not just to go back to before Amin. You told us that even *Mafuta Mingi* could teach us something and I so agreed.

I was most disappointed that the questions afterwards indicated that few at Makerere had really listened to what you were saying. I hope in the distinguished company around you today there will be some with ears to hear!

I have missed by a few days one or two of your most provocative lectures in recent years but I hope that you still have the magic which enchants some, causes others indignation,

but stimulates everyone. If I followed your own interest in numbers I might begin to add up the occasions we have missed a chance of meeting - I hope you didn't run away from New York because I was coming?

But may this be a very happy occasion. I shall be thinking of you."

PROF MARGARET MACPHERSON, RETIRED IN WINDERMERE, AN OLD COLLEAGUE OF PROF MAZRUI, MESSAGE READ BY PROF CHRISTOPHER DAVIES-ROBERTS

Great Friend

"I very much regret that as much as I wish I am unable to attend this function. I am happy, however, that The Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences is represented at this function by our European representative Dr Anas Al-Shaikh-Ali.

I am also extremely delighted that Prof Mazrui's book is being launched at the House of Lords, and that you have arranged this function to honour a man who made great contributions to many areas of the social sciences.

We, at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences, the first school of its kind in the United States, have not only been honoured and privileged to have him with us as the Ibn Khaldun Chair and Professor at Large at the School but have greatly benefited from his insight and important contributions.

We pray for his continued success, wish him all the best and send him our congratulations as the recipient of the first award given by the Association of Muslim Social Scientists in the UK. I would also like to thank Lord Ahmed for hosting this event and congratulate the Association for its appropriate, judicious and wise choice.

May God bless all those attending the function with you today."

DR TAHA JABIR AL-ALWANI, PRESIDENT, THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC & SOCIAL SCIENCES

A GLOBAL AFRICAN

OBITUARY: PROF MOHAMED BAKARI

I had heard about Prof. Ali Mazrui for the first time when I was a high school student in Mombasa, the natal home of the learned Professor, in the late 60s. The Professor then was almost a mythological figure in our town. He was rumoured to be a master of the English language who was using it to raise controversial political issues in international journals.

I first encountered his writings in the then most sprightly, sexy, and occasionally teasing *Transition* magazine, edited by the late Rajat Neogy. I distinctly remember some of his seductive pieces that appeared then, such as Nkrumah - the Leninist Czar, Tanzaphilia, and Phallic Symbols in Politics and War. These were exciting times in East Africa and the University of East Africa, and especially Makerere, was the intellectual hub of the emergent intellectual culture. Every East African with any intellectual pretensions wanted to be in Kampala. And the main attraction was really Ali Mazrui. They wanted to be witness to this relatively young Professor who was still to complete his doctorate under John Plamatz at Nuffield College, Oxford.

It was not until the month after I graduated from the University of Nairobi, that I met Prof. Ali Mazrui for the first time, in the unlikely town of Malindi. The occasion was a luncheon hosted by my uncle for his close friends who included Ali's relatively young uncle, Shaykh Abu Suleiman. Among those present was the diminutive Chief Kadhi of Kenya, the late Sheikh Abdallah Saleh Farsy, who also happens to have been a student of Shaykh Alamin Bin Ali Mazrui, the illustrious father of Professor Ali Mazrui.

As a young impressionable graduate I was awed by Ali's reputation as a scholar. Little did it occur to me then that we were to pursue identical careers and I was to be part of the generation that came after his. After the usual niceties, my uncle suggested that I take Ali and show him around. The Ostrich Farm was suggested.

Neither of us was interested in ostriches. We took the occasion to discuss our favourite issues: politics, literature and history. Ali had a way of making younger people more relaxed by engaging them as equals. He allowed me to disagree with his perspectives on African and international issues.

Like all young men at the time, I was disappointed by what we considered an unfair treatment of our idol, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. I had followed the acrimonious debates in the pages of *Transition* and I sympathised with his detractors than him.

What concerned me then also was the nature of political science as practiced by Ali Mazrui. I had been educated to believe that no social analyses could be taken seriously without the appropriate dose of mathematical formulae and diagrams with curves. Ali was in fact in the process of removing political analysis from the stuffy context of University lecture halls and journals by evolving a prose style appropriate to his needs.

The part conversational and part written style of much of his already significant ouvre was taking a distinctly Mazrui flavour. This style was to be parodied by the American novelist and travel writer Paul Theroux in a *Transition* piece. I remember then that an issue of *Transition* without a contribution by Ali Mazrui was not something to look forward to.

When he later came to apply his vigorous mind to language issues, I could appreciate why he would find it more pleasant to work on sociolinguistic problems of the Third World rather than involve himself in the incomprehensible and mathematics padded world of Chomskyan linguistics.

His forced departure from Kampala by the repressive regime of Iddi Amin left Makerere a lot poorer. It was at this juncture that we met with Ali Mazrui. I remember him telling me that there was no likelihood of him returning to Makerere and that he has just received an invitation



Prof. Mohamed Bakari, Professor of Linguistics at Faith University, Istanbul, Turkey & University of Nairobi, Kenya

to spend one year at Princeton's Center For Advanced Study in the Behavioural Sciences. This was to be a stop-gap measure before looking for alternative position elsewhere. By leaving Makerere suddenly Ali had not only lost his job but his entire library. There were no signs of disappointment or demoralisation in his demeanor in the course of that encounter and our subsequent trip together back to Mombasa. That was to become the beginning of our friendship that transcended mere academic matters.

Together with Dr Edward W Said of Columbia, Ali Mazrui

was to become one of the two the best known public intellectuals forever espousing and articulating Third World issues. These two scholars' works are so well known that we do not need to go into them here. What we need to note, though is the impact of their writings on Third World issues. Each of them virtually established a paradigm within which these areas to be discussed.

In recognition of Ali Mazrui's outstanding contribution to African political thought, the 1992 Seattle Meeting of the American African Studies Association set up a special session to deliberate on the man and

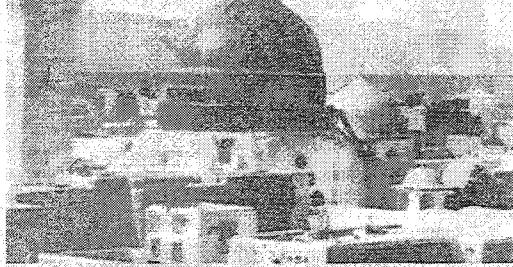
see Prof Bakari page 34

"Shall I not inform you of a better act than fasting, alms and prayers? Making peace between one another: enmity and malice tear up heavenly rewards by the roots."

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Times for other parts of the UK - add or subtract the following minutes:

	Fajr	Maghrib
• Belfast	+31	+03
• Birmingham	+09	+02
• Bradford	+12	-09
• Cambridge	+03	-04
• Cardiff	+12	+08
• Exeter	+12	+17
• Glasgow	+34	-02
• Leeds	+10	-05
• Leicester	+06	-02
• Liverpool	+16	-02
• Manchester	+13	-05
• Middlesbrough	+13	-17
• Portsmouth	+02	+06



FUR SUNRISE ZUHR ASR MAGHRIB ESHA

1.7.2000 28 Rabī' al-Āwwal 1421	Tue	3.18	4.48	1.05	5.28	9.23	10.53
2.7.2000 29 Rabī' al-Āwwal 1421	Wed	3.18	4.48	1.06	5.28	9.23	10.53
3.7.2000 1 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Thur	3.19	4.49	1.06	5.28	9.22	10.52
4.7.2000 2 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Fri	3.20	4.50	1.06	5.28	9.22	10.52
5.7.2000 3 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Sat	3.21	4.51	1.06	5.28	9.21	10.51
6.7.2000 4 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Sun	3.22	4.52	1.06	5.28	9.21	10.51
7.7.2000 5 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Mon	3.22	4.52	1.06	5.27	9.20	10.50
8.7.2000 6 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Tue	3.23	4.53	1.07	5.27	9.19	10.49
9.7.2000 7 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Wed	3.24	4.54	1.07	5.27	9.19	10.49
10.7.2000 8 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Thur	3.25	4.55	1.07	5.27	9.18	10.48
11.7.2000 9 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Fri	3.26	4.56	1.07	5.27	9.17	10.47
12.7.2000 10 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Sat	3.27	4.58	1.07	5.27	9.16	10.46
13.7.2000 11 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Sun	3.29	4.59	1.07	5.27	9.15	10.46
14.7.2000 12 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Mon	3.30	5.00	1.07	5.26	9.15	10.45
15.7.2000 13 Rabī' al-Thani 1421	Tue	3.31	5.01	1.08	5.26	9.14	10.44

Prof Bakari from page 29

his works and that meeting culminated in what is virtually his intellectually biography, *The Global African*.

Ali Mazrui is in a sense one of the earliest pioneers of the now fashionable discipline of global or multicultural studies. I suppose this was a natural inclination for a scholar born and brought up in a country and in a continent of diverse cultures, races, religions and languages, just to mention a few. He came to bring this experience and exposure in analysing social issues. He was original not only in the ideas he came to articulate, but also his mode of exposition. His language was accessible not only to the intellectuals but also the ordinary interested lay reader.

His natural gift of the gap was quickly recognised and was offered not only the possibility of being the first African to give the famous BBC Reith Lectures but also the opportunity to do the now famous 1986 documentary *The Africans*. These series will remain unsurpassed for a long time to come because of the clarity of exposition and the informed manner of their presentation and the wealth of their information.

Ali Mazrui is above all a gentleman and a humane person. No one who has ever met and spoken with him will forget his warmth, courteous and self-effacing manner, his personal charisma and alert and lively intelligence. One little known fact about Ali is that he is a completely selfless and generous person who would go an extra mile to be of help to others. He has paid thousands of dollars for the education of both African and non-African students ranging from remote villages in Africa to American Universities.

In his humility as a scholar he has enlisted the help of others in his research and writing. He has also co-authored articles and books with other scholars in recognition of the fact that the contribution of scholars from other related disciplines would likely through more light on the issues he was writing about. He also does this for purposes of mentoring young scholars who have not been sufficiently exposed but about whom Ali has noticed a certain talent.

One of the books Ali Mazrui is launching today here in the House of Lords, *Power of Babel*, is a significant contribution of our understanding of the role and power of language in political systems. This subject is particularly germane in an increasingly interdependent world of post Cold War era of globalisation and the coming to the fore the fear of the impact of Tinsel-town on the cultures of the rest of the world. This book is really a continuation of issues he has thought about in such previous writings as *The Political Sociology of the English Language in Africa and Swahili, Language and State*, the latter too co-authored with his nephew Prof. Alamin Mazrui of Ohio State University.

Professor Ali Mazrui is both anxious and optimistic about the future and role of African languages in the emergent global culture dominated by the indisputable ascendancy of the American version of the English Language. He shares these anxieties with other prominent African intellectuals like his countryman Ngugi Wa Thiong and the Cameroonian philosopher, Paulin Hountondji, who want African languages to become viable tools of intellectual introspection and articulation and as the key to African modes of being.

I for one do not share their pessimism. The problem with African societies is their legacy of misrule, plunder and utter disregard for its intellectual potential by its political leadership.

As a linguist I recognise that all languages are at par with one another. There are no superior or inferior languages. Only that every epoch has its own dominant language; the Medieval period had Arabic and Latin as the languages of intellectual discourse. English is the reigning champion at the moment, and from the look of things, for a long time to come. This has very little to do with the intrinsic nature of the English Language. Rather it has much to do with its lack of linguistic chauvinism. In the words of Professor Geoffrey Leech, English is a hospitable language that has absorbed and continues to absorb words from all languages. Its speakers are no longer recognisable on the basis of their race or creed. It has been forced by historical circumstances to embrace every conceivable racial and ethnic types who can all lay claim to it.

It is not at all surprising that the best writers writing in English at this material time are actually not mother tongue speakers. This is reflected in the preponderance of writers from the Third World who have won the Booker Prize for Literature in the past two decades. This trend will continue as writers from the various parts of the world continue to use English as a realistic means of reaching a global audience.

At the same time native languages will continue to thrive as media for articulating local concerns and issues. There is of course the human gift of translation. How on earth would the modern West been able to lay claim to classical Greek heritage if it were not for the thriving translation activities that were so much a part of that multicultural and tolerant Andalusian Muslim world that was the intellectual home for Christians and Jews also?

Professor Ali Mazrui's legacy is his espousal of the philosophy of globalisation and its potential as a paradigm for the peaceful coexistence of Civilisations, races and religions without any one dominant group imposing its hegemony on the others. It is interesting that a lot of the issues that Samuel Huntington had discussed in his well-known book *Clash of Civilizations* have preoccupied Ali Mazrui in the past four decades, only that they were discussed in terms of their relationship to the African World.