

SECOND DRAFT
APRIL 2012

Abstract of Longer Essay

**THE BLACK EXPERIENCE
BETWEEN GLOBAL WAR AND
UNIVERSAL PEACE:
FROM ENSLAVEMENT TO
ENLISTMENT**

By Ali A. Mazrui

**Director, Institute of Global Cultural Studies
and
Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities
Binghamton University
State University of New York at Binghamton, New York, USA**

**Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large Emeritus
and Senior Scholar In Africana Studies
Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA**

A RACIAL PARADIGM OF WORLD ORDER: THE ARGUMENT

When is the *story-teller* part of the *story*? This paper has been based on African elite views of world order and world security. The author is himself a member of the African intellectual and media elites. Can this story-teller disentangle himself from the story? This author has not too sharply separated the participant from the observer.

Partly because African history and the Black experience were profoundly affected by racism and imperialism, African perspectives on the world system are influenced by a fear of imperialism and a profound suspicion of racism. The paper has tried to indicate how this has given rise to a race-centric worldview and a racial paradigm of world order.

In the *African experience*, as in the *Irish* experience, the past is part and parcel of the *present*. *The day-before-yesterday is part of today*.

Samuel Huntington is wrong that the clash of civilizations is something to be confronted after the end of the Cold War. The Western world has made sure there have been clashes of civilizations for the last four hundred years — inspired by Western racism.

We have identified the following waves:

The *FIRST* wave of racio-cultural confrontation was the peopling of the Americas in a manner which involved large scale decimation of native American populations. This was the genocidal phase of history.

Should we characterize the trans Atlantic slave trade as the *SECOND* wave of racio-cultural confrontation? — resulting in the enslavement phase and export of millions of Africans to the so-called new world.

For many Africans this horrendous past lives on in the present. This history has been an impediment to Black military and upward social mobility.

The *THIRD* wave of racio-cultural confrontation was Europe's colonization of much of the rest of the world — Asia, Africa, Latin America and the islands on the sea. The era of the West triumphant. This was the imperial phase.

The colonial past is central to the post-colonial present: Once again history is impediment to economic and military security.

FOURTH wave of racio-cultural confrontation is the present one of *military discrimination* and *economic stratification*. This is the hegemonic phase.

White countries may have nuclear weapons but darker races should be denied. Israel may have weapons of mass destruction, but Muslims in the Middle East may not. The United States may use chemical weapons against Vietnam and use nuclear weapons against Japan in World War I, but Middle Eastern countries may not develop either weapons.

The greatest *economic* victims of the new racial cold war are Black people; greatest military victims are Muslims. More than 500,000 have been killed by

westerners since 1980. These had happened before the Iraq War of George W. Bush.

Curiously enough the two world wars of the twentieth century were initially intra-civilizational — starting as European civil wars. But they coincided with a period of history when Europe was calling the tune in most of the rest of the world.

In reality two factors turned European civil wars into world wars — the involvement of European empires and the cooptation of the United States. But for Africa World War II was also a positive development. It weakened the European powers, stimulated anti-colonialism and set the stage for genuine decolonization and independence. For Africa World War II was, on balance, a liberating experience — terrible as it was for Europe and parts of Asia.

The Cold War was also a liberating and *trans-racializing* experience. *White* Russians were supporting *Black* liberation movements against *White* minority governments in southern Africa.

Karl Marx and V. I. Lenin — two *White men* — were the icons of millions of *people of colour*. Oppression and liberation were deemed to be *race-neutral*. The liberation of Portuguese Africa and southern Africa might have been delayed for a generation if there had been no *armed struggle*.

And armed struggle was made possible by *an alliance between Black nationalist fighters and white socialist governments who provided Africans with arms*.

The Chinese were also major allies of Black liberation fighters in Southern Africa. Once again the Cold War was a trans-racializing experience.

The end of the Cold War has threatened those trans-racializing tendencies. Russia is now too weak to be a major player in North-South relations. Western moral commitment to Africa has drastically slackened.

Racism has increased in Western Europe and has emerged in Eastern and central Europe. Affirmative action and other civil rights gains are under threat in the United States. The shadow of *global apartheid* hangs over the world system with a structure of it in the form of a racial pyramid — White-ruled countries at the top, east Asian countries next, South East Asian next, South Asia and Arabs after that black people have been pushed to the bottom.

And yet the solution preferred by Africa is not “leave us alone.” The solution has three parts.

To avoid further imperialism from outside, Africa would police itself more efficiently. A system of *Pax Africana* needs to be developed — stronger African states coming to the rescue of weaker ones. This is partly *RACIAL SOVEREIGNTY* as a principle.

So the issue of *military* security, the preferred option is *regional self-reliance*. ECOMOG in Liberia — “Bay of Pigs” in Rwanda — Pan African sanctions against atrocities in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

On the issue of *economic security*, Africa has to sell its minerals and its agricultural products. It does not want to opt out of the world economy. It simply wants a fairer basis for global economic interchange and pricing system.

If a motto was needed for this strategy it would be “Military Regionalism and Economic Globalism.” On the whole, regions should solve their own military problems at the regional level. But in economics, the scale has become global.

On the issue of racial rehabilitation, Africa demands compensation for hundreds of years of enslavement, exploitation and racial degradation.

- Jews got compensated for the Holocaust
- Japanese-American internees in World War II got compensated by the USA.
- Kuwait got compensated by Iraq for Iraqi aggression.
- Steps towards making it up to the Aborigines of Australia are beginning to be taken

I and eleven others were sworn before African presidents as a Group of Eminent Persons on Reparation. But what kind of reparations? The options include the following:

- Capital Transfer* (like the Marshall Plan)

—*Skill Transfer* (to transform the educational and skill capacities of the Black people)

—*Power-sharing*, giving Africa access to such citadels as the veto or permanent membership of the Security Council and weighted membership on governing bodies of World Bank and IMF.

In the military field regional self-reliance should be consolidated as much as possible. In the economic field, equitable global interdependence in trade, investment and, where appropriate, foreign aid would be promoted.

In the racial field there would be a long drawn out struggle to bring the western conscience to the level when it can one day accept the principle of compensation for the awful damage to Black people — a damage which is here and now, and not simply a page in history.

The past is *now* — and it casts a shadow on perspectives of world security and on the search for enduring solutions.

APPENDIX

WORLD WAR AND CONTRASTING CONSEQUENCES

Intra-Civilizational Conflicts in the Northern hemisphere can have positive consequences for the Southern hemisphere.

The pessimist

“When two elephants fight it is the grass which suffers”

“When two elephants make love, it is still the grass which suffers.”

The optimist

“When two elephants make love, they are too busy to eat the grass.”

WORLD WAR II: CONTRASTING CONSEQUENCES

Destructive for Europe	Liberating for Africa and much of Asia
German expansionism	Liberating for Africa and much of Asia
Destruction of principles of sovereignty (Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Belgium, etc.).	Weakened the might of the imperial powers
Occupation and humiliation of France	France and Belgium were humiliated as imperial powers
Destruction of major European cities by aerial bombardments	The war undermined the mystique of the invincibility of the white man — sometimes by cutting him down from demi-God to fellow human
Death of many millions of Europeans as war casualties	The war internationalized the horizons of the colonized peoples as they tried to follow war news blow by blow
Nazi war crimes and crimes against humanity with special reference to the death camps for Jews, Gypsies and other condemned minorities.	The Africans who fought in the war came back home with new attitudes against being colonized.
	The rhetoric of the war was for “Freedom.” Well, what about freedom for the colonies?
	The war diminished Europe in world politics and gave birth to two anti-imperial superpowers. The USA and the USSR. The war gave birth to the UN

BETWEEN AFRICOLOGY AND ARABICOLOGY

AFRICOLOGY: MAIN CHARACTERISTICS	ARABICOLOGY: MAIN CHARACTERISTICS
<p>Politics & Gender: Liberia elected the first female democratic president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in the 21st century.</p> <p>The role of the Queen Mother in the political culture of the Ashanti [Asante] kingdom. Female role in choosing the Asantahene in Ghana.</p> <p>Political priestesses in post-colonial Africa include <u>Ali Lanshina</u> leader of Lumpa Church in Zambia and Alice Lakwena of the Acholi in Uganda.</p>	<p>Did ancient Egypt invent the female Head of State Hatshepsut? Egypt also had several Cleopatras (less indigenous heads of state).</p> <p>Did the Islamization of North Africa disempower the women in the political process? Was the legacy of Hatshepsut extinguished by the Imamate culture centuries later?</p> <p>Female Imams are discouraged in Arab Africa and in much of the Muslim world. This is in contrast to a mosque in Cape Town which allowed Amina Wadud, an African American female Muslim, to give a pre-Khutba Khutba (a pre-sermon sermon) before a Friday prayer congregation.</p>