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**THE AFRICAN IMPACT ON AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION:
ALI A. MAZRUI'S CONTRIBUTION**

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While the birth of the baby-Jesus was preceded by the arrival of the three wise men, the birth of every Swahili child in Mombasa in the 1930s was preceded by the convergence of three civilizations. Ali Mazrui was born in the context of a confluence of three cultures—Africanity, Islam and the new Western impact.

By a strange coincidence the year of Ali Mazrui's birth was 1933—the only year in the twentieth century which had more than one numeral 3. Ali A. Mazrui therefore had the triad woven into his year of birth. He was what he himself later designated as “a triple heritage baby”—a bundle of three civilizations.

His life was also destined to traverse three continents particularly strongly—Africa, Europe and North America. In each of those regions he spent many years.

But this chapter is about the American phase of his life, and whether that phase made a difference to American higher education.

In the film “*It's a Wonderful Life*” with James Stewart, an angel enables a suicidal and despondent man to experience what the world would have been like if he had never been born. In the United States this brilliant film is shown every Christmas season.

If Ali Mazrui were ever to contemplate suicide like the character in “*It's a Wonderful Life*” perhaps an angel would show Mazrui how the twentieth century would have been different had he never been born. Mazrui would have re-discovered that an African relatively illiterate electronically reached the biggest electronic audience reached by any African in history, and certainly in the twentieth century. Mazrui's electronic impact was first by his BBC Reith Lectures *The African Condition* in 1979, second by his PBS/BBC television series *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (translated into multiple languages) which first aired in 1986, and third by his widely-publicized Internet critique

of Henry Louis Gates' television series *Wonders of the African World* in 1999. By his electronic impact alone Ali Mazrui was a unique African of the twentieth century. Certainly his radio and television work reached millions of people world wide, in multiple languages.

Our focus in this essay remains America-centric. In what ways has Ali Mazrui essentially helped to redirect American higher education? What have been Ali A. Mazrui's contributions to higher education in the United States? These have been multifaceted. At least as significant as the content of such contributions have been the means and instrumentalities through which those contributions have been made.

Those instrumentalities can be translated into roles which Ali Mazrui has played. These are, firstly, Ali Mazrui as a classroom teacher on campuses; second, Mazrui as a writer of books and scholarly articles; third, Mazrui as a broadcaster on radio and television; fourth, Mazrui as a public speaker who is in demand nationally from New York to Austin, Texas, and from Boston to Berkeley, California; fifth, Mazrui as a feature-writer for newspapers and magazines; sixth Mazrui as a leader in academic and educational associations; and seventh, Mazrui as a consultant to bodies which range from the World Bank to emerging colleges.

However, let us first look more closely at Ali Mazrui's life before the American phase if we are to understand what he brought to America. We must also scrutinize the assets and liabilities which came with him to the United States.

Ancestry and Ascent

Ali Mazrui came from a highly devout Islamic Swahili family at the head of which was his father, who was for a while the Chief Kadhi (or Chief Islamic Justice) of

Kenya. In his childhood in the 1940s Ali Mazrui accompanied his father on some of his trips across Kenya to hear appeals under Islamic law. Ali Mazrui's first exposure to the Akamba and Gikuyu Muslims in the Kenya hinterland, for example, was through the judicial duties of his father as a roving court of appeal.

Ali Mazrui's father died in 1947 when Ali was only fourteen. Had the father lived, Ali would have been trained as an Islamic jurist, culminating at Al-Azhar University in Cairo. In his father's absence, Ali applied for scholarships and finally succeeded in winning a Kenyan Government scholarship (colonial) to enable him to complete his secondary education in Huddersfield, England, and to enable him to do his first degree at the University of Manchester, England.

Ali Mazrui's first exposure to the United States was as a graduate student at Columbia University, New York. He completed his Masters' degree at Columbia in nine months. He used the summer to take courses at the University of Mexico, Mexico City, and at the University of California, Berkeley, while still under Rockefeller Foundation sponsorship.

Ali Mazrui did his doctoral work at Oxford, University England, funded by Nuffield College, Oxford, of which Mazrui was a student. Ali Mazrui also did some broadcasting for the BBC radio during his Oxford years.

His first regular academic position was as a Lecturer at Makerere University in Uganda where he subsequently became both Head of the Department of Political Science and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences. After General Idi Amin captured power in a military coup in January 1971, Uganda became increasingly unstable. It was the instability and violence which finally forced Ali Mazrui and his family to leave Uganda

and move to the United States. The option of going back to Kenya instead of coming to the United States was not open to him because the University authorities in Kenya would not hire him. The reasons against him were political. Mazrui was regarded as a political dissident.

Ali Mazrui was a Fellow of the prestigious Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto, California (1972–1973) and a Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford in California (1973–1974). He then accepted a tenured professorship in the Department of Political Science at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 1974, where he remained until 1989. From 1978–1981 Mazrui was also the Director of the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies at Michigan. He moved to the State University of New York at Binghamton in 1989. More about that later.

Between Assets and Liabilities

Among Ali Mazrui's special assets which he brought to the United States was firstly a brilliant dialectical mind—dialectical in the sense of a capacity to discern the unity of opposites. His work is full of paradoxes; sometimes genuine, sometimes contrived. Each of the six Reith Lectures on the BBC World Service in 1979 was based on a paradox about “the African Condition.”¹

There is also his controversial article “Nkrumah: The Leninist Czar” first published as an evaluation of Kwame Nkrumah when he was overthrown in a military coup in 1966.²

Ali Mazrui's second major asset was a highly developed command of the English language. His facility of language has been relatively free of jargon, but not entirely free

of idiosyncracies and verbal conceits. He is often tempted to play with words. It works in his oratory, but it does not always work in his writings.

The third major asset which Ali Mazrui brought with him was his enjoyment of writing and the ease with which he could produce competent written material at relatively short notice. He is one author who never suffers from a writer's block.

The fourth major asset with his arrival was his oratorical skill. Although he prefers to have written notes before him, and sometimes even a text, he is capable of departing entirely from his text and to deliver a brilliant lecture almost extempore (In the American academic market his lectures do often earn him thousands of dollars per performance).

Mazrui's fifth asset has been his capacity to let his three civilizations (Africanity, Islam and Westernism) illuminate each other. One powerful illustration is his description of the birth of Islam as "the first Protestant Revolution" within the *Christian* tradition.³ Mazrui's second book chronologically was entitled *On Heroes and Uhuru-Worship*, deliberately echoing Thomas Carlyle's classic, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*. Mazrui has repeatedly borrowed from English literature to point an African moral or adorn an Islamic tale.⁴

What about the *liabilities* which Mazrui brought into his American career? One liability has been an unresolved conflict between his role as a political thinker (which may need no documentation or footnoting) and his role as a social scientist (which does require greater attention to formal evidence). Considering how impatient he has been with the minutiae of formal footnoting, it is astonishing that Mazrui has risen as high as he has, and published in some of the most respected journals in the Western world.

But is Mazrui a man of ideas or a man of science? When the man of ideas in him prevails, the scientist appears to lack rigour. On the other hand, it has been the originality of many of his ideas which have made his reputation internationally, as well as established him in the United States.

Another unresolved conflict in Mazrui has been between the political activist and the scholar. As far back as his Uganda days, Ali Mazrui was asked by President Milton Obote “Are you sure you know the difference between being a political scientist and being a politician?” President Obote was getting fed up with Mazrui’s criticisms of Obote’s policies, disguised as political science! In the United States the activism which might have cost Mazrui greater academic honors in Ivy League circles has been his defence of the rights of Palestinians in some of his public lectures, and even debates within his classes. In chapter 8 of his book *Cultural Forces in World Politics* he even compares the logic of Zionism (separating Arabs from Jews) with the logic of apartheid (separating Whites from Blacks).

And yet even on the question of the Jews Mazrui’s dialectical mind has been in evidence again. In the same book Mazrui devoted a separate chapter 7 in praise of Jewish intellectual achievements and calling upon Black people to learn from Jewish experience. In short, Ali Mazrui has been an admirer of the Jewish people and still been a passionate critic of the policies of the Israeli state.⁵

The third unresolved conflict in Ali Mazrui has been whether he is a journalistic populariser or a solemn and profound scholar. This ambivalence has made him courted by both the media and the academic world. No African scholar in history has been heard by more radio listeners (e.g., Mazrui’s BBC Reith Lectures), seen by more television

viewers (e.g., Mazrui's PBS, BBC and NBC programs) and read by more readers of magazines and newspapers in his own words (such as Mazrui's syndicated articles for the *Los Angeles Times* and others).

And yet Ali Mazrui has also been published in such highly competitive scholarly journals as *Political Studies* (UK), *Journal of Modern African Studies* (Cambridge), the *American Political Science Review* and *Harvard Educational Review*.

The fourth liability Ali Mazrui arrived with in the United States was a flaw in the American society rather than a fault in Ali Mazrui. "Driving while Black" captures the burden of Black people on American roads and under police surveillance. What about "Professing while Black"? Do Black professors confront special obstacles?

Ali Mazrui believes that he both gained and lost as a Black professor. He arrived in the United States in the era of affirmative action. This did help most Black academics. But the wider society was still fundamentally racist. His career suffered in less obvious ways as a result.

The fact that he was an African and not an African American also closed certain doors of advancement for him. For a political scientist the loss was particularly great in terms of comparative access to the Washington power elite. An African American scholar of comparable stature would (if he or she wanted it) have had much easier access to the Congressional elite and to the White House.

The fifth unresolved conflict in Ali Mazrui has been between being secular and being religious. Mazrui's lifestyle in the United States has been basically secular. He has been married twice, in each case to a woman from a Christian family. The three sons of his first marriage (all of them in their thirties now) have grown up as liberal, secular

Americans. Their father's influence had been more towards liberalism than towards religion—whether the father intended it or not.

And yet to the six or seven million Muslims of the United States, Ali Mazrui is regarded as a major intellectual resource for Islam. Indeed, he and Professor Sulayman Nyang of Howard University are probably the most prominent Black African Muslims in North America. Two major factors propelled Ali Mazrui towards high visibility among American Muslims. One factor was indeed his television series, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* which includes extensive treatment of Islam in Africa. The other factor which helped to give Mazrui instant fame among non-Africanist Muslims was his attack on Salman Rushdie's novel, *The Satanic Verses*. His attack was made in a public lecture given at Cornell University in 1989 soon after the publication of Rushdie's novel in the United States. Muslims present at the lecture audio-recorded it. To American Muslims the lecture was regarded as sensational. Tapes of it were distributed far and wide. Academic America also sat up and took notice. The lecture was published in two American academic journals and one British. It was also translated into other languages. The lecture was entitled "The Satanic Verses or a Satanic Novel?: Moral Dilemmas of Rushdie Affair."⁶

Ali Mazrui has continued to combine a relatively secular life-style with a strong loyalty to Islam. This has remained an unresolved conflict. Has it been a liability in the American context?

The sixth overlapping liability with which Ali Mazrui arrived in the United States was in any case in belonging to a minority religion and often a suspect community—the Muslims of America. In reality African Muslims suffered far less in the United States for

their religion than, say, Arab Muslims. African Muslims were seen much more as Africans than as Muslims. They were more likely to suffer for their race than for their religion.

However, there were occasions when being a Muslim was a liability in mainstream American institutions. Mainstream Zionists or Christian fundamentalists have sometimes treated Muslims with suspicion when it came to appointments, promotion and publications. Ali Mazrui has been caught up in these debates.

And yet, America being what it is, Ali Mazrui has taught hundreds of Jewish students at Michigan, Binghamton, Cornell, Stanford, Chicago and elsewhere. American pluralism has repeatedly responded to what Ali Mazrui has had to offer.

Between Africa and the Diaspora

But what is the content of Mazrui's contribution to higher education in the United States? Here, too, distinctions have to be made between different areas of study. These include new perspectives on, first Africana studies; second, conflict studies; third, cultural studies; fourth, global studies, and fifth Islamic studies. These areas are of course overlapping.

For example, his concept of Africa's "triple heritage" is a contribution to both African Studies and Islamic studies in American higher education. By "the triple heritage" Mazrui means the convergence of African culture, Islam and the Western Impact upon Africa. Mazrui also coined or re-invented the term "global Africa" to signify the emerging network of relationships among people of African descent scattered worldwide. He gave the concept "global Africa" visibility by making it the title of program 9 in his television series *"The Africans: A Triple Heritage"* (PBS and BBC,

1986) “Global Africa” is also the title of a course that Mazrui teaches at Cornell University every year. The term “Global Africa” has since also crept into the writings of other scholars, and the concept of “Global Africana Studies” is sometimes used in Centers of African-American and African studies.

An even older concept which Ali Mazrui brought to African studies was the concept of “Pax Africana,” meaning a system under which Africa becomes its own “policeman” for keeping the peace and maintaining stability. He first launched this concept to the US academic community in a book published by Chicago University Press in 1967 under the title *Towards A Pax Africana: A Study of Ideology and Ambition*. (The British publisher was Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1967). The concept of *Pax Africana* has assumed even greater urgency by the twenty-first century.

Can Africa be one entity if it is part Black and part Arab? Ali Mazrui’s most original solution has been to make the Arabian peninsular part of Africa:

“The most pernicious sea in Africa’s history may well be the Red Sea. This thin line of water has been deemed to be more relevant for defining where Africa ends than all the evidence of geology, geography, history, and culture [linking the continent to the Arabian peninsula].”⁷

He goes on to argue that while Madagascar is separated from the African continent by the 500 mile wide Mozambique Channel, Greater Yemen is “separated from Djibouti by only a stone’s throw at the strait of Bab el Mandeb.” He goes on to ask: “Why should Tananarive be an African capital when Aden is not?”⁸

Ali Mazrui coined two compound terms which capture the paradoxical intimacy between Africa and Arabia. He introduced the concept of *Afrabia* in an article published in the University of California journal, UFAHAMU. On the narrower relations between Africa and the Persian (Arabian) Gulf which include the historic impact of the Sultanate of Oman on Zanzibar and the East African coast, Mazrui has coined the term *Gulffrica*. It is part of Mazrui's stock-in-trade to coin terms which attempt to summarize complex political or historical phenomena.⁹

Ali Mazrui has also been fascinated by the African Diaspora. He had developed a distinction between the *Diaspora of Slavery*, such as "Survivors of the Middle Passage in the Americas," and the *Diaspora of Colonialism*, the new African migrants to other lands in the wake of the disruptions of colonialism and its aftermath.

He has also developed the concept of "*American Africans*" (relatively new African settlers in the Americas) to be distinguished from "*African Americans*" (in the usual sense of survivors of the Middle Passage within the United States, such as Jesse Jackson, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Toni Morrison).

A third important distinction which Ali Mazrui started developing from the 1990s has been between *Africans of the soil* (Africans who are part of the African continent but not necessarily part of the Black race) and *Africans of the blood* (Africans who are part of the Black race but not necessarily part of the African continent). Most Tunisians and Algerians are Africans of the soil but not of the blood. Most African Americans and Black Jamaicans are Africans of the blood but not of the soil. Most sub-Saharan Black people are both African of the blood and African of the soil.

Ali Mazrui has discussed these pairs of concepts on different campuses as a public speaker and in his own classes. Perhaps the most extensive elaboration was in his First Macmillan-Stewart lecture “African Migrations and American diversity,” delivered at Harvard University in March 2000 as part of a series of three lectures sponsored by the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute.¹⁰

An influential Diasporic course which Mazrui has taught but never quite developed into a book is “*Comparative Black Political Thought*.” He taught this course at the University of Michigan in the 1970s and 1980s. The course attempted to compare political thought in Africa, Black America and the Caribbean. Some of Mazrui’s former students subsequently developed their own versions of the same comparative course when they became college professors elsewhere. Mazrui has also published comparative philosophical papers in journals which range from *Ethics* and *Journal of African Philosophy* to *Comparative Studies in Society and History*.

Between Culturology and Global Studies

This links up with Mazrui’s work on cultural studies (culturology) and global studies (globalogy). Ali Mazrui tends to use the word “culture” in its sociological sense (the values and institutions of a society) rather than in its aesthetic sense (works of beauty and creativity, like music, paintings and poetry). When he was a professor at the University of Michigan (1974–1989) Mazrui organized a special course of his own on what he called “International Political Culture,” and taught it at both graduate and undergraduate levels. The course subsequently developed into the more comprehensive course on “*Cultural Forces in World Politics*” which has been taught at different levels at State University of New York at Binghamton. The course explores the impact of such

forces as religion, language, ideology and sexual division of labour not only on politics within societies but also on relations between societies. The course has become so successful at Binghamton University that when Mazrui is not teaching it, the department of political science asks another professor to take it on.

Ali Mazrui has his own paradigm of *culturology*. He sees culture as serving seven or eight functions in society. In his paradigm, culture can be our lenses of *perception*, or our source of *motivation*, or our means of *communication*, or the basis of our *stratification*, or our mode of *production*, or the pattern of our *consumption*, or our standard of *evaluation*, or the very foundation of our *identity*.¹¹ He started developing this paradigm of culture from his BBC Reith Lectures in 1979, and has been promoting and developing it ever since.

He developed even earlier his concept of *counterpenetration* as a separate aspect of his worldview. At a time when most Third World intellectuals were recommending that their countries should attempt to “*delink*” from the economies of the North, Ali Mazrui recommended the alternative strategy of *counterpenetrating* the citadels of power and attempting to influence the North from within. Even before the word “globalization” gained currency, he argued that “delinking” went against globalizing trends and was unrealistic. The correct solution would be for the developing countries to use their resources in a manner which empowered them (counterpenetration) rather than allow the North to reduce those countries to further dependency. Delinking would involve under-utilizing their resources.

Ali Mazrui even developed five strategies for making developing countries less dependent upon the North. These strategies were what he called *indigenization*

(emphasizing indigenous resources and skills), *domestication* (making imported institutions like universities more relevant); *diversification* (diversifying crops, trading partners, aid donors); *horizontal integration or interpenetration* (greater unity among less developed economies) and *vertical counterpenetration* (increasing the power of developing countries upon the North—as South Korea has done or the countries of OPEC have tried to do from time to time).

Mazrui's dual strategy has been to reduce the power of the North upon the South (reduced dependency) and enhance the power of South upon the North (counter penetration).

But it gets more complicated in the flow of ideas between North and South. His fascination with Western literary and philosophical classics has sometimes made him use a Western classic to illuminate an African experience. Quite early he wrote an article “Edmund Burke and Reflections on the Revolution in the Congo.” In reality Burke had written about the “revolution in France” in the eighteenth century. Ali Mazrui used Burkean ideas about the basics of society and governance and applied them to the Congolese situation in the early 1960s. Mazrui's article had quite an impact on *conservative* circles in the United States.¹²

Ali Mazrui has also written about “Rousseau and Intellectualized Populism in Africa” (co-author G. F. Engholm).¹³

Nor must we forget that Ali Mazrui's inaugural lecture, when he was first appointed full professor at Makerere University in Uganda, was entitled “*Ancient Greece in African Political Thought*” (1967). All these are illustrations of Mazrui using Western classics to illuminate the African experience.¹⁴

When Ali Mazrui Africanises such Western classics as Burke, Rousseau, Aristotle and Shakespeare, is he contributing to Africa's intellectual dependency? Or is he applying his strategy of *domestication*, which is part of his process of reducing dependency? In the ultimate analysis, he may be doing *both*!

In 1990 Ali Mazrui published his book "*Cultural Forces in World Politics*." It was Mazrui's second most ambitious book on culture on the global scale. His first one was *A World of Federation of Cultures: An African Perspective* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1976).¹⁵

One meeting point between his African concerns and his global concerns has been his interest in language. In the 1970s he published a book entitled *The Political Sociology of the English Language* which has been widely quoted. In the 1990s he went into academic partnership with Professor Alamin M. Mazrui, a relative at the Ohio State University. Together they have so far published two books—*The Power of Babel: Language and Governance in the African Experience* (1998) and before that *The Political Culture of Language: Swahili, Society and the State* (1996).

Between Islam and Conflict Resolution

With regard to Mazrui's impact on Islamic studies in the United States, some have traced the origins to his television series *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (1986). By doing research on Islam in Africa Mazrui reactivated his wider interest in the Islamic religion and in Islamic civilization. Moreover, Muslim viewers of the television series—who had previously thought of Mazrui only as an Africanist—suddenly discovered an Islamic side to Mazrui, both as a person and as a scholar. In the United States this resulted in the growth of a whole new academic constituency for Mazrui as different

Muslim organizations turned to him. They invited him initially as a public speaker, but later he was called upon to be a member of Governing Boards of different associations and institutions. By the year 2000 Ali Mazrui was the Chair of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy; a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Muslim Council; a member of the Board of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University; and a member of the International Board of Advisors of the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences, Leesburg, VA. Outside the United States Ali Mazrui was also a member of Board of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Oxford, England.

At the State University of New York at Binghamton and at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences, Ali Mazrui has taught such courses as “Islam in World Affairs,” “Islam in Global Africa and the Black World” and “Islam and the West.” Indeed, for about four years (1996–2000) Ali Mazrui served as Ibn Khaldun Professor-at-Large at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences, Leesburg, VA.

Apart from *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*, Ali Mazrui has not published a book specifically about Islam. However, he has published articles about Islam in such journals as *Foreign Affairs* (New York), *Harvard International Review* (Cambridge, MA), *International Affairs* (London), *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, *The Journal of African Arts* (University of California, Los Angeles and Berkeley), and the *Oxford Journal of Islamic Studies* (Oxford, England).

Ali Mazrui’s interest in conflict has been combined with a fascination for conflict-resolution. As indicated earlier, his first book published in the United States was entitled

Towards a Pax Africana (1967)—posing the question of who was to keep the peace in Africa now that Pax Britannica and its European imperial sisters were withdrawing.

Within two years after *Towards a Pax Africana* Ali Mazrui published his collection of essays entitled *Violence and Thought: Essays on Social Tensions in Africa* (1969). The Book included the following range of chapters:

Chapter 5: Conflict and the Integrative Process

Chapter 9: Thoughts on Assassination in Africa

Chapter 10: The Monarchical Tendency in African Political Culture

Chapter 14: On Revolution and Nakedness

Chapter 15: Political Sex

Chapter 16: Sacred Suicide.¹⁶

Mazrui's fascination with different varieties of violence continued until his controversial Reith Lectures for the British Broadcasting Corporation in 1979. In his sixth lecture he recommended nuclear proliferation in Africa as a way of shocking the nuclear Big Powers to give up nuclear weapons altogether.¹⁷

At least as controversial was his recommendation in the 1990s that stronger African states should be prepared to “*recolonize*” temporarily weaker African countries whose state-institutions had collapsed. He suggested that Tanganyika had “recolonized” Zanzibar in the wake of the Zanzibar revolution of 1964 and created the United Republic of Tanzania. More defensible was Tanzania's temporary occupation of Uganda in 1979 to get rid of Idi Amin. Should Nigeria have temporarily recolonized Sierra Leone in the 1990s? Was there temporary colonization of Rwanda by Uganda in 1994 through proxies in a bid to end the anti-Tutsi genocide?

One of the important roles that Ali Mazrui has played in American higher education has been to raise uncomfortable questions and initiate fundamental debates in classrooms as well as in the media. Mazrui's "recolonization" thesis was first publicized through a syndicated article for the *Los Angeles Times*, which was published worldwide and translated in many languages. The most widely read English version appeared in the *International Herald Tribune* (Paris, dated 4th August 1994).

A special kind of conflict and response has been Mazrui's attention to slavery and reparations. In 1992 Ali Mazrui and eleven others were "sworn in" by Africa's presidents to create a new body called Group of Eminent Persons on Africa's Reparations for Enslavement, Bondage and Exploitation (GEP). The Group elected Chief Moshood Abiola as its Chair. In June 1993 Abiola was elected President of Nigeria but he was never allowed by the military to assume office. Instead, he was imprisoned and died in detention in 1998.

Ali A. Mazrui, Professor Jacob Ade Ajayi of Ibadan University and Ambassador Dudley Thompson of Jamaica have kept the Reparations flame alive by having the issue debated every year at the annual meetings of the African Studies Association (ASA), of the United States. In the year 2000 they also involved, a major African-American speaker at the ASA, Randall Robinson, whose Trans Africa Forum (Washington, DC) had adopted reparations for African Americans as its latest crusade. Randall Robinson had himself just published a book entitled *The Debt* precisely on the issue of reparations.

In classroom situations, Ali Mazrui has provoked debates on what he calls "the triple heritage of African slavery—indigenous, Islamic and Western." Mazrui was less impressed by Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. of Harvard University and his television

series *Wonders of the African World*. In a heated Internet debate from the United States, Mazrui accused Gates of blaming the trans-Atlantic slave trade primarily on Africans themselves, thus “letting the White man off the hook.” Mazrui’s critique of Gates’ TV series remains the most highly publicized and the most often-quoted.

Ali Mazrui coined the phrase “the triple heritage” to describe Africa’s three legacies of Africanity, Islam and the West. But he himself has been described as “a walking triple heritage,” combining all those three legacies. His impact on higher education in the United States has indeed manifested all those three dimensions.

APPENDIX

Distinguished Professorships and Leadership Roles

Endowed and/or honorific professorships which Ali Mazrui has held during his years in the United States include the following:

- I. The first African to be appointed Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large Cornell University, Ithaca, New York (1986–1992) and Senior Scholar in Africana Studies (1992 to the present).
- II. The first African to be appointed Albert Schweitzer professor in the Humanities, State University of New York at Binghamton (1989 to the present).
- III. The first African to be appointed Ibn Khaldun Professor-at-Large Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences Leesburg, VA, (1996–2000)
- IV. Research Professor and Albert Luthuli Professor-at-large in Development Studies, University of Jos, Jos, Nigeria (1983 to the present).
- V. The first African Director, African American and African Studies, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1978–1981).

Ali Mazrui has also served on the following Boards of Directors, Trustees or Governors:

- (i) African Studies Association of the United States (he was President 1978 to 1979)
- (ii) International Congress of African Studies (1979–1991—also Vice-President).
- (iii) American Muslim Council (1996 to the present)
- (iv) Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (founder-Chair from 1999 to the present)
- (v) National Summit on Africa (from 1998)
- (vi) Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding Georgetown University Washington, (1998 to the present)
- (vii) New York African Studies Association (NYASA—1999 to the present)
- (viii) Oxford Center for Islamic Studies, Oxford, England (1998 to the present)
- (ix) Group of Eminent Persons on African Reparations, Organization of African Unity, Addis Ababa (1992 to the present)
- (x) International Association of Middle Eastern Studies (Headquarters in Canada, from 1997 to the present)
- (xi) Council of African Advisors, the World Bank, Washington DC (1987–1990)
- (xii) International Scientific Committee (as Editor of Volume VIII) UNESCO General History of Africa (1974 to 1997)
- (xiii) Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (1997 to the present)
- (xiv) Royal African Society, London (also Vice President—1987 to the present)
- (xv) Institute of Global Cultural Studies (founder-Director) Binghamton University, State University of New York Binghamton, New York (1991 to the present)

- (xvi) Editorial Boards, some 12 journals scattered in different parts of the world.

NOTES

1. See Ali A. Mazrui *The African Condition: A Political Diagnosis* (London: Heinemann Educational Books and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980).
2. *Transition* magazine (Kampala) No. 26, 1966. It has since been reproduced in the newly revived *Transition* (Cambridge, MA), No 75/76, 1998.
3. See Ali A. Mazrui, *Cultural Forces in World Politics* (New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books and Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 1990), Chapter 3.
4. See Ali A. Mazrui, *On Heroes and Uhuru-Worship* (London: Longmans, 1967). See also Thomas Carlyle classic, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841) in which he argued “The history of the World is but the biography of great men.”
5. *Cultural Forces in World Politics* (1990), op. cit. Chapters 7 and 8.
6. A version of the lecture is published as Chapter 4 in Ali Mazrui’s, *Cultural Forces in World Politics* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books and London: James Currey Publishers, 1990), pp. 83–101.
7. Ali A. Mazrui, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1986) p. 29.
8. Ibid, p. 28 .
9. See Ali A. Mazrui “Afrabia: Africa and the Arabs in the New World Order,” UFAHAMU, Vol. XX, No. 3, Fall 1992.
10. Ali A. Mazrui, *The African Condition and the American Experience: A Tale of Two Edens*, a series of three Macmillan-Stewart lectures sponsored by the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute, Harvard University, March 6 to 8, 2000. The lectures may be published by Oxford University Press in 2001.

11. See *Cultural Forces*, pp. 7–8.
12. Ali A. Mazrui, “Edmund Burke and Reflections on the Revolution in France,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (Ann Arbor, MI) Vol? No? 1963.
13. Ali A. Mazrui and G.F. Engholm, *The Review of Politics* Vol. 30, No. 1, January 1968.
14. Versions of the essays on Rousseau and Ancient Greece are published as chapters in Mazrui, *Political Values and the Educated Class in Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978).
15. *A World of Federation of Cultures: An African Perspective* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1976).
16. Ali A. Mazrui *Violence and Thought*, (New York: Humanities Press, 1969, reprinted 1971).
17. Ali A. Mazrui, *The African Condition: A Political Diagnosis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980).