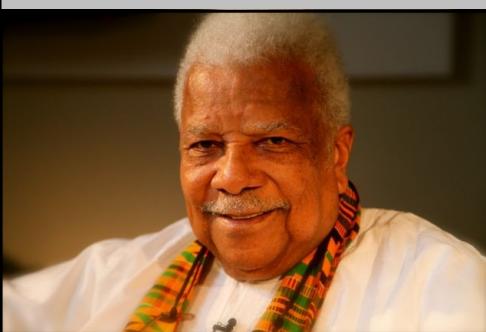


## Message from the Director Ali A. Mazrui



## Is Istanbul a Secular Jerusalem? Between Culture Conflict and Sacred History

The pro-democracy crisis in Syria has drawn attention not only to the Syrian version of "The Arab Spring," but also to Syria's neighbors. Turkey has been particularly important not only as a refuge for Syria's opposition on the run, but also as a base for democratic forces in the region.

The Turkish city which has been most relevant for these democratic trends has been Istanbul. For a long time Istanbul has been a center for region-wide **civilizing** forces. What has happened more recently is the emergence of Istanbul as a center for region-wide **democratizing** forces, as well as civilizing influences.

## A Tale of Two Centers of Civilization

Istanbul is a particularly appropriate city to host architects of change in global values. Diverse civilizations have interacted with each other in Istanbul across the centuries. Greeks, Romans, Byzantines and the Ottomans held sway in Istanbul across different centuries. The Ataturk Revolution between the two world wars weakened Islamic civilization, but planted the seeds for democratization.

(continued on page 3)

## A Multiple Convergence of Mazruiana Anniversaries

By IGCS Staff

The year 2011 marked the 50th year since Ali Mazrui's final year as a student at Columbia University. He obtained his Master's degree in political science from Columbia in 1961. In the second half of 1961 Mazrui began his Oxford career as a doctoral student at Nuffield College. The year 2011 marked the Golden Jubilee of his long association with Oxford. In January 1971 General Idi Amin Dada captured power in a military coup in Uganda. This marked the beginning of the end of Mazrui's Makerere University career in Kampala, although Mazrui did not leave the country until the following year.

It was also in 1971 that Ali Mazrui published his first and only novel, *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo*, (London: Heinemann Educational Books). 2011 became the 40th anniversary of Mazrui's partial career as a novelist. Since Ali Mazrui's

television series *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (BBC/PBS) was first broadcast in 1986, the year 2011 marked the 25th anniversary of that historic broadcast. During 1986 *The Africans* [a nine-part TV series] was shown in the United Kingdom, the United States, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and several other countries.

The year 2011 also marked the 25th anniversary of Ali Mazrui's appointment as Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. This was a six-year appointment involving periodic visits to Cornell to give public lectures, meet with students, and consult with Cornell professors in relevant fields. As Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large, Ali Mazrui was hosted by the African Studies and Research Center on the Cornell Campus.



Ali A. Mazrui (extreme right) presenting a paper on Barack Obama on a panel about "Black Winners of the Nobel Prize" at the African Studies Convention in Washington, DC in November 2011. The Chair (middle) was Professor Adebajo Adekeye of Nigeria.

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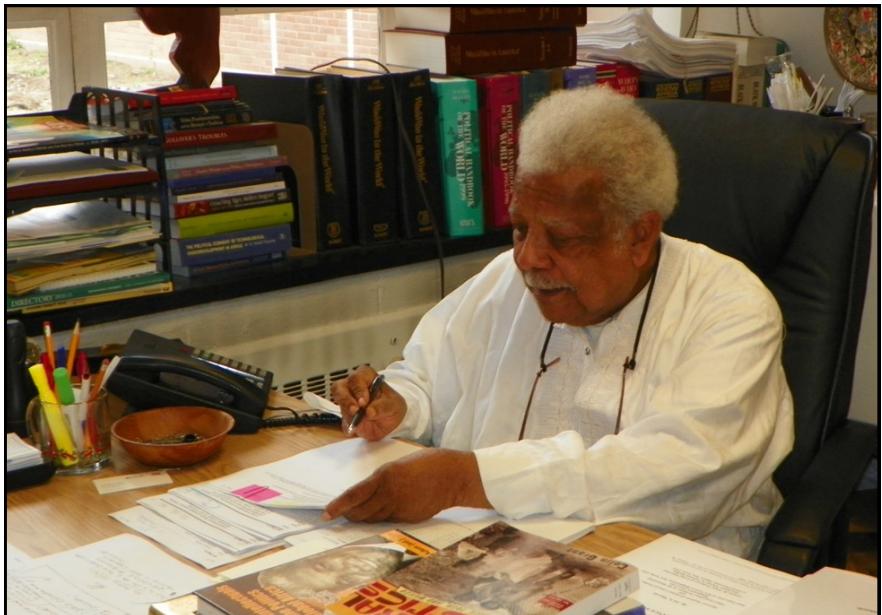
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## ... A Multiple Convergence of Mazruiana Anniversaries

(continued from page 1)



Professor Ali A. Mazrui working in his IGCS office at State University of New York, Binghamton, NY (2011)  
(IGCS Picture Archives)

The year 2011 also marked the 20th anniversary of Ali Mazrui's confirmation as Director of the newly-established Institute of Global Cultural Studies (IGCS) at the State University of New York at Binghamton. When Ali Mazrui was appointed two years earlier (1989) as Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities for Binghamton, he was allowed to retain concurrently for two years his prior professorship in Political Science at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. It was not until 1991 that Ali Mazrui resigned from the University of Michigan and confirmed his long-term affiliation to SUNY-Binghamton. The Institute of Global Cultural Studies (IGCS) was inaugurated soon after.

This convergence of Mazruiana anniversaries was celebrated at the 54th annual meeting of the African Studies Association (ASA) of the United States in Washington, DC in November 2011. The theme of the 2011 ASA annual meeting was itself a celebration of 50 years of Africa's independence from colonial rule. During the period of the annual meeting two round-tables were organized. The morning round-table on December 19, 2011 brought together Professor S. Nyang (Howard University), Professor R. Laremont (Binghamton University), Professor Assie-Lumumba (Cornell University), Professor A. Adebajo (Center for Conflict resolution Cape Town, South Africa, Chair) and Professor C. Butterworth (University of Maryland). The participants in the afternoon round-table on the same day were Professor A. Irele (Harvard University), Profes-

sor J. Mittelman (American University), Professor T. Shaw (University of London, Chair) and Professor S. Adem (Binghamton University). All participants reflected on the career and scholarship of Professor Ali A. Mazrui, and it is expected that the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) would financially support the publication of a book based upon the papers presented at the roundtables.

Also at the annual meeting IIIT awarded Ali Mazrui the *Ismail Al Faruqi Distinguished Scholar Award* in recognition of Mazrui's "lifetime achievements as a scholar activist." The ceremony was held at the Marriot Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC. Apart from tributes and the presentation of the award, the ceremony included an exhibition of Mazruiana memorabilia (biographical photographs, certificates, awards, etc.). There was also a 25 minute documentary about Mazrui's life, filmed and shown by Professor David Ndirangu Wachanga, of the University of Wisconsin.

Perhaps the most intriguing coincidence of all was that in the year 2011 Kenya (Mazrui's country of birth) adopted a new Constitution which for the first time recognized dual nationality. The new Constitution therefore opened the door for Ali Mazrui to apply for US citizenship without necessarily relinquishing his Kenyan nationality. Ali Mazrui has now started the process of pursuing that option. Ali Mazrui has been a permanent resident of the United States (green card holder) since 1974. ▲

## ... Is Istanbul a Secular Jerusalem? Between Culture Conflict and Sacred History

(continued from page 1)

*... If Jerusalem is a point of convergence of different religions, Istanbul is a point of convergence of different civilizations. It may be too early for Jerusalem to assume the role of peacemaker among religions, but it is not too early for Istanbul to become a force for peace among civilizations. Has Istanbul already become a secular Jerusalem? The new democratic forces in Istanbul have added to the progressive agenda of the city.*

The histories of the two cities have points in common. Historically Jerusalem had been a sacred ground of rivalry and contestation between and among the three Abrahamic traditions.

The Crusades sometimes united Muslims and Jews on one side against European Christians on the other.

On their way back from one of the Crusades some Western Christians invaded fellow Christians in Constantinople — and devastated life, limb and lands. The Orthodox Church of Byzantine nursed a grievance against the Roman Catholic Church right into the 20th century.

Under the Ottoman Empire conflict in the Holy Land declined dramatically and the Ottoman millet system permitted considerable autonomy to Jews and Christians as they lived under Muslim jurisdiction.

Jerusalem has continued to be a sacred city to followers of Moses, of Jesus and of Muhammad. Unfortunately the creation of the state of Israel and the Israeli conquest of Jerusalem in the 1967 war, have reactivated the role of Jerusalem as a trigger of conflict rather than a symbol of peace.

Like Jerusalem, Constantinople (alias Istanbul) has in the past been the headquarters of major religious traditions. Under Byzantine and under the Ottomans, Constantinople had a special status for Orthodox Christianity. The Ottomans also hosted the Caliphate until Mustafa Kemal Ataturk unilaterally abolished it in the 1920s.

Even under the Turkish Republic Istanbul has been the headquarters of the Greek Orthodox Church, though relations between church and state have not always been smooth.

Like Jerusalem, Istanbul (or Constantinople) has in the past been a sacred trigger of contestation and war. Western books refer to the fall of Constantinople to the Muslim conquerors in the fifteenth century (1453). Muslims refer to the same conquest as the spiritual liberation of Constantinople.



*Professor Mazrui at the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus presidential palace (1998)*

But in recent centuries Istanbul has become less and less a trigger odious conflict and more and more a meeting point of both sacred and secular cultures.

Fifty years after the death of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk Istanbul had become more peaceful than Israeli occupied Jerusalem. Istanbul had become a secular Jerusalem but more peaceful.

Istanbul is a synthesis of civilizations, while occupied Jerusalem remains a tense convergence of religions.

When T. E. Lawrence of Arabia published his book Seven Pillars of Wisdom Ottoman-friendly Turks were disgusted by Lawrence's prejudices.

But Lawrence did not coin the phrase Seven Pillars of Wisdom. T. E. Lawrence was aware of the words in the Book of Proverbs (IX: i):

*Wisdom hath builded a house; she has hewn out her seven pillars.*

### Towards Modern Wisdom?

We now need new modern pillars whether they be seven or ten, or fewer than either.

But modern pillars of wisdom may simply entail re-interpreting ancient lessons. When the Prophet Muhammad conquered Mecca from the ruling Quraysh in the year 630 C.E. the Prophet showed magnanimity in triumph. He and thousands of his followers entered Mecca without shedding any blood. He did not issue cards of the 50 most wanted Quraysh. He did not imprison thousands as some conquerors have done. The Prophet Muhammad conquered Mecca, granted amnesty to all Meccans who entered the sacred mosque for asylum, or stayed peacefully in their homes, or found their way to the home of the paramount Quraysh leader, Abu Sufyan — Muhammad's former enemy. This was magnanimity in triumph.

And the Qur'an urged Muslims not to nurse ancient grievances even if Muslims had been unjustly robbed in the past. In chapter 2 Surat al Baqara the Qur'an recommends compensation and forgiveness as a better alternative to revenge or collective punishment. Surah 2, verse 149, asserts the following:

*Kind words and the forgiving of faults are better than charity followed by injury.*

The Islamic calendar [Hijra] subsequently was determined to start not when Muhammad was born in 570 C.E., nor when he first received sacred revelation in 610 C.E., nor when he died in 632 C.E., but when he migrated from Mecca to Medina in 622 C.E. The whole Islamic calendar is therefore a celebration of asylum as a gesture of territorial magnanimity.

Another pillar of ancient wisdom worthy of modern interpretation is the Qur'an's salute to ethnic diversity and the spirit of internationalism.

*Oh people!*

*We have created you from male and female, and fashioned you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other, and learn from each other. Surely the best among you are [not that tribe or that nation], but the best are the most pious among you.*

*Ya ayuhha nasu. Innaa khalnaakum  
Min dhakarin wa unthaa;  
Wa jaalnaakum shuuban wa  
Qabaila li taarafu. Inna akramakum  
Indaa 'Llah atqaakum.*

(continued on page 8)

# Ali A. Mazrui: His Three Greatest Successful Failures

By Ireneo Omositon Namboka\*

About four decades ago, when I was an impressionable undergraduate student, I learned from Mwalimu that intellectual hot potatoes could be handled in original ways. The habit of not always following the beaten path in thinking or the established order of things fascinated me. On the occasion when so many special tributes were being paid to him as part of the African Studies Association (ASA) convention events, I chose to speak about three of his actions which I thought were his most successful failures. The risk which I took in seeking permission from the organizers to let me do so turned out to also be a risk for them to take. I was saved when Ali, in his extraordinary sense of humor gave the go-ahead. In doing this, however, Mwalimu now tipped the balance leaving the entire risk on me. I took refuge in the fact that my mentor is the Director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies (IGCS) and went ahead with this unorthodox adventure which I present in the following paragraphs.

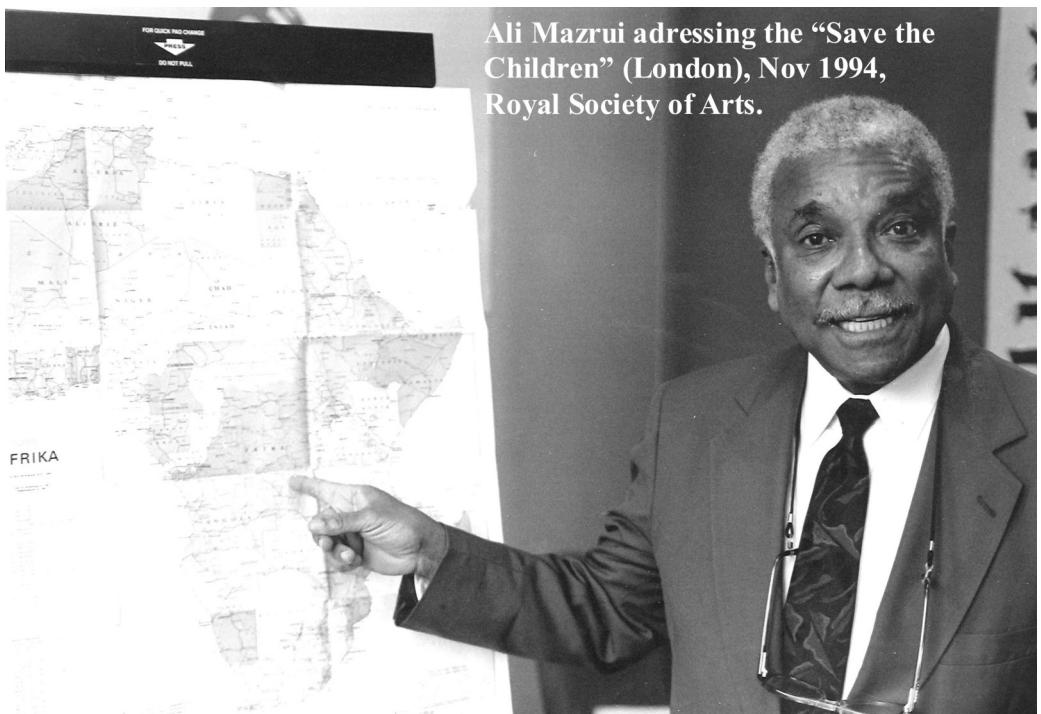
Mwalimu Ali Mazrui's first — and perhaps the greatest — failure was what he did in Mombasa, Kenya on February 24, 1933. Arriving on planet earth that day, little Ali, immediately precipitated a cultural linguistic controversy in Europe between the English and the French. It is not only driving on the wrong sides of the road that separates these two cousin nations from each other. For the French, the child is the subject — i.e., the actor in the verb from which the noun "birth" is derived. In other words, Ali himself "came into the world" (*il naquit le 24 février en 1933*). As for the English, on the other hand, at birth the child itself is inactive and therefore merely an object since it is born by someone — i.e., the mother who is therefore the subject. Having lived for thirty years in France since 1981, I now like the French, see the child as the actor in this matter. Fortunately, Professor Mazrui himself writes that (the) *French and British traders alike married Indian women ... and both were able to adapt themselves to Indian ways of life and the Indian manner of thinking...*<sup>1</sup> It was therefore little Ali himself who failed to arrive as a person who could be neatly fitted into one given human group — ethnic, cultural or racial. He could not belong or be caged into any one sectarian kind. This was because baby Ali chose to arrive with parents from more than one human group — a black African mother and an Arab father from the Arabian Peninsula! By his act of birth, Ali failed to be a person of one "pure" race. With this significant failure, little Ali was ironically predisposed to growing up into the caliber of Kenyan, African, Arab and

indeed world citizen crowds gathered to honor in Washington, DC in November 2011. The reverse side of that huge failure is Mwalimu's extraordinary cascade of successes. It also partly explains why Ali is a human bridge between and among divergent human societies, nations and continents.

About three decades later, more exactly 28 years after, another boy child arrived just like little Ali did — fusing two continents, races and countries into one: that little child is today the world's most powerful political figure under the sun in whose veins, like in those of Professor Mazrui, runs fifty percent of black African blood — President Barack Obama. In both cases, the maternal side had the preponderant influence as both sons adopted the countries of their mothers for citizenship: Ali Mazrui is Kenyan and Barack Obama is American. For failing to fit into the African/Arab/

with others across racial, religious and ideological divides. In the case of Professor Ali Mazrui, two of his lauded works<sup>2</sup> particularly bear testimony to this. With this background one is able to understand how and why the concept of "a triple heritage" occurred to Professor Ali Mazrui at the peak of his quest for *Africanness* in our time.

Born controversial, three decades later, in 1963 Ali did his second and maybe most objectionable act — traditionally, religiously and politically a troubling failure. An African, at that age, Ali, to rise to the social rank of a man, decided to take a wife. It was exactly on this point that he failed. A Kenyan of his generation, one of the few elites and therefore those expected to symbolically reflect the resolute nationalistic resistance to all things British, colonial or just white authority in the spirit of the *Mau Mau* war of liberation, Ali failed to embrace



Ali Mazrui addressing the "Save the Children" (London), Nov 1994, Royal Society of Arts.

White American traditions — (Ali and Barack should have respectively been Arab [from Oman] and Kenyan from Africa) according to the patrilineal practice, they were able to be something else — an African and an American.

Yet these two blood Kenyans, East Africans, Africans are just as truly blood brothers to the inhabitants of North Africa and the Middle East and the rest of the world. The success in the apparent failure is that Mwalimu and the American President have the unique independence and openness of mind which is a vital talent necessary in relating

bitterness, hate, vengefulness and the racial undercurrent associated with these sentiments among Kenyans. Instead of choosing an African girl or any other kind of partner, he decided to marry a white English woman. To add pain to injury, although himself a Muslim, Ali went for a Christian girl.

With hindsight, however, the heap of apparent failures connected with Mwalimu's nonconformity with the established order manifested in marriages, becomes evidence of his tremendous capacity in confronting huge personal and professional

challenges in his later life. About a decade later in the seventies up to the end of the 20th century this was to come true. Like with his birth, precisely in the logic of his nature, Ali was acting preemptively vis-à-vis distant challenges. The unclassifiable child when he arrived, Ali now acted in defiance of the received reductionist patriotism or cultural taboos. The racial, religious and ideological chains of the time did not manage to check his action. Was Mwalimu not resisting at all levels and therefore being a visionary as a man? From the spiritual level, Ali a Muslim black man from the oppressed Kenyan society marrying a woman from the white Christian British society could only be understood if one embraced the biblical admonition "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."<sup>3</sup> In this, as a man, Ali the Muslim took the stride to live the Gospel according to Saint Matthew. As for crossing the racial divide, he emulated his own father from Oman, who had done so with an African woman, his mother — only that in the case of Mwalimu Ali Mazrui, he was embracing the enemy society the colonizers who had committed atrocities on his own Kenyan people. This time Ali was now acting with the same rare visionary power of *Emanuel*, the hero in book *Gouverneurs de la Rosée*, by Jacques Roumain, the venerated Haitian writer during the first part of the 20th century. Indeed, Ali's Molly was Emmanuel's *Annaisé*, our heroine here.

In his great lectures, written (or electronic) works, Mwalimu has rarely directly preached reconciliation, tolerance, peace or love towards those we consider repugnant. Knowing Ali personally, however, I have consistently noticed him silently but powerfully sending these messages. Like Emmanuel, the hero cited above, Professor Ali Mazrui's valuable work at the human level is quiet and discrete, detected only by those who are close, sensitive and informally in touch with him. Snaps taken of him occasionally give this away.

Each one of Mwalimu's big failures almost always leads him to greater heights, throwing him into more trouble. His third most successful failure arose from an incident linked to his intellectual fearlessness and relentless advocacy for freedom of expression on the African continent. From the onset one should congratulate Ali on this third failure because it was inextricably tied to his second one. Professor Ali Mazrui at Makerere University in Uganda was publicly well-known for two habits. First, he often went off the campus and addressed civil society gatherings on all kinds of sensitive subjects. This also included his going outside Uganda to other countries. Secondly, on such occasions, when the time came for him to

enter the hall where he was going to address people, he ceremoniously walked in, and down the aisle holding his wife's hand like "bride and bridegroom" approaching platform. Enthusiastic cheers and applause filled the hall welcoming Ali Mazrui and Molly — the Afro-European couple.

Pan-African Ali Mazrui knew that his contribution to the self-esteem of all Africans and particularly of South Africa's black people was a duty. Therefore, on being invited by the Universities of Cape Town and Witwatersrand to address similar gatherings in that country he accepted although he put to his hosts — the organizers three conditions which, only if met would he go to apartheid-ruled South Africa. These were the following: 1) he should be able to say whatever he wanted, 2) he should be able to address racially mixed audiences, and 3) he should be able to go with his wife.

Ali Mazrui deliberately included the last condition to keenly test the apartheid system at its most sensitive point. As what has been said above will have shown, this is a point of strength Ali Mazrui had gained a decade earlier by failing to marry a fellow black or colored person. Now he was in a position to deliver a crucial message to the South African apartheid authorities, to Africa as a continent and to the world-at-large on the senselessness of practicing racial segregation. The question, however, is whether Professor Ali Mazrui succeeded or failed in this confrontation. He stuck to his principles and pride as laid down in the conditions under which he would go to South Africa. Under no circumstances would he be separated from his wife as the apartheid rules in South Africa would require. Exchanges between the organizers in Cape Town and Professor Mazrui followed as described below.

The conference organizers informed Professor Ali Mazrui that he was putting to them conditions which were difficult to satisfy given the laws in force within South Africa under the apartheid government. They nevertheless explained that they would try to have the first condition granted by the authorities. On the second, although they were not optimistic, they at least promised to try and see what the results would be. As for the third condition, the organizers informed Ali without any ambiguity that they were not even going to try. This, they knew, according to the official practice, if the black and white couple turned up, the police would arrest them on arrival. In the face of this Ali decided not go to South Africa. This, then, was Ali's third big successful failure — or was it?

On closer reflection this may in fact have been one of Professor Mazrui's political victories vis-à-vis the racist apartheid regime in Pretoria. He later used the incident to write an article in the

Commonwealth Report scathingly criticizing Prime Minister Jon Foster's government for the racial discrimination, lack of intellectual freedom or free speech, *inter alia*. The criticism was brought to Mr. Jon Foster's attention. In a face saving effort, the South African Prime Minister had a letter written to

Mazrui,  
Venice,  
Italy 1962.



Mwalimu in which the former obliquely put the blame on the organizers of the would have been conference. Eating his own words over the treatment of couples of mixed races — i.e., black and white,<sup>4</sup> the letter apologized for the misinformation Professor Mazrui had been subjected to by the organizers. It appealed to Mwalimu not to believe such information and to travel to South Africa with the assurances that nothing of the kind would happen to the couple. Ali's action in 1963, of marrying a white woman brought him to lock horns with the powerful racist authorities of South Africa. What radical Africans had looked at as Ali's failure a decade earlier had become the strongest silent way to challenge the apartheid system. Ali and Molly stood as an eloquent political and cultural symbol of the oneness and strength of the human race. What is more, between them Ali and Molly brought into the world more children of mixed race — a triple heritage incarnate!

These are children we should recognize to be assets in the creation of peace, harmony and unity in today's and tomorrow's world. President Barack Hussein Obama is one such. Professor Ali Mazrui falls exactly in the same category and for his age and contribution to Africa's advance-

(continued on page 9)

## Personal Encounter with *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*

By Augustine Agwuele\*

The intellectual relevance of Dr. Ali Mazrui has been variously noted, his scholarly preoccupation that is, Africa, its place and destiny in the wider global system, called *Mazruiana*, could be said to have gained international attention through this documentary. The focus on Africa as exemplified in this work is not a mere (re)affirmation of things Africa, or a collection of endangered practices for the amusement of curiosity seekers, rather it is in a sense the uncovering of Africa's foundational constitution in which are inscribed, perhaps, enshrined its creeds, values, aspirations, and institutions. This spiritual and social pact between the people, their gods and nature is an invaluable admixture the crux of which is integral to Africans' identity formation. In contact situations, aspect of this fulcrum of being for Africans interacts with non-African influences, while remaining aspects of this core are sheltered and jealously guarded. Thus, in recognition of its stable, solid core works on Africa speak of the resilience of African cultures. The application of the phrase resilience seems acceptable in so far as it refers to this indestructible crucible of African make-up.

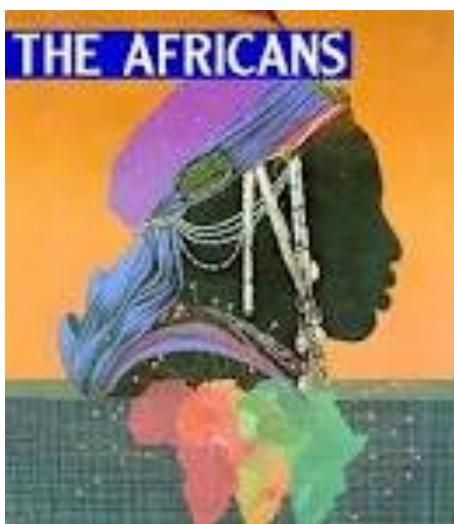
The indelible consciousness for this African core was first raised for me by the documentary, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*. It has been twenty-five years since it was made, nevertheless the theoretical, instructional appeal of this work has not ceased, neither has its pedagogical relevance abated. For me, this documentary marked a defining moment of confrontation with Africa, its history, its present, its place in the globe, and its future. This documentary is for me and perhaps for the narrator, Professor Ali Mazrui a journey toward self-evaluation, of discovery, and cognizing of one's own wealth in the form of history, indigenous cultural institutions and societal organization. But first, some aside comments.

The global exposure that this work gave and still gives to Africa remains remarkable, it is an invaluable documentary that introduces Africa, explicates and diagnoses the continent and its various institutions with intellectual rigor. This work is a great landmark of historiography and cultural study of the continent. Unlike many works with the pretentious tag "Africa" the documentary is a thorough analysis of the continent. Its scope, as has become most of Mazrui's work, truly spans the continent, illustrating every region and significant institutions. It looks into history to understand the present; through comparative analyses it makes sense of then contemporary Africa and thence explores its future. In fact, it is a thorough synopsis of the continent.

The model adopted by Mazrui in this documentary is arguably his template towards global studies. His scholarship since then has not been bound to a continent, rather, his theoretical positions find illustrations across the globe. Thus, issues of democracy, economic development and religious understanding are not only of concern to

pied the same space in the tube.<sup>1</sup> Professor Toyin Falola illustrated various examples of these moments in his memoir<sup>2</sup> with respect to polygamy, communal Yoruba lifestyle and gerontocracy. For Wole Soyinka, whose memoir,<sup>3</sup> similar to Falola's is an adult's reminiscence of childhood, it was confrontation with the world larger than the family and with the life of grown-ups. In all these cases, this point of confrontation becomes transformational and accompanied by a change in perspective. For me, this moment with respect to Africa, dates to the initial viewing of Ali Mazrui's *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*. I will describe just two defining outcomes from the viewing of this documentary (a) demystifying the source of knowledge (b) empowerment to contribute to scholarship on Africa.

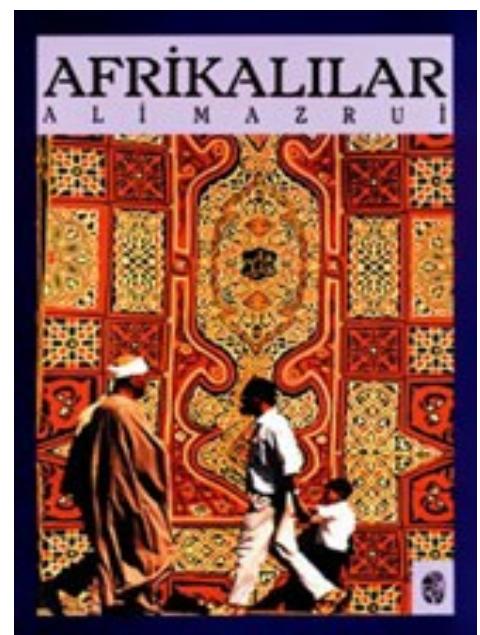
Born post independent in Nigeria, colonial deeds were of a past era, socio-political circumstance of the 1970s of West Africa were more present. Rightfully attending to youthful pre-occupations as were my peers in the metropolis of Ibadan, our serene existence and the fear for hell engendered by various Pentecostal Movements were intermittently punctuated with events of global dimension from other parts of Africa such as coup Ghana, popular uprising in Liberia, the death of Haile Selassie, the war of independence in Rhodesia, civil war in Mozambique, the toppling of Idi Amin in Uganda, of Emperor Jean Bokassa in



Africans, but to humanity in general. Consequently, Professor Mazrui has since transitioned to a global scholarship, using Africa as his point of departure.

A piece of this kind, given the occasion, is often replete with celebratory language and adulterous tone. This work deserves both, as does the narrator, Dr. Mazrui, for his insightful theoretical frameworks, his methodology and the aptness of his observations which have continued to inspire generations of scholars. As one of those who have profited from this documentary in terms of personal scholarly development and one who finds it invaluable in teaching an undergraduate course on peoples and cultures of Africa, the documentary has a personal and professional value.

There are memorable instructional moments where individuals, in the course of their intellectual growth, have to confront certain unexamined childhood preconceptions that have been neatly tucked away. Such moments require a person to take a stand that ultimately shreds such innocent assumptions. For Prof. Maurice Amutabi, this moment occurred when he was researching images of women in advertisement. As a child Maurice accepted as real, authentic and factual anyone that shows up on TV. Thus, for him actors including those in commercials, and their messages were just as real as President Moi, because they occu-



Central African Republic, and apartheid. In addition to these news reports were ethnographical reports, popular narratives and accounts illustrating discoveries, customs or certain catastrophe in the continent. However, there was never really an opportunity for a comprehensive overview through which youths of this time could gain a holistic understanding of the continent, neither was there easily accessible means that allow the contextualization and analyses of the various socio-political events plaguing the continent. Furthermore, the sources of available reports, documentaries, and narratives were European whose images have become stamped into our youthful memories as the quintessential heroes and faces of discoveries, inventions, and philanthropies. In fact, the only accent for proclaiming discoveries and for narrating historical events and places of importance on the continent were Ameri-Europeans.

Here comes the documentary. In it, there is not only a recognizable physiology and a familiar accent, this person is occupying the same space as those Europeans who had always had the monopoly on technology, who are often seen trotting with natives aides on one of those mysterious journeys often leading to discoveries, who possess this magical and uncanny ability to lead expeditions through which they not only domesticate an area but name them, and who have the exclusive right and ability to tell owners of a culture things they do not know about themselves. In one of the scenes, Ali Mazrui points to Great Zimbabwe, walks on its ruins and explicates its hidden cultural throve while proffering interpretations about its ascendancy and decline. In another scene, he is showing the pyramids in Egypt, over there in Ethiopia, he is describing the Rock-hewn Churches; mentioning such things as the possible presence of the ark of covenant! He is not one of those Europeans teaching the natives about themselves, but teaching the "natives" about themselves he certainly is and he has authenticating footages. Like all the Europeans before him, he cuts the image of an eye witness, walking, pointing, knowing and telling in a convincing manner. The illumination from each of the eight episodes; enhanced by compelling historical underpinnings of the various issues that feature in each segment, gave force of truism and reality to the discourse.

The sudden realization of the ability of Africans to shed lights of significance on epoch-defining moments of their civilization and the fact of their rights to document, declare and explicate their own stories were greatly impressed on me. I suddenly realized more so than before that none is

better placed than Africans to give insiders' perspective to Africa. I concluded that the account of Africans about Africa would have greater explanatory validity than others. Sometimes, the source of a message influences its reception, its impact and consequently its values. In this case, the person of the narrator deconstructed, demystified as it were, the European ownership of knowledge, discovery and invention. It removed the false impression that they personified documentary and narration.

By underscoring those positive things in Africa with accompanying illustrative and captivating images of historical places and events, and by carefully engaging the complex and overlapping issues implicated in the development of political, economic, technological and social issues across different regions of the continent, the documentary

rated novel and significant historical events such as the various indigenous messianic movements with profound African concerns — e.g., Kimbamgu. It was surprising to learn of the East African martyr, Beatrice, who in the 1700s became odious to the Catholic Mission for challenging some of their doctrines and was eventually burnt at stake for claiming to have also conceived immaculately.

Aside from all this new information, there was the impressive use of language. For an African, who was socialized to appreciate flowery language and careful manipulation of imagery; there is no better mnemonic device to retaining a message than for it to be couched in a familiar prose. To hear such phrases as "abundance of import has replaced the abundance of nature; we embraced western taste at the expense of taste or are we responding to the sweet tooth of Europe that we have forgotten our own hungry mouth."

Ali Mazrui in this documentary was speaking at the village square; I can almost see the elders nod their approval at each utterance

In addition to demystifying the perception of European ownership of knowledge, it suggested an approach for analyzing the conditions on the continent. Being a student of linguistics, experimental phonetics to be precise, I expect any analytical model to be verifiable and falsifiable. The conceptual paradigm proposed and explored in the documentary meets this standard. The triple heritage of indigenous traditions, Islam and western influence or put different the interaction of African traditional institutions with eastern and western cultures remain not only a viable research agenda for Africa of any epoch, but also an invaluable source of understanding what Ali Mazrui termed the African condition. For example, through its application, there emerged for me a clear and appreciable

*"We have replaced indigenous abundance with imported extravagance; we have embraced Western tastes of consumption without Western skills of production. Our agriculture is so busy cultivating for Europe's sweet tooth that we have forgotten our own hungry mouths. We have created dessert and beverage economies."*

—Ali Mazrui in his documentary

*The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (1986)

marked the onset of my personal journey in gaining closer familiarity with the continent. As Bob Marley wailed, "if you know your history, then you would know where you're coming from...."<sup>4</sup> Consequently, it was interesting to hear Prof. Mazrui affirm that Christians and Christian ceremonies were in existence in Ethiopia well before it reached England and to wonder along with him why we mainly hear of European missionary activities to Africa, but never of African origin of Christianity. Actually, there is no African origin of any worthy element of modernization and civilization. Yet, Christian monastery was first developed in Africa. Scholars in Ethiopia were reading and writing earlier than in England. The concept of a single god is one of the major contributions of Africa that is least acknowledged.... It was instructive to hear nar-

connection between the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism and the clash of cultures which manifests politically with the assassination of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, conflicts of independence, in fact there seem not to be any internal or local conflict, rather, each is internationalized as exemplified by the Nigerian-Biafran war or Mozambique's civil war. The much vaunted developmental projects such as the Akosombo Dam that was billed as a catalyst for modernization and development, turned out to be a mere instrument of imperialism.

The viability of Mazrui's tripartite paradigm for the study of Africa can be independently evaluated after 25 years. Consider religion, for the 2000s,

(continued on page 10)

## ... Is Istanbul a Secular Jerusalem? Between Culture Conflict and Sacred History

(continued from page 3)

Was Muhammad thinking of Bilal when upon, Muhammad's farewell pilgrimage, the Prophet reaffirmed the following:

*An Arab is not superior to a non-Arab, nor a red man to a black man except through piety and virtue.*

Lawrence of Arabia did not do justice to the concept of Seven Pillars of Wisdom. But modern Istanbul could reformulate modern pillars of wisdom, partially based on ancient insights and sacred values.

Although Istanbul is a secular Jerusalem it should be ready to borrow wisdom from both science and religion, from both Einstein of yesterday and Abraham of ancient times.

Finally, a word about gender issues as well as ethnicity in the context of democratization. If Turkey has had a woman Prime Minister long before the Arab world has broken through that ultimate gender-barrier, does that mean that Turkey is ahead of the Arab world in gender democracy and civilized gender relations?

On the other hand, if the Arab world has had black presidents and black Prime Ministers long before Turkey has broken through that ultimate racial barrier, does that mean that the Arab world is ahead of Turkey in pursuit of a post-racial social order?

Both Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula have produced rulers who are parentally "black" in Barack Obama's sense — i.e., a ruler one of whose parents is a black African, as in the case of Anwar Sadat.



**Prof. Ali A. Mazrui speaking at the 2011 NYASA Conference, Oneonta, NY**

In reality both Turkey and the Arab world need more scientific measurements of both inter-racial democratic performance and inter-gender democratic performance than can be provided by an isolated Turkish woman ruler like Tansu Çiller, or by an isolated Afro-Arab President like Anwar Sadat.

Nevertheless, Istanbul as a convergence of civilizations will have observed contradictions as well as similarities between civilizations.

Should the fact be more advertised that four Muslim countries have produced five women Presidents or Prime Ministers long before the

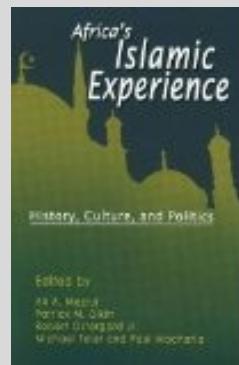
United States has elected a woman President, or Italy has elected a woman Prime Minister, or modern Russia had produced a woman Head of State? Turkey joined the ranks of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Indonesia as Muslim countries which have permitted women to reach the pinnacle of power.

The ancient Jerusalem is already in the shadow of one great lady of the past who is revered in the sacred scriptures of both Christianity and Islam. This great lady who breathed the air of Jerusalem was, of course, the Virgin Mary. Israel more recently has a record of a woman Prime Minister, Golda Meir.

Istanbul as the new secular Jerusalem is already in the process of producing great female Istanbulis. The men are conceding space for them.

*The stream of civilization meanders on  
In the vast expanse of the valley of Time  
The new is come, the old is joined,  
And the city abides a changing clime. ▲*

\*An earlier version was presented at Summit of — Leaders of Change — held in Istanbul, Turkey, on March 15, 2011, in the session on "Paths to Conflict Resolution: Cultural Communication."



**Professor Ali A. Mazrui memorabilia and book exhibition at the African Studies Association (ASA) Conference, Washington, DC, 2011.**



## ... Ali A. Mazrui: His Three Greatest Successful Failures

(continued from page 5)

ment, great souls and minds bowed their heads in his honor at the Marriot Hotel, Wardman Park in November — Washington, DC.

The world today and Africa in particular — more critically than ever before needs role models in every field of endeavor. Leadership, whether political, economic, cultural, intellectual or scientific — must be based on unbiased, informed and tolerant understanding of others' concerns. Professor Ali Mazrui protected by his ancestors' blessings and by the Creator has devoted his entire life over the last half-a-century researching, teaching and analyzing human crises of all kinds. Mwalimu was professor in 1968 when I first met him as a college student in Uganda. Working on the General History of Africa at United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1989, Mwalimu used to squeeze a time and listen to me! He would even come home to see the grandchildren. Ali invariably brought greetings and news of his first wife Molly, my teacher of French, and about the children. We talked about faith, family life and only turned to world issues afterwards. A brother, mentor and friend shared with me how to be open to other cultures and civilization on earth.

Mwalimu's life helped me discover that events or things must not be judged on their face value. The saying "A blessing in disguise" runs throughout what I have written about Ali's life. Failures aren't exactly what they may appear to be at first. ▲

### Notes

1. Ali Mazrui quoting William C. McLeod in *Euro-Jews and Afro-Arabs: The Great Semitic Divergence in World History*, edited by S. Adem. (University Press of America, 2008).
2. See Ali A. Mazrui, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*, (BBC Publications, 1986), and *Euro-Jews and Afro-Arabs, The Great Semitic Divergence in World History*, edited by S. Adem. (University Press of America, 2008).
3. Matthew 5: 43–44, (<http://www.douglarionbooks.com/online>)
4. See Ali Mazrui, *A Tale of Two Africas: Nigeria and South Africa as Contrasting Visions*, edited by James N. Kariuki. (Adonis & Abbey Publishers Ltd., 2006).

\*Mr. Ireneo Omositon Namboka is a former United Nations Human Rights Advisor.



*Above: Professor Mazrui receiving an Islamic Award from Dr. Jamal Barzinji, left, and Dr. Abubaker al-Shingjeti (middle) at a ceremony in Washington, DC, 2011.*

*Below: Ali Mazrui addressing an audience who had assembled to honor him. The event was sponsored by the International Institute of Islamic Thought, Washington, DC, 2011.*



## ... Personal Encounter with *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*

(continued from page 7)

Africa was exporting Christianity which by now has become not just indigenized but rejuvenated on the continent. Scholars like Rimi Nwariboko, Caleb Oladipo and Asonzeh Ukah continue to document the growth of Christianity on the continent and its outward spread. In fact, as of 2011, Africa's greatest export to the rest of the world is perhaps Christianity with its distinct African flair and religiosity. Islam continues to rise unabated, especially its effort towards political domination. This is attested by the violence in Somalia, terrorist activities in Northern Nigeria by the Boko Haram and by the performances of the Islamic Brotherhood in elections in the recently liberated Egypt and the institution of Islamic government by the interim government of Libya. African traditional religion on the other hand may not be spectacular in visibility; it remains the core-belief system and mark of identification for most Africans. The cultural primacy of traditional Africa and its importance to solving Africa's problems is perhaps the most overlooked resources in Africa. Western cultural influence remains in my opinion poorly grafted appendage to African institutions.

The quality and rate of African production attest to the industrial and technological impact of

the West on it. Twenty-five years ago, the documentary lamented the crude state of industrial production as well as the decaying political, health, social and economic institutions on the continent show the shallowness of the relationship. Twenty-five years after this documentary, it is not clear that a new documentary will attest to anything different in these regards.

In his narrative, Ali Mazrui seems to show a shifting target in the liberation of Africa. When enslavement ended, colonialism replaced it, colonialism ended, neo-colonialism replaced it, economic exploitation, accumulation of debt, intellectual enslavement, and cultural reorientation each creeps one following the other. This piecemeal emergence and sequential resolution of problems continue to foster dependence on the West. Essentially, one wonders when Africans will seize the initiatives, stop reacting to events orchestrated elsewhere and become truly independent. It is interesting to note that as Ali Mazrui decries various neocolonial policies, the effects of westernization and external influences on the continent, his credits, based on nomenclature, did not include African names; ranging from the researchers for the documentary, the technical crew, to the spon-

sors. It would seem that imperialism and neo-colonialism that Africans decry are only to the extent that imperialists make it possible to be heard. Let us hope that a sequel will not be inspired by outsiders but will be informed and directed by internal African considerations, creativity and vision. ▲

## Notes

- Notes

  1. Marice Amutabi, "Matangazo ya Biashara na Jinsia: Gender Stereotypes and Advertisements in Kenya," in *Development, Modernism and Modernity in Africa* edited by Augustine Agwuele. (New York: Routledge, 2012).
  2. Toyin Falola. *A Mouth Sweeter than Salt: An African Memoir*. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004).
  3. Wole Soyinka. *Ake: The Years of Childhood*. (New York: Random House, 1981).
  4. Bob Marley & the Wailers. *Buffalo Soldier*.

\*Dr. Augustine Agwuele is Associate Professor of Linguistics at the Department of Anthropology, Texas State University-San Marcos.



*Left: Professor Ali A. Mazrui (middle) being introduced before his lecture "Democracy and the Politics of Petroleum," sponsored by the Goddy Jidenma Foundation, at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria, December 8, 2011.*



*Right: Professor Ali A. Mazrui receiving gifts of thanks after his lecture "Democracy and the Politics of Petroleum," sponsored by the Goddy Jidenma Foundation, at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria, December 8, 2011.*



*Above: Ali Mazrui before his formal lecture at the Free State University in Bloemfontein, South Africa, May 2011.*

*Left: Vice-Chancellor Jonathan Jansen introducing Professor Ali A. Mazrui's Memorial Lecture on "Pro-Democracy Uprisings in Africa's Experience: From Sharpeville to Benghazi." Free State University in Bloemfontein, Durban, South Africa, 2011.*

*Below: Professor Ali A. Mazrui delivering Memorial Lecture entitled "Pro-Democracy Uprisings in Africa's Experience: From Sharpeville to Benghazi." Free State University in Bloemfontein, Durban, South Africa, 2011.*



# Reflections on Japan's Culture, Ideology and Economy

By Seifudein Adem\*

*"Postwar Japan replaced the imperial Samurai with the businessman, the battalions with multinational corporations and the honor-motivated hara-kiri with profit-motivated business."* (Ali Mazrui, 1978)

The economic power of Japan is all too obvious even after the March 2011 mega earthquake, the subsequent tsunami and nuclear radiations. Japan is the third largest economy in the world — after the United States and China. And yet the ideational elements, or the philosophical underpinnings, of this power are less well-known. Japan's economy has indeed been the subject of considerable scholarly scrutiny over the years, but we know that the same cannot be said about Japan's culture, or the relationship between the two.

But, why do scholars generally tend to pay relatively little attention to cultural explanations of social and economic behavior? One likely answer would have to do with the problem of measuring culture and systematically relating it to behavioral changes. Cultural behavior cannot readily be observed; it has to be deduced from the spoken word and overt actions. This also makes it difficult, theoretically, to formulate and empirically test the relationship between culture and behavior. Another thing which "frightens scholars" who seek to use a cultural approach relates to "the sulfurous odor of race and inheritance" that inherently accompanies it. Whatever the fundamental reason that discouraged scholars from cultural

analysis of behavior is, the consequence had been the slighting of the role of culture in society.

Thus, I wish to inquire here briefly about how culture shaped Japan's economic organization and how it made the Japanese system of thought what it is. Let us start by asking a simple and straightforward question: Could Japan boast of an ideology of its own? Some say Japan does not have anything unique of its own in the form of original ideas since virtually every aspect of Japanese achievement is itself the result of imitation. With some dramatization, J. Tobin summarized this view succinctly: "... the Japanese, unable or unwilling to create, borrow. The genius of the Japanese lies not in invention but in adaptation — of Korean pottery, tombs and textiles; Chinese script and scripture; Dutch science and medicine; French education; English colonialism; German militarism; and American egalitarianism, corporate efficiency and popular culture." There are also those who insist that Japan is so unique from the rest of the world in fundamental ways that it could offer an attractively powerful model that is worthy of emulating.

But, a broad consensus exists that Japanese are culturally flexible people; they have the ability to change course quickly in response to the needs of the times, rather than stubbornly clinging on. Ruth Benedict has observed: "The Japanese sees that he has made an 'error' in embarking a course of action which does not achieve its goal. When it fails, he discards it as a lost cause, for he is not conditioned to pursue lost causes. 'It is no use,' he says, 'biting one's na-

vel.'" The views are far from uniform, however, when it comes to the extent to which cultural flexibility contributed to the rapid industrialization and economic development of Japan.

This is where the issue of imitation also should enter the discussion. It is evident that Japanese give more value to imitation (adaptation or domestication, as some would prefer to put it) than to invention. And successful imitation is undoubtedly a virtue rather than a vice, irrespective of the society in which it takes place. History of nations reaffirms that there is no civilization that had risen to pre-eminence without borrowing ideas from another civilization. Japanese are good imitators and excellent modifiers of what has been imitated. An example of a foreign idea that had been modified to fit domestic purpose is Confucianism. Confucius regarded benevolence, justice, ceremony, knowledge and faith as among the most important virtues, but believed out of these it was benevolence which was the virtue that should be at the heart of humanity. In Japan, loyalty, rather than benevolence, became the most important virtue.

Honna and Hoffer had offered one cultural explanation about the underlying root of and the general attitude towards imitation in Japan: "At the core of the Japanese culture lies the idea that imitation is an important process of basic education. The word manabu (to learn) and maneru (to imitate) are said to have derived from the same origin, manaburu, and students and apprentices are often told to flow their masters' models before they acquire their own ideas and skills. Nor do



Dr. Seifudein Adem (center) with the last group of his students in December 2005, University of Tsukuba, Japan.

Japanese always distinguish between imitation and creation. Rather, they regard practical application of science and requirements of prototypes of technology as no less creative than discoveries and inventions."

Similarly, the fundamental distinction between the Japanese system of thought and that of the West has made Japanese "capitalism" work in ways neither Adam Smith nor Karl Marx would have easily understood. One such distinction could perhaps be illustrated by taking a brief contrastive look at the ideas of Adam Smith and Shosan Suzuki, a European political economist and a Japanese monk, respectively. One of the well-known and distinguishing features of Adam Smith's idea is the deep suspicion with which merchants and manufacturers are viewed. In Smith's own well-known words: "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves not to their humanity, but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our necessities but of their advantages."

Shosan Suzuki is regarded by some as the man most directly responsible for the development of "capitalism" in Japan, and Suzuki's idea is the obverse of Adam Smith. In a clear attempt to morally justify a "worldly activity," Suzuki wrote: "All is for the good of the world... The all encompassing Buddha-nature manifests in us all works for the world's good; without artisans, such as the blacksmith, there would be no tools; without officials there would be no order; without farmers there would be no food; without merchants, we would suffer inconvenience. All the other occupations as well are for the good of the world." In fact, Suzuki went as far as to assert: "... commerce is the function Heaven has assigned to those whose job is to promote freedom throughout the country."

Another way of illustrating the distinction between the two systems of thought is to look at matters pertaining to religion. Writing about the

rapid industrialization of Japan, historian Takeo Kuwabara had argued: "Over all Japan's myriad gods and deities, there is no single Allah or Jehovah, no monopolistic god that devours all the others. One all-powerful god would not permit constant shifting from one thing to another. For a Japanese, one all-knowing god would be constricting. When one does something uncommendable, he may hide it from his wife, children and other people, but if that god was above him, he would be uneasy... That god would scold when he caught someone beating a drum as a Nichiren Buddhist one day and singing hymns at church the next... As it is, none of Japan's thousands of gods has too much power. As the old maxim goes, 'If one god throws you, another god will pick you up'... I believe that the absence of an almighty God was instrumental in that success."

At least insofar as the instrumentality of religious values is assumed to be crucial for economic success, Max Weber's argument bears a striking similarity to that of Takeo Kuwabara. Kuwabara's thesis could be also seen as the Weberian theory *in reverse*. Referring to the difference in the attitudes of different religions toward economic life, Max Weber quotes, in his famous book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, a succinct characterization by a contemporary writer: "The Catholic is quieter, having less of the acquisitive impulse; he prefers a life of the greatest possible security, even with the smaller income, to a life of risk and excitement, even though it may bring the chance of gaining honor and riches. The proverb says jokingly, 'either eat well or sleep well.' In the present case, the Protestant prefers to eat well, the Catholic to sleep undisturbed."

While Weber viewed Protestantism as fostering economic development by inculcating certain favorable values in people's minds, Kuwabara believed commitment to any particular religion is restrictive and undermines flexibility. J. Taylor has further elaborated the Japanese attitude towards monotheism: "The reason why Japanese balk at Christianity is that it demands exclusive loyalty. If

the demands of the community are in conflict with the demands of God, Christianity teaches men to follow God. This takes great courage in any society but it is part of the Western mythology about individual autonomy. For the Japanese, it is well nigh unthinkable to forsake the group for a principle, no matter how deeply felt." Moreover Weber's account of the emergence of capitalism, especially in reference to Luther's conception of the *calling*, seems to echo Suzuki's philosophical elevation of commercial activity. It is in this way that success in attaining worldly "good" is stressed in Japanese mythology and philosophy. ▲

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Dr. Seifudein Adem (center) with Chinese colleagues at the 13th CODESRIA General Assembly, Rabat, Morocco, December 2011.



# Forty-Five Years of Independence: Revisiting Botswana's Political History

By F. Sonia Arellano-López\*

Botswana is one of fourteen landlocked countries in Africa. Located in the center of southern Africa, Botswana is bordered by South Africa on the east and south, Namibia on the west and north, and Zimbabwe on the northeast, and it touches Zambia along the Zambezi River. Occupying an area of nearly 582,000 square kilometers, Botswana is similar in size to the US State of Texas, or the Republic of Kenya. The Okavango River, one of southern Africa's longest rivers flows through Botswana, fanning out into a huge inland delta some 15,000 square kilometers in area, to form a unique environment with a myriad of water channels. The Kalahari (or Kgalagadi) desert occupies approximately eighty percent of the country, with valleys and pans etched across the landscape.

Botswana's large area seems out of proportion to its population of just two million people. More than a third of the population lives in a corridor that runs north and south in the eastern portion of the country, where rainfall is most abundant and the water supply is permanent, land is arable, and infrastructure is more developed. Although, Botswana's government has maintained a firm commitment to policies that make no distinctions along ethnic or racial lines, the country is ethnically diverse. There are eight major Setswana-speaking groups, a large non-Setswana-speaking language group, the Bakalanga speakers, followed by the San or Basarwa (usually referred to as Bushmen), who speak Khoi-San languages and other smaller groups. There is a significant Damara or Baherero population, who fled Namibia, in 1905, when it was under German rule. There are also significant numbers of citizens of European, Asian and mixed descent, as well as a large temporary expatriate community.

Before the entrance of Tswana herders, the area that became Botswana was sparsely populated by hunter and gatherer communities of the San people. The Tswana began to enter the country in the early 16th century, but a major Tswana displacement from South Africa occurred during the early 18th century, as a consequence of the Zulu wars. British missionaries arrived to Tswana territory in the 19th century. In the late 1800s, when hostilities broke out between the Tswana and the Transvaal Boer settlers who were invading Tswana lands, the Tswana chiefs appealed to the British for protection. In 1885, the British put Tswana territory under their protection, through the creation of the Bechuanaland Protectorate.

During the colonial period (1885–1966), the British administration gave very little attention to the physical and social infrastructure of the Protectorate. Education was neglected and the population was largely illiterate. Manufacturing was al-

under the constitution through the creation of the House of Chiefs as part of the legislative branch of government. The House of Chiefs represents the eight principal sub-groups of the Botswana ethnic composition, and four other members are selected by the sub-chiefs of four of the districts. Chiefs and other leaders preside over customary and traditional courts, but within the constitutional government, the role of the House of Chiefs is strictly advisory (Tlou and Campbell 1984: 231).

Botswana's post-independence economic success is exceptional, considering that it has occurred in a context of a liberal democratic political order, and in a regional context where independence struggles, threats of invasion, and in particular the disruptive influence of apartheid South Africa, were constant menaces for its political and economic stability (Thomson 2000: 101–103). Botswana's liberal democratic political order makes it worthwhile to revisit historical political events and remember the role that key political figures played during the pre-independence negotiations.

One of the key political figures was Sir Seretse Khama, the Bangwato chiefdom heir, and future prime minister of independent Botswana. Sir Seretse Khama was the son of Segoma II and grandson of Khama III, both former chiefs of the Bangwato chiefdom. Born in 1921, he became chief-designate at the age of four, on the death of his father. His uncle Tshekedi Khama ruled the chiefdom as regent until he reached the age of majority. He was educated at Lovedale Institution in the Cape Province of South Africa, Fort Hare University College, and University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, then in Britain at Balliol College, Oxford. In 1946 he joined the Inner Temple in London, to study to become a barrister. In 1948, he married a white Englishwoman, Ruth Williams. The marriage was condemned at tribal meetings, and, in 1950, the British Government decided to withhold recognition of Khama as the Bangwato chief. For the South African government and the white population, Khama's marriage was an outrageous event, and it served as a pretext for demanding once more the transfer of the High Commission Territories to the Union of South Africa, as was provided for in the 1910 Act to constitute the Union of South Africa. The South Africa Act formed the Union of South Africa from the British Colonies of the Cape of Good Hope, Orange River, Natal and Transvaal, and provided for the possible future incorporation of the three High



*Batswana women cutting and polishing diamonds  
at Debswana Diamond Company  
(S. Arellano, Botswana 1995)*

most non-existent, commercial activities consisted basically of a creamery, a bone meal and animal fodder plant, an abattoir, maize and malt mill, and most of the shops were scattered along the single railway track line built by the British South Africa Company to link the Cape Colony with Southern Rhodesia. The Protectorate had twenty kilometers of paved road and the rest of the road network consisted of dirt tracks. This poor economic and social landscape began to change a year after Botswana's independence, in 1966, when gem-quality diamonds were discovered at Orapa (Harvey and Lewis 1990: 15; Mogalakwe 1997: 25–26).

Botswana soon became one of the world's top diamond producers, and the country's per capita gross national product (GNP) expanded from less than US\$ 100, in 1966, to over US\$ 7,500 by 2009. Politically, Botswana is one of the most stable constitutional democracies in southern Africa. Presidential elections are held on schedule every five years. The president has executive power and is chosen by national election. The cabinet is selected by the President from the members of the National Assembly, which has forty elected and four appointed members. The authority of the Chiefs was formally recognized

Commission Territories (Bechuanaland, Swaziland, and Lesotho) and Rhodesia, subject to consultation with their populations. Rhodesia rejected incorporation in a referendum, but South Africa demanded that the High Commission Territories be incorporated without consultation, and used Khama's marriage to Williams as a justification. To satisfy the South African demand, the British banned Khama from Bechuanaland for five years, but this did not placate the calls for incorporation, leading the British to seek appeasement by making Khama's ban indefinite. Khama's banning provoked protests and riots within the Bangwato chieftdom, and prominent members of the Bangwato aristocracy mobilized forming the Bangwato National Congress (BNC). The BNC stood for Khama's reinstallation as Bangwato chief and for democratic reform in the Protectorate (Morton and Ramsay 1987: 129–130).

The political unrest that Khama's marriage and banishment had provoked coincided with other denunciations of South Africa's apartheid policies in international fora in Britain and the United Nations by African nationalist leaders. The international attention forced the South African government to reconsider the political consequences that could arise from having its image damaged internationally by continuing to insist on the transfer issue. For example, strains its relations with Britain and other European countries, could damage South African economic interests in the region (Parsons et al. 1995; Dutfield 1990).

In 1956, Seretse Khama returned to Bechuanaland, on the condition that neither he nor his children would claim the Bangwato chieftaincy. But, once Khama arrived in the Bangwato chieftdom, he assumed the vice-chairmanship of the Bangwato Tribal Council. Tribal Councils consisted of two groups of representatives. The group of hereditary and appointed traditional authorities and the group of representatives popularly elected in the *kgotla*. One of the first Tribal Council's to begin functioning was the Bangwato Tribal Council under the leadership of Seretse Khama. Once the Bangwato had accepted the Tribal Councils, other chieftdoms followed suit. Soon Tribal Councils started to function even in areas located outside of the chieftdoms.

In 1960, the Bechuanaland Peoples Party (BPP) was formed. The BPP leaders did not belong to any chieftdoms, royal houses or aristocratic factions, but were ordinary Tswana. The BPP maintained relations with the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-African Congress (PAC). The BPP advocated for independence, Africanization of the civil service, land nationalization and the removal of chiefs and lesser traditional leaders from political affairs. Chiefs and lesser traditional leaders were considered obstacles for attaining national independence. The BPP proselytized

among former migrant workers to South Africa, mainly in towns along the railway line, where landless Tswana and other Africans had settled. The BPP political discourse and international links with ANC and PAC alarmed the Legislative Council members and colonial administrators. Formed in 1960, the Legislative Council was a body required by the British to develop the constitution and guide the transition to independence. To counteract the spread of the BPP's political influence, Seretse Khama and other members of the Legislative Council formed the Bechuanaland Democratic Party (BDP), in 1962. The BDP later changed its name to Botswana Democratic Party (Picard 1981: 22–23; 1987: 135–137; Parson 1985: 30).

The leading figure of the BDP was Seretse Khama, former heir to the Bangwato Chieftainship,



*Basarwa women. Tshane, Botswana, 1995.  
(S. Arellano 1995)*

head of the Bangwato Tribal Council, one of the major cattle owners in Bechuanaland, and member of the board of directors of the Lobatse abattoir and canning factory. Seretse Khama personified the party's emerging position of combining traditional legitimacy and rural popular support with modern [western] education and lifestyle. The BDP had made two premises central to its political campaign: 1) the question of racial discrimination and 2) economic growth, based on mineral exploitation and commercial ranching. The BDP's emphasis on racial issues in the pre-independence and the early post-independence periods reflected the party's ethnically diverse constituency, and its desire to avoid becoming commercially dependent on Botswana's neighbors, Namibia, South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. Rallying people around these two issues, the BDP devoted a great deal of energy to holding meetings in all corners of the countryside of the Protectorate. By 1965, the BDP had successfully consolidated the support of most of the rural areas, and the southeastern towns. The mix of party leaders, white settlers, Tswana aristocracy and having Khama as the leading BDP figure, combined with proselytization based on a very moderate political program, contributed to the party's success. It allowed the party to garner

support among rural people who maintained strong ties to their traditional authorities, as well as among white settlers and colonial officials who agreed with the BDP's political program (Parsons 1995: 198, 204–205; Morton and Ramsay 1994: 55–56).

On March 1, 1965, the first Bechuanaland parliamentary elections were held. The BDP had previously announced its slate of 31 candidates; the BPP listed 26 candidates and the Bechuanaland Independence Party (BIP), formed in the wake of a split in the BPP, presented 24 candidates. After a slow recount of the votes, the BDP was declared the winner with twenty-eight of the thirty-one parliamentary elected seats. Seretse Khama, as the leader of the BDP, became prime minister. Once the BDP was in power, they formed local councils and passed the Chieftainship Act creating the House of Chiefs, which consists of eight Chiefs of Botswana's principal ethnic groups, four representatives from minor ethnic groups, sub-chiefs, and three members selected by the House of Chiefs. The Chieftainship Act relegated the Tswana Chiefs to an advisory role, and placed their formal political roles in local councils. Chiefs reacted against this Act, complaining to the Queen's Commissioner. They asked to convene a constitutional conference that would reconstitute Bechuanaland as a federal state, returning and guaranteeing the Chiefs political power once more. The major opponent to the Act was the Bangwaketse Chief Bathoen II, who later resigned his Chieftaincy in order to participate actively in the parliament. He also became a member and leader of the Botswana National Front (BNF). The BNF was formed in 1965 as an opposition party to the BDP. Nevertheless, with the BDP in power, the Tswana chiefs' fear of losing their political power became a reality. The Chieftainship Act had drastically curtailed their political influence, but most importantly, it had eliminated their authority to demand tribute payments. The Tswana Chiefs dissatisfaction with their advisory role still creates political friction between the government and the House of Chiefs. In 1996, for example, the newly-crowned Batawana chief Tawana Moremi II, opposed to the government's plan to down list elephants on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) endangered species lists, to allow for controlled commercial ivory trading, and the decision on killing Ngamiland cattle as a consequence of the outbreak of bovine lung disease. He refused to take orders from the government, declaring that he was not a civil servant but a Tswana chief. In September 1966, the Bechuanaland Protectorate gained its independence as the Republic of Botswana, with Seretse Kama as the president. The unconditional support that the colonial administration had provided to the BDP, the party's intense

### ... Forty-Five Years ...

proselytization in the rural areas and the moderate political program it had advocated had borne fruits. Seretse Khama led the country until his death in 1980.

Certainly, at this time the ability of the pre-independence ruling elite to stay in power, benefit disproportionately from the economic bonanza generated by diamonds, and the high levels of economic and political inequality that characterize Botswana society are cause for concern. Nonetheless a review of Botswana's political and economic history forces us to acknowledge that the country's road to independence was not an easy one, and that things could have come out much worse for most of the population. Botswana is a country of both significant achievements and significant problems, and the origins of both are rooted in political and economic relations that developed as part of Botswana's colonial history. ▲

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*Prof. Ali A. Mazrui being greeted by Prof. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Washington, DC, November 2011.*



*Prof. Ali A. Mazrui with his wife Mrs. Pauline Mazrui at the African Studies Association (ASA) Conference reception, Washington, DC, November 2011.*



*Prof. Ali A. Mazrui with Dr. Sulayman Nyang and other friends, Howard University, November 2011.*

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# Africa's 50 Years of Ideological Linguistic Struggle

By Anukware Selase Adzima\*

Last year marked the fiftieth anniversary of one of the biggest successes of the wave of struggles for independence in the twentieth century — seventeen African countries attained their independence in 1960 to join the nine African countries that were not under formal colonial rule at the time. The attainment of sovereignty, which was greeted with a lot of euphoria, optimism, and great expectations because Africans were taking charge of their own affairs, turned out to be the beginning of a more challenging struggle, development. As more and more African countries celebrate their Golden Jubilees and we continue to draw the balance sheet of Africa's independence, it is proper to verify the ideological/theoretical and practical implications of language planning models in Africa's post-independence development.

Since language planning does not have a universally accepted definition, let us define it as a deliberate act of intervention by a government, an individual or an interest group to introduce change(s) into a current linguistic situation. Language planning has been most difficult for African countries since they received their political independence for a number of reasons. First, except for about ten essentially monolingual countries — Botswana, Burundi, Lesotho, Somalia, Swaziland, Madagascar, Cape Verde, Rwanda, Seychelles, and Mauritius, Africa is chronically multilingual with some African countries having several hundreds of indigenous languages.<sup>1</sup> Second, Africa's multilingualism was compounded by the colonial experience. Despite the weakness of European languages in terms of the number of speakers, they became the languages of national administration and communication and medium of instruction during the colonial period. Third, by the time African countries began to attain their political independence, the dominant nineteenth century European romantic notion of language, culture, and nationhood had promoted an idealized monolithic model and has made the "one nation, one language, one culture" model more desirable in Africa.

Following independence, the ultimate goal for African countries has been to create and develop a good nation. Located within the boundaries of the artificial states created through the "Scramble for Africa" were, and still are, several ethnic groups. For the leaders of the new states, bringing the various ethnic groups together to interact and cooperate was a precondition for bringing the nation envisioned into existence.

Influenced by the "one nation, one language, one culture" model, there emerged a preference for a monolithic approach for the purposes of national integration and national identity building. This desire culminated in the creation of national symbols including the national anthem, national football team, national language, and national flag.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to language, the main question has been about which language to choose as the official/national language of the state. There have since been competing desires between choosing either an indigenous language or an imported European language for the much favored one-language model. Ideologically, those who favor the choice of an indigenous language have proposed language planning as a reaction to colonial practices where "planning is intimately connected with struggles for domination, as is every attempt to prevent it, stop it, or change its course."<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, due to the politicking of language planning along ethnic lines and the urgent need to implement and sustain democratization and development initiatives to deal with serious economic and socio-political problems the newly independent states faced, others proposed the adoption of the European languages inherited from the colonial past.<sup>4</sup> In Ghana, the diversity of the population is indexed mainly by language.<sup>5</sup> Thus, language would appear to be the main marker of sub-national (or in some cases supranational) ethnic identity. Thus for most Ghanaians, Ghanaian identity entails a recognized ethnic identity so that, no matter the status and role of English, the ability to speak a Ghanaian language is also a necessary feature of the national identity. It is not a surprise that nationality by birth in Ghana implies a language and an associated territory.<sup>6</sup> In addition, language is a constitutional requirement for naturalization, and it is the only naturalization requirement that cannot be waived by any authority.<sup>7</sup> Thus, to avoid politicking of language planning along ethnic lines that led to such problems as the anti-Hindi agitations that ensued in India and the resistance to Akan in Ghana, Nigeria, just as most African countries, decided not to discontinue the imported European language — English — to adopt one of its three major languages: Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo.<sup>8</sup>

Tanzania was the only country to successfully adopt an indigenous language after independence. This was an exception because Kiswahili had already spread widely, and had already been used as a language of administration in now mainland Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika) under

German rule.<sup>9</sup> It has been indicated that the then Governor Rechenberg of Tanganyika (1906–1912), his successor and other settlers spoke Kiswahili. And, since Kiswahili was a mobilizing force in the run up to independence, it made sense to use it as a symbol of national unity/integration based on Julius Nyerere's famous *Ujamaa* philosophy. What the above observations show is that every proposed language planning model has a function or goal based on one form of ideology or another.

Language planning in newly independent countries sparked an intellectual curiosity. Research on the theoretical and practical language problems in Africa started with the publication of the volume *Language Problems of Developing Nations* published in 1968, edited by Fishman et al. The volume was in response to the complexity of language issues, whose discussions are accompanied by a lot of intense feelings, such as the examples of Ghana and India given above, as language does not relate to only individuals but also to groups of people and societies in general. Academic study of language planning problems revealed two things. First, it revealed the orientations of language planning. Second, it delved into the advantages and disadvantages of the monolithic approach be it through maintaining the imported European language or adopting an indigenous language, and presented the opportunity for alternative thinking. Language issues are also sometimes misunderstood and thus result in different orientations. Three main orientations were identified: language as problem, language as right, and language as resource.<sup>12</sup>

*Language as problem:* Here language planning focuses on language as a problem especially when language is discussed within political and social contexts.<sup>13</sup> There are so many ways to look at how language as a problem has been projected in the African situation. With a focus on nation-building in many areas including national integration, education and national development — including promoting social, cultural, political, and economic growth, for policymakers whose desire is to resolve national and international relation problems, there are too many languages to deal with. In Ghana, for example, by the time of Ghana's political independence, there were ten candidates, that is, nine indigenous languages and English, and "the more languages there are to choose from, the more complex the problems tend to become."<sup>14</sup>



*Mr. Anukware Selase Adzima addressing a local congregation in the Ewe language in Tema, Ghana, 2005.*

The Nkrumah-led government recognized multilingualism in Ghana. Unfortunately, for ease of administration or as a matter of expediency, due to the urgent need to implement and sustain democratization and development initiatives to fulfill his dream of industrializing Ghana, the Nkrumah government opted for the monolithic approach and decided to adopt the English language as the official language of Ghana. The language policy of the Nkrumah government was thus summarized in the then Deputy Minister of Education, Mrs. Susannah Al-Hassan's speech in parliament in 1961. She declared:

*It is the intention of government to encourage the development of all our major national languages so that each of them may have an equal opportunity of attaining a standard which will improve their chances of being chosen as the national language when the time comes for such a decision.*<sup>15</sup>

A more critical consideration of the above statement reveals other problems the government was looking to resolve, apart from the preference for monolingualism. Nkrumah intimated that for true independence to be achieved in Africa, the roots of European domination must be dug out.<sup>16</sup> In such a decolonizing context, an indigenous language should be chosen over English. Thus, the first problem would be self-determinism, and what Joshua Fishman refers to as the sociology of organized change. According to Fishman:

*"The sociology of language planning tends to be the sociology of organized change vis-à-vis non-Western languages. The focus on the non-West is related to a corresponding focus on 'newly developing' entities."*<sup>17</sup>

The second problem is inherently stated in the government's desire "to encourage the development of all our major national languages." Code selection, standardization, development of literacy capacity and orthography of languages, and language stratification would be examples of the sort of language development the Nkrumah-led government wanted to achieve before an indigenous language was adopted as the official language of Ghana, as the expressive capacity of indigenous languages were not extensive enough to cover scientific and technical terminologies that were required at all levels.

*Language as right:* Mimicking the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man, there was a push for a Universal Declaration of Linguistic Human Rights which has led to such declaration as is found in Article 24 of the Barcelona Declaration of Linguistic Rights, 1996, which states that:

*All language communities have the right to decide to what extent their language is to be present, as a vehicular language and as an object of study, at all levels of education within their territory: preschool, primary, secondary, technical and vocational, university, and adult education.*

The aim is to ensure that no one is denied a right to his or her own language. This orientation assumes that everyone is interested in his/her language and, thus, ignores attitudes toward indigenous languages in formerly colonized societies. It also assumes that there is the political will on the part of political leaders to respect the linguistic rights of the people. What happens to a government that refuses to respect people's linguistic rights or implement such a declaration?

*Language as resource:* This orientation proceeds from viewpoints that consider language as a "valuable asset," that is, no matter how big or small a language community is, the language

should be considered as an asset for both the individual and society/nation as opposed to looking at just a language's demography to choose it over or neglect it for another language.<sup>18</sup> Language as a resource also rejects the use of the cost-benefit and/or demand and supply analysis that has been used to discourage investment in indigenous and minority languages. This orientation is concerned about whether people are using the languages they need or just the one that is made available to them through planning activities. The aim of this orientation is to promote bilingualism which is the norm in formerly colonized societies, as opposed to monolingualism.

The most challenging aspects of language planning in a multilingual context like Africa are language choice for and use in education, communication, and administration. The cost of developing the expressive capacity of languages and the ability to find a role for minority languages are also challenges. What follows are reviews of multilingual and bilingual models in light of the above challenges.

Bi/multilingual models are attempting to deal with an area — multilingualism — that has been ignored for a long time in favor of the monolithic approach which promotes mostly inherited European languages as official languages in most African countries. It is revealed that ninety percent of Africans use only African languages; not more than ten percent of the population speaks French in francophone Africa and only five to ten percent speaks Portuguese in lusophone Africa.<sup>19</sup> These models will, hopefully, reduce linguistic disenfranchisement, that is, the situation where language planning deprives Africans of the right to use their indigenous languages. The goal of language planning with these models then is to use language as a resource to mobilize Africans to solve their problems. While the general attitude of the African peoples toward indigenous languages in relation to their use in the formal sector

suggests some form of disengagement with them, there are those who have also proposed disengagement with the imported European languages.<sup>20</sup>

One of the first bilingual programs to be carried out was the Ife Six-Year Primary Project, which showed that with specially trained teachers, children who receive education through mother-tongue instruction will benefit cognitively, socially, linguistically, and culturally, and their command of the English language will also benefit. Another example is the Operational Research Project for Language Education in Cameroon (PROPELCA) being undertaken in Cameroon.<sup>21</sup>

In North Africa, besides Arabic, there are also indigenous languages of the Maghreb whose speakers Europeans have lumped together as Berber speakers. For example, in Morocco, there are three different groups: Tarifit, Tashelhit, and Tamazight,<sup>22</sup> who make up forty percent of the Moroccan population.<sup>23</sup> After so many years of arabization in Morocco, the Charter for Educational Reform in 2000 recognized the importance of these indigenous languages; the goal is to incorporate them into Moroccan schools.

Creating bi/multilingual programs that involve imported European languages is good. In fact, these languages have become non-indigenous African languages because since the independence explosion, there have emerged Africans who speak imported European languages as their first language. In *The Political Sociology of the English Language*, Ali Mazrui makes a good case for the Afro-Saxons — Africans who speak English as their first language. On the other hand, the development of new Englishes as seen through such publications as *New Englishes: A West African Perspective*, edited by Bamgbose, Banjo and Thomas; *The English of West Africa*, edited by John Spencer; and Janina Brutt-Griffler's *World English: A Study of its Development* indicates a move away from purely British or American standards. It is also worth making a quick note of Kofi Anyidoho's classification of how language has been employed in literary works in Africa and the Diaspora that seem to broach this subject. They include: (i) Africans' acceptance of the colonizer's language as the most practical way of self-expression, inasmuch as this medium of expression is inadequate; (ii) the transformation or Africanization of the colonizer's language as a tool for liberation and identity; (iii) the rejection of the colonizer's language and a return to the indigenous language; and (iv) a reinvention of the mother tongue.<sup>24</sup> This classification caters to the arguments inherent in the debates involving Chinua Achebe, Obi Wali, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the like.



Professor Mazrui being presented with a painting by a Nigerian artist after his public lecture in Lagos, Nigeria, sponsored by the Goddy Jidenma Foundation, Nigeria, 2011.



Prof. Ali A. Mazrui with his wife, Mrs. Pauline Mazrui (center), ASA Executive Director Karen Jenkins (second from left) and colleagues at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association (ASA), Washington, DC, November 2011.

# Ali A. Mazrui: An Anecdotal Essay

By Abdul Bemath\*

## "The Africans" Television Series

"So you are in Africa after all!" So Ali Mazrui said when the phone got cut off during his stay at a Johannesburg hotel, when he came to deliver the 1990 Sixth Desmond Tutu Peace Lecture. That South Africa is not exceptional to, and part of Africa as he narrates in his nine-part television series "*The Africans*." A scene in which he opens the water tap in a West African hotel and no hot water flows as the pipe has not been connected — and he calls reception to complain — and the phone is not working! This is one of my vivid memories of Ali Mazrui. The other, illustrating his "*Africa's Triple Heritage*" was at this same Desmond Tutu lecture when prayers were read in the Abrahamic faiths (Islam, Christianity and Judaism) and the Hindu religion. And, Professor Mazrui opens his lecture by asking, what about prayers from the indigenous faith! This observation was appropriate as the lecture title was — *Africa's Pro-Democracy Movement: Indigenous, Islamic, and Christian Tendencies* — looking at the impact of "*Africa's Triple Heritage*" — the interplay of indigenous African culture, Islam, and Christianity, accompanied with Western culture on Africa, and its contribution to pro-democracy in South Africa. I asked him several days after the lecture what answer he received and he replied, "just some vague excuse!"

"*The Africans*" captured the imagination of South Africans, especially its Black majority. For me this was a different form of exposure to Mazrui, a visual one, encapsulating his perspectives of Africa in a television documentary series, and further reinforced my interest in him and in purchasing his book, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*. "*The Africans*" was shown very frequently on the apartheid government's homelands Bophuthatswana BOP TV station during the early nineties. BOP TV was also beamed over the Black Soweto Township near Johannesburg and spilled over to the Indian residential area of Lenasia near Soweto where I reside. To my knowledge, it was not shown during that period by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) television covering South Africa. How unfortunate for White South Africans and fortunate for Bophuthatswana's White citizens.

I enquired from a BOP TV presenter why "*The Africans*" was shown so frequently over BOP TV. He explained that the local public was fascinated by these series and that South Africa at that time was undergoing rapid political and

social transformation. In Mazrui's series they saw a positive picture of Africa, the pitfalls that the future Black-ruled South Africa should avoid, and lessons learned from the African experience. That in Mazrui, they saw a visionary and precursor of the African Renaissance. An African friend of mine was praising the western-trained intellectual Mazrui for his belief in the spirit of the African ancestors when he visited a Sangoma (traditional faith healer) in Soweto, and her predicting his future. Mazrui at his "*Triple Heritage*" best! Many Muslim students in South Africa have been drawn to him over the years because of the Islamic perspective of his Africa's "*Triple Heritage*." During the Salman Rushdie affair over his book, *The Satanic Verses*, South African Muslims relied on Mazrui's thoughts in their criticism of Rushdie's book.

## Mazrui and Aca-Media

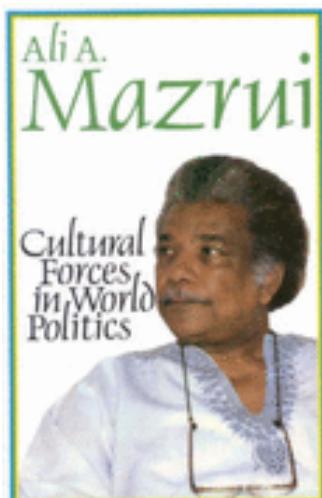
Mazrui coined this phrase at the launch of *The Mazruiana Collection* bibliography at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair in 1998. Aca-Media — linking the world of scholars and the media. At this launch, Professor Mazrui called for an "African Best Books of the Century" similar to the "100 Best Novels published in the English language." The media has had a powerful impact on Mazrui from his youthful days writing the Arab Page for the *Mombasa Times*, and as a radio station broadcaster in Mombasa. I asked him, as a Swahili speaker, why he came to have such a command of the English language — both spoken and written — and he put this down to writing for the *Mombasa Times*. Muhammed Rajah, Mazrui's Manchester University contemporary told me, Mazrui wrote a piece for the university periodical in impeccable English. Professor Mazrui pointed out to me that *The Mazruiana Collection* does not list his 1979 *Reith Lectures* under section, Radio, Television and Video Recordings. This made me realise the importance the media plays in his life and made sure these Reith Lectures were listed in the *The Mazruiana Collection Revisited*... (2005).

## As his Bibliographer

Being associated with him as bibliographer of his works, *The Mazruiana Collection* (Sterling, 1998) and *The Mazruiana Collection Revisited* (New Dawn Press and Africa Institute of South

Africa, 2005) brings out differing responses from people. Let me elaborate. Garth Le Pere, at that time Director of the Foundation for Global Dialogue, introduced me to one of the University of Zimbabwe Vice-Chancellors at a conference. On telling him that I compiled a bibliography of Professor Mazrui's works, his attitude towards me changed with respect. Unlike a Mazruiphobic response on showing my bibliography to a participant at a conference in Johannesburg — he threw my bibliography in disgust to the ground, which is understandable as it is difficult to hold a book with 514 entries, let alone 24 books. A heavy load to carry in both hands! The Foundation for Global Dialogue is one of the seven co-publishers of *The Mazruiana Collection*, which Bellagio Publishing Network states in its newsletter — "Although this book is not directly concerned with publishing, we list it as an example of good co-publishing arrangements." Illustrating the impact Mazrui has on publishers, radio and television stations in search for his views.

My essay "In Search of Mazruiana: Tracing the Writings of Ali A. Mazrui, 1962–2003" in *Public Intellectuals and the Politics of Global Africa* edited by Seifudein Adem (Adonis & Abbey, 2011) traces my worldwide search for Mazruiana. Compiling these bibliographies has connected me to libraries, librarians, academics and institutes worldwide. Most helpful at all times was Dr. David Easterbrook, Africana librarian at Northwestern University in the United States. Dr. Easterbrook facilitated a copy of Professor Mazrui's Columbia University M.A. dissertation for both of us, as Professor Mazrui did not have a copy. And, I had a copy deposited in the South Africa-based Africa Institute of South Africa library. I queried from



Cambridge (UK)-based Terry Barringer, *African Affairs Journal* Bibliographer and Editor of *African Research and Documentation*, whether she could obtain a copy for me of Professor Mazrui's Ph.D. from Oxford University. She suggested I contact the British Library and I purchased a copy from the British Libraries, British Thesis Service.

I purchased his entire book via online Amazon.com, ABEBOOKS and other online bookshops; also I have "The Africans" nine-part television series. I am now a proud owner of *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo*, signed: "To Peter and Frances and family from Ali and Molly. With warm greetings for 1973." His essays in these books, roughly about 300, can be compiled into a bibliography on its own, independent of my Mazruiana Collections!

*The Mazruiana Collection Revisited* has two essays touching on Professor Mazrui's *Triple Heritage*. Dr. Zine Magubane's "Mazrui as Debater: Passion, Power, and Polemic" in *Africanist Scholarship* focuses on three themes in her essay. These are the Mazrui-Wole Soyinka documentary debates on "The Africans" and Henry Louis Gates 1999 — *Wonders of the African World* documentary. Dr. Magubane also touches in her essay on the acrimonious Mazrui-Archie Mafeje debate on benign colonialism and the

Mazrui-William Ochieng debate on the future of the African university. The other essay is Dr. Sam Makinda's *The Triple Heritage and Global Governance*.

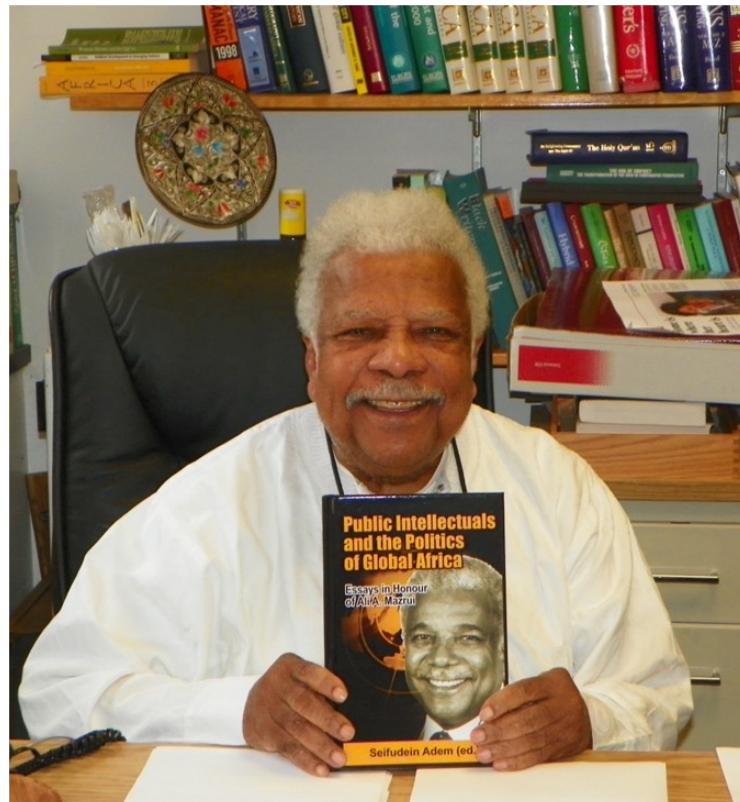
Associating with Professor Mazrui has taken me to countries abroad and meeting distinguished people. The Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs edition of *The Mazruiana Collection* was jointly launched with the London-based Africa Centre at its African Renaissance Conference in London, November 1999. Lord Ahmed of Rotherham invited me to a special tribute to Professor Mazrui at the House of Lords in 2000. Chief Emeka Anyaoku, former Commonwealth Secretary-General delivered the keynote address and also wrote the Foreword for *The Mazruiana Collection Revisited*. I also presented a paper at a Symposium in his honour for his 70th birthday, in Binghamton, NY in 2003.

I saw a picture, an Internet picture, of Professor Mazrui using a laptop and a group of university students looking on. I was not computer literate and my compilation of his bibliographies prompted me to purchase a computer and become computer literate. Professor Mazrui is referred to as a "knowledge machine" and as his secretary at Makerere University so aptly put it about his prolific literary output to Colin Leys, "I

don't know, he writes faster than I can type!" (Q News Magazine, July 2000, p. 25).

The Professor and IGCS staff have always been helpful to me. I recall the late Nancy Levis working under great pressure facilitating Mazrui to me. So have Barbara Tierno and Ravenna Narizzano. And, that shy Seifudein Adem asking me, how do I approach a great scholar, such a great scholar as Professor Mazrui? I told him just write to him — and Seifudein is now IGCS Associate Director! So our fate has been sealed in many differing ways with Professor Mazrui! ▲

\*Mr. Abdul Bemath has prepared this essay exclusively for the *IGCS Newsletter*. Mr. Bemath is a South African based Library Consultant and Bibliographer.



Professor Ali A. Mazrui holding a book about him written by multiple authors.  
IGCS, Binghamton, NY, 2011.

## Africa's 50 Years of Ideological and Linguistic Struggle

(continued from page 19)

What is the way forward? Language planning must be significant at both the macro (societal/national) and micro (individual) levels. In addition, a comprehensive language planning in the African context should have a three-fold objective, that is, it should cater to the local, national and the inter- or supra-national/global needs of the linguistically diverse communities in African countries.

Inasmuch as there is a gradual departure from monolingualism toward bi/multilingualism, and while these bi/multilingual models are becoming more and more comprehensive, they are only limited to the lower level of basic education. How should the bi/multilingual models be used in the upper basic, secondary education, and tertiary levels of education? Language planning for educational purposes must, besides *formal education*, include *traditional or informal education* and *non-formal education*. There is the need to also move beyond official languages; so much emphasis on official languages portrays multilingualism as a problem of development.

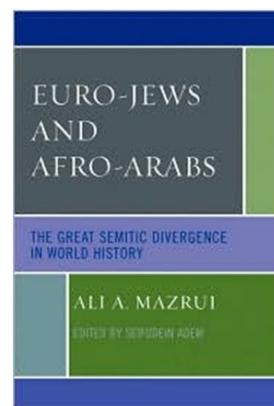
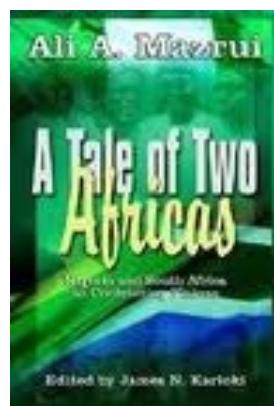
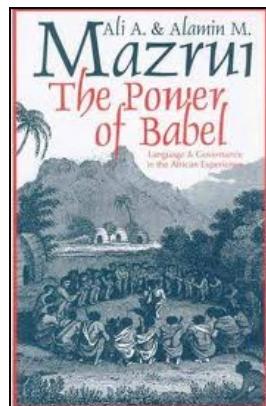
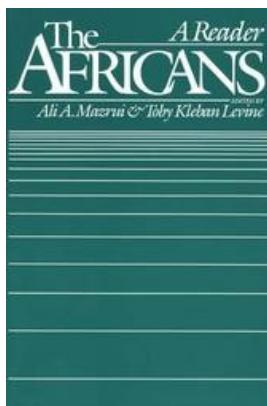
The literature on language planning shows that it is not only governments that plan languages<sup>25</sup>; individuals and/or groups of individuals also take such initiatives. Apart from government organizations such as the *Académie Française*, and the mass literacy campaign pursued by the *Derg* in Ethiopia following the deposition of Haile Selassie, the activities of interest groups such as the American feminist movement against sex-bias language and of individuals such as Ben Yehuda in Palestine, Samuel Johnson in England and Ivar Aasen in Norway were phenomenal in language planning activities in their respective countries.<sup>26</sup> The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and its partners in Africa are constantly developing indigenous languages. This is good news which should be encouraged. There is the need to encourage language communities to become interested in developing their own languages instead of concentrating on one or a handful of languages in the name of national integration/unity. Ensuring

justice and equality of opportunity are better ways of achieving national unity and not just by designating one language as a unifying force. There can certainly be unity in diversity. To foster national unity, instead of assimilating them to prevent inter-ethnic frictions, language communities should be made to feel desired and desirable in the development process. And, if language can be linked to development then language planning must be considered culture planning, that is, a mechanism for providing opportunities for citizens. ▲

### Notes

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# We the People Have the Power and Responsibility

By Ravenna Narizzano-Bronson\*

Our government of the United States of America is no longer a democracy. It is now a plutocracy. Our rights have been compromised. The gap between wealth and poverty is at a record high. We the people have the power and responsibility to demand corrections and to make our world better.

A plutocracy is a government run by a controlling class of the wealthy. America appears to be run by the wealthy one percent. Our systems of law have been altered to benefit the wealthy class and to enable greed-powered inequity.

For example, a landmark decision made by the Supreme Court in 2010 gave the wealthy one percent freedom to spend any amount of money they want to on US elections. According to the Supreme Court's decision, money is "speech!" With this decision the wealthy one percent succeeded in making the act of spending money to influence elections like giving a speech, holding a sign or writing to a newspaper. Now the one percent has more "freedom of speech" than those who have less money. Should we the people demand the reversal of this Supreme Court decision?

Our country has a record high divide between the rich and poor. The recession

has affected all races and ethnicities. However, statistics show that people of color continue to be hardest hit. Should we the people demand the rich be taxed, end plutocracy and economic apartheid?

No one has been held accountable and no one has been prosecuted for the actions that have caused so much economic trouble in the United States of America that negatively impacts the rest of the world. The corrupt systems set up by the criminals are still in operation. Correction has not yet been made. Should we the people demand that regulations be reinstated on the financial industry?

We are the people — you and me and all of us. I beg us all to recognize that together we are the vast majority of the population — the 99% and we have great power together. United we have the power to demand our democracy back. United we have the power to demand accountability for the unconstitutional and unlawful behavior of individuals and corporations whose actions have caused a great deal of chronic distress. I ask that we all look closely at what has been done and work seriously toward corrective measures. We are the people and our government is supposed to be for us and by us.

I am thankful to all the people of the world who are standing up in protest of the systematic oppression of its people for the benefit of the greedy few. I am thankful to "Occupy Wall Street" and "Occupy Binghamton" for bringing awareness to our community of the many challenges our country and world is facing. It has been a pleasure to visit the occupation and to meet individual people and to listen to their concerns and ideas for solutions. For me, finding solutions is what it is all about! Thank you to all the protestors and all those supporting the protests!

We are the people — we may not know every detail of the tangled web that has been woven (much in secret) but we are all caught up in it. I believe that we know what is good and what is not good and we can join together to identify what needs to be corrected and changed and we can make a better tomorrow for us all.

So I challenge myself and each and every one of you to occupy your minds: take a good long look and seek solutions at home, on your street, in your community, in our nation and in our world. Speak to one another and do your part. Please, remember we have good on our side and that the people united will never be defeated!

\*Ravenna N. Bronson is Administrative Assistant at IGCS. ▲



Occupy Binghamton participates in Global Day of Action, Court House Steps, Binghamton, NY, October 15th, 2011.  
(R. Narizzano-Bronson, 2011)



Occupy Binghamton protests against hydraulic fracturing at DEC Public Hearing on SGEIS. Binghamton, NY, November 17, 2011.  
(R. Narizzano-Bronson, 2011)



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