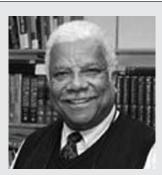## Message from the Director, Ali A. Mazrui

The Sacred Origins of Secular Learning

Educational institutions in any culture are designed to transmit four legacies to succeeding generations. They transmit skills, values, information (data) and beliefs. The balance among these four legacies may vary, partly depending upon the wider purposes of the particular educational instructions.

Thus faith-schools put a particularly high premium on values and beliefs. Technical schools seek to transmit skills and know-how. In both the Muslim world and the West faith-instructions preceded secular and technical ones. Parents were concerned about issues of faith and values long before they worried about the skills and know-how of their children. Even at the level of universities Oxford and Harvard were quasi-religious institutions before they became thorough-going secular ones. We shall elaborate on this later in this essay.

On the other hand, Islamic universities like Al-Azhar in Cairo and Fez in Morocco were at their most glorious when faith and science were intertwined. Those were the centuries when Islamic scholars developed algebra, logarithm, astronomy, the nautical sciences, and the numbers which we now call "the Arabic numerals." Science was not regarded as antithetical to religion. On the contrary, they were interpreted as mutually reinforcing.

The skills which were being transmitted were partly those of *functional implementation* (as in the nautical sciences). But there were also such *cultural skills* as poetry, philosophy and theological disputations.

Islam is arguably the only religion in the world which began with the command *"Read!"* This was what the angel Gabriel commanded Muhammad to do on their first encounter on Mount Hira. Gabriel said to Muhammad:

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Ali A. Mazrui, Witness to History?

By IGCS reporters

In February 2008, Mwalimu Ali Mazrui becomes 75. To mark the occasion, Seifudein Adem sat down with him with a bunch of "unusual" questions. What follow are excerpts from the interview.

You have met (and continue to meet) leaders after leaders in Africa and beyond, from Idi Amin to Muammar Khadafy, from Kwame Nkrumah to

Nelson Mandela, and the list is long. Of the leaders you have met who impressed you most, positively and/or negatively, and why?

Of the African leaders I have known personally over the years, the one who impressed me the most *negatively* was Uganda's Idi Amin.

(. . . Witness continued on page 2)

Ali Mazrui (seated left) and future president of Liberia Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Standing behind are, from left to right, Lord David Owen, Susan Rice, Charlayne Hunter-Gault, Andrew Young and Paul Simon at the National Summit on Africa, Washington, D.C., 2000.

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Although Idi Amin had great personal charm, he was also a brutal dictator. He ruled Uganda from 1971 to 1979. Ironically, I was for a while Idi Amin's intellectual hero. He even wanted to send me to apartheid South Africa in a bid to persuade the white racists that Black people could *think*. I was to be Exhibit A. Fortunately for me, the South African government rejected Idi Amin's offer of this kind of politicized intellectual exchange!

There was another irony in my relationship with Idi Amin. Precisely by his being a brutal dictator, he changed my life more fundamentally than did any other African leader. When I fell out of favor with him, my life was at risk. Idi Amin forced me to leave Africa for the United States. This semi-exile was virtually for the rest of my life, though there were continuing links with different African countries. Sometimes evil has a bigger impact on its victims than goodness has on it beneficiaries.

The African leader who influenced me most positively was Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, although I met him face-to-face only a couple of times. I had far less personal contact with him than I have had with at least a dozen other African leaders. So in what sense was Nkrumah such an influence on me? The impact was intellectual and political rather than personal. My doctoral thesis at Oxford University was partly influenced by his ideas on Pan Africanism [See my first book ever *Towards a Pax Africana: A Study of Ideology and Ambition* (Chicago University Press, 1967).

Kwame Nkrumah also stimulated my vision of Africa as a convergence of three civilizations — Africanity, Islam and Western culture. Nkrumah called that convergence "Consciencism." I later called it "Africa's Triple Heritage." I was able to elaborate on my own concept in a BBC/PBS television series titled *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (1986).

My critique of Nkrumah became one of my most influential articles about Africa. My article in *Transition* magazine (Kampala, 1966) was titled "Nkrumah: The Leninist Czar." It has featured in anthologies, and been debated across the decades.

The fact that Nkrumah had a greater positive impact on me than has any other leader does not necessarily mean that I admire Nkrumah the most. Intellectually, I admired Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzania higher than most politicians anywhere in the world. Nyerere and I also met more often over the years from 1967 to 1997 approximately. I am also a great fan of Nelson Mandela. By ethical standards Mandela is greater than Nyerere; but by intellectual standards

Ali Mazrui with the Vice-President of Ghana, Alhaji Aliu Mahama after a luncheon hosted by the Vice President in Mazrui's honor, Accra, August 2007.

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Nyerere is greater than Mandela.

What about the President of my own country, Kenya? The first two Presidents of Kenya were less familiar to me than were the Presidents of Kenya's neighbors. In fact, I was introduced to President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya by President Milton Obobe of Uganda at a graduation ceremony at the University of Nairobi in the late 1960s. Kenya's second president, Daniel arap Moi, imprisoned some members of my Kenya family, and turned me into a pariah at Kenyan universities for some fifteen years. It was Kenya's third president — Mwai Kibaki — who restored my national credentials and made me Chancellor of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.

You have been described as "Multiple Mazrui." You have made seminal contributions to various disciplines ranging from political science, comparative culture to philosophy, literature, Islamic studies, and of course, African studies. To which field, if any, do you swear the greatest allegiance and to which one have you contributed most intellectually? What do you think about your characterization as "Multiple Mazrui"? Is it a good thing to be described as such?

Why have I been described as "the Multiple Mazrui"? One aspect of my "multiple nature" is my interdisciplinary style of writing and lecturing. I regard myself not just as a political scientist, but much more as a comprehensive political analyst. My interest is not just in politics as matters of governance, but in the politics of the human condition as a whole. My range is from the politics of religion to the politics of language and literature. There is a sense in which I am also a political philosopher. My colleagues in political science do not always approve of my approach to the study of political phenomena. But quite early in my life I demonstrated that I could publish in such political science journals as the *American Political Science Review,*

Ali Mazrui with other members of the Board of Trustees, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Oxford, UK.

World Politics, Political Studies, Political Quarterly, and *International Affaires* in London. But having established my political science credentials, I then felt free to publish in interdisciplinary journals as I wished.

You had once categorized cultures as calculus-friendly and calculus-challenged, depicting Africa as representing the second. Given "calculus" is so central for the mastery of modern science and technology, and given cultures take a long time to change, am I correct in concluding that your thesis condemns Africa to poverty and backwardness for a long time to come? If not, please explain.

Yes, I do regard some cultures in Asia as calculus-friendly — cultures in India or Korea which produce a disproportionate proficiency in mathematics. But where do I place African cultures in the rank order of calculus-friendly (mathematically proficient) and calculus-challenged (mathematically slow)? In reality African cultures differ from one ethnic group to another. Igbo and Yoruba cultures in Nigeria are more calculus-friendly than Hausa culture. Kikuyu culture in Kenya is more calculus friendly than are the cultures of Kenya's coastal peoples. Indeed, Luo culture in Kenya has produced more intellectuals and scholars than any other ethnic systems of values in that country.

I remember an aphorism, a version of which you sometimes use in your writings: Some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. Your own greatness is now beyond doubt, but what is its source? Were you born great, did you achieve greatness, or was greatness thrust upon you? Or some combination of these? Please explain.

You ask if I was born "great." I say "No"! But I was born within the distinguished clan of the Mazrui, who were noteworthy in history as rulers, scholars and jurists. My father was the Chief Islamic Judge [Chief Kadhi] of the British colony of Kenya. My father was in turn descended from earlier Islamic jurists. Please consult my father's own book The Mazrui Dynasty of Mombasa [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985, annotated by JM Ritchie]

I've heard some of your colleagues say that if you had written as much in the field of economics (and made comparable contributions) as you had done in the fields of comparative politics, history and cultural studies, you would have won a Nobel Prize for economics. Why is there no Nobel Prize in political science? Should there be one?

It is indeed true that since I am not in the field of economics, or in peace-

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making, or in creative literature, I can never be eligible for the Nobel Prize of either Economics, Peace or Literature. It is my misfortune that none of my own disciplinary fields of specialization (especially history, political science and social philosophy) have Nobel Prizes focusing on special achievements in those particular fields. But on at least one occasion I was instrumental in helping another African win the Nobel Prize for Peace.

Almost all the time you seem to be doing something — traveling, lecturing, writing, etc., and this has made you one of the most productive scholars. But my question is this: do you work when you rest? Or do you rest when you work? What is your idea of the relationship between work and rest anyhow? And where does all this energy come from?

It is indeed true that writing in my case is more like a passion than work. Sometimes writing in my case is almost like a compulsion. I believe I have inherited this compulsion to write from my father who was a pamphleteer in the Swahili language and Arabic. My Old Man was constantly engaged in debates about social reform and theological interpretations of Islam. My father used to say that there were two areas of life in which he had not tried to emulate the Prophet Muhammad — my father did not try to marry as many wives as the Prophet Muhammad had done, nor did my father limit himself to producing only one book as the Prophet had done. [Muslims believe that although the Prophet Muhammad was himself totally non-literate, he dictated a book which became the most widely read volume in its original language in human history — the Qur'an]. The Christian Bible is the most widely book in translation.

African studies and Islamic studies are not always mutually exclusive fields, or at least they should not be, and you have intellectually contributed to both of them considerably. In the last two decades you

have given more attention to Islam than you had done before. What was the impetus? Tell us, if you will, also the ways in which the expansion of the scope of your interest affected, if it did, your Africanist credentials and African constituency.

Let me first define a couple of terms. An Islamist is a person to whom Islam is not just a religion, but is a radical political ideology. An Islamicist, on the other hand, is a scholar who studies Islam. As for a *Muslim,* that is simply a believer in the religion of Islam.

Of course, I have been a Muslim all my life, but I did not become an Islamicist (a scholar in Islamic studies) until the 1980s. As you know, I was born into a highly religious Muslim family in colonial Mombasa, Kenya. My father was the Chief Kadhi (the Chief Justice in Islamic law) of Kenya under British rule. His dream for me was that I should become a learned scholar in Islamic studies like himself. He hired an Arab to teach me classical Arabic, and I learned Islamic theology in evening classes at our local mosque. He hoped that after finishing secondary school in British-ruled Mombasa, I would find my way to Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, one of the most distinguished seats of learning in the Muslim world.

My father died when I was only fourteen years old. His dream of having me educated at Al-Azhar Islamic

University in Cairo died with him, although I would have loved to go to Al-Azhar if someone had offered me a scholarship.

What did not die with my Dad was my being a believer in Islam. Indeed, my first regular job was at the Mombasa Institute of Muslim Education [MIOME] in which all the students were Muslims, whereas almost all the instructors were Europeans. My bosses at MIOME played a crucial role in my getting a Kenya Government scholarship to study in Great Britain. This was the most decisive departure from the dream of pursuing Islamic Studies in the Arab world. However, I did include the study of the Arabic language as a minor in my undergraduate program at the University of Manchester in Britain.

My formal study of Africa began at Columbia University in New York when I was studying for my Master's degree. As for my doctoral dissertation (Oxford calls it "thesis") at the University of Oxford, it was entirely about post-colonial Anglophone Africa.

In reality, it was Oxford which turned me into a professional Africanist. I successfully defended my doctoral dissertation in 1966, and in 1967 I published three books in one year, all of them about Africa. Indeed, as early as 1963, when I was still a graduate student, I had published four articles in professional journals — including the

Ali Mazrui being greeted by President Kenneth Kaunda in Lusaka, Zambia, at a regional Islamic Conference, in 1982.

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With Archbishop Desmond Tutu — Just before Ali Mazrui delivered the Desmond Tutu Peace Lecture, Johannesburg, South Africa, 1991.

American Political Science Review in the United States and *Political Studies* in Great Britain. Almost all the subject matter was Africa's political experience.

In the 1970s the British Broadcasting Corporation invited me to deliver their most prestigious Radio Lectures called the Reith Lectures. The lectures were named after the Founder Director-General of the BBC, Lord Reith. These lectures were broadcast in 1979 and entitled "THE AFRICAN CONDITION," with a book which was published in 1980 by Cambridge University Press in New York and by Heinemann Educational Books in London.

Just as it was Oxford which helped to turn me into an Africanist, it was the British Broadcasting Corporation which (inspite of itself) helped to turn me into an Islamicist.

When the BBC invited me in about 1980-1982 to do a television series with them about Africa, what they had in mind was a story about "Africa and the West." Instead, I insisted that the TV series be about what I called "Africa's Triple Heritage — Africanity, Islam and the West." In the TV series I drew attention to Islam as a major part of the African condition.

This became a major turning point in my career. Instead of my being viewed exclusively as an Africanist

and political scientist, I began to be viewed also as someone who had important and distinctive things to say about Islam. Before long I was receiving an avalanche of invitations to speak about Islam or to play other roles in Islamic institutions. Since then I have served in several Boards of Islamic organizations, been Chair of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, been elected a Trustee to the Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies and been elected President of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists.

When I coined the concept of Africa's triple heritage, I already knew that I personally was an embodiment of those three legacies — Africanity, Islam and the West. But I did not yet know that my whole career was also being transformed into focusing onto those three civilizations. Since then I have been publishing books and articles either about Africa and the West, or about Islam and the West, or about all three civilizations in convergence and divergence. My entire scholarship has been a case of a triple heritage. What is more, I have since lectured at Al-Azhar University, and have had Al-Azhar filmed sympathetically for my television series. It was not quite what my Dad had in mind in his dream for me. But I hope he approves of the historic compromise which we have forged in Africa's triple heritage.

You don't drive, but you top your peers in mobility — both on land and in air. Could you please explain your shyness about driving cars? Is there anything which made you loathe driving?

When I was a child in colonial Mombasa our family did not own a car. But there was quite a good bus service for most of the distant places we needed to go to. Taxis were too expensive for our family except for an emergency. Against this background, my first ambition as a schoolboy was to become a taxi driver. I assumed every taxi driver owned his own car, and used it to make a living. The very few taxi drivers in colonial Mombasa were all men. There were also rickshaws, pulled not by horses but by men (black Africans, of course).

I nursed this ambition of becoming a taxi driver for years. It is the more ironic that when I grew up I never learned to drive. When I was psycho-analyzed by a therapist many years later, my therapist concluded that my failure to learn to drive was an unconscious rebellion against my childhood dream to make a living as a taxi-driver. According to the therapist, I have since compensated by flying across vast distances. Do you think the therapist's diagnosis made sense?

At a Conference Banquet hosted by Ali Mazrui, April 2002. Left to Right — Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka, Former University President Niara Sudarkasa, Host Ali A. Mazrui, Mrs. Pauline Mazrui, Professor J. Isawa Elaigwu.

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You have written extensively on problems of governance in Africa. Was there ever a time when you wished you were a leader of an African country to turn things around? How should African governance and African(ist) scholarship relate? And how have they related in the past?

Yes, I did have political aspirations when I started studying political science at the University of Manchester in England in the 1950s. I became a leader among African students when I was elected President of the African Students' Association in Manchester. I also wrote for the general university students' magazine. When I came to the United States for the first time to pursue a Masters' degree at Columbia University in New York, I was active in students' activities at International House on Riverside Drive, New York, where I lived.

In my students' years at Oxford I tried to get more experience in media-activities rather than students' activities. I became a regular contributor to the BBC radio service beamed at Africa. I wrote short radio commentaries on some item of African news. I broadcast in both English and Kiswahili from London to Africa.

Ali Mazrui cracking a joke as he presents his latest book, A Tale of two Africas, to President Thabo Mbeki in Pretoria, South Africa, 2007. On the left is Sir Shridath Ramphal, former secretary-general of the Commonwealth. On right is Esther Githinji.

The BBC's confidence in me grew. While still at Oxford they invited me to deliver two half-hour talks on their most prestigious domestic radio channel. At that time the channel was called The Third Program — whose constituency was the intellectual and cultural elite of Great Britain. My talks were delivered in 1963 when I was still a graduate student at Oxford.

It was also when I was at Oxford that I published my first article in a major Western newspaper. I published an op-ed article in *The Times* of London. My fellow students were so incredulous that I had an article published in *The Times* that many of them suspected that I had been assisted by Dame Margery Perham, the most distinguished Africanist at Oxford at that time. Actually, Margery Perham had absolutely nothing to do with it. I wrote the article under the title "Why Does an African Feel African?" and simply mailed it to the newspaper. To my own astonishment, the newspaper promptly accepted it as it was, with virtually no alteration whatsoever.

I regarded my media experiences not as preparation for an academic career, but as a promising preparation for a political career in Kenya. My country's independence was imminent during my years at Oxford, but Kenya did not emerge from colonial rule until December 1963.

It was earlier in 1963 that I started my career at Makerere College in Uganda. Also appointed at Makerere was another young Kenyan social scientist, Mwai Kibaki. It was predicted at that time that I would become the first African full professor in political science in Eastern Africa, and Mwai Kibaki would become the first African professor of economics in our part of the continent. The prediction about me did come true — I became the first Black Professor in the social sciences in Anglophone Africa. But the prediction about Mwai Kibaki did not come true. He left Makerere and entered Kenyan politics. He lived to become a Minister in independent Kenya, then Vice-President, then leader of an opposition party, and was finally elected President of Kenya by popular vote in 2002.

On the other hand, I chose to remain in academic life, with part-time participation in electronic and print media in Africa and the Western world. By a strange twist of destiny, President Mwai Kibaki as Head of State appointed me Chancellor of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, my first major appointment at a Kenyan University. Also ironically, the Chancellorship was a position he himself had held jointly as Head of State, which he then chose to relinquish in my favor. He was the first President of Kenya to delegate the Chancellorships of public universities to ordinary citizens instead of the Head of State.

When Kenya returned to multiparty politics in the 1980s (after a couple of decades of the one-party state), my name circulated as a potential leader of one of the opposition parties. But I did not encourage those who were trying to promote me. This was a totally secular option. But there was another option. Kenyan Muslims started to form a party of their own on the model of the Christian Democratic parties of Germany and Italy. The Kenyan Muslim Democratic Party would be based on Muslim values, but was to be open for membership to all Kenyans who shared Muslim values of sobriety and social discipline.

The interim leaders of the Muslim party sent a delegation to ask me to lead them. I offered to be their political adviser, but not their party leader.

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Fortunately or unfortunately, political parties bearing the name of a religion were banned under President Daniel arap Moi in Kenya. Christian Democrats in Italy and Germany had clearly enjoyed more freedom than Muslim Democrats in Kenya.

We know that you have intimate links to several African countries both at professional and personal levels. The countries that come to mind in this regard include Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, South Africa and your own country of birth, Kenya. Which of these countries is your favorite other than (or in addition to) Kenya, and why? I understand choosing one of these countries is a daunting task in practice, but please assume, in theory, that you had to.

Ali Mazrui with the First Lady of South Africa, Mrs Mbeki (center) and Dr. Mazrui's friend Esther Githinji (right), 2007.

In one sense, I identify with all African countries and with the African Diaspora. But it is true that there are some particular African countries which have intersected with my own life more than others. Kenya is the land of my birth and my nationality; Uganda is the birthplace of my academic career and the initial engine of my rise to professional pre-eminence; Nigeria is the land of my African wife's birth [Pauline Uti] and the country which inspired the emotions of my only novel, *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo*. Nigeria is also the country which made it possible for me to combine an appointment in Africa (University of Jos) with an appointment in the Western World (University of Michigan). The Nigerian Television Authority also joined forces with the BBC in Britain and the PBS in the U.S. to produce my television series, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage.* Ghana was the country which had a greater impact on my Oxford doctoral dissertation, and Tanzania is the vanguard of my own Swahili culture. Kiswahili is my mother tongue, and Tanzania has done more to promote it than even my

own country of Kenya. Of the three founding presidents of Anglophone East Africa, I knew Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzania and Milton Obote of Uganda far better than I knew my own Jomo Kenyatta or Daniel arap Moi of Kenya.

South Africa is autobiographically important for different reasons. Of all the Black intellectuals outside South Africa who tested the apartheid system at its most raw, I was probably in a class by myself. Because my first wife was English, and I was invited by the University of Cape Town, I deliberately challenged apartheid on the issue of racially mixed marriages. My challenge provoked a response from the Prime Minister of South Africa himself at the time.

South Africa is also the first African country other than my own to award me a national honor from the Head of State. President Thabo Mbeki elevated me in April 2007 to the rank of Grand Companion of Oliver Tambo. South Africa also produced the first Annotated Bibliography of my works

(electronic and print) from 1963 to the present. The editor and compiler is Abdul S. Bemath, a South African Librarian and Bibliographer.

It seems that there is usually a moment in early life when a potential genius comes to realize that he/she may be one of those rare breeds of brilliant human beings. Was there such a "eureka" moment of self-discovery in your experience and, if so, what was the context? You have been nominated by Foreign Policy *magazine as one of the top one hundred intellectuals in the world. Both prior to and following this recognition, various honors have been bestowed upon you by different institutions, including by my own alma mater, Addis Ababa University. How heavy is the burden of fame, and how do you cope with it?*

You are asking me if I ever realized that I was an African genius!! My answer is that I am convinced that I fall short of a genius, although I have had fans who have so regarded me as

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a genius from my days at Makerere in Uganda.

Unfortunately, those who regarded me as a genius included President Idi Amin of Uganda in the 1970s. That is why Idi Amin wanted to send me to apartheid South Africa as the ultimate refutation that Black people were disqualified as intellectual agents of charge. It stretches our credulity, but I have indeed been designated among the top one hundred public intellectuals of the world (*Foreign Policy* magazine, 2005 Washington, DC), among the top one hundred most dangerous professors in the United States (David Horowitz in his book by same title), among one hundred top public intellectuals of the world (*Perspectives,* London) and, the most preposterous of all, that I am among the top one hundred greatest Africans of all time (*Africa Today* magazine, London). I am flattered that there are people in the world who value me so highly, but let me pray that at least one of my children or grandchildren rises to the real ranks of which I have been so prematurely elevated.

What was the most memorable moment (for you) in 2007?

A convergence of two events made 2007 extra memorable. I was hospitalized almost for the first time in my life. The problem was limb-threatening (my right leg) rather than life-threatening. On doctor's orders I had to cancel speaking engagements in June in Dublin, Ireland, at The Hague (the Netherlands) and in Accra (Ghana). What made these events particularly memorable was Dublin's refusal to take "NO" for an answer, and their readiness to be addressed by me from my hospital bed by satellite if necessary! I finally agreed to give my lecture by satellite, but from my office at Binghamton University, New York rather than my hospital bed. I could see and hear the audience in Ireland and they could see and hear me as I addressed them on "Cultural Forces in World Politics."

Other memorable events in 2007 was my being elevated to the Order of Grand Companions of Oliver Tambo by President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and my being recognized as a Living Legend by the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] and the African Communications Agency in Abuja, Nigeria.

From the family point of view the most memorable events were reunions with my two sisters in Mombasa and with my multiple nephews, nieces and cousins in July 2007. And then there was the grand reunion in Binghamton of all my three adult sons, their families, my former wife, Molly, and her new husband, and of course my usual family and household in Binghamton, New York (my current wife, Pauline, our two teenage sons, Goretti, Mugambwa and her daughter Maria). I was delighted that you yourself managed to join us for that Thanksgiving reunion in November 2007.

Your brilliance as a teacher, researcher and public intellectual is clear. Any advice for those who see you as a model and wish to follow your footsteps?

As you know, I have critics as well as fans; I have faults as well as talents. But the most compelling lesson which my academic life illustrates is quite simple. It is the old adage "If at first you don't succeed, try and try again!"

I nearly failed the final high school examination in Mombasa — the Cambridge School Certificate examination, which was set and graded by Cambridge University for schools in the British colonial empire. Because I got what was called a "Third Grade" (meaning just a pass) in 1949, I was not qualified to go to college. The only higher-education college for East Africans at the time was Makerere

A Nigerian audience listening to Ali Mazrui, Kano, Nigeria, 2002.

College in Uganda. Makerere College understandably rejected my application for admission. I even failed to get a job as a junior bank clerk in Mombasa. But I refused to accept that situation as the final word about my career.

For the next four to five years I applied for scholarships to different parts of the world. I got negative answers from institutions in Europe, North America, India, the Arab world and Australia.

Fortunately for me the British colonial authorities in Kenya rediscovered me through the intervention of British officials in Mombasa. The educational authorities in colonial Nairobi decided that I was much brighter than indicated by my Cambridge School Certificate results. I got a Kenya Government scholarship to go to complete my secondary education in England, and then proceed to a British university. I got a Distinction in my bachelor's degree, won a Rockefeller Foundation fellowship to do a Master's degree at Columbia University in New York, and then won a Nuffield College Fellowship to do my doctorate at Oxford University in England.

Yes, I had vindicated the old English adage: "If at first you don't succeed, try and try again!"

Thank you!

The Elements of Cultural Forces in World Politics: Redux

By Thomas Uthup

Earlier this year (October 2007), in a lecture on "From Colour-Line To Culture Line: Is Globalization Re-Defining The Dynamic Of Political Prejudice?" at the W.E.B. DuBois Pan-African Centre, Accra, Ghana, Professor Ali A. Mazrui had asked: "Now that we are in the twenty-first century, the question has arisen whether the central problem of the twenty-first century was going to be the problem of the culture line." Certainly for me, there is no question that the "culture line" is increasingly going to be of vast importance for those of us interested in the politics of the twenty-first century.

When Professor Mazrui was a candidate for the position of Albert Schweitzer Chair in the Humanities at Binghamton University, I was extremely enthusiastic about Binghamton recruiting such a senior scholar who was as interested in the effects of culture on politics as I was. I did my little bit of lobbying (with people I knew on the State University Board), and was gratified when Professor Mazrui became part of the Binghamton faculty in 1989. Coincidentally, one of my first tasks working for Professor Mazrui was to proofread the galleys for *Cultural Forces in World Politics* (1990), and as I devoured the delightful and provocative writing I was even more convinced of the rich possibilities for scholarship on the elements of culture and world politics.

Certainly since 1989 — or 1991, when the Institute of Global Cultural Studies (IGCS)was established — Professor Mazrui, faculty colleagues, visiting scholars, and graduate students writing their dissertations have written reams of material on different areas of culture and politics. Since my association with Professor Mazrui from 1989 (in both formal and informal affiliations with IGCS), I have been privileged to have exposure to much of the scholarship at IGCS.

This exposure has been stimulating to my own thinking on the role of culture in world politics. In early 2007, as I occasionally substituted for Professor Mazrui in his lecture class on Cultural Forces in World Politics, I began to think about elaborating on the functional roles of culture in world politics. These functions of culture were first laid out in his *The African Condition: A Political Diagnosis* (1980) as well as in his *Cultural Forces in World Politics*. In Professor Mazrui's conception, the seven functions of culture in politics are:

1. As lenses of perception
2. As markers of identity
3. As layers of stratification
4. As means of communication
5. As standards of judgment
6. As springs of motivation
7. And as means of production and modes of consumption

We can further collapse these functions in three categories. The first three may be regarded as **framing** functions; the fourth and fifth as **communicating** functions; and the last two as **actionable** functions. Theoretically, we thus have a very neat way of looking at the roles of culture in world politics. However, to reexamine culture in world politics in the twenty-first century, it is equally important to look at those **elements** of culture that are most important in affecting world politics. While "culture" as a term has been defined endlessly, both Professor Mazrui and I are more partial to the wider sociological sense of the term. This sense of the term allows us to tease out those elements (or aspects) of culture that have (and will have) continued influences, either directly or indirectly, in the realm of world politics. It must be noted that the term "world politics" is used because we feel the walls between domestic and international politics are more permeable in the era of globalization.

The Elements

Using the Mazruian functional definitions to illustrate the impact of culture on politics is facilitated by breaking out those elements of culture that play important roles in politics, and detailing how each of the functions may play out in the elements of culture. In my way of thinking, these seven elements of culture are: religion, language, age, ideology, race/ethnicity/caste, gender, and popular culture. In what follows, I will elaborate briefly on each of these. Of course, I recognize that there may be other elements (for example, sexual orientation) of culture, but they may not have the same global role *in politics* as the seven discussed below.

First, there is no doubt that *religion* will continue to be a key factor in world politics in the twenty-first century. Religion frames issues and candidates, as for example in the case of members of religious minorities running for the U.S. Presidency. It provides rhetorical devices and language as in the clash between radical Islam and the West. Most recently, there have been coalitions of religious bodies promoting policy goals such as reducing global warming and promoting peace. Interesting questions to ponder for the 21st century will also include whether secular India will fall to muscular fundamentalist Hinduism and what the implications of that would be for the region and the world.

Second, *language* — which would include not just the medium but also the content — will also continue to be an issue in international politics. Here it is not just the question of what should be the national language(s), but the tensions of free speech and blasphemy or offensive speech which will cause political controversy in the increasingly multicultural states of the twenty-first century. These are issues not only in developing countries

The Elements of Cultural . . .

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but also in developed countries. The resurgence of tensions between the Dutch-speaking Flemish population and the French-speaking Walloons in Belgium, the resentment of the spread of Spanish in the United States due to migration, and the continuing disputes over blasphemy between Islam and the West are examples of the continuing role of language in world politics.

Age may be the surprising **third** element of culture that will create political issues. We are entering an era where "We've gone from Pampers to Depends," as Joseph Chamie, director of the United Nations population division, said in a 2004 interview. As the world increasingly faces what may be a preponderantly female, older North and a preponderantly male younger South, political debates about the welfare state, immigration, acceptance of risks at home, the use of military means, and health care will be affected by the ages of policy makers as well as their intended audiences.

Some may question the inclusion of a **fourth** element of culture that will affect politics in the twenty first century: *ideology.* We include ideology as an element of culture because of its framing, communicative and actionable functions. When ideology is seen as reflecting an "ism" — whether socialism or environmentalism, Islamism or secularism — it does provide political actors with frameworks, language, and motivation. In some senses, the more complex the world becomes, the more human beings will need prisms of whatever "ism" they follow. Global complexity will also mean that ideologies will be important in retention of identity, providing criteria of judgment, and providing springs of motivation and a larger context for actions resulting in production and consumption.

Like religion, *race/ethnicity/caste,* much to the disappointment of modernization theorists and linear thinkers, is the **fifth** element of culture that continues to bedevil modern politics.

This element continues to be important politically not just in the developing worlds of Asia and Africa but also in the ugly politics of immigration in North America and Europe — although the overt racism of apartheid and segregation have ended. Globalization, far from ending these divisions, may actually complicate them in the twenty-first century through the rise of a new "global apartheid," uneducated racial profiling of foreigners by fearful governmental agents in the guise of antiterrorism and border control, and the presence of individuals — like Barack Obama in the U.S. and Rahul Gandhi in India — who come from previously binary ethnicities.

From the rise of the first female serious contender for the U.S. Presidency to the implications of aberrant sex ratios in China, India, and Russia, *gender* as the **sixth** element of culture will increasingly affect both national and international politics. How both genders view the world and identify themselves has important implications for formulating areas of political concern and allocating economic resources. Differences in communication by different genders will obviously have implications politically. As rape is increasingly becoming a weapon of war and ethnic cleansing, gender differences may be an important element in the prosecution of war criminals. One of the more interesting areas of discussion is the impact of the Information Revolution and the spread of the Internet in developing areas, opening up promises and peril for women, as Ali A. Mazrui and Alamin M. Mazrui pointed out in a 2001 paper "The Digital Revolution And The New Reformation: Doctrine And Gender In Islam."

A **seventh** and final element of culture that is related to the global impact of the Information Revolution are those parts of *popular culture* that have proven to have political impact. Globalization of hip-hop and rap has led to their adoption as avenues for

political expression where rap artists draw attention to the problems of the underclass and identify across borders with other oppressed people. Films like "Hotel Rwanda" and documentaries like "An Inconvenient Truth" have drawn attention to political issues like genocide and global warming. As financial and technical barriers are surmounted, more films and documentaries will contend for our busy eyeballs' attention. Printed material (books, plays, cartoons) have long provoked political action, but the speed of today's political reactions to provocative print material gives urgency to age-old debates about free speech and state/society interests. Finally, fashion/dress as arenas of political contestation (as in the case of the debates about the veil in Britain and France, or the wearing of the kaffiyeh in the United States) will also continue to be an example of the interaction of popular culture and politics in the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

These fascinating areas of inquiry will undoubtedly benefit from the work of Professor Mazrui and his stimulating and uncommon insights into the area of culture and politics. I am very excited to be part of the IGCS team that will enable me to engage in a discourse with other scholars on these areas. At present, I am hopeful of expanding these thoughts on culture and politics into a book-length project which will enable the detailed theoretical examination of the role of cultural forces in world politics and contribute to Professor Mazrui's intellectual legacy in that area.

News in brief

Ali A. Mazrui elected the President of the Association of Muslim Association of Muslim Social Scientists in North America

Ali A. Mazrui has been elected almost unanimously as the new President of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists [AMSS] in the United States and Canada. His tenure of office is for two years, beginning in November 2007.

This Association is linked to a number of related Islamic institutions in North America. Dr. Mazrui had to choose between becoming the Chief Editor of the American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences and assuming the Presidency of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists. He was invited to consider either role. He thought he could better serve the Muslim Social Scientists of North America as President of their Association. The Association and the journal have had a long-standing collaborative relationship.

Both the Association and the Journal are in turn linked to the International Institute of Islamic Thought, based in Virginia, and generating wide-ranging publications, maps, atlases, and electronic products about Muslim history and culture. The International Institute of Islamic Thought has also had historic links with the International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where Professor Mazrui has given lectures in the past.

Dr. Mazrui has in the past published in the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (AJISS). His most influential articles in the journal were "Islam and the Debate about the End of History" and a later article, "Islam and Globalization: Between Homogenization and Hegemonization."

The Association of Muslim Social Scientists of which Ali Mazrui is now president promotes regional conferences about Islamic Studies in both the United States and Canada. There is also an annual conference in the United States every year, which seeks to promote both professorial scholarship and efforts by graduate students.

New experiments by the Association may include lectures about the Muslim world which the Association would attempt to co-sponsor on specific American campuses from time to time. The Association would bear part of the cost of promoting such lectures, and the hosting institution could provide the honorarium. Some of the ideas are Mazrui's own concepts for experimentation under his leadership.

The new interim dean of Harpur College of Arts and Sciences, Professor Ricardo Laremont.

Ex-Associate Dirctor Named Dean

Professor Ricardo Rene Laremont, associate director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies from 1997 to 2002, was appointed in 2007 as the interim dean of the Harpur College of Arts and Sciences. His rise to deanship was also preceded by multiple outstanding achievements, including his selection for the Excellence in Teaching Award from the State University of New York. Dr. Laremont says he learned a great deal about effective teaching from his former boss, Professor Ali A. Mazrui, the founding-director of the IGCS. The key to effective teaching, says Dr. Laremont, is "deep love for and close attention to students, their hopes and their aspirations." Dr. Laremont received a PhD from Yale University and a JD from New York University; he taught at Yale and Columbia before coming to Binghamton in 1997.

Since his arrival in Binghamton, Dr. Laremont has received substantial research grants from various institutions, including the Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the United States Institute of Peace. As Dean of the Harpur College, Dr. Laremont now oversees nearly 9000 students and more than 500 faculty members. This is, of course, a far cry from Department Chairmanship — he served as Chair of the Department of Sociology from 2002 to 2007. Despite the challenges which attend to entertaining highly diverse interests and more numerous constituents, Dean Laremont says, his basic administrative philosophy and the motto remain the same: "how best to serve."

Dr. Laremont's research in the past included Africa and Islam, and he has published widely acclaimed books in both areas. The inspirational sources of his interest in these areas are partly attributable, according to Dr. Laremont, to his association with Dr. Mazrui, whom he first met when Dr. Mazrui was a Senior Professor at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. In addition, Dr. Laremont says, he is long in love with Sahelian Africa.

Dr. Laremont is proficient in, among other languages, French, Spanish, and Arabic, and he believes that it helps a great deal to be multilingual: "If you understand other languages, you understand other cultures."

Interview with Jayantha Jayman

By IGCS reporters

Dr. Jayantha Jayman joined the Institute of Global Cultural Studies (IGCS) in Fall 2007 as a Research Assistant Professor. He brings to the institute years of teaching and research in the field of international politics. Below is an interview held with Dr. Jayman on December 10, 2007.

Could you please tell us about yourself and your academic background?

I was formally and informally educated in Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, the U.S., Canada, UK and Japan at different stages of my life. After completing my high school education in Sri Lanka and the U.S., I completed my undergraduate work at Denison University in Ohio, where I majored in Physics and Political Science. At the time I have decided to pursue a graduate degree in alternative energy use in developing countries at the University of Pennsylvania, but then for family reasons I moved to Canada, where I pursued a Master's degree in Political Science (specialization in Political Economy of Development) at the University of Toronto. That in turn led me to my doctoral work from the London School of Economics including my time in Japan.

Could you please tell us about your major area of academic interest?

When we speak of major areas we already begin to accept the Western academy's divisions of such areas, and the problems this poses for the gathering of knowledge and for its subsequent use. While there is no escaping the dominant academy's organization, and perhaps even its need, I still attempt to break free by being driven by questions. In terms of questions, I am particularly interested in those that concern the poorer people of the world in their relationship with rich and industrialized nations. In terms of disciplinary areas, I tend to write about international political economy (IPE) broadly interpreted to include philosophy, cultural studies, history, econom-ics, politics, sociology and geography among others.

Could you please tell us about your academic journey involving Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan and the United States?

This journey had great deal to do with my childhood, so let's start there. I had blurry recollections of Sri Lankan politics due to the insurgency by the JVP, but the events in Wollo Province in Ethiopia shaped me. I saw the first rifle shot fired in reaction to students taking over the local high school (where my parents taught) signaling the beginning of the student-led revolution, which the military, and then the Dergue, sadly took over. I remember this vividly even as a very young boy, barely able to read, as I listened to some of the student leaders talk outside our gate. Being so young, I had no idea at the time about what it all meant, but I knew that the students were fed up with unfairness, and that was something a even child understands instinctively.

Then in Sri Lanka as a teenager I witnessed the pogrom against Tamils in reaction to the murder of thirteen soldiers by Tamil militants. In Colombo I witnessed a form of class warfare as it was the wealthy Tamils the poor mobs were after as they burned house after house after first hacking the refrigerator, the symbol of middle class wealth. At times the mobs caught Tamils who did not have time to escape to the safety of their Sinhalese neighbors abodes. The story not told on Sri Lanka is the one of how thousands of Sinhalese offered refuge to their Tamil neighbors.

If Ethiopia was a lesson in the politics of famine and revolution, Sri Lanka was a lesson in how ethnicity is manipulated by the elite interested in power. From my early experiences, I understood the devastation of poverty, famine, insurgency and war, though I never appreciated my own experiences until I began to read politics at Denison — that is, when I began to think of the issues confronting non-rich states more systematically. As I was writing papers that were actually mini-theses that challenged the conventional wisdom of the West about the rest, I was challenged by Professor James Pletcher, an Africanist to tackle Political Science as a major, which he said was not as easy as Physics. I saw Jim Pletcher at the International Studies Association meeting a few years ago, and that was a treat for me.

Denison sounded busy . . . you studied Physics and Political Science?

I was very busy at Denison. In addition to double major, I was also very involved with the student government and politics on campus. I was the President of the International Students Association (DISA), which became a powerful voice for diversity on campus. I was also one of the Head Residents of the Global Studies Center (GSC), along with my wonderful friend and fellow refusnik physicist Andy McQuigg. The GSC was a hive of activity — at Denison I used the space to achieve several things, among them to bridge the cultural gap between the Africans and the African Americans. I was aware of the sad misconceptions and also saw that we were all working towards the same goal, though from different starting points and experiences. The highlight of my Denison days was to see the divestment of university assets from firms doing business in South Africa — this was in accordance with the wishes of the African National Congress (ANC) as conveyed to us by its youth leaders at Denison.

The move towards my current career track in politics was in some way also due to the influence of the South Africans at Dension, which at the time hosted the orientation of South African students coming to the U.S. on scholarship, via the Ford Foundation, I think. (This was just before Apartheid officially was ended, so there was still active engagement of the potential

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leaders of future South Africa by the U.S. Now with the Cold War "won" Africa is severely neglected, though after 9/11 there is some wooing again.) Thus, I met and spoke to hundreds of South Africans each summer. It was a great learning experience. Two South Africans were particularly influential in my early political consciousness. Charles Mngomezulu was my close friend (and we were co-workers on the graveyard shift for campus security). He taught me that those in direct opposition to our ideas were safer to deal with than those who gave us token support. Nazeema Mohamed, of South Asian origin, was my other early mentor: her energy and dedication to the cause of anti-Apartheid was something I took away to remember the importance of praxis if one is really serious about politics.

How did you come to know about Professor Mazrui?

Good question and well timed! It was about this time that I first began to know about Professor Marzrui's work via my formal interest in "Third World" politics or post-colonial states, as I refer to it now.
His work confirmed the feeling I had that we all had origins that was rooted in different cultures. For me, his work provided legitimacy to the feeling I was African and Asian at the same time, given my childhood experiences in Sri Lanka and Ethiopia. I think I move effortlessly between Asian and African communities and appreciate the positive aspects of this dual heritage, particular now as a Canadian whose friends are of various cultures of the world.

At a more formal level, Professor Mazrui's work on the triple heritage was influential without being obvious at the time. Although I did not debate culture vs. class with my South African peers, that line of reasoning did inform the discussion. My South African friends' interests in politics were mostly on the class side of the equation. For

them, cultural clashes were the end result of imperialism and the race and class structure such a system creates. Professor Mazrui however shows us that culture — good and bad — was there *before* imperialism and class. His work is thus something we should all carefully consider without believing that somehow culture is a backward notion. I only began to grasp the deeper implications Professor Mazrui's influence during my Master's work in Toronto — such is the unlearning one must do with the imperialism of thought or Western domination, or what Gramsci speaks of in terms of hegemony in the cultural realm. In countering imperialism it is crucial to appreciate the cultural strength of our backgrounds, while seeking to move away from the cultural weaknesses: that is true path to progress in a diverse world.

Why do you think culture is useful to study?

Culture is unfortunately left as a "soft" issue to study, even though it is crucial to the social sciences in general. The specificity of culture must not be pushed aside in the search for "universal relationships" between variable that seem to leap out in certain works of such theoretical parsimony that one wonders how useful it is in the real world where there is more complexity. To carry on with this exercise of seeking such relationships is to continue to incorrectly construct a world of universal half truths, as culture is not accounted for. Such social constructions are of little or no value — they can indeed be highly dangerous as we have seen with all imperial incursions to civilize the "other" with really appreciating the complexity of the other's story.

The closing of the American mind to non-Western cultures is a result of not knowing about other cultures. Fortunately, those such as Professor Mazrui have tried to bridge the divide and explain culture — his three col-

lections of essays that is coming out in 2008 is another contribution to tell us to think about culture. No one can deny that knowledge of culture is crucial for the future globalized community, perhaps even more than economics, into which we invest so much more scarce research funds. Actual cultural studies require years and years of investment in the study of languages, customs, etc., and it is crucial this investment take place. We are now discovering this in the aftermath of 9/11, and perhaps wise voices will prevail so there might be better and deeper cross-cultural understanding.

Is culture the main reason you looked at Japan?

Learning about Japan is fascinating for any scholar, and many have taken away lessons from its experience. I think how one gets to Japan is also important, as I was not an accidental arrival. How I arrived in Japan had to do with the course of my graduate studies, beginning with my Master's at Toronto. At Toronto I worried over development in post colonial states, and with instructors such as G.K. Helleiner and Albert Berry, I was properly challenged. As a result, like many concerned with such issues, I looked for South-South cooperation as a way out of dependency on the North.

My work at the Master's level was also inspired by my direct contact with Professor Wahidul Haque, a former Bangladeshi finance minister, who was teaching in the department of economics at the University of Toronto. He pushed me to think of South Asian regional cooperation for my thesis. From his discipline of economics it would have seemed clear that 1.5 billion people in South Asia would constitute a significant market for internally driven growth — that is, growth which is a result of domestic demand, and not so much export reliant. However, as I wrote from *international political economy,* I discovered the regional

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cooperation in South Asia did not work as the regional hegemony — India, of course — did not lead well, and indeed was mired in conflict of different proportions with every nation that it shared borders with. Despite its visionary leaders on global issues, India's leaders lacked a decent vision for regional issues. Not willing to give up on South-South cooperation, I realized then that my next move would be to study why the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (or ASEAN) was relatively more successful in achieving cooperation.

My work on South Asia was guided by the theories leadership, with Susan Strange's work on leadership and world order influencing me. I began to think systematically about how to explain the ASEAN phenomena as a prospective doctoral dissertation at Toronto. Then, had the fortune of meeting Susan Strange herself, after Professor Louis Pauly picked me upon reading my one page proposal on understanding the particular success of Malaysia, a key member of ASEAN, in attracting Japanese investment. At the time I had begun to make the counter-intuitive hypothesis that Malaysia had *power over* Japan. Intrigued by what I explained she bluntly told me that I was in the wrong school to study critical international political economy of the sort I was interested in. And very bluntly she told me that I ought to be in England. With my ideas not being heard in Toronto beyond Louis Pauly, I eventually took up Susan Strange's challenge and I think I was her very last student in international political economy.

Sitting among the dusty books in the old LSE buildings affected my thinking deeply. Rebuffed from taking on a specifically "Strangean" view of the world by Susan Strange herself, upon her insistence I began to think on my own, and then Antonio Gramsci's use of hegemony caught my attention, as he no doubt did of so many others. My question on Malaysia however, just lay there. I was too interested in theory to feel the need to tackle any more empirical material. Alarmed I was also being affected by the LSE penchant for theory, Susan Strange pushed me to get on the field. Then, with the help of a Monbusho scholarship, I was in Japan. She arranged for me to report to Professor Hideo Sato, at the Graduate School of Inernational Political Economy (GSIPE), at Tsukuba University. Tsukuba was also located in Japan's science city, so I was surrounded by scholars from every field I could think of. (I was told that the Soviets had a nuclear missile targeted at the location at one time!)

Once in Japan, I had to shed my theoretical cobwebs. It became very obvious to me that I had to spend time in Tokyo when possible and this I did by developing my networking skills. I attended conferences and events to meet with several Japanese civil servants from several ministries. Eventually, I was speaking to the senior most public servants in several ministries understanding where power in Japan really lay. While my Japanese language skills were non-existent to poor, despite a six-month crash immersion course, the Japanese officials were patient and used their various levels of English to help me with answers to questions. I had my explanation for how ASEAN became functional: the Japanese were playing the role of leader, but so very quietly that most did not see. Still, I did not know why the Japanese led and that became my theoretical quest in understanding the region.

What is your view of Japan's place in the world?

Now that is big question. Let me just answer the portion of Japan in Eastern Asia. What I am saying here has profound implications for social science of Asia, as much has been overlooked in only linking Japan to Asia in terms of Tokyo's interests in acquiring raw materials, cheap labour, markets, etc., that is a purely material view that ignores among other things, culture. While these material interests are important there is more going on than meets the eye. The sum total impression I gathered in my talks with Japanese officials were that they felt obligated to the Asian region: certainly for the barbaric effects of the Imperial Japanese Army's occupation of Korea and parts of China and Southeast Asia in the early 20th century, even though few want to state that publicly due to the highly politicized nature of the debate today. Lost in the heated debate is the fact that the Japanese are also concerned with Asia and its opinions of Japan *as they are Asians themselves,* which is a cultural category that many political scientists of course miss. Like all Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans the Japanese have like felt the slight of racism and thus identify with the victims. Like many Africans Asian and Latin Americans that Japanese too have victimized others and try their best to absolve themselves of the blame.

Now in terms of implications of understanding the Japanese influence, say in the area of the economy, one could say that Eastern Asian industrialization has two parents: the West *and* Japan. According to the logic of Gautam Sen (he was my supervisor following Susan Strange's death) in *Military Origins of Industrialization* the West and Japan were driven in the direction of industrialization due to security interests. In contrast, for me, the industrialization of the rest of postcolonial spaces was a result of the need to economically develop as an end in itself: *freedom was supposed to deliver economic development.* The effect of Japan on post-colonial Asian spaces in this sense of desire for economic development was immense. On one hand many Asians felt if the Japanese could do it, "so could we," and this is also a cultural category that many political scientists and economists overlook: demonstration effects are

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only useful if the emulator identifies with the leader in terms of capability. No where is this more obvious than in the discourse of the Koreans, who feel rightly that they have been overlooked due to the attention given to Japan, despite Korea being the civilization that was older than Japan and from whence Japan borrowed much. Ditto the Chinese. However, Japan's effect is not just in Eastern Asia, as in a more pure sense, Japan also inspired countries as far away as Indonesia, India and Turkey as evidenced by the deep interest the nationalists of these countries showed in Japan.

While many non-Europeans were looking at Japan, on the other hand Japan was also happy to play the role of leader in Asia. It was certainly cynically done in the 1930s when Japan proposed the Greater Co-prosperity sphere. However, what the Japanese did in the last three decades of the 20th century is much closer to the true spirit of leadership. Thus, the Japanese parent in Asian industrialization is much more different to the Western parent. Like the Western powers Japan acted in self-interest in accessing raw materials, markets, and cheap labor. However, unlike Western parents Japan was of the Asian region and thus it was viewed as emulable and it in turn felt the weight of advancing the cause of Asians and did so.

Your doctoral dissertation was on the hegemonic power of Japan in Eastern Asia. Could you please tell us more about your dissertation?

As I had mentioned, I was interested in how ASEAN nations had the kind of regional cohesion absent in South Asia. As I began to notice, the Indonesians, the largest power in the region of Southeast Asia was not exercising its power over the region as did India in South Asia. Was it then just enlightened cooperation as the liberals would have? Were all the countries merely interested in absolute gains? That too was not possible as each

country was highly concerned with what the other gained, that is, they were interested in relative gains. Then I noticed the Japanese role in Malaysia, Thailand, etc. ASEAN it seemed had Japan as a good investor in the region. At this point I realized the need to understand Japan's role in Eastern Asia. It was the case of classic observation here, as I had more or less stumbled on something that was not quite what I was looking for, but that nonetheless suggested where the explanation might lie. After getting to Japan I realized that the Western perspective of Asia was very myopic. Japan was actually rather thick with ASEAN and so much was happening at so many levels that I found it hard to keep up: there were cultural exchanges, but these were well organized and they were well institutionalized. There were Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) loans and grants, and these were long standing and also involved more money for economic development than even the U.S. allocated. There were technical "exchanges" in which actually Japanese experts were sent to even help write five-year economic plans . . . So, I had indeed stumbled onto a research agenda that just could not be done from a Western perch from which everything in the East was exotic or corrupt or authoritarian . . . certainly, the idea of Japan leading Asia's economies was not something most wanted to contemplate in the West. Barring the Marshall Plan (for themselves, I might add) the West has done next to nothing anywhere in the world, preferring instead the market to do it its work. Thus for most Western academics Asians success was merely the result of Asians more obediently following the free market economics and exports and had little to do with Japan. As I realized my time in Japan was crucial even for the political freedoms countries such as Philippines, Indonesia and India. In the last three decades of the 20th century Japan was leading the region into the industrialized core.

How was it possible for Japan, which was hated in the region to be now thus so engaged in it? Thus, mid-way through my stay in Japan, I had hit up the intellectual puzzle that was to drive my research for the PhD. It was to also drive me back to theory, as now I needed to find a way to answer my question coherently.

The ideas of *bad* leadership by India explained the stagnation of South Asian cooperation. Indonesia was *too weak* compared to India to really play a hegemonic regional role in ASEAN. Theoretically, hegemonic leadership needed a vast disparity in power, of the likes only the U.S., China, Russia, India and Japan enjoyed. It now seemed reasonable to suggest that Japan was in a hegemonic relationship with Eastern Asia from South Korea to Indonesia. However, the hegemonic relationship was not in the same vein as those systems run by the British or the U.S. hegemonies that relied on their militaries in the 19th and 20th centuries respectively. Rather, it seemed Japan's leadership in Asia was done with more consensus than imagined possible by Western international relations narrative that limited ideas of leadership to those of the British and the U.S. period. The materialist ideas of power in these two examples meant that Japanese leadership was not understood in the theoretical terms available to even in political science in the U.K. and U.S.

Thus my doctoral work involved a great deal of re-writing of Western theory on hegemony that was incomplete at least in so far as international relations and international political economy was concerned.

Reading on the Japanese political economy, and aided by the insights of Susan Strange's theory of international political economy, I came to realize that Japan was actually the largest creditor notion of the world today with nearly one third of the world's savings and with immense structural power. Its production power was also immense,

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and with transnationalization, its firms were dominant in most sectors of industry. Japan's domestic market, the second largest in the world after the U.S., was large enough to absorb regional imports but via Japanese firms, who controlled intra-trade that was the dominant portion. The Japanese military was indeed far behind the U.S., but still ahead of most in the world. Thus in Susan Strange's terms Japan's power was structural, and Japan had the material attributes needed for at least regional leadership. What was missing was the label of leader and that had to do more with theoretical weaknesses of the Western IR&IPE discourse.

Simply put, Japan was simply not seen as a leader as it did not lead from the front, American quarterback style. Rather, Japan was leading from within and among the led or even from the rear, all done quietly.

Faced with the theoretical problems of Western IR/IPE theory, I had to reformulate it such that notions of leadership included consensual forms available in other *cultures* and best captured in Western theory in the work of Gramsci, but also Jurgen Habermas. Thus, I was able to reshape tools of IPE so that we could begin to understand Japanese power. It was this power, expressed in a myriad of ways that was allowing the regional success ASEAN, rapid economic development in Eastern Asia, etc.

Do you see any similarities between the Japanese regional status and other hegemonic powers in the world?

This is very good question, and it anticipates work I am doing now on U.S. hegemony. I would say that there are no other powers that are similar to Japanese hegemony in Eastern Asia. In Asia the Japanese *focus on the moment of consent that is implied in Gramscian hegemony.* The U.S. unfortunately does attempt to seek consent from the countries and peoples it claims to lead . . . this is the obvious difference in the two

hegemonies. Also, these two examples of hegemony are different to British hegemony that was driven by the notion of "indirect rule," or co-optation of local leaders to be part of the British Empire in a formal sense. This method the English learned after not being able capture Scotland militarily and thus resorting to buying out the Scottish leaders and making them Lords or their realms with the backing of the English. Thus the British perfected "indirect rule" while imparting institutions to perpetuate that power from schools to even the currency board in Singapore (used to manage the exchange rate even today). The U.S. might look like they try to do something like the English, but Washington tends to bed with corrupt leaders who have little or no legitimacy in their theoretical realm: the support of Somoza in Nicaragua is a classic U.S. error as is the current support of the less than legitimate Somali government. Without notions of consent in the U.S. policy making apparatus, where it is egotistical leader who are in charge, the U.S. violently carries out policies; this to the chagrin of many old hands in the State Department, Central Intelligence Agency, etc. So Japan is very much alone in their consensual forms of leadership . . . culture I am afraid has something to do with this, in as much as Japan's strategic weakness, which is what most would point to.

You are in the process of finalizing several papers and books as well, could you please tell us more about your personal work?

On my own, I have a book project on morality and hegemonic power where some members of the ICGS contribute as well. I will also be working to publish my work on Japan that has perked the interest of a well known press, while the theoretical implications of my work will be applied to the U.S. in another volume, and this is something Professor Ricardo Laremont wants me to get out fast!

Dr. Jayman, you have taught several courses in comparative politics and international relations. The subjects of the courses that you have taught have ranged from terrorism to democratization, international political economy, human rights, as well as foreign policy. What are the subjects that you enjoy teaching the most?

I enjoy classes in which I can have a realistic chance of engaging students. I have found that my course in international political economy tends to really excite students from a broad section of the academic community. That said, the most challenging course so far has been on what is now called "terrorism," as it is very hard to get people from very different perspectives on the matter to think about their loaded world view — that is, I love the challenge of getting students to think about constructed "other" and her/his problem as if it is "theirs."

At the universities where you taught, you have become known for involving your students in innovative class projects, could you please tell us about some of your previous successful class projects?

At Earlham College, where I taught International Political Economy and Human Rights, the major project was to find a real world issue and then go about providing a coherent analysis based on theory, followed by going on to do something about it. I found that this assignment was well received by the students and that some of them have contributed to news analysis in a serial in the major student newspaper. Others have sent their papers to their home country's government. Yet others are forming political action groups. In Toronto, where I was before Earlham, I was really delighted by the output of my fourth year course on globalization and terror. The students developed documentaries that were produced with the help of the university as part of their final submission. These were done in consultation with

Post-Colonial Africa and Post-War Japan Convergence and Divergence

By Seifudein Adem

> Soon and very soon our two year battle will be over,
> The clarion call will summon us back to our families and our people,
> Our association with Japan will be a matter of history . . .
> Oh, how it hurts to part company with loved ones . . .
> For many of us this will be the final good-bye to Japan,
> But then our gratitude to Japan will forever remain on our lips,
> A land of unassuming people . . . small but thinking very big,
> A place where love and sympathy prevail in a
> scenic atmosphere of peace and tranquility . . .
>
> Kwateng Amaning Frimpong, 1994

We learn everything, it is said, by imitation, far more than by precept. Japan's modern history substantially bears out this observation. I ask in this article whether Africa should also imitate others, including Japan.

A plethora of theories have been advanced to explain why Japan suc-

Seifudein Adem

ceeded, ranging from, on the one hand, that Japan succeeded because it was completely westernized to, on the other hand, the nation succeeded because it clung to its core values and traditions. Other perspectives fall somewhere in between the two. On the whole these views may be classified into three ideal types. Most dominant in the period prior to the Second World War was the externally oriented school which maintained Japan succeeded because it abandoned its culture. According to this school Japan borrowed from the West not just scientific techniques but also the values and institutions which support them. Japan's modernization was nothing less than Westernization.

According to the second, internally oriented school, Japan succeeded because it remained loyal to its culture. It was Japan's culture that provided the foundations for sustained economic growth and industrialization. This perspective not only rejected the Euro-centric notion that non-Western societies

cannot modernize without substantial input from the West but argued that it was, in fact, Japan's pre-capitalistic, and even feudal, culture that prepared the necessary condition for Japan's modernization. This view was most fashionable in the postwar period. The third hybrid theory attributed the success of Japan to a creative synthesis of "the Japanese spirit" and "the Western techniques." This approach is transcendental and has held sway across different phases of the modernization of Japan.

Why did Africa fail to modernize? Using the same classificatory schema used in the case of Japan, the explanations about Africa's failure to modernize can be categorized into externally-oriented, internally oriented and a hybrid. Theories such as "Europe underdeveloped Africa" or, in general, "the industrialized world underdeveloped Africa" are externally oriented theories. World systems theorists, dependentistas and Neo-Marxists have sometimes advanced ideas reflective of this approach. Others linked Africa's underdevelopment to the "laziness of the people," to its "low-trust" societies or the "vampire states" in the continent. And this is the internalist school. The paradigm that is becoming increasingly popular in recent years among many Africanists and some policymakers is that which sees the combination of internal and external factors as the primary culprits collectively.

Interview with Jayantha Jayman

each other and with me, and with the aim of sending them to a local TV station if they were properly done — the students were able to carry on with the project through the summer. Some of

the productions were excellent and put the normal news analysts to shame. With more work that included the department of media, I am sure the better projects would have been aired as the

content itself was superior to most TV output, barring PBS, BBC, CBC and TV Ontario.

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Japan's response to the challenges of modernization was more culturally mediated than post-colonial Africa ever aspired. In Africa, ideology seemed to have played a greater part.

The Japanese modified imported ideas and institutions, ranging from Confucianism to capitalism, and adapted them to local conditions without much concern about whether the end product had or did not have close resemblance to the original. In other words the principle of creative imitation, itself deeply rooted in their culture, guided the Japanese endeavor.

Africans, in the first place, did not have a major say in the process of selecting which ideas and institutions to import. Whatever new ideas came from abroad, they were either imposed from above/outside, or the choice was merely a result of the conspiracy of circumstances. And yet Africa's post-colonial modernizers tried to stick to the script of a foreign idea as much as possible, believing vacillating between one system of ideas and another, or blending different systems, was a sign of indetermination. The guiding force behind Africa's pursuit of foreign ideas thus seemed to be ideological authenticity even as the ultimate goal was bound up with social purpose. This was again in contrast to the Japanese approach, which favored not only the shifting of gears from one system to another but also one which encouraged the blending of different systems too.

We should also bear in mind, however, that the choices which were available to Japan were not as disharmonious as the ones with which post-colonial Africa was confronted. Japan had the luxury of choosing between the American model and the British, or the French and the Prussian, etc., and these models were not always mutually exclusive to the same degree for instance as between liberal-capitalism and Marxism-Leninism.

A related factor to the Japanese proclivity to modify which also contributed to their success in economic modernization is flexibility — the versatility to change as circumstances require. Japanese culture allows considerable degree of flexibility. The general tendency in contemporary Africa has not been very favorable for flexibility; but a great potential seems to exist in Africa, too, for developing this cultural resource. So long as African cultures attach greater significance to experience than ideology, which they do, as studies have demonstrated, it can be argued that African cultures are not incompatible with the principle of flexible accommodation. Africa's cultural capital hasn't been fully utilized doesn't mean that the potential is not there. Empirical studies have also strongly suggested that cultural resources could be revitalized for utilization even centuries after they were lying dormant.

We should also bear in mind that Japan's modernizers never sought a radical transformation of their culture in order to modernize. They saw to it that if there was a change, it was only incremental, often with some kind of link between the old and the new. They never doubted that one could be modern and traditional at the same time. On the other hand, Africa's abortive modernization efforts were based on a host of "new" foreign ideas, and Africa's post-independence modernizers often sought to transform traditional culture in a fundamental way, with little or no attempt to incorporate the modern into the traditional, or vice versa. In the end, the old was badly dismantled, and the also new was not in place. The effort itself was never ill intended, of course, but the outcome almost always turned out to be disappointing. The Japanese mobilized their energy and resources to build a new, modern society when they were engaged in the modernization effort; they did not labor as much to abolish age-old practices, or completely cut themselves off from the past. In short Japan's experience in economic modernization bears out that it is useful to be flexible, it is crucial to link tradi-

tional values to modern ideas, and it is imperative to rely on one's own cultural resources.

Let me now turn attention to comparative politics in post-colonial Africa and post-Cold War Japan. The reason why pos-colonial Africa is chosen is obvious; but how about post-Cold War Japan? Japanese political scientists call the 1990s "the years of trial." In that decade Japan changed its governments nine times. Despite such a high frequency of change, political transitions were nevertheless peaceful. And it was this simple observation that leads one to ask the following questions. Why is political change in Japan peaceful while in Africa it is less so? Does culture play a part? At least four factors can be identified in this context.

First, politics are not perceived in Japan as a-zero-sum game, certainly not to the same extent as elsewhere, including in Africa. In fact one Japanese political scientist has argued that effectiveness of a politician should be judged by the extent to which he/she could successfully make compromises between conflicting positions. One way of arriving at this type of compromise is by ensuring a loser of today could be a winner of tomorrow. The Japanese have succeeded in doing just that.

In Africa, more often than not, you lose a political contest, a contest that is sometimes bloody and violent, then that marks the end of your political career, but it could also even mean physical extermination or long-term imprisonment. In much of Africa the unwritten rule of the game seems to be, unfortunately, if you are in a political contest, you have two choices: either to win and exterminate your opponents or to lose and be exterminated. This is where contemporary Japanese political system is at variance with its African counterpart.

Second, there is political recycling. By political recycling I mean public utilization of senior statesmen who

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had been out of service for one reason or another. A net effect of political recycling is the institutionalization of a multiple-sum game of politics, or its perception as such. The idea of political recycling fosters the desire among political contestants not only to be good losers but also gracious winners. In this dynamics also lies a condition of robust cooperation among political actors because of the large shadow of the future that guarantees that another encounter between same political actors is almost inevitable and that defection under the circumstances becomes unprofitable strategy. In Africa the concept of political recycling is virtually unknown. If a leader captures a political power he realizes that that is his only chance and should cling to it by all means.

A most enabling factor to the vibrancy and healthy functioning of political recycling in Japan is the transient nature of hierarchy. Even though Japanese tend to view things hierarchically, real or imagined, political hierarchy is also seen as transient. It does not therefore bother Keiichi Miyazawa, the former prime minister of Japan, to work as a Finance Minister two years after stepping down as prime minister. The same is true about former Prime Minister Hashimoto and many other ex-prime-ministers and senior politicians. In general, in Africa, with one or two exceptions, no example springs to mind of a leader who had been on the helms of power, had lost office and came back to re-assume a top position in the national government, let alone serve in a position lower than one he had held previously.

Third, the win-win perspective such as the above also stems from and results in the distinct nature of conflict resolution in Japan. Japan's political culture, on balance, favors good rather than right if, for the sake of argument, we disregard the fact that what is good and what is right are themselves culturally contingent. In the Japanese system of thought, morality usually means establishing harmony, rather than justice.

The nature of conflict resolution in Africa is, on the whole, more clear-cut: loser and winner. The Japanese follow the "winner without loser" formula. In conflict resolution mechanism of contemporary African politics, in general, it is as if political contestants are unable to grasp they had won unless their opponents were humiliatingly defeated, and even crushed — both metaphorically and literally.

The fourth factor pertains to the social identity of the principal political actors. Even a cursory look at the professional background of post-War Japanese prime ministers reveals that they come from diverse social background. What they all have in common is a non-military background. Not only the prime ministers, but also all the key players in the Japanese national politics are professionals from areas other than the military. In fact, the overwhelming majority of Japanese prime ministers and other senior politicians had acquired at one time or another professional training or experience in an area pertaining to economics. And virtually all of them had gone to a handful of select elite universities in the country.

Comparatively, the situation in many African countries is quite different. In many cases, those who occupy the highest office are the powerful; and those who are powerful have for the most part a military background, either as former leaders of liberation movements, or as defense ministers or senior officers in the ministry. The identity as well as background of these individuals, it seems, also conditions them to perceive politics as a zero-sum game.

Japans' political system, like its economic system, is deeply rooted in its culture. This is good news for Africa because it suggests that Africa too could draw upon its own culture in devising a most suitable system of governance.

Africa and Japan are closer culturally than it is generally recognized. And yet the Japanese are perhaps the last to admit their culture has shared elements with African cultures; some would even regard such a notion as bordering on blasphemy. At least three possible reasons have relevance to the explanation of the Japanese resistance to any form of cultural affinity with Africa.

The first stems from the fact that such a view clashes with the Japanese belief that they are special people. The Japanese believe — and they want others to believe — that they are really special. Another source of resistance is the natural tendency of humans to distance themselves from their less successful fellow beings. Part of the explanation has also to do with prevalence of ignorance about Africa in Japan, and the absence of incentives to rectify it.

Ali Mazrui, who has treated the subject with uncommon verve and flair, characterizes the elder and sage traditions, among others, as two of the major elements in the socio-cultural traditions of Africa. I limit my brief discussion here to the corresponding elements in Japan, their expressions and how they are utilized for the betterment of the society.

It is a well-known fact that the Japanese place a heavy premium on age. There are even some observers who characterize the Japanese political system as being closer to a gerontocracy than it is to democracy. One important feature of this tradition is the maximum value attached to experience rather than ideology. The principle of seniority through which party and government leaders are elected to office is one practical manifestation. With a handful of exceptions all of the post-War prime ministers of Japan were senior both in age and experience in comparison to the next in line.

Another indication of the greater value attached to age and experience pertains to the utilization of the expertise of leaders of the preceding governments, even after they are displaced by new ones. Greatly stabilizing the sys-

Message from Director . . . *(continued from page 1)*

Read in the name of Thy Lord
　　who created
Created man, out of a (mere) clot
　　of congealed blood;
Read and thy Lord is most bountiful
He who taught by the pen
Taught man that which he knew not.
　　　　Sura Iqra or Alaq, verses 1-8

Islam is bibliocentric — focusing on the legacy of reading. The Qur'an is the most widely read book in its original language in human history. The Bible is the most widely read book in translation. The Prophet Muhammad subsequently advised his followers to seek knowledge even as far as China. Islam began as a knowledge-driven creed.

Ironically, the Prophet Muhammad could neither read nor write. Yet his religion is a celebration of the imperative of reading and the imperative of seeking knowledge as far as China.

Out of this preoccupation with reading, writing and reciting the madrasa was born. In some parts of the Muslim world the madrasa is known as a Qur'an school — emphasizing reading, reciting and memorizing the different chapters and verses of the sacred book. And more sophisticated madrasas added other areas of Islamic studies in the curriculum.

Two types of faith-based schools have had a profound impact on colonial and post-colonial Africa. Christian missionary schools were initially designed to help produce new generations of Christianized to convert ("civilize") Africans. The Islamic madrasa were mainly designed to strengthen the faith of those who were already Islamized. During the colonial period Christian missionary schools were evangelizing institutions in quest of new converts. In the same period the Islamic madrasa became defensive against Christian missionary encroachment.

The missionary schools targeted those young people who were potential respondents to the Christian gospel. The madrasa targeted those young Muslims who needed to have their iman (their faith in Islam) strengthened.

Both the missionary schools and the madrasa had unintended consequences. While the colonial missionary schools did indeed produce many devout Christians, they also produced many anti-colonial African nationalists. Great nationalist products of Christian missionary schools in the twentieth century included such towering figures as Kwame Nkrumah of the Gold Coast, Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzanyika, Albert Luthuli of South Africa and Robert Mugabe of Southern Rhodesia.

While these graduates of missionary schools did not necessarily become anti-Christian, many did indeed become anti-Western. It was indeed in this sense that Christian missionary schools became radicalizing influences in the direction of anti-imperialism.

What about the Islamic madrasa? For much of the colonial period the madrasas were culturally defensive and politically conservative. There was little political militancy activated in the madrasa of colonized Northern Nigeria, or Sudan or even Egypt.

However, in the post-colonial period the madrasa began to have some of the unintended radicalizing consequences which Christian missionary schools had manifested before independence. Just as Christian missionary schools had once produced anti-Western African nationalists, so have the madrasas in recent years sometimes produced anti-Western politicized Islamists.

The madrasas of North Africa, the Horn of Africa and Northern Nigeria have manifested radicalization in this twenty-first century. Christian missionary schools have been taken over by the state in some former colonies — but the legacy of the Christian mission is sometimes manifest among African nationalists. The radicalization of the madrasa may ascend from passive Islamic conservatism to active Islamic radicalism.

But radicalization for what ends and purposes? Christian missionary schools produced opposition to Western political imperialism and the quest for independence. Islamic madrasas produced opposition to Western cultural imperialism and the quest for Islamic authenticity.

African nationalists produced by Christian missionary schools sometimes headed liberation movements committed to violent methods of struggle. Eduard Mondlane of Mozambique and Joshua Nkomo of Southern Rhodesia were among such freedom fighters.

African Islamists produced by the madrasa sometimes headed liberation movements also committed to violent methods of struggle. These included al-Qaeda freedom fighters and Muslim Brotherhood jihadists, who have emerged from the Nile Valley and the Horn of Africa, from Cairo to Mogadisho.

We should next explore the distinction not between conservatism and radicalism, but between secularism and religion in the field of education. Perhaps the best illustration of this dialectic between secularism and religion is at the level of tertiary education. In the history of both the West and the Muslim world, higher education began by being more religious than secular, more spiritual than material. Universities in North Africa repeated the Western transition from quasi-religious higher education to secular standards. On the other hand, universities in sub-Saharan Africa were created in a period when Western tertiary education had gone more and more secular. Universities in Black Africa emerged in the full bloom of secularism — even if primary and secondary schools were rooted earlier in Christian mission.

In the history of universities this millennium there has often been a link between religion and science. For several centuries at the University of Oxford one could not hold an academic position without subscribing to the articles of faith of the Church of England. One could not get a Masters degree either without that religious reaffirmation.

In the context of the millennium, Oxford University is the oldest university in the English-speaking world and one of the oldest in the Western world.

In millennium terms, Harvard is less than half a millennium old.

How many people know that Harvard College was a church-sponsored school for two centuries, and that it was named after a Puritan Minister in about 1638?

The problem at Harvard at that time was not Eurocentrism but Christocentrism. Harvard was not only exclusive by class but also exclusive by religion.

There are two methods for a religious school to go beyond being purely religious, one is through a strategy of secularization and the other is through a strategy of dualization.

Secularization is the route which Harvard (and Oxford) took as the subject

Message from Director . .

matter, the methods of study, and the qualifications for entry and graduation became more and more religion-neutral.

Dualization is the strategy which Al-Azhar University took as it evolved into a dual university one part still religious and distinguished as sacred, and the other part of Al-Azhar as secular and modern.

Al-Azhar University is about one whole millennium old.

But neither the secularization of Oxford nor the dualization of Al-Azhar happened at once. There were stages on the way. For example, while Harvard was generalizing the subject matter being studied within its walls, it was still discriminating on religious grounds about who was admitted into Harvard.

The politics of the quota system at American universities for centuries were intentionally intended to restrict the number of Jews admitted, in favor of Christians. Christocentrism applied to admission. There is still a lot of Christocentrism left at many American universities, but most of university life has been increasingly secularized in the last quarter-millennium.

Occasionally there is Judeo-Christocentrism at American universities. When I started teaching at the State University of New York at Binghamton in 1989, and I offered to teach a course on Islam in World Affairs, the chairman of my department said, "Do you realize, Professor Mazrui, that this is a Jewish university?" I said, Is that an argument for, or against, teaching a course on Islam in world affairs? And he said, "The real problem is that your coming here was accompanied by a good deal of controversy. It would be inadvisable to be teaching a course in your first semester about a controversial subject." In the end we compromised by my teaching such a course on Islam in my second semester after arrival, rather than the first. Judeo-Christocentrism is now admitting the Jews without restrictions but it is still cautious about other faiths.

Of course U.S. universities have since become primarily secular and scientific institutions though within the wider diversity of American academia there are still distinguished universities like Notre Dame (Catholic in orientation), Brandeis (Jewish in orientation) and others. But even these are (at their best) academic vanguards of science rather than asylums of religion.

U.S. Muslims have also begun establishing institutions of higher learning of their own including this Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences located near Washington, D.C.

It is located not very far from Georgetown University in Washington, which has its own Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding led by Professor John Esposito, a Roman Catholic scholar of Islam and a friend of U.S. Muslims.

Elsewhere in major universities in the United States Islam is also studied. A major complaint of U.S. Muslims is that most centers of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies on the main campuses are either led or dominated by Jewish scholars. However, although there are as many Muslims as Jews in the U.S. today, there are many more Jewish scholars than Muslim scholars.

Have African universities also experienced the dialectic of sacred science? Universities in Arab Africa go further back than not only in the United States but further back than in Europe. Al-Azhar University in Cairo is, as we indicated, over a thousand years older than almost any university in the Western world. Morocco can boast a comparable ancient institution of higher learning still in existence today (Feis).

The history of Islamic civilization as a whole was indeed once a fusion of religious vision and scientific advancement. We must not forget that words like algebra, zero, tariff, are of Arabic derivation. And the numerals we use in the West are still called Arabic numerals though they are partly also Indian. Religion and science were also once linked in the academy in Timbuktu (today's Mali) in ancient times.

A particularly controversial educational combination of this twenty-first century is when a student first goes to a religious school (such as the madrasa) in order to strengthen his faith; and then he graduates from a technological secular school (like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in order to defend his faith. There is suspicion in much of the Western world that Al-Qaeda seeks recruits from among those who have synthesized the madrasa with the M.I.T., those who have integrated religious commitment with technological and organizational skills.

It took considerable technical proficiency to hijack in a single morning four large passenger planes in the most technologically advanced country on earth — and use them as missiles against three of the four targets they had intended. The sheer organizational efficiency of September 11 was unbelievable.

The world has become fearful of the skills of improvisations of Al-Qaeda. From August 2006 we even became fearful of allowing airline passengers to carry toothpaste or bottled water in their hand luggage on board. Al-Qaeda was suspected of having learned newer and newer technical skills, capable of being operationalized on planes midway across the Atlantic. Was the legacy of the M.I.T. being integrated with the heritage of the madrasa? And what should be done about it?

In reality, it would make no more sense to ban the madrasa than to ban the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. September 11, 2001, was a product of both kinds of educational institutions — the soul-enforcement of a religious school and the skill-empowerment of a technical secular school.

It is important to learn how religiously inspired violence is perpetrated. But it is even more fundamental to learn why such faith-triggered violence occurs. In the long run, catching terrorists may be less important than understanding the causes of terrorism.

Let us use both the madrasa and the secular educational institutions to help us understand why suicide bombers blow themselves up in their prime, and why there is so much rage and hostility between nations, between cultures and between civilizations. The rage and hatred are not caused by types of educational institutions. They are caused by perceived injustices in world affairs and by relative deprivation in economic affairs.

In the final analysis, solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is likely to save more lives than closing down a thousand madrasas in the Muslim world. Similarly, demilitarizing American foreign policy may be a sounder approach towards world peace than any struggle to spread democracy by force. Sound political remedies are only effective after sound political diagnosis. Let the search for diagnostic answers continue.

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tem, the elder tradition serves in this way as a basis for political continuity.

The sage tradition, on the other hand, is connected to that element of Japanese political thought that conceptualizes political leadership as the task of the wise. This tradition also supplements the elder tradition rather than undermining it. The wise is usually one with a wealth of experience who, in most cases, would also be relatively advanced in age. Although age, too, factors in the sage tradition, it is not the decisive one. What seems to be more important in the sage tradition is the acquisition of an acceptable level of formal education preferably in one of the elite institutions of higher education in the country, a situation which further introduces important dimension

of shared experience among the key political actors.

One relevant factor in the modernization of Japan was the fact that Japan was never colonized — a fate that enabled it to escape the kind of negative consequences colonialism had wrought in Africa, including the disruptive influence on the development of Africa's own traditional institutions. That Japan is a mono-ethnic nation in contrast to the multi-ethnic states of post-colonial Africa was another consequential factor.

A comparative study of Africa and Japan seems to suggest (and even support) three broad but inter-related generalizations. As a rule, the problems that confront all societies at different stages are limited in scope and they

boil down to the question of how to improve the human condition. And secondly, the range of solutions is also of finite variability even though the collective actions and reactions of all societies to internal and external stimuli are always mediated by particular set of beliefs, assumptions and worldviews. This is the issue of finite solutions. The potential for solving the common challenges exists in all cultures in a variety of forms. Every culture, every society has the potential for successfully tackling the challenges of modernization. There is, however, no universal model for doing so which is valid for all places and under all circumstances. Africa should look inside itself, not outside to overcome the challenges of modernization.

Report on IGCS publications and recent activities of Director Ali A. Mazrui (2006-07)

Recent Books

Islam between Globalization and Counterterrorism (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press and Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2006).

A Tale of Two Africas: Nigeria and South Africa as Contrasting Visions (London: Adonis-Abbey, 2006).

Civilization and Globalization: Are There Forces in Conflict? (N.Y.: Global Scholarly Publications, 2008). Principal Editor.

Euro-Jews and Afro-Arabs: The Great Semitic Divergence in World History (Lanham: University Press of America, 2008).

The Politics of War and the Culture of Violence (Trenton, N.J., Africa World Press, 2008).

Africa's Islamic Experience: History, Culture and Politics (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2008). Co-editor.

Recent Activities

Chairing for the first time of the Board of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists of North America (December 2007).

Participation as one of the principal speakers at a "Teach-In Session against Islamophobia and Hate Speech" on Binghamton University campus. The Teach-In was in protest against Daniel Pipe's speech the next day, also on Binghamton University campus, New York (December 2007).

Election as President of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists of North America (November 2007).

Keynote address. "The Tensions of Black Liberation : From Post-Enslavement to Post-Coloniality," Cornell University, Ithaca, New York (November 2007).

Lecture. "Inter-Faith Dialogue and the Search for Stability: The Religious Factor in the Greater Horn," UNESCO's Greater Horn Horizon Initiative, Djibouti (November 2007).

Presentation. "Interpreting the Islamic Tradition on the Contemporary World," Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Islamic Studies Conference, Harvard University (November 2007).

Presentation. "Black Abolitionists As Warriors against Terror," 50th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, New York, New York (October 2007).

Nomination of Dr. Mazrui's 1993 M.K.O. Abiola lecture on "Global Africa" as one of the 50 Fabulous Firsts at the 50th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, New York (October 2007).

Lecture. The Du Bois Center on "From the Color-Line to the Culture-Line in Global Politics: Du Bois, Nkrumah and the New Clash of Civilizations," Accra, Ghana (October 2007).

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Lecture. The British Council on "Paradoxes of Leadership in Africa's Experience: Between Post-Coloniality and Globalization," Accra, Ghana (October 2007).

Lecture. Sponsored by Horisont Foundation on "Can African Culture Survive Globalization?" Oslo, Norway (October 2007).

Presentation. The Christopher Okigbo International Conference on "Between Heroic Universalism and Parochical Martyrdom: The Life and Death of Christopher Okigbo," Harvard, Boston University and University of Massachusetts Campuses (September 2007).

Attendance of the academic council meeting of the Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. (September 2007).

Board meeting of the Africa Society of the National Summit in Washington, D.C. (September 2007).

Lecture. "Islam and the Black Experience: Expansion, Revival and Radicalization," Miami University, Oxford, Ohio (September 2007).

Attendance of "An Evening with Ali Mazrui," at the W. E. B. Du Bois's Pan-African Center. The event included Mazrui's opening remarks, questions and answers and showing of two episodes from his *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (Videos), Accra, Ghana (August 2007).

Lecture. "The Brain Drain and the Dual Diaspora: Post-Enslavement and Postcoloniality," sponsored by Ghana's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and NEPAD; and Ghana's @ 50 Secretariat, University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana (August 2007).

Nomination as a "Liberation Hero" by the Mau Mau Veterans Association, Nairobi, Kenya (July 2007).

Lecture. "Between Secular Activism and Religious Observance: Abu Mayanja and Africa's Triple Heritage," sponsored by Abu Mayanja Foundation, Kampala, Uganda (July 2007).

Graduation ceremony of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. The Chancellor's address was titled, "University Management and the Torch of the African Renaissance: A Graduation Address," Thika, Kenya (July 2007).

Board of Trustees Meeting of Oxford Center for Islamic Studies, Oxford, UK (July 2007).

Africa Center's 5th Annual Lecture on "Cultural Forces in World Politics: Implications for Africa," Dublin, Ireland (June 2007).

Keynote address. Regional Conference of Rotary Clubs of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Eritrea, held at Munyonyo Speke Hotel on "Counter-ecology: Is the Human Presence its own Global Environment?" near Kampala, Uganda (May 2007).

Lecture. "Pax Islamica? Issues of War and Peace between the West and the Muslim World," Oxford Center for Islamic Studies, Oxford, UK (May 2007).

The Tenth Commonwealth Lecture. "The Power of Language and the Politics of Religion," London, England (May 2007).

The Order of the Grand Companion of O. R. Tambo from President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa (April 2007).

Public Lecture. "Paradoxes of Post-Colonial Heroism: The African Experience," University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Johannesburg, South Africa (April 2007).

Video Presentation. "The Macro-History of Language: From Eden to England." An International Conference on "Going Global, Going Vernacular: Appropriation and Disowning of English in Post-colonial Contexts," Cornell University, Ithaca, New York (April 2007).

Keynote Address. "Images of Ethiopians in Religion, Politics and Culture: from the Muezzin Bilal to the Opera *Aida*." International Symposium on "Imaging Ethiopia: Monarchy and Modernity," Sponsored by Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia; and Africana Studies and Research Center, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York (April 2007).

Keynote speech. The Abrahamic Faith Peacemaking Initiative Series, at the Islamic Center of Southern California (April 2007).

Presentation at the UN Headquarters on a panel. "The Transatlantic Slave Trade: the Tragedy, the Legacy," New York City (March 2007).

Institute of Global Cultural Studies co-sponsors dual anniversary panel "Celebrating Black Freedom," on the occasion of the 200th and 50th anniversaries, respectively, of the end of Atlantic slave trade and independence of Ghana. Professor Locksley Edmondson (Cornell University) and Professor Abena Busia (Rutgers University) spoke, Binghamton University (March 2007).

Appearance. "Free at Last," a BBC World Service documentary about the end of Atlantic slave trade (March 2007).

Presentation at a roundtable chaired by James Mittleman. "Is the Study of World Politics Lagging behind World Politics?" at the annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Chicago, Illinois (March 2007).

"Living Legend Award" from Organization of West African States (ECOWAS) and African Communication Agency (February 2007). Other awardees include boxer Muhammad Ali. The plaque was presented to Dr. Ali Mazrui in Accra, Ghana (August 2007).

Lecture. "Islam between Clash and Concord of Civilizations" at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Catham House, London (January 2007).

Lecture. "Africa in a World of Disorder," sponsored by the Royal African Society and the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, England (January 2007).

Lecture. "Islam between Clash and Concord of Civilizations," at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Catham House, London (January 2007).

Lecture. "Africa in a World of Disorder," sponsored by the Royal African Society and the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, England (January 2007).

Presentation. "Waning Racism and Waxing Culture-Conflict: A Transition Between Centuries," on the panel "Africa Between Clash and Concord of Civilizations," 49th African Studies Association Meeting, San Francisco, CA (November 2006).

Interview. Radio New Zealand International (October 2006).

Keynote Presentation. Africast conference, Abuja, Nigeria (October 2006).

Keynote Speech. AFRICAST, National Broadcasting Commission "Messages and Images Between the West and the Rest: Media, Academy and the Internet," Abuja, Nigeria (October 2006).

Report on IGCS publications . . .

Honorary Doctorate in African Studies from the University of Venda, South Africa (September 2006).

Keynote Speech. Third Steve Biko Coloquium, Johannesburg, South Africa (September 2006).

Keynote Speech. "Nationalism, Power and Africa at War," at Symposium on "Power and Nationalism in Modern Africa," Cornell University, Ithaca, New York (September 2006).

Keynote Speech. "Uganda between the Dual Society and the Dual Polity," Uganda-American Association, New York (September 2006).

Acceptance Address. When receiving Honorary Doctorate in African Studies from the University of Venda, Venda, South Africa (September 2006).

Meeting with Ugandan President Museveni, Kampala, Uganda (August 2006).

Oxford Amnesty Lecture. "Africa and Islam: In Search of Seven Pillars of Wisdom," Oxford, England (August 2006).

Keynote Lecture. "The Role of the Academy in Politics and Economics," 40th Anniversary of the Bank of Uganda Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda (August 2006).

Presentation. "Central Banking and the Culture of Money In Globalization," 40th Anniversary of the Bank of Uganda, Munyonyo Speke Resort, near Kampala (August 2006).

Chancellor's Address. Annual Graduation of the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Thika, Kenya (July 2006).

Keynote Speech. "From Bandung to Baghdad," Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio (April 2006).

Presentation. "Conceptualizing the Diaspora: Towards New Vocabulary," Symposium on the New African Diaspora Binghamton University, Binghamton, N.Y. (April 2006).

Meeting with Somaliland President Kahin, Hargesia, Somaliland (March 2006).

Public Lecture. "Africa's Bondage of Boundaries: Can the Shackles Be Loosened?" Hargesia University, Hargesia, Somaliland (March 2006).

Address to Houses of Parliament. "Cultural Continuities and Constitutional Innovation." Hargesia, Somaliland (March 2006).

Keynote Presentation. "Political Leadership and Comparative Martydom," Commemoration of Murtala Muhammad's Assassination, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria (February 2006).

Inaugural Lecture. "Global Africa: Walter Rodney," Anniversary of Rodney's Assasination. The Symposium was held at the University of Dar es Salaam (January 2006).

Distinguished Lecture. "Afrabia: From Arabo-Hebraic to Afro-Arab Convergence," Bibliotheca Alexandria, Alexandria, Egypt (January 2006).

Closing Address. International Conference to mark 50th anniversary of Sudan's Independence, "Sudan in the Context of Afrabia," sponsored by International University of Africa, Khartoum, Sudan (January 2006).

Address. University of Khartoum, broadcast by Al-Jazeera Television, on the topic "Africa, Islam and Modern Pillars of Wisdom," Khartoum, Sudan (January 2006).

Address. University of Juba, "Sudan between Modernization and Westernization," Khartoum Campus of University of Juba, Sudan (January 2006).