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Mazrui's Pan-Africanism: A Post-TICAD 9 Commentary

Seifudein Adem*

Abstract

Pan-Africanism has a long pedigree. It has meant many things for varied people at different times. But its contemporary expression boils down to the quest for peace, good governance and economic development in Africa. And no one I have known or read about grappled with Pan-Africanism both as an idea and ideal more passionately, more eloquently, more systematically, and for a longer period than the Kenyan-born academic Ali Mazrui (1933-2014). Mazrui's Pan-Africanism is as such a product of rigorous thinking, and its many elements have remarkably stood the test of time. This paper is about the evolution and development of Mazrui's Pan-Africanism. In the wake of the Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, which took place in Yokohama, Japan, from August 20 to 22, 2025, (—hence the prefix "post" in the subtitle of the paper—), this paper seeks to introduce Mazrui's undiluted and rich Pan-Africanism concisely and comprehensively, particularly drawing on his works that are less known or not known at all outside the narrow circle of his fan club. Apart from chronology, TICAD is connected to the theme of this paper in another way: TICAD is concerned, among other things, with the question of how the African condition can be improved and how Japan can contribute to this process. Yet the major preoccupation of this Discussion Paper (DP) is Mazrui's thoughts on Pan-Africanism which are rooted in his flagship concept of "Africa's triple heritage". The DP seeks to make the case that they are timely and critically relevant for Africa today and should be studied with greater vigor and seriousness.

Keywords: Development, Ali Mazrui, Pan-Africanism, Peace, Post-colonialism

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[Very long ago] we were all in one village called Africa. Our village was the world. It was all we knew. But now we are scattered so widely that the sun never sets on the descendants of Africa. The world is our village.

(Ali A. Mazrui, 1986a)

1. Introduction

The Japanese have a saying. It goes like this: *tora wa shishite kawa wo nokosu; hito wa shishite namae wo nokosu*. It can be translated roughly into English as, "When a tiger dies, it leaves its skin; when a person dies, they leave their name." Pan-Africanist scholar Ali Mazrui died in October 2014, but his Pan-Africanist legacy lives on.

"Thank God for Giving Africa Ali Mazrui!" That was how Kenneth Kaunda, the first president of Zambia, paid tribute in August 1988 in a nationally televised event dedicated to the Kenyan scholar Ali Mazrui (see Mazrui 1988, 8). About a decade later, in 1995, Nelson Mandela described Mazrui as "an outstanding educationist and a freedom fighter" (see Mazrui 1996a, 9).[1] There is a widespread consensus in Africa today that Mazrui was easily the foremost public intellectual that the continent has produced in the last fifty years. His graceful and stimulating Pan-Africanist scholarship is also extensive, although it is scattered across space and time, spanning about fifty years, from 1963 to 2013. The vastness of his published and unpublished research on Pan-Africanism suggests that we must also acknowledge its complexity. Another distinctive feature of his Pan-Africanism is its connection to his vision of an international system built on the dignity of the human being and a fair and genuine international reciprocity.

The term Pan-Africanism is used in this paper in two broad senses. It is used, first, to mean the quest for African unity. This entailed three distinct approaches in the postcolonial African context. The revolutionary approach was spearheaded by Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah. It emphasized the political integration of the entire continent as the precursor to meaningful economic integration. Ethiopia's Emperor Haile Selassie promoted functionalism, reversing the

[1] Mazrui (2002c) had thus recorded how he met Mandela for the first time:

> Nelson Mandela's love of books was enhanced rather than diminished in prison. I personally discovered in an unusual way how Mandela had continued to read widely even in prison. It was the occasion when we first met. Mr. Mandela was attending his first summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity, before he was the Head of State. This was in Dakar, Senegal, in 1992. I met Nelson Mandela in the corridor, one-on-one. I said, "Mr. Mandela, my name is Mazrui." He cut me short and completed my name, "Professor Ali Mazrui?" Now, why should Mr. Mandela, in 1992—when he had only recently been released after twenty-seven years in prison—have heard my name at all? After all, when he went to prison, I was a non-entity. The only explanation I could think of was that even in prison, Mandela's reading was so wide-ranging that he had even read Ali Mazrui. I was flattered for myself, but more importantly, I was impressed by Nelson Mandela as a true lover of books.

sequence of Nkrumah's approach and advocating economic integration of the continent first (Adem 2009). The third approach is regionalism, once championed by such African leaders as Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, who stressed the need for economic and political union within each African region as a step toward full-fledged continental unity. These three approaches continue to animate the debate about African unity, even though the functionalist approach, which prioritizes economic integration, seems to have gained the upper hand in recent years.

Secondly, Pan-Africanism is the quest for good governance, economic development, and peace in Africa (*Pax-Africana*).

This is how this paper is structured. Section 2 describes Mazrui's relevance to contemporary Pan-Africanist scholarship. Section 3 introduces his rich typology of Pan-Africanism, which is further explored in Section 4, specifically in the context of grassroots-level Pan-Africanism. The latter section elaborates on an outline he had been working on before he died. Section 5 examines how ethnicity may be reconciled with Pan-Africanism. Section 6 takes a closer look at how Mazrui sought to integrate his flagship concept of "Africa's triple heritage" into his Pan-Africanist discourse (Badran, Adem, and Dikirr 2014, 89–104) and by so doing reconciles the divergent visions of the founding fathers of Pan-Africanism. In Section 7, the paper briefly addresses a recurrent issue in Mazrui's scholarship in general—namely, his proximity to the corridors of power. Section 8 is the conclusion. The paper uses lengthy quotations from Mazrui's published and unpublished works in order to allow the reader to appreciate Mazrui's considerable power of perception, insight and articulation.

2. Bringing Mazrui back in

Mazrui (1963, 88-97) published his first academic paper on Pan-Africanism in the *American Political Science Review*. The following year, Mazrui (1964: 520) outlined the two driving forces of African nationalism:

> One concerns the relations of Africans with the outside world; the other pertains to the relations of Africans with each other. The former includes the fear of being manipulated by non-Africans; the latter is the desire for greater unity among Africans.

It is possible to argue that the same forces continue to animate Pan-Africanism today. Fast forward from 1964 to 2014, when *The New York Times* published Mazrui's obituary titled: "Ali Mazrui, Scholar of Africa, Who Divided US Audiences, Dies at 81" (Martin 2014). This depiction of Mazrui as a catalyst for the discourse on Africa in the United States is accurate in my judgment. But how widely are Mazrui's Pan-Africanist ideas known in Africa itself, beyond the narrow circles of his Pan-Africanist fans? The answer is: not so widely. And, even more specifically, how many courses taught in Africa today at a university level include Mazrui's works in their syllabi

as recommended or required readings, let alone offer courses exclusively devoted to his ideas? The answer, again, is: not that many. Unfortunately, Mazrui has not been allowed to stimulate people in Africa to the extent that he has been able to do so elsewhere.

But why was Mazrui overlooked in African scholarship? As Makinda and Leahy (2025, 45) have recently argued,

> Unfortunately, the legitimation and de-legitimation of knowledge in Africa at one time stifled independent academic voices. In the early postcolonial period, agents of legitimation and de-legitimation used terms such as the lack of "commitment to the African revolution," a tendency toward "Western-style objectivity," and lack of "empathy with African masses" to deter scholars from engaging in global intellectual debates. A dominant understanding was that a commitment to the "African revolution" entailed an acceptance of a theoretical approach based on Marxism or socialism. In some cases, scholars whose works were applauded by their Western colleagues were regarded as traitors to the African cause…Under these circumstances, scholars like Mazrui, who questioned the rationale of some public policies and criticized political leaders while pursuing academic theory, received little encouragement.

More than a decade before Makinda and Leahy (2025, 38-56), Seifudein Adem (2014, 147; see also Adem 2011) observed:

> Mazrui is an intellectual giant, and his legacy is formidable. And yet the nature of discourse, the politics of identity, Mazrui's own intellectual style, his ideological predisposition, and his relationship with some of the scholars of and about the Third World have all conspired to reduce the size of Mazrui's fan club in postcolonial theory.

Adem (2014, 147) concluded that,

> Whatever the rationale for Ali Mazrui's marginalization in postcolonial theory, it is clear that embracing him would add an articulate and powerful voice to it, and that engagement and intellectual dialogue with [him] would sharpen our insights about postcolonialism. By embracing him, we would also extend the pleasure and stimulation of Mazrui's intellectual company.

Bischoff, Aning, and Acharya (2016, 2) have indicated that one factor which may explain the underdevelopment of [non-Western] international relations theory (IRT) is "the possibility that indigenous IR theories may exist but remain hidden from public view due to language and *other barriers*" (italics added). As indicated above, such barriers may be at least partly responsible for

the obscurity of Mazrui in Pan-Africanist and IR discourses. Ironically, it was Africa's leaders, and not Africa's scholars, who have been openly calling upon Africans to take the study of Ali Mazrui's ideas seriously.

Let us see now what some of these African leaders had to say about Mazrui's Africanist scholarship in general. Salim Ahmed Salim, the former Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity or OAU (the predecessor of the African Union [AU]) and Prime Minister of Tanzania, remembered Mazrui in this way: "For many, the very name—Ali Al'amin Mazrui—triggers an intellectual enthusiasm for a deeper insight into the world and an understanding of how its many parts interconnect" (Adem et al. 2016, ix). Thabo Mbeki, the former President of South Africa, also wrote shortly after Mazrui died: "When a great mind like Professor Ali Mazrui passed on, we have to stop and ponder over what we shall do together to fill the immeasurable void that inevitably arises. The starting point is that we, especially our youth, must critically read and re-read everything Ali Mazrui wrote" (Adem et al. 2016, 363).

Olusegun Obasanjo (2015), the former President of Nigeria, also observed:

> I remember Ali Mazrui for at least three things. First, he was immensely soaked in the history of Africa and could extrapolate the future growth and development of the region with uncanny accuracy and positivism. He was an embodiment of courage and humanism. Second, he was down-to-earth and not a lover of material things, freeing his mind for wider exploration of things that affect humanity, especially his African ancestry. The third thing I remember Professor Ali Mazrui for is being a prominent critic of the current world order… .

President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya described Mazrui as "a towering academician…[whose] brilliance raised him to the apex of scholarly distinction and earned him respect and following among his peers globally" (see Adem et al. 2016, 317). And H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, the Chairperson of the AU Commission (Adem et al. 2016, 321) said: "Mazrui was a distinguished scholar, writer and Pan-Africanist *par excellence*. His indomitable spirit will inspire us for many years to come and many more generations".

The time is ripe for a long-overdue examination of Mazrui's Pan-Africanist "supermarket" of ideas. The almost complete list of Mazrui's most significant publications, which includes 40 books, 250 book chapters, and 400 academic articles, is found in the meticulously annotated, 427-page monograph by the South African bibliographer Abdul Samed Bemath (1998, 2005, 2018).

3. Typology of Pan-Africanism

Although Mazrui's (1963, 88-97; 499-520) major academic publication on Pan-Africanism came out earlier, Mazrui (1977, 68) thus spelled out in detail what he referred to as the five dimensions of Pan-Africanism only later. He classified Pan-Africanism into the following five categories: Sub-Saharan, Trans-Saharan, Trans-Atlantic, West-Hemispheric, and Global.

Mazrui sought to classify Pan-Africanism in this way due to the need he saw at the time for balancing the diaspora-centric definition of the phenomenon. He was also concerned about the dominance of the "conference approach" to the study of Pan-Africanism, which was itself an aspect of diaspora-centrism. He was convinced that it is easy to miss a great deal about the dynamics of such a momentous movement as Pan-Africanism if one concentrates solely on the minutes of big Pan-African conferences held every few years (Author's correspondence with Mazrui, January 29, 2010).

Let us look at Mazrui's classification of Pan-Africanism more closely.

(a) *Sub-Saharan Pan-Africanism* refers to solidarity of the African people south of the Sahara. It was a regionally focused strand of Pan-African thought that emphasizes the political, cultural, and historical solidarity of African peoples living south of the Sahara Desert. It drew on a set of commonalities, including intertwined precolonial histories, similar experiences of European colonial rule, comparable postcolonial development challenges, and the enduring aspiration for collective empowerment. Sub-Saharan Pan-Africanism represents an attempt to articulate unity within a culturally, geographically and historically specific context, while remaining connected to the wider Pan-African project. It highlighted the need for cooperation among Sub-Saharan states and societies, whether in political coordination, economic integration, cultural affirmation, or the defense of shared interests in international arenas.

(b) Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism is about the unity of the two parts of the African continent, the sub-Saharan and the Arab North Africa. It celebrates the Sahara Desert as a vital link between sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa and the strength that emerges from the collective action of these two regions. It was also Trans-African Pan-Africanism that subsequently evolved into two distinct subcategories: (i) Pan-Africanism of Liberation, dedicated to liberation and embodying the strong unity of Africans who courageously resisted colonialism, racism, and apartheid. This movement achieved remarkable success in the second half of the twentieth century, showcasing the determination and resilience of African people, and (ii) Pan-Africanism of Integration emphasizes the importance of regional cooperation, including such initiatives as free trade areas and economic unions (Adem 2021a, 223). While the journey toward economic integration has faced challenges, the movement itself is gaining momentum through the African Continental Free Trade Area (Adem 2021a, 223). This is timely since, as Howard French (2025, 9) aptly put it:

> As long as the continent was composed of its legacy jigsaw countries, most of them small in size and population – and many of them landlocked, condemning them to additional poverty and instability – they would remain underdeveloped. The small size of their markets would make it all but impossible to industrialize or to sustain engagement with the outside world on favorable terms. This implies more than the kind of naked extraction of fossil fuels and minerals that is commonplace now and a shift to local transformation of the continent's resources and commodities.

Pan-Africanists like Kwame Nkrumah believed in Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism (Mazrui and Kaba 2016, 14). Initially, it was Trans-African Pan-Africanism which also gave birth to the idea of "Afrabia"—a term coined by Ali Mazrui (1992) Mazrui (1971, 25-26) also observed:

> Pan-Africanism…as a major regional movement was ultimately inspired by a sense of shared racial identity, though there was also the mystique of the African continent to prevent black identity south of the Sahara from becoming too alienated from Arab Africa north of the desert. In other words, [Pan-Africanism], as a trans-Saharan continental movement was inspired by the mystique of a shared continent. But Pan-Africanism, as an assertion of a united black dignity, was by definition inspired by a sense of a shared racial identity.

"Afrabia" thus represents the interaction between African identity and Arab identity, highlighting the process of fusion between the two. While the idea of Afrabia acknowledges that Africa and the Arab world are interconnected, it also suggests that these two regions are historically evolving toward becoming one entity (Mazrui and Kaba 2016, 14).

AFRABIANS can be grouped into at least four interrelated categories (Mazrui and Kaba 2016, 14–15): (i) *Cultural Afrabians* are those whose culture and way of life have been significantly influenced by Arab traditions, yet they do not speak Arabic as their native language. This category includes many Somalis, Hausa people, and some Waswahili. While their mother tongue is not Arabic, a substantial part of the culture of cultural Afrabians reflects the influence of Arabic and Islamic traditions. (ii) *Ideological Afrabians* are those who advocate solidarity between Arabs and Africans, or at least between Black Africa and Arab Africa. Such leaders in postcolonial Africa have included Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and Sékou Touréof Guinea. (iii) *Geographical Afrabians* are those Arabs and Berbers from countries that are members of both the AU and the Arab League. Some of these countries, like Egypt and Tunisia, are predominantly Arab, while others, such as Mauritania, Somalia, and the Comoro Islands, have only a marginal Arab presence. (iv) *Genealogical Afrabians* are those with cultural heritage, both Arab and Black African ancestry. In North Africa, examples include figures like Anwar Sadat of Egypt, whose mother was black. Sub-Saharan Africa also has influential Afrabians, such as Salim Ahmed Salim, the former Secretary-General of the OAU and prime minister of Tanzania. The

Mazrui clan, found in coastal Kenya and Tanzania, too, is from this lineage.

(c) Trans-Atlantic Pan-Africanism unites the peoples of the African diaspora in the Americas with those from the African continent. While one interpretation focuses on Sub-Saharan Africa, it sometimes overlooks the connection with North African Arabs. Hence, Afro-Canadians, Jamaicans, African Americans, and Afro-Brazilians are linked with Nigerians, Zimbabweans, and Namibians, but not with North Africans. Another version of Trans-Atlantic Pan-Africanism is more expansive and celebrates the unity of Africans and people of African descent in the Americas. The basis of this solidarity is the legacy of being jointly exploited.

Although not directly related to the conceptual category under review, another Mazrui concept worth pointing out in passing is the concept of the "American African," which is distinct from "African American". Mazrui defined an American African as one who is usually first or second generation immigrant from Africa to the Americas, who may be a citizen or permanent resident of countries in the Western hemisphere, whose mother tongue is still an African language, who has immediate blood relatives in Africa, who is likely to still maintain the food culture of their African ancestry and who is likely to still bear African family name. However, this is not universal, especially among Lusophone Africans, Liberians and Sierra Leoneans. Ali Mazrui's definition would also make him a classic example of an American African person (Mazrui 2005a; also see Adem and Njogu 2018).

(d) West Hemispheric or Trans-American Pan-Africanism connects West Indians, Black Americans, Black Brazilians, and others of African descent across the Western Hemisphere. This movement highlights the deep bonds, especially between Black Americans and English-speaking West Indians. A vital element of West Hemispheric Pan-Africanism is the common heritage shared by nearly all Black individuals in the region, many of whom descend from those who endured enslavement. This powerful connection fosters a sense of unity and solidarity rooted in a shared history.

(e) Global Pan-Africanism includes the four types of Pan-Africanism outlined above and adds the new Black communities in the UK, France, and beyond, which primarily originate from the Caribbean and African roots.

In relation to Global Pan-Africanism, it is helpful to distinguish between two related concepts introduced by Mazrui (1986a, 1987): the Diaspora of Enslavement and the Diaspora of Colonialism. The Diaspora of Enslavement comprises survivors of the Middle Passage and their descendants. As a part of the Afro-Atlantic paradigm, this diaspora has played a significant role in shaping the culture and lifestyle of the Western hemisphere. The Diaspora of Colonialism consists of the survivors of the partition of Africa and their descendants. They are casualties of

the displacement caused either directly by colonialism or by the aftermath of colonial and postcolonial disruptions (Adem 2021a, 164). Another related concept coined and developed by Mazrui but now widely appropriated – often without attribution – is "Global Africa". Mazrui first used the term as the title of Program 9 of his 1986 TV series, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*. For Mazrui, Global Africa denoted a historically and politically constituted space linking continental Africa with its diasporic extensions through shared experiences of displacement, identity formation and unequal power relations in the global order. Today, however, the term circulates across teaching, scholarship, and cultural and commercial domain largely detached from its critical framework, obscuring both its original analytical depth and Mazrui's foundational role in its formation. In short, the usage of the term "Global Africa" has proliferated in as diverse sectors as academic research (titles of books, journals, and book series), art, fashion and so forth.

In any case, Ali Mazrui's dream was to see a stronger solidarity between Africans at home and in the diaspora. Mazrui put this to me four years before he died :

> I myself am totally convinced that Africa should constantly seek to arouse the sympathies and commitment of her sons and daughters in the Black Diaspora. I look forward to the day when Africans are as concerned about Black support abroad as Israel is about Jewish support abroad. I look forward also to the day when Diaspora blacks are as concerned about Africa's predicament as Diaspora Jews are about Israel's fortunes. For the time being, blacks worldwide are simply less concerned about each other than Jews worldwide are about their shared predicament (Author's correspondence with Mazrui, January 29, 2010).

Relatedly, Mazrui's sentiment above was echoed most recently by Howard French (Polgreen 2025, 10):

> The African Diaspora and African Americans have a role to play [in encouraging America's engagement with Africa in a much deeper way] in terms of changing the public conversation around Africa, in terms of lighting a fire in the public imagination about Africa, in terms of making Africa more real and more complete, in terms of the way we see it and hopefully embrace it going forward.

Mazrui also identified the following four paradoxes of Pan-Africanism regarding its origin and evolution. Firstly, Pan-Africanism often flourished through the unifying force of European languages (see Adem 2021a, 115–116). He said figures like W. E. B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey would never have become the founding fathers of Trans-Atlantic Pan-Africanism without the mediation of the English language, and figures like Aimé Césaire and Léopold Sédar Senghor would not have become the founding fathers of Négritude without the role of the French language.

Secondly, although race consciousness was the original fountainhead of Pan-Africanism, it was neither the Trans-Atlantic movement nor the Sub-Saharan movement that found institutional fulfilment first. It was, in fact, Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism, in spite of the significant racial differences separating parts of North Africa from those of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Thirdly, historically, one would have expected Pan-Africanism to originate from the smaller units in the subcontinent south of the Sahara, and then expand outward to encompass North Africa, ultimately reestablishing contact with the African diaspora. But what happened was different—Pan-Africanism started with the Trans-Atlantic version before shifting its focus more narrowly to the African continent itself.

As Mazrui (1965, 60) thus observed, "…the origins of Pan-Africanism were intercontinental, involving participation by both Africa and the New World. But out of this inter-continentalism has emerged a doctrine of continental exclusiveness implicit in the very composition of the [AU]". Similarly, Mazrui (1969, 240) identified two additional interrelated principles that he believed were implicit in African diplomatic thought: *the principles of continental jurisdiction* and *racial sovereignty*. The principle of continental jurisdiction posits that some African issues need to be solved only by Africans themselves, without interference from external powers. This sounds like Africa's "Monroe Doctrine." However, one crucial difference, according to Mazrui, is that the Monroe Doctrine is hemispheric, not continental. For the principle of racial sovereignty, the unit of exclusiveness shifts from "race" to "continent".

Also on the origin of Pan-Africanism, Mazrui (1963, 94) wrote: "Pan-Africanism has…a root in the New World not only because Afro-Americans like Du Bois and Garvey launched it onto a world stage but also because many of the African fathers of Pan-Africanism [such as Azikiwe of Nigeria, Nkrumah of Ghana and Banda of Nyasaland] were themselves exposed to elements in American political thought".

Finally, a basic dialectic to understand in Africa is that while race consciousness ("pigmentational" solidarity) is the greatest friend of African nationalism (particularly in the colonial period), ethnic consciousness (especially in the postcolonial period) is the greatest enemy of African unity.

4. From elite-based to mass-based Pan-Africanism

The five types of "macro-level" Pan-Africanism described above are generally elite-based rather than mass-based or grassroots-based. To address this gap, Mazrui (1997) came up with a typology that he was in the process of refining until just before he died in October 2014. The following are the seven types of "micro-level" Pan-Africanism:

(i) Inter-Gender Pan-Africanism: What is the point of Africans cultivating African Americans if this movement involves only men and very few women? We have the founding fathers of Pan-Africanism, but almost no founding mothers. Mazrui (1998, 237) also made this argument in relation to the issue of gender in general: "…there are three interrelated tasks concerning the destiny of womanhood: liberating women, centering women, and empowering women. Women can be at the center without being empowered; they can be liberated without being either centered or empowered."

(ii) Inter-Ethnic Pan-Africanism: What is the point of Nigerian Americans getting on well with Jamaicans and other West Indians if in Nigeria, Nigerians cannot get on with each other? The deadliest divide between Africans is ethnic. Ethnic conflicts have killed millions since independence.

(iii) Inter-Linguistic Pan-Africanism: How can we overcome the barriers of language in relations among African peoples? Ghanaians may get on with Guyanese through the English language—but how well do they get on with people from Burkina Faso across the linguistic divide? Was Mazrui suggesting that there is a need for an African *lingua franca*?

(iv) Inter-Class Pan-Africanism: How well do privileged classes relate to the underprivileged in Africa and the diaspora? How elitist is the Pan-African movement? Sometimes the gulf to be transcended is between: 1) the rich African and the poor; 2) the educated African and the uneducated; 3) the skilled African and the unskilled; 4) the urban and the rural; and 5) the powerful African and the powerless.

(v) Inter-Religious Pan-Africanism: The Black experience is based primarily on a triple heritage of religion – indigenous religions of Africa, Christianity and Islam. The most ecumenical and tolerant is the indigenous religious tradition. Mazrui (2005b, 8) wrote: "Africa had no religious wars before the coming of Islam and Christianity. African indigenous religions were non-competitive with other religions."

(vi) Inter-Generational Pan-Africanism: Efforts to build bridges between the generations.

(vii) Inter-Regional Pan-Africanism: What is the level of cooperation between one region and another region in Africa, including on issues of mutual concern? The answer is "not much." This, too, must be addressed.

5. Taming ethnicity in Africa

Among the seven major micro-level categories of Pan-Africanism outlined above, Inter--Ethnic Pan-Africanism stands out as both vital and urgent for achieving the overarching goals of African unity, peace, and prosperity. It is therefore significant that Mazrui (1996b) singled out the role of ethnicity and examined, on several occasions, the various strategies for its democratization. Mazrui (1979) thus observed that "the ambitions of most African countries are large, encompassing the desire to forge numerous communities into cohesive nations within a lifetime and transforming the borderline of poverty into a foundation of affluence in a generation."

Using the Ethiopian case, where ethnicity has been a contentious issue, I will attempt to demonstrate below how some of Mazrui's suggestions based on his concept of triple heritage can be applied to mitigate ethnic tensions in Africa.

It can be argued that, with a Muslim and Oromo father and a Christian Amhara mother, Abiy Ahmed, the current prime minister of Ethiopia, in a sense embodies Africa's triple heritage. The Oromo and Amhara blood flowing in his genes represents his indigenous African roots. Ethiopia itself, being a product of the triple heritage, is thus redefined, and Ethiopians from virtually all backgrounds can identify with Prime Minister Abiy because they can see a piece of themselves in him. He, too, could feel equally at home among the Oromos, Amharas, Muslims, and Christians of Ethiopia, as well as among his other compatriots who use different markers of identity.

It is here that Ethiopia's indigenous philosophy of *medemer* becomes relevant. What is *medemer*? Some say *medemer* means "convergence." For others, it simply means "unity." The concept of *medemer* is best captured, in my view, by the word "synthesis" in the English language. *Medemer* combines different value systems to create something greater than the sum of its parts. Prime Minister Abiy, the person who first popularized the idea of medemer, explained it using the example of H2O. He said hydrogen (H) and oxygen (O) are two combustible gases; when they are appropriately combined, however, they create a compound (H2O) that is substantially different and can even put out fire. He published a book in 2019 in Amharic titled ሙደሙር (medemer) (Ahmed 2019).

On a deeper level, *medemer* is also not very different from—and indeed resonates with—what is known as *harambee* in East Africa and *ubuntu* in Southern Africa.

In his New Year's speech to Ethiopians on September 11, 2018, Prime Minister Abiy drew the attention of his compatriots to two religious anniversaries that were being observed simultaneously. He then quipped that it was as though the gods were reaffirming his philosophy of *medemer*. Here was an Oromo prime minister of Ethiopia reminding Ethiopians that, during the Ethiopian New Year, a major celebration of Orthodox Christianity and Islam converged (Adem 2019). This was a meaningful event. After all, Ethiopia was the first point of arrival for both the Christian Gospel and Islam in sub-Saharan Africa (see Mazrui 2007).

Medemer can also be translated as the process of seeking areas of compromise and consensus among divergent points of view (see also Adem 2018a, 7). This is a particularly relevant matter since one of the major items on Abiy Ahmed's domestic agenda concerns resolving the inherent anomalies of divided sovereignty in Ethiopia. The current system of Ethiopia's cultural federalism presumes that a shared central government and twelve unequal ethnic-regional governments are

at once interdependent and autonomous. Incidentally, this system was created by the party in power in 1991. Mazrui (2002a, 69) argued that the two taboos of postcolonial Africa were broken with this administrative experiment—the taboo of retribalization and the taboo of officially sanctioned secession from an existing African state—were manifested.

What are the more concrete, practical steps Ethiopia could take to tame ethnicity (see also Adem 2018b)? Some of these are widely known.

It is essential for Ethiopia to carefully distinguish between fundamental rights and instrumental rights. The right to vote serves as an instrumental right that facilitates the realization of the fundamental principle of governance by consent. Likewise, the right to a free press serves as an instrumental right that supports the development of an open society and promotes freedom of information.

Let us introduce here Mazrui's (2002b) five maxims on democracy. First, political pluralism survives best in those societies that have successfully experimented with economic pluralism earlier on. Second, in a multiethnic society, democracy can only survive if the voters have learned to vote across ethnic and denominational lines. Third, democracy will only work when the primordial culture of consensus has begun to give way to the modern culture of tolerance. Fourth, democracy will only work when the rule of law begins to replace the rule of personal power, and rules are obeyed, even by the most powerful.

There are at least four major goals of democracy, according to Ali Mazrui: accountable rulers, actively participating citizens, an open society, and social justice. But the means for achieving these goals vary from society to society.

If the goals of democracy are the same, even as the means for achieving them differ, are there Ethiopian means of achieving the goals of democracy? What this means is that the challenges for the drafters of the future Ethiopian constitution is how to maintain democratic goals while finding more suitable democratic pathways for Ethiopia.

The Iron Law of Ethnic Loyalty: One major characteristic of politics in Ethiopia, as elsewhere in much of Africa, is that they are ethnically-prone (Mazrui 2004, 472–482). The ethnic proneness of Ethiopian politics can affect not only who is elected but also how jobs are allocated. It can also perpetuate or even aggravate ethnic nepotism. But one thing that is even worse than nepotism is the tendency for a public officer to neglect his ethnic constituency completely, and instead to favor his own pocket.

One of the ethnic checks for the chief executive proposed elsewhere in Africa is a regionally

rotating presidency. Another approach would be to require that a president be ineligible for election unless they secure a minimum level of multi-regional support. It is not enough that a head of state has a majority of the people on their side; that majority must also be distributed nationally. Perhaps the president should be required to demonstrate substantial support in at least four regions out of Ethiopia's current twelve regions.

Institutional Checks and Ethnic Balances: Can Ethiopia find a new democratic path that combines a new concept of parliamentary sovereignty with an even newer concept of checks and balances? Is it possible, for instance, to combine ethnic checks and balances with gender checks and balances?

As one option, Ethiopia could make the speaker of the House of Representatives always a woman. A modified version would involve alternating the speaker's position between a man and a woman. If the current speaker is a man, the next one must be a woman, regardless of the party in power. Another scenario would be to appoint two vice presidents—one a man and the other a woman—from two different ethnic groups, who are both ethnically different from the president.

A system that encourages different ethnic groups to coalesce into a few major political parties remains much more desirable than a system that gives a larger number of ethnic groups the possibility of having their own political parties. What this means is that, from the perspective of ethnic pluralism, a multi-party system is less desirable than a two-party system. The Anglo-American model of two major parties confronting each other at least enforces coalitions and alignments between groups that would otherwise have separate political organizations. A multi-party system would exacerbate ethnic affiliations and antagonisms if ethnic groups and parties align too closely. However, a multi-party system could help to mitigate and even eliminate tribalism from politics if parties and ethnic groups crisscrossed.

Based on the available evidence, there is one idea that has never been tried in Africa: the possibility of a multi-party parliament combined with a non-party executive president? Can we have a constitution in which candidates for president belong to no political party and are required to be nonpartisan as executive heads of state, while parliament operates on the basis of a multi-party competition? This would enable the head of state to be truly above the inter-party squabbles and to attain a higher level of political objectivity. The disadvantage of this system is that only very wealthy individual candidates would be able to launch a presidential campaign without the support of party functionaries nationwide (Mazrui 1999).

There is also the novel concept of electoral polygamy, which, in principle, can de-ethnicize politics and create strong ethnic checks and balances. This requires, according to Mazrui, that every member of the House of Representatives have, for instance, two constituencies—one

primary, which may be their ethnic group, and the other a secondary constituency distant from their roots (see Adem 2021a, 171).

Each candidate would need a plurality of votes in their primary constituency and a specified minimum percentage of votes in the other constituencies. The idea is to help each candidate enjoy the trust and confidence of the nation as a whole, not merely that of their ethnic group. Surely, this is perhaps the most challenging approach to pursue in the Ethiopian context.

Given that political behavior in Ethiopia today is strongly influenced by ethnic forces, Ethiopian democratic institutions should take this paramount factor into account. No one should be in denial about ethnicity. As Mazrui (1995a) reminded us, "[The principle of the unitary state might have cost Ethiopia millions of lives over the decades]. By treating ethnic loyalty as a kind of political pathology and constructing unitarist constitutions without adequate relevance to socio-cultural realities, the settings of conflict were created rather than structures of concourse" (12). The ethnic genie is also already out of the bottle.

Since ethnicity will likely remain a defining aspect of Ethiopia for many decades, political de-ethnicization is not a viable option. But ethnic checks and balances of a creative and constructive kind are needed. We should shed the superstition that, in order to foster national consciousness, we must have a unitary state. Regional loyalties should be compatible with national patriotism, provided the whole system is inclusive and accommodates differences without marginalizing smaller groups.

Ethiopia must therefore continue to grapple with the question of whether an "instant" liberal democracy is a viable option, given its complex history and rich ethnic diversity. The challenges that need to be addressed, as we have seen above, pertain to fragmented ethnocultural identity and fragile institutions. However, as Samuel Huntington (1993, 3) rightly said, "despite the unfavorable conditions, a democratic system conceivably could be created in Ethiopia if the current leaders of the country make that their goal."

Democratization in Ethiopia is a viable option. I also say this based on my understanding (see Adem 2019) of Japan's experience:

> …non-Western cultures are more democracy-friendly than might at first appear. Democracy took root in Japan also because the Japanese saw its benefits, both tangible and intangible, and realized it was superior to the alternative systems of governance. It is a simple cost-benefit analysis.

In Ethiopia today the desire for democracy is palpable. But will Ethiopians be able to muster the

will to democratize? (see Adem 2021b). Such a will necessitates also the readiness to permit the government to take measures necessary to this end, however unpopular they may be.

In short, as Francis Fukuyama (2019) argued, Ethiopia needs a modern state (with a bureaucracy that is meritocratic, technocratic, high-capacity, and insulated from politicization), a unifying identity, and democracy. However, it is from some form of regional integration for the Horn of Africa as a whole that the necessary step toward the dream of African unity can be taken (Adem 2025).

6. Mazrui's Pan-African visions

Mazrui attempted to accomplish at least two things with his Pan-Africanist scholarship: he sought to demonstrate how Africa's renaissance could result from the creative synthesis of the legacies of indigenous values, Islam, and Western culture and reconcile the divergent approaches to African unity: Nkrumah's continentalism, Nyerere's regionalism, and Haile Selassie's functionalism. Let us look at how, specifically, he approached this formidable issue.

6.1 . *Africa's triple heritage*[2]

Africa's triple heritage is the organizing concept of Ali Mazrui's entire scholarship. Mazrui (1986c, 23-30) defined the concept as follows: "Africa's own rich inheritance, Islamic culture and the impact of Western traditions and lifestyles. The interplay of these three civilizations is the essence of the continent's triple heritage".

Mazrui (1986c, 23) also claimed that,

> …[e]ven before Islam came to Africa, there was an older triple heritage in the continent – an interplay between African culture, Semitic culture, and the legacy of Greece and Rome. This ancient triple heritage is best illustrated in Ethiopia, where Christianity has flourished since the fourth century, the impact of Judaism is reflected in local versions of the legend of Solomon and Sheba, and the Greco-Roman legacy is evident in both social traditions and architectural structures.

Mazrui thus used this concept extensively as a framework for analyzing what he saw as the realities of Africa's past, present, and future.

Africa's triple heritage has persisted against the background of positive and negative trends in Africa. The negative trends in recent years include civil wars, military coups, other forms of authoritarianism, economic instability, ethnic tensions, and urban crime. These trends are either intertwined with or caused by, according to Mazrui (1995c), too little government (anarchy) or

[2] This section partly draws on Adem (2008).

too much government (tyranny).

Indigenous values in Africa have proven resilient, contrary to expectations, and continue to express themselves through people's strong ties to ethnic loyalties and spiritual beliefs. Islam and Arabic culture have greatly enriched some of Africa's major languages, such as Hausa and Kiswahili. At the same time, Western culture has left its mark across a wide range of areas in Africa, from political institutions and fashion to music and cuisine, with numerous sub-Saharan African countries even adopting European languages as their official languages.

A question now arises: are there culture wars currently underway in Africa? This question, too, must be asked because, after all, as Mazrui (1985, 838-839) stated:

> Long before the religion of the crescent or the religion of the cross arrived on the African continent, Africa was at worship, its sons and daughters were at prayer. Indigenous religions had a concept of divinity that was decentralized. And then came Christianity and Islam, with a greater focus on man as being in the image of God, and with a God often defined and described in the image of Man.

Mazrui (1970, 8) likewise observed: "Religions that acknowledge the existence of many gods…are not specially incensed when one more group comes and claims gods of its own". However, with the arrival of religions operating on different assumptions, Africa began to experience culture wars, or, as Mazrui put it, "a clash of cultures" (1980, 46–69).

The contest between Westernism and Islam is obvious. However, the challenges posed by Westernism to indigenous cultures may be less noticeable and often require a more nuanced understanding.

The West vs. Islam: In North Africa, the clash between Western secularism and political Islam tragically escalated in the 1990s in Algeria. It is striking that this turmoil began when secularists undermined democratic ideals by dismissing an Islamic electoral victory. What happened in Egypt in 2011 appears to be more or less the same thing. The region then experienced profound violence, with countless lives lost.

In Nigeria, a struggle is taking place between the influences of Westernized Christianity and the traditions of Islam. This dynamic tension not only reflects the diverse beliefs that shape the nation but also underscores the importance of understanding and dialogue in fostering unity within its rich cultural landscape. Embracing this complexity can pave the way for greater harmony and mutual respect among Nigeria's varied communities. Sudan has experienced a messier clash involving political Islam, politicized Christianity, and secularism. These conflicts have shaped the

history of Sudan as well as its fate, as South Sudan seceded from Sudan in 2011, becoming an independent state. Both South Sudan and Sudan are now at war with themselves.

The West vs. Indigenous Culture: The ongoing struggle between indigenous cultures and Western influence is both subtle and profound. Indigenous traditions challenge ill-fitting Western systems of ideas and institutions that were transplanted in Africa. A primary reason for the failure, or at least ineffectiveness, of the Westminster parliamentary model in Africa is the lack of attention to cultural context. Mazrui (1980, 80–82; also see Adem 2020) therefore suggested that there was a need for "domestication":

> It involves making resources which are foreign more relevant and more appropriate for the African situation. For example, the African university today is basically a foreign institution, transmitting foreign culture and techniques, consolidating foreign academic traditions, and even preparing the way for foreign ideologies among students and future teachers. Domesticating the African university would involve making it more relevant to local needs and more responsive to branches of knowledge and understanding available elsewhere on the local scene. Parliament in Nairobi is, in conception, a foreign institution. It has all the paraphernalia of parliament at Westminster without the sanctity of tradition and stamp of authority…and for more than a decade after independence, the language of discussion in Kenya's national Assembly was exclusively English. Domesticating the economy itself involves a reduction of its export orientation and an enhancement of the focus on domestic food needs and other local requirements. Sometimes, emphasizing labor-intensive instead of capital-intensive technology is itself a form of domesticating…Labor-intensive technology is a form of democratizing modernity, involving more and more people in the process of modern production, and utilizing major resources of even the poorest of the African countries – the human resource .

Islam vs. Indigenous Culture: In general, Mazrui (1989, 6) observed that "The spread [or expansion] of Islam in postcolonial Africa is basically a peaceful process of persuasion and consent. The revival of Islamism is often an angry process of rediscovered fundamentalism." Forced conversion to Islam often leads to conflict with indigenous cultures. In contrast, peaceful conversion typically fosters a more harmonious relationship for several reasons: (a) In the twentieth century, Islam in Africa was less dominant and less threatening than Western influences; (b) indigenous cultures are generally tolerant and accept peaceful religious competition; (c) the absence of a centralized Islamic authority allows for local interpretations; and (d) Islam has often blended with indigenous cultures.

Mazrui (1973) envisioned an African renaissance built on the creative synthesis of the desirable elements from Africa's triple heritage. As Mazrui (1973, 667) observed, "traditional African

religion is socially conservative but politically tolerant; Islam is socially conservative but politically radical; Christianity is socially innovative and progressive but inclining towards political conservatism".

In more concrete terms, Mazrui believed that Africa could draw from its rich indigenous cultural heritage in various ways. One particularly notable element is ecumenicalism, which embodies the principles of religious tolerance and the pursuit of shared understanding among diverse religious traditions. Distinctively, Africa's indigenous belief systems often embrace a more inclusive approach and do not subscribe to the binary thinking prevalent in the other Abrahamic religions.

Another positive aspect of Africa's indigenous values is reflected in the remarkable ability of Africans to forgive each other and others quickly. While Africans have endured more than their fair share of violence, they often embrace moments of reconciliation with an inspiring speed. As the international media frequently spotlight civil wars and conflicts, the powerful stories of forgiveness often go unnoticed. This short memory of past animosities is a crucial cultural resource for future conflict resolution. Africa must find ways to harness this capacity to promote Pax Africana. Prominent African leaders like Jomo Kenyatta and Nelson Mandela vividly exemplified the continent's remarkable ability to transcend hatred quickly.

What Africa can take from Islam includes a culture that values sobriety, promoting a healthy skepticism toward alcohol, drugs, and narcotics, and a sense of modesty in spirit and appearance that extends to practices of devotion and dress for both men and women. From the West, Africa can take, among other things, the wealth of knowledge and innovative spirit that drives educational advancement and capitalistic growth. The Pan-African renaissance should continue its search for a synthesis of Africa's triple heritage.

6.2. *Toward African unity*

Kwame Nkrumah fervently championed a united Africa, while Haile Selassie focused on building economic ties first. Meanwhile, Julius Nyerere dreamed of fostering sub-regional cooperation in East Africa. Their diverse visions highlight the vibrant quest for a united and prosperous continent (Mazrui 2001b, 2013). Mazrui (1995b, 36) developed a novel approach to African unity, which was apparently intended to bridge these divergent Pan-Africanist ideals in four ways. Firstly, Pan-Africanism in the form of economic integration would be led by Southern Africa under the umbrella of the Southern African Development Community. The promising progress in this economic sub-regional integration can be attributed in part to the influential role of the Republic of South Africa. As a key player in this new economic alliance, South Africa's leadership is essential for nurturing successful regional collaboration and growth.

Secondly, West Africa is likely to take the lead in Pan-African military integration, inspired by

the impactful work of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group, or ECOMOG. Even though ECOMOG faced challenges during its Liberia mission, it nevertheless paved the way for a brighter future in Pax-Africana, showcasing the resilience and commitment of the region to promote peace and cooperation across West Africa and beyond.

Northern Africa stands poised to take the lead in the journey toward Pan-African political integration. While there are challenges ahead, this vibrant subregion is uniquely equipped for the adventure, united by a rich tapestry of shared faith (Islam), language (Arabic), culture (Arabo-Berber), and a deep historical connection that spans centuries. Economic collaboration is already underway among Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Mauritania through the Arab Maghreb Union. If Egypt joins the bloc, there could be an even more dynamic push for regional integration in North Africa.

Finally, the cultural integration aspect of Pan-Africanism is likely to be led by East Africa, which benefits from having a region-wide indigenous language. Kiswahili serves as a unifying force for Tanzania, Kenya, as well as, to a certain extent, Uganda, and potentially Rwanda, Burundi, and Eastern Zaire. Northern Mozambique and Malawi are also influenced by Swahili. By rapidly training teachers of African languages throughout the continent, we can open up a world of possibilities and connections, creating a united and vibrant African identity. A shared language is an asset for advancing both regional integration and continental unity.

Apart from cultural integration based on prior similarities, there is also what Mazrui calls cultural diffusion, both before, during, and after colonial rule, as a basis for Pan-Africanism. Mazrui (1986b: 45-49) explained his vision for such a Pan-African cultural diffusion as follows.

Diffusion can often stem from intentional policy efforts, as seen in the widespread adoption of the novels of Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiong'o in schools across Africa, from Maiduguri to Mombasa, fostering a rich appreciation for African literature and culture.

Cultural diffusion can also thrive beyond policy, showcasing Africa's vibrant march for unity. In this vein, from Lusaka to Lagos, the lively rhythms of Zaire could be seen inspiring joyful dances, while West African attire could be spotted on the streets of Dar es Salaam.

Cultural Pan-Africanism is indeed already blossoming. Africans are engaging with one another's literature, appreciating each other's performances, exchanging innovative ideas, embracing diverse styles, and connecting over shared experiences on various issues.

If Africa aspires to make cultural diffusion more intentional and impactful, it would benefit from a thoughtful and rational approach. The question to consider is: which of Africa's rich and diverse

dress cultures should be promoted and shared across the continent? It's widely acknowledged that West Africa boasts some of the most sophisticated and elaborate indigenous dress traditions. By purposefully sharing West Africa's vibrant heritage further afield, we can enrich the cultural tapestry of the entire continent. Excitingly, we're already witnessing the spread of West African styles, from Dodoma to Durban! Implementing a clear policy to embrace and promote West African dress as a pan-African identity could elevate and celebrate the finest aspects of Africa's clothing traditions. This collaborative effort could not only foster unity but also inspire a renewed appreciation for the continent's artistic diversity, creating a vibrant exchange that uplifts everyone.

In the vibrant landscape of African music, it makes perfect sense to build on the powerful foundations we have. The captivating rhythms of Zaire have already begun to resonate across the continent, and isn't it exciting to think about embracing this music as a truly Pan-African treasure? We could nurture its presence in dance halls, schools, concert venues, and on our airwaves, connecting communities from Blantyre to Ouagadougou.

Southern Africa has a great deal to offer in terms of technology, with some regions of the country among the most technologically advanced on the continent. What makes Southern Africa truly special is that the roots of this sophistication go far back, long before colonial times. The magnificent ancient walls of Zimbabwe, skillfully built without mortar, have withstood the test of time for over six hundred years—a remarkable testament to the region's rich engineering heritage.

The ancient Shona kingdoms demonstrated remarkable civil engineering, while the Zulus excelled in military organization and innovation in the nineteenth century. Southern Africa's technological legacy beautifully intertwines the impressive structures of the Shona with the strategic brilliance of Shaka's conquests. This rich history of indigenous ingenuity paves the way for a bright future, where the southern tip of Africa can lead through its technological advancements. Embracing the Pan-Africanization of scientific knowledge will undoubtedly inspire innovation across the continent.

7. Mazrui's proximity to power

It is an inescapable fact that Ali Mazrui had enjoyed maximum proximity to Africa's leaders and other persons of power. Some of these leaders were known to violate the human rights of their fellow citizens. His critics therefore sometimes pointed out that he was very close to those leaders and that he even fraternized with them. Mazrui did indeed cultivate close relationships with many African leaders and other men and women of power. However, it is wrong to suggest that his relationships with these leaders were always cordial. As Mazrui (see Adem, Mutunga and Mazrui 2013, 209) himself said, for instance: "[President] Obote was sometimes tempted to detain me or expel me [from Uganda]; [President]Idi Amin [of Uganda] eventually wished he had eliminated me; and [President] Julius Nyerere [of Tanzania] was in recurrent debates with me; [President]

Moi [of Kenya] does not know what to do with me".

It is legitimate, of course, to ask the question: How was Mazrui able to reconcile the demands of his deep political connections with the dictates of his intellectual integrity? We may gain some insight into the answer to this question from the following anecdote. Mazrui's (1995d) favorite quotation was from a book by his mentor at Oxford, John Plamenatz (1960): "The vices of the powerful acquire some of the prestige of power." In his writings, Mazrui used variations of this quotation more frequently than any other. This suggests, in my view, that Mazrui understood the nature of power well and did not feel he had to distort facts for political purposes. It is perhaps this profound awareness that enabled him to be both a confidant and a critic of many of postcolonial Africa's leaders.

Mazrui had also said that the maximum access he enjoyed in the corridors of power in Africa and elsewhere was desirable from the point of view of his transactional methodology of teaching and research (see Adem 2021a, 41). An incident in Florida reported in *The Washington Post* (Murphy 2003), when he was a professor of political science at Binghamton University in New York, illustrates this point. Suspecting that Mazrui had met Yaseen Abubakar, a controversial Muslim leader in Trinidad and Tobago, the FBI briefly detained him in Miami on his return from the Caribbean country in September 2003. His mission in the country, according to Mazrui's account, had nothing to do with religion. Asked at the airport if he had indeed met the radical Islamist leader in Trinidad and Tobago, Mazrui told the FBI interrogators: "I did not, but I did try to meet him… It is my business to know about Muslims because I teach that."

We should also remember that Mazrui's critique of Africa's leaders was often as sharp.. For instance, more than forty years ago, Mazrui (1982, 323) noted:

> An American president can get away with killing a million foreigners but he takes a great gamble if he personally authorizes the murder of a single irritating American journalist at home…By contrast, an African president can get away with killing thousands of his compatriots but he still takes a gamble when he deliberately orders the murder of a single American journalist…Africa's lack of constitutional arrangements allows considerable domestic brutality but limited capacity for the brutalization of foreigners in one's own country, let alone in other lands. While Africa should not necessarily aspire to acquire the equivalent of America's capacity for killing others in the name of national interests, she would do well to learn some of the constitutional devices by which Americans seek to limit their rulers' capacity for domestic evil.

After exploring whether Africa could one day be able to impeach its presidents who committed "crimes against the African people," Mazrui (1982, 323) concluded: "Africa is unlikely to

impeach its presidents before it learns to elect them freely". This, too, seems just as applicable to the African condition today.

Mazrui (1996b) also recognized the challenges of being a leader in Africa. As he put it, "In many African countries, presidential power is a zero-sum game: either one is Head of State or a figure of fun and derision—if not vulnerable to imprisonment or death. This state of affairs encourages some Heads of State to cling to power indefinitely. They have everything to lose by giving up the State House." Mazrui (1982, 326; see also Mazrui 1995e, 161-164) suggested that:

> Justice is not simply a case of punishing the wicked; it should also include provision to reward virtue, when feasible. The [AU] needs not only to find ways of punishing offenders; it should also find methods of honoring great service or great humaneness among its members. One innovation that may deserve consideration is that of choosing [as chairpersons of the AU Commission] from former heads of state and government, with the option of re-electing the same person for up to a maximum of five years.

Along the same lines, Mazrui (1995b, 38) suggested more concrete steps for "encouraging Africa's leaders to hand over power graciously to an elected successor". Mazrui (1995, 38) thus wrote: "…Africa needs to create conditions in which former presidents retain dignity and national standing provided they voluntarily hand over power to a democratic process". Making the case for this, Mazrui (1995, 38) argued that:

> …the establishment of a Pan-African Senate consisting of precisely former Heads of State who have either allowed themselves to be defeated at the polls (like Kaunda of Zambia), or handed over [power] to a democratic process (like Obasanjo of Nigeria), or retired in conditions of pluralism and the open society (like Leopold Senghor and Julius K. Nyerere).
>
> The purpose of such a Pan-African Senate would be two-fold. Firstly, the Senate would enable Africa to continue to tap the wisdom and accumulated political experience of some of its most historic statesmen (and, one day, statewomen). Secondly, the Pan-African Senate would help to give African heads of state the promise of a continuing honorific role.
>
> Is there life after State House? Africa has to find ways of assuring its presidents that there is such a thing as a dignified retirement within Africa. Africa needs to rescue the institutions of the presidency from continuing to be a zero-sum game. It need not be a case of 'either I am President, or I am nothing.'

> Membership of a Pan-African Senate would be a step, only a step. Other ways of reassuring African heads of state about their last years need to be found if we do not want them to cling to power until they are as sick as Hastings Banda or as senile as Habib Bourguiba. Or until they are overthrown in yet another humiliating military coup.

In an unpublished memo (April 1975), Mazrui also stated that:

> I believe that no African leader, no matter how obviously good, should be protected from criticism. Similarly, no African leader, no matter how blatantly bad, should be denied occasional dispassionate evaluation. Just as Africa cannot afford undiluted admiration of its heroes, it cannot afford undiluted condemnation of its villains. Both inclinations amount to a suspension of judgment, a kind of abdication of the mind.

8. Conclusion

In this paper, I have sought to demonstrate that the Pan-African intellectual Ali A. Mazrui advanced a compelling vision for Africa grounded in what he famously termed "Africa's triple heritage": the convergence of indigenous African traditions, Islam, and Western cultural influences. For Mazrui, this triadic inheritance was not a burden to be overcome but a reservoir of creative possibilities. He believed that Africa's future viability—its capacity to achieve unity, prosperity, and peace—lay in the continent's ability to harmonize these cultural currents rather than privileging one at the expense of the others. This synthetic orientation, I have argued, lies at the heart of Mazrui's Pan-Africanist vision.

In addition to clarifying Mazrui's normative commitment to cultural synthesis, I have shown how he skillfully positioned himself between, and often above, competing ideological camps. On the one hand, he appreciated, and selectively embraced core liberal values associated with the West—among them pluralism, reasoned public debate, open society, and constitutional governance. On the other hand, he remained steadfast in his Pan-Africanist commitments, refusing to allow Western liberalism to subsume or overshadow the political and cultural imperatives of African self-definition. This balancing act was neither accidental nor purely rhetorical. It reflected Mazrui's deeper conviction that Africa must appropriate global ideas while refusing to be intellectually or politically subordinated to them.

Mazrui's Pan-Africanist thought also reflects a persistent resistance to hegemonic structures, both within African states and across the international system. Domestically, he was critical of authoritarianism, political intolerance, and the monopolization of power by postcolonial elites who claimed to speak for the nation while suppressing dissenting voices. Internationally, he denounced the asymmetries that continue to shape global governance, calling attention to how some powerful states and institutions leverage economic and military might to perpetuate Africa's

marginalization. In this respect, Mazrui was an advocate for a more equitable international order. Equally central to his critique was the problem of dependency Mazrui consistently problematized Africa's structural reliance on external powers for capital, technology, security, and intellectual validation. He regarded such dependence as incompatible with Africa's long-term autonomy and as a major obstacle for the realization of African agency. Against this backdrop, he urged Africans to cultivate indigenous knowledge systems, strengthen intra-African cooperation, and develop political institutions capable of resisting external domination while engaging the world on more balanced terms.

The OAU, founded in 1963, emerged as a political institution whose central ambition was Africa's "collective disengagement" from former colonial powers. By contrast, the AU signaled a new orientation when, in 2002, it adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as its strategic framework—an agenda aimed at Africa's economic re-engagement with external powers, including Japan. Notably, NEPAD (now the African Union Development Agency, or AUDA-NEPAD) has become a key institutional partner in the TICAD process, as evidenced by the multifaceted and prominent roles it played alongside JICA at TICAD 9. This shift also aligns with Ali Mazrui's long-standing argument that Africa should diversify its external partnerships to maximize its strategic autonomy.

Quite fittingly, Kofi Annan, when he was the Secretary-General of the United Nations, described Mazrui as "Africa's gift to the world" (see Mazuri 2001a, Appendix 4). Equally true is to say that Mazrui was Africa's gift to Africa – its interpreter and its philosopher-storyteller. But Africans have yet to fully unwrap the gift. His ideas still sit on the shelves of Africa's collective library, waiting for new generations to read them not as relics but as insights, as unfinished conversations.

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Abstract (in Japanese)

要　約

「アフリカにアリ・マズルイを与えてくれた神に感謝！」これは、ザンビア初代大統領ケネス・カウンダが 1988 年 8 月、全国放送のイベントでケニアの学者アリ・マズルイに敬意を表して述べた言葉である。それから約 10 年後の 1995 年には、ネルソン・マンデラもマズルイを「卓越した教育者であり自由の闘士」と評している。

今日のアフリカでは、マズルイが過去 50 年間で大陸が生み出した最も傑出した公共知識人であるという広範な共通認識がある。彼の優雅で刺激的なパン・アフリカ主義的学問は広範囲に及び、1963 年から 2013 年までの約 50 年間にわたって空間的・時間的に散在している。その膨大な発表済みおよび未発表のパン・アフリカ主義に関する研究は、その複雑さをも認識すべきであることを示唆している。彼のパン・アフリカ主義のもう一つの特徴は、人間の尊厳と真の国際的相互性の公正さに基づいた国際システムという彼のビジョンとの結びつきである。マズルイのパン・アフリカ主義に関する多くの思想は、時を経た現代においても多くの示唆を与えている。2025 年 8 月 20 日から 22 日にかけて日本の横浜で開催された第 9 回アフリカ開発会議（TICAD9）を受けて（本論文の副題にある「ポスト」はこの文脈に由来する）、本稿ではマズルイの純粋で豊かなパン･アフリカ主義を簡潔かつ包括的に紹介することを試みる。特に、あまり知られていない、あるいは全く知られていない彼の業績に焦点を当てる。これは、今日のアフリカにとって極めてタイムリーで重要な内容である。

キーワード：開発、アリ・マズルイ、パン・アフリカ主義、平和、ポストコロニアリズム