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كتاب المستخلصات



مؤتمر الإصلاح والتجديد على ضوء ميراث علي مزروعى ومستقبل الإصلاح
في العالم الإسلامي

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كتاب المستخلصات – مؤتمر الإصلاح والتجديد على ضوء ميراث علي مزروعى ومستقبل الإصلاح في العالم الإسلامي

Traversing the Road Less Travelled: An Excursion into the Educational Philosophy of Prof. Ali Mazrui

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Abstract

Prof. Ali Mazrui is strongly associated with the intertwined disciplines of social science and humanities, which are essentially his academic territory. He is generally known as anything but an educational thinker. Consequently, literature is replete with scholarly interventions on his scholarship through which he bestrode the academic world like a colossus. However, the dominant perception in the educational parlance that Ali Mazrui is anything but a leading educational thinker has informed little or no attention to his educational views. Consequently, there is no significant evidence of systematic investigation into the ideological underpinnings of his educational thought. This may not be unconnected with the fact that his educational views are not contained exclusively in any work but are rather fragmented in his various publications and scattered as incomprehensive pieces of information in his public presentations especially those on the culture of African universities. Hence the dearth of scientific research on the subject for which there now is a clamour in the face of the long-felt need. The purpose of this paper is to expose the educational thought of Ali Mazrui by examining the ideological directions and philosophical orientations that nurture his educational ideas and ideals. The paper whose theoretical framework derives from the social and philosophical foundations of education, employs three methods namely the historical method, the philosophical method, and creative synthesis. The significance of the study lies in its potential to draw the blind and adjust our view of the scholarship of Ali Mazrui in the context of Pan-Africanism by

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engaging with his educational views for the purpose of codifying them thereby stimulating further interest in such a scholarly enterprise. However, the paper will not formulate Afrocentric education principles from the scholarship of Mazrui, for possible translation to innovative education frameworks. Such an elaborate systematic undertaking has to be subject of another paper.

Introduction

No more injurious and absurd myth could be concocted in the estimation of Modern university-based scholars and researchers than that a man whose academic territory falls within humanities and social sciences will be reckoned with as a leading educational thinker with sophisticated education-oriented philosophical views. It is therefore almost inconceivable that Ali Mazrui who, according to Aliet (2007), obtained a first degree in political science at the University of Manchester, Britain in 1960, Masters at the Columbia University of New York, USA in 1961 and Ph.D at Oxford University, Britain in 1966, all in the social sciences, will be regarded as having contributed significantly to the field of education. This is an impression that is hardly created by any of the scholars who have written so ‘sweetly’ in their celebratory works on Ali Mazrui. For instance, Akoda (2015:66), writes that ‘Ali Mazrui has contributed to various disciplines such as political science, Islamic studies, African studies, cultural studies and literature ...and this has earned him the name ‘multiple Mazrui’.’ Similarly, President Milton Obote of Uganda declared that Mazrui was no more than a political scientist when he rhetorically asked him in the 1960s, ‘Professor Mazrui, are you sure you know the difference between being a political scientist and being a politician’ (IGCS, 2005:2). That happened in connection with the Head of State of Uganda’s anger over Mazrui’s wander-lust to criticize government policies rather expressly in the public space ‘in contradiction of Presidential pronouncements’ (IGCS, 2005: 2).

In a similar token, the list of one hundred great public intellectuals provided by Foreign Policy and The Prospect magazine features only five Black Africans namely Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka of



Nigeria, J.M. Coetzee of South Africa, as well as Florence Wambugu and Ali Mazrui of Kenya. While Achebe was characterized in the highly prestigious publication as a novelist, Soyinka was characterized as a playwright, Coetzee as a novelist, Wambugu as a plant pathologist, and Mazrui as a social scientist. In the *Highlights Without Precedent: When Ali A. Mazrui Led The Way* (2011), it is captured that ‘Ali Mazrui was the first African scholar to occupy each of the following positions: Full professor in any of the humanities in any university in East Africa – beginning in 1965 at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda; Full professor of Political Science in any university in East Africa – beginning in 1965 at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda; Dean of Social Sciences in any of the universities in East Africa – from 1966 to 1968 at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda; and Vice-President, International Political Science Association (Headquarters in Paris, France, at the time) from 1968 to 1971’. The implication of the foregoing is that Mazrui is not known to have been considerably associated with the field of education. *The Road Less Travelled*, as the subject of this paper thus becomes self-explanatory.

The Problem:

Ali Mazrui earned general acceptance and recognition as an established scholar in the humanities and social sciences. The literature is replete with evidence of his contributions to scholarship in these inter-twinned areas. There even seems to be a proliferation of commentaries, analyses, critiques and rejoinders on some of his works in these areas. Conversely, there is little evidence of scholarly attention to his educational thought probably owing to the dominant thinking that he is anything but an educationist. Ironically however, Mazrui’s educational thoughts and views, which have high potential to illuminate the educational path and ideological directions in African settings, are fragmented somehow unnoticed into his numerous publications and presentations. Accordingly, there is need for a careful, meticulous and painstaking engagement with his works in



order to expose their education foci or dimensions. The present paper hereby undertakes to address such a need.

Research Objectives

This paper is intended to traverse the less travelled road represented by Mazrui's educational thought. In specific terms, this paper shall:

1. Examine the nature of the scholarship of Mazrui;
2. Investigate the education components of Mazrui's works;
3. Underscore the specific educational ideas and ideals promoted by Mazrui; and
4. Situate Mazrui's educational thought in the contemporary scholarship of education.

Research Questions:

For a systematic pursuit of the objectives of this paper, the presentation is guided by four questions. The paper may therefore aptly described as a scholarly attempt at proffering answers to the four questions which are:

1. What is the nature of the scholarship of Mazrui?
2. What are the education components of Mazrui's works?
3. What are the specific educational ideas and ideals promoted by Mazrui?
4. What is the merit of Mazrui's educational thought in the contemporary scholarship of education?

Methodology:

It should be noted from the onset that this section of the paper derives essentially from a number of previous studies by the researcher where subjects of similar nature have been addressed in other contexts. These include Rufai 2009, 2010, 2012, 2015, 2016 and 2018. In pursuing the four objectives stated for achievement through the instrumentality of this qualitative study, the paper employs a number of methods each of which plays significant role in the realization of the purpose of the study. Such methods, in specific terms, are three and comprise the historical method, the analytical method, and creative synthesis. It is not uncommon in qualitative studies to



combine several data collection and analysis methods over the course of a study (Bogman and Bilken, 1998). What matters most in such a situation is for the researcher to assess each method and decide its relevance to his study especially with regard to the specific role expected of such method towards the realization of the objective of the study.

Accordingly, it is worthy of mention that the historical orientation of this study stems from its historical examination of the scholarship of Mazrui otherwise known as Mazruiana. There also will be a critical analysis of some aspects of such works especially where Mazrui promotes education related views. Such a critical analysis is carried out through the use of the analytical method, which is also used in analyzing historical data and in carrying out a comparison between his and other works as well as in making a textual analysis and in providing the implication of specific lines of argument. The connection between the historical method and the critical or philosophical method that is employed alongside it, lies in the fact that a historian is expected to evaluate his sources or anything that provides him information about any historical event. In such a situation, the techniques of criticism or the philosophical method are of central importance to his historical works. It should be pointed out that it is the role of the historical sources to provide information or testimony while it is the role of the philosophical method or external criticism to establish the authenticity of a source. Accordingly, the present study complements the historical method with the philosophical method by establishing the fact of testimony as well as integrity of information or its freedom from corruption.

As regards creative synthesis, its relevance to this study stems from its nature as a tool for “the combining of separate elements to form a coherent whole” (Murphy, 2007). The formulation of a framework for the translation of Mazrui’s views into a curriculum is not without its creative and synthetic dimension. Hence the use of creative synthesis in the study especially with regard derivation of educational views from Mazrui’s thoughts for possible translation of such views into



educational principles. This method, as noted earlier, is primarily associated with the systematic selection and organization of different components into an interlinked unit or interlocked whole. This is particularly the situation where this paper generates educational ideals preparatory to the formulation of educational principles from the scholarship of Mazrui

Literature Review:

It should be noted from the onset that the literature for this study shall be focused on specific objectives and questions of the research. Accordingly, the literature review shall be pursued under three specific subheadings with a view to addressing the first two research objectives by attempting to proffer answers to the first two research questions. The specific tasks involved in these are an examination of the scholarship of Mazrui and an investigation of the educational components of Mazrui's works. Only the historical and analytic methods are relevant to the researcher's engagement with the scholarship involved in that regard and there is no role whatsoever for creative synthesis. However, the last two research objectives and questions are associated with the original contribution of the paper. This researcher's tasks in this connection are an exposition on the specific educational ideas and ideals promoted by Mazrui and an assessment of the implication of Mazrui's educational thought for development in Africa in the context of professional scholarship of education. These two tasks shall be a precursor to the formulation of an educational framework for subsequent possible translation of Mazrui's educational thoughts to educational principles. Given the nature of the two research objectives involved here, creative synthesis takes the lead in the methodological consideration while both the historical method and analytic philosophy play complementary role, as will be demonstrated in what follows.

The Nature of Mazrui's Scholarship:

This present writer is not familiar with any piece that captures the essence of the nature of the scholarship of Professor Ali Mazrui more



graphically than his 2008 Media Chat, especially the aspect documented by Akoda (2005:66), as follows:

The first three books published by Mazrui includes 'Towards a Pax Africana' (Mazrui, 1967a), a published version of his Ph.D thesis; The Anglo-African Commonwealth (Mazrui, 1967b) and 'On Heroes and Uhuru Worship; Essays on Independent Africa' (Mazrui, 1967c). As a graduate student, Mazrui had written extensively on Africa's political experience in professional Journals like 'American Political Science Review' in the United States and 'Political Studies', a British journal. His first article in a major western newspaper in Britain, 'Why does an African feel African' was accepted and published with no corrections or alterations whatsoever. Mazrui also became a regular face of the British Broadcasting Service in the 70s where he lectured on topics and issues relating to African condition. These lectures culminated in the publication of a book, 'The African Condition' in 1980 (Mazrui, 1980). Mazrui's lectures and commentaries were not only broadcast in English but in Kiswahili and heard on radio from London to Africa.

It is clearly derivable from Akoda's words as quoted above that Mazrui was a humanist and social scientist with the African continent as his laboratory. He was seriously concerned about issues affecting Africa in the world. A cursory look at some of the subjects or questions he engaged with most actively lends credence to his characterization in this light. An instance of this his article, *Who killed Democracy in Africa? Clues of the Past, Concerns of the Future* (2002). Another instance of it is his article, *From Slave Ship to Space Ship: African between Marginalization and Globalization* (1999). Yet, another instance is his *Annual Mazrui Newsletter* (No. 25). It suffices to elaborate upon the relevance of these three works to both the first research objective and research question, in the face of the publication record of a man who published numerous works with potential to complete with the sand of the seashore. . Yet, before approaching the specific details of the nature of each of the



three works, it is not out of place to further demonstrate the African-oriented and globally-focussed nature of the scholarship of Mazrui by identifying his first ten published books. They are *Towards a Pax Africana: A Study of Ideology and Ambition* (1967); *On heroes and Uhuru-Worship: Essays on Independent Africa* (1967); *The Anglo-African Commonwealth: Political Friction and Cultural Fusion* (1967); *Violence and Thought: Essays on Social Tensions in Africa* (1969); *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (1970); *Cultural Engineering and Nation-Building in East Africa* (1971); *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo* (1971); *Africa in World Affairs: The Next Thirty Years* (1973); and *World Culture and the Black Experience* (1973). While it may not be controvertible that the direction of Mazrui's scholarship is self-explanatory from the above enumerated titles, a short analysis on the three articles itemized earlier may be of great value.

In *Who killed Democracy in Africa*, Mazrui draws a bold line of demarcation between what he characterizes as 'ultimate goals' and the instruments with potential to facilitate their achievement. He also distinguishes between 'fundamental rights' and 'instrumental rights' and argues that 'the right to vote ...is an instrumental right designed to help us achieve the fundamental right of government by consent'. In a similar token, he argues that 'the right to a free press is an instrumental right designed to help us achieve an open society and freedom of information'. Mazrui pursues this line of critical analysis extensively and waxes highly creative as he constantly offers sophisticated enlightenment for Africa. Mazrui has always advanced the course of the African continent through the instrumentality of his scholarship. He insists that Africa and the African people have contributed in no small measure to the technological revolution of the West. He argues that what Africa contributed in this regard surpassed what the West contributed to industrial change in Africa. He alludes to Water Rodney whom he claims was concerned about how Europe retarded Africa's development, asking rather rhetorically, 'But is there not another big story – the story of how

Africa accelerated Europe's development? Did not Rodney also contribute to this second debate? Especially in Chapters III and V of his book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. This is Mazrui's argument in the introductory paragraph of his article, *From Slave to Space Ship: Africa between Marginalization and Globalization*. It is characteristically his approach to scholarly engagement of the Western world on African affairs.

His *Annual Newsletter* is another piece of evidence in support of the nature of his scholarship. This researcher has thought it appropriate to instance one edition of the highly influential publication. The general theme of the issue in question is 'On Boundaries and the Bloodline' and the focus is entirely on African affairs. The table of contents comprises the following: Family Bloodline: Death, Rebirth and Beyond; A Centennial of Excellence; Africa's Dynasties of the Muse; Libya; Between Pan Africanism and Pan Arabism; Nkumba, Harvard, and the House of Lords; Between Tutu and the Tutsi; Crossing Boundaries in Nigeria; Nigeria, Religion and I, From Robert Mugabe to the Washington Summit; and Between the Personal and the Princely: A Conclusion. This is how Ali Mazrui's 36-page Annual Newsletter makes Africa the centre of its scholarly engagement. The issue referenced here, which is Number 25, is not an exception in this regard as all the earlier and subsequent issues variously address African questions in global perspectives. It is of great value to note that Mazruina, a term by which the corpus associated with Mazrui is known, is not without its distinct features among which are its various components which are essentially political, historical, and cultural. However, Mazruina is not without some hidden components that are somewhat characterized by obscurity. The official closing remarks at the Ali Mazrui International Symposium held at the Southern Sun, Westlands, Nairobi on July 16, 2016, was very close to engaging somewhat indirectly with the hidden components of Mazrui's scholarship, through the chairman's disclosure that,

For me, Ali Mazrui's stature rests on several extraordinary achievements, three of which I would like to single out. First, there was his prodigious volume of scholarship: he published more than 30 books, hundreds of essays, commentaries, and film documentaries. Second, the range, probity, and impact of his intellectual analyses, interventions, and debates. Mazrui embodied the life of the public intellectual par excellence. He was a towering intellect who moved seamlessly between the classroom, conference circuit, popular media, corporate boardroom, to the corridors of political power. He relished intellectual debate and combat because he believed in the power of ideas as a dynamic force in human history. Third, his unflinching commitment to repositioning Africa's global position and the place of African scholarship in global scholarship. He did this by unapologetically remapping and inserting Africa in global history, developments, and discourses, and through scholarship that was capacious in its interdisciplinarity, internationalism, and interculturalism.

The most salient aspect of Salem's submission lies in his words 'interdisciplinarity, internationalism, and interculturalism'. The hidden components may be characterized as subsumed under these three inter-related terms. Among such hidden elements are the educational components which constitute the focus of what follows.

Educational Components of Mazrui's Scholarship:

It will be recalled that Akoda (2015) was quoted earlier in this paper as having correlated the appellation 'Multiple Mazrui' earned by the world-class African scholar to the multidimensional nature of his scholarship. However, this paper has demonstrated that although Mazrui is deserving of such an ennobling title, his multidimensional scholarship has always focused on Africa in a global context. This position finds support in both the open and hidden components of his scholarship. While the open components have received scholarly attention among scholars across the years, the hidden components have not received enough exposure let alone any considerable

scholarly attention. In his ‘Ali Mazrui, 1933 to 2014: A Tribute’, published in *The Premium Times* on October 14, 2014, Toyin Falola, seems to have unconsciously offered an insight into some aspects of the education component of Mazrui’s scholarship, saying ‘Mazrui’s intellectual assembly was a combination of the plurality of issues, the plurality of subjects, the plurality of perspectives, and the plurality of languages. But that plurality of languages was enfolded in what I have identified as the recourse to orality, the constant references to fragmented histories and memory’. However, what was stated by Falola but can not be easily intelligible or discernible to some later found a better expression in Horace Campbell’s Keynote Address at the Ali Mazrui International Symposium in Nairobi in 2016 where he underscores ‘Mazrui’s immense contributions to the demanding pan-African project of dismantling the epistemic architecture of Eurocentric education and knowledge systems through transformative education and reparative justice.’

However, it is noteworthy that Mazrui was not alone in the pan-African project targeted in part at the enthronement of the Afrocentric system of education. This story cannot be complete without reference to a number of notable African leaders and nationalists. Infact, what was later known as the pan-African project has been aptly described as ‘the struggle for an African developmental university’ (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017: 43). The struggle was intended to culminate in the formulation of a new philosophy of higher education grounded in African historical, cultural, social and ideological foundations, in a manner capable of facilitating a structural rethinking and redefinition of the role of the university. Why the need for decolonization and Africanisation was generally felt, albeit to varied degrees, among those involved in the struggle, there was a concern over the disparity between the sophisticated standards already set in the West and the African peculiarities with regard to the quality and social function of the university. Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire articulated some aspects of such concern where he states:



We need to emancipate the educational system in the Congo from the Western model by going back to the Authenticity while paying due attention to scientific knowledge. I have always thought it inappropriate for us to train our youth as if they were Westerners. It would be more desirable to have an educational system which shapes the youth according to our requirements. That would make them authentically Congolese. Their ideas, reasoning and actions would be Congolese, and they would see the future in Congolese terms (Mkandawire, 2005: 23).

According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2017), Mobutu Sese Seko was associated with the African ideology known as ‘Authenticite’ which is all about abandoning the use of European names as part of the national project of Africanisation. Ndlovu-Gatsheni alludes to a speech delivered by Mobutu Sese Seko at Leopold Sedar Senghor’s seventieth birthday celebrations, where he (Mobutu) distinguished between his own idea authenticity and Senghor’s negritude. ‘While negritude was a rebellion against the arrogance of the French colonisers, authenticity was a rebellion against one’s own dependency and imitateness’, Mobutu Sese Seko declared. In a similar token, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania also expresses some concern over the idea of African university. ‘There are two possible dangers facing a university in a developing nation: the danger of blindly adoring mythical ‘international standards’ which may cast a shadow on national development objectives, and the danger of forcing our university to look inward and isolate itself from the world’ (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017:43). Nyerere’s line of thinking becomes more intelligible where he correlates the role of the university to national development, saying:

For twentieth century nationalism is part of a social revolution; an essential part of the development of man as a human being whose freedom depends on his equal membership of the world. Modern nationalism is necessary humanitarian and international; it is therefore incompatible with racialism. One of the basic tasks of this University is to make this truth an instinctive part of our

nationalist expression (Nyerere, 1966 cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017).

It is rather paradoxical that such African leaders as quoted above and their counterparts in other African countries showed appreciable enthusiasm about the Africanisation project which they urged African intellectuals to contribute to, while they demonstrated 'disdain for African intellectuals by inviting foreigners as close advisers'. Relying on Mkandawire (2005), Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2017) offers offers a clear portrait of how Nyerere surrounded himself with foreign 'Fabian socialists' in contrast to Tanzanian intellectuals and how Keneth Kaunda of Zambia made John Hatch his closest intellectual associate and even made him first director of the Institute for Humanism, as well as of how Nkrumah himself favoured foreign pan-Africanists like George Padmore and Williams E.B. Dubois who were his closest intellectual associates (p. 43).

Kamuzu Banda of Malawi went far beyond the level of surrounding himself with Western intellectuals. What he did was to import the West into Africa! Nyamnjoh (2011:146) captures it most graphically:

In a BBC television documentary broadcast at 9:30pm, Tuesday September 8, 1987, Malawi was singled out as an example of a country which had established a school that resembled Eton of England. The school, named Kamuzu Academy, was situated in the Kasungu District in the Central Region of Malawi, President Banda;s home area. This school, nicknamed by some critics 'Eton of the Bush', was built in 1981 and imported allits education equipment from the UK and South Africa. When the school was short of chemicals or other equipment, those concerned had to drive for at least five hundred miles to acquire new ones. This school has cost no less than 15 million British pounds to build, and needed no less than 1 million British pounds a year to run. The students whose table manners would put many a working class Briton to shame, were made to believe that no one is truly educated unless s/he is knows

something about the ancient world which should not be mistaken to mean the ancestral world of the African (pregnant with primitive savagery and to be treated with disdain), but the world of Julius Caesar, Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, and other founding fathers of Western intellectual traditions.

While all these African leaders claim to be favourably disposed to the African project in the struggle for an African developmental university, they arguably failed to walk the talk, by showing disdain to African intellectuals, as demonstrated earlier. The disconnect between their claim and their action may have informed Mazrui's argument that 'Firstly, a university has to be politically distant from the state; secondly, a university has also to be culturally close to society; and thirdly, a university has to be intellectually linked to wider scholarly and scientific values of the world of learning' (Mazrui, 2003: 141). This way, Mazrui's thought seems to have addressed all the concerns raised by the various African leaders. Nkrumah's notoriety in interfering with university autonomy and academic freedom in Ghana eloquently explains why a university has to be politically distant from the state. Similarly, Kamuzu Banda's 'importation' of Eton to Malawi and its ridiculous aftermath clearly underscores the need for the university to be culturally close to the society. Similarly also and most importantly, Julius Nyerere's concern over the possible danger of 'forcing our university to look inward and isolate itself from the world' has been taken care of by Mazrui's proposed intellectual linkage of the African university to wider scholarly and scientific value of the world of learning'. The sophisticated nature of Mazrui's intervention in this regards speaks volumes about the stuff he was made of.

What is there in the West that African universities cannot do without? Nyamnjoh (2011) attempts an answer to this salient question by likening the value of education in Africa to soft currencies of the continent. 'Just as the most stable of these currencies are pecked and used for taking nosedives in relation to the hard currencies of the

West over the years, so has the value of education on the continent. And just as African presidents prefer to beg and bank in foreign currencies – ignoring even banknotes that bear their own faces and stamp of omnipotence, so is their preference for Western intellectual expert over locally produced expertise’ (p. 144). Mazrui (2003) argues that this trend is surreptitiously promoted under the guise of lack of an internationally competitive intellectual environment which is why ‘the practice since independence has been to model education in Africa after educational institutions in the West, with each country drawing from the institutions of its immediate past coloniser and/or the USA’ (Nyamnjoh, 2011: 144). According to Mazrui (2001), the African elites have, ‘often in unabashed imitativeness’, and with little attempt at domestication, sought to reproduce, even without the finance to sustain, the Oxfords, Cambridges, Harvards, Stanfords, and Sorbonnes of England, the USA, and France’ (p. 39). It is easily derivable from Mazrui’s analysis that the educational climate in Africa was not really favourable to the enthronement of an Afrocentric education system.

Mazrui connects the economic problem in Africa to education where he emphasised the need for cultural re-adjustment rather than cultural adjustment (Mazrui, 2002). He argues that the re-adjustment in culture is a better balance between continuities of African culture and Africa’s borrowing from Western culture. To demonstrate his line of argument, Mazrui states that ‘until now, Africa has borrowed Western tastes without Western skills, Western consumption patterns without Western production techniques, urbanisation without industrialization, secularisation (the erosion of religion) without scientification’ (p. 17). ‘Would Africa have been better off if it had retained its own tastes while borrowing Western skills? Would Africa have been better off with African consumption patterns and Western production techniques, instead of the other way round? Mazrui queried. The issues raised by Mazrui in this connection comprise change in attitude, acquisition of skills, value reorientation, and cultural redirection. Given that they are all function of education, it

follows in simple logic that Mazrui is interrogative of the system of education obtainable in Africa, especially with regard to the question of relevance to African peculiarities. Incidentally, most of the education-related issues he alludes to, in passing, in the foregoing have been addressed by him more eloquently in his *Political Values and Educated Class in Africa* (1978) which may be described as his magnum opus, on education, as will be demonstrated later in this paper.

He engages with the sociological foundations of education where he articulates what a society is expected to do in order to develop a university with potential to develop the society itself. He identifies academic freedom and an unrestricted flourishing of intellectualism but places a high premium on investment of resources in the university in a manner capable of ensuring high quality of academic recruitment and high quality of retention of staff and students. He further emphasise the importance of resources to high quality curriculum development and high quality research and general development. He grounds his position in the argument that ‘students and staff are human beings whose motivation and sense of commitment needs to be sustained by a system of rewards and recognition’ (Mazrui, 2003: 139). Mazrui is not favourably disposed to the pervasive disregard for educational accountability that characterises the greater part of the educational sector in Africa. According to him, grades should be a true reflection of students’ achievements in the same manner that promotion should be a true measure of staff performance. He clamours for adequate attention to education at various levels and argues that tertiary education cannot be effective in the face of substandard primary and secondary education systems. ‘There cannot be an excellent university without academic excellence at the pre-university level. That, according to Mazrui, explains why ‘quality of education at the primary and secondary levels needs to be sustained if the final candidates for possible admission to the universities are to be of high standard’ (p. 140). There have been critical engagements, especially by Aliet

(2007: 1-14) with Mazrui on some of his views on education especially where he discusses cultural autonomy in the face of borrowed languages, the Africanisation of the African university, the strategy of diversification, the strategy of counter-penetration, as well as wider strategies of change. However, it is noteworthy that there has not been any contradiction to his ideas on the ideal linkages among the various levels of education, as enumerated in the foregoing. It is therefore of great value to subject to searchlight at this juncture, specific education-based ideas and ideals promoted by Mazrui in Mazruiana.

The Educational Ideas and Ideals Promoted by Mazrui:

An unmistakable common denominator in Mazrui's scholarship is his unveiled aversion to blind imitation and sheepish followership of Africa to the Western world. He casts a comparative look at the westernization of Africa and the modernization of Japan and argues that rather than emphasising western productive technology and reducing western lifestyles and verbal culture, Africa reversed the Japanese order of emphasis by embracing westernization so uncritically through western life-styles devoid of western technology or productive skills. He holds African university systems responsible for this in view of their colonial origin and European traditions which make African universities among the major instruments and vehicles of cultural westernization on the continent' (Mazrui, 2003: 141).

This educational question has been of concern to Mazrui right from the early stage of his academic career. For instance, in his first book, *Towards a Pax Africana*, (1963), he examines the problem of Africa's dependency on the Western world and articulates the need for Africans to be less dependent on others and take charge of their own affairs. He is of the view that development cannot materialise in Africa unless she becomes less dependent. According to him, development is modernisation minus dependency and argues that an effective way of minimising dependency is indigenisation which he describes as the embrace of indigenous techniques, personnel and approaches to purposeful change (Mazrui, 2000). He elaborated upon

his view in this regard, saying, ‘...indigenised modernisation would include the greater use of African languages in the pursuit of scientific, economic and constitutional change...no country had ascended to a first rank technological and economic power through the excessive dependence on foreign languages’ (p. 73).

Mazrui (1978: 16) sees Western education in the African context as a ‘process of psychological de-ruralization owing to the fact that the educated African became...a misfit in his own village...when he graduated...and his parents did not expect him to continue living with them, tending the cattle or cultivating the land’. According to Woolman (2001), that is the nature of colonial education which is known for undermining traditional societies on the one hand by introducing an individualistic Eurocentric value system that was alien to African communal mores and, on the other hand by isolating students from their local communities (p. 29). Relying on Busia (1964), Woolman recalls how schools in Ghana ‘separated students from the life and needs of their community and adds that the colonial education promoted imperial domination and economic exploitation which is instrumental to several challenges on the African continent such as cultural and intellectual servitude, social stratification, devaluation of traditional culture as well as educational experience that lacks functionalism in view of its irrelevant to the needs of society. (p. 29). According to Woolman, one social observer, B.S. Kwakwa (cited by Bray, Clark and Stephens in Nwomonoh, 1998: 265) commented on the Western schooling in Africa, saying that, ‘The effect of the Western type of education has been to produce...three nations in one country, each unable to communicate effectively with the others...the ‘educate’...many who do not understand the way of the ‘educated’...then...a third group, the ‘half educated’ who understand neither the way of their own indigenous society nor those of the highly ‘educate’ (p. 29). However, some African scholars maintain that it was the extraverted nature of African education in general that cleared the coast for the

advancement of the Western knowledge industry (Fonlon, 1967; Chinweizu, 1987; Mudimbe, 1988; Schipper, 1990; Ngugi waa Thong'o, 1977; Mbebe, 2000). According to Nyamnjoh (2011: 139), such African scholars argue that African education created an ample chance for the Western intellectual tradition and practitioners to write themselves into the past, present and future of Africa as civilisers, saviours, initiators, mentors, and arbiters. Consequently, they dominated and controlled the entire education space on the continent. Mazrui (1978) was quick to raise the alarm having realised early enough the potential threat of neo-colonial cultural dependency to what Woolman describes as 'African psychological autonomy and sovereignty'. Mazrui opines that 'Very few educated Africans are even aware that they are also in cultural bondage...as ...all educated Africans are still cultural captives of the West' (p. 13). Mazrui's educational thought in this regard finds a better expression in Woolman (2001) who describes traditional education as an organic process that bears no disconnect whatsoever between activities and desired outcomes. Woolman alludes to the ideal of communal participation as having been 'reinforced by immersion in traditions through dance, song, and story, involvement with learning groups, exposure to cooperative work, and ancestor spirit worship that cemented kinship ties and obligation' (p. 30). The 'ancestor spirit worship that cemented kinship ties and obligation' is much likely to have posed a threat to Mazrui's Muslim belief system. However, this subject cannot be addressed in details, in the present paper.

Woolman was meticulous enough to have noticed Mazrui (1978: 18)'s favourable disposition to the need for young Africans to 'struggle to conquer African self-contempt' which is a product of psychological engagement with Euro-centricism. Woolman sees Mazrui as much concerned about the possibility of Africa's 'return to traditional values without sacrificing any possibility of a scientific and technological revolution' (p, 36). Consequently, Mazru offers an ameliorative proposal of 'Africanising the humanities while boosting technical and vocational training'. Woolman (2001), infact, deserves



plaudits for exposing us to an equally creative educational proposal where he writes:

A more radical plan is favoured by Unwuachi (1972:10) who thinks that 'black cultural objectives can never be obtained by using...white European standardised educational processes....Western culture as motivated by individualism, economic expediency, self-interest and 'superego' principles is incompatible with the African emphasis on collective life, economic communalism, resource-sharing, and group obligation. He calls for a new departure in African education to build community values, strengthen the family, teach ethical standards, promote health, and develop capacity to achieve the basic needs of security and human welfare. (p. 32).

What Woolman articulates above is no more than a call to what Mazrui and Tidy (1984: 298) describe as 'cultural decolonisation...which is more fundamental than many have assumed. Yet cultural imperialism 'obscures awareness', making it the most dangerous form of colonialism'. Chaba (2002) captures the essence of the African experience most graphically where he remarks that, 'it is a painful legacy of Western civilization that whatever comes from there is the best. This myth is reinforced by tailoring its educational, cultural and social values to Europeanise and de-Africanise the African via European languages and culture' (p. 32). For the wheel to come full circle, both the educational problem in Africa and its possible interventions may be recapitulated below in the words of Mazrui:

African universities have been the highest transmitters of Western culture in African societies. The high priests of Western civilization in the continent are virtually all products of those cultural seminaries called 'universities'. On balance, the African university is caught up in the tension between its ambition to promote genuine development in Africa and its continuing role in the consolidation of cultural dependency. If genuine development has to include cultural decolonisation, a basic contradiction



persists in the ultimate functions of an African university. It may generate skills relevant for modernisation and development. But it has not even begun to acquire, let alone to transmit to others, what is perhaps the most fundamental skill of them all – how to promote development in a post-colonial state without consolidating the structures of dependency inherited from its imperial past. If development for Africa means decolonisation of modernity, then some major strategies are needed for African development – two of them are capable of rapid implementation, while others are for slower but sustained introduction. The first strategy concerns domestication of modernity: the bid to relate it more firmly to local cultural and economic needs. The second strategy is paradoxical. It involves the wider diversification of the cultural content of modernity. Under this approach, the foreign reference-group for an African institution becomes not only the West but also other non-African civilizations. The African university is thus to be transformed from a multinational to a multicultural corporation. The third strategy is perhaps the most ambitious. It concerns an attempt by the African continent as a whole to counter-penetrate western civilization itself (p. 148).

The above are Mazrui's educational ideas and ideals. How consistent are these views with the professional scholarship of education? Are Mazrui's views intelligible to scholars and researchers in the educational parlance? What is the implication of Mazrui's educational thought for development in Africa or, better, *African Renaissance*? These are the concerns addressed in what follows.

Situating Mazrui's Educational Thought in the Scholarship of Education:

The unfavourable educational experience in Africa, as captured in Mazrui's scholarship which was exposed earlier, has probably provided an athlete for active engagement in educational discourse which, according to Higgs, is "founded on the perception that the overall character of much of educational theory and practice in the

investigation of the educational components in Africa is overwhelmingly either European or Eurocentric” (2003). Relying on Teffo (2000), Vilakazi (2000) and Seepe (2001), Higgs argues that substantial part of what is regarded as education in Africa “is in fact not African” (p.7). Higgs also associates with the phenomenal efforts of such advocates of African Renaissance in educational discourse subsequent contributions of such scholars as Hoppers (1999; 2001a, 2001b, 2001c) and Sepee (2001a, 2001b) who are in the vanguard of “the call for the recognition of indigenous knowledge systems by scholar” (p. 7). The meeting point between the indigenous knowledge systems and Afrocentric education system seems to have found a better expression in the words of Waghid (2004:56) who argues that “if someone hopes to understand the experiences and conditions of African communities, then one firstly needs to practice a philosophy of education” which he interprets as “related to modes of thought and action which make education what it is”. There has been a critical engagement with the interplay of the two by notable African scholars in the field of education (Asante, 1988, 1990; Fajana, 1986; Boateng, 1990; Oladipo, 1992; Higgs, 1994a, 1994b, 1999; Emagalit, 2001; Wiredu, 2004; Wyk 2014; Forster, 2010; Shockley 2007; 2010, 2011; Ramose; 2003; Nakata, 2012; Horsthemke, 2008; Vilakazi, 2000; Le Roux, 2000; and Higgs & Van Niekerk, 2002; Ramose, 2004, 2016; Waghid, 2016).

The foregoing exposes the problem area identified by Mazrui with regard to the deep incursion of the African educational systems into the life-styles of local societies, for better or for worse Mazrui, 2003). According to him, ‘in the very process of producing educated manpower, creating new forms of stratification, accelerating Westernisation and modernization, African educational institutions have been major instruments through which the Western world has affected and changed the continent’ (p. 148). Mazrui (2003) seems to agree with Higgs (2001) and Waghid (2004) where he proffers solution to this educational challenge by insisting that ‘African societies must be allowed fundamentally to influence the educational

systems themselves'. He rationalizes that 'it is not enough for an African university to send a travelling theatre to perform a play by Shakespeare or even by the Nigerian playwright, Wole Soyinka, before rural audiences in different villages'. He admits that such an undertaking is required and has the potential to deepen the life experiences of folk communities in the villages, but maintains that the travelling theatre of an African university is one more form of academic impact on the wider society but 'does not by itself constitute a reverse flow of influence' (p. 149). It is interesting to note that what Waghid (2004) offers through his view that understanding the experiences and conditions of African communities, requires an engagement with African philosophy of education as it relates to modes of thought and action which make education what it is, finds a better expression in Mazrui (2003) who rationalises that the first task in decolonizing modernity is to seek cultural nearness to African society and to enable the influence of the local society to balance that of the Western reference group. To achieve this in the university settings, Mazrui opines that four major areas have to be examined afresh namely 'the requirements for admission of students, the content of courses throughout the educational system, the criteria for recruitment of teachers and other staff, and the general structure of the educational system' (p. 149). The foregoing fits well into the thinking of Nkoane (2005:50), who sees Afrocentric education is a process that seeks to foster in its learners "an African consciousness and behavioural orientation which will optimize the positive expression of African learners' fundamental humanity and ability to contribute significantly to the growth and development of the African Community of which an African learner is a member". Alluding to Makgoha (1998), Nkoane further beams an illuminating light on the essence of Afrocentric education which, in his own words, "is a process or vehicle for defining, interpreting, promoting, and transmitting African thought, philosophy, identity and culture. It encompasses an African mind-set that permeates all sectors in society as they are influenced by (an



Africanised) education apparatus” (p.50). This line of argument strengthens Mazrui’s view that university admission requirements should tilt favourably towards certain subjects of indigenous relevance and that a pass in an African language should be an admission requirement. Mazrui maintains that there were times when many African universities stated some level of competence in Latin as an entry requirement into some faculties and now wonder a Modern African university should not require ‘competence, formally demonstrated in an examination of at least one African language regardless of the subject that the student proposes to study once admitted’ (p. 150).

Mazrui and Tidy (1984), as noted earlier, exposed the danger of the pervasive tailoring of the African educational, cultural and social value systems towards the Europeanisation and de-Africanisation of the African via European languages and culture. Chacha (2002) expresses some concern over the promotion and support for the acquisition and imitation of these languages which was made a status symbol. According to him, those who acquired these foreign languages looked down upon and even despised those who did not. ‘They identified more with the colonisers, as they out-did each other in speaking the foreign tongue with eloquence. This had to do with maintaining intercourse with the masters and by securing the opportunities availed by such knowledge’ (p, 32). In order to drive his point home, Chacha (2002) alludes to Emerson (1962:136) who opines that ‘The imperial languages were of course tied to the prestige system of the white since the Whiteman, with the partial exception of the missionary and the scholar, generally learned the local languages as an act of grace or better to rule or trade with the subordinate peoples where it was assumed that the native who wanted to advance must rise to the level of foreign language’.

Concerning the fostering of African unity through language(s), Mwalimu Nyerere would always be remembered for his rejection of Eurocentricity and fostered a national unity and identity by promoting Kiswahili as the national and official language. He

navigated a good way for the advancement of Kiswahili in East and Central Africa. Nyerere's rationale was that with good reason, 'Kiswahili could promote African unity as was the case in Tanzania (Chacha, 2002: 34). Pursuant to Nyerere's effort, when Mazrui was invited to address the OAU at Addis Ababa, he insisted on making his presentation in Kiswahili. However, there was a major setback at the session in Addis Ababa, when it turned out that there was no translator for Kiswahili and there was no switch button engaged for one of Africa's most widely spoken languages' (Nyamnjoh, 2011). Mazrui felt fulfilled that he made a significant statement through his insistence on the use of Kiswahili at such a big forum and even felt more fulfilled over the embarrassment caused to the Heads of State through such a singular act. 'You need to see how the Heads of State were bewildered, but I had passed my message across', Mazrui remarked.

The inevitability of embracing the African system of education in Africa and its Diaspora has been expressed by various African leaders and thinkers. For instance, Julius Nyerere advocates a re-education of "ourselves, to regain our former attitude of mind" (p.14) while Sekou Toure insists that "we must Africanise our education and get rid of the negative features and misconceptions inherited from an educational system designed to serve colonial purposes" (p.13) whereas Kwame Nkruma rationalizes that for the African intelligentsia and intellectuals to feature and function in the African Revolution, they must cut "themselves free from bourgeois attitudes and ideologies imbibed as a result of colonialist education and propaganda" (p.14). The views of these great Africans are buttressed by yet another African mind, Frantz Fanon who maintains that "every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality, finds itself face to face with the ...culture of the mother country" (p.18). This view is probably articulated better by Ngugi wa Thiong'o who believes that the colonial system of education takes us "further and further from ourselves to other selves, from our world to other

worlds” (p.15). However, Afrocentric education which is the instrument through which the production or training of the African may take place in the African context, has not materialized as yet, for it can only materialize if education addresses the challenge of creating a mindset shift from Westoxicated orientation to an African paradigm (Nkoane, 2006: 50). One of the major ingredients for the facilitation of such a mindset shift in Africa is indigenous knowledge (Sisebo, 2012). This is the implication of Mazrui’s educational strategy of domestication.

The need for indigenous orientation in Afrocentric education has been emphasized in the research literature (Leifer, 1969; Ki-Zerbo, 1990; Magubane, 1999; Mahlomaholo, 1998; 2004; Makgoba, 1998; Mamdani, 1999; Nkoane, 2002; Ntuli, 1999; Odora-Hoppers, 2002; Maurial, 1999; Mwadime, 1999; Bangura, 2005; Nkoane, 2006; Sisebo, 2012). There is hardly a cultural setting without some elements of indigenous knowledge or education. In his doctoral thesis, Sisebo (2012) demonstrates how “the emergence of indigenous knowledge in the academic was triggered by ethnographic studies conducted in nation-states that were once colonized by Europeans during their expansionist agenda” (pp. 49-50). Such studies revealed that before the advent of colonial masters, some local people sustained themselves better when they owned locally developed knowledge than was the case after the colonial era” (p.50). Alluding to Thomson (2003), Sisebo (2012) illustrates with the experience of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, formerly Zaire) which witnessed “a downturn in its capacity to produce cereals due to the disruption of colonialism” (p.50). The DRC was later to experience a situation where its “local people’s cereal civilization became almost dysfunctional and people could no longer sustain their food requirements” (p. 50).

Consequently, Sisebo argues that Thomson’s (2003) and other critical anthropological studies of similar nature have found that “reverting to the use of some indigenous knowledge and practices, that sustained people many years before colonization was a gateway



to revamping some colonial country's ailing sustainable living systems among indigenous people" (p.50). This growing thinking or rethinking has culminated in the shift of the pendulum of scholarly discourses or debates at local, regional and global levels, to the indigenous knowledge question. An informetric analysis of indigenous knowledge by Ocholla and Onyancha (2005) revealed a rapid growth in the literature on indigenous knowledge in the form of journal articles already published in most databases during the period from 1990 to 2005, thereby suggesting a growing nostalgia for indigenous knowledge (Sisebo, 2012).

However, most of the earlier contributions in the question of indigenous knowledge demonstrated a high tendency of promoting the perception that indigenous knowledge is a body of oral knowledge that "has sustained people who have solely relied on oral transmission of such knowledge for all their survival until they were colonized and introduced to the world of print and education" (Sisebo, 2012:50). Mazrui identified the leader of the negritude movement in Africa, Leopold Senghor, former President of Senegal, as one of the African leaders who meant well but erred in their reaction against the Westernisation. Senghor's definition of negritude is 'the sum of African cultural values informed by their emotive attitude toward the world' (Senghor, 1965: 35 cited in Mazrui, 2003). Other African leaders embraced Marxism as an alternative to Westernisation probably owing to their perception that it offers Africans the much required chance to break out in rebellion against the West without necessarily losing a scientific orientation. To such African leaders, and most of the earlier quoted African nationalists belong here, 'the Marxist heritage was a scientific critique of the West' (Mazrui, 2003:155). According to Mazrui, these two African-based reactions against Westernisation represent the major forces in operation in Africa. 'The negritudist rebels against the scientific West by idealizing his own heritage; the African Marxist rebels against the West by embracing an alternative scientism' (p. 155).

Criticised and characterized as an intellectual primitivist who has restricted the African modes of knowledge to the Affective domain and portrayed the history of Africa as a story of the Noble Savage, Senghor was quick to deny any attempt by him to strip the African of his great potential for creativity and innovation. He rationalizes: *It is a fact that there is a white European civilization and a black African civilization. The question is to explain their differences and the reasons for these differences which my opponents have not yet done. I can refer them back to their authorities. 'Reason has always existed', wrote Marx to Arnold Ruge, 'but not always under the rational form'...Two kinds of experience...one exterior, material; the other, interior; laws of thought and forms of thinking. Forms of thinking also partly transmitted by heredity. A mathematical axiom is self-evident to a European, but not to a Bushman or an Australian aboriginal'* (Senghor, 1965: 38).

Senghor's view as represented above exposes where lies the rationale for Mazrui's second educational strategy namely the strategy of diversification. He sees cultural as a potential benefit of the exchange between Senghor and his critics among African intellectuals but remarks that such a cultural pluralism which really lies behind the scientific heritage of is lost to the young Africans 'who continue to be dazzled at a formative period by Western civilization alone'. Accordingly, Mazrui emphasizes the need for secondary school curricula in Africa to put science in its proper historical context , reveal the diversity of human heritage, and break the dangerous myth of Western scientific pre-eminence'. Mazrui returns to the question of language teaching in African primary and secondary schools by emphasizing the need for each African child to to learn a minimum of three languages – one European, one Asian and one African, thereby embracing a shift from the pervasive practice of exposing the African student to the learning of three European languages - some ancient and some modern – while other linguistic heritages of the world are ignored' (Mazrui, 2003:156).



What Mazrui's educational strategy of diversification really means is self-explanatory in his own words. The educational system in Africa shall become multicultural rather than remain multinational. Such a noble objective of becoming multicultural requires more than a combination of African traditions and Western heritage. It indeed requires a decisive attention to the cultures and experiments of other civilizations, This way, the African educational system shall not be interested in only an admixture of European history and African history but spreads its academic tentacles in order to beam its searchlight unto Indian civilizations, Chinese civilizations, and Islamic civilizations which he describes as most immediate to Africa, of all other civilizations. Closely related to this is Mazrui's observation that, 'although Arabic is the most widely spoken language in the African continent, the language has received very little acknowledgement in the educational syllabi of Africa south of the Sahara'. It has not even received recognition from countries bordering Arabic-speaking areas, or with large numbers of Muslims among their own citizens'. Mazrui has articulated this concern more succinctly where he offers specific examples to drive home his point:

The Muslim community in Nigeria runs into millions, and the bordering countries contain millions more, yet Nigeria's universities once favoured Latin and Greek rather than Arabic studies. As for Chinese studies, there is at most some interest in Mao Tse-tung in political science departments these days, but still no interest in Confucius. Mao's China is relevant not only to ideology and economic organization but also to intermediate technology, medicine and new methods of agriculture. A conscious effort to learn more about what is done in China since Mao, and an attempt to see how much of it is relevant for African needs could help to add technical richness to cultural pluralism. A multicultural corporation requires not only a revival of interest in African indigenous traditions, but also a cultural diversification of the foreign components in African curricula. A

twin process is then underway: increased Africanisation, as the society is permitted to reciprocate the impact of the university; and increased internationalization as the foreign component ceases to be Euro-centric and attention is paid to other parts of the total human heritage (Mazrui, 2003: 154).

It is worthy of note that some of the useful ideas offered by Mazrui are already being implemented across educational settings in Africa. For instance, the University of Lagos in Ngeria and few other institutions of learning in Africa, have established Centres for Confucius Learning. This serves as evidence of Mazrui's intellectual influence on education in the continent.

Mazrui's third educational strategy, the strategy of counter-penetration, is intended complete the process of Africanisation of education in the context of globalization. He posits that both the first and the second strategy namely domestication and diversification will not fulfil their purposes without 'reversing the flow of influence back into Western civilization itself. He argues that the domestication strategy alone may imply a withdrawal from the world culture and ultimately promote the continuing marginality of Africa in global affairs. To him, such a line of action 'would be a counsel not only of despair but also of dangerous futility'. According to him, 'modernity is here to stay; the task is to decolonize it' in the face of the fast-evolving world culture. Mazrui identifies the challenge of saving modernity from Eurocentricism and thinks of how such a challenge is to be combated. 'This is where the strategy of counter-penetration is relevant. If African cultures have been penetrated so deeply by the West, how is Western culture to be reciprocally penetrated by Africa', Mazrui queried. He opines that the West has not escaped from Africa's cultural influence and substantiates this with the argument that 'it has been estimated that the first piece of carving by an African to reach modern Europe arrived on a Portuguese trading ship in 1954. African workmanship in leather and probably gold had much older presence in Europe' (p. 158). Mazrui



articulates his counter-penetration strategy more eloquently where he writes:

Africa's cultural influence on the West has been for more modest than the West's influence on Africa. This asymmetry will continue for at least the rest of this century, but the gap in reciprocity can be narrowed. To achieve this, Africa will need allies. The continent's most natural allies consist of of the Black Diaspora and the Arab World.. The Arabs share a continent with black people. Indeed, the majority of the Arabs are within Africa; so is the bulk of Arab land. Black and African states share the Organisation of African Unity. The organization and the Arab League have overlapping membership. There are possibilities of exploiting this relationship to the mutual advantage of both peoples (p. 158).

However, Mazrui's educational views have not always gone without some measure of criticism or attempted deflation. There are several instances of this. However, Aliet (2007) seems to be more scholarly and more constructive than others in his critical and somewhat uncompromising engagement with Mazrui's educational views. His scholarly exchange with Mazrui on education in Africa is therefore worthy of attention, at this juncture. For instance, he rejects Mazrui's domestication strategy on the grounds that the underpinning culture in the African society is western and 'to make the university a centre for the perpetuation of African culture in such a Western environment, where success is judged by western standards, and where ninety-nine percent of books in University libraries are 'western' would be incongruous and misdirected' (Aliet, 2007: 3). In the opinion of this writer, Aliet argument in this regard has failed to show sufficient evidence of his grasp of Masrui's domestication strategy, as some of the concerns raised by him have been addressed by Mazrui, albeit inadequately. However, his claim that Mazrui erroneously treats African culture as a homogeneous, concrete collective, is not without some merit. He is at his best where he argues that 'in Kenya alone, there are over thirty tribes, each with its



own set of cultural beliefs and practices' as the only unifying element across them is western religion: Christianity, or Islam'. If Aliet had illustrated with the Nigerian experience where there are over three hundred ethnic groups, the cultural domestication strategy of Mazrui would probably have diminished in strength albeit without losing its merit. Consequently, Aliet offers 'glocalization strategy' as a credible alternative to Mazrui's 'domestication strategy', arguing that the difference between the two is that 'glocalizing leaves the arena for the preservation of local traditions out of the educational institutions' (p. 7).

Aliet also rejects Mazrui's diversification strategy by arguing that what Africans need to do is not to introduce a competing culture but to surpass western intellects in the mastery of western science and out-innovate them as the world gets 'flatter'....Asian countries do not teach Swahili, Wolof or other African languages, Why do Africans need to teach Asian languages in African schools. What economic or cultural gain can Kenyans for example acquire by learning Hindi in the interestingly highly westernized society (p. 10). Aliet's critique of Mazrui's idea of diversification is a brilliant attempt with potential to stimulate both intellectual curiosity and further research. This is in view of the strengths of both Mazrui's idea and his own criticism thereof. While Aliet's criticisms are arguably considerable in connection with domestication and diversification, it is interesting that Mazrui's counter-penetration strategy proves impregnable in the face of his attempted deflation. Aliet seems to have admitted this rather unconsciously where he writes, 'it is true that full maturity of African educational experience will come when Africa develops capability to innovate and invent independently', however, is is a bit limiting to seek 'reciprocal penetration' from a cultural angle only' (p. 12). Aliet's further attempt at deflating or deconstructing Mazrui on this subject proves rather inpotent as it seems bereft of substance. Yet, he deserves plaudits for such a critical engagement with Mazrui's educational though has greatly improved our understanding of the subject.



Nonetheless, we should not lose sight of the focus of the present discourse which concerns the potential of indigenous knowledge system to development in Africa.

In dispelling the expectation that indigenous knowledge should remain “exclusively historical” owing to its oral nature and transmission from adults to younger generations, Sisebo relies on Reynar (1999), in arguing that “indigenous knowledge has kept evolving and improving to the extent that the past two decades have noted an increase in indigenous knowledge systems” which is why there is a positive attitude towards it as having “the capacity for adaptation” (p. 50). A clear picture of the positive attitude to indigenous knowledge has been created in Sisebo’s doctoral thesis where he writes that:

The International Council for Science (ICSU) recognizes the value of indigenous knowledge of the local peoples of the world. Today, this international science organization agrees that some of the science contributing like classification of animals was partly adapted and adopted from indigenous people, whereby the local people’s extensive knowledge of plants and animals were a source for compiling the extensive list for classifying living organisms and not a sole invention of Linnacus. In the same token, the ICSU (2002) report indicates that the indigenous people accumulated knowledge about medicines, some of which have been upgraded using scientific techniques. Furthermore, recognition has been made that some indigenous people have their own science covering astronomy, meteorology, geology, ecology, botany, agriculture, physiology, psychology and health. The only difference is that indigenous knowledge tends to come as a whole set of knowledge (holistic) and not compartmentalized as done in the science Western (p.50).

It is evident from the foregoing that indigenous knowledge has been on and is already being accorded acceptance and recognition in the modern world. It is equally evident that there probably has not been



sufficient systematic effort at transmitting indigenous knowledge especially in the African setting. Yet, African scholars are gradually being rendered inept through the instrumentality of an arguably deficient system being imposed on them and which arguably develops the cognitive at the expense of the affective and the psychomotor in contradistinction to the African system of education that is almost all-embracing. For instance, 'in industrialized countries, advanced learning and research are receiving increased attention and investment in recognition of their acknowledged contribution to economic development and global competitiveness' (Sawyer, 2004: 214). It is of great value to allude at this juncture to Professor Taban lo Liyong, Head of the Centre for African Studies at the University of Venda, South Africa who, according to Bangura (2005:42-43), "has argued that each discipline must elaborate and extend its curriculum to embrace the African indigenous worldview, or social practices, or scientific and technological usages and developments." Bangura further articulates the view of Professor Liyong, in the following words:

...past technological developments and achievements of Africans, their techniques, arts and artistry, the products and processes of production must be studied with a view to "modernizing them." At the same time, technological innovations from Europe and Asia should be married to the native ones to produce a third new and appropriate technology. In whatever event, the African rhythm should control the speed of adoption and adaptation; African ethos of communal care and spiritual life should determine what we get from outside or keep from our past. This is the correct approach because besides recognizing other systems of knowledge, it leaves open the need for African systems of knowledge to acknowledge and learn from others in a discourse of cross-cultural understanding (pp. 42-43).

This sums up Mazrui's thesis on education in Africa and somewhat satisfactorily addresses his concerns in that regard.

It is not out of place to allude to a 2019 and arguably the most recent work on Mazrui's thought by Hasan Makki Muhamed Ahmad. Entitled, 'A Comparative Study on the Questions of Being and Civilizational Construction Between Mazrui and His Colleagues among the Leaders of Reforms in Africa', the work is an attempt to offer a panoramic but judgmental look at the most salient aspects of Mazrui's intellectual legacy in comparison to other notable African, Arab or Afro-Arab intellectuals who predated him. According to the author, Mazrui in his earliest writing on Africa portrayed the continent as homogenous with no regard for the cultural distinctions between the Black Africa and the Arabic-speaking Africa. 'Consequently, he seemed almost oblivious of the multifarious nature of the colonial experiences on the continent' (Hasan Makki, 2019: 10). The author likens Mazrui, in the earliest days of his writing career, to Cheikh Anta Diop of Senegal who insists that the history of Africa is closely connected to that of Egypt and by extension that of Sudan. He argues that conversely Mazrui, like Abbas Mahmud Aqqad and Taha Hussain, seems only aware of the Modern Africa as the Black or ancient Africa seems nonexistent in his estimation (pp. 11-14). The author also likens Mazrui to Malik Bn Nabi but draws a bold line of demarcation between their approaches to Islamic work. 'For instance, Bn Nabi who spent a quarter of his life in France and wrote his books in French was strongly inspired by Ibn Khaldun's method for the enthronement of a civilized Islamic society' (pp. 15-16). 'Bn Nabi also demonstrated this through his own immediate family orientation by leading his French wife on the path of Islam and even trained his young daughters on the use of hijab before age 13 as they emerged the first set of girls to wear Hijab in Algeria' (pp. 15-16). Yet, Bn Nabi was so moderate in his approach that Sayyid Qutb criticised him for his moderate stance, remarked Hasan Makki. According to him, the major commonality between Bn Nabi and Mazrui is that the former promoted Afro-Asianism in the same manner that the latter espoused Afro-Arabism which was the last of his ideological orientations (p. 16).

Makki also compares Mazrui with Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Edward Said. He states that Al-Faruqi established the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) in Virginia, the United States of America for the purpose of Islamization of Knowledge and that it was ironical that after his assassination, Mazrui was awarded a professorial chair endowed in the name of Ibn Khaldun even though there is no significant evidence of Mazrui's interest in or favourable disposition to the question of Islamization of Knowledge which engaged the attention of Al-Faruqi. Conversely, Mazrui was preoccupied with issues bordering on injustice against Africa, as well as the triple heritage (pp. 17-20). Makki identifies Edward Said as another noteworthy intellectual in Mazrui's class. Highly proficient in both English and Arabic, Said was concerned about the Palestinian question and also engaged critically with orientalism which he depicts as a tool for neo-colonialism in all its ramifications. Said incurred a great number of intellectual adversaries notable among them being Bernard Louis in his critical engagement with orientalism. Mazrui is however of a different orientation as he, rather than criticise orientalism, relies heavily thereupon even though he, at times, picks holes in some aspects thereof (p 19). Another leading African scholar comparable to Mazrui is Abubakr Gumi of Nigeria. Ideologically speaking, Mazrui sees the state as a giant aeroplane that must be flown by only the competent one regardless of his religion, while Hasan Turabi does not favour the enthronement of a non-Muslim leader, for any reason whereas Abubakr Gumi is not concerned about the competence or qualification of whoever will fly the plane, as he emphasises that such an individual must be a Muslim. Hasan Makki deserves plaudits for engaging with Mazrui so critically in a highly scholarly fashion. Aside the comparative dimension of the work in question which has been exposed in this section, there are specific illustrations of Mazrui's strengths, weaknesses, accuracies, inaccuracies, sagacity and pitfalls, articulated in the most refined and never offensive manner, which are not common features in the works of Mazrui's critics. .

Conclusion:

This paper has investigated the rationale for associating Ali Mazrui with the intertwined disciplines of social science and humanities, where he excelled as an academic Professor. The paper argued that Mazrui is generally known as anything but an educational thinker and identified that as one of the reasons for dearth of scholarly engagement with his educational views and their ideological underpinnings. . Conscious of the fact that Mazrui's educational views are not contained exclusively in any work but are rather fragmented in his various publications and scattered as incomprehensive pieces of information in his public presentations especially those on the culture of African universities, the paper engages critically with the scholarship of Mazrui especially the aspects directly or indirectly related to education or culture. That way, the paper attempted to address the long-felt need for a scholarly engagement with the education oriented scholarship of Mazrui with a focus of four research questions. Grounded in the social and philosophical foundations of education and employing three methods namely the historical method, the philosophical method, and creative synthesis, the paper attempted to draw the blind and adjust our view of the scholarship of Ali Mazrui in the context of Pan-Africanism. The paper ultimately has further interest in such a scholarly enterprise around Mazruiana. However, it could not take a step further by formulating some Afrocentric educational principles from Mazrui's scholarship for their possible translation into educational frameworks. Such a systematic undertaking is an elaborate work on Mazrui's educational thought and may even be a subject of a short- or long-term fellowship in any Institute of African Studies around the world. It may also simply be a subject of another paper or other papers.

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