



African Association of Political Science

17TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE AND 50th ANNIVERSARY

ALI MAZRUI MEMORIAL LECTURE LAUNCHING



“The problematic of International Cultural Order”

LUC SINDJOUN

Professor of Political Science (University of Yaoundé II, Cameroon)

African Association of Political Science Former President

International Political Science Association Former Vice-President

Pretoria, October 13, 2023

The memorial pattern is essential in the construction of the sense of the self. It creates the memory that we should have, and how we shall cope with that, as an association in a revamping process. Part of what keeps us moving, is the way looking behind of us, making sense of the work of our elders. This is mediated by memories. Far from being a verbatim record of the past, these memories are reconstructed with distortions and even gross inaccuracies. If a yesterday is to be brought here and now, it's because, to quote Yves Valentin Mudimbe, "A now guarantees a destiny. *Et nunc*, and now, supposes a dislocation: a before distinct from this present, pregnant with a tomorrow. In any question involving a temporal reference, the present is presumed to be a totality, a clear and neat unit". A Memorial Lecture centered on Ali MAZRUI is a time travel and chronotopic experience indeed, exceeding time divisions, aimed at bringing the past here and scrolling back to read the past with the present conditions.

The Kenyan American political scientist is one of Africa's foremost political scientists with a prestigious trajectory: B.A. with Distinction from Manchester University in England in 1960, M.A. from Columbia University in New York in 1961, PhD from Nuffield College Oxford University in England in 1966; Ali MAZRUI started his career at the Uganda's Makerere University in Kampala. For ten years, he served as Head of the Department of Political Science, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences as well as Dean of the Faculty of Law ; while opposing Ugandan President Idi Amin Dada who he considered "deeply primordial" with a "rugged, peasant, and masculine charisma". In 1973, he left the country in response to threats from state agents. From 1974 to 1991, He moved to the University of Michigan and the State University of New York at Binghamton where he was Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities/Professor in Political Science, African Studies and Philosophy, Interpretation and Culture. He founded (in 1991) and directed the Institute of Global Cultural Studies. Mazrui also held faculty positions at other universities worldwide: Stanford, Chicago, Nigeria, Singapore, Australia, Malaysia, Oxford, Harvard, Bridgewater, Cairo, Leeds, Nairobi, Teheran, Denver, London, Ohio State, Baghdad, McGill, Sussex, Pennsylvania, etc). He was the Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large Emeritus and Senior Scholar in Africana Studies at Cornell University. Ali Mazrui wrote more than 30 books on African politics and society as well as postcolonial patterns of development and underdevelopment. *Towards a Pax Africana* (1967), *The African Condition: A Political Diagnosis* (1980), *Black Reparations in the Era of Globalization* (2002), and *The African Predicament and the American Experience: A Tale of Two Edens* (2003) are some of his well-known publications. Apart from his academic responsibilities, He served on the Board of Directors of the American Muslim Council, Washington, DC, and as Chair of the Board of the Center for the Study of



Islam and Democracy, Washington, DC; the Board of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, and as a Fellow of the Institute of Governance and Social Research, Jos, Nigeria. He served as President of Muslim Social Scientists of North America and was elected Senior Fellow of Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, Washington, DC.

By launching a Memorial Lecture in this wonderful occasion, it's 50th anniversary, the African Association of Political Science wish to honour and celebrate the memory of a person who worked tirelessly towards, and achieved so much, in realising the goals of Political Science on the continent and beyond. The late name after Ali MAZRUI, one of the greatest political scientist is recognized for his dedication in advancing scholarship and knowledge. Every non- conference year, on a biennial calendar, a speaker with significant and meritorious contributions will be nominated and selected present a lecture to discuss their on-going research or topics of special interest. These memorial lectures provide a forum for vibrant academic debates and the exchange of innovative research ideas in the field of Political Sciences. The Research Committee will be in charge of organizing these memorial lectures.

The speaker launching the Memorial Lecture offers the recognition to high Political Science achievers, Prof Luc SINDJOUN, Former President of the African Association of Political Science and Former Vice-President of the International Political Science Association. He is Professor at the University of Yaoundé II (Cameroon). His research focuses on the sociology of the state, constitutional politics, comparative politics and international relations with dozens of books and more that 60 publications in major journals. He was Head of the political science Department at the Faculty of Laws and Political Science, University of Yaoundé II, President of the African Political Science Association (2001-2005) and member of the Executive Committee and Vice-President of the International Political Science Association (2003-2009). He has chaired the jury for the African agrégation competition in political science six times in succession. He is the founder of POLIS, Revue Camerounaise de Science Politique. In recognition for his contribution to knowledge production, he was granted the Francophone Scientific Prize in Social Sciences (2003/2004) and in January 2008, he was admitted as a member of the Académie des Sciences d'Outre-mer (France).

He's delivering a lecture on the topic **“The problematic of International Cultural Order”**.



Prof Nadine MACHIKOU
Vice- President of the African Association of Political
Science
Chair of the 17th Biennial Conference



Dear AAPS President,
Distinguished AAPS Congress Chair,
Professor Nadine MACHIKOU,
Deputy Vice Chancellor of University of
Yaoundé II
Members of AAPS Executive committee,
Fellow AAPS former presidents,
Dear participants to AAPS biennial
congress
Dear colleagues,
All protocols duly respected;



A Scientific mentality does not prohibit the observation of coincidences. It takes them into consideration without drawing quick conclusions nor making confusions between correlation and causality. In fact, twenty years ago, precisely in June 2003 when I launch my tenure as AAPS President here in Pretoria, City of Tshwane, I met with Ali Mazrui during a ceremony in his honor organized by the then mayor of this Jacaranda city. It was the first time that we were meeting physically and sharing a few agreements and disagreements on his double-faced thought: architectonic in its ability to propose structuring ideas; polemic in its ability to deconstruct given ideas, to generate controversies. Be it architectonic or polemic, Ali Mazrui's thought is a stimulating one. My encounter with Ali Mazrui was facilitated by my friend and successor at the position of AAPS President, Prof. Eddy Maloka. It was a symbolic one. I was representing AAPS, a scientific association in which the preponderance of the radical and critical thought had led in the 1970s and 1980s to the marginalization of other currents of thought, of liberal thinkers like Ali Marui. Due to the path dependency of AAPS, to the Dar es Salaam intellectual legacy structured by the liberation struggle, my encounter with Ali Mazrui was a demonstration of a paradigmatic inclusion and inter-paradigmatic dialogue. It led to his participation at an AAPS biennial congress in Pretoria. Twenty years after, I have been assigned by the AAPS Executive Committee the task to deliver the "Ali Mazrui Memorial Lecture". I can't derogate to my dual loyalty to AAPS and Ali Mazrui.

Firstly, to AAPS, the organizational loyalty is not a straitjacket. It cohabits with individual liberty. Our choice is to contribute to the decolonization of political science. I cannot refuse an intellectual task because it is our duty to contribute to the dissemination and innovation of political science ideas, to the promotion of African political science scholars such as Ali Mazrui. The fulfilment by the African Association of Political Science of its historic and epistemic responsibility implies necessarily the organization of the visibility of African Political Science

scholars and the creation of favorable conditions for reception of their works. It is worth repeating that political science in Africa should not be reduced, consciously or unconsciously, to an enterprise of cultural domination of others without an evaluation of their added value to understanding or the explanation. What precedes is not an assumption of cultural or scientific chauvinism. It is just the renewal of the appeal to render justice to African Political Science scholars in an international cultural system that is unequal. By assigning to me the task to deliver the first ever “Ali Mazrui Memorial Lecture”, AAPS is in accordance with the decolonization agenda, exactly like other African scientific organizations such as CODESRIA. Here and now, let me underscore that decolonization, more precisely scientific decolonization, doesn't mean closure, nor rejection.

Secondly, as far as Ali Mazrui is concerned, what is constant is that the intellectual loyalty is not a devotion nor a submission. The intellectual loyalty is always dialectical and emancipatory. In this framework, it is a recognition of the richness of his intellectual achievements. In fact, if political science in Africa is considered as a normal science, in the sense of Thomas Kuhn, it is because it has authors that have established paradigms to understand and explain reality. Ali Mazrui is one of those authors. He made substantial contributions in different domains: for instance, in comparative politics through his attempt to elaborate ideal types of leadership in independent Africa; in International Relations through his elaboration on the pertinence of the cultural variable or the pax Africana. His work is structured by a permanent proliferation of concepts and ideas. In the same vein, other African political science scholars can be mentioned such as Dan Nabudere, Claude Ake, Okwudiba Nnoli, Samir Amin, Adele Jinadu, etc. At this stage, it should be recognized that the analysis made in the 1990s by Thandeka Mkandawire on the different generations of African social science scholars is relevant to apprehend the

institutionalization of political science in Africa and its incarnation by some scholars (Mkandawire, 1995).

Twenty years ago, I was introducing in Pretoria a conference presented by Ali Mazrui. Today, I am delivering in Pretoria the “Ali Mazrui Memorial Lecture”. What a coincidence! Pretoria is a city where I met with Ali Mazrui. The first time, I met him in person, body and spirit. Today, I am meeting him in spirit, in order to engage a discussion on his works. Therefore, I am particularly moved. However, as legitimate as it can be, emotion is not a category of thought. That is why reason is needed *hic et nunc* (**hēk-et-'nuṅk. : here and now**). It is the password to get access to the intellectual universe of Ali Mazrui’s works. These works are so rich and diverse that, used as password, reason requires that I select a concept for the purpose of my analysis.

I have chosen deliberately to organize my “Ali Mazrui Memorial Lecture” around the idea of culture as summoned by Ali Mazrui, in its implications in international relations. My choice is partial because it hides other dimensions of Ali Mazrui’s works. I do not pretend to be a specialist of Ali Mazrui’s works. I do confess that I am just an opportunistic user of his works. Without ignoring the richness and the complexity of Ali Mazrui works, my focus is on his operationalization of culture in international politics. My approach ignores the logic of antipodes whose terms are “Mazruiphilia” and “Mazruiphobia” as described by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015, 205-222). The “Mazruiphilia” and “Mazruiphobia” quarrel has no place in a science where the logic of discovery repudiates primary feelings. Worshiping and abhorring are not scientific attitudes. Ali Mazrui’s works are scientific works only if their eventual falsifiability, in Popperian sense, are dedramatized and banalized. That is my epistemological standing point while using Ali Mazrui’s stimulating ideas on the relation between culture and politics.

It is through the lenses of culture that Ali Mazrui analyzes the state with the paradigm of the triple heritage: Islamic, Christian and Indigenous. That paradigm is fruitful even if one must insist that the influence of heritage is not mechanic: political actors elsewhere in Africa have always reinterpreted or instrumentalized cultural heritage. Moreover, there should be more nuance in the use of the triple heritage idea. Because there are other factors that are relevant such as economics.

Culture is used by Ali Mazrui in his analysis of international relations. Here, we must notice the anteriority of his works on those of Samuel Huntington about the role of cultural factors in world politics. The title of the third Reith Lecture delivered by Ali Mazrui on November, 21, 1979 was “A clash of cultures”, nearly two decades before the publication by Samuel Huntington’s “The clash of civilizations”. The arguments of those two authors are different, even if they have in common, the absolutism of the cultural paradigm, the primacy of culture and the explanation of the cleavage between the “west” and the “non west world”.

It is in the post-cold war era that the cultural paradigm has become more visible in the mainstream political science (Huntington, 1996): in all the domains, it is considered that “culture counts” (Huntington, 2000: 13-16). Culture was then given a *droit de cité* (place to be) in mainstream political science and was no longer treated with disdain. In 1976, in his major book *A world Federation of Cultures: an African perspective*, Ali Mazrui had proposed a solution for a desirable international order, a world federation of cultures (Mazrui, 1976). He had exposed the importance of cultural factors in international relations due to the functions of culture (as a worldview, a source of identity, a basis of stratification, an instrument of communication, a standard of judgment, a source of motivation, a system of production and consumption) (Mazrui, 1990). The success of the ideas of Samuel Huntington, despite the explanatory poverty of some

of them, had been a factor for the rediscovery of the pertinence of those of Ali Mazrui about the cultural cleavages, the subversion of the westernization of the world, etc.

In this memorial lecture, from my privileged position on the shoulders of the intellectual giant that is Ali Mazrui, I intend to operationalize the cultural paradigm in international relations through the category of cultural international order. I do not share Ali Mazrui's advocacy of the primacy of culture; he considers that culture is the cause and economy, the consequence. In fact, the "embeddedness" of culture, economy and politics is an obstacle to the absolute separation of one from the others. Having in mind the reality of interpenetration, the separation can only be artificial and relative. Any attempt to establish a rigid hierarchy among cultures, politics and economics is bound to fail. While culture influences economy, in return economy influences culture: the relation is bijective. Here, the debate on the roles of "chicken" and "egg" is useless. What matters, is the scientific proposition to account for a cultural international order.

The cultural international order is a partial dimension of the international order. Like the political international order or the economic international order, it is more constructed than given. By cultural international order, I refer to the systems of beliefs, representations, laws, customs, discourses, and myths that are part of the power distribution in the world, that structure the interaction among states and non-state actors of international relations. There is an umbilical relation between the international order and culture (Linklater and Suganami, 2006). The two main hypotheses of the English school of International Relations underline the relationship between "pattern of cultures" and "society of states": the first hypothesis is that "a shared culture is a precondition for the formation of a society of states"; the second one is that "a society of states lacking a shared culture because it has expanded beyond its original base will be unstable" (Buzan, 2010: 1). Even the realist school is permeated by the culture variable, despite its pretention to provide a value free explanation of world politics: the anarchy that we know, be it

“mature” or “immature”, is made by the states with societal values, beliefs, patterns of behavior, customs and laws (Kissinger, 2014; Wendt, 1992: 391-425).

In my line of reasoning, an international order implies *a minima (minimum)* of plurality of members and an interaction among its members in their respective positions: each member is influenced by its culture; the interaction among members is an opportunity for the flow of cultures, ideas, images, sounds that transcend boundaries, that can lead to acceptance, imitation, reinterpretation or rejection, clash or concord (depending on the way in which they are mobilized). Moreover, the interaction among the members is determined by a complex of rules, norms, habits, and institutions, commonly established, or universally imposed by some “established” actors to outsiders or newcomers. Culture is a factor of institutionalization of order, just like order produces culture.

The cultural international order that I am referring to, is not necessarily just or equitable. It is a regular, predictable and stable pattern of interaction among states and other actors, based on agreed, respected or dominant norms, rules, institutions. The cultural international order is fundamentally subjective because it has to do with values, beliefs, standard of judgement and “frame of experience”. It is a terrain of manifestation of, on one part, the will of some actors to impose their arbitrary cultural as a universal norm versus the claim of the cultural self-determination of other actors, on the other part, the permanent negotiation of common norms. The historic context that I will analyze starts from the 19th century till contemporary times. It is a context characterized by the western claim of the monopoly for structuring the cultural international order (Wallerstein, 2006).

What precedes my main argument is that the cultural international order is a moving configuration with different figures and whose active principle is dynamism. This argument will be substantiated in two parts in the developments below.

I- The variable geometry of cultural international order

In general, there is in sociology a linkage between order and structure. In that regard, cultural international order is comprised of a stable arrangement of roles derivated from norms and institutions. However, despite the analytical power of the concept of structure, it remains relative. Stability is not synonymous of immobilism. Consequently, referring to the Norbert Elias' theory of configuration (Elias, 1993: 155-159) is useful to present the different figures of cultural international order. The “global figure” constituted by the actors, evolves according to the “equilibrium of tensions. That is why the cultural international order can be simultaneously vertical and horizontal.

A- The verticality of cultural international order

The cultural international order, as every order is a hierarchy characterized by power politics. It is a particular order that “universalizes” itself (Leclerc, 2000). The idea of the cultural international order as *the fake nose* (sock puppet) of western cultural order is presented in the works of Ali Mazrui in different manners.

- The cultural international order is in fact a manifestation of western cultural supremacy made possible by European imperialism, the colonization of the non-western world among which is Africa. The western supremacy is so strong that the colonization of non-western societies in Asia and Africa is presented as the expansion of international relations whose rules and principles were defined by western states according to their culture and history. As Ali Mazrui expresses it: *“There is a sense in which the West regards an interpretation of the march of history as having one destination and that is towards the evolution of institutions that are very western...all those three- westernization, modernization and globalization- are interrelated and they assume a single direction of the march of history...”*. What is at work is the production of a rigid hierarchy of cultures having at the top, as Ali Mazrui puts it beautifully, the west as the “role model”. The idea of a specific culture being a role model for other cultures carries the ideology of the “role model culture” as the procrustean bed into which the non-western cultures should be constrained to lay on.

- The cultural international order was built without and against Africa. According to Ali Mazrui, the position of Africa is at the down of the hierarchy: Africa’s identity is being defined by European languages as demonstrate by the expressions “French speaking Africa”, “English speaking Africa”, or “Portuguese speaking Africa”. The cultural extraversion towards the western cultures is so strong that Ali Mazrui proposed that, despite the humiliation of slavery and colonization, Africa is the most westernized continent. The African condition is shared to some extent by the Arabs and the Islamic world.

- The cultural international order pretends to be universal, to have, in Ali Mazrui terms, “the status of universal validity” in the context of globalization. Ali Mazrui uses

two terms to analyze the western claim of universalism: Homogenization and hegemonization. Both are part of the *pax americana*. Homogenization refers to the increasing production of similarity with the west as a referential point. Its perimeter includes the globalization of European languages, the progressive convergence of educational systems, the triumph of market economy, the interdependence of societies and so on. Meanwhile, the sister process called hegemonization is made of the orchestration and enforcement of “marketization, liberalization and privatization” by “western economic gurus, the positioning of American and European educational systems as the role models of the educational convergence, the globalization of western dress, the control of the world economy by western countries, the location in US of the nerve centre of the global internet system” and so on. The processes of homogenization and hegemonization tend to impose a universal cultural order dictated by western states. Those processes are real. But, Ali Mazrui had absolutized their effects due to the illusion of similarity: the globalization of western languages, western dress and even western sounds does not preclude their local reinventions and appropriations. To this effect, the Nigerian cultural landscape is an interesting site of observation of the subversion of western cultural influences. For instance, the use of English language by Nigerian writers is more specific than “universal”. Likewise, hegemonization does not mean total control. Hegemons always encounter resistances and can be weakened by the undesired effects of power’s concentration. As colorfully depicted by Stanley Hoffman, Gulliver can face troubles and be entangled (1968). The “unipolar moment” is more an ideal type than a reality.

B- The horizontality of cultural international order

Verticality doesn't have the monopoly to express the existence of an order. As it is the case with cultural international order, an order can also be horizontal. The idea of horizontal cultural order is intrinsic in the works of Ali Mazrui. Here, it is borrowed from public policy where the concept of horizontal governance is often used. Horizontal governance is in contradiction with hierarchical or vertical governance. It is based on collaboration, coordination, shared responsibilities or power sharing for decisions and outcomes. Horizontal governance is defined by some main characteristics: - nonhierarchical structures; - partnership versus competition; - coordination (Peters, 1998).

I do not idealize horizontal governance. It has several limits such as the dilution of responsibility. I do not create a dichotomy between horizontal governance and vertical governance: an efficient governance can be balanced, semi vertical and semi horizontal, according to the conjuncture and the goals.

Horizontal cultural international order is not opposed to the vertical one. They are two distinct and complimentary regimes of interiorization and exteriorization of order. Even better, they are part of the same continuum of values, habits, beliefs, and pattern of behavior that creates stability, regularity, predictability and mutual recognition in the interaction among states. However, horizontal cultural international order is specific. It develops more on the logic of collective deliberation than imposition. It has more to do with common culture than national cultures. There are similarities between horizontal cultural international order and the international society as elaborated by the English school of international relations.

- Horizontal cultural international order is promoted by international organizations. It is a consequence of multilateralism when states take advantage of their membership in various organizations to establish common norms, rules, organs and institutions that are supposed to govern their behavior in the international milieu in different domains. Through universal and regional organizations, horizontal cultural international order is institutionalized.

- Horizontal cultural international order should not be idealized. Various international organizations were created when international society was restricted to Europe and major powers like USA, China and the then Soviet Union. The universalization of those organizations had not always coincided with power redistribution. Therefore, the inequality among states in international organizations affects the validity of horizontal cultural international order (Smouts, 1995: 259-271). It is the belief in the legitimacy and the necessity of a genuine inclusive international cultural order that justifies the claim for the reform of United Nations and the global financial architecture.

- Horizontal cultural international order is the consequence of the principles of self-determination and equality among states. With the independence of third world countries during the twentieth century, a change of the prevailing environment was to be taken into consideration. It had led to the multiplication of the creation of new norms, for instance, permanent sovereignty over natural resources, the principles of international law and so on. Those norms are not always respected. But their lack of effectivity doesn't imply their invalidity.

It is under the auspices of the horizontal cultural international order that Ali Mazrui had called for reparations in favor of Africa and the black world (Mazrui, 1994: 1-18). The injustices against Africa and the black world are established according to shared norms and values; the reparations requested are sanctions destined to protect the order. An order that is fundamentally dynamic.

II- The dynamics of cultural international order

Every order is subjected to transformations and changes. It is the case for the cultural international order. Cultural international order has never been monolithic. It has always hosted dynamics of variance and deviance, subcultures and countercultures. Even when the international society was restricted to Europe, it was agitated by the conflict between the monarchical political culture and the revolutionary one (Kissinger, 2014: 11- 48). The cultural international order is pluralistic. Within the order, subcultures and counter cultures can spur changes. At the exterior of the order that is partial, change can also be provoked.

A- The crisis of cultural international order

The cultural international order is in crisis. It was not built for today's world. The forgoing affirmation doesn't sentence the cultural international order for a jail time imprisonment in the

past. The focus on the historical circumstances of the setting of cultural international order helps to understand its crisis.

- The decolonization of Africa and Asia remains the source of the crisis of the cultural international order. In an order that was structured around European and western values, to deal with other cultures and conceptions of life is necessarily dysfunctional. For instance, in the United Nations, before the proliferation of African states, the General Assembly was the place *par excellence* where important resolutions were adopted. What is more normal: the balance of forces at the general assembly was in favor of western states. After the decolonization, the western states lost their numerical power. And African states, thanks to their majority, gained the control of the agenda and engaged discussions on the new political world order, the new economic world order, the new cultural and informational world order. The period between the 1960s and 1980s is characterized by a systematic critique of western norms and values. In that context, western states used the United Nations charter in order to marginalized the General Assembly and to remind that the Security Council is the center of gravity: the same states were using the powers of the General Assembly in the 1950s to neutralize Russia and champion their values and norms. What is at stake is the control of norms and values that influence peace and security in the world. Despite the attempts to marginalize the General Assembly of United Nations, it has remained an important organ and tribune where third world countries denounce the arbitrary cultures of western countries.

- The crisis of cultural international order is also reflected by the “exit” dimension of the strategy of third world countries. The African-Asian conference held in Bandung (Indonesia) from 18th to 24th April 1955 is one clear illustration. The principle of the

Bandung conference was a challenge of the western supremacy by ex-colonized countries. The Bandung conference of 1955 was based on an unsatisfaction with the world order as it is and the culture that goes with. Therefore, it was aiming at a sub or counter cultural international order suitable to “the problems of common interest and concern of countries of Asia and Africa”. The exit from the existing cultural international order was not complete. While they were positioning themselves as normative engineers through the emphasis on the principles of political self-determination, mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, and equality, states participating in the Bandung conference were laying down conditions of their participation in the international cultural order. That mixture of variance and deviance is also at work in the Non-Aligned Movement. Here, the challenge of the cultural international order is originally structured around the condemnation of imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism. Based on Bandung principles, The Non-Aligned Movement in 1961, during the Cairo summit, was calling for a transition from an “old world based on domination to a new world based on cooperation between nations, founded on freedom, equality, and social justice for the promotion of prosperity”.

- The crisis of the cultural international order is to a large extent a product of third world critique of the “western” pretense to monopolize identification with “Provincializing” Europe (Chakrabarty, 2000) as it is done by decolonization and globalization: the move from a Eurocentric order to a universal one is necessarily a crisis. A crisis that had started in the twentieth century and is still persistent.

- It has already been said that the cultural international order was made for and by western states. That is why they are still having an exorbitant privilege due to the prevalence of norms, rules, customs and pattern of behavior that they have established.

For instance, in international relations, customary law in all domains is the product of the history and culture of Europe. Such persistence doesn't conceal the crisis of cultural international order. Indeed, the cultural diversity of the world is a factor of disintegration of that order. For this purpose, the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is meaningful: It affirms cultural diversity "as a defining characteristic of humanity"; it recognizes the necessity to promote and protect the diversity of cultural expressions; it emphasizes on the principle of equal dignity and respect for all cultures. Consequently, heterogeneity became a category of perception of cultural international order. Likewise, pluriversality is also to be taken into consideration (Parasram, 2023: 356-367). The insistence on heterogeneity and "pluriversality" is the result of the crystallization of the figure of the multiple. Having said that, homogeneity and universality, on the one hand can cohabit with heterogeneity and pluriversality, on another hand. Such cohabitation is part of the paradigmatic change that occurs in international relations.

On what concerns the crisis of the cultural international order, Ali Mazrui's works were adding fuel to the fire. Being a fierce critique of the western hegemony, he was also the architect on an alliance between Arabs and Africa in order to create a new world order. That imagined alliance was baptized "Afrabia" and presented as "part of the answer" to the risk of "a disproportionated number of more dead muslims" and "a disproportionated number of more poor blacks" created by the world order (Mazrui, 1992: 60). "Historical fusion of Arabism and Africity...", according to Ali Mazrui, Afrabia will link "languages, religions, and identities across both the Sahara Desert and the Red Sea" (Mazrui, 1992: 62). Here, prophetism seems to have entangled the scientific analysis. As evidence, the conclusive sentence of the Ali Mazrui's paper is "Amen" (Mazrui; 1992: 62). Even if it seems to be a prayer, it remains that in that prayer,

Ali Mazrui is criticizing strongly the world order dominated by western states. He is praying for an alternative cultural international order built around Africans and Arabs. Prophets are not generally welcome in social sciences. Because they are more inclined to value judgements than to factual ones.

The crisis of cultural international order is a “stubborn fact”. It is the terrain of proposals for a renewal.

B) The Reinvention of cultural international order

The reinvention of cultural international order had been permanent in the works of Ali Mazrui. He had always had an idea of a desirable world order. His participation in the “World Order Models Project” had led to a major proposal of a World Federation of Cultures.

- A desirable cultural international order, according to Ali Mazrui, should be organized through the world federation of cultures. The cultural federation is formed of pluralistic and complimentary cultures. It is a factor of peace in the world. In that regards, Ali Mazrui proposes three main principles: - the acceptance of cultural interdependence among constituent parts; - the acceptance of the principle of parity of esteem among constituent parts; - the promotion of “cultural fusion” at the federal level. It is interesting to note that Ali Mazrui applied the concept of federation to cultures and not states. That is his main difference with Emmanuel Kant who had also mustered the concept of federation in order to achieve “perpetual peace” in international relations (Kant, 1991). Contrary to Emmanuel Kant who was suggesting that the “federative union” should be

among states, Ali Mazrui had based the world federation on cultures. At this level, Ali Mazrui is more closed to Samuel Huntington: while Ali Mazrui in 1976 considered cultures as actors of international relations, Samuel Huntington analyzed in 1993 civilizations as actors of international relations. Such concealment or minimization of states weakens Ali Mazrui's idea of world federation of cultures. Cultures exist independently from states. But cultures by themselves don't make war nor peace.

- The idea of "fusion of cultures" proposed by Ali Mazrui is to some extent similar to the one of "civilisation de l'universel" (civilization of the universal) championed by Léopold Sédar Senghor. The *civilisation de l'universel*, as exposed by the Senegalese poet President Léopold Sédar Senghor, is a synthesis between the African and European civilizations. The interpenetration of civilizations is a sort of "cultural fusion". The rapprochement between Ali Mazrui and Léopold Sédar Senghor is normal. Ali Mazrui was interested by the literature of Négritude. For instance, he had referred to the Martinican poet, Aimé Césaire in his critique of the European arrogance (Mazrui, 2003). The ideas of fusion of cultures and of *civilisation de l'universel* are quite interesting. In one dimension, they rejoin the reality because there's no pure culture. The cultural landscape had always been characterized everywhere by imitation, emulation, borrowing and loss in such a way that a culture supposed to be pure is in fact more mix and hybrid than it might appear. In another dimension, the ideas of Ali Mazrui and Leopold Sédar Senghor are naïve to some extent: the *civilisation de l'universel* is supposed to be rendez-vous of give and take, of parity of cultures; but it can be observed that some cultures give more than they take, others take more than they give. It is the same with the fusion of cultures due to the fact that here balance of forces matter. The fusion does not hide or suppress the imperialist tendencies of some cultures in such a way that the so-called hybridity is in fact and annexation of other cultures (Sindjoun, 2002).

The problem of cultural international order, as analyzed through the works of Ali Mazrui, reveals the dialectics of stability and change, homogeneity and heterogeneity, universality and “pluriversality”. In fact, it invites to the use of a grammar of multiplicity. At this stage, the heuristic fertility of the figure of Babel (that is familiar to Ali Mazrui) leads to the proposal of a dynamic continuum formed by one soft international cultural order and multiple international cultural orders.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Buzan, B., 2010, “Culture and International society”, *International Affairs*, 86, 1, pp.1-26.
- Chakrabarty, D., *Provincializing Europe*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Elias, N., *Qu'est-ce que la sociologie ?* Paris, éditions de l'Aube, 1991.
- Hoffman, S., *Gulliver's Trouble's or the setting of American foreign policy*, New York, McGraw-hill, 1968.
- Huntington, S.P., *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1996.
- Huntington, S.P., 2000 “Culture counts” in Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P; Huntington, (eds), *Culture matters*, New York Basic Books, 2000.
- Kant, E. “Toward Perpetual Peace,” in *Kant: Political Writings*, 2nd ed., H Reiss, ed., Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Kissinger, H., *World Order. Reflections on the Character of Nations and the Course of History*, London, Penguin Books, 2014.
- Leclerc, G., *La mondialisation culturelle*, Paris, PUF, 2000.
- Linkalter, A. and Suganami, H., *The English School of International Relations*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Mazrui, A. “ Africa and arabs in the new world order”, *Ufahamu. A journal of African studies*, 20, 3 1992, pp. 51-62.
- Mazrui, A., *Cultural forces in world politics*, London, James Currey, 1990.

- Mazrui, A., “The African Experience in Politics and Culture: From Monroe’s to Nkrumah’s consciencism”, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, 2003.
- Mazrui, A., 1994, “Global Africa: From Abolitionists To Reparationists”, *African Studies Review*, 37 (3), pp. 1–18.
- Mazrui, A., *a world Federation of Cultures: an African perspective*, New York, The Free Press, 1976.
- Mkandawire, Thandeka, “Three generations of African Academics: a note” *Transformation: critical perspectives on southern Africa*, 28, 1995, PP. 75-83.
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J., “Ali A. Mazrui on the invention of Africa and postcolonial predicaments: my life is one long debate” *Third World Quarterly*, vol.36, 2, PP. 205-222.
- Parasram, A., “Pluriversal sovereignty and the state of IR”, *Review of International Studies*, 49, 3, 2023, PP. 356-367.
- Peters, G., “Managing Horizontal Government: The Politics of Co-Ordination”, *Public administration*, vol.76, 1998, pp.295-311.
- Sindjoun, L. (eds.), “Culture and International Relations”, *International Review of Sociology*, vol 12, 2002, Special Issue.
- Smouts, M.C. “Les organisations internationales et l’inégalité des États », *Revue Internationale des Sciences Sociales*, N°144, juin 1995, pp.259-271.
- Wallerstein, I., *European universalism: the rhetoric of power*, New York, The Free Press, 2006.
- Wendt, A., “Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics”, *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (Spring, 1992), pp. 391-425.



African Association of Political Science

ALI MAZRUI
MEMORIAL
LECTURE