

Western culture. He has shown numerous instances of its misuse to denigrate non-European people and he has raised many legitimate criticisms of the attempt to "know" the Oriental. He has written well, and maintained the appearance of fairness in trying to give the subject comprehensive treatment.

But one must finally disagree with the overall *effect* of his argument. For Said has written against Orientalism more than about it; and in spite of what he says, there is much profit remaining in the multidisciplinary area studies approach to other cultures. If the effect of his argument is to persuade scholars and patrons to abandon the admittedly imperfect quest to understand, compare, and translate the different values systems of the world with their cultural heritage as discrete areas of inquiry, one must object. For even if a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, less knowl-

edge is not necessarily safer. If, on the other hand, scholars and others are reminded that too often stereotypes pass for knowledge, especially in the mass communications media, Said's arguments will have accomplished a real good. In any case, the book is informative intellectual history and is admirably written, thought-provoking criticism.

(The author, Edward W. Said, is a respected literary critic and professor of English at Columbia University. He is also of Middle Eastern origin and the man who was prematurely named by Egyptian President Sadat as a possible spokesman for the Palestinian people in his negotiations with Israel. This fact would not be important, except that Said is arguing the near impossibility of non-politically tinged scholarship, and it is not completely clear that he can escape the same criticism he so forcefully directs at others.)

social science models (e.g., demonstration effect, n-Achievement, dependency), created some of his own (the four-step process of cultural convergence from coexistence to contact to compromise to coalescence), and has explained and integrated them with a minimum of jargon. "From a cultural point of view," he writes, "convergence is a process which either creates or discovers a growing sector of shared tastes, emotions, images, and values." It may combine cultural diversity with sharing, but it is not the same as one-sided conquest. Still, if the process moves beyond a certain point, "the stage of coalescence is reached." Mazrui shows, for instance, how alien European tongues have been utilized and adapted by African leaders, despite some linguistic racism and imperialist overtones, to help Africans unite and associate with a broader culture. Thus, Tom Mboya quoted Kipling to urge Africans to keep their heads; Tanzanian President Nyerere translated *Julius Caesar* and *The Merchant of Venice* into Swahili; Ugandan President Milton Obote chose as his name that of the author of *Paradise Lost*. To adapt an alien idiom likely to rub salt into the open wounds of dependent psyches requires transcendent statesmanship.

Like Oscar Wilde, Mazrui would prefer that all men possessed the heart of Christ and the mind of Shakespeare, but he would be content if most men became mutually tolerant—never mind about fraternity—and if they toiled and practiced teamwork. These three "carrier values," he rightly contends, amount to the three T's of development. They would also serve as the keys to achieving the psychological and material prerequisites of world order. The entire process of development, within and across national borders, Mazrui argues, should be consciously promoted by deliberate action to foster cultural convergence and expanded empathy.

Western culture dominates the world today—from high science and technology to pop art—thanks to the high levels of creativity and mobility of Western man. Third World cultures remain vibrant, with much to offer Western audiences, but are hemmed in by lack of mobility. The present asymmetry is unhealthy for all parties. Counterpenetration may be achieved first of all in the arts, music, and dance, because robust Third World creativity helps fill a void left by overly rational and prudish

## A World Federation of Cultures: An African Perspective by Ali Al'amin Mazrui (Free Press; 508 pp.; \$14.95)

Walter C. Clemens, Jr.

*A World Federation of Cultures* brings to life the ties between Africa and the rest of the world and, even more important, analyzes the links among art, culture, feeling, race, religion, sex, science, and the world political economy.

Mazrui's approach is bold. For example, his chapter "Suttee and Levirate in Black-Brown Relations" explores sexual-cultural as well as economic-racial conflicts between East Indians and blacks in Uganda and other countries. The Indian practice of suttee (wife burned with dead husband) was outlawed by British authorities in 1829, but it belongs to an antipollution syndrome that has endured, and contrasts sharply with the African levirate (passing on the wife to the dead man's "brother"). Mazrui's conclusion: "The ghosts of cremated Indian widows of yesteryears, and the jealousies of dead Africans whose wives had been inherited by others, may continue to haunt Indo-African relations for generations

to come." After a year's observation in Trinidad, I concluded that Mazrui had hit upon a powerful explanatory variable. One race fears pollution; the other, oblivion. In the words of the Trinidad-born novelist V.S. Naipaul, an Indian mother's protest against her son's marriage to a non-Indian was "an act of piety towards the past, toward ancient unknown wanderings in another continent."

Mazrui casts a strong light not just on Africa but on all humanity. How Christian Europeans and Muslim Arabs intermarried with Africans and raised their children illustrates patterns for other societies as well. Arab (and Brazilian) attitudes toward racially mixed offspring have been more constructive than those of white Christians—both in Africa and the U.S., and such kinship and identity crises illuminate not only black-brown and black-white relations but also black-yellow.

Mazrui has assimilated a wealth of

Western modes. Mazrui points to trends extending back over two millennia to suggest a secular movement toward cultural convergence. But his most detailed case studies come from the last two decades. This is a problem, for Mazrui leans toward cosmic extrapolations from trends that could prove short-lived or cyclical rather than secular.

Is he more an African or a man of the world? Born in Kenya, schooled in England and New York, a professor in Uganda, he later moved to a professorship at Michigan. This book is the "African perspective" in the World Order Models Project sponsored by the Institute of World Order. Mazrui's work reveals his strong African roots but also the quality he hopes to implant in others: empathy for one's fellow man and receptivity to others' life-styles.

History is probably moving in the directions Mazrui posits: toward a progressive enlargement of human consciousness and conscience, toward biological as well as cultural miscegenation, toward greater worldwide interdependence of political economies as well as cultural systems. Indeed, the world is becoming "one" culturally even while the United Nations and other international organizations come apart at the seams. To this extent, Mazrui's perspective may be closer to reality than the institutional reforms advocated by Richard A. Falk (author of an American perspective on world order in the same series) or, a generation ago, by Clark and Sohn (in *World Peace Through World Law*).

Unfortunately, neither interdependence nor convergence ensures that swords will become plowshares. The European powers that embarked on a protracted war in August, 1914, had achieved a degree of interdependence and convergence—political as well as economic and cultural—far in excess of what can be anticipated in the next decades for the USSR and United States, the West and the Third World, or China and any other state. Mazrui himself notes that civil strife has been intense within Zanzibar and Burundi despite much cultural convergence.

Mazrui's answer to this conundrum is that convergence must be accompanied by a consensus on social and economic stratification. Violence and conflict derive not only from cultural variables but from a sense of relative deprivation.

Patterns of wealth and distribution must change even as people get to know one another better. Europe is now at peace, it seems, not only because of considerable cultural and other convergence, but because Europeans have assimilated lessons about the costs of war and the rewards of peaceful cooperation.

Whatever the impact of convergence on world peace, I doubt that its pace will be shaped much by books of this kind. Cultural dissemination, like the epochal forces noted in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, seems to lie beyond human manipulation. Which record tops the hit parade and which cola formula is sold to the Kremlin may be due to individual decisions and interventions, but Russians' yearnings for cola drinks, jeans, and rock were not prompted by Madison Avenue. People all over the world want to learn English, though the *Académie Française* "tries harder" than its British and U.S. equivalents. The French try to simulate demand; the British and Americans try to meet it. A Brazilian magazine reports on tai-chi-chuan (in Europe) with no goading from Taipei or Peking. American military insignia (mostly Caribbean-made) flooded Trinidad fashions during the 1978 Carnival with no help from the CIA. The *Zeitgeist* and a strong substratum of materialistic hedonism outweigh any conspiracy in such affairs.

How can one legislate or even plan cultural convergence? English-speaking Canadians are loath to learn French regardless of the law or their own self-interest. How then will every child learn three languages (one global, one regional, one national or tribal), as Mazrui advocates, unless he or she feels a deep reason to do so? If an investor had a million dollars to promote normative convergence, better to put it in the Beatles than UNESCO, in "Sesame Street" rather than the international bureaus on "educational methods," whose establishment Mazrui advocates. The very idea of a "model world federation of cultures," outlined in an appendix, looks more like an afterthought to please the World Order Project than an organic outgrowth of the author's life experience and studies.

One must come down somewhere, but Mazrui lands in just the wrong places. He recommends that the Northern Hemisphere adopt socialism and that the Southern become more nation-

alistic. Socialism would generate a conscience and tame the North's inclination to dominate, while nationalism in the South would generate the momentum needed to rebel against dependency and to overcome ethnic rivalries. Northern socialism and Southern nationalism, he says, could become complementary ideologies.

Though Mazrui is skilled at extrapolation for contemporary events, there is little in recent history to justify his recommendations. No "socialist" country has shown much empathy for other peoples or taken a major role in foreign aid. By Mazrui's own account, the United States "has spent more on other nations and societies than is likely to be done by any other country for generations to come." The USSR, in contrast, has developed a doctrine in recent years that can only be summarized as "Nyet, I am not my brother's keeper, though I may sell him guns from time to time."

Does the Third World need more nationalism? Perhaps in Africa, where tribalism is still divisive. But not in South America, where regional cooperation founders on nationalism and ideology, and not—on balance—in the Indian subcontinent or Indonesian archipelago. If the Third World must become more nationalistic for an integrated whole to emerge, humanity may first stumble on a nuclear (or other) catastrophe.

It is the specific combination of socialism and nationalism that lies behind many military dangers, from the Sino-Soviet and Vietnamese-Cambodian frontiers to the *seriatum* invasions of one another's domains by the quasi-socialist but highly nationalistic regimes of the Middle East and Africa. They follow in a tradition established in the 1930's by the state-capitalist or "national-socialist" regimes of Japan, Italy, and Germany.

If intellectuals are to spread the new global consciousness as Mazrui hopes, how will their exercise of free thought be protected from the oppression common among socialist and nationalist regimes? Mazrui wants his intellectuals to pick and choose from Marxism and other systems. He also observes that his kind of socialism should include a "human face." But how often has this happened—and endured?

In 1968 I met a Czech couple in their fifties traveling to Paris, where their son was enrolled in an IBM training course

for personnel to be employed in Czechoslovakia. This program helped his parents to come West for the first time in over thirty years. Comparing the fate of Czechoslovakia's 1968 experiment with the contributions of transnational corporations to Mazrui's convergence, I conclude that planetary well-being is more likely to be aided by sensitivity training for Western, Communist, and Third World personnel of IBM and other globe-encircling builders than by prescriptions for world order—especially if they entail socialism for the North, nationalism for the South, and three languages for all!

The importance of Mazrui's book and the other World Order studies lies less in their substantive content than in their contribution to a *confederal* world culture in which individual thinkers model their values and policies interactively. Alas for committee projects, Sakharov's one-man manifesto in 1968 calling for U.S.-Soviet cooperation and East-West convergence to deal with the world's ills has probably evoked more commentary and critical feedback than all the World Order Models Project studies combined.

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#### Correspondence (from p. 2)

U.S. as well to examine its own compliance with human rights norms.

2. The Fund maintains that there would be "staggering implications" if the U.S. were to stay deportation of Haitian refugees until their safety could be assured. On the contrary, given the fact that the Haitian Government made

grandiose statements of "détente" and welcome for returning exiles in 1973 and 1975 and then followed these with mass arrests in 1974 and 1976, it would seem the implications for *deporting* Haitian refugees in contravention of the law are staggering and fatal.

Furthermore, in stating that "if any illegal immigrant is likely to be persecuted in his home country, the U.S. has always offered to deport him (or her) to any third country that will accept him (or her) as a legal immigrant," the Fund completely disregards historical fact. The U.S. has consistently sacrificed refugees to its foreign policy considerations. Perhaps the best-known case was pre-World War II, when the U.S., operating on the principle of isolationism, forced the return of Jews to Europe and to eventual massacre by the Third Reich. Since then Dominicans, Iranians, Nicaraguans, Haitians, and many others have been not only rejected, but forcibly returned to their home country and consequently imprisoned. The major problem here is that the U.S. State

Department refuses, as it did with the Jews, to acknowledge the existence of human rights violations by its allies, i.e., any non-Communist nation. The result is that refugees from these countries are not legally recognized as refugees and are therefore not given the option of deportation to a third country.

Requiring an assurance of safety for returning refugees is not what characterizes the U.S. as the world's policeman. It is by continuing to provide military arms and training to such a notoriously abusive and arbitrary military apparatus as that in Haiti that the U.S. clearly maintains its negative reputation as the "policeman" of the world and insures that the repressive conditions that generate the refugees continue.

3. The Fund advocates as a moral priority the enforcement of immigration regulations, saying that it would be "suicide" to abolish controls on immigration, because an open border is "an invitation to disaster." In this instance it is precisely the enforcement of existing regulations that is being sought. The



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