As she admits, "the crucial nature of tension levels and expressions of conflict was only fully realized at an advanced stage of the field work" (p. 18) after the survey had already been completed. This area is missing from the questionnaire data. Her final chapter "Tension and Change" is an assessment of some of these patterns of conflict, the strategies developed to "rectify imbalances in the conjugal exchange" and the reference models used to justify pressures toward change.

Throughout this study, the position of the wife appears to be an unenviable one. In one stimulating passage on the wives’ resources, Oppong suggests that the wives of these civil servants “depend upon their husbands in a way they customarily never did”. In this sense they are more vulnerable than traditional Akan wives. They have less bargaining power in that they have much more to lose if they left their husbands. Although their material standard of living is undoubtedly envied by other women in Ghanaian society, their increasing dependency on their husbands probably is not.

Oppong emphasizes that this study deals with a limited segment of Ghanaian society – an elite group not representative of the majority. She has pointed out the variety of ways in which the relations between kin and spouses are mediated. Not all of these tend toward a strong conjugal relationship even in this highly educated, elite group. Hopefully this excellent study is only the beginning of other studies using concepts and techniques at the same level of clarity and sophistication. If these future studies are directed at groups more representative of the total population, we will gain an even clearer picture of the ways in which unilineal systems change.

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Since the advent of independence in Africa, African intellectuals have begun to analyze the historical forces affecting their place in the human drama. This search for Africa’s identity in a technologically interdependent world has given rise to a growing number of attempts to portray concern for historical clarity and philosophical self-determination, examples of which are: Kwame Nkrumah’s Consciencism, Leopold Senghor’s Liberte 1 and Willie Abraham’s Mind of Africa.

What unifies all these works is their common feeling that Africa’s role in the modern age must be defined and clarified by Africans themselves. Ali Mazrui’s World Culture and the Black Experience is a valuable addition to this growing number of books dealing with the black man in the present world. Although the three works above focus primarily on problems and issues of Africans in Continental Africa, their line of reasoning still relates to Mazrui’s wider discussion of the global problems confronting members of the black race.

Mazrui’s work is based on several propositions relating to the universal implications of religion, science, and language for the black man. In Mazrui’s first chapter he states that monotheistic Semitic religions tended to be more
intolerant than religions that accepted divine multiplicity. Taking this as a point of departure he contends very persuasively that Christianity’s efficacy as a social bridge linking the different islands of humanity has been greatly undermined in Africa and the African Diaspora by the cultural arrogance of Europeans who in recent times were its peddlers among black humanity.

Professor Mazrui maintains also that the Christianization of African people not only brought them within the European cultural orbit, but also robbed them of their martial traditions. This point has been elaborated repeatedly in Mazrui’s other writings, and this emphasis is warranted if we take note of the psychologically crippling effects of a doctrine that preaches emasculation to a race on the defensive. On the other hand, Mazrui’s claim that Christianity accentuated black cultural dependency raises a question which continues to haunt all those who examine this phenomenon. Such a question could best be phrased as follows: Was Christianity the root cause of black emasculation or was it the ideology that provided a justification for the emasculation of the blacks? The answer to this question is not very clearly stated in Mazrui’s work. He seems to suggest that the colonization process was greatly facilitated by the emasculating activities of the missionary. This reviewer, however, contends that Africa’s emasculation was first brought about by Europe’s technological advantage rather than by the missionary’s proselytization of Christianity. The missionary’s efforts could best be described as the pharmaceutical therapy that soothed the agonizing pains associated with the African’s diminishing political masculinity. When it is seen in this light, one can agree with Mazrui’s claim that cultural dependency undermines the political will of the leaders of the developing areas of the globe. The values inculcated at the colonial schools not only preached loyalty to Jesus, but also passed on European cultural commodities as fruits of Christian civilization. This confusing nature of the Euro-African relationship aggravates the problem.

Mazrui also has something to say about religion in Africa within the context of ecumenicalism. To him, the Middle Eastern notion of ecumenical man has a bright future in post colonial Africa because of the great tolerance in African traditional religions. He believes that the polytheistic nature of African traditional religion may well provide the soil in which such ecumenicalism will develop and touch every side of African society. Mazrui seems to be optimistic that “the heritage of the Semitic peoples, interacting with the polytheistic inheritance of African tribes, should provide, in the years ahead, a striking fulfillment of the ideal of the universal man.”

In addition to the religious question, Mazrui’s book touches on black peoples’ marginality in scientific and technological realms. Mazrui argues, brilliantly, that this marginality is not a result of intellectual deficiency, but a manifestation of historical “latecomerism.” He documents his point by comparing the blacks to the Greeks and the Jews. The historical record reveals that: Europeans who now take pride in Greek culture and civilization are themselves late beneficiaries of an ancient fountain of knowledge and wisdom; the African’s late participation in this global cultural economy, which bears the marks of the ancient Greek, Roman and Jewish cultures, is a result of his late adoption of the technology of intellectual conservation; European cultural arrogance, which is based on self-centered interpretation of the historical record, is largely responsible for the racist notion of black intellectual inadequacy.