

U F A H A M U

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UFAHAMU will accept contributions from anyone interested in Africa and related subject areas. Contributions may include scholarly articles, political-economic analyses, commentaries, film and book reviews and freelance prose, art work and poetry.

Manuscripts may be of any length, but those of 15-25 pages are preferred. (All manuscripts must be clearly typed, double-spaced originals with footnotes gathered at the end. Contributors should endeavor to keep duplicate copies of all their manuscripts.) The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit any manuscript to meet the objectives of the journal.

Authors should send with article a brief biographical note, indicating position, academic affiliation and recent publications, etc.

All correspondence -- manuscripts, subscriptions, books for review, inquiries, etc., -- should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief at the following address:

AFRICAN ACTIVIST ASSOCIATION
AFRICAN STUDIES CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90024

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CONTRIBUTORS

EMMANUEL O.O. AMALI: Lecturer of Literature at the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.

HORACE CAMPBELL: A regular contributor to Ufahamu, and lecturer in the Political Science Department, University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

CHRISTINE CHOI: "Revolutionary" performance artist and co-leader of Beyond Barque Poetry Workshop in Venice, California.

RASHIDAH ISMAILI: Prefers to use this name for writing purposes. Currently at the Afro-American and Africana Studies, Rutgers University.

R.D.G. KELLEY: Doctoral student, Department of History and chairperson of the African Activist Association, UCLA.

MAHMOOD MAMDANI: Professor of Political Science and Acting Dean of the Faculty of Social Science, Makerere University, Uganda. Ufahamu has recently learnt that Dr. Mamdani, while attending the United Nations University Conference in April 1985, was stripped of his Ugandan citizenship by the Commissioner for Immigration -- thus rendering him stateless.

KYALO MATIVO: Former Editor-in-Chief and regular contributor to Ufahamu, now lecturer at the University of Nairobi, School of Journalism, Kenya.

CYRIL MOKWENYE: Currently studying at the Domane Universitaire, France.

BEN NAANEN: Doctoral Candidate, Department of History, Dalhousie University, Canada.

WILLIAM R. OCHIENG: Chairman of the History Department, Kenyatta University College, Kenya.

P. GODFREY OKOTH: Doctoral Candidate, History Department, UCLA.

AHMED I. SAMATAR: Assistant Professor, Department of Government, St. Lawrence University, New York.

DEREK WRIGHT: Currently in the Department of English, University of Queensland, Australia.

EDITOR'S QUILL

With this issue Ufahamu enters its fifteenth year of continuous publication. It is an appropriate time for a modest celebration.

Ufahamu was born in a turbulent decade when a major intellectual upheaval and change involving unprecedented self-criticism and critical reevaluation was sweeping the social sciences in general and the economic and social studies of Africa in particular.

A greater part of the African Studies field during the 1950's sought to provide intellectual respectability to the "ideology of development" which brought euphoria among the newly-created nationalist classes reproduced by the economic and social relations of colonialism. New and bogus terminologies such as "modernizing elite" and "entrepreneurship", etc. were created to rationalize the distorted physical and economic structures of Africa. The struggle for national independence during the period called for a carefully orchestrated process of "decolonization" and the setting into motion a process of development which would reconcile the "harmony of interests" between the emerging nationalist classes and the economic dominance by the metropolitan countries on the African continent.

Much of the conceptual tools which dominated African Studies during the period sought to provide the "ideal type" of society which African countries should strive for. Sociological theories attempted to demonstrate the "universality" underlying the capitalist economic system and economic theories depicted the efficiency of the "free market" as the best allocative system in meeting economic and social needs of society.

Armed with esoteric mathematical models and statistical methods, etc., research in the African Studies area attempted to show how African societies, regardless of their initial conditions were destined to travel sooner or later in a linear path already traversed by the advanced capitalist countries. In this vision of historical amnesia and intellectual sterility, the wide variety of African political and social formations were presented with arresting simplicity in a perfect, almost mechanical harmony. Such a simplistic and factually incorrect view later gave way to a more sophisticated school, nonetheless still anchored in a terrain which viewed African social development from two sets of complementary methodologies: one boldly depicting "primitive Africa" with its mindless gyration of "traditional warring tribes," the other promoting the image of Africa where in the

byone centuries, Africans lived under the beign rule of their own leaders. Removing this false and unscientific conceptual blinkers from the intellectual domain took a protracted challenge. It was only in the last two decades that critical intervention was made in the mainstream economic and social studies of Africa. Much of the debate of this period could be found in the pages of Ufahamu.

Ufahamu was founded to pursue a definite intellectual purpose which would provide a penetrating account of the continuous process of underdevelopment and the changing relation between the African continent and the international division of labor.

Ufahamu has striven to provide a forum for critical intellectual discourse where historical events, ideas and personalities are carefully scrutinized. The Journal has channeled several of the key debates and the major shifts in the critical reinterpretation of African social and economic development.

Ufahamu has been guided in its choice by themes and issues with social and political significance. The Journal's focus on issues affecting the African continent has enabled it to constantly confront the paradoxes of underdevelopment and the need for the economic, cultural and intellectual liberation of Africa. Such a focus gives Ufahamu an urgency and political significance lacking in many journals devoted to African Studies.

The mission of Ufahamu remains today as significant and urgent today as when it was founded fifteen years ago. Ufahamu gratefully acknowledges the support of many of our friends throughout the world and particularly in Africa. Without this support, it would have been difficult to maintain the momentum of the Journal. Our acknowledgement also goes to the staff of the African Studies Center at UCLA, particular to our sisters who constantly kept our spirit high and the contributors and referees. Dr. Michael Lofchie, Director of the African Studies Center and Dr. Teshome H. Gabriel, the Assistant Director of the African Studies Center always encouraged the editorial freedom of the Journal.

Fassil Demissie

ISSUES

ON DR. MAHMOOD MAMDANI'S PRESENT STATE OF STATELESSNESS

Intellectual harassment and the arbitrary closing down of universities occur with regular frequency in Africa. In some countries a certain form of militarization of the intellectual and cultural life of universities has taken place with the permanent presence of security forces and in others, regular armed raids accompanied with brute exercise of force to silence criticism of official public policy have brought a reign of terror in African universities.

In political and social life, difference in opinion must be openly debated. In the realm of ideas, the essence of democracy is the struggle of ideas. However, the struggle for ideas is not the same as military struggle between opposing armies. The essential weapon for ideas are arguments, reasons and logic and not the imposition of repressive laws to silence the voices of dissent.

The obtrusion of legal technicalities to silence open discussion over public issues assumed a new dimension in Uganda recently. Ufahamu has learnt that Dr. Mahmood Mamdani was stripped of his Ugandan citizenship because of a talk he gave to the Uganda Red Cross Conference on "Disaster Prevention: Defining the Problem." In the talk Dr. Mamdani argued that famine is a phenomenon caused by certain political and social conditions and not simply an outcome of drought or other natural factors. The speech did not go unnoticed by those in the circles of the Ugandan government. It is our understanding that the Minister of State for Security was so infuriated that he singled out Dr. Mamdani for a personal attack in his closing remarks to the conference. Subsequently, the same Minister appeared on television to repeat his earlier attack.

On April 13, 1985, the Commissioner for Immigration revoked Dr. Mamdani's Ugandan citizenship -- thus rendering him stateless. This action which violates all norms of law has disturbed the academic community everywhere. Ufahamu, on its part has sent the following letter of appeal to His Excellency, Dr. A.M. Obote, President of the Republic of Uganda and Chancellor of Makerere University, requesting him to intervene on the behalf of Dr. Mamdani to restore his citizenship and position at the University.

F.D.

May 24, 1985

His Excellency
Dr. A.M. Obote
President of the Republic of Uganda
State House
Entebbe, UGANDA

Your Excellency,

RE: PROFESSOR MAHMOOD MAMDANI'S PRESENT STATE OF
STATELESSNESS

We, the Editorial Board of Ufahamu, having learnt of the withdrawal of Dr. Mamdani's Ugandan citizenship, beg to plead with Your Excellency in Prof. Mamdani's favour.

In appealing to Your Excellency to intervene in this matter, we do not intend to question the right of Your Excellency's Government to regularise Dr. Mamdani's citizenship; neither are we concerned about the circumstances leading to this unfortunate situation. We only wish to establish the following points relating to Dr. Mamdani's competence as a true Ugandan patriot:

1. As African scholars, we are aware of Dr. Mamdani's intellectual contribution to African Studies through his numerous publications. These include articles in leading learned journals, among them, Ufahamu, an internationally renowned publication totally dedicated to the political, economic and intellectual independence of Africa.
2. Through his writings, Dr. Mamdani has earned an international acclaim for African intellectuals as a whole.
3. Dr. Mamdani is a vital component of the larger African academic community. As members of that community, we are in solidarity with his critical and constructive scholarship at a time when African scholarship has been dominated by confused and confusing Western academic fortune-seekers. Against these academic opportunists, Dr. Mamdani has set out to fight in order to set the records straight, thereby setting a good example for the rest of us. This is evidenced by his article in the current issue of Ufahamu, Vol. 14, No. 2.
4. In the paper he delivered at the conference organised

by the Ugandan Red Cross, entitled "Disaster Prevention: Defining the Problem," Dr. Mamdani clearly demonstrated his deep-felt responsibility, as a progressive African intellectual, for the general plight of the African peasantry, the overwhelming majority of the African population.

5. Dr. Mamdani's role as the Editor of Mawazo is in conformity with our own perspective in the analysis of African social problems. If Dr. Mamdani's views do not coincide with those of Your Excellency's Government, then it is our humble opinion that these views should be debated in the best traditions of academic freedom. We are sure that Your Excellency's Government has at its disposal very qualified people who can be entrusted with the task of rebuttal. We are also of the opinion, Your Excellency, that Dr. Mamdani's intellectual activity constitutes an indigenous expertise in matters of national development.

For these reasons, Mr. President, and in view of the fact that Your Excellency's own progressive standpoint is widely acknowledged, we kindly beg to indulge Your Excellency's intervention, in Your Excellency's capacity as the President of the Republic of Uganda and Chancellor of Makerere University, to reinstate Dr. Mamdani's Ugandan citizenship and position at Makerere University.

We beg to remain, Mr. President,

Sincerely yours.

Ali Jimale Ahmed
Fassil Demissie (Editor-in-Chief)
Doris Johnson-Ivanga (Production Editor)
Robin Kelley
Kyalo Mativo (Editorial Advisor)
Peter Ngau
Godfrey Okoth