

Editorial

Welcome and Happy 45th Anniversary!

We are very happy to welcome you back to *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies*. This issue is going to be the last of this academic year. It has been a hectic and wonderful year and we are pleased that three fruitful editions have emerged with such positive responses. We only hope to maintain this momentum. This special edition though is in many ways a look back (and forward) at *Ufahamu's* past forty-five years of activism and scholarship, beginning with its founding as part of UCLA's African Activist Association in 1970.

The writings and artworks collected in this edition are wide-ranging in theme and disciplinary concerns, but all share connections to our legacy of engaged scholarship and activism. A number of articles presented here were featured previously either within *Ufahamu* or other publications. The remainder are original works that relate in different ways to the authors' own experiences working with *Ufahamu* as past editors or contributors, or through the authors' engagement with UCLA's African Studies Center or programs. To this end, we are truly excited to feature some of *Ufahamu's* past pillars. Their work and vision continues to steer us.

We are also glad to have maintained our dual mandate of being a space and medium *for Africans and those of African descent*, students, academics, and non-academics to publish their work in Western academic circles. This includes helping foster intellectual linkages and featuring their work and views within our pages.

In our previous editorial, we offered support to scholars who receive threats due to their efforts to highlight the ongoing disparities in academic hiring practices in South Africa and beyond, as well as scholars pushing for more inclusive and socially just societies. In that endeavor, we offered *Ufahamu* as a space for Siona O'Connell, a University of Cape Town (UCT) lecturer, who received at least eight-hundred hate e-mails and/or death threats because of her column in the *Cape Argus* asking for

more diversity of the UCT faculty, to continue to push for equity within the University system. We are delighted that O'Connell has accepted our offer. In this edition she presents a brief look at the recent removal of the Cecil John Rhodes statue from the UCT campus. Following a similar train of thought, former *Ufahamu* editor Zachariah Mampilly's article in this issue explores the ways in which United States activists, scholars, and even institutions can learn from decolonization struggles in Africa, such as those on UCT's campus.

One essential aspect of our Journal is its ability to stimulate and engage important debates that are not necessarily covered freely in other scholarly forums. With this, we are fortunate that Wits University Department of History has written a response to William H. Worger's "The Tricameral Academy: Personal Reflections on Universities and History Departments in 'Post-Apartheid' South Africa"¹ and Neo Lekgotla *laga* Ramoupi's "African Research and Scholarship: 20 Years of Lost Opportunities to Transform Higher Education in South Africa"² published in our Vol. 38. Issue 1. Furthermore, we also extremely delighted that Worger and Ramoupi have written a response addressing Wits' Department of History's comments on their papers. We do not expect these responses to be the last of their kind and we encourage further discussions to be submitted for inclusion in our subsequent issue in October, 2015, Vol. 39. Issue 2. In the spirit of activism, we are all also fortunate that Ramoupi attended, transcribed, and translated a very important UCT higher education transformation discussion session that occurred between university administrators and students for *Ufahamu*. It is certainly a fascinating read.

Current News

Elections

We would like to congratulate Nigeria on the completion of their most recent national elections. Furthermore, we would like to wholeheartedly commend President Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan for accepting the election results and stepping aside. We would similarly like to congratulate Guyana's new president, David Granger, whose coalition of opposition parties ended the

former ruling party's over two-decade rule. *Ufahamu* likewise appreciates Guyana's former president, Donald Ramotar, for his concession. In this spirit, we encourage you to read the two articles in this edition that touch upon national politics and their Pan-African connections to issues across the globe, from Cape Town to Baltimore. Finally, on the topic of free and fair elections, we also implore President Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi to not seek a third term in office. His decision to do so has plunged the country into demonstrations and violence.³

On a better note, *Ufahamu* is pleased to celebrate with the nation of Liberia the recent news that the World Health Organization has declared it officially Ebola free.⁴ While we are excited about this development, the fight against Ebola remains as it continues to plague Sierra Leone and Guinea. *Ufahamu* continues to support those two countries and hopes that the right efforts are underway to also ensure that Sierra Leone and Guinea are also declared Ebola free in the near future.

Xenophobic Attacks in South Africa

We would also like to wholeheartedly condemn the xenophobic attacks on foreign African nationals in South Africa. These incidents have flared up too often since the end of apartheid and need to be systematically addressed. We know that these attacks primarily stem from the lack of economic opportunities faced by many black South Africans. These economic frustrations should not be directed against other African nationals, but against the economic system that pits disadvantaged people against others in similar positions.

Black Lives Matter Everywhere

As we discussed in our last editorial, *Ufahamu* continues to share our unwavering support for the #blacklivesmatter movement, which we believe is not solely significant for Black people across the globe, but to all disempowered people as well. Indeed, incidents from Baltimore to Tel Aviv⁵ highlight the ongoing struggles of people in the African diaspora.

Yet again, we think it is clear that the ongoing incidents of police violence that ignited this new movement's consciousness

in the United States and elsewhere did not happen in isolation from each other, nor can they be rightly understood as separate incidents.⁶ Throughout our long history, *Ufahamu* has consistently pushed for a more egalitarian world; we are very excited to continue this tradition. As a Journal, we believe in the need for a collective push for strong examinations of the legal, social, and political systems in the United States that enable such violence and unbalanced forms of justice to form and persist.⁷ The continued fight for social, economic, legal, and political equality seems to be just gearing up and these tragedies and public responses to them bring a wider awareness to the realities of the underrepresented. We continue to pledge *Ufahamu* as a medium for people to highlight inequality and injustice.

Acknowledgements

Once again, we would like to give a special thank you to Stacey Meeker. As always, she has provided us with unwavering professional, intellectual, and emotional support and assistance in producing this edition. We cannot thank her enough as she answered all our various inquiries pertaining to the Journal. Without her, *Ufahamu* would not be able to do what it does. This is no exaggeration! We also pledge our support to her in her vigorous attempts to continue to fight for editorial freedom and for the graduate student journals at UCLA. Indeed, we are extremely grateful for her dedication to *Ufahamu* and Graduate Student Publications at UCLA.

We would also like to thank our faculty advisor, Professor Jemima Pierre, for continuing to push us to stick to the Journal's mission and providing us with timely advice when required. This includes providing a platform for grappling with economic, political, and social issues facing communities, and a continuous space whereby African scholars, scholars within the African continent, and scholars marginalized by mainstream academia can present their research to the world. We would also very much like to thank our copy-editor, Michelle Gaston, for all her hard work in making sure that these pieces were ready for publication. Furthermore, we would also like to give a special acknowledgement to Bill Morosi, our layout-editor, for the wonderful work, professionalism, and calm that he brings to the Journal. Everything he

does is par-excellence and we are very appreciative of that. He wears more than two hats and also plays the role of third copy-editor at times! Finally, and of course not least, we would like to thank UCLA's African Studies Center, particularly Sheila Breeding and Claire Pfitzinger, for their continued help in publicizing and supporting *Ufahamu*, and informing a broader community that *Ufahamu* is alive and kicking again. They continue to be one of our greatest supporters in the community.

Future Editions

Whilst this is our final edition of this academic year, we are excited about three, and possibly even four, future editions coming out during the next academic year. Another interesting issue to look out for, and for which to consider submitting a manuscript for possible publication, is Volume 39 Issue 1, which is set to be published in October, 2015. Furthermore, Volume 39 Issue 2 is scheduled to be published in Winter of 2016. We shall also publish a special issue on methods in African studies with *Stichproben: Vienna Journal for African Studies* (<http://stichproben.univie.ac.at/>). This edition is scheduled to be published in the Winter of 2016 as well.

Whilst we believe in having an international outlook, we also know that issues at home, within UCLA, are important. In that regards, *Ufahamu* is proud to announce a forth-coming multi-journal edition with other UCLA based activist journals in the Winter or Spring of 2016. This initiative was conceived to convey to UCLA and its broader community that scholarly-activist publications are neither aberrations nor trivial, but represent meaningful contributions to various disciplines and peoples. Finally, in the Fall of 2016, *Ufahamu* will publish a special edition that will showcase the intellectually ground-breaking work of UCLA's Africanist and African Diaspora faculty and staff. Please be on the lookout for this and our other forth-coming editions!

Farewells

We would also like to take a moment to say some goodbyes to some of our fabulous team members as they move on with their careers. Thank you to our former arts editor, Elaine Sullivan, for her work over the last academic year. Elaine's determined pursuit

of excellence has been inspiring and we are surely disadvantaged by her absence. Over the last two editions, Elaine has been foundational in creating an exhibition and art review section for *Ufahamu*, which has been significant in working towards the Journal's goal of including more creative works and art in our pages. Elaine, you will be missed, but of course we wish you all the best in your overseas research and other noble endeavors.

We would like to also take this opportunity to say a special thank you to two of our senior editors: Erica Anjum and Emily Milstein. Both of these dedicated individuals have played very instrumental roles in the resurrection of *Ufahamu* these last twelve months. They have put in extremely long hours and have willingly and joyously contributed to the Journal. Erica has played an important role in securing book reviews and ensuring that they have been ready for publication. Emily has continued to do anything and everything to ensure that the Journal has returned to its former heights. For instance, on a Saturday night, during finals, I, Nana, realized that I had made a mistake with one of the retyped essays, Emily sat with me from 8pm-12am to retype the essay and double check that the others were okay. This sort of dedication from Emily was not an isolated incident. We are very saddened to lose them both to graduation, but we know that they are going on to do wonderful things in the future. Elaine, Erica, and Emily, as well as all our previous editors, you will always have a home within *Ufahamu* and here at UCLA.

Conclusion

We write and say this often, but it is our true feeling as an editorial collective. We are extremely happy that our friends and broader community continue to find our Journal suitable to their intellectual needs, tastes, and consumption. We would like to share our gratitude for the support of all our valued readers and contributors, and we hope that this collaborative tradition continues for a very long time to come. Without you, there simply is no *Ufahamu*, so keep reading and writing!

As always, we encourage your continued submissions. Thank you!

Nana Osei-Opare & Jeremy Jacob Peretz

Notes

- ¹ Worger, William H.(2014). The Tricameral Academy: Personal Reflections on Universities and History Departments in “Post-Apartheid” South Africa. *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies*, 38(1). international_asc_ufahamu_25035. Retrieved from: <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/0tm991zw>
- ² Ramoupi, Neo Lekgotla *laga*. (2014). African Research and Scholarship: 20 Years of Lost Opportunities to Transform Higher Education in South Africa. *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies*, 38(1). international_asc_ufahamu_25032. Retrieved from: <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/13m5c5vp>
- ³ Aislinn Laing, “Female police officer stoned and dragged through the streets of Burundian capital,” May 12, 2015, *The Telegraph*, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/burundi/11598890/Female-police-officer-stoned-and-dragged-through-the-streets-of-Burundian-capital.html> (accessed May 13, 2015)
- ⁴ Unknown, “Liberia declared Ebola-free after weeks of no cases”, May 9, 2015, *BBC News*, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32671520> (accessed May 11, 2015); Matt Schiavenza, ”Liberia’s Ebola Nightmare Is Over,” May 9, 2015, *The Atlantic*, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/05/liberias-ebola-nightmare-is-over/392858/> (accessed May 11, 2015)
- ⁵ Sarah Levy, “Do Black lives matter in Israel?,” May 13, 2015, *Socialist Worker*, <http://socialistworker.org/2015/05/13/do-black-lives-matter-in-israel> (accessed May 13, 2015).
- ⁶ United States Department of Justice Report/Memorandum. *The Guardian*. March 4, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2015/mar/04/justice-department-reports-ferguson-michael-brown-full-text> (accessed March 4, 2015).
- ⁷ Jon Swaine, “Discrimination in Ferguson: full extent of police bias laid bare in damning report.” March 4, 2015. *The Guardian*. <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/mar/04/ferguson-police-racial-persecution-federal-report> (accessed March 4, 2015).