

UCLA

Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies

Title

Back Matter

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/22c467rt>

Journal

Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies, 1(2)

ISSN

0041-5715

Author

n/a, n/a

Publication Date

1970

DOI

10.5070/F712016363

Copyright Information

Copyright 1970 by the author(s). All rights reserved unless otherwise indicated. Contact the author(s) for any necessary permissions. Learn more at <https://escholarship.org/terms>

Peer reviewed

History is so popular among whites for this very reason: it is "relevant" but far away from the clamoring on our own doorstep.

The position of American and European whites in this matter is becoming more and more tenuous, for we must find realistic means of understanding our past and present, especially with regard to the "Third World" (including non-white peoples in our own country), if we are to act quickly enough to save ourselves. The world will not wait forever for white people to act decisively to free their former and present servants. Whether the movement results in a fascist revolution from above or a mass movement from below, it is the mass of the white, affluent, "secure" west that is the target.

This is our dilemma and no amount of liberal rhetoric can negate it. Only a realistic and constructive understanding of our past and present can provide us with the means of liberating ourselves by freeing two-thirds of the world from poverty and oppression. In this, I trust that Peter Waterman and I are in some agreement. I certainly can relate to his feeling that the search for a realistic understanding of Africa, using non-ideological historical materialism is as difficult as it is necessary. I shed no tears for Sik. Suret-Canale and Basil Davidson seem to provide the best signposts along the way.

To Mr. Mihalyi, I can only make two brief comments. First, Sik is *not* the only example of Marxist historiography on Africa that I deal with. I go to some length to explain my reasons for considering Davidson to be a Marxist, although I have unfortunately not had the opportunity to ask him if he would use such a label for himself. In addition to Davidson, I mention Suret-Canale, and Magubane, two men who are pursuing similar lines of argument. It is simply not true that I used Davidson as an example because he is respected and well-known. If anything, Davidson's "non-ideological" stance makes him a better Marxist, for he can write the truth without being immediately (and negatively) identified as a "Red".

I am not sure what is involved when Mr. Mihalyi comments that my article is "remarkable but..." and follows with a Latin phrase. I do not read Latin. I feel that I would have benefitted more from a clear and concise criticism, however short, than from these "comments".

Finally, let me point out that my contribution to UFAHAMU was written not as a scholarly article, but as a rather

free-wheeling exposition of my feelings on, and perception of, my own experience as a student, graduate and undergraduate, in African History. As such, it is a beginning rather than an ending point for me.

Harry Meserve
History Department
UCLA

I have read with great interest the first issue of UFAHAMU...since I think that you are serving a definite need, may I offer these thoughts?

I enjoyed several refreshing aspects of UFAHAMU. First, it was contemporary, relevant and stressed process. Journals of Africa - anthropology, history, geography or whatever - easily fail to see the present. This you helped me to do. The interview with Mr. Gil Fernandez, of course, best illustrates this; but most of the articles also contributed. I, for one, am tired of reading journalistic essays that were accepted according to the number and obscurity of the footnotes included. In other words, scholarly research has its limits; and there are other ways of learning as a social scientist. Too often, these studies do not involve the present, or are unwilling and hesitant to approach value areas. You also have included a great variety of sources and materials (for example, I have ordered all of the novels from the Hower essay which I might not have otherwise been familiar with). This I would like to encourage.

My reservations are less tangible. I would like to have had the editorial statement clarified. In the last decade the study of African history has become increasingly complex, and partly because of the writers themselves. More and more, the reader must be fully aware of the frame of reference of the author. At times, for example, in the review by Joy Stewart, I felt vaguely uncomfortable - not because I disagreed, but because I felt that I did not know enough concerning her own starting point to fully accept her analysis. Maybe there needs to be a more evident variety of authorship?

Let me then state that I most of all profited from UFAHAMU because it did not simply duplicate other sources, and I certainly look forward to future editions.

Ronald Boucher
Charlton City, Massachusetts

I have received a copy of your invitation to a preview, and I have subsequently read at least one of the articles included in your first issue of UFAHAMU.

I would be grateful if you could allow us to reproduce in the *East Africa Journal*, Mr. Hower's article on modern Ugandan and Kenyan literature.

Bethwell A. Ogot
Professor and Head of Department
Department of History
University College
Nairobi, Kenya

We have here at UCLA a young journal into which students interested in African Studies can channel their ideas. The title of the journal, UFAHAMU, means "understanding" in Swahili. But I question the validity of such a journal in a white institution, and I especially question the direction of an African Studies Center with a white director.

The study of black people in white universities has caused many problems for black people. The problems range from conflict between black people of different ideologies over the development of black-oriented programs to the stealing of ideas and the draining of the minds of black students by white administrators, researchers, and professors for profit and other nefarious motives. As young black people begin to understand the wrongs in this society, it becomes a reality that black awareness is a contradiction to western thought.

As an undergraduate majoring in Afro-American history with an interest in African history, I have a concern for UFAHAMU. My concern centers around the fear that UFAHAMU will be used as a source of information for white scholars, rather than as a vehicle for channeling African and Afro-American Studies into one vein. Because black people in the Americas are descendants of African peoples, the journal of UFAHAMU should find a natural urge to look in the direction of the black community at UCLA and at large for input and criticism on papers and articles written in the journal. It should make no difference as to the graduate or undergraduate status of those who comprise the black input, or even a black worker or a black housewife doing research on Africa.

In my opinion, most black people in the Americas look

UCLA LIBRARY
LOS ANGELES, CALIF. 90024

at themselves as being black in their own personal way. Blackness is a frame of mind that is just beginning to tie the vein of thought among Africa's peoples all over the world. UFAHAMU should look at itself as a connection in that vein of unity. I do understand that as yet there has been only one issue, yet I felt the need to express my hopes that increased channels of communication will be set up with the black community at large.

Paul Williams
Vice-Chairman, BSU
UCLA

I would like to have the following listed in UFAHAMU.

Africa

Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio
Africa - Undergraduate and graduate level
Ph.D rank. Salary depends upon qualifications.
Contact Hugh G. Earnhart, Chairman.

Hugh G. Earnhart
Chairman
Department of History
Youngstown State University
Youngstown, Ohio

* * * * *



