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**Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies**

**Title**

Front Matter

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7x63673j>

**Journal**

Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies, 20(3)

**ISSN**

0041-5715

**Author**

n/a, n/a

**Publication Date**

1992

**DOI**

10.5070/F7203016751

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**UFAHAMU**  
**JOURNAL OF THE AFRICAN ACTIVIST ASSOCIATION**

JAMES S. COLEMAN AFRICAN STUDIES CENTER  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90024-1310

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UFAHAMU accepts contributions from anyone interested in Africa and related subject areas. Contributions may include scholarly articles, political-economic analysis, commentaries, review articles, film and book reviews and poetry. Manuscripts must be between 20-30 pages, clearly typed, double spaced, with footnotes on separate page(s). Contributors should keep copies of their manuscripts. The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit any manuscript to meet the objectives of the journal. Authors must submit two copies of their manuscripts and a brief biographical note, including position, academic affiliation and recent significant publications, etc. All correspondence - manuscripts, subscriptions, books for review, inquiries, etc. - should be addressed to the Editor - in- Chief at the above address.

Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS and AMERICA: HISTORY AND LIFE.

Partial funding for the publication of *UFAHAMU* is provided by the Graduate Students Association of UCLA.

UFAHAMU  
JOURNAL OF THE AFRICAN ACTIVIST  
ASSOCIATION

VOLUME XX NUMBER 3  
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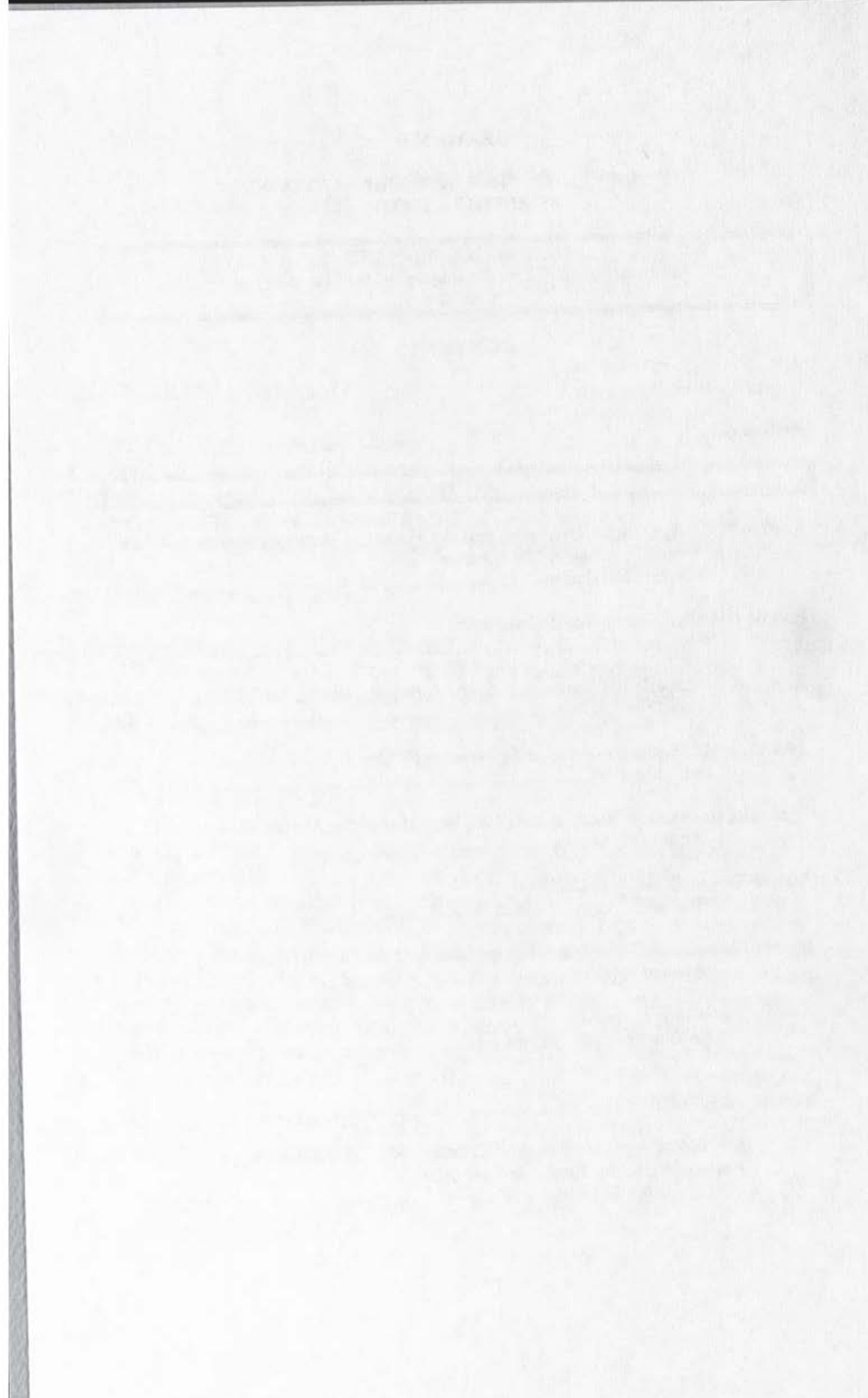
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## EDITORIAL

Important events are unfolding in the Middle East today. The Israeli government has finally realized that the country's security can no longer be guaranteed in the absence of an autonomous Palestinian state. Palestinian leaders have also finally realized that seeking to establish an independent Palestinian state on the ruins of Israel is simply not practicable. Leaders on both sides should be congratulated for their decisions of courage, albeit sudden and surprising.

The Arab-Israeli conflict had not only earned the Middle East the dubious distinction of being the world's worst "trouble spot," but also turned it into the most dangerous region for anyone to visit. Yet the importance of the region as the largest producer of the world's leading source of energy was not lost to the rest of the world. As a result, the whole world had always been interested in, in fact concerned about the situation in the Middle East. Due to their dependence on Middle East oil, many countries saw continued instability in the region as a direct threat to their own national economies and security. Indeed, when Iraq's Saddam Hussein tried to exacerbate the problem with his invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the United States wasted no time to intervene and mobilize UN member countries to forcibly remove Saddam from Kuwait. Although observers are not in agreement about who was wrong and who was right (Saddam, former U. S. President George Bush, or the Kuwaiti monarchy), the conflict brought into sharp focus the importance of the region to the world more than ever before. Although not directly involved, African countries probably suffered the most from the fallout of the conflict. In fact, not many can claim to have recovered from the recessionary difficulties they suffered as a result of the conflict.

Africa and the Arab world are so close to each other yet so far apart. Why? In this issue of our journal we have put together articles that explore some of the experiences that the two regions share. The articles cover such diverse areas as politics, history, geography, gender issues, language, literature, and culture in general. In his article, "AFRABIA: Africa and the Arabs in the New World Order," Ali Mazrui argues for closer cooperation among Arab and African countries that could see Africa and the Arabian Peninsula become one integrated region, geographically, politically, and economically—"Afrabia." The position of African countries on the Arab-Israeli conflict is analyzed by Maudelyn Johnson in "Africa: A Diplomatic Battleground in the Arab/Israeli Conflict, 1967-73," while Mervat Hatem looks at how

women have been used as pawns in North African political games. We hope that the observations in the articles in this issue will help Africans and their Arab brothers forge closer cooperation which would greatly benefit them.

The idea of this issue was mooted sometime in early 1992, and it is very gratifying to us at *Ufahamu* now to see its publication coincide with the momentous developments in the Middle East. Despite the obstacles that both Palestinian and Israeli leaders face as they try to implement their peace accord, we wish to register our strong support for their efforts and appeal to the rest of the world to cooperate with the two parties and help them achieve the goals of their accord. Peace, and here we mean *permanent peace*, between Israelis and Palestinians will not be for the benefit of the two groups alone but the rest of the world. We, therefore, encourage Palestinians and Israelis not to waver but persist in their quest for peace. We wish them a lot of success.

Angaluki Muaka