The past twenty years of our liberation have disappointed and failed African research and scholarship in South African higher education institutions. In this article, I provide examples of how we have failed to transform the higher education sector. The first example is drawn from two fieldwork studies I conducted at the Universities of Ghana, Legon and of Dar es Salaam on the subject of curriculum and content in higher education in Africa. At liberation, Kwame Nkrumah and Mwalimu Nyerere, founding Presidents of Ghana and Tanzania, respectively, were clear about what they wanted the role of the university and education to be in their independent countries. Nkrumah asked if the university would be permitted to proceed in its established pattern. And the answer for Nkrumah was a confident “No.” A radical shift away from the courses and degree structure already established at the University of Ghana, Legon was required.

The President of Ghana knew that the function of the university in the postcolonial period was to study the history, culture and institutions, languages, arts, and heritage of Ghana and of Africa in new African-centred ways, free from the proportions of the colonial era.

For Tanzania, “our first step,” said Nyerere, “must be to re-educate ourselves; to regain our former attitude of mind”; he spoke “of the need for an African university to provide an “African-orientated education,” an education aimed to meet “the present needs of Africa.”

The point I make with Ghana and Tanzania is that there was a bold commitment to radically change the direction of their education systems that was absent in South Africa at the time of our liberation in 1994 (p.1).

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In attempting to Decolonizing African Universities, this presentation focuses on fieldworks carried out between 2010 and 2017 in Ghana at the Institute of African Studies (IAS), University of Ghana, Legon (UGL); in Tanzania, Pan-African Studies Department at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDS); in South Africa at the Centre of African Studies (CAS) at the University of Cape Town (UCT); and at the historic University of Fort Hare (UFH).

The second focus of my presentation focuses on the volatile year -2014 - in the South African Higher Education landscape that, I argue, gave birth, firstly, to the #Rhodes Must Fall Movement in March 2015 at in Cape Town at UCT and which spread nationally into other Universities in South Africa and internationally; secondly, to the #Fees Must Fall Movement in Johannesburg at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) in October 2015, and which became a truly South African Universities’ Protest Movement; and the first nationally organised student movement in South Africa’s democratic dispensation that shut down the entire University system for a week. It is likened to the June 1976’s Soweto Students’ Uprisings. Thirdly, I survey the other Fallist Movement that were born as a consequence of the two ‘Must Fall Movements of 2015’ into 2016 and expected to continue in the academic year of 2017, just starting right now in South Africa.

Throughout this presentation, I reflect on my own academic education and training in South Africa between 1987 and 1998 when I earned my Bachelor's degree to Master's degree in History at a historically white University (HWU), University of Natal Durban – UND – (renamed University of KwaZulu Natal – UKZN – Howard College, Durban; and in the USA, at Howard University, in Washington D.C., where I read – on a Ford Foundation International Fellowship – and earned my PhD degree with major in African History, and minors in African Studies, Public History and Southern African History (2003-2006). I graduated in May 2013.

**Selected & Related Peer-Reviewed Publications:**


“African Research and Scholarship: 20 Years of Lost Opportunities to Transform Higher Education in South Africa”, Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies, 38 (1) December 2014 (UCLA), Special South African Edition to mark twenty years since the end of apartheid and a year since the passing of President Nelson Mandela. Link: http://escholarship.org/uc/item/13m5c5vp#page-3


“Hairgate: We Must Look at Language Too to Get to the Root of the Problem”, Mail & Guardian (M&G), 2 September 2016 http://mg.co.za/article/2016-09-02-00-hairgate-we-must-look-at-language-too-to-get-to-the-root-of-the-problem