

# UHURU

**The McGill Journal of African Studies**

Volume 3, Issue 1

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McGill's African Studies Students' Association (ASSA)

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The McGill Journal of African Studies



African Studies Students' Association (ASSA)  
of McGill University

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### **Land Acknowledgement**

McGill University is built on a land which has long served as a meeting place for many Indigenous peoples, such as the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations.

The Uhutu journal team would like to pay respect and recognize these nations as the traditional keepers of the land.

“The day will come when history will speak.  
But it will not be the history which will be taught  
in Brussels, Paris, Washington or the United Nations...

Africa will write its own history and in both North and South  
it will be a history of glory and dignity.”

- Patrice Lumumba

## Opening Statement

As the Chair of the African Studies Program at McGill University, it is my great honor to introduce readers to *Uhuru: The McGill Undergraduate Journal of African Studies*. *Uhuru*, now in its third volume, is one of the very first undergraduate journals of its kind. In the following pages readers will be treated to, and rewarded with, peer reviewed articles on a wide range of topics. These include rigorously researched and edited works on the relationship between neocolonialism and Wildlife conservation; the continued relevance of the legendary artist Jean-Michel Basquiat; the lesser known issue of identity and subculture in the Republic of the Congo; the linkage between foreign policy and political violence in East Africa and state collapse in Somalia; the colonial effects of the UN Security Council vis-à-vis Africa; the relationship between economic models - inherited from the West - and inter-ethnic violence; and the profound and enduring scholarly, political and cultural contributions of African intellectuals, filmmakers and artists (past and present) for our understanding of Pan-Africanism and Black cultural production.

The idea for the aptly named *Uhuru* (Freedom in Swahili) originated from the initiative, intellectual talent, and perseverance of the African Studies Students Association (ASSA) and the many students here at McGill that, over the years, have been steadfast in promoting rigorous academic research on topics related to Africa and the African diaspora. Indeed, *Uhuru* speaks poignantly to advancements in the scholarship on Africa in ways that would have defied expectations only a few years ago. A product of the tireless efforts of its editorial team, the Journal takes seriously issues associated with the historical (mis)representation of Africa, the importance of working towards decolonizing scholarship on the continent, the vital importance of including (and centering) research produced by student authors from Africa and those of African descent, and the encouragement of any and all contributions that address African topics from a critical analytical lens.

Readers of *Uhuru* will immediately recognize the Journal's overall sentiment of "sharing." That is, the ways in which cross-disciplinary work on Africa and the African diaspora contributes to our understanding of some of the most pressing issues not only in Africa but throughout the globe. Consequently, and taken together, the contributions to this volume not only center work on and about Africa in new, novel and critical ways; they foreground the avenues through which scholarship on Africa and the African diaspora paves the way for academics, students and the wider community alike to understand that efforts at combating anti-Black racism worldwide are crucially and foundationally determined by how we imagine, research and write about the continent of Africa.

Khalid Mustafa Medani  
Chair, African Studies Program  
McGill University

## **A Word from the ASSA**

It is an incredible honour for the African Studies Student Association to present you with another edition of our academic journal: *Uhuru*. This edition is a true testament of the determination, resilience and strength demonstrated by both the editorial team and the McGill Student body during the creative process. The past year has presented the world with unprecedented challenges and we take pride in noting their capacity to strive against all adversity and join forces in producing a quality body of work.

As an organization, the McGill African Studies Student Association is proud to carry on the legacy of our predecessors in bringing forward valuable content on Africa and its diasporas. *Uhuru* is that more meaningful as it is produced in its entirety by none other than our fellow students.

Our deepest congratulations to the editorial team who, from their first day in office, demonstrated nothing but professionalism and dedication in the completion of their tasks.

We hope that through these different pages you may embark on a journey of innumerable discoveries. Enjoy your read!

Denise Mely,  
African Studies Students' Association President

## Letter from the Editors

*Uhuru* is an Afrocentric undergraduate journal that aims to provide knowledge on various occurrences, experiences, and personalities from the African continent and its wide-ranging diaspora. The theme of this publication is “Africanization and Decolonization”.

*Uhuru*, freedom in Swahili, is meant to set free the stories, art, and academic texts produced by students who seek to share a veracious account of African realities. A more accurate representation and understanding of Africa remains to be achieved in academia. Hence, one of the main goals of this journal is to ensure the accurate depiction of the Motherland and of its people.

We are very proud of the submissions that fill the pages of this publication. The authors have touched upon a wide range of topics; each of them intriguing in their own right. Whether in the form of an academic paper or a piece of poetry, we hope that every reader will find intellectually stimulating information, differing perspectives, compelling insights, and finally, captivating take away points in every read.

Ruru Hogan  
Editor-in-Chief

Harmata Aboubakar  
Senior Editor

Naya Sophia Moser  
Junior Editor

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