Political independence in Africa during the early 1960s and mid-1970s inspired Africans to fight for independence in other spheres of life, including education. In East Africa, the development of higher education which reached its apogee in 1963 with the establishment of the Federal University of East Africa happened within the broader political context of the time. Having succeeded in bringing the British colonial government to its knees, the East African political and academic leadership vowed to Africanize the higher education sector epitomized by the Federal University. They called for the Africanization of academic and administrative staff, the curriculum, as well as teaching and research methods. But the development of higher education in East Africa happened both as part of British hegemony in the region and as a result of African agitation for higher education. Britain wanted to insulate Africans from potential politicisation if they travelled abroad. East Africans on the other hand needed higher education facilities that would produce manpower needed to consolidate political independence and ensure economic independence from Britain. In both instances, the motivating factor behind the development of higher education was political.

The spirit of nationalism which swept through East Africa united the region against the British. Once political independence was achieved, national interests prevailed over regional interests. In the process, the development of higher education was negatively affected. Therefore, the demise of the Federal University in 1970 did not come as a surprise. The university was a still born entity. It was accompanied by many challenges from its inception to its eventual collapse in 1970. This confirms the view that “education and politics are inextricably intertwined.”
POLITICS AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN EAST AFRICA

From the 1920s to 1970

Bhekithemba Richard Mngomezulu
Dedication

To the memory of my two late brothers: Moses and Josiah Mngomezulu; to my mom, Mrs. Nondlala Filda Mngomezulu; my sister, Ms. Mavis Fanisile Mngomezulu and my beloved Esovane community at Ingwavuma in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Most importantly, to the love of my life, my wife, Mrs. Silindile Jabu Mngomezulu (MaMkhumane) who gave me the reason to live and who remains my pillar of strength.

Lastly, to the people of East Africa who, through their academic and political leadership prowess, reconfigured the higher education landscape in the region for the sake of their communities.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAU</td>
<td>Association of African Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCAST</td>
<td>Advisory Committee on Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACEC</td>
<td>Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIM</td>
<td>Africa Inland Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA</td>
<td>Academic Staff Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD &amp; WA</td>
<td>Colonial Development &amp; Welfare Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODESRIA</td>
<td>Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EACSO</td>
<td>East African Common Services Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAHC</td>
<td>East Africa High Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIC</td>
<td>East India Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSC</td>
<td>Higher School Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSRC</td>
<td>Human Sciences Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICTA</td>
<td>Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDRC</td>
<td>International Development Research Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUCHEO</td>
<td>Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNA</td>
<td>Kenya National Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>MWG</td>
<td>Multinational Working Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARC</td>
<td>National Rainbow Coalition</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Royal College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTC</td>
<td>Royal Technical College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTCEA</td>
<td>Royal Technical College of East Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANU</td>
<td>Tanganyika African National Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCT</td>
<td>University of Cape Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCWI</td>
<td>University College of the West Indies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDP</td>
<td>University Development Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEA</td>
<td>University of East Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UGAC</td>
<td>University Grants Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIA</td>
<td>Universal Negro Improvement Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNISA</td>
<td>University of South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UON</td>
<td>University of Nairobi</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWC</td>
<td>University of the Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWI</td>
<td>University of the West Indies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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<td>YBA</td>
<td>Young Baganda Association</td>
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Background to the study

This book is based on my doctoral thesis titled: ‘A Political History of Higher Education in East Africa: The Rise and Fall of the University of East Africa, 1937-1970’, which was completed at Rice University in America in 2004. The book is a product of many months of hard work at different research institutions in Africa and abroad. It is about the role played by politics in the development of higher education in East Africa.

I started conducting research for this study at Fondren Library at Rice University in Texas, USA where I had access to volumes of Parliamentary Debates from the House of Commons and the House of Lords in Britain covering the period between 1920 and 1970. I also used that opportunity to scan the literature on the development of higher education in different parts of the African continent in preparation for an overview chapter on the subject. Between September 2002 and June 2003 I conducted primary research at the archives housed at Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library at the University of Nairobi and also used the Kenya National Archives (KNA). Both institutions hold tons of information on different aspects of East African history. I spent time digging through dusty documents such as reports on National Assembly debates held in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and on the proceedings at the East Africa Legislative Assembly. I also looked at Senate and Council meetings of the University of East Africa and its constituent colleges, correspondence documents and newspapers. At the end of this exercise I was able to piece together the intriguing and eventful history of the development of higher education in East Africa and demonstrated the role played by politics in the entire process of setting up the university in 1963 as well as its eventual demise in 1970.

The African Studies section at Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library gave me access to the hard to find information documents on higher education in East Africa – some of which are not published or available elsewhere. This included speeches delivered by East African academics and politicians at different moments. I also had informal conversations with East Africans who were either involved in some of the University Colleges or knew something about the issues I was keenly addressing. This was an enlightening experience although the interviews were not used as the methodology for this study.

Before returning to America I spent a few weeks in South Africa where I used the libraries at the University of Cape Town (UCT) and at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). I also used the City Library and the South African National Library in Cape Town as well as the Bellville Library. I then returned to Rice University to write my dissertation under the guidance of the late Professor E.S. Atieno-Odhambo, an eminent scholar of Kenyan descent and Professor Elias Bongmba, a reputable scholar originally from Cameroun. Another Pillar of strength for me was Professor Edward Cox, a renowned History Professor from the Caribbean.

I finished writing my dissertation and defended it successfully. Soon thereafter, my friends and colleagues pushed me to revise my thesis for publication. However, my teaching and research obligations at UWC where I resumed my work as a lecturer in the History Department soon after
graduation kept me preoccupied. I also got involved with the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) through one of the prominent African scholars who was working at their Cape Town office at the time, Professor Yaw Amoateng. This was academically enriching. I temporarily put my dissertation aside and focused on conducting research for the HSRC and lecturing at UWC.

I left UWC in July 2006 to assume a government position where I served as a senior research analyst on foreign political developments and a policy advisor. It was at this time that I had a chance to start revising my PhD dissertation before my mind was attracted to other things. Parallel to this project I was also part of the Multinational Working Group (MWG) on Higher Education, which had been put together by the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). I wrote a chapter focusing on the critical appraisal of higher education policies in post-apartheid South Africa. I also invested part of my time writing my first book on the social and political history of my rural village, Ingwavuma (far northern KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa) which was subsequently published in Germany in 2010.

The present book is written at a time when higher education is receiving specific attention in Africa in general and in South Africa in particular. Although written from the historical and political science viewpoints, the book has policy implications and is a contribution to the reconfiguration of the landscape in African higher education. It has more relevance in South Africa where numerous changes have been introduced in the higher education sector since the advent of democracy in April 1994 and more so since 2004. The book is inter-disciplinary in its approach, tackling educational, political and sociological issues. It is both a historical and political source which cuts across various disciplines.

Research method

Webster’s New Unabridged Dictionary and Longman Dictionary, define the concept method as ‘a way or manner of doing’. Methodology on the other hand is, according to Longman Dictionary, ‘the set of methods used for study or action in a particular subject’. Different research methods were used in this study. To ensure reliability of information, I analysed a wide range of documents that talk about the development of higher education in East Africa and on the African continent in general, particularly Anglophone Africa. These documents include:

(i) Reports: Commission reports, reports by different Working Parties, newspaper reports and reports by special committees;

(ii) Debates: Parliamentary debates that took place in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Britain and those that took place at the East Africa Legislative Assembly;

(iii) Acts: Parliamentary and University Acts;

(iv) Letters: Correspondence between different individuals and institutions regarding the Federal University of East Africa and its constituent colleges; and

(v) Minutes: Minutes of the meetings of the Academic Boards, University Councils, and Senate Committees at the constituent colleges and also at the Central Office of the Federal University. Document analysis and archival research thus formed the core of data collection for this book.
The structure of the book

The book is organised as follows:

It has three parts. Part I has one Chapter (Chapter 1) which provides a broad overview of the development of higher education in the British Empire as background to the study. With regards to Africa, the Chapter traces the development of higher education from the early 1920s right up to the 1960s and demonstrates how different African constituencies in Anglophone Africa responded to this development at different moments.

Part II comprises three Chapters (2-4). It focuses specifically on the rise of the University of East Africa. Chapter 2 explores the process of establishing the University of East Africa from 1937 to 1963. Chapter 3 discusses the politics behind the establishment of this Federal University by analysing different reports and other sources discussed in Chapter 2. The Chapter locates the Federal University of East Africa within the broader context of British imperial policy. Chapter 4 builds on Chapter 3; it provides the political context in which different constituencies interpreted the development of higher education in East Africa and how they perceived the Federal University once it was established.

Part III comprises two Chapters; it explores the factors that led to the demise of the University of East Africa. The main argument is that while the establishment of the University was indeed a worthwhile project, natural and human factors predetermined its fate. Chapter 5 discusses a wide range of problems that dogged the University of East Africa from the outset, demonstrating how each problem contributed to the University’s eventual collapse in 1970. Chapter 6 builds on Chapter 5 and focuses specifically on the role played by nationalism and independence in the demise of the Federal University. Chapter 7 forms the conclusion of the whole book. It provides a synthesis of the key issues discussed in the preceding Chapters and demonstrates the relevance of the present study in education policy-making in contemporary Africa, not only in East Africa which is used as the case study, but the study’s importance to: East Africa, South Africa and the entire African continent now and in the future.
Acknowledgements

Writing this book was an arduous task characterised by emotional stress and sleepless nights. However, I did not endure this pain all by myself. The study benefited greatly from a wide range of people, both in South Africa and abroad. For example, without the professional assistance I received from the staff at Fondren Library, Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library, libraries based in Cape Town and from the Kenya National Archives, this study would have lost much of its richness. I therefore acknowledge the co-operation I received from the staff members in all these institutions.

Time and space will not allow me to mention all the people who assisted me during my research in East Africa. But I would like to acknowledge the following people who, in different ways, made my research experience a memorable one: Professor Milcah Achola and her secretaries in the History Department at the University of Nairobi, Ben Nyanchoga, Eunice Wanjiru, Moses Mutulili, Solomon Githinji, Emma Manyeki at the University of Nairobi Archives (together with her two colleagues, Grace Kiragu and Lucy Wambui Njenga), and all the staff at the Africana section of the library. At the Kenya National Archives my sincere thanks and gratitude go to Mr Musila Musembi and his entire staff who became my friends, colleagues and mentors.

I am indebted to my doctoral thesis committee: Professors E.S. Atieno-Odhiambo, Edward Cox and Elias Bongmba for their detailed and generous comments on my thesis. I found those comments very useful as I revised my thesis for publication in the book form. Moreover, I would like to thank Dr Carol Sicherman from New York for sharing her sources with me. Most importantly, my hat goes down for Dr Ibrahim Abdullah, my former colleague at UWC for motivating me to travel to America and for his guidance.

I would also like to thank the trustees of the Wagoner Scholarship, which funded my memorable trip to East Africa. Without this funding, my research would have hit a snag. In the same vein, I would like to thank the postgraduate office at Rice University and all staff members for giving me the scholarship which enabled me to study in America. I will forever remember this gesture. Moreover, I would like to thank all those who pushed me to write this book, more especially Anne Chao and Verva Densmore who were like a family to me while I was in America. All my fellow PhD students played a key role in making me think seriously about the issues I was addressing in my research.

Finally, this work would have not been completed without the support I received from my family. I would like to express my sincere thanks to my beloved and caring mother, Mrs Nondlala Filda Mngomezulu, my ever supportive sister, Ms Mavis Fanisile Mngomezulu and the rest of the Mngomezulu family for enduring emotional stress as I travelled to different countries and research institutions gathering data needed to complete this work. To all these and other people whose names I could not include here, I say to them: nime njalo [Long Live]!! Above all, I thank God Almighty who protected me throughout this very long journey and enabled me to reach my set goal against all odds.

Dr B.R. Mngomezulu
October 2012
Durban
Introduction

During the last half of the twentieth century, higher education has become a key institution in societies around the world. Nearly everywhere national systems of higher education have grown tremendously in size and scope in response to increased demand for access and the growing need to train experts for an expanding array of advanced occupations.

The development of higher education in East Africa has a long history. For many years, the process was characterised by political wrangling, negotiations and compromises by black and white constituencies. What eventually became the federal University of East Africa (UEA) in 1963 was a saturation point of a process initiated by British authorities as part of the colonial thinking about imperial integration from the 1920s – an initiative that was later embraced by East Africans in the late 1950s. During the inter-war period the British Colonial Office started formulating a standard policy on African education for its African territories. As part of this initiative, on 24 November 1923, the Duke of Devonshire, Secretary of State for the Colonies, appointed a Commission under the chairmanship of W.G.A. Ormsby-Gore, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, and tasked it to investigate and report on matters of Native Education in the British Colonies and Protectorates in Tropical Africa. The main goal was to advance the progress of education in those Colonies and Protectorates. The Commission concluded its work and submitted its Report to Devonshire early in 1925. The latter subsequently published the Report as Command Paper No. 2374 in March 1925. This marked the early stages of the process of developing higher education in East Africa.

One of the key recommendations of the Ormsby-Gore Commission was that the time was opportune for some public statement of principles and policy which would prove a useful guide to all those engaged, directly or indirectly, in the advancement of native education in the African continent. Thus, although the primary focus of the Ormsby-Gore Commission was not East Africa per se, this memorandum laid a solid foundation for the development of higher education in East Africa.

As discussed in the following chapters, the actual process that culminated in the establishment of the UEA in 1963 began with the publication of the De la Warr Commission Report in 1937. The Commission had been set up by Ormsby-Gore, who had been promoted as Secretary of State for the Colonies, to examine and report upon the organisation and working of Makerere College in Uganda, which had begun its operation in 1922 and of the institutions or other agencies for advanced vocational training connected with it. One of the Commission’s key recommendations was that there was a need for the establishment of an inter-territorial University College in East Africa. However, the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 disrupted the implementation of this process somewhat.

In August 1943, Oliver Stanley, the new Secretary of State for the Colonies, appointed the Asquith Commission and tasked it to consider the principles which would guide the promotion
of higher education, learning and research and the development of universities in the British Colonies; and to explore the means through which universities and other appropriate bodies in the United Kingdom might be able to co-operate with institutions of higher education in the colonies. The Asquith Commission presented its Report in June 1945 and proposed the establishment of Colleges in the colonies where they were non-existent and the upgrading of those that were already in place. These [Asquith] Colleges would have a ‘Special Relationship’ with the University of London and would be monitored by the Inter-University Council (IUC) formed by British universities until they were ready to stand on their own as independent institutions of higher learning. The Asquith Commission endorsed the earlier recommendation made by the De la Warr Commission regarding the upgrading of Makerere College into a fully-fledged regional University College. Consequently, in September 1947, William D. Lamont, Principal of Makerere College, submitted the first formal application to the University of London seeking admission to the ‘Special Relationship’ programme. The application was accepted in November 1949 and Makerere then became the University College of East Africa serving Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar.

Meanwhile, the Royal Technical College (RTC) was established in Kenya in 1954 and admitted its first students in 1956. In 1955, the IUC and the Advisory Committee on Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology (ACCAST) appointed the First Working Party on behalf of the East Africa High Commission (EAHC) established in January 1948 as a regional administrative body. The First Working Party was tasked to review the provision for postsecondary education in East Africa. Its Report was published in 1956. While acknowledging the fact that Makerere was already at an advanced stage of development regarding higher education, the Working Party argued that the development of higher education and specifically the provision of university education in East Africa had to remain the concern of all three territories.

A Second Working Party, appointed in 1958 at the request of East African governors, agreed on the need to establish a University College in Dar es Salaam. This third College opened in 1961. The Provisional Council of the University of East Africa was established in June 1961 to draw the statutes and rules that would govern the envisaged University. Then, the University of East Africa was inaugurated at the Royal College in Nairobi on 28 June 1963. The three University Colleges physically located in Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika thus became the constituent colleges of the Federal University of East Africa. The University ceased its operation on 30 June 1970 due to political and economic reasons, some of which were already incipient from its infancy. On 1 July 1970, national universities were established in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania thus confirming the collapse of the Federal University of East Africa.

The main objective of this book is to establish the salient reasons why higher education was developed in East Africa and specifically why the Federal University was constituted. Also, the book will identify the factors responsible for the collapse of this regional institution in June 1970. Another objective of this book is to demonstrate how the history of the University of East Africa sheds light on colonial and post-colonial policies on education – especially higher education – as a contribution to educational planning in contemporary Africa. The overarching aim is to establish the role played by politics in the development of higher education in East Africa and specifically in the rise and fall of the UEA. The book is divided into three parts, each of which tackles an aspect of the broad theme of this book.
POLITICS AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN EAST AFRICA
From the 1920s to 1970

Political independence in Africa during the early 1960s and mid-1970s inspired Africans to fight for independence in other spheres of life, including education. In East Africa, the development of higher education which reached its apogee in 1963 with the establishment of the Federal University of East Africa happened within the broader political context of the time. Having succeeded in bringing the British colonial government to its knees, the East African political and academic leadership vowed to Africanize the higher education sector epitomized by the Federal University. They called for the Africanization of academic and administrative staff, the curriculum, as well as teaching and research methods. But the development of higher education in East Africa happened both as part of British hegemony in the region and as a result of African agitation for higher education. Britain wanted to insulate Africans from potential politicisation if they travelled abroad. East Africans on the other hand needed higher education facilities that would produce manpower needed to consolidate political independence and ensure economic independence from Britain. In both instances, the motivating factor behind the development of higher education was political.

The spirit of nationalism which swept through East Africa united the region against the British. Once political independence was achieved, national interests prevailed over regional interests. In the process, the development of higher education was negatively affected. Therefore, the demise of the Federal University in 1970 did not come as a surprise. The university was a still born entity. It was accompanied by many challenges from its inception to its eventual collapse in 1970. This confirms the view that “education and politics are inextricably intertwined.”