CODESRIA

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

Digital Storytelling and Archiving as Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility

Chambi Chachage

Howard University

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'The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom is an innovative document'—Issa Shivji

Abstract

This paper examines the role of digital storytelling and archiving in advancing academic freedom and social responsibility, using the Dar es Salaam Declaration, in relation to the Kampala Declaration, as its main case. Through a storytelling approach, the paper revisits the origins and evolution of these declarations, shedding light on the key actors, their contributions, and the processes that have shaped their legacy. It argues that conventional legal and content analyses often overlook the personal narratives behind these documents, limiting their influential impact on new generations of scholars and activists. After highlighting the challenges of preserving and disseminating critical academic documents, it explores how online platforms and social media have begun to bridge past gaps in accessibility, creating new opportunities for engagement. By incorporating digital storytelling, this study demonstrates how digital tools can recover and amplify marginalized voices, ensuring broader access to academic knowledge and information. The paper ultimately advocates for digital storytelling and digital archiving as vital methodologies for safeguarding academic freedom, fostering intellectual autonomy, and strengthening connections between academic communities and the broader public. In doing so, it underscores the importance of integrating digital technologies in preserving and promoting knowledge production in Africa and the African diaspora.

Introduction

In her reflection on 'How Free, How Responsible? The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom: 20 Years After', Saida Yahya-Othman shares a personal story about accessing the historic document. "Interestingly," she notes, "when I was searching for a soft copy for referencing for this article, I found it in unexpected quarters—on the website of the University of Minnesota" (Yahya-Othman 2010: 34).[1] She then rhetorically asked: "Is it available on our own University website? Take a guess" (Ibid.) By our own, she meant the official website of the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) in Tanzania. Before sharing this anecdote, Yahya-Othman observed that the new crop of young aspiring scholars recruited in institutions of higher learning may not have been aware of the existence of the Declaration, not least because they were a few years older than it. Hence, her decision to bring it to their attention through the third issue of the now-defunct *Chemchemi: Fountain of Idea*, a magazine published by the Mwalimu Nyerere Professorial Chair in Pan-African Studies at UDSM. I am one of those who were a few years older than the Declaration. Fortunately, I was aware of its existence because I used to see some copies of the publication in our home library at the UDSM campus, where the late Chachage Seithy Loth Chachage, the author of its preface in the published booklet, held them.[2] However, I knew little about its content or the story behind it.

Partly through a storytelling approach that Yahya-Othman and other key players in its genesis and evolution partially adopt, the Dar es Salaam Declaration—and in extension the Kampala Declaration—is brought to life to the generation that was not there. In this paper, I argue that, coupled with digitalization, storytelling can become a potent force for disseminating its ideas and ideals in this digital day and age. We have indeed started to see some signs or shifts from the time when Yahya-Othman could only find its electronic copy on the University of Minnesota's website in the United States to the current time, where it is accessible on other websites, such as

that of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), and discussions about or related to it featured on online platforms and social media.3 The paper revisits what the storytelling approach reveals about the genesis and evolution of the Dar es Salaam Declaration, and its enduring linkages to the Kampala Declaration, that generally seems to be lost in legal and content analyses of the seminal document. Of particular interest here is what Yahya-Othman (2010: 34) refers to as 'the process, the actors.' Who were the actual actors? What were their individual and collective roles in the overall process? When and where were their contributions documented or archived? Why are their identities and contributions not relatively widely recognized among young scholars and activists, and how can this be rectified?

After addressing the genesis and evolution, the paper shifts its focus to how digital storytelling captures, or can capture, the trajectory of subsequent processes and actors in connection to the twin declarations. Who are they and what are their individual and collective roles in realizing the ideals of academic freedom the digital age? Why and where do they engage theoretically and in practice? When and how does digitalization enable their stories to be relatively well publicized?

Before addressing these sets of questions, it is crucial to clarify the use of certain terms that may seem familiar but have specific conceptual meanings in this paper. First, the paper adopts, albeit with some elaborations, the Dar es Salaam Declaration's definition of Academic Freedom that has gained considerable traction as comprehensive in scholarly and activist works in Africa and elsewhere that specifically engage with it.[4] In line with the practice of defining concisely a term that is already broadly defined within a legal text in which it appears, the Declaration states succinctly that '"Academic Freedom" means the freedom of members of the academic individually or collectively, in the pursuit, development and transmission of knowledge, through

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research, study, discussion, documentation, creation, teaching, lecturing and writing.'[5] This paper asserts that due to its specificity, peculiarity and unconventionality, the term storytelling, in relation to the term archiving, ought to be included on its own right in any revision in lieu or alongside the terms creation and documentation.

By storytelling, the paper means a specific methodology that involves using the act of telling, listening, and collecting stories about certain events or outcomes, including those that may seem mundane or even irrelevant and thus neglected, bypassed, or omitted in conventional narratives or scholarly analyses. In this paper's estimation, it is a subversive methodology that rejects the disregarding or ignoring of certain actors and processes involved in bringing a given eventuality for the sake of the bigger picture or by privileging the main protagonist(s) and/or the memorable moment(s).[6] Whereas stories can be powerful, storytelling can be empowering. 'Moreover,' Sylvia Tamale (2020: 71) aptly notes, 'storytelling is closely associated with Indigenous ways of knowing and fits in perfectly with decolonizing/decolonial discourses.'

Digital storytelling, therefore, marshals digitalizing tools to source, produce, reproduce, and disseminate stories in empowering ways. 'The late Dana Atchley', recalls Gary Marsden et al (2010: 257), 'developed "digital storytelling" in California in the early to mid-1990s with the idea of putting "the universal human delight in narrative and self-expression into the hands of Everyone."' If indeed academic freedom, as conceived by both the Dar es Salaam and Kampala declarations, extends beyond the academic and intellectual communities, respectively, to include the wider communities that ought to mutually benefit from the knowledge production ensuing from it, then digital storytelling is suited for the dissemination of such knowledge.

Here what is crucial, as Marsden et al. (2010: 257, 258) notes in the case of rural Africa, is for communities to shape their own—or adopt—forms of 'digital storytelling compatible with their ways of doing and saying' by designing—or adapting—storytelling 'systems suited to their community.' In this sense, CODESRIA and its wide continental and global networks of academic and intellectual communities involved in propagating and safeguarding Academic Freedom can fully employ digital storytelling in sharing widely the stories and the times of the two associated declarations. It is ironic that the digital version of the Dar es Salaam Declaration that appears on CODESRIA website is sourced from the same University of Minnesota' link.[7] 'Move', Mshai Mwangola (2008: 17) aptly declare, 'such interventions as "The Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility" out of library archives, through introductory courses offered in every department at both undergraduate and graduate level, into the everyday life of the academic institutions on this continent.' And into African digital spaces, we may add.

The core part of this paper is divided into three sections. First, it looks at who were the actors in the beginning and their respective roles and contributions in relation to others. Second, it focuses on the actual process during the declaration's inception and how this developed in the course of time in relation to events that have had a positive or negative bearing on Academic Freedom in Africa in general and in Tanzania in particular. Third, it captures the ways in which digitalization can accord and, in some cases, has accorded the digital avenues for furthering the dissemination of the ideas and inspire the practices advocated in the Dar es Salaam Declaration and what is regarded as its sister document—the Kampala Declaration.

The　　　　　Actors　　　　　and　　　　　the　　　　　Genesis

In his submission on 'Revisiting the Struggles for Academic/Intellectual Freedom and the Social Responsibility of Intellectuals in Africa: The Case of the Dar es Salaam and Kampala Declarations', J. Oloka-Onyango identifies one key individual actor in the genesis of the two documents. 'Both', he notes, 'were primarily authored by the same individual, Issa Shivji, law professor at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM)' (Oloka-Onyango 2024: 1). Shivji's publicly available Curriculum Vitae attest to this. It indicates he was the chair of the respective drafting committees in 1990.[8]

Shivji's (1991) analysis of 'The Jurisprudence of the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom' mentions, without naming them, twelve delegates who attended the inaugural workshop that adopted the declaration. Characteristic of his aversion to individual identity politics and self-aggrandizement, he only points out that these signatories were from autonomous staff associations of six institutions of higher learning in the country. He also notes the presence of one invited student representative from the then-proposed and soon-to-be student union of UDSM, who he/she doesn't name. He also notes the attendance of unnamed representatives from eight other institutions of higher learning in Tanzania that did not yet have staff associations.

To get the full gist of the story of what transpired, he directs his readers, through a footnote, to the working documents and the proceedings workshop that were reproduced in the University of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly's (UDASA) Newsletter/Forum. However, he gives us a glimpse by pointing out that it was "two days of intense, and at times heated, discussions at the

workshop" (Shivji 1991: 128). Both the twelve delegates who voted and the nine observers who were not eligible to vote participated fully in the deliberations.

Before we consult the proceedings from the difficult-to-access and yet-to-be-digitized archives of the UDASA Newsletter's issues from the early 1990s before the age of the Internet, it is crucial to note that before the workshop, there was a lot of background work that was done. Some key actors are hardly mentioned or not mentioned at all in relatively recent reflections and narratives of the genesis of the declaration. This recollection aptly captures, albeit briefly, by way of

storytelling some key actors and their seminal role at the very beginning of the process:

> UDASA, chaired by Dr. Kapepwa Tambila at that time, recognized the importance of addressing the issue of academic freedom in a wider perspective, to deal not with individual instances, but systematically and globally. A small committee was set up, convened by Issa Shivji and including myself [Saida Yahya-Othman], Ernest Wamba dia Wamba and Ammon Mbelle. We had long, intense, exciting meetings, thrashing out ideas, consulting colleagues in other places, reading various human rights declarations and covenants (Yahya-Othman 2010: 35).

To date, the late Tambila does not feature in direct connection to the Dar es Salaam Declaration on any text-recognizable document available online via Google search and Google Scholar. Nor does the late Mbelle. Hence, a need to adapt digital storytelling as an approach to capture and document digitally the genesis and evolution of the Dar es Salaam Declaration, among other related or neglected topics and actors. This could start with digitizing and uploading online Chemchemi magazines and UDASA newsletters from yesteryears.

Although the task of bridging the digital divide reflected in the relatively limited access to online academic materials in the Global South compared to the Global North is still a work in progress,

the current situation is starkly different from the time when the Declaration's conception. "This," recalls Yahya-Othman (2010: 35), "was before the easy access to information made possible by the internet today…." Stressing the seminal nature, she adds that "at any rate, there would have been very little reference material in terms of the declaration, because in Africa, ours was a pioneering attempt, although we benefitted greatly from the Lima Declaration and a statement of academic freedom by Zimbabwe's Association of University Teachers" (Ibid.).

Given the advancement of digitalization in Africa in general and Tanzania in particular since 2010, when she penned those words, the digital conditions are relatively suited for digital storytelling and digital archiving of the intellectual contributions of key actors in the genesis and evolution of the Dar es Salaam Declaration in connection to other freedoms. For instance, in his critique of 'The Transition to Multiparty Democracy in Tanzania: Some History and Missed Opportunities' available online, Tambila (1995) mentions academic freedom twice. Although he does not specifically mention the Dar es Salaam Declaration, one can notice its discourse lingering on in his lamentation about the implementation of specific recommendations concerning the then transition period from the Presidential Commission on Mono-Party or Multi-Party System, famously known as the Nyalali Commission. Observing that, by December 1992, about half of the twenty-six specific recommendations had been partially or fully implemented, he notes that five of them—including one on enhancing academic freedom—had been left out.

In his estimation, this specific recommendation and those on educating or informing the people about the principles of multi-party democracy, teaching the constitution and human rights in schools, as well as enhancing the free flow of information, and encouraging the growth of a free

press, respectively, 'were very crucial in the short-term' (Tambila 1995: 477). In a parlance that seems to invoke the Dar es Salaam Declaration in line with Yahya-Othman's earlier assertion about his quest for a wider perspective on and systematic approach to academic freedom, he rhetorically asks a chicken-egg question: "The other area which needed examination in connection with education was which development preceded which: education for democracy or the democratization of educational institutions and organisations?" (Tambila 1995: 478). "Obviously," he responds conclusively, "an undemocratic Ministry of Information cannot encourage the growth of a free press, nor can an undemocratically organised and run university be expected to help enhance academic freedom and least of all an undemocratic state" (Ibid.).

The   Process   and   the   Evolution

In his critical examination of 'Academic Freedom, the Autonomy of Institutions of Higher Education and the Social Responsibility of Academics', the late Josaphat L. Kanywanyi (2006: 80) ask rhetorically: "Hitherto what African debate on the issues raised by the declaration have we had?" He initially posed this question at a CODESRIA-UDASA workshop on 'Academic Freedom, Social Responsibility the State of Academia' held at White Sands Hotel in Dar es Salaam on February 10-11, 2005. By then—15 years after the Dar es Salaam Declaration—the anticipated debate had been mainly muted.

In a way, the proposal that UDASA submitted to CODESRIA accordingly subtitled 'More than a Decade after the Dar as Salaam and Kampala Declarations' anticipated his question. "The conditions that necessitated the formulation of the Dar es Salaam Declaration may have altered, but the conditions of academic un-freedom still persist, and in some instances, they are on the

increase", it observed.[9] "It is for this reason," the proposal added, "that UDASA has decided to hold a workshop to review the state of academic freedom in Tanzania since the launching of the Dar es Salaam and Kampala declarations." It even went further to state that 'education and knowledge production' were 'under siege more than ever before.'

Acutely aware of this situation, Kanywanyi ((2006: 80) pointed out that what transpired in the immediate aftermath of the Dar es Salaam Declaration in 1990-1991 "suggests that something more concrete and more mundane was and is necessary". He thus concluded in a seemingly ironic way: "Otherwise we shall have to wait indefinitely for another workshop to '"debate"'". The wait was definitely over when a series of workshops that dealt implicitly or explicitly with the two declarations were held from time to time over the next two decades in Tanzania.

This has been the case over years despite the fact that the delegates of the 2005 workshop came out with a resolution—reproduced in Chachage (2008: 77-78)— to, among other things, reaffirm their 'commitment to uphold the academic freedoms stated in the declarations.' In relation to that, they solemnly rededicated themselves to undertake their 'social responsibilities' of serving their communities seriously (Ibid.). Accordingly, they also resolved to again underline 'the need for the governments to take seriously their duties of guaranteeing equal and equitable education to the people and making available adequate proportion of their national incomes for education, guarantee the academics the right to determine what is taught and how it is taught without compromising the interests of the people' (Ibid.).

Adopted by Academic Staff Associations of East Africa on February 11, 2005, this resolution stemmed from noting, among other things, that there was 'excessive interference by non-professional administrators, consultants and advisors in the determination of forms of knowledge, how knowledge is produced and imparted and methods of research' (Ibid.) One of the other things was the undue interference from International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and donors. This resulted from what the delegates perceived as an increasing withdrawal of East African governments from funding of public universities.

Published posthumously, Chachage's (2008: 79) edited volume includes ten names of signatories of the resolution and their respective institutions and countries.[10] It also reproduces the proceedings that aptly captures in storytelling way what transpired in the buildup to the resolution. A glittering story of the softspoken Geoffrey Mmari, the former Vice-Chancellor (VC) of UDSM and then CV of Open University, sheds light on the collective and individual loss and gains in the struggle for academic freedom. In the welcoming, the proceedings note that the then Vice-Chair of UDASA Yahya-Othman expressed how proud they were 'to have deliver the keynote address, as he had been the first chairperson of the academic staff organisation, started during a momentous and crisis-ridden period.' She went on to praise him 'as a dynamic scholar eager to foster academic freedom and excellence as well as the welfare of fellow academicians.'

Similarly, in the Vote of Thanks, the then UDASA chairperson, Chachage, 'extolled him as a staunch and unflinching supporter of academic freedom in the various positions he has held and as a pioneer of honest, dynamic leadership in his role as the first UDASA chairperson.' One—especially those not familiar with his story—may wonder how can in it be that a VC and a

former VC, who are generally seen as the extension of the state apparatus be heaped with such praises from advocates of academic freedom. By way of storytelling, the proceedings give a glimpse. 'The discussion which followed described Professor Mmari as a dedicated public servant and a true academician who has sacrificed a lot in pursuit of knowledge, excellence and fairness,' it narrates. 'A question was posed: why do many activists abdicate or give up their militancy once they get better or higher jobs.' In his response, 'Professor Mmari explained that very few people practice in earnest what they preach….' Hence attainment of high administrative positions in academia led some of them to forsake their professorial/professional stance.

In a way he was talking about his story—a tale of two VC positions. As a result of what came to be known as the 1990 crisis at UDSM that pitted a suppressing state against protesting students, he was transferred or rather removed as CV. Students were demanding, among other things, the right to form an autonomous student organisation and to be free from the then single-party state's encroachment on their affairs. After an apparent stalemate, the government closed indefinitely the main campus of UDSM on May 12, 1990. "Professor Mmari was removed from the University apparently for having been too soft on students during the crisis", notes Buluda Itandala (1996: 20) drawing from his reading of UDASA Newsletter/Forum. 'It is widely believed among the academic community", Shivji (1991: 133) noted then, 'Prof. Mmari's democratic inclinations, personal integrity and popularity in the university community proved to be too much for the powers-that-be.'

Shivji (1991: 133) also notes that the Dar es Salaam Declaration recognizes that one of the ways in which security of tenure can be undermined indirectly is by 'simply transferring an outspoken

academic, for example, to another post within or outside the institution.' As such, it contains Articles that 'are supposed to take care of such eventualities' (Ibid.). However, as it has been noted in Kanywanywi's (2006) critique above, these provisions are not legally binding. In fact, the proceedings from the 2005 UDASA-CODESRIA workshop documents that, in responding to his 'paper centred on the need to design and operationalise the provisions of the Dar es Salaam Declaration by providing tools for their implementation' some 'discussants argued that the declaration was not a legal document but a political statement meant to raise awareness on the rights and obligations of academics and should be evaluated from this perspective.'

This awareness, however, did not stop the state from removing the popular VC. Nor from attempting to transfer other academics whose attempted removal from UDSM was rumoured to be for 'allegedly inciting students to challenge the authorities during the crisis' (Itandala 1996: 21). One of the UDASA Newsletter/Forum's editorials, most likely penned by at least one of them, thus captured graphically, albeit succinctly their story in relation to the Dar Declaration:

> When the members of UDASA and other staff organizations of higher learning in Tanzania decided to launch the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academic in early July 1991, little did they know that…the Declaration would be subjected to a test at the moment of launching. The launching coincided with the removal of three members of staff, namely, associate Professor M. Baregu (Political Science Department… and Prof. A. Kweka (Institute of Development Studies) and Dr. C.S.L Chachage (Sociology Department). These were being transferred to other institution without their consent. The participating members of the launching ceremony declared that the transfer were an "arbitrary and reprehensible" exercise of state powers which impinged on the integrity and autonomy of the University. They also called upon the government to desist from such interference in the running of the University (The Editor 1992: 1).

The saga received coverage in the then fledgling, liberalized media. Bulbul Dhar (1995) notes that *Family Mirror*'s second issue in July 1991, asserted that it was because of their criticism of

'those in power.' She also notes that on July 12, 1991, *The Business Times*' (12th July 1991) felt 'that the issues raised in the 1990 crisis, debated in public in UDASA's Workshop on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility, are widespread and the events on the University could be seen as a microcosm of activity within the country as a whole' (Dhar 1995: 278). A frequent review of Tanzania in the Media from expatriates had this to say:

> According to the August 1991 issue of AFRICA EVENTS the 'crisis ridden' University of Dar es Salaam faces another storm in October when it reopens after a six-month break. The removal of a very popular Vice-Chancellor in April had demoralised many 'on the Hill' and the attempt to transfer three senior academics at the beginning of June had added 'new ingredients to perhaps an explosive brew'. The academic staff association had subsequently organised a seminar in honour of the ex-Vice-Chancellor, Prof Mmari, focusing on the role of the university in society and had launched a 'Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom' (Britain-Tanzania Society 1991: 23).[11]

In solidarity, the Committee for Academic Freedom in Africa reproduced one of the editorials from UDASA Newsletter/Forum that shed more light on the authoritarian intervention from the highest office in the country. They actually "received letters from the Central Establishment in the President's Office, removing them from the University and requiring them to report to other institutions" (The Editor, UDASA Newsletter/Forum 1991: 15). For the editor, this was a poignant occasion for the implementation of Article 30 of the Dar es Salaam Declaration that provides for security of tenure. At UDASA's emergency meeting they came with this resolution, among others: "If the university authorities do cut off their salaries or try to evict them from their quarters, the members agreed to withdraw from all university committees as the first step (Ibid.).

I recall, as a terrified young member of the household of one of the three academics, my worry was if our family will get a place to stay. In hindsight, I see why provisions for security of tenure in the Dar es Salaam Declaration are not just about the individual as unitary but as a collectivity.

The father of my schoolmates at Mlimani Primary school located within UDSM became my instant hero when I heard, through the news on the radio, that he queried the decision in the parliament. The same editorial of UDASA Newsletter/Forum thus captured what transpired:

> A member of parliament (Mr. P. Qorro, NP for Karatu) who raised the same question in the parliament was given a stern warning by the Speak that he could be sacked. When the same member of Parliament raised this question and withheld "a shilling" from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, the government took the position that: "Member of Staff of the University or Universities will not be removed from their positions without consent" (The Editor 1992: 1).

Such yesteryears stories of struggles for academic freedom within and without the walls of the academy may be well known to older generations, especially of those who were there. However, they are relatively not accessible to a younger generation, not least because historic documents that contains their narrative have not been digitized or are lost.[12] For instance, current issues of colorful UDASA newsletters are digitized and uploaded.[13] However, the older, radical issues have not yet been digitized, and their physical copies are difficult to access from UDSM's library or UDASA's offices as evidenced in the course of drafting this paper. Digitizing in the context of digitalization ought to be the order of the day in the digital age, a theme we now turn to.

The   Digitalization   and   the   Trajectory

In his synthesis report on 'Academic Freedom, Democracy and Sustainable Development in Africa: Re-envisioning the Role of the University', Muhidin Shangwe (2024: 5) states: "The rise of the digital space and associated technologies such as Artificial Intelligence must have a significant bearing on academic freedom." The entrance and presence of advocates of academic freedom in digital spaces has widened access to both the contents of and discussions on the Dar

es Salaam Declaration. For instance, in an online debate about the state of the education system in Tanzania on October 8, 2024, its principal drafter used his Twitter (now known as X) account to point out that the Declaration recommended that the foundational principles of education should be enshrined in the constitution.[14]

When organisers live-streamed a panel on 'Academic Freedom, Democracy and Intellectual Social Responsibility in a Technological Age' during CODESRIA-UDSM'S 'Colloquium on Academic Freedom, Democracy and Sustainable Development in Africa on November 9, 2023, it had a wide reach. Its link on Twitter has been viewed more than one thousand times since that time.[15] Malinda S. Smith, the Associate Vice President of Research (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) at the University of Calgary in Canada, watched it, noting its important discussion on the two declarations and CODESRIA's commitment to "invest in the development of academic and intellectual freedom in the East Africa region."[16] She shared UDSM's link to the live stream on Twitter, which has garnered more than four hundred views since then. Her subsequent tweets with links to the Dar es Salaam and Kampala Declarations from the University of Minnesota have been viewed more than one hundred times, thus far.[17]

Following—and partly inspired by—the CODESRIA-UDSM colloquium, on November 8, 2024, Muhidin hosted, as part of the 8th Voice of Social Science (VSS) conference, a lively discussion on 'Whither Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics in Tanzania?'[18] Two things stood out that illustrate the potentiality of digital storytelling. First, it departed from the conventional structure of convening a panel of solely academics to discuss matters of academic freedom. Muhidin invited to UDSM a radical journalist, Khalifa Said, who has over 55 thousand

followers on Twitter; an influential lawyer, Fatma Karume, who has 1.1 million followers on Twitter; and Aeshi Mashaka, a student, as discussants. Mary Ndaro, a fiery activist who run a feminist digital platform known as Vavagaa was also invited to take the place of Fatma who could not make it due to an urgent legal matter.[19]

Second, the discussions were live streamed beyond the confines of academia.[20] The YouTube link that was used, indicates that since then there has been over 400 views.[21] Some of us who were far away in the African diaspora opted to impromptu use Clubhouse, a digital audio platform, that was connected to Zoom, a digital audiovisual platform. Through Udadisi House on Clubhouse that has over 11 thousand followers, we followed the debate live and engage in our own live discussion.[22] Clubhouse Replays indicate that 76 people tuned in and after a brief interruption 64 tuned in again, most of them outside academia. As the host of Udadisi, I was initially worried that people would not enter as there were exciting topics in other Houses.

Written comments on the Clubhouse Chatroom included a clarifying, if not a rhetorical, question about the whether the intellectuals during the heydays of academic activism at UDSM were 'really' free: 'Did academia 'really' challenge power in some meaningful way. Or are we just romanticizing the past"? "Does academic freedom in Tanzania permit controversial and politically incorrect academic question", queried another member citing a controversial example from the US. Other comments dealt directly from what discussants in the panel and participants during the plenary discussions evoked, ranging from some being upset with a senior professor who seemed to dismiss the contribution from a young participant to being excited about a push back against the professor.

Discussants from outside academia brought fresh ideas and stories, knowingly or unknowingly, connecting some pertinent issues to the clauses and ideals of the Dar es Salaam Declaration. "We are sitting here right now at the University discussing these grand ideas and theories about academic freedom", queried Said, "but there are people out there who are still missing." This was in reference to activists and opposition politicians who have been abducted or presumed dead, such Ben Saanane. A memoir of an investigative journalist, Erick Kabendera, reasserts that he met this fate because of questioning the authenticity of the PhD of a former president from UDSM. 'Both opposition and government sources I have spoken to', Kabendera (2024: 2) claims, 'confirm that he was taken to State House where the president, who always carried a gun, personally shot him in the head.'

Based on past events in Tanzania and elsewhere, the Dar es Salaam Declaration anticipates such eventualities. Part of Article 41 states: 'Institutions of higher education should be critical of conditions of political violations of human rights in our society.' However, it does not explicitly state what form of intervention when it involves members of society who are not academics. In the case of the latter, it categorical. "All institutions of higher education shall extend support to other such institutions and individual members of academic communities, both inside or outside the country, when they are subject to persecution," reads part of Article 43. "Such support", its other parts specify, may be moral or material, and should include refuge and employment or education for victims of persecution.'

Conclusion

In her appraisal 'Towards Academic Freedom for Africa in the 21st Century', Amina Mama made two key observations that anticipates digital storytelling as envisioned in this paper. First, 'the global shift towards a much greater reliance on knowledge and information, information, a trend that is likely to further marginalise the world's poorest continent if steps are not taken to address the fact that we also have the world's lowest higher education enrolment' (Mama 2006: 1). Second, 'the introduction of information and communication technologies" that had "already facilitated the emergence of a number of new collegial and research networks across the region and enhanced the work of existing associations' (Mama 2006: 29).

These twin trends have dramatically increased since the Review of Academic Freedom in Africa commissioned by CODESR1A/UNESCO in 2004 that informed her observations. As such, they call for further adoption and integration of digital storytelling as part and parcel of academic freedom to bridge the gap in the global production of knowledge and information. Even though the digital divide between the Global North and the Global South is still wide, the relatively little access to information and communication technologies within Global Africa has shown that, by way of storytelling, Africans can wield digital tools to produce knowledge and information that is relevant to the continent and its diaspora. This what this paper has attempted to demonstrate through revisiting the 'her/hi-story' and trajectory of the Dar es Salaam Declaration in relation to the Kampala Declaration on Academic Freedom. A story that ought to be widely digitally told.

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[1] The version of the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom uploaded on the University of Minnesota's website is still available at http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/africa/DARDOK.htm. 31 January 2025.
[2] The version uploaded on the University of Minnesota's website contains the preface, however, many texts online, including Chachage's (2008: 86-94) and Shivji's (1991 135-141), do not include it.
[3] Apart from appearing in some texts published online, it also appears in the following websites: https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g04/102/33/pdf/g0410233.pdf; https://www.concernedhistorians.org/content_files/file/et/04.pdf; https://codesria.org/public-statements/ ; and https://codesria.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Dar-es-Salaam-Declaration.pdf. 31 January 2025.
[4] These include, among others: Adar, K.G., 1999. Human rights and academic freedom in Kenya's public universities: the case of the universities academic staff union. *Human Rights Quarterly*, *21*(1), pp.179-206; Gutema, B., 2015. Whither the African University? *Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities*, *11*(2), pp.29-56; Nyamnjoh, F.B., 2015. Introduction: Academic freedom in African universities. *Pax Academica*, *1*, pp.7-14; Taha, F. and Bjørkelo, A., 2016. The crisis of higher education in Sudan with special reference to the University of Khartoum, 1956–2014. *North–South Knowledge Networks*; Nkhata, M.J., 2017. Academic freedom, institutional autonomy and the University of Malawi: An analysis of some trends and prospects. *Law, Democracy & Development*, *21*, pp.127-152; Appiagyei-Atua, K., 2019. Students' academic freedom in African universities and democratic enhancement. *African Human Rights Law Journal*, *19*(1), pp.151-166; Rajamanickam, R. and Anisah Che Ngah, A.C.N., 2019. Academic Freedom in Malaysia and its Relationship with the National Education Philosophy. *European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences*; Nyamnjoh, A.N. and Luescher, T.M., 2022. 16. Academic freedom, students and the decolonial turn in South Africa. *Handbook on Academic Freedom*, p.270; Belluigi, D.Z., 2023. De-idealising the problem of academic freedom and academic autonomy: Exploring alternative readings for scholarship of South African higher education. *Southern African*

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[5] Reproduced in, among other sources, Shivji (1991:140) and Chachage (2008: 93).

[6] For instance, as of 31 January 2025, there is only one source online, i.e. https://codesria.org/public-statements/, that provides the proceedings with tactual names of signatories of the Dar es Salaam Declaration on 19 April 1990: Professor AC Mosha Mr. DJ Sadilci from ARDHl Institute Staff Assembly; Dr. J. Bugengo and Mr. BSA Liheta from Co-operative College Staff Association; Dr. GGM Ituga and Dr. L J Shio from the Institute of Development Management Staff Association; Mr. S. Kamanzi and Mr. B. Kaare from the Institute of Finance Management Staff Assembly; Prof. ASM Mgeni and Dr. AZ Maltee from Sokoine University of Agriculture Staff Association; Professor Issa G. Shivji and Professor E. Wamba-dia-Wamba from University of Dar-es-sa1aam Academic Staff Assembly.

[7] https://codesria.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Dar-es-Salaam-Declaration.pdf.

[8] The CV is downloadable on the University of Dar es Salaam Website: https://www.udsm.ac.tz/web/index.php/linkurl/download/3373. 27 January 2025. It is also accessible in his Academia page: https://udsm.academia.edu/IShivji/CurriculumVitae. 31 January 2025.

[9] Chachage Seithy Loth Chachage Digital Family Archive under construction.

[10] Mr Eligius Benjamin Danda from MUCASA (Moshi University College Moshi University of Cooperative and Business Studies), Dr Elifuraha G. Mtalo from ARISA (UCLAS [University College of Lands and. Architectural Studies now Ardhi University] Staff Assembly), and Prof. Chachage S. L. Chachage from UDASA (University of Dar es Salaam [UDSM] Academic Staff Assembly), and Prof. D. M. Kambarage from SUASA (Sokoine University [of Agriculture] Academic Staff Assembly) all in Tanzania Mainland; Mr Salim Othman Hamad from SUZAASA (The State University of Zanzibar [SUZA] Academic Staff Association) and Mr Lubowa Luwalira from Zanzibar University Staff Academic Assembly both in Zanzibar/Tanzania;; Prof. John H. Nderutu from UASU (University [of Nairobi] Academic Staff Union), Mr Musaha Esebe from UASU ([Moi] University Academic Staff Union), Mr Muga K'olale from UASU ([Egerton] University Academic Staff Union) all in Kenya; and Dr Ezra M. Twesigomwe from MUASA (Makerere University Staff Association) in Uganda.

[11] All but one misplaced issue of this bulletin that started in 1975 have been digitized. https://www.tzaffairs.org/scanned-pdf-issues/. 31 January 2025

[12] It is interesting to note that some young intellectuals and activists have opted to self-publish online to ensure that their struggles for academic freedom are digitally documented for posterity. For instance, in 2027 Joel Ntile and Bob Chacha Wangwe have published a pictorial biography of Alphonce Lusako entitled 'A Long Walk to Academic Justice' cf. The Chanzo (2012) 'Young Activist's Twelve-Year Ordeal in Search of education', 4 December, https://thechanzo.com/2020/12/04/young-activists-twelve-year-ordeal-in-search-of-education/ (Accessed 31 January 2025).

[13] https://udasa.udsm.ac.tz. 30 January 2025.

[14] https://x.com/IssaShivji/status/784701932669657088. 28 January 2025.

[15] https://x.com/UdsmOfficial/status/1722565141164884023. 28 January 2025.

[16] https://x.com/MalindaSmith/status/1722590814721945845. 28 January 2025.

[17] https://x.com/MalindaSmith/status/1722591426574504441; https://x.com/MalindaSmith/status/1722591674839531564. 28 January 2025.

[18] https://x.com/shangweliberia/status/1854726638954553561?s=61. 29 January 2025.

[19] https://x.com/shangweliberia/status/1855348418513969204?s=61. 29 January 2025.

[20] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnsmRL9ogYA. 30 January 2025.

[21] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnsmRL9ogYA. 30 January 2025.

[22] https://www.clubhouse.com/@udadisi. 30 January 2025.