

Friday, 20.05.2022; 4:15 - 6:00 pm CEST

Toyin Falola, The University of Texas at Austin:

Research in Universities and the Legacy of Colonization

Abstract:

One of the hallmarks of research is to reflect and inquire into the characteristics of society and broaden the scope of its development. As a result, research cannot be distanced from society's past; it wears it like a cloak. Colonial history and heritage have had their impacts on research endeavors, and they seem not to have been washed away by time. The systems and remnants of identifiable colonial heritages still seen in African research are many. In this lecture, the most important ones will be discussed and criticized with recommendations provided. Since research must extend the scope of development and inspire it in society, it must be used to redefine how the global world and Africans see Africa. It must be harnessed to show that those who study Africa are capable of era-changing innovations and bringing certain innovative ideas, systems, and inventions from Africa to bear. Research must be used to prove that Africa is not a land of nothingness or of barbarians who beckon for sympathy. Hence, this lecture will show how research can help re-identify Africa as it should be. One feature militating against the Africanization of university research in Africa is the conceptualization system that defines the credibility of the research. The African intellectual sphere has conceptual explanations and philosophies that are original and identifiable to the continent. Unfortunately, the explanation of concepts that form the bases of research and the development of research logic is sought elsewhere. No doubt, Africa has sufficient language structures to express ideologies in the most relatable way, and the adaptation of foreign languages that is usually expected in research endeavors must be allowed to reflect the continent's language philosophies, which will make such research more identifiable to Africa itself. This lecture will discuss how the African pool of knowledge can be explored and utilized to explain concepts from an African perspective and provide relevant research results that can be identified with Africa. Globalization has come to stay in academia. Therefore, the importance of exchanging ideas, concepts, and research for expanding knowledge cannot be underestimated. This work will inquire into the standing of African university research in the academic world, as well as how well the discipline should be positioned to gain prominence in the global community.

Bio:

Toyin Falola's current project is on the African knowledge systems, which he has been studying for a decade. He recently published *Religious Beliefs and Knowledge Systems* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2021), and a long book, *Decolonizing African Studies: Knowledge Production, Agency, and Voice* (University of Rochester Press), *Sacred Words and Holy Realm* (Bloomsbury, forthcoming), and *Autoethnography and Knowledge Systems* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).