

NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY



History, Memory and the Archive: Prospects for the Diversification of the Academic Canon in South African Higher Education

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25 YEARS UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG & NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY COOPERATION WEEK
26-30 JUNE 2023

Introduction

- South Africa's educational **theoretical foundations and pedagogic practices remain entrenched in the past and reflect knowledge centred in western intellectual world**, even though there are policies in place to redress the past marginalisation of indigenous epistemologies
- There is growing **academic discourse on the role of the African archive in the understanding and reclamation of the African episteme** that has been undervalued through deliberate colonial epistemic erasure
- The value of the African archive in our context is three-fold:
 - it is a **record of a collective memory** of society
 - the **primary source of the archive are the early African thinkers**, writing in indigenous languages and from an African perspective and,
 - the **lexicon of a language provides insights into word meanings** and therefore gives a glimpse into a society's conceptualization about phenomena at the time of writing and is therefore one of the **resources for recovering memory**
- This contribution provides insights on the value of the African archive in the reconstruction of memory through African historiography from an African perspective, and the potential of the archive in diversifying and transforming the academic canon

Institutional and Faculty context

- As a Faculty of Humanities in an African university, we ask ourselves critical questions:
 - What is **our purpose** and how are we positioned in relation to society and its needs?
 - What **knowledge traditions** set us apart from other Faculties of Humanities in Africa?
 - How do we impart these knowledge traditions to **make our students distinct from others**?
- Our response to these questions guided by institutional strategic priorities on:
 - Revitalisation of the Humanities and Fostering transdisciplinarity
 - Origins, Culture, Heritage and Memory with a focus on
 - African Vernacular Archive and Heritage Studies, and
 - Women's Digital Archive and Gendered Histories

Questions of History, Memory and Archive in an African University

- Given the deliberate epistemic erasure, the marginalization and invisibility of historiography of African scholars on African experiences before and during European and missionary engagement, an African archive (a collection or a repository of documents imagined as belonging together as sources of historical evidence) ...
 - is important in **exploring authoritative African narratives**, presenting and preserving marginalised voices, and engaging with African knowledge systems
 - inserts **African historiographies about African experience** in knowledge production processes
 - is important in **understanding the role of power and dominance (hegemony) in the erasure of memory, or the reclamation of memory**

Sources of the archive



- Documentation of oral narratives from the native population
- Travelogues from early explorers
- Missionaries – journals, reports to their Missionary societies in their home countries, etc
- Colonial administrators' reports to the Queen
- Records of early African literates' intellectual thoughts
- Academics from the global North

Early recognition of precolonial African indigenous episteme

- In all grammatical variations of form, [isiXhosa] is eminently distinguished by system and regularity. It is ... correctly spoken by all classes of the community, which is not the case, perhaps, with any of our European tongues...(Appleyard 1850: 67-8).
- [isiXhosa] oral tradition in debates demonstrates gift of logic. [T]hey have tenacious memory... and nothing escapes their keen observation and when [knowledge is] engraved in the tablet of their memory, it is never obliterated (Holden, 1866 paraphrased from Mostert, 1992: 202-3)
- Whosoever wants to gain an intimate knowledge of the native ... will best do it by studying the fruits of his intellect: those productions which serve ...for the education of both the young and the old, wherein his soul expresses itself, unstifled by foreign intrusion ... (Meinhof 1899).

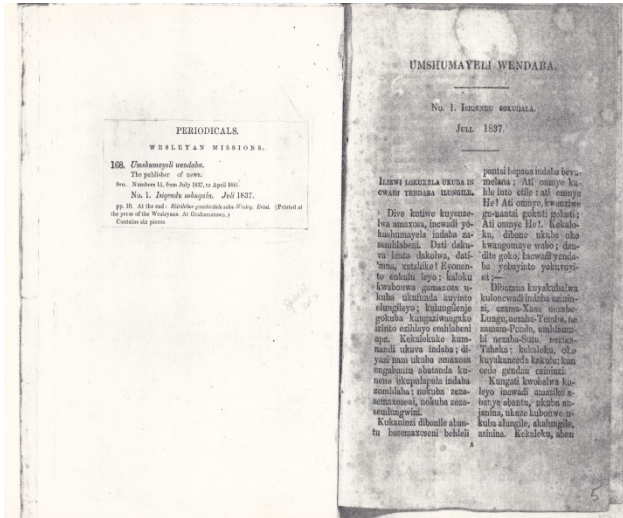
Recognition followed by deliberate ignorance

- There is very little in old Kaffirdom worth preserving – and we think it will be the wisdom of the natives as soon as possible to move forward into day – and secure the blessings which the present time brings to them. (Steward in Isigidimi 1871)

African Languages Literary Archive

- Primary purpose: recovery, preservation and valorisation of (south) African epistemologies from early African thinkers writing in indigenous African languages (isiXhosa)
- The ultimate aim is to produce diverse and rich epistemic academic canon that recognises experiences from the global South, especially from Africa.
- Research activities include:
 - Identification, collection, documentation, curation and publication isiXhosa writings from 19th century African intellectuals, and others using newspapers as the primary sources, and **deliberate inclusion of writings from women intellectuals**
 - Development of a digital archive to preserve and widen access to the writings
 - Collaborate with government institutions in identification and preservation of sites from which literary activities from early African thinkers took place
 - Translation into African languages of writings identified as key texts from African writers across the continent and the diaspora.

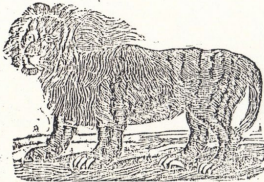
Literary activity from 1823-1950s



ISIBUTO SAMAVO.

No. 1

JANUARY 1843.



IZILO ZOMHLABA.

I.—INGONYAMA.

Ingonyama yinkosi yamaramncwa. Si
atsho gokuba i yinto ekalipileyo kucene: i
namanjla amakulu. Yinto onga ti waku
yi bona, u ti yikati e gangetole lenkabi. In-
zipo zayo asi zizo nezipo. Inkunzi iy'aziwa
gesinnci esikulu esisentanyeni. I ti yona
yaku ba nomsindo i be yinto eyoyikekayo

ISITUNYWA SENNYANGA.

"UTIXO SIMOVIKE; UKUMKANI SIMBEKE."

[ISANI 1.]

EQONCI, INNYANGA 8, 1850.

[IXANISO 14d.]

UKUBIKWA KWENKOMO NEMFUMELA
EZIBUWA. O.
INSTANSI 4, 1850.
(Kakhegwanezi Afozomonyazi.)

1. - EMBUSWINI.
Kwabisa ngenyanga yokugala yalonyaka
kumanefoga nabini nabalaweni inkomo ezi-
ntsha ezintombi: akwabikwa usapo; amalela o-
bengo-Kwikiwi no-Batal basamagpakizi: kwa-
buyosa inkomo ezintsha ezintombi: kwabikwa
inkomo ezintsha ezintombi amahini ngaphandle.
Inkomo zidanyanywa ngaphandle, naba-
kubano. Kwabikwa ukwabikwa kwikowidnywa
ukwa omhungweni, ase abuzwe kona. Waba-
nywa no-Isita, wabanywa ukwa ontolobongweni
yas-Dikeni.

4. - WENYANGA 4. - Izabisa ku-Zonasi was-
nangweni ibabekazi: kwabikwa ngalo un-
dwa wabalandela: inde botingobokazi: kwa-
buyanywa ibabekazi: kwabikwa imazi zam-
bini. Kwalandela umkondo wabekazi: um-
eni ka-Hlo, ovalanda.

Kwabisa ku-Zadi Maza was-Nkuleni is-
mbalake nam, izaba Ingqaba, kwabikwa
usapo; amalela obengo-Mpasi no-Sakali ba-
nangpakizi: kwabuyisa amabandla omalela
kwabuyisa ngabantu baka-Mapa nasabawona
amabandla ukwa kumpoti wakona.

U-Zayo no-Lawo bamaMalaile umlango o-
agu-Franco, ngemal ababona amalela namini
ngemal yelawo selabo wawelwa zona ngaph-
andle: amabandla ababona amalela namini.

U-Nku nabanywa amalela bamalaile um-
ngakazi ng. -Hland, ngokom zamfumu ali-
ambini notelwe liyo ngaphandle, ngemal yel-
awelwa kwengwelo yake usapo-Xeni ngemal
w wenyanga U palonyaka Amabandla aka-
ngemalwaga, koda bekukufupi nomal wama-
nkaba kwemal amalela lawo.

2. - ENKONGEZI.
Innyanga 9, 1849. - Kwabisa ku-Mongo wa-
wambalakele amabandla amahini: kwabikwa
ase ngemal 10 wenyanga 4, 1850: isela
w-babikwa kwabuyisa amabandla amahini.

IMBEWU!
Kuko into enninzi yem-
bewu yokutengelwa kwa-
Mpetsheni e-Gcuwa. E-
yona ikolisayo ukubako
gyeyombona. Seiko kodwa
neyamazimba.

INKOMO EZINTSHA!
Ziko nenkomo ezintsha zokuteng-
elwa kwa-Mpetsheni e-Gcuwa.

INNCWADI ZOKUTENGELWA!

Innewadi yezifundo:
ISAHLUKO SESINYE, 3d.
ISAHLUKO SESIBINI, 3d.

Innewadi yemibuzo:
EYOKUQALISA, 3d.
EYESIBINI, 3d.

**Innewadi yamaculo oku-
yunywa, Sz.**

Ibandakanyive nnewadi yemibuzo
zombini, 2s. 6d.
Ibandakanyive nnewadi zemibede-
sho, 2s. 6d.
Ibandakanyive nnewadi yemibede-
sho, kuzwe nnewadi yemibede-

KANGELANI APA!

Oligama libaliweyo ezants' apa unento
enninzi

YESALI NETUME
ezinipalara zokutengelwa. Ukumelwa
kwasaz kuncinane kuneni.

J. KNIBBS,

Umjoli wasali.

Egala, Innyanga 8, 1850.

Innewadi yonaka koda ngaphandle iphelelwanisa
yona: ababona ezintsha yona ababona abalandela
bala ngemalwe kwazo amagagagazwa kwazo.
Bala ababekazi bakubikwa embeke abantu ngen-
weni, nabalandela wazi, bala ngemalwe ezintsha ez-
intombi amahini yona ngemalwe, ngemalwe
wazi ezintombi abahini. Amabandla bakaba
abanywa kuzomala nabo ngemalwe.
Kwabisa amahini yona libalwa wazi ngu-George Cy-
rus. Sin' kubona abalawo kwabikwa kuzomala: yona
bala nye ibabikwa.

ISITUNYWA SENNYANGA.

EQONCI, INNYANGA 8, 1850.

INNCWADI zendaba zizonke pakati
kwabalingu. Abantu bayaziswa nga-
zo izinto ezikeyo, nabalawo lakwabona,
nencamzwe abanzanga bababona. Bo-
newa kakulu ngoko. Ngokuba uk-
kwazi kuyinto emodyo bonke abanaka-
ka. Kekaloku alio bakokwazi ngaba-
fundliyo; ngokuba ukwazi kungezi
ngokwako. Umntu ofana ukwazi
makalele nnewadi, ase akuzwe.

INDABA.

"Khuti umpfamtlo ustevle nkhwazi akhulungile."

(Isigxwa ngobuhlobo lwentlalo; kuthi kodwa ukuba uphinyelele umntu kwakwke naye ibhokole uzo woposi; ukuba sibe utandathuko.)

No. 1.) AUGUSTI, 1862. (Vol. I.

Ukuvulwa kwe-Tyalike yase-Mgwali.

NDITE ngenye imini apa, ndeta ukuba iyakuvulwa ityalike ka-Rev.Tyio Soga ngosuku lweshumi elinesihlanu luka-June, lenyanga kutiwa ngu-Ntulikazi ngokwa-Mamfengu. Ndikeke adabamba ikwangana lam, "u-Puti lakwa-Ihlo sivafo sama-Xosakazi;" ndisinga e-Mgwali apo. Ndithe-tu kwindzwanenkulu yendhlu, into entungo ilapaya, into eyoke iwaninyele amakulu amaninzi. Into eyabambi kwesuka kwawa iliqhwa, wati ukuba mkulu kwawo umoya wancamis, wanan' ukuntyantamakwelo endhivini apa.

Kuteke kwangenwa okunene ngalo-Sabata; kwati kweyokugala ya-Maxosa kwaleta u-Rev. John Brownlee, lamfundisi-wafika wamisa easikola saye sise-Gwali, waza wati ukusuka kona waya kuma kwa-Ntinde e-Qonce, apo asafundisa kona nanamhla. Ute ukugala wake watyila kwelwa-Mat. xx.; waza ukuteta wakatolala kweyotibini ka-Mosesi xx. 24, kulamazwi ati—"Endaweni zonke endibalele kuzo igama lam ndiyakuza kuwe ndikasikelele." Nakuba ndinini ukupolapula andibanga nakukwa ukuteta kwake, kuba wayeshumayela kungekuko nokuba mkulu umoya, ndibe kanaanalo ndibona, ukuba woyisekile lufefe lwalento ayikangeleyo namhla ukuba asawazi engali nakawapimela.

Kute kwakupama leyo kwangena eya-Mangosi; kwa-teta u-Rev. William Govan, lamfundisi upete easikola sikula sifunda amadodana e-Dikeni paya. Ute watyila

MORNING STAR & DEMOCRAT (LONDON)

IMVO ZAKAZILE

(NATIVE LANGUAGE)

IKALIBO 24. KING WILLIAM'S TOWN, NORTHERN, NOVEMBER 24, 1918.

G. WHITAKER,
 Isebe elitengisa nentwana ezincinane,
Kwincenitso ektandaba yoku- Mayilgauna (MORRISGOLF)
 Utenga zonke imilobo Zobera. Nezokumba sempahla emntshane, Nese Nkomo, Nempondo onika amaxabiso adluliseloyo.

Ukuba esatya isantya utenga utengisa nani, ezinika, kabi ngabo ngabo

INGUBO. IKELEKO. IPRINTI
 Iputlwa nezikali,
Ingcawa, Amafelane, Iikeleko Zokulala.
 Amaninba emilobo sonke-akwa isetyenzako into esiqinisekela ngabantu abasetyenzaka.

Ukuba isantya imapha idla amaxabiso adluliseloyo.

KANGELA APA.
 Imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R.
 Imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R. Imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R. Imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R.

JOHN ROBBINSON,
 EMANTLA NE TOLLE
 Emantla ne Tolle, imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R.

J. IRVINE & CO.
 Abatengi imapha i-Pamanye imapha i-Rivoli,
Nabatengisi bofani ngofani,
 Abatengi imapha i-Pamanye imapha i-Rivoli,
BOYA, IZIKUMBA ZENKOMO,
 Nezempahla emfutshane, BEMPONDO.
Akubandi, ngabo ngabo.

Ukuba isantya imapha idla amaxabiso adluliseloyo.

JOHN J. IRVINE & CO.
 PASCOE BROTHERS.
 Imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R.

J. W. WEIR & CO.
 Abatengi nabatengisi bofani ngofani,
 Abatengi nabatengisi bofani ngofani,
 Abatengi nabatengisi bofani ngofani,

INGOMA.
 Imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R.

R. W. ROSEBURN.
 Imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R.

W. J. DEALY.
 Imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R.

G. H. TINDALE.
 Imilobo wesi-2 ng. STEINERZ, JACOBSFOONTJEN, O.P.R.

Contestations about the canon

- There is a long history of contestations of the prominence of a particular knowledge in institutions of learning, namely, the epistemic canon deriving from the Western intellectual world, and erasure of African knowledge systems (AKS)
- Early African intellectuals, as early as the 1840s, argued for the indigenous African phenomena to be made knowable, as an integral part of epistemic canon in education

Early African intellectuals and debates on African indigenous episteme 1/4

- **Tiyo Soga 1848** – expressed a need to use language to share and preserve African knowledge because print is
 - “*isitya esihle sokulondoloza iimbali, neendaba namavo, asekhaya*”
 - [a beautiful dish for preserving indigenous chronological narrative accounts [history], values and knowledge]

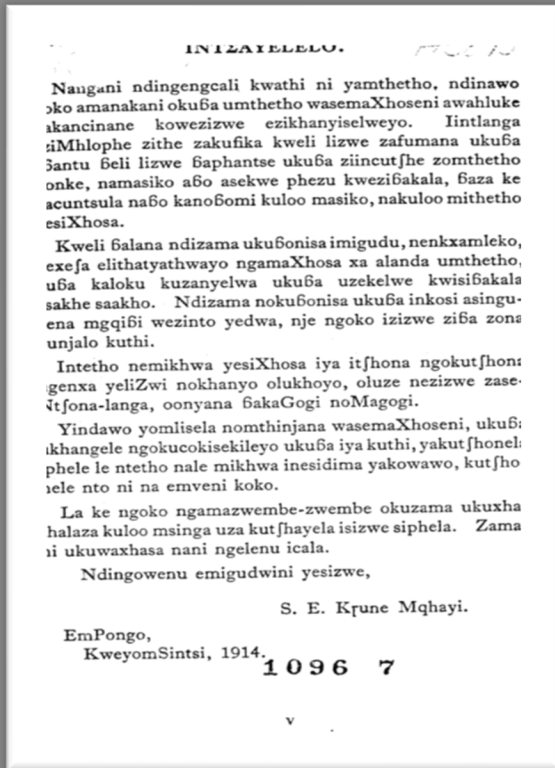
Early African intellectuals and debates on African indigenous episteme 2/4

- **William Wellington Gqoba 1887** – a relationship exists between literacy, knowledge and power
 - Sifundiswa ngeembali zezizwe zaseGreece, Rome, Egypt, nezamaNgesi njalo-njalo, into ezazizizo kwanento eziyiyo namhla. Ke ngoko ziphilile, kuba nathi singazange sizibone sazi nto ngazo, namhla ngenxa yeencwadi zembali zazo, siyazibona, siyathetha nazo, siyazekela nentetho nemikhwa ethile kuzo kubume banamhla bazo.
 - We are taught the history of the nations of Greece, Rome, Egypt, of the English and so on, who they were and what they are today. Thus they are very much alive, because even we who never shared their experiences or saw them, at least today we know something about them through their historical books, we see them, we discuss them and make an example of some of their sayings and habits as reflected in their present day legacy.

Early African intellectuals and debates on African indigenous episteme 3/4

- **Mazisi Kunene 1945** – there is a need to challenge assumptions placing African thought systems just as “folk-thought meriting no serious classification in the hierarchy of knowledge in the academy”

Early African intellectuals and debates on African indigenous episteme 4/4



- ...I have insights that law in isiXhosa speaking society is not different at all from that of enlightened countries. ...
- The language and the cultural practices of amaXhosa are gradually disappearing because of the Word ...
- ... When these and the language disappears, and the dignified cultural practices cease to exist, what else will follow?
- These then are my attempts in trying to hold steady against the powerful stream that will eventually sweep away the entire nation...

Key historical moments in which writings were produced

- Different political regimes: From Colonialism to apartheid
- 1779–1879 Hundred-year Frontier Wars – longest wars of dispossession between the British empire and the native population in the present Eastern Cape
- 1856-1857 Cattle killing that led to widespread famine and death in the Eastern Cape
- 1850s onwards Industrial Revolution and the effects of migrant system on native population
- 1899-1902 South African Anglo-Boer War
- 1910 The Union of the Republic of South Africa
- 1912 Intense and resolute black political resistance
- 1914-1918, 1939-1945 First World War and Second World War
- 1948 Apartheid/politics of segregation

Emerging themes from the African archive

- Language, culture and history in Cape Nguni society from the 16th century
- Historical accounts of conflict from point of contact with Europe in the 17th century
- 18th-early 20th African politics
- 18th-early 20th global politics
- Botany – medicinal plants and IKS
- Zoology – ornithology
- Epidemics in South Africa

Publications from the African archive: NIHSS African Languages Literary Heritage Research Hub

- Compiles from newspapers, translates into English and publishes annotated volumes under original authors
- UKZN Press isiXhosa Literature Series
 - Publication in diplomatic edition
 - Translation into English
 - Introduction and annotations to provide context
- 9 volumes published to date
 - 7 volumes writings from African intellectuals published in newspapers
 - 2 literary appreciation of the literature from the series

Publications from the African language (isiXhosa) literary archive



- Publications from newspaper writings from "Opland Collection of Xhosa Literature"
- Writings from 1830s-1940s
- Publications by UKZN Press in collaboration with the NIHSS since 2013
- Authors:
 - Early African (Nguni/isiXhosa speaking literates)
 - Missionaries
 - Colonial administrators

Collaboration with Carl Von Ossietzky University Oldenburg

- Co-teaching – History, Memory, Archives and Slavery Seminar 2023 (Prof Dagmar Freist)
- Summer School - Gender and Queer Studies: Experiences from the South of Africa and Germany (Prof Sylvia Pritsch)

Joint Class on
History, Memory Cultures, Historical Archives
and Slavery, Summer Term 2023

CARL VON OSSIETZKY
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NELSON MANDELA
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Prof. Dr. Nomalanga Mkhize,
Dr Vusumuzi Kumalo, Prof. Dr Dagmar Freist

The focus on culture, heritage and memory are equally important. In the last 50 years, the United Nations (via UNESCO) has advanced the global management of tangible and intangible heritage, identifying and inscribing what it deems to be universally valued cultural artefacts and practices on its World Heritage List (WHL) and its List of Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritages. Heritage management and conservation, however, goes beyond the reach of global heritage organizations. It indicates the evolution of humanity and the resources early humans used to craft a socially meaningful existence. It also tells us about contemporary relations of power and the meaning of culture in society.
Source: <https://research.mandela.ac.za/institution-Research-Themes>

Sources: www.prizepapers.de

Points of Discussion: Whose memory?



Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre
Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung
CvU Universität Oldenburg

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Dialogues for Responsible Gender and Queer Studies – Experiences from the South of Africa and Germany

Summer School 23 – 24 June 2023 at Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg

Venue: Campus Haarentor

Centre for interdisciplinary Women and Gender Studies (ZFG) at Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg (Germany) in cooperation with the Centre for Women and Gender Studies (CWGS) at Nelson Mandela University Gqeberha (South Africa)

PROGRAM

23.06.2023, 14:00 – 21:30 h

14:00: Opening (Room A03-1-117)

PROF. DR. ALMUT HÖFERT, DR. SYLVIA PRITSCH (ZFG UOL)

14:15 – 18:00 Workshops:

14:15 Workshop 1:

PROF. DR. MATHABO KHAU (NMU/ Teacher Education): Rethinking Sexuality Education in Higher Education Institutions: A decolonial approach

16:15 Workshop 2:

NAMUPA SHIVUTE (Namibia, African storyteller, researcher, journalist): Interaktive Bildungsarbeit zum

Advancing archival research: digital archive

- Creating access and preserving the archive
- Digital humanities infrastructure
- Development of digital research capacity
- Digital research tools: creating possibilities for accuracy in historical accounts
- Facilitates global collaboration

Conclusion

- The appraisal and scientific engagement with the publications from the African archive make it possible to move away from the notion of universalizing experience in the academy from a Western perspective
- Writings can, therefore, be used as a catalyst in challenging the notion of whose knowledge/whose memory is given authority in the academy.
- Questions of ownership and location of African literary archives remain a challenge as we rethink the SA literary canon, and recovery of works written in the past, but marginalised.

Change the World

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