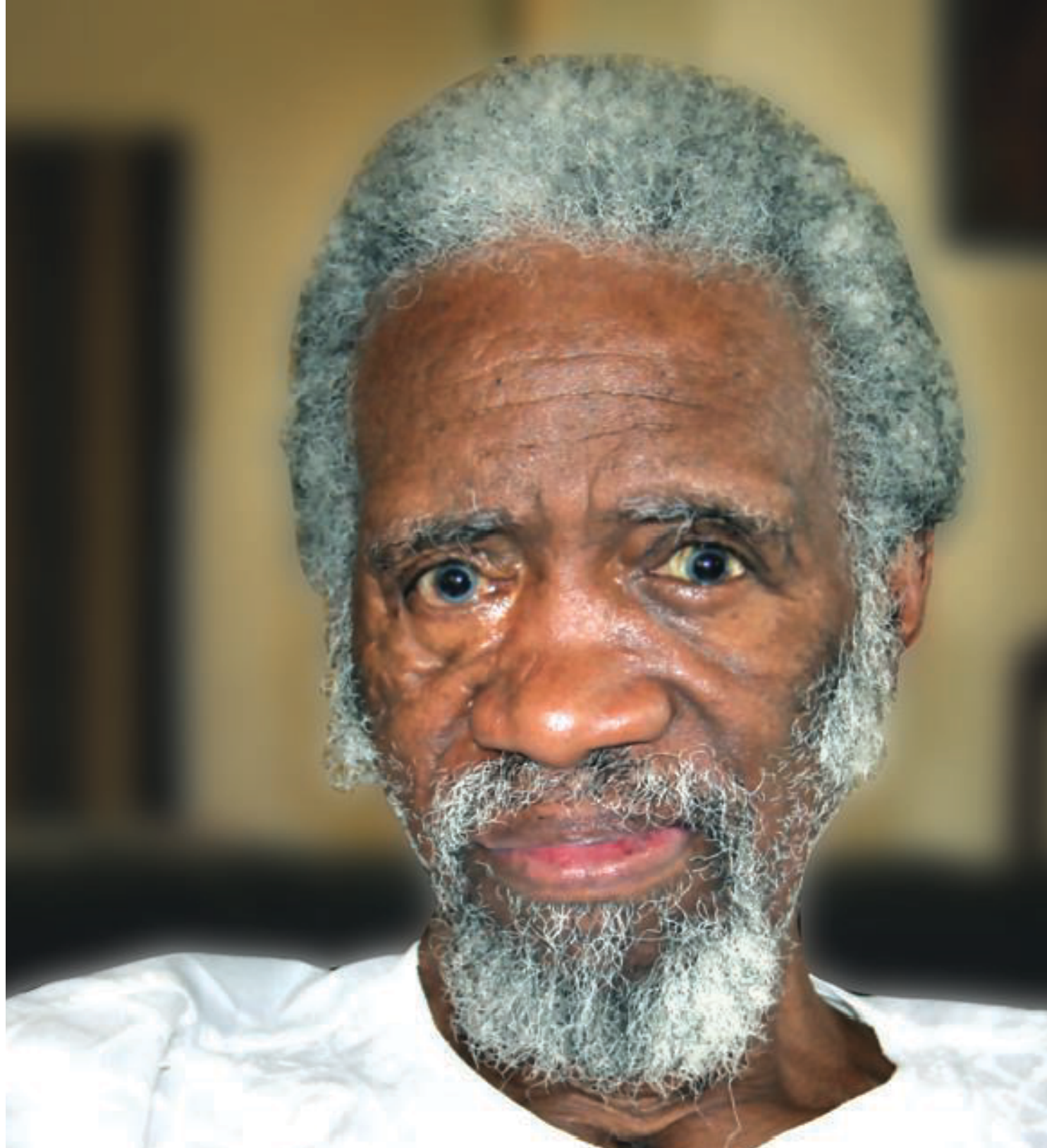


# Archie Mafeje

Memorial Lecture



Celebrating Archie Mafeje's  
Scholarship Excellence:

**Annual Archie Mafeje Memorial Lecture**

**25 March 2024 || 10:00 - 14:00**

Javett Art Centre, at the  
University of Pretoria, 23 Lynnwood road,  
Hatfield, Pretoria, 0002

**Keynote speaker:** Ms Liepollo Pheko

**Moderator:** Ms Yvonne Busisiwe Phyllis

**Respondent:** Dr Bongani Nyoka

**Prof Archie Mafeje:**

## The Migrant Intellectual

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) presents the 2024 Archie Mafeje Memorial Lecture focusing on migration and democracy, with specific attention to the issue of new types of academic migrants and the implication for universality in knowledge generation and dissemination. The event will be hosted by the HSRC's Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA). This institute leads and coordinates engagements in Africa, acting as a catalyst for research and policy implementation across the continent. The annual Archie Mafeje Memorial Lecture is a critical flagship of AISA's work toward expanding the depth and breadth of African agency in producing knowledge that informs policy and practice in Africa.

As we reflect on the legacy of Professor Archie Monwabisi Mafeje as a Pan-Africanist intellectual, activist and cosmopolitan scholar, the 2024 Archie Mafeje Memorial Lecture seeks to think about and engage his teachings, arguing beyond his ideological and philosophical orientation. In recent years, Africans have and continue to face challenges of underdevelopment and stagnant socio-political conditions. Therefore, in an attempt to imagine where Africa and Africans should be insofar as prosperous and knowledge ecology is concerned, it is critical to channel the thought leadership in Africa through radically transformative policies. Mafeje posited that Africanity was the basis of the ontological reality of African people, as people cannot exist outside their historicity, which necessarily informs their lived experience. So, we have to contend with questions that bear transformative influence in the institutions of knowledge and policy implementation. This means we must ask questions that persuades the value of theory-research praxis, knowledge-informed interrelations, and, in our mandate as HSRC, consider the meaning of research for policymaking.

Presented by Ms Liepollo Pheko, this year's lecture is inspired by one of the fundamental doctrines of the Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA), the need for equality and universality of human endeavours, including knowledge. Mafeje was a member of UMSA and this radical Marxist political inclination pushed him to the far corners of the globe, making him a migrant intellectual par excellence. While many have attributed his constant academic movement to his pragmatic philosophical and intellectual rigidity, Mafeje's regular movement from one centre of knowledge to the next was an attempt to look for a fertile ground for his cosmopolitan conceptual and theoretical ideals. His academic sojourn in Denmark, Egypt, and Namibia underlines his belief in search of epistemological breakthroughs and non-disciplinary. The push towards an agricultural revolution in Africa sustains Mafeje's argument that Africa is still a rural continent and that an agrarian economy is likely to persist for a very long time to come. As a migrant intellectual, Mafeje had to temper with this theoretical predilection as the land question in southern Africa presented a different sociological outlook with a white settler community.

Through this series of memorial lectures, AISA seeks to preserve the legacy of Mafeje as a respected African intellectual who critically engaged the position of Africans in the global space as knowledge producers. He, among others then and now, noted the challenge of overcoming the nature and extent to which colonisation altered many practices and norms in Africa. Essentially, this realisation must inspire mass Afrocentric production of knowledge and practice that improves the welfare of all Africans. In that regard, this year's memorial lecture will put into context Mafeje's strong opposition to African intellectuals being dictated to and the place of the decolonial debate in knowledge generation in this regard.



science & innovation  
Department:  
Science and Innovation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



HSRC  
Human Sciences  
Research Council



Africa Institute  
of South Africa  
Development Through Knowledge