



*Reclaiming Africa's Intellectual Futures*

# **DECOLONISATION AND RE-AFRICANISATION OF LIBRARIES: A NECESSITY FOR AFRICA**

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**FIESOLE RETREAT**  
**VINEYARD HOTEL, CAPE TOWN**  
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# AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH AND GENEALOGICAL LINE ARCHIVE

Zimu +  
Mazibuko



# OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

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This presentation covers the following areas:

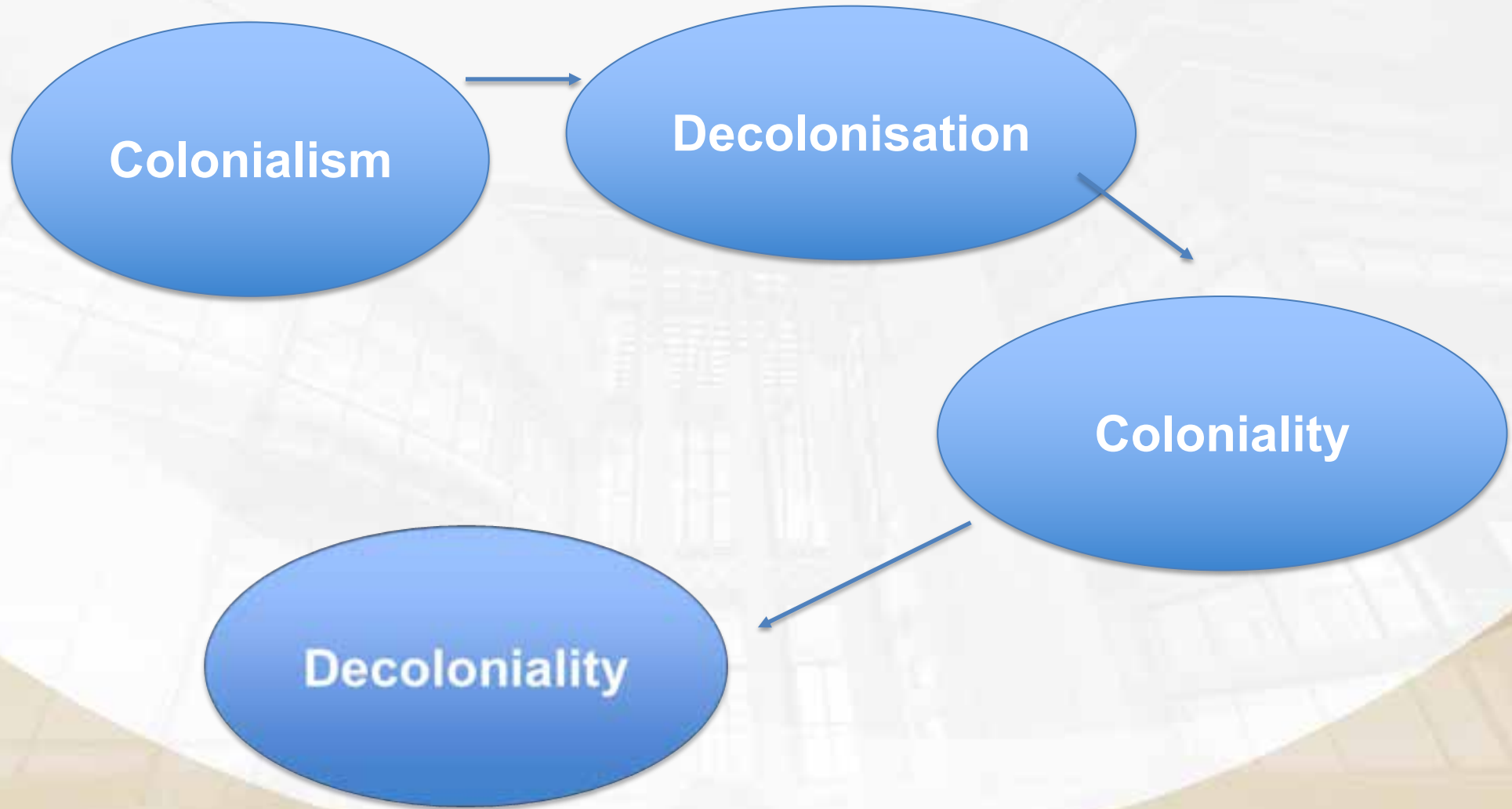
- **Introduction and background** (Colonialism, Coloniality, Decolonisation, Decoloniality)
- **Problem statement** (African Librarianship (AL) & Brief historical evolution)
- **Literature Review and Research methodology**
- **Purpose and objectives** (Why decoloniality activities are important for libraries in Africa?)
- **Lefa le Tsebo model (Heritage of knowledges)**
- **Conclusion and recommendations**

# Decolonisation – Individual Responsibility (Le Grange 2021)

- **Wiseman Magasela (2012)** – “*If you are black* in SA’s world of work, it is a daily struggle against a system that constantly alienates you aiming to exclude and sideline you. *If you are black*, you are never good enough. Powerful but subtle and insidious currents incessantly work at undermining you, pinning you down where you belong. Everyday becomes a struggle as those around you the privileged, aim to limit your space, deny you opportunities and render you incapable and sterile. You have to fight for an acknowledgement that to be where you are you have worked hard” (**Mail & Guardian, January 15, 2012**).
- **Le Grange (2021)** – 2 factors that limit decolonization and decoloniality
- **Ngulube, Dube & Mhlongo (2015)** – aim of education and curriculum anchored on colonization ideologies is to...

# Decolonisation and Decoloniality

- Ndlovu-Gatssheni (2013)



# What is Decolonisation

- For **Le Grange (2021)** the concept of '**decolonisation**' can be used to refer to processes of discovering, and recovering the lost knowledges, histories, identities, cultures and languages.
- **Decoloniality** process is a lifelong struggle that calls for individual responsibility to self-unlearn in order to re-learn new ways of doing things (**Le Grange 2021**).
- The lifelong struggle of decolonisation campaigns is imperative as we continue to inhale and exhale the legacy of coloniality in our spaces including academic contexts (**Le Grange 2021**).

# What is African Librarianship (AL)?

**AL** has a colonial history. It is anchored on Western-model librarianship. It was established by the colonials, for the colonials and to serve their interests. Those of the local people were considered sub-servient if ever, they were considered **(Stilwell 1989; Tise & Raju 2015; Strand & Britz 2018)**.

**Mchombu (1991); Mhlongo (2018)** have lamented paucity of information relevant for development of the African continent.

**John-Okeke (2009)** has separated challenges into external and internal factors.

**External factors** – refer to the backwardness of Africa such as high illiteracy rate, and other socio-economic challenges.

**Internal factors** – have to do with the challenges of imported ideologies.

Libraries failing to provide relevant services to their diverse users.

# Brief Historical Evolution

- **1818** - First library established in Cape Colony, SA by **Sir Governor Charles Somerset** (Satjoor 2015).
- **1896** – Bulawayo Public Library was founded in Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia)
- **Carnegie Cooperation of New York** recommended the use of the **Centralised National Library Lending Model** (Sturges 2001).
- Model extended to **Anglophone** countries such as Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Tanganyika (now Tanzania), Uganda, South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and others (Sturges 2001:40).
- **1939 -1945** (WWII) **Public Library Model** was initiated in Nigeria. The aim was to spread the propaganda and get support for the war effort (Stilwell 1989).
- **Chinua Achebe** as cited in **Stilwell (1989:264)** alludes on the type of collection that was found in one private school library in Nigeria. It comprised of one dusty **cupboard, one holy bible, three pamphlets** on '*The adventures of Tarzan*' and one novel entitled '*The sorrows of Satan*'



# Brief Historical Evolution

- **1940s** - Model was introduced in **Ghana by a female Britain Council Librarian, (Evelyn Evans)**. Consultative bottom-up user-friendly approach was used hence it was accepted by **Kwame Nkrumah** (First President of Ghana).
- **1950** – Gold Coast (Ghana) Library Board was formed
- **1970s** - The country's economic disaster also affected the library system
- **1970s** – First entry of blacks to Msunduzi Municipality Libraries / Bessie Head Libraries (then Natal Society Library) & Johannesburg Public Libraries (Strand & Britz 2018; Satgoor 2015)
- **1985/7/8** – **Zaaiman Report (SA)** for the “**decolonisation and re-Africanisation**” of libraries in Africa

# Why Decolonisation AL?

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In libraries the cry for decolonization can be traced back to the **Zaaiman Report (1980s)** (Strand & Britz 2018; Raju 2005).

In South Africa, **Professor RB Zaaiman** from Unisa was commissioned by the **South Africa Institute of Librarianship and information Science (SAILIS)** the 'whites only' association to investigate the role of libraries for development in South Africa. **(Walker 2006)**.

**1987** – First draft of Zaaiman Report was produced.

# ZAIMAN REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Some of the important **recommendations of the Zaiman Report (1987)** were that:

- ❑ Collection in Libraries must be Africanised and not maintain the status quo.
- ❑ Libraries must be apolitical, and not offer biased and propagandistic materials.
- ❑ Dominant Western ideologies **in LIS education and training** in South Africa to give space to other knowledge systems
- ❑ Curriculum offering to take cognizance of African context including indigenous languages.

# Literature after Zaaiman Report

**Literature review** was used to establish scholarly work that has been written on African librarianship. **Google Scholar** was used because of its wide scope in harnessing articles published online and its ability to search widely for important references in literature (Ukwoma & Ngulube 2021).

- **Zaaiman Report** (1987) – LIASA Transformation Charter (2014)
- **Stilwell**. 1989. Community libraries: a brief reviews of their origins and nature with particular reference to SA.
- **Mchombu**. 1991. Which Way African Librarianship”.
- **Onwubiko**. 1996. The practice of Amadi’s barefoot librarianship in African public libraries: constraints and prospects.
- **Sturges**. 2001. The poverty of librarianship: an historical critique of public librarianship in Anglophone Africa.
- **Raju, J**. 2005. LIS education and training in SA: a historical review.
- **John-Okeke**. 2009. African Librarianship in the 21st century.
- **Nyana**. 2009. Creating library systems that serves the needs of rural communities in Africa, South of the Sahara.
- **Dick**. 2013. the future of African librarianship: expectations and successes (during the launch of AfLIA).
- **Tise & Raju**. 2015. African Librarianship: a relic, a fallacy, or an imperative.
- **Satjoor**. 2015. Celebrating libraries in 20 years of democracy: an overview of library and information services in SA.

# Literature after Zaaiman Report

- **Chisa & Hoskins.** 2015. Decolonising indigenous intellectual and cultural rights in heritage institutions: a survey of **policy** and protocol in SA
- **Ngulube, Dube & Mhlongo.** 2015. Towards a cartography of IKS in LIS training and education in Anglophone Eastern and Southern Africa.
- **Strand & Britz.** 2018. “The evolving role of public libraries in SA in addressing information poverty”.
- **Molepo.** 2018. The academic library in society’s knowledge system: a case study of Tshwane University of Technology.
- **Molepo & Dick.** 2018. **Lefa le Tsebo**: a proposed model for framing Tshwane University of Technology’s Libraries Policies
- **Mhlongo.** 2018. Integration of IK into the services of public libraries in SA.
- **Mhlongo & Ngulube.** 2020. Resource provision and access to IK in public libraries in SA.
- **Ngoepe, Mbuyisa, Saurombe, & Matshontswane.** 2023, Transforming a provincial archive through collecting sports memories: experiences of the Gauteng province in South Africa
- **Ngulube.** 2024. From Orality to Digital Assets: Managing Indigenous Knowledge in Africa in the Wake of the Open Science Movement

# Why Decolonisation of African Librarianship?

- In SA, the cry for decolonisation and re-Africanisation of the education system or curriculum was triggered by **#Rhodes Must Fall and #Fees Must Fall Students Protests of 2015 and 2016** (Le Grange 2021).
- Amidst rigorous debates on decolonisation, libraries' voices seem to have **been muted** (Molepo 2018) yet **IFLA Public Library manifesto (2022)** libraries are the **storehouses and carriers of curriculum**. Libraries are gateway to knowledge including Cultural Knowledge.

# PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

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The purpose is to gain insight regarding the landscape of decoloniality and re-Africanisation of libraries in Africa

**The objectives of the study are to:**

1. Explore the role of African librarianship in decolonising the four key areas such as 1) library resources and services; 2) education and training, 3) associations and 4) publishing landscape.
2. Make recommendations based on the findings of objective one.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## LIBRARY RESOURCES & SERVICES

1. Decolonised library policies to include indigenous epistemologies & languages
2. Mapping of knowledges
3. Intergenerational dialogues

## LIBRARY TRAINING & EDUCATION

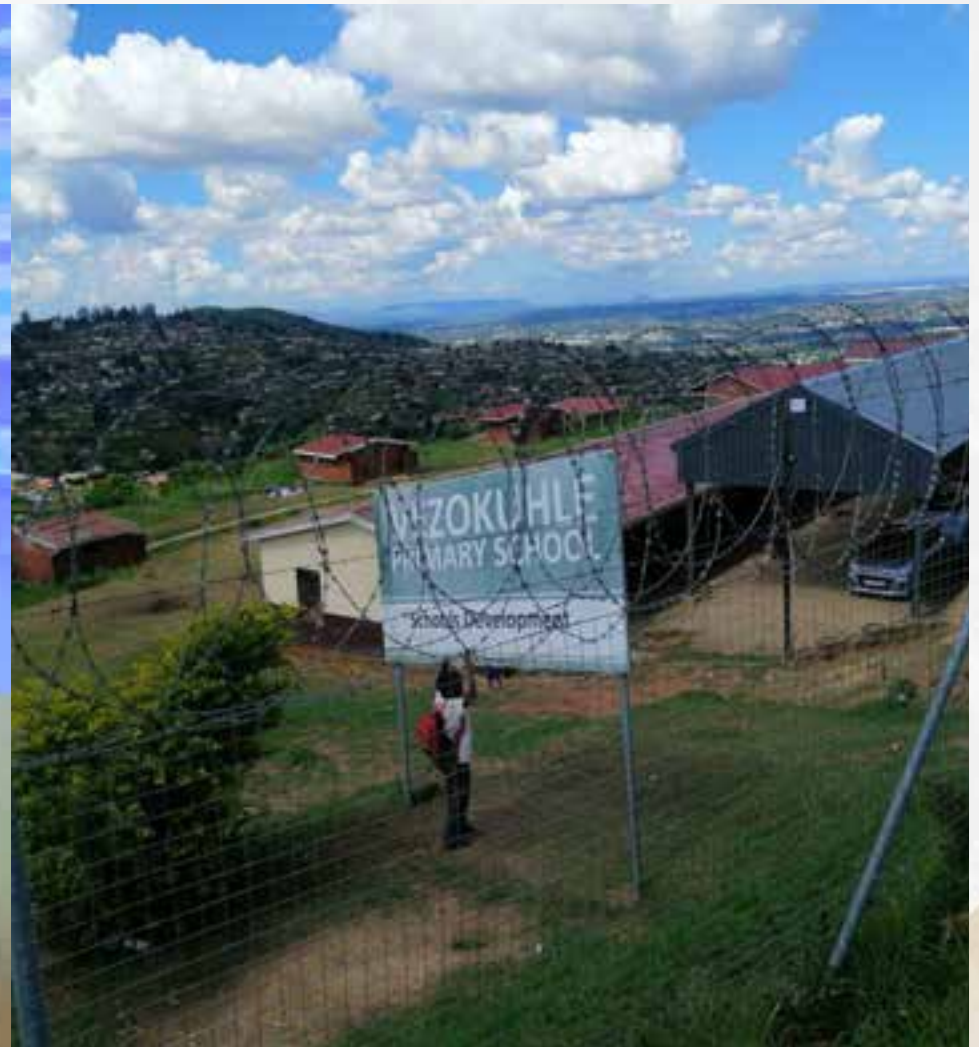
**Decolonised Curriculum (IFLA Guidelines 2022)**

## DECOLONIALITY DECOLONISATION

## LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS & PUBLISHING INDUSTRY



# UNISA & VEZOKUHLA & BIBLIONEF





Ukuqonda  
iNtshona kakhulu kweNtshona

SANIBOMANI!

Zivikele  
Tibul

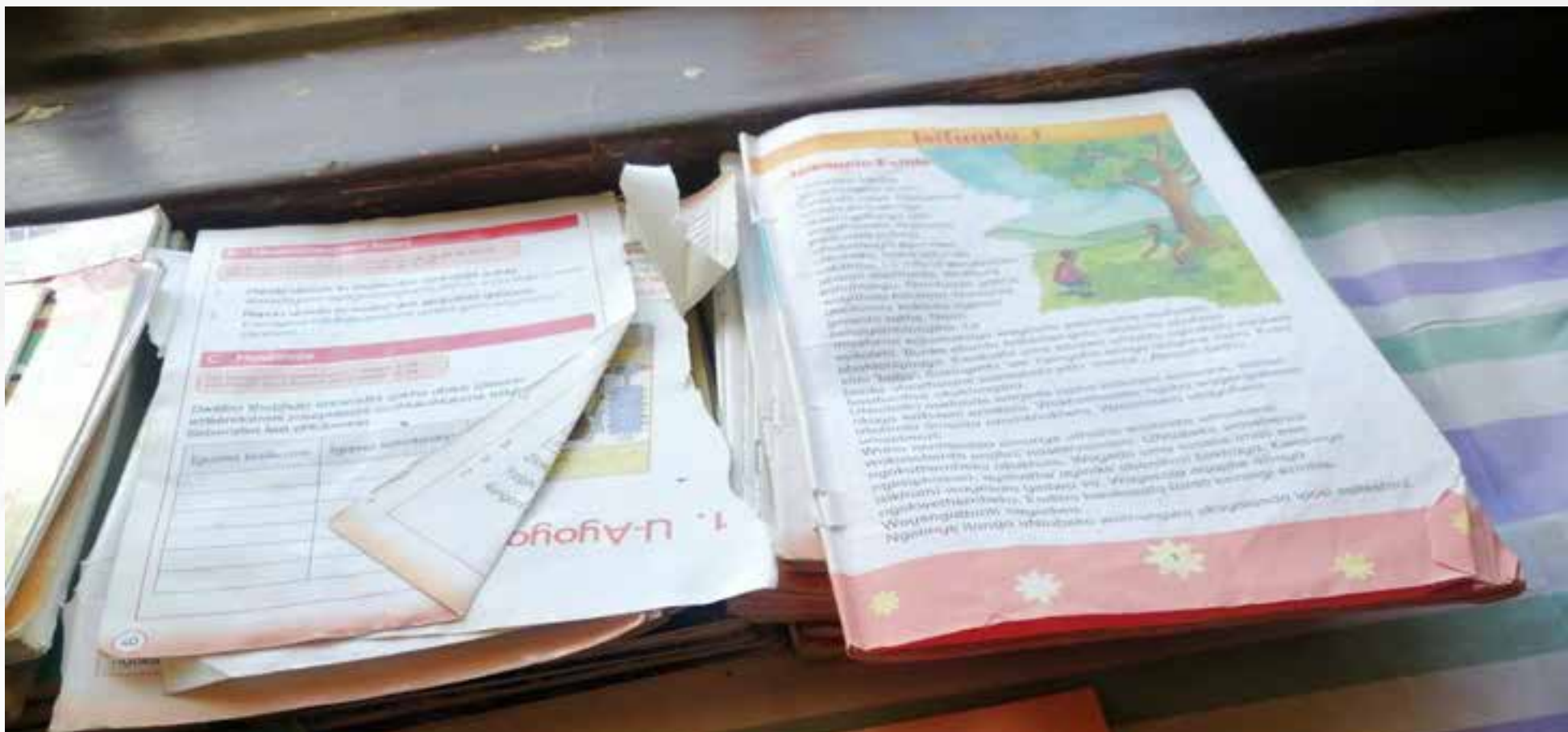
Hu-Hu!

Udado  
Onubi

Zizizinyo  
ezizizinyo?

Izinyo  
Lengi





# Ngingamanzi

## Thembinkosi Kohli

Isihumsho sesiZulu nguBusisiwe Pokode



rika

# WHO IS BESSIE HEAD?

## Msunduzi Municipal Library Services

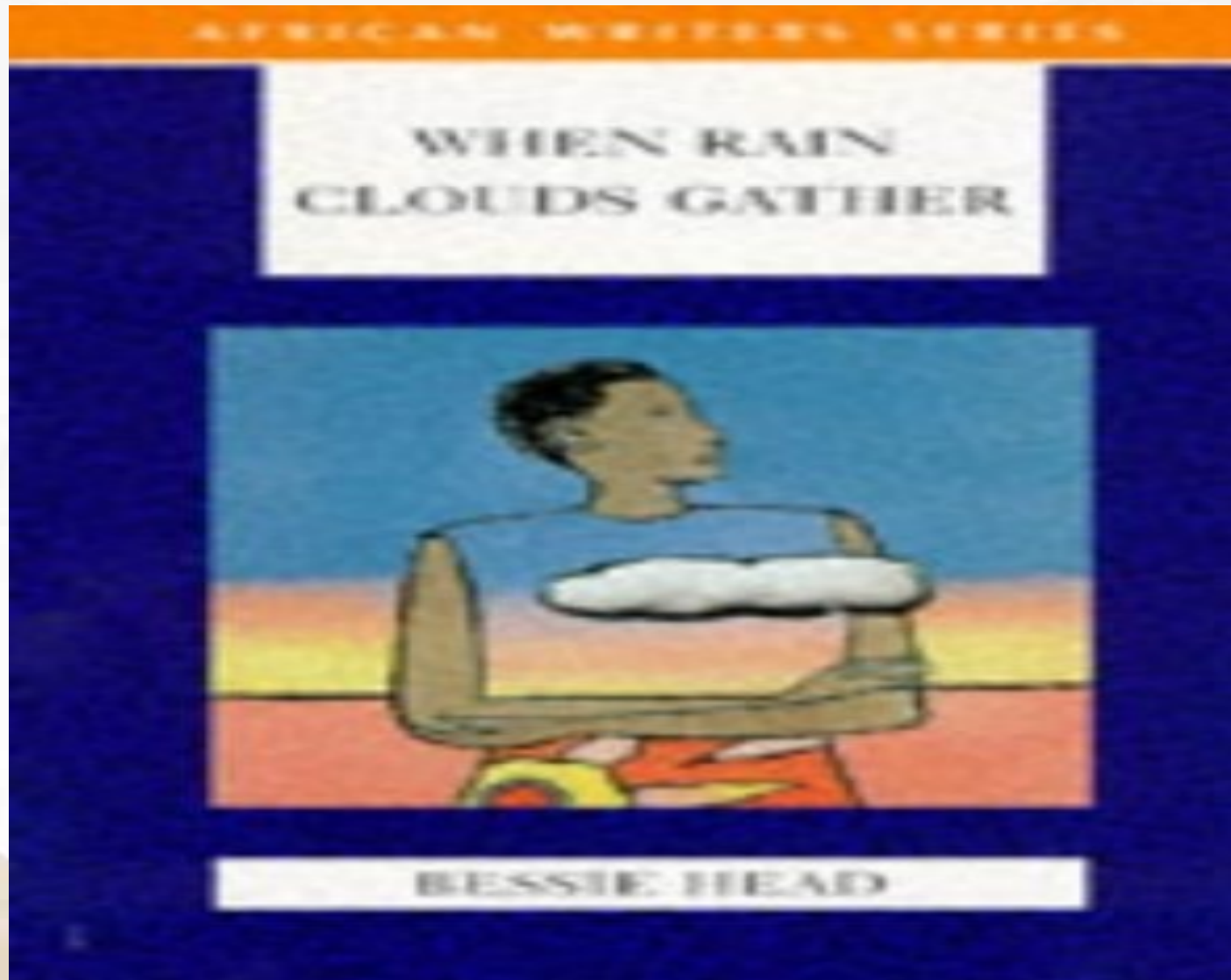


*Msunduzi Municipal Library (formerly The Natal Society Library) has provided public library services for the people of Pietermaritzburg since 1850. On 1 April 2004, libraries and staff of The Natal Society were incorporated into the Msunduzi Municipality as Msunduzi Municipal Library Services. The main library, named the Bessie Head Library, and eight branch libraries, aim to provide a comprehensive library service to all residents of the Msunduzi Municipal area.*



- Bessie Head Born: **July 6, 1937**
- Died: **April 17, 1986**
- Occupation: **Writer**
- Natal Society Library: **1850**
- Black access: **1970s**
- Renamed: **2004**
- **Msunduzi Municipality**

# SA Born – Botswana Influential Author



# AFRICAN ARCHIVAL COLLECTION



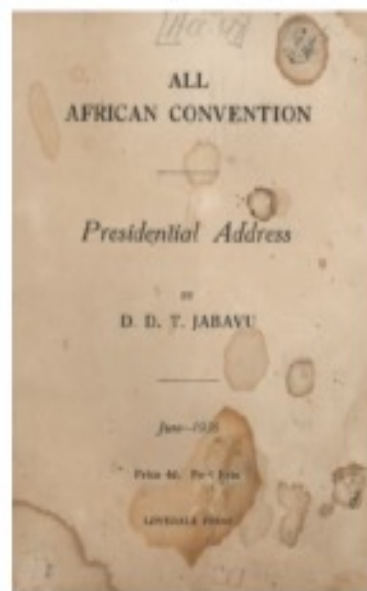
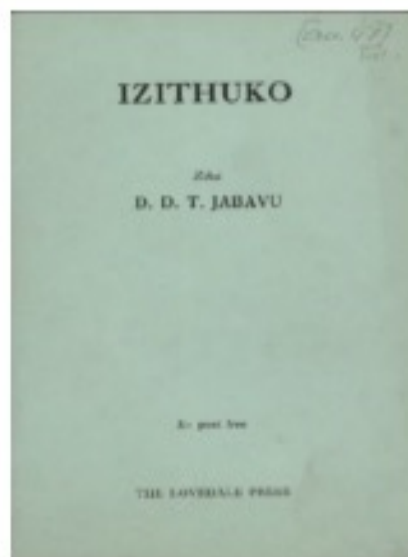
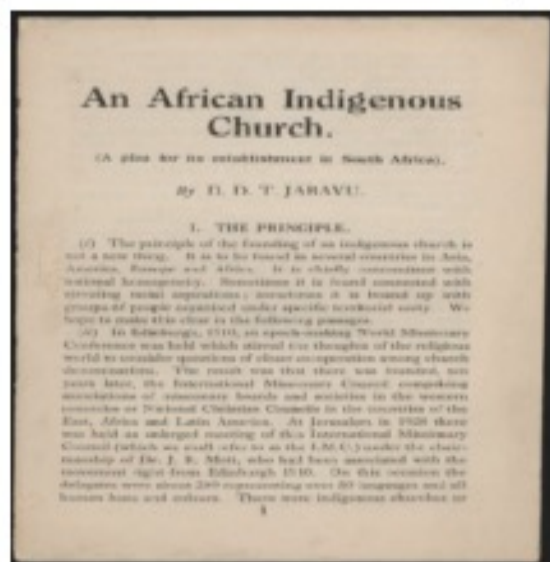
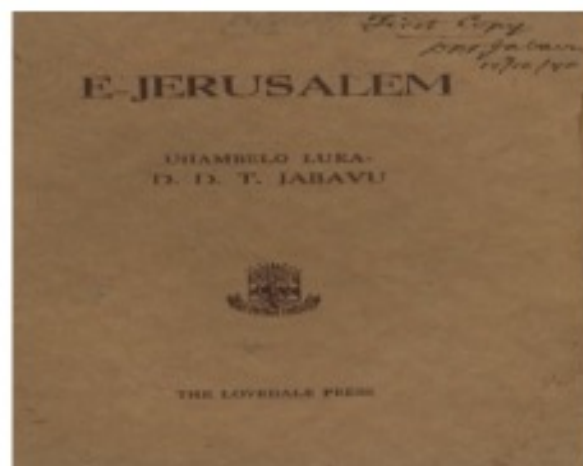
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Remembrance of the Late  
D. D. T. Jabavu

I feel it is my duty as one of the friends  
of the Journal to state and say a few words  
in remembrance and the purpose of this day.

To me it seems it is our loss, happy they  
never have asked a reading of the Journal in better  
than the publisher "I had in fact a great deal  
to do with it" a great many of you will I think  
agree with me that the Publishing was the main  
of this work, why they should suddenly change  
that is beyond my understanding as did not they  
they will see to see still looking forward to  
the progress the magazine was to give us  
some of the most interesting parts that the  
world had the best of the most intelligent of the  
world's progress.

I say this for several reasons  
1. The Publishing is bound with a responsibility  
2. The publisher makes business difficulties.



# **LIS EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

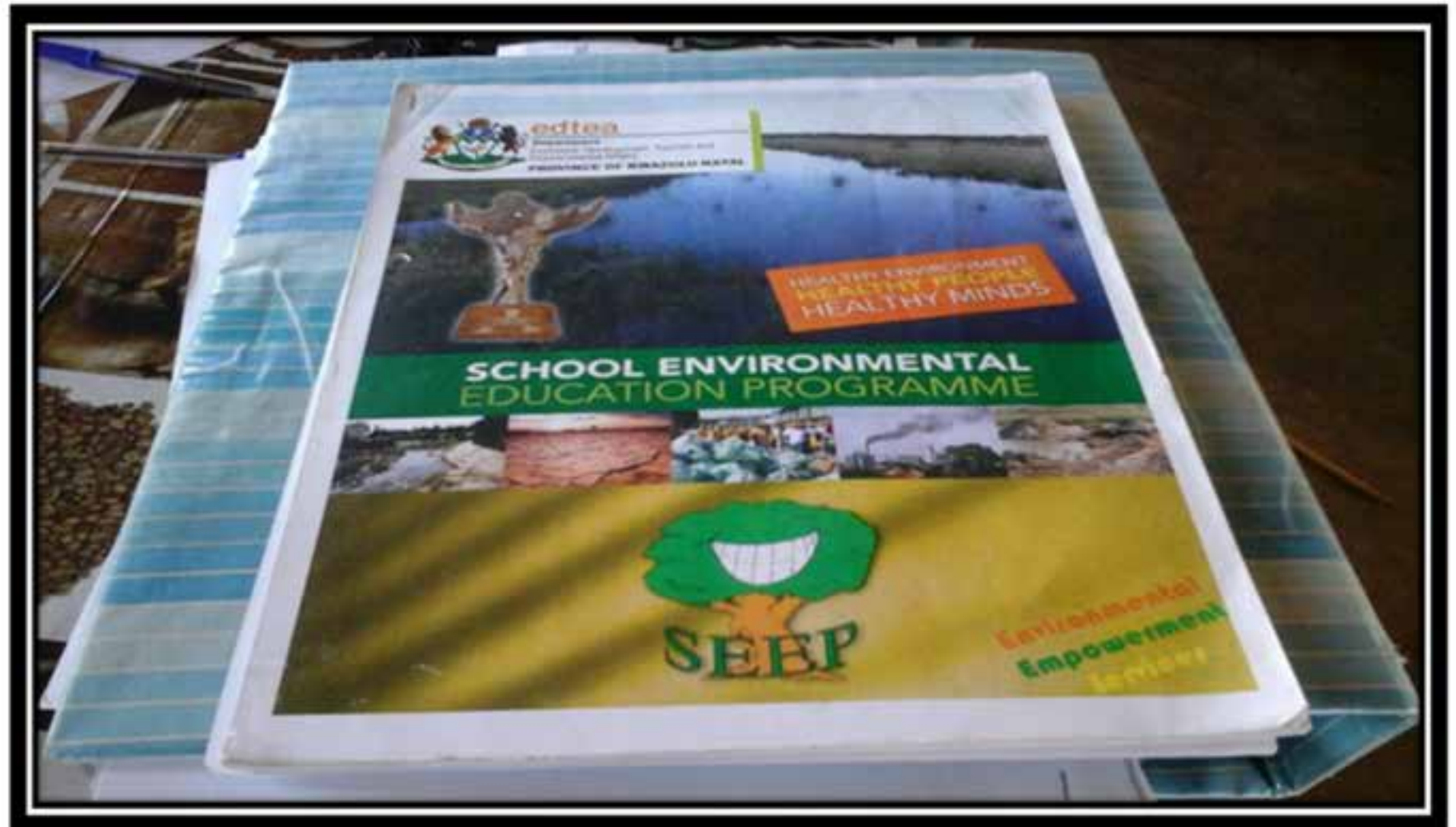
The **National Education Policy Framework (NEPI) of LIS Services Group** (1992) has lamented curriculum offerings in South Africa that have neglected **local and African** context (**Raju 2005:71**). **Underwood (1996) and Rosenberg (1999)** as cited in **Raju (2005:71)** both agreed on the need for the LIS education and training sector to take cognizance of **indigenous cultures or to indigenise** LIS curricular.

Library schools have heeded the call, at various degrees of success. **North-West Univ.** offers speciality field in **LIS for Agriculture**. **Unisa LIS Dept** collaborated with **Gauteng Provincial Archives** to decolonise sports archive and encouraging postgraduate students to publish on them.

More still needs to be done regarding curriculum transformation. Western cataloguing and classification schemes are used but are irrelevant for the African context (**John-Okeke 2009**). Nigeria has more than 200 ethnic languages. Some will go extinct because they are not preserved.



# Portfolio of Evidence File



## GREEN PROJECTS

The school is promoting one home one garden idea. Learners are encouraged to bring animal manure to fertilize the soil. They are given skill and techniques of having healthy vegetable garden. This also help in cultivating poverty and generating income.





# Science, Technology & Education



# LIS ASSOCIATIONS & PUBLISHING

Aim of associations – professional development (**Alemna 1994**), however associations in Africa are viewed as fragmented and working in silos (**Mchombu 1991**) hence the cry for the strong and united association (**Alemna 1994**).

The formation of **SCESCAL** in Tanzania in 1974 (Raseroka 1992) and **AfLIA** in Ghana in 2014 (AfLIA.Net 2019) are viewed as attempts to promote unity and development of the LIS profession.

In SA, **LIASA (1997)** emanated from the racialised associations' trend. SALA and SAILIS were '**whites only**' association that had an influence on professional development and scientific publishing issues. (**Ocholla's (2007) study 2002-2005**)

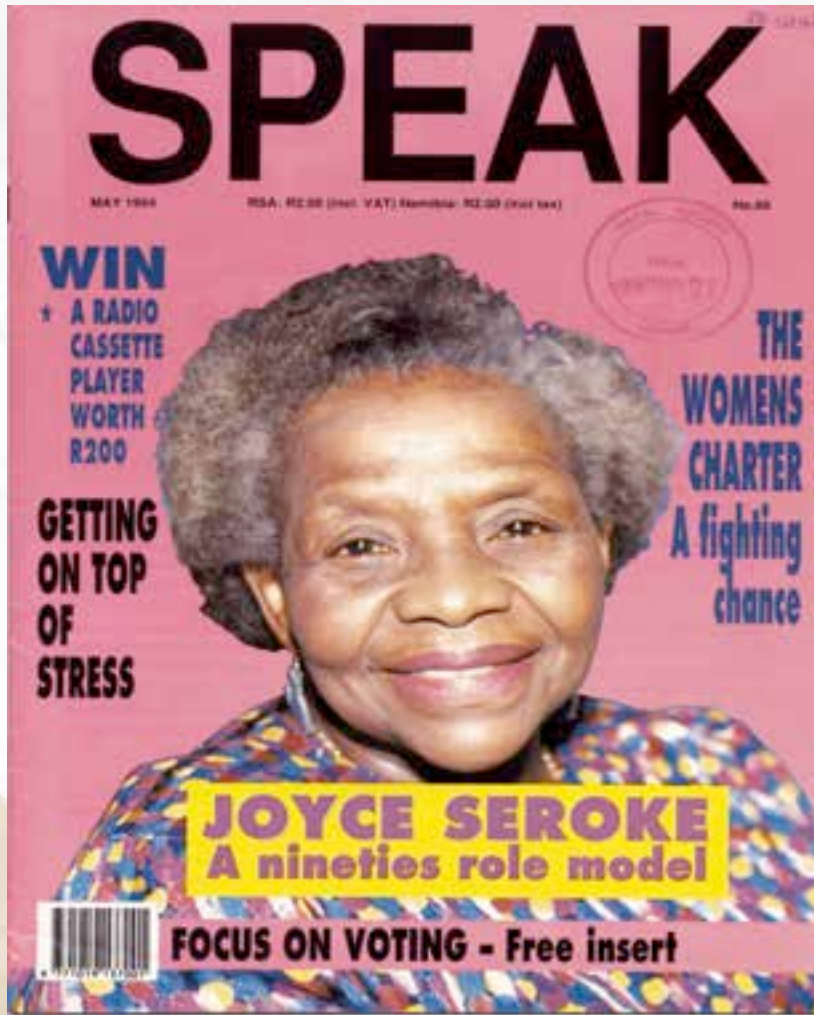
**1933** – with the help of **Carnegie Corporation**, the first issue of its journal was produced. Its name was "**South African Libraries**".

The **SAJLIS** journal is born from this trend. Today, Prof Ngoepe is the editor of the journal.

**1970s** – **African Libraries Association of South Africa (ALASA)**, the first "**blacks only**" library association in South Africa.

**Patience Maisela**, became the first woman **Librarian President of ALASA**. However, there is **no sufficient literature** documented about her.

**PATIENCE MAISELA (1<sup>ST</sup> ALASA PRESIDENT); JOHN-OKEKE RITA (PROFESSOR OF LIBRARY SCIENCE, LAGOS, NIGERIA)**



# **BLACK INDIGENOUS WOMEN LIBRARIAN ACTIVISTS – (1<sup>st</sup> IFLA PRESIDENTS)**



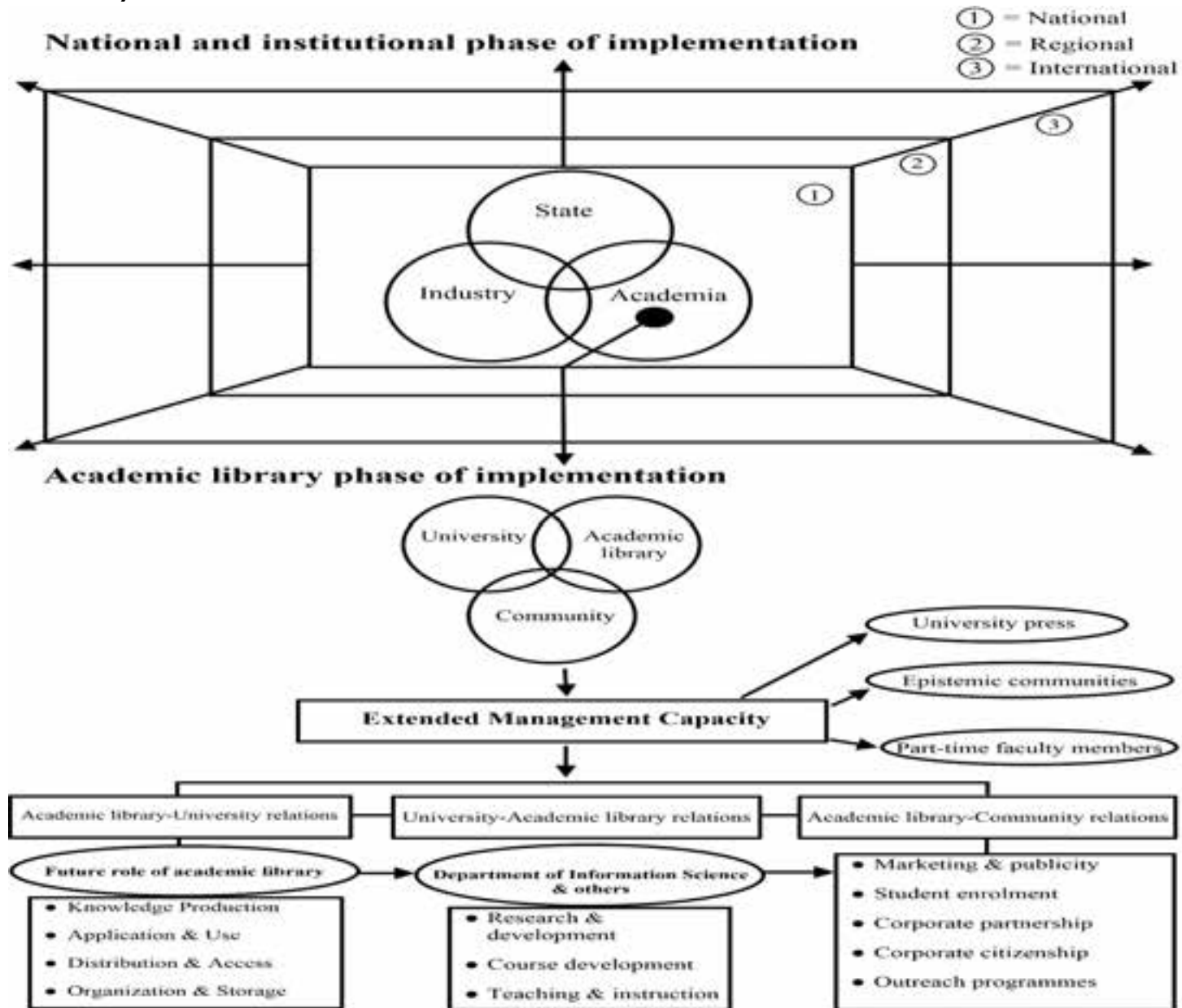
# NON-INDIGENOUS WOMEN SCHOLARS / ACTIVISTS IN LIS TRANSFORMATION





# Lefa le Tsebo model (Africa Heritage of Knowledge)

(Molepo 2018:162)



# Lefa le Tsebo Model

- The adopted model proposes a **multiple constructivist reality approach** to improve on a multiple or shared reality in the understanding of what constitutes knowledge in a democratic era of Africa (Molepo 2018).
- It can be useful at **national-institutional and academic level**. Nationally there is a need for debates around the models used to shape the knowledge system of contemporary Africa. It is well known that the national context is influenced by **regional and international policies and vice versa. (CLIR, IFLA Guidelines & Manifestos, UNSDGs, LIASA-LIS Charter)**
- **LIS Education & Training** there is a need to think broadly about the **decolonisation and re-Africanisation** of curriculum and knowledge.
- **Extended management capacity** has to do with the extended roles of **Libraries and Associations** in influencing the decolonization and re-Africanisation of knowledge.

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **LIS EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

- Curriculum development to be guided by international and national policies such as CLIR, IFLA Professional Educ & Training Guidelines (2022), IFLA Global Vision 7 & 9, SDG 4 & Target 4.7, Regional, National & Institutional Policies.
- Integration of epistemologies and indigenous languages.
- Formulation of Task Teams & Committees
- Mapping of IK projects & engage in collaborative digitalisation projects
- Monitoring & Evaluation Reports

- **LIS RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

- IFLA Public Library Manifesto (2022); LIASA-LIS Transformation Charter (2014)
- Understanding of information needs and formats needed by diverse library clientele

- **LIS ASSOCIATIONS**

- **Strong social cohesion and collaboration** among associations in Africa

- **TRANSFORMATIVE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY**

- To improve women scholarly cohort representation in scientific journal

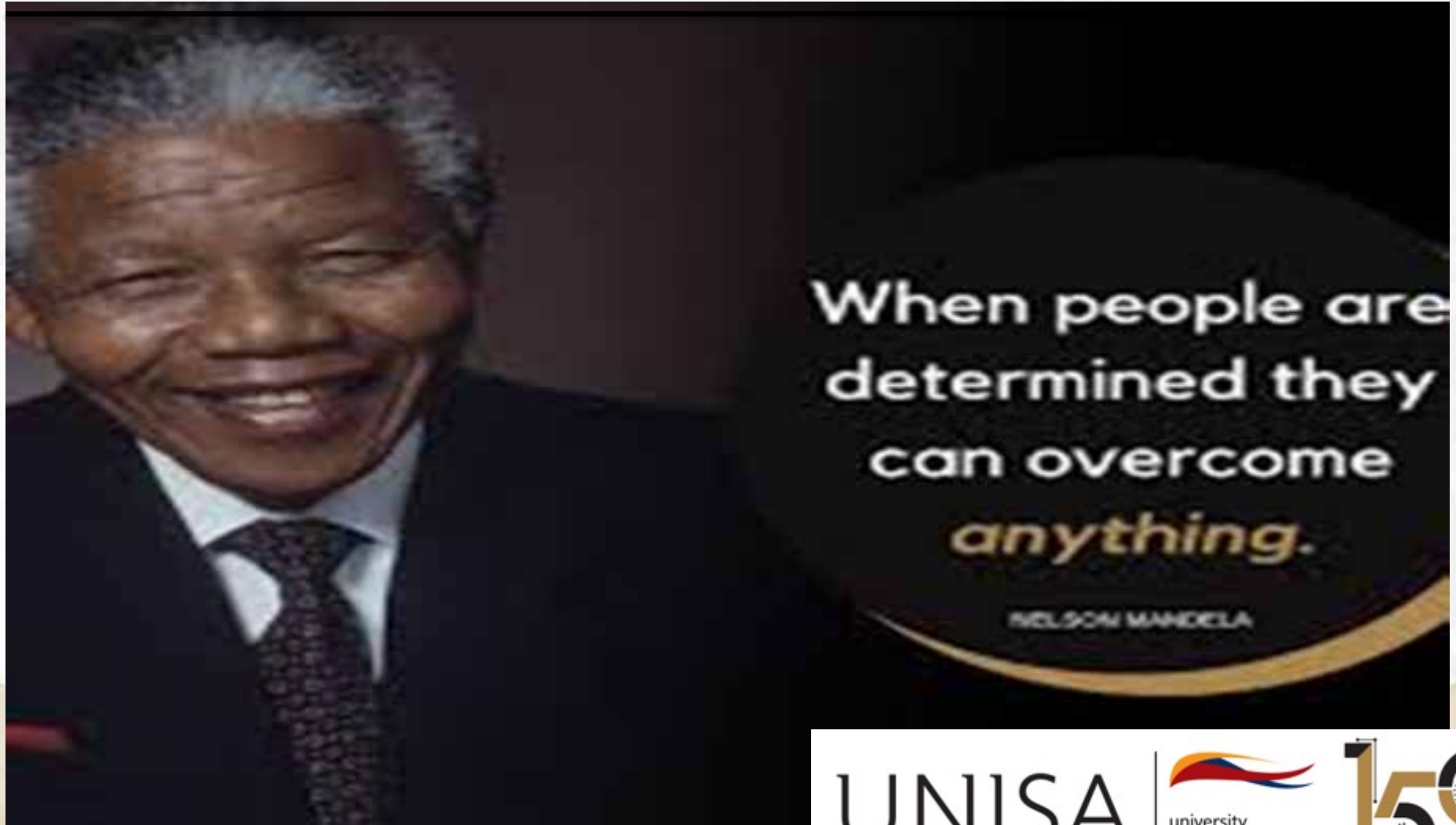
# IFLA Global Vision (2018): Ten Highlights and Opportunities (7 and 9)

HIGHLIGHTS	OPPORTUNITIES
<p><b>7.</b> We see the need to build <b>collaboration</b> and partnerships We recognise working collaboratively amongst ourselves, and in partnership with those outside, as essential for creating a strong, united library field.</p>	<p><b>7.</b> We need to <b>develop a spirit of collaboration</b> Understanding and addressing actual and perceived barriers to collaboration will help end a tendency to work in isolation and realise the vision of a <b>united library field</b>.</p>
<p><b>9.</b> We are the <b>guardians of the memory</b> of the world Libraries are the primary repositories of the world's documentary heritage, and the ideas and creativity they contain. We are uniquely good at preserving and organising knowledge for future generations.</p>	<p><b>9.</b> We need to <b>maximise access to the world's documentary heritage</b>. As a united field we must apply innovative practices and tools, share expertise and resources, and advocate for solutions to legal and funding challenges, <b>to give access to the works we safeguard</b>.</p>
	<p><b>Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, NLSA Heritage Preservation projects, and Unisa Archives</b></p>

# AFRIKOLOGY, UNESCO DECADE OF INDIGENOUS MATTERS (2022-2032), IFLA INDIGENOUS COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN (2021-2023)

AFRIKOLOGY	UNESCO DECLARATION DECADE OF INDIGENOUS MATTERS (2022-2032)	IFLA INDIGENOUS COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN (2021-23)
<p>It is an all-inclusive epistemology of knowledge generation and application that has roots in African cosmology or science (Akinwale 2012).</p>	<p>The objectives of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages are to integrate indigenous languages and multilingualism into global sustainable development framework and individual countries' policies; preserve, revitalize, and promote the use of indigenous languages.</p>	<p>The IFLA action plan for Indigenous Matters Section (Sub-Saharan Africa Region) is anchored on 4 pillars.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) to intensify engagement with the sustainable development goals' processes.</li> <li>2) to increase engagement in the global advocacy priorities such as digitalisation projects; intellectual property rights of indigenous people and others.</li> <li>3) understanding libraries' information needs especially of post-covid-19 era.</li> <li>4) strengthening library collaborative initiatives for community outreach or engaged scholarship projects.</li> </ol>
<p>Afrikology is based on Nabudene's (2011) recognition that the mainstream scientific knowledge is unable to fully explain the crisis facing humanity on its hence the need for integration of knowledges Akinwale 2012:9).</p>		

# THANK YOU



Define tomorrow.

