

Archie Mafeje

Professor Archie Mafeje was born in the region of Eastern Cape on 30 March 1936. A few days before his 71st birthday on 28 March 2007, he passed away. The sad news of his death brought to the whole African intellectual community, to his family and friends, a deep shock and a profound sense of pain. For a moment, it seemed, time stood still, poised at the edge of the unknown.

One of the finest minds among African scholars, Archie was a fighter for African freedom, a comrade, a mentor, and a very special friend, to so many of us. Archie was above all the projects of CODESRIA, husband of our dear sister and friend, Shahida. His departure leaves an inconsolable sense of loss. This untimely departure leaves us with many projects and dreams unrealized, as CODESRIA had great plans of immortalizing his formidable achievements and ensuring continuity for the mentorship he was never tired of giving us, and the younger generation of social scientists.

In his intellectual and commendable controversial style, Archie was a profound thinker, always concerned with the different social, political and economic challenges Africa has faced and still faces. It would be shortsighted of us to limit our appreciation of Archie's contributions to knowledge only to his published works. To celebrate the fullness of his contribu-

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tion, we need to recognize that the areas covered by his analysis came out also through his speeches, conference papers, public lectures and many other interventions. Whether published or unpublished, his highly original and profound quality of thought has always been a great inspiration for different generations of Africa scholars and for Africans of all walks of life.

Archie has been and will always remain a founding father and guide of CODESRIA. His contributions are of such magnitude that the history of CODESRIA cannot be complete without him. In recognition of his immense work, he was honored by the African social research community with a life membership of CODESRIA at the 30th Anniversary Conference in Dakar in 2003.

As current president of CODESRIA I shall sorely miss his wisdom, guidance and good humor at Scientific Committee meetings. With other founder members, he shared different debates on the future of Africa. His honest positions, political and intellectual integrity, immense generosity and authority of voice earned him profound respect from the academic community.

In this moment of profound pain, and on behalf of CODESRIA's members, the Scientific Committee where he served, the Executive Committee, and on my personal behalf, I would like to express our heartfelt condolence and solidarity with Archie's family, intellectual colleagues, friends, and all those who have had occasion to drink from his well of wisdom.

And last but not the least, I have a word for our dear sister. Dear Shaida, I'm aware that in a moment of pain such as this, and especially the loss of someone we love so dearly, the words of our friends are not enough to fill the great emptiness we feel. However, I would like to assure you that CODESRIA's family will walk with you, with Dana, with Xolane, and with the other members of Archie's family, hand in hand, in this difficult phase of your lives, offering as much as we can, a shoulder for you to lean on. Accept therefore, our deep expression of love and solidarity. On behalf of CODESRIA I can also assure you and the African community of our commitment to make any efforts necessary to immortalize Archie's lifelong work and to realize the dream we built together, to spread his knowledge to the younger generation in the continent and beyond.

Archie has died, Archie lives. Archie will live forever in our hearts. Archie's memories and thoughts will continue to grow and flower like the seed of a giant tree.



Sammy Beban Chumbow,
Tandika Nkiwane
and Archie Mafeje,
December 2003, in Dakar,
Senegal