BECOMING WORTHY ANCESTORS

Book Project
Xolela Mangcu
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The book Becoming Worthy Ancestors flows out of the Identity and Archive Lecture Series. It examines the intersections of race, power and the archive, cautioning against evidentiary genocide. It urges South Africans to attend closely to the political stakes at play in the matter of archive so as to become worthy ancestors to the generations yet to come.
The book *Becoming Worthy Ancestors* explores the relationship between archive, identity and public deliberation in contemporary South Africa. It examines the intersections of race, power and the archive, cautioning against evidentiary genocide and urging South Africans to become worthy ancestors to the generations yet to come.

The Public Conversations Book Project is an extension of the 2006 public lecture series initiated by Dr. Xolela Mangcu as a Visiting Fellow of the Public Intellectual Life Project at the University of Witwatersrand.

The book, like the lecture series, proceeds from three central propositions.

The first is that ongoing public deliberation is a powerful vehicle for social change and economic progress, and is fundamental to the attainment, and maintenance, of freedom.

The second is that every engagement with archive is always inflected with power. In every society, including our own, there are strong motivations and efforts to exert control over archive, to read it in singular ways, and to exclude alternative and multiple readings.

The third proposition is that public deliberation - around the key questions of our times and our location in South Africa, and specifically our identity as South Africans - is inhibited by the constrained archive available to us to pursue our deliberations. Identity politics of all kinds typically play out their contests in relation to archive.

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ARCHIVE, PUBLIC DELIBERATION AND IDENTITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Benedict Anderson Kwame Anthony Appiah Martin Bernal Pumla Dineo Gqola Carolyn Hamilton Xolela Mangcu Ntongela Masilela Frederick Van Zyl Slabbert

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