

Yesterday & Today

No. 24, December 2020

CONTENTS

ARTICLES

- Rosa Cabecenas & Martins Magera*
Decolonising images? The liberation script in Mozambican history textbooks 1
- Jean Leonard Bahigiro*
Understanding the complexity of teaching the genocide against the Tutsi through a career life story 28
- Karel Van Niewenhuyse*
Synchronous interactive live lectures versus asynchronous individual online modules. A comparative analysis of students' perceptions and performances 55
- RM Bennett, GI Burton, S Hlalani, B Tsowane & LM Kruger*
Sustaining the University of Johannesburg and Western Sydney University partnership in the time of COVID: A qualitative case study 71
- Levina M Hor*
A self-study of pedagogical experiences in History Education at a university during the COVID-19 pandemic 92
- Sarah Godsell*
Teaching History teachers during COVID-19: Charting poems, pathways and agency 112
- Mhaxemi Celempelo Dube*
Online learning challenges postgraduate certificate in education History students faced during COVID-19 at the University of Zululand 136
- M Noor Davids*
Teaching historical pandemics, using Bernstein's pedagogical device as framework 158
- Rob Siebörger & Barry Firth*
Teaching about dying and death: The 1918 flu epidemic in South Africa 176

HANDS-ON ARTICLES

- Bismwen Nyidom*
Two pandemics, one hundred years and the University of Pretoria: A brief comparison 191
- Tarvin Hlalali*
A new History Education lecturer's university experiences during COVID-19: A personal reflection 196
- Kevon Kaland*
Creating a collaborative learning environment online and in a blended history environment during COVID-19 205
- L. Nasson*
Stop thinking about tomorrow: Even in the era of COVID-19 History is teaching past and present. Reflections on teaching History during COVID-19 219
- Morjorie Ann Brown*
Teaching and learning History in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic: Reflections of a senior school history teacher 226
- Nombhambi CM Situma*
Teaching and learning history in the time of the coronavirus pandemic 239
- Rejoice K. Dlamini*
A reflection on History Education in higher education in Eswatini during COVID-19 247
- Ackson M Kandaza*
In the moment of making History: The case of COVID-19 in Zambia 257
- Amyl Balthusa et al.*
Decolonial History teachers' charter: A praxis guide 274
- BOOK REVIEWS**
- Jimmy Justice, Mubhele et al. Our Story – Godongwana becomes Dingiswayo* 289
- Derrick Meyer* 294
- Maria Grever Inescapable past: Reflections on a changing historical culture* 294
- Dennis Bemoato* 299
- Daniela Trifkan and Spela Bezjak (eds.) Archaeological heritage and education: An international perspective on History Education* 299
- Nancy Rusbulters

YESTERDAY & TODAY

NO. 24, DECEMBER 2020

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YESTERDAY
& TODAY



The *Yesterday&Today* is a scholarly, peer-reviewed and educationally focused History journal. It is indexed by the South African Department of Higher Education and Training. The journal is currently published in conjunction with The South African Society for History Teaching (SASHT) under the patronage of the North-West University. Open access to the journal is available on the SASHT, the SciELO and the Boloka websites. The Website addresses to find previous and current issues of the *Yesterday&Today* journal are:

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Contents

Editorial I

Articles

Rosa Cabecinhas & Martins Mapera

Decolonising images? The liberation script in Mozambican history 1
textbooks

Jean Leonard Buhigiro

Understanding the complexity of teaching the genocide against 28
the Tutsi through a career life story

Karel Van Nieuwenhuysse

Synchronous interactive live lectures versus asynchronous 55
individual online modules. A comparative analysis of students'
perceptions and performances

BM Bennett, GA Barton, S Hifazat, B Tsuwane & LM Kruger

Sustaining the University of Johannesburg and Western Sydney 71
University partnership in the time of COVID: A qualitative case
study

Leevina M Iyer

A self-study of pedagogical experiences in History Education at a 92
university during the COVID-19 pandemic

Sarah Godsell

Teaching History teachers during COVID-19: Charting poems, 112
pathways and agency

Mbusiseni Celimpilo Dube

Online learning challenges postgraduate certificate in education 136
History students faced during COVID-19 at the University of
Zululand

M Noor Davids

Teaching historical pandemics, using Bernstein's pedagogical 158
device as framework

<i>Rob Siebörger & Barry Firth</i>	
Teaching about dying and death: The 1918 flu epidemic in South Africa	176

Hands-on Articles

<i>Bronwyn Strydom</i>	
Two pandemics, one hundred years and the University of Pretoria: A brief comparison	191
<i>Tarryn Halsall</i>	
A new History Education lecturer's university experiences during COVID-19: A personal reflection	196
<i>Kirstin Kukard</i>	
Creating a collaborative learning environment online and in a blended history environment during COVID-19	205
<i>L Nasson</i>	
Stop thinking about tomorrow: Even in the era of COVID-19 History is teaching past and present Reflections on teaching History during COVID-19	219
<i>Marjorie Ann Brown</i>	
Teaching and learning History in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic: Reflections of a senior school history teacher	226
<i>Nonhlanhla CM Skosana</i>	
Teaching and learning history in the time of the coronavirus pandemic	239
<i>Rejoice K Dlamini</i>	
A reflection on History Education in higher education in Eswatini during COVID-19	247
<i>Ackson M Kanduza</i>	
In the moment of making History: The case of COVID-19 in Zambia	257
<i>Aasif Bulbulia et al.</i>	
Decolonial History teachers' charter: A praxis guide	274

Book Reviews

<i>Jimmy Justice Maluleke et al. Our Story – Godongwana becomes Dingiswayo</i> Derick Myeni	289
<i>Maria Grever Inescapable past: Reflections on a changing historical culture</i> Denise Bentreovato	294
<i>Danijela Trškan and Špela Bezjak (eds.) Archaeological heritage and education: An international perspective on History Education</i> Nancy Rushohora	299
<i>SASHT Constitution</i>	303
<i>Yesterday&Today reference guidelines</i>	309
<i>Yesterday&Today subscription, 2020-2021</i>	319

Editorial

History Education greetings,

Welcome to the December 2019 edition of *Yesterday & Today*. Unfortunately, this volume appeared a month late, at the end of January 2021. But one of the minor consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Minor indeed when considering the havoc, the COVID-19 pandemic has wrecked all over the world.

At the beginning of April 2020, just after the severity of COVID-19 pandemic hit home, it was decided to dedicate the bulk of the December 2020 edition (volume 24) of *Yesterday & Today* to the teaching and learning of history under COVID-19 conditions. Subsequently, a call-for-papers reading: “*Yesterday & Today*, an accredited open-access journal, with a focus on History Education, History in Education, History for Education and the History of Education, are calling for papers on the teaching and learning of History in the time of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”, were distributed. Numerous abstracts from across the world were received, but alas, many of the initial abstracts were not followed through on, simply because of the toll COVID-19 took on history educators and the institutions they work in. Others were, no doubt, lured in a different direction by the plethora of other scholarly journals also seeking to produce special editions on education and COVID-19. The academic articles finally accepted for publication were of a high academic standard and spoke directly to the call-for-papers. I will say more about this further down.

But first I want to dwell on several other matters related to history education and COVID-19. While COVID-19 served to lay bare numerous societal fault lines, it also did so in terms of matters relating to history education. Three examples in this regard will suffice. The first relates to the absence of history in the numerous “cloud schools” that sprang up in South Africa. One would have thought that, considering the zeitgeist we are in, the powers that be would include history in the “cloud schools” created on television and elsewhere, Alas, this did not happen and the standard privileged fare of Mathematics, English and so forth were dished up. The second deals with the absence of history educationalists and other social scientists in the mitigation policies created by many countries in the world. Such policies, by dint of their legal-ethical nature and societal impact, needs more than a bio-medical approach. Sadly, this was not how, generally speaking, the COVID-19 world was viewed. And finally, whatever curriculum reform is

planned in history education in future, planners would do well to consider the inclusion of the study of pandemics.

Back to the December 2020 edition. Volume 24 of *Yesterday & Today*, for the uninitiated the journal is attached to the South African Society for History Teaching (SASHT), consists of four sections. The first section contains the usual academic articles. The second contains academic articles related to COVID-19 and history education, and the third, “hands-on” or practical articles on COVID-19 and history education. The final section contains the three book reviews appearing in this edition of *Yesterday & Today*.

Section 1 consists of the usual academic articles related to history education. In the first Rosa Cabecinhas and Martins Mapera dealt with decolonisation and the liberation script in Mozambican history textbooks. In the second, Leonard Buhigiro engaged, by means of a career life story, with the complexity of teaching the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

The second section carries the COVID-19 academic articles related to history education. In the first of these Karel Van Nieuwenhuys, in a comparative study, interrogated postgraduate history education students’ perceptions and performances when using different modes of online studying. This is followed by an article by Brett Bennett and his team of co-authors who investigated the consequences of COVID-19 on international partnership between universities. In her article, Leevina Iyer turned the research lens inwards and studied her own educational practices as a history education lecturer during COVID-19. Sarah Godsell, in her contribution, asked critical questions about her history education practices during the pandemic by focussing on the challenges and problems brought about by Emergency Online Teaching. Mpilo Dube, in his article, focussed on higher education by honing in on the experiences of PGCE History students when teaching and learning moved online. A different research slant was brought to the special edition by Noor Davids in his article on the use of Bernstein’s Pedagogical Device to teach historical pandemics. The final academic paper related to COVID-19 and history education is by Siebörger and Firth. In it they ponder the teaching of dying and death with reference to the 1918 flu epidemic in South Africa.

In the third section, consisting of “hands-on” articles, Bronwynne Strydom continues with the 1918 flu epidemic theme by looking at how the University of Pretoria reacted to it at the time. This is followed by an autoethnographic piece by Tarryn Halsall, who started her career as

an academic in history education on the day when the lockdown was announced. The third “hands on” article is by Leah Nasson in which she asks critical questions about online teaching, history education and society. Marj Brown, in her article also adopts a critical stance in interrogating what she did as a history teacher at an affluent school during COVID-19. This is followed by an article by Kirsten Kukard and her experiences of teaching history for blended and online learning during the pandemic. In her article, Nonhlanhla Skosana, reflects on the dual process on teaching history during the pandemic at a township school while also pursuing her postgrad studies in history education. This is followed by a “hands-on” article by history education students of the University of the Witwatersrand in which they propose a decolonising teachers charter. The final two “hands-on” articles are from fellow African countries. In her contribution Rejoice Dlamini reflects on history education during the pandemic in Eswatini, while Ackson Kanduzi shines the light on COVID-19 in Zambia.

I am confident that the above contributions will not be the final word on history education under COVID-19 conditions and that the 2021 volumes of *Yesterday & Today* will carry further contributions in this regard.

I would like to conclude this editorial on a sobering note, one that would, in my view, serve to contextualise the devastating impact of COVID-19. In early January 2021, Dr Gengs Pillay, a leading light in history education at secondary school level in South Africa, and former member of the editorial board of *Yesterday & Today*, passed away of COVID-19 related complications. Dr Kate Angier, one of the assistant-editors for *Yesterday & Today*, who worked closely with Gengs, contributed the memorial piece on the next page.

Take care and stay safe!

Johan Wassermann (Editor-in-Chief)



Remembering Dr Gengs Pillay – a history education giant

It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of Dr Gengatharen Pillay in January 2021 from Covid-related complications and extend our sincere condolences to his bereaved family. Gengs had been a member of the editorial board of *Yesterday & Today* since 2013 and was a doyen of the history education community in South Africa, playing a hugely influential role in shaping history teaching and learning in post-apartheid South Africa. Enormously generous of spirit, Gengs was a charismatic leader with a passion for History; his loss will be felt by all those who knew him, from deep rural classrooms of Kwazulu-Natal to the examination directorate at Department of Basic Education in Pretoria.

Gengs had a profound understanding of education, schools, teaching and learning acquired over more than 30 years working in the field. He had served as a teacher, subject advisor, academic, a provincial and national examiner and moderator, a curriculum evaluator for Umalusi, chief editor and author of the hugely successful and popular *New Generation* history textbook series as well as serving on the editorial board of the academic journal *Yesterday & Today*, and as an executive member of SASHT (The South African Society for History Teachers). Gengs played a key role in turning the post-apartheid history curriculum into classroom practice through his workshops, resources and the tireless support he gave to teachers. It was this work of curriculum implementation which formed the basis of his doctoral research, for which he was awarded a PhD in 2013. Gengs remained humble, despite his many achievements and took great pleasure in stepping back into the classroom to teach a Grade 12 revision class or to give a motivational talk to the ‘laities’. He was an engaging and enthusiastic speaker, telling stories from his own history, of experiences during the struggle, and impressing on them the transformational power of education.

Under Gengs’s leadership and mentorship, History has grown in popularity as a choice subject in the Further Education and Training phase. However, Gengs supported the Ministerial Task Team’s 2018 recommendation that History should become a compulsory school subject for all learners to Grade 12. He believed strongly that all South African children should know their own history, be proud of their heritage and learn the stories of ‘ordinary’ heroes that had been hidden from them in the past. Had he lived, Gengs would have played a key role in shaping the assessment standards for the next iteration of the South African curriculum.

Go well Gengs, may you rest in peace in the certain knowledge that your life and work has made a profound difference to those of us who had the privilege to work with you in history education and to generations of learners who will continue to benefit from your life’s work.

Dr Kate Angier, *University of Cape Town*
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Decolonising images? The liberation script in Mozambican history textbooks

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Abstract

In this article we examine the textbook narratives of the colonial past and the nation-building process in Mozambique, a Southern African country which gained its independence in 1975. One of the priorities after independence was to redesign the state apparatus and social system in order to decolonise people's minds, foster patriotism and strengthen national cohesion. We have conducted a discourse analysis of the verbal and iconic content of two Mozambican history textbooks, which are exclusively dedicated to national history: one published during the single-party or "socialist" phase; and the other published in the multi-party or "neoliberal" phase and currently in use. For this purpose, we developed an analytic framework to unveil how the textbooks' written and visual repertoires, and the combination thereof, convey (or otherwise) a diverse and inclusive vision of the nation. Our findings reveal that although there have been changes in the types of language and images used, the general account of Mozambican history remains identical, emphasising the need for national unity under the leadership of the ruling political elite and recounting the History of Mozambique from the perspective of a single Liberation script, that completely overlooks the agency of women.

Keywords: Africa; Decoloniality; History education; Intersectionality; Mozambique; Nationalism.

In this article we examine History textbook narratives about the nation-building process in Mozambique, a multilingual country (Lopes, 1998) in Southern Africa bordered by the Indian Ocean. According to Israel (2013:11), the Mozambican case can be viewed as both "paradigmatic" and "extreme". On the one hand, it is "paradigmatic of a southern African tendency, whereby the political legitimacy acquired in liberation struggles," in this case against Portuguese colonialism – "generated a triumphalist historical narrative, which became an instrument of state – and nation-building, a catalyst of collective identities, and a tool of power." On the other hand, it is an "extreme" case, in the sense that "a prolonged

anti-colonial struggle gave way to a socialist experiment [...], led by a charismatic leader of a revolutionary party” (Israel, 2013:11). Therefore, “in Mozambique the liberation narrative seemed to promise a victory – not only against colonialism and conjunctural Cold War enemies but also against the exploitation of man by man” (Israel, 2013:11). However, the “very dramatic” recent history lived by Mozambicans (Arnfred, 2004:106), shows that the dream that it will be possible to eradicate extreme inequality is far from being achieved.

After the proclamation of the People’s Republic of Mozambique in 1975, one of the priorities of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) was to redesign the state apparatus and the social system in order to overcome the colonial mindset, foster patriotism and strengthen national cohesion (Basílio, 2010). Education was perceived as the driving force for the envisioned social and economic progress. But qualified national teaching staff and material resources were scarce. In order to overcome the huge rates of poverty and illiteracy inherited from the colonial era, the FRELIMO government built upon the educational experiences initiated in the liberated areas during the armed struggle. While the Mozambican government was struggling to redesign the state apparatus, the so-called Cold War gained ground in the region (Piepiorka, 2020). In this context, the “post-independence development in education was triggered by foreign-induced impulses, stemming from ‘socialist solidarity’” (Piepiorka, 2020:289). “Cooperantes” from a variety of countries (Brazil, Canada, Italy, Portugal, Nordic countries, among others; Cf. Isaacman & Isaacman, 1983; Gasparini, 1989), worked as educational advisors, schoolteachers, curriculum designers, etc., together with local teams in the huge and challenging task of creating an approach that aimed to overcome “both traditional and colonial modes of education”, fighting oppressive systems of class divisions (Barnes, 1982:407). These post-independence socialist goals were integrated into the Mozambican national education system, implemented in 1983.

One of the main priorities was to re-write history and disseminate a new narrative of the nation to rescue dignity. The new curriculum materials emphasised the history of resistance and the role played by the armed liberation struggle (Barnes, 1982) in the nation-building process. As in other contexts, the need to legitimise the new political order led to the construction and dissemination of a single account of national history. According to Coelho (2013), the “Liberation script” disseminated in the

public sphere emphasised the armed liberation struggle against colonialism, primarily through binary opposites: revolutionary versus colonialist, exploiter versus exploited, and so on. This “usable past” (Wertsch, 2002) was disseminated by various instruments of the state, including the education system and the media.

Since 2010 there has been a growing body of research into Mozambican public memory and social representations of national history (e.g. Cabecinhas & Feijó, 2010) as well as critical reflection on the “Liberation script” (Coelho, 2013) in the Mozambican public sphere, in particular analysis of how this liberation script has been conveyed via political discourses, films, novels, biographies, etc. (e.g. Israel, 2013; Meneses, 2011; Schefer, 2016). However, there has been very little research into Mozambican history textbooks.

Cabecinhas, Macedo, Jamal and Sá (2018) developed a synchronic analysis of the representations of European colonialism and liberation struggles in current History curricula and textbooks for lower and upper secondary school education in Mozambique. Cabecinhas, Jamal, Sá and Macedo (2021) conducted a diachronic analysis of the Liberation script in Mozambican history textbooks since independence. In this article, we examine the representations of national history conveyed in two Mozambican history textbooks, published in distinct phases: the single-party or “socialist” phase; and the multi-party or “neoliberal” phase. While previous work has focused solely on the verbal content, in this article we will also analyse the iconic dimension, using exploratory multimodal analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; van Leeuwen & Selander, 1995), informed by an intersectional framework (Crenshaw, 1989; May, 2015), which acknowledges that oppression is not a single-axis phenomenon, but a complex one, involving multiple social groups. Such an intersectional framework is particularly relevant for the context of Mozambique, since the Liberation struggle aimed to fight against all kind of oppressions and thereby create a nation that would be free from any kind of discrimination, in particular racism and sexism.

In the following sections we provide a brief context for our study, presenting the analytic framework and the Mozambican historical and educational background. We then present a multimodal analysis of the Liberation script in two Mozambican History textbooks, published in different political phases. The two textbooks analysed herein obviously do

not constitute a representative sample of all History textbooks published since 1975. Our aim is far more modest: to reflect on how the images chosen and incorporated in these textbooks may contribute to the task of decolonising historical knowledge; and the extent to which the visual elements are aligned with the text, to convey a single script of the nation-building process. We will not, therefore, provide a systematic multimodal analysis, including linguistic and layout structures (Kress & van Leeuwen 1990), nor a comprehensive analysis of the verbal and visual text in the two textbooks. We will pay particular attention to the verbal and iconic representations of the colonial past and the liberation struggle and how they convey group and individual agency, in a way that challenges or reinforces the colonial legacy.

Picturing the nation and decolonising historical knowledge

Debates on how the colonial past is interpreted and how it is taught in schools are crucial (Carretero, Berger & Grever, 2017; van Nieuwenhuysse & Valentim, 2018) as well as the need to move away from traditional dichotomies between Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives in history education. Nowadays there is a huge worldwide controversy about history education (Cajani, Lässig & Repoussi, 2019). Different trends can be observed around the world concerning the ways of operationalising a “multicultural”, “cosmopolitan”, or “global” history education, in order to promote multi-perspectivity and a culture of peace. However, despite the recommendations established by international organisations, such as UNESCO, history education continues to be a privileged arena for the State’s soft power, aiming to foster patriotism (often confused with nationalism) and convening a vision of the past which legitimises the current political order (Wertsch, 2002).

History education, like other instruments of the State, establishes guidelines on what should be remembered from the nation’s past, and also how it should be remembered (Valsiner & Marsico, 2019), establishing a link between dominant meaning systems or hegemonic social representations (Moscovici, 1988) and personal experiences. According to Valsiner and Marsico (2019), historical memory is “socially suggested to be fragmented, superficial, and affectively accepting the hegemonic message encoded in the words of the parents (about ones great-great-grandparents), school history textbooks, and public monuments” (Valsiner & Marsico, 2019:vi). Several studies have demonstrated the longstanding impact of education

and textbooks on the political worldviews of young people, which may even be detectable at an adult age (Ide, Kirchheimer & Bentrovato, 2018).

Remembering is a constructive process (Bartlett, 1933) embedded within a specific cultural context and cannot be understood without taking into account the interplay between cognition, affect, identity dynamics, asymmetric power relations and cultural symbols. For example, Wagoner, Brescó and Awad (2019) stress the need for conducting qualitative analysis in order to examine how remembering is transformed over time, according to the systems of meaning of a given society and its historical transformation. Assuming an interdisciplinary perspective, in this article we will focus on history education in Mozambique, conducting an exploratory multimodal analysis of the visual “Liberation script” in two textbooks published in different political moments.

Taking into account the extremely asymmetric power relations during the period of European Imperialism and the way that they pervasively undermined the wealth, well-being, self-esteem and self-confidence of former colonised peoples, one of the priorities of African liberation movements has been to rewrite history in order to overcome Eurocentric perspectives. However, according to Chakrabarty, despite the development of alternative historiographies, “‘Europe’ remains the sovereign, theoretical subject of all histories”, functioning “as a silent referent in historical knowledge” (1992:1-2).

This “silent referent” works not only through the text (concepts used to describe historical processes and periods), but also through the images, since African textbooks usually rely on the colonial archive (photographs of documents, etc.) to illustrate historical events and figures. As will be shown below, the need to tell history from a Mozambican perspective led to the creation of original illustrations (drawings, photographs, infographics and maps) to be incorporated into history textbooks.

In this article we will focus on the efforts made to challenge Europe as a “silent referent” of historical knowledge and to decolonise history education through the use of local sources and images. We will pay particular attention to the images of historical figures. An intersectional decolonial framework was developed to analyse these images, considering that each person pertains to multiple social groups (socially constructed in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, social class, age group, etc.), occupying asymmetric positions in a given society. In Mozambique, the

Liberation struggle was presented as a fight against two main forms of oppression – the “colonial” and the “traditional” – which had a particularly strong impact on women. Women’s emancipation was considered to be crucial for achieving liberation, as expressed in Samora Machel’s famous statement during the inaugural meeting of the Organisation of Mozambican Women (Organização da Mulher Moçambicana; OMM) in 1973: “The liberation of women is a necessity for the revolution, a guarantee of its continuity and a condition for its success” (Arnfred, 2004:109).

Overcoming the colonial education system and Mozambican history textbooks

By the 1960s, almost all former African colonies had gained independence and Portugal had the only European colonial empire that had not collapsed. The political ideology and national historiography, under the Estado Novo dictatorship, steeped in strongly Eurocentric and nationalistic assumptions, praised Portugal’s “civilising mission” (Jerónimo, 2015). Portugal’s former African colonies gained their independence in the mid-1970s, after Portugal’s 1974 Carnation Revolution and a long liberation war in Angola, Portuguese Guinea, and Mozambique (Valentim & Miguel, 2018).

According to Arnfred (2004:106) “the recent history of Mozambique has been very dramatic. There have been several changes of political regimes, and almost three decades of war, from the onset of the armed struggle in 1964 to the Rome Peace Agreement in 1992”, ending the “16 years” conflict/civil war. Two remarkable political shifts are identified: 1) the transition in 1975 from Portuguese colonialism to political independence and FRELIMO socialism; 2) the transition from FRELIMO socialism to neo-liberal economic policies and a structural adjustment programme coordinated by the World Bank, since the early 1990s. Arnfred adds that although “these decades of history include dramatic changes in government”, in which Mozambicans moved “from colonial dominance economy in a one-party state, to multi-party democracy and neo-liberal economic structures”, these changes are “overshadowed by persistent continuities” (2004:106). In fact, today’s power structures remain concentrated around FRELIMO, providing “a layered form of social stratification within the nation” (Sumich, 2010:679), a situation which contrasts with the utopian dreams proclaimed during the liberation struggle.

After independence, the main priority for the education system was to form a “New Man”, who would have a patriotic and revolutionary

consciousness, free from colonial thoughts or any other form of domination (Cabaço, 2007; Mazula, 1995). The prevalence of a colonial mindset in a large part of the population and the fact that people identified themselves on an ethnic, tribal and regional basis were considered to be obstacles to national unity (Mazula, 1995). These problems led to the emergence of an educational model based on Marxism-Leninism values, in which tradition and cultural diversity were seen as a barrier to building the new order (Cabaço, 2007). The process of nation-building was based on erasing local cultural traditions, which allegedly contributed to obscurantism (Basílio, 2010). In this political context, a single vision of the colonial past was constructed and mobilised by political leaders, and also in the education system, to gather the people around the “nation”, ignoring distinct ethnicities and different experiences, in which the “heart of national history is located in the memory of the struggle for national liberation” from colonialism (Meneses, 2011:130). Appealing to unity, the nationalist narrative generated profound contradictions as well as continuities with modern oppression mechanisms (Meneses, 2011).

The collapse of the USSR, brought significant changes to Mozambique’s political system. The end of the civil war (1976-92) led to opening of democracy and the transition to a multi-party system. However, the liberalisation of the economy and higher foreign investment did not eradicate poverty or huge regional disparities (Castiano, 2019). In the education system, the transition from a “socialist” to a “neoliberal” phase led to implementation of curricular reforms and an opening to the private sector, but still maintained inequalities in terms of access to high-quality education (Castiano, 2019).

According to the Ministry of Education (MINED, 2012:21), since the country gained independence, Mozambique’s Education System had had three distinct periods: 1975-1979 – nationalisation of Education and the expansion of the school network and enrolment; 1980-1992 – shrinking of the school network due to the civil war; 1992 onwards – after signature of the Peace Agreement in 1992 there has been major expansion of the school network and enrolment, and the opening of private schools and universities. In 2004, Public Primary School Education was restructured, through introduction of a new curriculum aimed at offering seven years of basic education to all, although this goal is still far from being achieved. The curriculum of the General Secondary School Education was restructured in 2008, introducing “multicultural education”, oriented

towards entrepreneurship and the global market. Public Primary School Education is free, with provision of free textbooks, whereas in Secondary School Education there are tuition fees and no provision of free textbooks. Secondary School attendance rates remain very low today (MINED, 2019).

A new education reform was recently approved (Law no. 18/2018, of December 28) that aimed to “Harmonise current educational policies with regional education initiatives within the framework of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and, at the level of the African continent, within the framework of the African Union Vision 2063 and its Continental Education Strategy for Africa (2016-2025)” (MINED, 2019: 10). According to the new law, public Primary School Education will cover six years (instead of the current seven years) and History, as an autonomous subject, will be removed from the curriculum.

After independence, History was a priority subject and was compulsory in primary and secondary schools. History is now taught as a separate subject in secondary school education: in the lower level of secondary school (years 8 to 10) students learn about “universal history”, including Mozambican history, while the upper level is dedicated to African history (year 11) and Mozambican history (year 12). The 2018 reform aims to include History within a general subject of “Social Sciences”, but the new curricular directives haven’t yet been defined.

Mozambican textbooks follow the mandatory curricula defined by the Ministry of Education. In the 2000s there was an opening, which enabled different publishing houses to produce textbooks, and a list of various textbooks was approved by the Ministry of Education for each year/subject. However, since 2017, a single textbook is recommended for each year/subject. In the case of History, the textbooks published by Texto Editores (which has its headquarters in Portugal) were chosen to be used in all school years (Cabecinhas et al., 2018).

Narrating the nation: The (visual) liberation script in textbooks about Mozambican history

In this article we compare two textbooks which focus exclusively on national history: *A História da minha pátria. 5ª Classe* [The history of my homeland. Year 5] (INDE, 1986) was the first textbook entirely dedicated to Mozambican history published after implementation of the Mozambican National Education System (1983); and *H12 História* [History, Year 12]

(Mussa, 2015), resulting from the most recent curricular reform and the one that is currently in use.

As mentioned above, in this article we will pay attention to the efforts made to overcome Europe as a “silent referent” and to decolonise history education, by challenging colonial conceptualisations and using local sources and images. In terms of images, we will focus exclusively on images of people and the way that these images reinforce or challenge asymmetries of power. For this purpose, we have adapted the semiotic multimodal analysis grid proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), –in particular that which they call “representational meanings” (representation of human participants: gender, ethnicity, age, social status, occupation) and “compositional meanings” (framing) – with an intersectional approach (e.g. Crenshaw, 1991; May, 2015) in order to engage with complexity, rather than analysing each element in isolation. In addition to looking at the combination of the elements found therein, we also considered the absent elements. The images reproduced in this article aim to question the “silent” referents in the narration of the nation. The captions provided below correspond to the captions that appear in the textbooks (translated into English).

Decolonising the archive

The textbook *A História da minha pátria* (INDE, 1986) was written by a “collective of authors” whose names are indicated in the book’s technical credits, alongside the authors of the illustrations and graphic arrangements and the archives used (in particular the Mozambican magazine *Tempo*, the Historical Archive and the Museum of the Revolution). No sources are identified for the images, nor is there any reference or bibliography list. There is recurring use of expressions such as “we”, “we, Mozambicans” with an emphasis placed on oral testimonies (mainly from peasants and freedom fighters) and speeches by FRELIMO leaders, who have the highest number of photographs in this textbook, in particular Eduardo Mondlane, FRELIMO’s first president, who was assassinated in 1969, and Samora Machel, Mozambique’s first President, who died in a plane crash on October 19, 1986, a few weeks before this textbook was published. In fact, the textbook concludes with a tribute to Samora Machel: “The father of the nation is dead” (INDE, 1986:109) and the final page is dedicated to “Joaquim Alberto Chissano, successor of Samora and Mondlane”, with a photograph of the new president, highlighting FRELIMO’s role “in the fight against

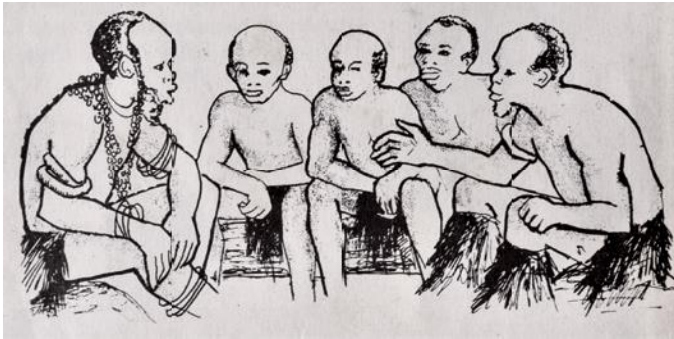
tribalism, regionalism, racism and other forms of division of the People, and which has helped form the Mozambican Nation” (INDE, 1986:112).

In INDE (1986) the oral testimonies are presented as having evidential status, conveying the truth. The textbook contains various testimonial elements – in the form of photographs, illustrations, maps, chronological charts and other documents, all in black and white. The majority are original materials (drawings, charts and photographs), complemented by a few illustrations from various archives. Both oral testimonies and material and archaeological evidence are used to rescue “Mozambique’s long history” (p. 7), contradicting the Eurocentric narrative that Africa had no history before the arrival of the Europeans. The elders (Image 1: Council of Elders) symbolise the preservation of endogenous wisdom and history.

The textbook *H12 História* (Mussa, 2015) is illustrated with color photos, figures, graphs and maps, but none of the sources are indicated. The tables are the only illustrations that are always accompanied by a source. There is a bibliography at the end, which includes both Mozambican and foreign sources, predominantly African and European. This textbook also stresses the importance of oral history and material and archaeological evidence in order to recover Africa’s history. The textbook states that historical sources are a crucial subject and dedicates the first chapter to discussing the problem of sources for the different periods in the History of Mozambique. The interpretative nature of historical knowledge is addressed, including problems related to availability, credibility, access and distribution of sources for the reconstitution of the history of Mozambique, and stressing the need for oral sources, since “colonial historiography left a fragile base in terms of source structures (...) a poor record of popular struggles against the colonial system” (Mussa, 2015:12). In this context, the textbook includes excerpts from the book *Mozambique, 16 Years of Historiography* (1991:17-27) which states that the almost complete absence of historical sources in post-independence textbooks is due to the fragile documentary legacy left by colonial historiography, which means that retracing the country’s history depends on ethnographic descriptions, travellers’ reports and some legal support from the Portuguese administration. Taken as a whole, this “makes historical reconstruction of the country very difficult” (Mussa, 2015: 12). The gaps are being filled by oral testimonies, which in many cases are the only available sources. The text explains: “Because there is still a lack of reliable, written information for the reconstruction of certain periods in our country’s history, oral sources are extensively

used in the History of Mozambique” (Mussa, 2015:12). Another passage from the same excerpt adds : “We cannot (...) forget that in any historical era or period the class in power determines a certain type of historical production, a manipulation for which researchers should always be aware” (Mussa, 2015:12), denoting a critical position in relation to the lack of impartiality of this type of testimony, and laying a bridge towards the limitations of written sources in Mozambique. It is therefore necessary to resort to material and archaeological sources, as well as secondary sources, in particular those from other countries, but which raised difficulties of interpretation due to insufficient mastery of their languages, such as Arabic and Hebrew (Mussa, 2015). A photograph of an “elder who guards the Chinghamaperi rock art engravings in Manica” (Image 2) symbolises the importance of ancient history.

Image 1: Council of Elders



Source: INDE, *A História da minha pátria. 5ª classe*, 1986, p. 12.

Image 2: Elder who guards the Chinghamaperi rock art engravings in Manica



Source: C Mussa, *História 12a classe*, 2015, p. 12.

Contesting the colonial mindset

INDE (1986:4-7) begins with a short chronological overview of Mozambican history, divided into six periods: “Ancient kingdoms and empires”; “Arab presence”, “Portuguese incursions into Mozambique and resistance”; “Effective occupation of Mozambique”; “The armed National Liberation struggle”; and “Independent Mozambique”. The first chapter, intitled “The people of Mozambique many, many years ago”, emphasises the ancient history of the Mozambican people and the lifestyle of small communities, based on harvesting, hunting and fishing. The second chapter describes the arrival and settling of the Bantu people, emphasising the formation and decline of several kingdoms, in particular Great Zimbabwe, Mwenemutapa, Marave, Yao and Gaza. The third chapter covers the “Arab presence”, the “Portuguese penetration” and the “Prazos” of the Zambezi river valley. The fourth chapter corresponds to “effective occupation” by the Portuguese and Mozambican resistance. The fifth chapter is about the armed struggle for national liberation, and the sixth chapter covers Mozambique after independence.

In Mussa (2015) the classification of the different periods of Mozambican history is somewhat similar, but is only divided into five periods, since the armed liberation struggle is presented as the final phase of the fourth period. Independent Mozambique corresponds to the fifth period, which is divided into two phases: the single party phase; and the multi-party phase, since 1990/4. Ironically, the image chosen to identify Unit 1 - dedicated to the periodisation of Mozambican history and highlighting the need to move beyond the colonial archive – is a photograph of a bas-relief representing the imprisonment of Ngungunyane, the last emperor of Gaza, in December of 1895, considered to be the moment that signalled the beginning of Portugal’s “effective occupation” of Mozambique (Image 3). The same image, where Ngungunyane is portrayed in a position of submission, is shown on three occasions in this textbook. Furthermore, Ngungunyane is the only Mozambican identified in images covering the periods prior to independence.

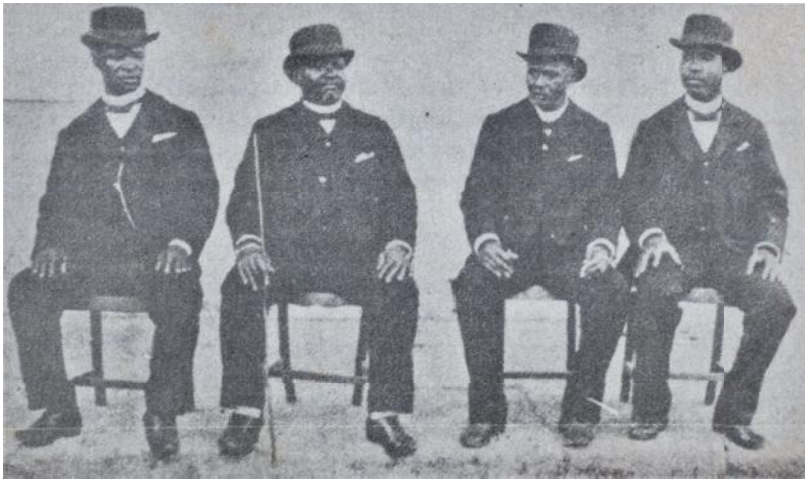
Ngungunyane is also highlighted as a symbol of resistance in INDE (1986), and is once again the only Mozambican from this period to be identified in a photograph that indicates his name, but with a different image: a photograph where Ngungunyane is with his family, after being deported to the Azores (Image 4).

Image 3: The imprisonment of Ngungunyane



Source: C Mussa, *História 12a classe*, 2015, p. 81.

Image 4: Ngungunyane with his son (Godigo), the uncle (Mulungo) e Matibjana (Zixaxa) in Portugal



Source: INDE, *A História da minha pátria. 5ª classe*, 1986, p. 45.

As mentioned above, both textbooks distinguish two periods of colonialism in Mozambique: “foreign mercantile penetration” and “effective occupation of Mozambique” or “aggressive imperialism”. However, the type of images chosen to illustrate these periods are quite distinct. INDE (1986:21) states that “in 1498 the first Portuguese explorers, led by Vasco da Gama, arrived

in Mozambique. They were interested in our riches, in particular our gold and ivory”. The Portuguese attacked the Arabs and formed alliances with some of the local chiefs, who “authorised the Portuguese to settle and trade, under certain conditions. A tax was introduced called the ‘Curva’. When entering Zimbabwe, ruled by the Mwenemutapa, the Portuguese could not wear hats or bear weapons and had to clap their hands as a sign of respect” (INDE, 1986:23). This asymmetry of power relations is represented in Image 5, where the Mwenemutapa is shown in a higher position and the Portuguese in a submissive posture and lower position, in contrast with the dominant Eurocentric narrative, which portrays colonialism as a top-down process, controlled by European agency.

INDE (1986) notes that “from the outset, the Portuguese colonialists encountered strong resistance from the Mozambican people. However, some Mwenemutapas betrayed our People’s heroic resistance. This betrayal led to rebellions and internal struggles, such as the 1596 revolt, in which the Mambos in Quiteve and Manica revolted against Gatsi-Rusere controlled by the Mwenemutapa, which allowed Portuguese merchants and soldiers to enter and establish their empire” (INDE, 1986:23). It is explained that the conflicts between the different groups were encouraged by the “Portuguese colonialists”, who “unleashed wars against the people of Mozambique to steal their riches. But, the people of Mozambique resisted the Portuguese colonialists. The latter were often defeated by brave chiefs and warriors” (INDE, 1986:39). The textbook highlights “the internal struggles between Mozambicans, the betrayal of some chiefs who allied themselves with the Portuguese and the religious influence, which allowed the colonialists to begin exploiting our country [...]. Until the 19th century, Portuguese penetration into the hinterland and the effective occupation of our country was always difficult, due to the heroic resistance of the Mozambican people” (INDE, 1986:42). A reference is also made to the resistance to forced labour (*xibalo*) in different parts of the country and the alliances forged by the Portuguese with other colonial powers to exploit the country. Despite these adversities, “our culture always resisted colonialism” (INDE, 1986:56).

While in INDE (1986) slavery is illustrated with three drawings (for example, Image 6) and forced labour is illustrated with several photographs, the current textbook (Mussa, 2015) also devotes special attention to slavery and force labour, highlighting the violation of human rights and its undermining effects, contributing to the underdevelopment

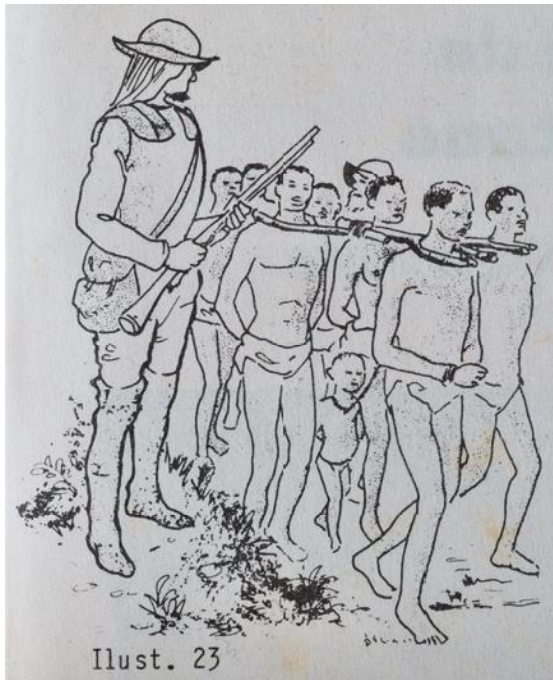
of Mozambique today, but these topics are not illustrated with images.

Image 5: Mwenemutapa receives the Portuguese



Source: INDE, *A História da minha pátria. 5ª classe*, 1986, p. 23.

Image 6: Slavery



Source: INDE, *A História da minha pátria. 5ª classe*, 1986, p. 41.

In relation to imperialism, Mussa (2015) focuses on the causes and consequences of European expansion, the partition of Africa and the imperialist contradictions of the late nineteenth century until the end of World War I, the so-called “pacification wars” and Mozambican resistance, colonial rule and racism, World War II and the pan-African anti-colonial liberation movements. The textbook emphasises how colonial rule, rooted in the idea of “white superiority”, differentiated between Africans and Europeans, in political, economic, religious, administrative, educational, legislative and judicial domains. In all areas of life, this duality of criteria meant that the infra-structures, education and health services developed during the colonial era primarily benefited the colonisers. A concrete example was the existence of a two-tier “legal” system where problems involving Europeans fell under colonial jurisdiction, while litigation solely between Africans was settled using traditional local laws.

Both textbooks directly criticise the education system during the colonial area, for “preaching the doctrine of submission” (Mussa, 2015:49) and attempting to achieve forced assimilation of Mozambican people: “The Portuguese colonialists tried to convince Mozambicans that they were Portuguese. Mozambicans should only speak Portuguese and no longer speak their mother tongues; they should only dance Portuguese dances, sing Portuguese songs and learn the history and geography of Portugal.” (INDE, 1986:57). However, the textbook emphasises that Mozambican people always resisted this forced assimilation and “never stopped speaking their mother tongues” (INDE, 1986:57).

In particular, both textbooks denounce the harmful effects of the Statute of Indigenous Peoples:

The Portuguese colonialists created two types of education in Mozambique: one, for the colonists’ children, called official education and the other called basic primary education, which was only for Mozambicans. The first type of education only existed in the cities, while the second type was found primarily in missions, given by missionaries, especially Catholic missionaries. The missionary schools taught the few Mozambicans who could go to school to read and write. They also taught us to be shoemakers, bricklayers, tailors and other professions that generated profits for the colonialists. Mozambicans were never taught to be doctors, teachers, skilled workers or engineers. [...] After completing Basic Primary Education and passing the 4th grade exam, a Mozambican could stop being ‘indigenous’, because he or she already knew how to speak Portuguese, and already dressed, danced and sang Portuguese music and songs. These Mozambicans could therefore be called ‘assimilated’

(INDE, 1986:57).

Both textbooks contrast colonial education with the education implemented in the liberated areas during the armed struggle:

In colonial schools they taught the history and geography of Portugal and not of Mozambique. Portuguese colonialists wanted to transform Mozambicans into Portuguese people with black skin. In the liberated areas, schools suffered many problems, but the students, teachers, guerrillas, militias and peasants joined forces to solve their problems.” (INDE, 1986:84).

While INDE (1986) presents several photos of the liberated areas, including schools, health services and work, Mussa (2015) only shows one photo with the freedom fighters (Image 7).

INDE (1986) notes that during the armed struggle “everyone helped defend the country. Children and women took food and weapons to safe places while men fought” (p. 82), adding that “women also actively participated in the defence of the liberated areas. Many were FRELIMO guerrillas” (p. 84). In reference to “Women in the armed struggle”, emphasis is placed on Josina Machel (Image 8) and other freedom fighters, in particular Mónica Chitupila, whose testimony is quoted to highlight FRELIMO’s fight against sexism: through the struggle “I learned that equality between men and women was possible” (INDE, 1986:86).

Image 7: FRELIMO’s freedom fighters



Source: C Mussa, *História 12a classe*, 2015, p. 139.

Image 8: Josina Machel



Source: INDE, *A História da minha pátria. 5ª classe*, 1986, p. 86.

INDE explains that “in the national struggle, national unity developed. [...] people from different regions of Mozambique felt increasingly united – all were Mozambicans – and were fighting against the same enemy – Portuguese colonialism” (1986:86). The former freedom fighter Rita Mulumua is quoted: “FRELIMO showed us that we are one people. We unite to destroy colonialism. [...] The songs, dances, stories and other things were no longer just *yao*, *maconde*, or *changana*, because everyone practiced them, regardless of where they came from. They simply became part of *Mozambican culture*” (INDE, 1986:87). In contrast, in Mussa (2015) no woman is quoted or appears an image with her name, despite women’s active role during the liberation struggle.

The chapter on “Independent Mozambique”, INDE highlights Samora Machel’s speeches, explaining that now “schools and hospitals started to serve the People” (1986:93) while in the colonial period they primarily served the exploiters. It notes that “the Mozambican people, during the

armed struggle, were supported by peoples”, and now the government of Mozambique “support the peoples who fight against colonialism and racism”, namely “the people of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa”, in their struggle “for a non-racial and popularly-elected government, which represents the interests of the majority” (INDE, 1986:98). The textbook then describes the process of National Unity, emphasising that this work is obstructed by “South African aggression”: “South Africa attacks Mozambique because it is a free and independent nation. Men, women, old people and children of all colours live and work together. They attack us because we fight tribalism, exploitation and racism” (1986:103). It emphasises that “South Africa continues to recruit, train and equip armed bandits” and to intensify “actions of persecution and destruction” within Mozambican territory, but states that the “armed bandits will be defeated” (1986: 106). These indirect references to the civil conflict no longer appear in the current textbook (Mussa, 2015), which in turn, emphasises the end of the civil war, the end of the “Cold War”, and the collapse of the racist Apartheid regimes in Southern Africa.

Mussa (2015) emphasises that the liberation struggle in Mozambique occurred against the background of growing African nationalism and pan-Africanist movements, showing photographs of several key African nationalists involved in the fight against colonialism and apartheid. The last chapter, dedicated to national independence, explains that the racist regimes in neighbouring countries took action to weaken the FRELIMO government, which helped peoples in their fight against apartheid (curiously, Nelson Mandela is the only person illustrated with an individual photograph in this chapter on national independence). The importance of international alliances is stressed, in particular with non-aligned countries and regional supranational organisations, such as SADC, PARPA and PARP. The textbook ends with a brief reference to the civil war and the national reconciliation process, stressing the importance of democracy and the fact that FRELIMO once again won the elections.

Discussion: Faces and voices of Mozambican history

As mentioned above, our analytical framework was based on an intersectional approach. Among other aspects, we analysed what kind of roles were ascribed to different people (whether or not they were “historical figures”) and the asymmetries of power that are (explicitly or implicitly) conveyed by both textbooks. We verified whether each person is identified

with a name; whether they are quoted; whether they are shown on their own (individualised) or in group; and whether they are portrayed in a position of power.

Male faces and quotations are overwhelmingly predominant in both textbooks, portrayed in multiple roles. Although most of the faces and quotations are of FRELIMO leaders in both textbooks, INDE (1986) quotes and shows images of various people, including peasants and female freedom fighters (for example, Image 8). No female voices or faces appear in Mussa (2015), and there are only occasional references to women, such as the writer Noémia de Sousa, the freedom fighter Josina Muthemba Machel, and to Precild Gumane, FRELIMO Women's League secretary. No woman is quoted or represented with an image with her name identified. In fact, a very small image of an anonymous "ancient woman" (Image 2) - placed at the bottom of an even-numbered page, almost goes unnoticed – and is the only photograph representing a woman in the entire textbook. No woman, identified with a name, appears in the illustrations, not even in relation to the liberation struggles. This oversight is therefore not just a question of the lack of images from a "Mozambican perspective". The richness and diversity of the Mozambican archive is therefore not mobilised in the most recent textbook about Mozambican History.

Another puzzling finding is the use of photographs that implicitly reinforce colonial hierarchies. As mentioned above, ironically, in Mussa (2015) the image chosen to identify Unit 1, dedicated to the periodization of Mozambican history, is a photograph of a bas-relief representing the imprisonment of Ngungunyane, which is considered to be the moment that signals the beginning of Portugal's "effective occupation" of Mozambique (Image 3). Ngungunyane, who is the only Mozambican person identified in images in this textbook concerning the periods prior to independence, is portrayed in a position of submission, with downcast eyes, surrounded by the Portuguese in haughty positions. The fact that photographs of these bas-relief are shown three times is puzzling, especially given that there are other photographs of Ngungunyane available, in a dignified position, one of which is used in a very small size at the bottom of an even-numbered page (Mussa, 2015: 78). Why are there no images of other people who symbolised colonial resistance, in particular from other regions of Mozambique? Why are the original drawings presented in INDE (1986), which convey a challenging view of the colonial past (for example, Image 5) not included in the current textbook? It is impossible to answer these

questions without studying how Mozambican textbooks are currently produced and the role of foreign aid and foreign publishing houses. In fact, if we observe who is given a voice or a face underlines how much still remains to be done to decolonise historical knowledge.

Conclusions

In this article we have explored how the colonial past and the nation-building process are narrated in two Mozambican History textbooks, one published during the single-party period (INDE, 1986), and the other one currently in use (Mussa, 2015). Although there are changes in the type of language used and the type of images chosen to illustrate the colonial past and the liberation process, the general account of Mozambican history is identical in both textbooks, presenting the colonial liberation struggles at the core of the nation-building process. However, the erasure of the agency of women is particularly evident in the current textbook.

Since the beginning of the liberation struggle, the teaching of history was viewed as a priority in order to decolonise people minds and build national unity. Colonialism is described as a violent process, which disrupted African societies and its devastating consequences explain current divisions and underdevelopment. The invasion of the national territory, the exploitation of its natural and human resources, the slave trade, the discriminatory and racist colonial rule are the main subjects addressed in both textbooks, as well as the strong and enduring resistance against colonialism and the liberation struggle. Both textbooks emphasise that the long resistance against foreign occupation failed to be fully effective because Mozambicans were disunited and because of betrayals by several local chiefs who established alliances with the foreign invaders. Both textbooks illustrate how colonial rule differentiated between Africans and Europeans in political, economic, religious, administrative, educational, legislative and judicial domains. In all areas of life, the dual criteria meant that the infra-structures, education and health services developed during the colonial era only benefited the colonisers and not the local people.

While INDE (1986) relies mainly on oral sources and original images (drawings, photos and maps) to build a history from the Mozambican perspective, the current textbook (Mussa, 2015) is richer in resources (coloured images, documents, sources) but essentially depends on the colonial archive for images to illustrate the history of Mozambique prior to independence. In fact, Mussa (2015), in line with the requirements of

“multicultural education” attempts to offer a more balanced vision of the past in terms of its verbal account, but the different perspectives are simply juxtaposed. There is limited engagement with diversity, achieved through more information about the ways of life of different peoples in the various regions of Mozambique, but this attempt at inclusion is not anchored in images or quotations of people’s voices.

Overall, both textbooks convey an official history (Wertsh, 2002) that legitimises the current ruling elite, under the umbrella of a simplified Liberation script that depends on binary opposites – in particular exploiter vs. exploited (Coelho, 2013). Although with some nuances, arising from the political situations in Mozambique and abroad, both textbooks adopt a narrative of *agency*, stressing the ingroup’s successful resistance against foreign oppression and highlighting the heroic role played by several actors during the armed struggle for independence, who are acclaimed as national heroes. There is also a narrative of *suffering*, which stresses the profound undermining effects of colonial rule.

While all Mozambicans – men and women – are depicted as victims of the colonialism, women are referred to as dual victims, suffering two oppressions – colonialism/imperialism and tradition/tribalism –, especially in INDE (1986). Both textbooks emphasis the fight against colonialism and racism, but whereas, in the context of the single party period, the fight against “tribalism” is one of the main focuses of concern (INDE, 1986), in the context of the multi-party period the fight against tribalism vanishes, giving room to approach issues on cultural diversity (Mussa, 2015). However, that goes in tandem with an absence of references to the fight against sexism and the erasure of women’s agency in the current textbook.

In fact, as in other postcolonial contexts, the Liberation script disseminated in the Mozambican textbooks erases women’s agency, and this erasure is particularly evident in the current textbook (Mussa, 2015) where no women is quoted or identified with an individual image (photograph or other type of illustration). Despite the fact that women played an active role in the armed liberation struggle, and despite the fact that the fight against sexism, alongside the fight against racism, was one of the pillars of FRELIMO’s propaganda, in the absence of either a name or face, women are simply not recognised as agents of history.

This striking exclusion of women from the narrative script of the nation, especially in the current textbook, echoes Spivak (2014): “Although liberation struggles forced women into apparent equality in the 19th century or even earlier, when dust settles, the postcolonial nation returns to the invisible, long-term gender structures [...]. Colonised and coloniser unite in gender violence”, erasing women as an agent of history. In fact, the reproduction of the former sexist colonial order in many postcolonial states challenges the clear-cut binary opposition between the colonial and postcolonial. Questioning binaries is precisely one of key requirements of a truly decolonial approach.

Some of the trends we observed in these two Mozambican history textbooks are also found in other Southern African countries and beyond. As explained by Cajani, Lässig and Repoussi (2019:7), the new independent countries “have felt first and foremost a need to nationalise their history in order to assert and consolidate their independence as a nation” and “they are challenged to construct a narrative showing in a meaningful way the entanglements of the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period”, a complex task that “inevitably encompass divided memories”. According to the authors, nowadays “History teaching in many African countries persists in taking a Eurocentric or nationalist view”, citing the UNESCO Harare Newsletter (January-March, 2012:4), which states that History education in Africa is “disproportionately focused on the colonial period” (Cajani et al, 2019:4). Are these two tendencies – Eurocentric and nationalist – opposed, or they are merely two sides of the same coin? This is a complex question which deserves a multi-layered critical analysis of the particular configurations and reconfigurations in each Nation-State according to its specific historical, cultural and socioeconomic context and political contingencies.

In a commentary paper about the representations of the colonial past in textbooks in several countries, Wassermann (2018:267) pointed out that “Western sources and historical actors were overwhelmingly foreground” in current textbooks. All in all, although there is “a marginal decrease in Eurocentrism in favour of a more balanced interpretation”, the changes portray “snippets to cling to rather than an actual decolonial turn” (Wassermann, 2018:267). In fact, building decolonial perspectives remains a very challenging task. It is not just about making visible the colonial oppression and inverting the value systems of the Eurocentric narratives. It requires challenging the paradigms, social categories and

binary systems forged during the colonial periods and also to engage fully with the diversity of memories and experiences (Cabecinhas & Brasil, 2019; Quijano, 2000). Moreover, it requires the creation of the material and symbolic conditions that allow the participation of all Mozambicans, men and women, in expressing their own stories and listening to the stories of others. A true decolonial turn is extremely difficult to achieve and requires social justice, dialogue, respect and a profound engagement with diversity, with all its complexity.

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Understanding the complexity of teaching the genocide against the Tutsi through a career life story

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Abstract

The Tutsi, the Twa and the Hutu are three social groups that have enjoyed a monoculture and lived on the same land. In 1994, around one million Tutsi were killed in a genocide organised by the then interim government. It is almost impossible to find any category of people who resisted participating in these killings, which have had tremendous long-lasting consequences. The extent of the killings made the genocide against the Tutsi one of the most researched topics in the history of Rwanda. However, only a few studies have focused on the teaching of this topic. In this article, I argue that the teaching of the genocide against the Tutsi is not an easy task because the teacher has to be careful not only in the choice of the methodology but also in selecting words to be used in a history class and taking into consideration the Rwandan socio-political context. In order to understand the phenomenon of teaching the genocide against the Tutsi, this study adopted a qualitative approach with a career life story methodology. This approach helps us to understand one history teacher's views on his experience of teaching the aforementioned phenomenon. The selected teacher's views cannot be generalised. However, they can give insight into the situation. Rukundo is one of the eleven Rwandan history teachers interviewed in 2013 and again in 2020 in Rwanda during and after my PhD research. This story was chosen because Rukundo is one of the four out of eleven history teachers who indicated that they predominantly used the learner-centred approach recommended by the 2008 and 2010 history curricula and the current competence-based curriculum. The choice of the above participant can help the readers to understand not only the complexity of teaching the genocide against the Tutsi in history in Rwandan secondary schools but also the way the career life story used in this article was constructed to explain Rukundo's lived experience.

Keywords: The Genocide against the Tutsi; Controversial topics; Career life story; Official narrative; Peace Education.

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Introduction

The genocide against the Tutsi is one of the 20th century's genocides perpetrated in a post-colonial African country. Officially, more than one million Tutsi were killed in a genocide organised by the then provisional government. Even if the genocide is one of the most researched topics in the history of Rwanda, few studies have focused on how this phenomenon is taught in Rwandan secondary schools' history classes.

To understand this phenomenon, a qualitative research design was chosen. Qualitative research with a career life story methodology was constructed to describe how Rukundo reacted the first time he taught about the genocide against the Tutsi and to show how he achieved the aims of the lesson. In addition, the career life story highlights the content covered and how the topic is taught. This particular methodology is useful to understand Rukundo's lived experiences by using his own words and describing the context he is working in.

A Rwandan teacher of history at secondary school, Rukundo was selected from a case study on history teachers' experiences of teaching the genocide in Rwandan secondary schools because he affirmed that he used the participatory approach recommended by the history curriculum (National Curriculum Development Centre, 2008, 2010; Rwanda Education Board, 2015:3-7). This choice can help us to understand how he complied with the philosophy of the history curriculum. As a qualitative study, the perceptions of Rukundo cannot be generalised but they can give an understanding of what is happening in the Rwandan schools. The choice of the above participant can therefore help readers not only to understand the complexity of teaching the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwandan secondary schools but also how the career life story used in this article was constructed to explain Rukundo's lived experience.

The research was guided by the following research questions:

- What are the topics related to the genocide against the Tutsi that are being taught (and not taught) by Rukundo?
- What are Rukundo's aims, methods and experiences in teaching the genocide against the Tutsi?
- What are the factors that led Rukundo to teach the genocide the way he does?

The research showed that Rukundo skilfully adopted the proposed teaching approaches and adapted them within the socio-political context. He avoided the tension between official interpretations of facts and those held by the common population. By side-stepping an unofficial interpretation of facts, he avoided polarising the class and being accused of being a genocide denier but he also knew how to use favourable situations such as the role of rescuers to teach the genocide in view of building a peaceful Rwanda.

My argument is that teaching the genocide against the Tutsi is a challenging task which requires the teacher to take into consideration the fact that Rwandan society in general is still affected by the effects of genocide. The choice of teaching methods, the selection of words used and the topics to be avoided in plenary discussions should be meticulously done for self-care and for not harming learners and the society.

Literature review

The consulted literature highlights certain topics that are sensitive and difficult to discuss in post-conflict societies (Korostelina, Lässig & Ibrig, 2013; Epstein & Peck, 2018). The genocide against the Tutsi is one of those sensitive topics that are controversial and difficult to teach (Buhigiro, 2017:190; Nkusi, 2004:55-84). A body of literature highlights various aspects of the genocide including the historical background of the genocide (Newbury, 1995; Prunier, 1997), the controversial role of the international community (Berdal, 2005; Gouteux, 2002; Melvern, 2000), and the context of genocide education in Rwanda (Bentrovato, 2013; Duruz, 2012; Freedman, Weinstein, Murphy & Longman, 2008; Masabo, 2014; Rutembesa, 2011). It also deals with the teachers' positionality while teaching controversial topics in different contexts. On one hand, there are, for instance, positions which can favour learner-centredness and the development of critical skills. In this regard, teachers can use the balanced approach or they can be Socratic cross-examiners, devil's advocates or risk takers (Lockwood, 1996:29- 30; McCully & Kitson, 2005:35; Stradling, 1984:1-12). Using either the balanced approach or Socratic cross-examining, teachers can help learners to deal with different sides of an issue while playing devil's advocate, where teachers take a side of an issue different from that generally accepted with a view to enhancing learners' analytical skills. The debit side does not allow learners to deal with all sides of an issue like the balanced approach. On the

other side, stated commitment, containment, avoidance, peace-making and indoctrination hinder active reasoning and participation (McCully & Kitson, 2005:35; Stradling, 1984:1-12; Wassermann, 2011:10). By containment, teachers do not tackle controversial topics, they rather analyse cases from afar that are similar to the ones at home. Avoiders simply skip controversial topics. This is the case of British teachers who do not talk about al-Qaida so as not to be accused of unpatriotic behaviour (Philips, 2008:120). Peacemakers prefer to engage with forgiveness instead of critically analysing the origins of conflicts (Wassermann, 2011:10). With indoctrination, teachers convince learners to adhere to the official version of facts. They can falsify data or teach something without evidence. The procedural neutrality can be on both sides, depending on the teacher's aim (Stradling, 1984:6). It involves adopting a strategy in which the teacher's role is that of an impartial chairperson.

While the Rwandan history curriculum (National Curriculum Development Centre, 2008; 2010; Rwanda Education Board, 2015:3-7) emphasises a participatory approach and enhancement of learners' competences (knowledge, skills and values), the literature describes advantages and disadvantages of teaching methods and resources used in teaching genocide and other controversial topics. The literature suggests the use of multi-perspectivity and an inquiry approach (McCully, 2010:166; Stradling, 2003:14), contextualisation, use of resource persons, stories including survivors' testimonies in view of micro-history (Lawrence, 2010:51-52; Lawrence, 2012; Lindquist, 2006:217), using parallels with other genocides (Avraham, 2010:S33-SS40; Waterson, 2009:6-7), a cross-curricular approach through art (Thorsen, 2010:191-196); and using information communication technologies (ICT) (Lawrence, 2010:47-53; Totten, 2000:65-71), pictures (Toll, 2000) and field visits (Smith, 2012:97-107). What is missing from the literature is how an individual teacher explains her or his experience of teaching the genocide in a post-genocide context so that we can understand the challenges of navigating between enhancing learners' critical skills and respect of the official narrative. As the genocide is a historical event and considering that people use stories to talk about their life experiences, this paper seeks to explore, through a career life story methodology, how a Rwandan secondary school history teacher narrates his experience of teaching the genocide. As Clandinin and Connelly (2009) posit "experience happens narratively... educational experience should be studied narratively" (2009:19).

Career life story as research methodology

Career life stories are used in a qualitative research methodology within the interpretative perspective. They are in the broad category of narrative research such as narrative inquiry (Webmaster & Mertova, 2007), life history (Seetal, 2005), life stories (McAdams, 2008), biographies (Berma, 2010) and autobiographies. Atkinson considers that both life story and life history tell a story about individual life but with a different emphasis and scope. The first “can cover the time from birth to the present” (1998:8), while an oral history can focus on a specific aspect of a person’s life. In the case of this research, a career life story can also cover the period from the time a person starts working to the present and it deals with important events, experiences and feelings about their professional life. Career stories have been conducted in other contexts too, including psychology (Jones, 2013:37-53; Tinsley-Myerscough & Seabi, 2012:742-764). In the same line, some authors highlight the benefits of career life stories. These advantages include, for instance, the ability to explore and communicate experience, entertain, educate, inspire, motivate, put scattered information in the same understandable frame, and as an educational research tool. Life stories help us to know about the subject matter (Webster & Mertova, 2007:15). By sharing stories, participants understand better what they are doing and obtain greater self-knowledge. It is also a way of “purging, or releasing, certain burdens” (Atkinson, 1998:27). Some teachers feel certain emotions due to sensitive topics and when they talk about their experiences they feel relieved. On the debit side, telling a story involves the issue of memory, which can be deficient or guided by an individual context (McAdams, 2008:246; Riessmann, 1993:22). It is why stories require interpretation – they do not speak for themselves. They can be constructed by using, for instance, written and visual texts, field notes of shared experience, participants’ own commentaries, journal records, storytelling interviews (unstructured) and personal philosophies (Riessmann, 1993:47).

In view of gathering data, I employed emergent methods including visual techniques (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006; Hesse-Bieber & Sharlene, 2008). Rukundo was given an A4 piece of paper to represent his experience of teaching the genocide (Buhigiro, 2017:169; Buhigiro & Wassermann, 2017:151-174). Drawing was a hint for him to engage with a difficult topic and to dissipate his emotions. As a drawing can be misunderstood, in this research it was supported by an interview in order to discover the participant’s unique perspective through his own voice (Atkinson,

1998:124). The participant was requested to provide the meaning behind his drawing. A series of pictures from the internet that related to the history of Rwanda and which were selected based on the key aspects of the history curriculum regarding the teaching of the genocide helped Rukundo to talk about the content. In fact, “images evoke deeper elements of human consciousness that [sic] do words” (Harper, 2002:13). More specifically, the selected pictures were in line with the long- and short-term causes of the genocide such as traditional relationships, ethnographic photographs taken under colonial administration and the crashing of President Juvénal Habyarimana’s plane. Other aspects included the genocide actors, weapons used during the tragedy and the consequences of genocide. Rukundo was given five minutes to observe the photographs and thereafter asked to choose five photographs most appropriate for his teaching of the genocide. This process helped to identify key aspects in the teaching of this phenomenon.

The analysis of verbal data from the above research methods was done through open coding (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:561) and the drawing was first analysed through semiotic analysis in order to understand the complexity of the depiction (Berger, 2004:16; Parsa, 2004:844). Conceptually, semiotics is the study of signs and what they symbolise in daily life. A photograph, a drawing, a gesture or a word are different forms of signs. In this case, I was concerned with the meanings of a drawing depicted by Rukundo. With the visual approach, I considered three types of signs, namely icon, index and symbol (Sebeok, 2001:10-11). An icon expresses real meaning. For instance, a photograph of Yuhi III Musinga represents the photographed Rwandan king. An index implies a relationship that it establishes with the object through sensory features (Türkcan, 2013: 601). For example, cumulonimbus clouds which indicate imminent rain. The symbolic meaning is known through convention. For Christians, a cross is a symbol of their religion recalling their redemption through Jesus’s crucifixion. As signs can mean different things depending on the time and place, Rukundo’s drawing was analysed according to Rwandan culture. The drawing was the data, Rukundo was the analyst and his descriptions were regarded as the primary results. In the second step, they were analysed through open coding.

This analytic strategy of using open coding line by line was guided by the research questions and controversial issues theory (Buhigiro, 2017:130-142). The purpose of coding was to describe and reorganise the data by arranging the data into categories. The created categories were used to

compare things in the same category to develop theoretical concepts and organise the data into broader themes and issues. For instance, certain concepts based on the theoretical ideas such as risk taking, avoiding, peacebuilding, indoctrination, hard experience and teaching methods were used as a priori codes to think about the use of visual methods, in line with controversial issues theory. All common codes such as teaching the genocide using films, teaching the genocide through museums, or teaching the genocide by visiting affected communities were grouped together to form bigger themes such as teaching methods and resources. Other codes such as teaching the genocide for nation-building and teaching the genocide for historical knowledge became the aims of teaching the genocide. Given the sensitivity of the genocide and the research questions, I added other themes, namely the commencement of teaching the genocide and emotions. However, to avoid duplication, the theme about emotions has been dealt with extensively in another work to be published soon (Bentrovato & Buhigiro, 2021:124-150). The selected themes became the plan to construct the career life story and were used during the presentation of Rukundo's story. More conceptual and interpretative themes were generated. For instance, using resources was adopted in lieu of teaching resources. During the interpretation, the silences were also identified in the data (Fuji, 2009:148). For the first level of the analysis process, the interview was converted into one comprehensible story which serves to illustrate the complexity of teaching the genocide against the Tutsi. More specifically Rukundo's story is composed of a short biography, his first experience in teaching the genocide, selected aims and content, teaching methods and resources. For ethical consideration, anonymity was used as per the consent form and the first person was used to respect Rukundo's own voice. This paper highlights key aspects of the constructed story based on the research questions. The subsequent data presentation followed by discussions is based on themes from the data. This analysis and interpretation of the constructed story constitutes the second level of analysis to allow the reader to better understand the meaning of the story and its context.

How did Rukundo react at the commencement of teaching the genocide?

The story starts with a brief overview of Rukundo's profile. During my first field research, Rukundo had been a history teacher for 13 years. He

had completed his bachelor's degree in History with Education at the former Kigali Institute of Education. I met him outside his rural school with limited resources in the Eastern Province. The internet facilities had very modest bandwidth and teachers were obliged to use their cell phones to search for information. Electricity was a problem and the school library was very small. I met him for the second time in a training of teachers of history organised by the National Iterero Commission in December 2019. After the biography, the story goes on to tell of Rukundo's first response to the teaching of the genocide against the Tutsi:

When I was given the course on the genocide to teach the first time I did not find it easy. This was the case because I could not imagine what the learners were thinking about the subject. Moreover, during my first year of teaching history I was challenged on issues related to ethnic groups and the trauma my learners have experienced. In an attempt to come to grip with the challenges I faced I started reading various resources related to the social groups in Rwanda. I also attended a training course organised by the Ministry of Education which empowered me in preventing cases of trauma before they occurred. As a result, I feel that I can teach learners how to speak when they are talking about the genocide; the terminologies they are supposed to use and the terminologies they are to avoid so as not offending their neighbours. For instance, they should not talk about the victims' remains but their corpses or bodies, terms which are more respectful. For the genocide against the Tutsi, they should not use the 1994 civil war, the 1994 upheavals or Rwandan conflict of 1994.

The commencement of teaching the genocide was full of anxieties and commitment to teach this phenomenon. A kind of anxiety about how the learners would react to the subject struck Rukundo. His anxiety was due to the sensitivity of a topic with psychological, social, economic and political awful effects. Even today, the country, learners and teachers are still affected by the past. Thus teachers have to be careful of their own emotions and those of their learners.

Apparently, Rukundo's fear was also due to some aspects like "ethnicity", which are currently considered taboo in Rwandan society. While the current Government of Rwanda is promoting Rwandan citizenship instead of "ethnicity", dealing with such issues can be risky (Bentrovato, 2016:227; Freedman et al., 2008:664). Traditionally, the three social groups – Twa, Hutu and Tutsi – shared the same culture. Under Belgian colonial rule (1916–1962), the porosity of these classes eroded. No one could change from one class to another because they were recorded in identity cards as separate "ethnic groups". After independence, the Hutu-dominated regimes

(1962-1994) continued to consider Hutu and Tutsi as two separate “ethnic” groups. Thus, no more changes of social class were possible except for those who did it by corruption to gain socio-political advantages and for their own safety. The genocidal killings were guided by these elusive “ethnic” identities. In 1994, power was taken by a rebellion dominated by former Tutsi refugees. In post-genocide Rwanda, the Rwandese Patriotic regime (RPF) is struggling to construct a “unified Rwanda”. History is therefore used to show how the colonial administration brought divisionism which was reinforced by the two first republics. “Ethnicity” is thus viewed by the Government as one of the causes of the genocide. This view is criticised by external opponents and some scholars as a strategy of silencing opposition (Bentrovato, 2016:227). However, “ethnicity” cannot be avoided while teaching about the genocide (Gasanabo, 2014:115). The tension between government policy and the teaching of the genocide overwhelmed Rukundo. For his self-care, Rukundo expressed some fears, but as a trained history teacher he was not discouraged. His decision to teach can be understood because history is an examinable subject at the end of the ordinary level (13-16 years) at the national level. Skipping the topic could have led to learners’ failure. Moreover, silencing the topic could be viewed as a conspiracy tantamount to genocide denial (Rutembesa, 2011:159).

Some scholars have noticed the commencement of teaching the genocide as risky and horrific (Masabo, 2014:131; Philips, 2008:25). Despite this appalling task, fear and anxiety, which are negative emotions (Alberts, Schneider, Martin, 2012:863), did not prevent Rukundo from working hard to face the challenges related to teaching the genocide. Rather, the mentioned emotions became a motivating factor to him academically and psychologically when preparing the course to efficiently respond to the learners’ queries. Pedagogically speaking, before teaching a new topic the teacher thinks about aims, appropriate teaching methods, learners’ knowledge and “about what questions or problems are posed by the topic” (Haydn, Arthur & Hunt, 2001:46).

Why teach the genocide?

The story goes on to explain the aims of teaching the genocide. In his story, Rukundo described the importance of nation-building and using this strategy:

My primary aim while teaching the genocide and its related controversial issues is to unite Rwandans and to teach learners the nature of good relationship to the extent that they would not engage in genocide-like atrocities. In line with my primary aim, I teach learners to debate so that they can defend their ideas, make judgement[s] and take decisions. Given my teaching the genocide experience, and my interest in the history of Rwanda, I formed an anti-genocide club here at my school. The aim behind this club is also in achieving my primary aim. The club assists the school in the promotion of a culture of peace, tolerance, reconciliation and patriotism amongst learners in order to transform them into good Rwandan citizens. As part of the activities of the club, learners are also given the chance to debate issues school wide.

The teaching of the genocide against the Tutsi for unity or nation-building is one of the stated aims in history curriculums at secondary schools (National Curriculum Development, 2008:3; National Curriculum Development Centre, 2010:5) and one of the broad competences in the new competence-based curriculum (Rwanda, Education Board, 2015a:5). The aims guide teaching and learning. A lesson without aims can lack coherence, hence becoming useless (Haydn et al., 2001: 46). Peace education, with its emphasis on living in harmony and with tolerance and without any distinction of religion or other forms of discrimination that caused the genocide against the Tutsi, is also among the stated aims. Other generic skills such as learners' critical thinking have to be enhanced. Similarly, the differentiation of genocide from inter-ethnic massacres, the involvement of international community and the consequences of the genocide were also part of the aims.

The prioritisation to teach the genocide for nation-building and not for historical knowledge can be problematic given the Rwandan context where one "ethnic" group was systematically killed by another and children from both sides have to study in the same classrooms. This teaching requires enhancing the learners' analytical skills to understand historical evidence in a non-partisan way. The school is therefore one of the best places to foster the culture of unity for nation-building. It hosts a young generation composed of children from all social groups who, through interpersonal relationships, can become unity champions.

Teaching the genocide for nation-building seems to have a twofold focus. First, it can help learners to understand the importance of good relationships, and second it serves as a means of genocide prevention by sensitising learners to avoid genocidal violence. In other words, teaching

the genocide for genocide prevention is intimately linked to living in peace and harmony as an intention stated in the Rwandan history curriculum (National Curriculum Development Centre, 2008; 2010). For Cole and Barsalou (2006:4), “[H]istory should be taught in a way that inspires young people to believe in their own ability to effect positive changes in society and contribute to a more peaceful and just future.” The above aims are also in line with the Government’s policies of unity and reconciliation already envisaged in the Arusha Peace Agreement signed in 1993 between the then Rwandan Government and the Rwandese Patriotic Front and reinforced as a national policy after the genocide.

Teaching the genocide so that learners can gain other transferable skills is another aim for Rukundo. In this regard, learners can defend their ideas on the genocide through debate. Learners’ debates are done during history class and with the whole school community. Therefore, the idea of debate is also intertwined with genocide prevention. Specifically, genocide prevention cannot be achieved by leaving out any group of learners. Putting this into perspective, school discussions can lead to a community free of discrimination. Learners can also be adequately equipped to face contradicting messages, convey appropriate information and make correct decisions. Thus, teaching the genocide goes beyond the stated aims and reflects on the impact of teaching the matter.

This history teacher also has a sense of historical consciousness when teaching what happened, what is happening and what will happen. This means that the genocide is taught within its historical context, not in isolation, by looking at its causes, sequences and effects. Other scholars also posit that sensitive issues such as the genocide have to be taught so that learners understand why and how these tragedies occurred so that they can contribute to their future prevention (Burtonwood, 2002:69-82; Eckmann, 2010:9). As learners discuss the past objectively, they also avoid biases and stereotyping. In teaching and learning, the aims guide the content.

Which content is covered by Rukundo while teaching the genocide?

The participant’s story focused on the content related to the genocide, including its historical background, genocide-related controversial topics, causes, sequences and its consequences. In the following paragraphs, the

story is presented in a dialogical way to describe the classroom situation.²

For me, genocide is the act of killing a target group of people to the extent that nobody may survive to tell the story. Just it is an extermination of a certain group of people.

The challenging issue is that this is not explained the same way elsewhere where the genocide is equated to a simple war... Other topics that I have to engage in include the planning of the genocide, its execution, the way it was halted and its negative effects on Rwanda.

There are learners who argue that in the neighbouring countries there are many different "ethnic" groups, but they do not kill each other or their neighbours. As a result, it is not accepted by all history learners that the existence of different "ethnic" groups led to the genocide. To them, one cause cannot explain the origins of the genocide.

Another controversial topic that is discussed in my history class when teaching the genocide relates to the issue of a double genocide.

Learner: Teacher, I think there is also another genocide due to the fact that I heard that some Hutu people died in the "Liberation War".

Rukundo: It is not genocide because people who died in the war were not targeted. During the war, there was no planning or intention to exterminate all Hutu. After the genocide, there were few people who were victims of the revenge killings due to the Rwandese Patriotic Front soldiers who were unhappy because of their relatives who were horribly executed. The government made enough efforts to stop this unacceptable attitude. Soldiers who did so were convicted in military courts for their deeds.

Based on my explanation, I am confident that learners are able to differentiate between the actual genocide and the effects of the "Liberation War" and scattered revenge killings which followed the genocide against the Tutsi.

Within the context it is evidenced that the teaching of the genocide raises a conceptual challenge between genocide and war. Rukundo did not refer to the United Nations' conceptualisation of genocide; rather, he provided his own understanding. He refrained from identifying a specific target group. In this regard, he mentioned, "just it is an extermination of a certain group of people". As earlier stated, in pre-colonial Rwanda, the Hutu and Tutsi were two fluid social groups belonging to the same culture. One individual could shift from one group to another. For instance, a Hutu could become a Tutsi after the acquisition of many cows, which was a sign of wealth, or because

² The "Liberation War" is the civil war that opposed the Juvenal Habyarimana regime and the Rwandese Patriotic Front, Inkotanyi, from October 1990 to 1994, when the latter were fighting mainly for power change and for the Rwandan refugees return to their homeland.

of a political promotion. However, this was not a general rule because all cow owners or political leaders were not Tutsi only, some Hutu could have more cows than Tutsi, and some Tutsi were agro-pastoralists. The situation was quite complex and it kept changing with time. It is why Rukundo does not consider Tutsi as an “ethnic” group and thus his understanding does not match with any category of people mentioned by the United Nations conceptualisation. For the latter, genocide is conceptualised as specific acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, the national, ethnic, racial or religious groups (Jørgensen, 2001:285-313). Some scholars considered the United Nations’ definition incomplete (Kissi, 2004: 115-133; Straus, 2001:349-375). For instance, the extermination of political groups during the Second World War is not included in a view of hiding pro-Soviet Union regimes’ atrocities. Silencing “ethnic” groups in the case of Rwanda is prudent because it can contradict the Government policy of promoting a unified Rwandan identity (Freedman et al.: 2008:664). From the same perspective, Rukundo preferred not to comment on the learners’ case of neighbouring countries where “ethnic” problems were discussed openly (Vandeginste, 2014:263-277). Teaching history this way promotes a docile citizen but does not help a critical learner. It is also unsafe for a teacher to deal with issues that are not discussed publicly.

In the case of Rwanda, equating the genocide against the Tutsi to a simple war is very sensitive. This is because the opponents of the Rwandese Patriotic Front-led regime wanted to exploit what was officially called individual and isolated cases of revenge perpetrated by some soldiers to connect them to a deliberate extermination (Belof, 2014:269), thus attracting the attention of the international community. The teacher-centredness adopted by Rukundo on this matter is evidence of the sensitivity of the topic. Rukundo did not take the risk to raise this sensitive issue: it was raised by a learner. In addition, Rukundo did not allow the learners to discuss it. He preferred to tell them which narrative to adopt. This preaching was aimed at protecting the teacher’s and learners’ safety by avoiding the propagation of unofficial narratives which could be considered as genocide denial and divisionism. In Rwanda, the crime of genocide ideology is used as a pretext to skip or avoid discussing some aspects of the genocide that would lead to a prosecution for an unintentional crime. According to the law, the negation of genocide includes, for instance, the support for a double genocide theory for Rwanda or a misconstruing of the facts to mislead people (Republic of Rwanda, 2013:38-39).

The idea of the existence of “ethnic” groups as the cause of the genocide was challenged by learners. For them, other neighbouring countries have many tribes or “ethnic” groups, but they do not engage in wars or genocidal acts. In reality, the causes of the genocide, like any other historical event, are multiple. One learner made it clear by adding that the cause was “the exclusion against the Tutsi and people from southern regions in education and some public sectors positions”. Other causes of the genocide, such as the role of media, international community influence and the former regime’s fear of losing power due to the pressure of the war launched by the Rwandese Patriotic Front, were not pointed out by Rukundo. This silence can be understood in as much as the quota policy propounded by political leaders in the early 1960s implied exclusion of Tutsi. Consequently, learners pointed out the prominent cause. However, teaching the genocide without mentioning other causes is deficient and can lead learners to keep their misconceptions on the matter.

Rukundo’s avoidance to discuss the double genocide problem concurs with McCully’s (2012:145-159) scepticism about using a multi-perspective method to analyse a recent contentious history still coupled with trauma and anger. In Rwanda, the genocide is still fresh in the minds of a good number of Rwandans and some of them are either suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (Munyandamutsa, Mahoro, Gex-Fabry & Eytan, 2012:n.p.; Sibomana, 2017:13) or are afflicted by other consequences of the genocide, such as the loss of loved ones or properties.

How is the genocide taught?

Rukundo’s story continues with the teaching methods used in teaching the genocide. In the following extract, the participant explains different strategies he uses to deliver this sensitive topic:

Given my academic qualification and experience, since the beginning of my teaching career, I like using interactive methods when teaching genocide and its related controversial topics. It helps learners to internalise their content and some activities like group work increase their unity. In the introduction of my lesson on the causes of the genocide, I ask the learners questions about the definition of genocide according to their understandings. I also ask questions about pre-colonial Rwandan society so as to determine what they know mainly as causes of disunity. I follow the same approach for the body of the lesson. The learners can give answers according to what they know...

Sometimes, I divide the learners in my history class into groups so that they can analyse stories related to the genocide and understand specific decisions. For the planning of the genocide, for example, I, mainly use a study done by the Rwandan Parliament (Parliament, The Senate, 2005). It deals with the genesis and development of the genocide ideology. It shows for instance how colonial racism changed into national ethnicity, the role of political parties, and the role of propaganda, and the description of enemy, namely the Tutsi in the post-colonial period. For this topic, I use a teacher-centred approach because the document gives a series of hatred policies and extract of speeches. It is done in this way because my main aim here is not to help learners internalise this discrimination but to understand how bad policies can lead to disastrous events.

The use of teacher-centredness to talk about some topics including “ethnic” identities and hatred policies can be explained by Rukundo’s knowledge of Rwandan society. In fact, there were divergent discourses about “ethnic” identities during and after the genocide as stated earlier. The study mentioned was based on European racial theories that could negatively influence learners because these theories were exploited to fabricate hatred policies. Thus, Rukundo avoided learner-centredness. The adoption of discussion on “ethnic” identities could generate the flow of uncontrolled information, which could either polarise the class or harm certain learners. “Ethnic” identities are side-stepped in the history curricula in order to avoid the recurrence of divisionism (National Curriculum Development Centre 2008; 2010; REB, 2015). However, “ethnic” identities are mentioned in public for a purpose but are not openly discussed. For instance, in public talks, “ethnic” identities can be referred to in order to show the impact of hatred policies or genocidal processes. Rukundo complied with the curriculum and official narrative by not engaging with “ethnic” identities and hatred propaganda by using critical pedagogical methods. Rukundo used teacher-centredness, which can be categorised as teachers who can deal with difficult or abstract ideas instead of avoiding them (Haydn et al., 2001:73; Totten, 1999:36-39).

Despite this teacher-centredness, Rukundo adopted a learner-centredness through stories. The following paragraphs are extracts of a story about a young person, the narrator, describing his life during the socio-political changes of the early 1990s, characterised by the re-installation of a multi-party system and the war between the Rwandese Patriotic Front and the then Government. It is used by Rukundo to teach the genocide.

Before the genocide erupted, I was very young and strong. I was a member of our political party youth organisation. We used to accompany the party leaders in political meetings. Youth, we were sensitized to be ready to secure our country. When the genocide started, we felt that it was courageous to kill Tutsi as we were told that they were Rwandese Patriotic Front accomplices as a way of protecting our country. I thought we were really protecting our country. May God forgive me!

During the Gacaca courts, I pled guilty and confessed to have killed people in my village. The Gacaca courts reduced my sentence and I was released. For the moment, I participate in activities of helping my neighbours who were affected by the genocide and I pray so that no more people be involved in such hate deeds against Tutsi or one's neighbour.

I ask at once a series of questions to the learners after two minutes of reflection, the latter start giving their views: If it was you who were young member of the political party, what would you have done at the eruption of genocide? Did those involved do something good? The decisions taken was it done with judgment? What do you think about the decision to plead guilty? Was it a firm decision or a strategy to be released?

Such questions help learners to enhance their thinking skills in a neutral manner. This procedural neutrality position helped the learners to understand the complexity of the execution of the genocide. However, Rukundo's questions had some limitations because they were not interpretative. Such questions require the use of evidence and inferences. In this case, evaluation of the story with the available evidence and historical knowledge was not done. Rukundo also failed to put the character in his historical context. Apparently, the proposed questions were aimed at teaching learners to be able to take responsible decisions which, in the view of genocide prevention, thus insisted on the history's educative value.

What is emerging from the story is that by using stories Rukundo wanted to develop a series of skills and values. For instance, the learners were given time for reflection before responding so they could develop their analytical skills. Discussing stories in groups was intended to help learners to be responsible for their own education. Learning the history of the genocide in that way also fostered a climate of collaboration, mutual respect and tolerance (Prince & Fielder, 2006:123). In addition, learners could understand that normal people could become perpetrators (Eckmann, 2010:9). Through truth-telling, stories can contribute to reconciliation as was the case during post-war Polish-Jewish relations due to the narratives of the righteous (Bilewicz & Jaworska, 2013:162).

Considering theories about controversial issues, the use of discussion by Rukundo can be connected to the nurturant facilitator (Lockwood, 1996:499) because he did his best to engage learners on values clarification within a safe environment. However, the story was not crafted by learners to enhance their generic skills and participation. Avoiding the learners' stories did not totally engage the learners' participation when teaching a contentious topic. Apparently, sometimes Rukundo took the risk of asking sensitive questions. This was the case when he himself pleaded guilty, which could have brought undesirable narratives into the history class. He proposed another question which could suggest an alternative answer to guide learners in their choice. A kind of learner-centredness was practised in view of the teacher's safety and that of the learners.

Which resources?

Rukundo's story went on by unfolding teaching aids which helped him to achieve his teaching aims. These included, amongst others, pictures, maps, films and resource persons. Pictures depicting different actors in the genocide, such as the United Nations or French troops during the 1990s, orphans and other genocide consequences and the hope for Rwandans to live a better life in the future.

Regarding the use of ICT, Rukundo narrated how films and the internet were used in the history class:

To concretise the event, I used also to screen films such as Tuez-les tous to show learners how the genocide was executed and how the Interahamwe militiamen killed people. Pedagogically speaking, in my view, with films learners observe and listen at the same time to what happened. They are requested to write a summary of the film. They are also given homework. This also helps them to relate to what they have learnt in class.

Teacher: In your today's homework respond briefly to the following questions to be submitted in our next history lesson: Show if colonists contributed to sow divisionism in Rwanda. Explain the role to propaganda and how Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines contributed to the killings. By considering J.P.Chrétien's comments explain the role of elites. Discuss the role of France in Rwandan conflict and finally discuss if the film conclusion contribute to the Rwandan reconciliation.

I also urge my history learners to use sources from the internet while preparing, for example, their presentations. But the learners are not free to use any website - only the recommended ones such as the documents on the National Unity and Reconciliation websites.

The use of ICT has been identified as a theme in this story. Rukundo was worried by the learners visiting his website in his absence. He took precautionary measures relating to the learners' use of the internet. On the one hand, this decision can be seen as a way of preventing learners from harm by watching traumatising films. On the other hand, learners can be influenced by genocide deniers' websites. Alongside the internet, films were also used. By paying attention, films were an opportunity for learners to enhance their skills and values, including decision-making, writing and listening to others' views. In brief, it was a chance to enhance their visual literacy. It could also help learners to become human rights activists. Enhancing the learners' critical thinking due to interpretative questions asked by Rukundo was another aim. However, by selecting specific websites, learners should get some preliminary techniques to critique history in order to analyse a large number of electronic sources. The most important thing is not to hide some sources, but rather to be able to understand why different people have different views. Missing such skills can lead to lack of tolerance and respect of others' views.

The benefits and disadvantages of ICT have been discussed in history education by some authors (Haydn 2000:102-134). What Rukundo did to achieve his aim of building a better Rwanda and enhancing the learners' skills is supported by the literature. Totten (1987:63-67), for instance, encouraged the use of video presentations as they could make a topic real for learners. More importantly, the learners were obliged to try to see and critically interpret the images so as to gain literacy skills. Thus, films were not used for entertaining learners; rather, they were used to understand content, enhance some skills and build a better Rwanda. The lack of other ICT-related activities, such as computers for designing databases on genocide issues and PowerPoint presentations, can be explained by the shortage of resources in Rwandan schools. Preventing learners from using any website can be seen as a kind of indoctrination instead of protecting them against unofficial narratives.

Concerning museum and field study as resources, the story runs as follows:

Before the visit, learners are requested to write in their notebooks main ideas and questions to the local leader or elder. Back at school, they are requested to find similarities or particular aspects of the told testimonies. Similarly, my class visits to the Rugarama memorial site and families that have been affected by the genocide discuss how they have been assisted

and live with their neighbours. In my view, learners are interested in knowing how people were reunited after horrible events that had occurred. After such visits, learners are given time to explain what they have seen and to reflect on how the genocide has impacted on people. Moreover, according to me, by visiting families they get to realise that there is a hope for the future and that Rwandans will be united. The reconstruction of the country is one of the ways that can show affected learners that they are not alone. However, I admit that visiting sites can be a problem as it requires transport which not every learner can afford. The study tours were adopted in my second year of experience after identifying where and who to visit and the school planning financially for it.

The development of understanding a genocide of the past can be done by visiting museums and genocide memorials. The new competence-based curriculum does not mention the use of museums in the unit on genocide (Rwanda Education Board, 2015a:32-33, 2015b:26-27). During the study tour, invited resource persons' choices have a double objective. On the one hand, choosing a local leader could transmit an official narrative to learners. On the other, choosing an elder could serve to teach learners from her or his lived experience. In this case, Rukundo accepted that multiple views could arise. For instance, people from the targeted Tutsi social group were killed but also political opponents and rescuers suffered during the genocide. Thus, learners got to understand that people had different experiences during the genocide. Genocide memorials are also used to increase the learners' historical understanding and critical skills by comparing testimonies with other sources. In other words, study tours to museums and local communities can be a way of reflecting on the local history and helping learners to gain direct information about reconciliation by empathising with affected communities. According to McAllister and Irvine (2002:433), "Empathy can potentially foster openness, attentiveness, and positive relationships." But the danger is that learners might over-identify themselves with either the victim or the perpetrator (Waterson, 2009:7). The choice of the person to visit in the community was, in the case of this study, meticulously done. If selection is not well done, it is not easy to achieve the learning outcome of the study tour. It denotes lack of experience and the subject matter changes into amusement. Briefly, the study tours proved to Rukundo that the genocide could be taught beyond the classroom to increase the learners' participation and development of their skills and values.

Conclusion

In post-genocide Rwanda, the use of the participatory approach proved to be challenging for Rukundo even though it was recommended by the history curriculum. The participant refrained from pedagogically engaging learners with certain topics such as double genocide, “ethnic” identities and race. Fear of being accused of genocide denial dictated the use of lecture mode for this topic for which the official legal version provides a clear positioning. Thus, multi-perspectivity does not seem to be a panacea in history teaching. Given the context, discussing the aforementioned topics could polarise the classroom by bringing harmful messages into a society still affected by the genocide consequences. Adopting a self-care attitude does not only aim at respecting the official narrative, but also to avoid harming learners and the community. Thus, compliance with the official narrative, the societal sufferings and the way of interpreting the curriculum guides how the Rwandan genocide and related topics are taught. This means that teachers should have the capacity to critique the syllabus and use resources in line with the learners’ specific social and cognitive needs.

Teaching the genocide does not only aim at enhancing historical knowledge by putting the genocide into its wider context for discussing causes, sequences and effects. Given the Rwandan context, a range of activities adopted by Rukundo aimed at helping learners to become responsible citizens who could responsibly take decisions. With the same perspective, the learners are the first trained to reflect on what they are going to do. Thus, teaching the genocide goes beyond historical knowledge; rather, it aims at imparting values and behaviours which can be used to cure Rwandan society’s scars to learners.

In terms of controversial issues theory, the story proved that Rukundo’s positions kept changing with regard to the topic or aim to be achieved. Some positions such as the teacher as Socratic cross-examiner (Lockwood, 1996:29-30) or taking a balanced approach (Stradling, 1984:6) were adopted while asking questions to train learners to make decisions. In the face of hard topics, including those punishable by Rwandan law, a commitment to adopting the official version, which was tantamount to indoctrination, was embraced. However, some positions, such as risk-taking or playing devil’s advocate, were not adopted by Rukundo. Rather, he cautiously preferred to avoid bringing uncontrollable discussions into class. This scepticism shows that Rwandan society is still fragile and teaching the

genocide cannot blindly follow the proposed participatory approach. By taking this risk, the teacher can be plunged into genocide denial or polarise the classroom. The challenge is that imposing one narrative can also lead to learner anger and frustration. Teaching the genocide thus poses a double challenge: developing the learners' critical skills and respecting the official narrative. Instead of preventing learners from dealing with some issues or using some sources, an effort should be made to teach them to analyse evidence, including a range of electronic sources. Learners should be taught to look for evidence and identify its strengths and weaknesses. In order to enhance critical skills while discussing contentious topics, Rwandan schools should be considered safe spaces where such discussions can take place and teachers should be constantly trained and sensitised so that schools become venues for constructive confrontation. This means that they should allow learners to increase their knowledge through discussion, but the community at large should also be involved in this process to a certain extent, otherwise learners will lack the skills to discuss hard contentious topics and discern why people have different views. This gap can lead to lack of tolerance of divergent views hence sources of other conflicts.

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Synchronous interactive live lectures versus asynchronous individual online modules. A comparative analysis of students' perceptions and performances

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Abstract

Interactive and collaborative learning in 'live' and online (synchronous and asynchronous) environments generates an influence on the perception, motivation and outcomes of learning among students. From that theory, the aim of this contribution is to analyse the effects of different teaching approaches unexpectedly provoked by the COVID-19 pandemic. The object of this study is a master's course titled "History and Education" of which half the classes were taught via synchronous live lectures in an interactive and collaborative group condition and half via asynchronous digital modules to be individually completed without interaction or collaboration. The effects of those different conditions on students' perception of the comprehensibility and ease of studying the course, on students' interest, motivation and efforts, and on their learning performance was examined via a descriptive and exploratory case study using a questionnaire and the outcomes of a written examination. In the questionnaire, the course students had to score both conditions for several issues and explain their scores. The results show that the live lectures obtained better average scores than the digital modules, except for the perception of the ease of studying the course. Also, more students attributed higher scores to the live lectures on each issue, again except for the perception of the ease of studying the course. The learning performances did not generate differences between the two conditions. These results are discussed within the existing research and reflected upon in the light of the continuous pandemic forcing higher education to combine different shapes of teaching.

Keywords: Higher education; Interactive and collaborative learning; (A)Synchronous learning; Online learning; Teacher presence; History education.

Introduction

Learning, as the theory of constructivism states, is an active and

constructive process.¹ Social constructivism adds to this powerful insight by pointing to the social dimensions of learning and by incorporating the role of others into the learning process.² It refers to learning as an interactive and collaborative process. In the past six decades, an extensive body of literature has been published, showing that interactive and collaborative learning generates positive learning outcomes compared to individual learning.³ Interaction and collaboration can increase students' interest, motivation and study effort for, amongst others, students long to be socially responsible and to form social relationships with their peers.⁴ The self-determination theory states that together with a sense of competence and autonomy, connectedness is also a basic need of learners that needs to be met in order to reinforce motivation in all learning contexts.⁵ Furthermore, by providing the necessary support and interaction with qualified others (such as the lecturer or fellow students), interactive and collaborative learning exercises an influence on the quality and outcomes of learning and on students' learning performances. At the same time, however, research shows that collaborative learning does not automatically generate good (or better) learning outcomes. To accomplish that, several conditions have to be met such as meaningful interaction aimed at fostering an understanding of the topic under study.⁶

Particularly since the 1990s, a very important extra dimension has been added to the research into the effects of interactive and collaborative learning, namely that of computer-supported (online) learning. Research has been conducted into the role of computer-supported collaborative

1 JD Bransford, AI Brown & RR Cocking, *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school* (Washington (DC), National Academies Press, 2000); CT Fosnot, "Constructivism: A psychological theory of learning", CT Fosnot (ed.), *Constructivism: Theory, perspectives and practice* (New York (NY), Teachers College Press, 1996), pp. 8-33.

2 LS Vygotsky, *Thought and language* (Cambridge MA, MIT Press, 1962).

3 DW Johnson & RT Johnson, "An educational psychology success story: Social interdependence theory and cooperative learning", *Educational Researcher*, 38(5), 2009, pp. 365-379; Y Lou, PC Abrami, JC Spence, C Poulson, B Chambers & S d'Apollonia, "Within-class grouping: A meta-analysis", *Review of Educational Research*, 66, 1996, pp. 423-458.

4 H Patrick, L Hicks & AM Ryan, "Relations of perceived social efficacy and social goal pursuit to self-efficacy for academic work", *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 17(2), 1997, pp. 109-128; K Wentzel & A Wigfield, "Academic and social motivational influences on students' academic performance", *Educational Psychology Review*, 10, 1998, pp. 155-175.

5 RM Ryan & EL Deci, "Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being", *American Psychologist*, 55, 2000, pp. 68-78; EL Deci & RM Ryan, "Motivation, personality, and development within embedded social contexts: An overview of self-determination theory", RM Ryan (ed.), *Oxford handbook of human motivation* (Oxford UK, Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 85-107.

6 DW Johnson & RT Johnson, "Cooperation and the use of technology", DH Jonassen (ed.), *Handbook of research on educational communications and technology*, (Mahwah NJ, Erlbaum, 2004), pp. 785-811.

learning environments, into the differences between small group and individual learning with technology, into online and distance education in various interactive and collaborative conditions, and into the effects of synchronous and asynchronous learning.⁷ Here, too, positive effects of interactive and collaborative learning emerge, albeit again subject to conditions, for example, that attention is paid to individual accountability; that media should support collaborative discussion in order to be more effective; that interaction and collaboration are to be included in asynchronous learning conditions in order to make them effective; and that the instructor should take up an active role in online or distance education in order to influence students' performances.

In short, interactive and collaborative learning can have positive effects on learning processes and learning outcomes in both synchronous and asynchronous conditions. This two-fold issue of collaborative interactive versus individual learning and of synchronous versus asynchronous learning environments became urgent in the spring of 2020 due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This crisis imposed an obligation on educational institutions worldwide to switch immediately from synchronous live lectures to asynchronous digital conditions as on-campus live education was immediately suspended in many countries.

Apart from the difficulties accompanying the "digital switch" that had to be made, the extraordinary circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic allowed, at the same time, an opportunity to analyse the effects of different teaching approaches within one course, in terms of physical live or synchronous lectures versus online asynchronous conditions and of interactive and collaborative versus individual learning. This contribution, being part of a special issue addressing "teaching and learning history in the time of the COVID-19/coronavirus pandemic", reports on such an analysis. The course used as the object of this analysis is a master's of history at the University of Leuven (situated in Flanders, the northern Dutch-speaking part of Belgium) titled "History and Education", which

7 Y Lou, PC Abrami & S d'Apollonia, "Small group and individual learning with technology: A meta-analysis", *Review of Educational Research*, 71(3), 2001, pp. 449-521; K Kreijns, PA Kirschner & W Jochems, "Identifying the pitfalls for social interaction in computer-supported collaborative learning environments: A review of the research", *Computers in Human Behavior*, 19(3), 2003, pp. 335-353; Y Lou, RM Bernard & PC Abrami, "Media and pedagogy in undergraduate distance education: A theory-based meta-analysis of empirical literature", *Educational Technology Research & Development*, 54(2), 2006, pp. 141-176; PC Abrami, RM Bernard, EM Bures, E Borokhovski & R Tamim, "Interaction in distance education and online learning: Using evidence and theory to improve practice", *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 23(2/3), 2011, pp. 82-103.

is taught by the author.⁸ Half of this course, dedicated to the history of secondary school history education in Belgium, was taught via interactive and collaborative synchronous live lectures; the other half, addressing an international perspective on history education, was offered via asynchronous online modules that had to be completed individually by the students. This allowed research to be conducted into the effects of both conditions on a number of learning issues. Students' perceptions of their interest, motivation and efforts to engage with the course in each of the two conditions was examined, as well as students' learning performances for both parts of the course. The specific circumstances of the digital switch halfway through the semester also allowed two additional issues to be examined. Because the two parts of the course titled "History and Education" were each taught in different ways, it was also possible to examine the perceived comprehensibility of the two parts of the course as well as the perceived ease of studying both parts by the students. The analysis made it possible to not only examine the effects of each condition on students' perceptions and performances, but also to compare both.

In what follows, first the research context, questions and methods are explained, then the results of the study are presented and discussed.

Research context: History and education

The course titled "History and Education" constitutes six credits (ECTS) and is offered within the Master of History programme and the Educational Master of Cultural Sciences–History Didactics programme, both at the University of Leuven (Belgium). That university mainly attracts students belonging to the White majority group in Belgium and the lower-middle-, upper-middle- and upper-classes of society. The course is particularly meant for prospective historians and history teachers and is an elective of both master's programmes. In the academic year 2019-2020, 15 students enrolled for the course: three female and 12 male students. All belonged, in terms of socio-economic status, to upper-middle-class households. The course consists of two parts. In the first part, the history of secondary school history education in the Low Countries (the current territory of Belgium and the Netherlands) since the end of the 18th century and in Belgium since its establishment in 1830 is addressed. The second part provides an analysis of secondary school history education in other countries around

⁸ For more information on the course, see https://onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/2019/syllabi/v/e/F0VE1AE.htm#activetab=doelstellingen_idm1561056, as accessed on 5 November 2020.

the world. In particular, history education in the Netherlands, the United States, Russia, Rwanda, Israel and Palestine, and the Arabic Muslim world is studied. The focus is on recent and current societal debates and expectations about history education in those countries and on the influence of those debates on the shape and outlook of standards, curricula and textbooks for history education (in terms of main aims and content orientation). History education in this course is not examined through a history didactics lens. Rather, a cultural history perspective is taken, as the guiding questions are, How are the past and history approached in history education? Whose history is addressed and for what aims? And what does the relationship between the state, society and history education look like?

This course is scheduled in the second semester (between February and May) of the academic year and takes two hours a week over a period of 12 weeks. Half of the course is spent on the history of history education in Belgium, the other half on an international perspective on history education. The weekly two-hour classes are a combination of lecturing and collaborative and interactive learning that focuses on fostering an understanding of the topic being taught via, for instance, group work, Socratic dialogue and group debate, which is often centred around and starting from document analysis. All classes are accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation that serves as a basis for students who are expected to take notes themselves. A learning text is not provided.

However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the organisation of the classes had to change drastically. From mid-March onwards, the University of Leuven suspended all physical live classes and obliged all lecturers to make a digital switch. They had the choice to teach online, to design digital modules, to provide students with PowerPoint presentations and an accompanying voice-over, and so forth. For the course “History and Education”, this meant that while the lessons on the history of history education in Belgium had been provided via physical live classes, the lessons on the international perspective on history education had to be offered in a digital manner. Therefore digital lesson modules were designed on Toledo, the e-learning platform of the University of Leuven. These modules had to be completed by the students individually, without collaborative learning activities; did not contain deadlines; and were set up in an asynchronous way so students were free to choose when precisely to complete them. This also meant that no collaborative or interactive educational activities such as discussion forums were provided. This shape of online education was

chosen as it left students free to choose when to engage with the modules and at what pace. Some students still had to work on their theses and others on a pre-service internship in secondary education. This way, their agendas were not overloaded during weekdays.

Each of the six digital modules was built following the same outline. An introduction was offered in order to generate interest in the topic. It consisted of a news article, a quiz to test previous knowledge, a padlet gauging their opinion on a specific topic,⁹ etc. The main part of each digital module ensured an alternation between pieces of theory and assignments (often based on document analysis) followed by automatic feedback (in terms of a model answer) and sometimes a padlet to write down their opinions on a matter, which then became visible to the other students. The assignments were not mandatory: students could skip them if they preferred. As all students in the course were graduates and hence experienced students, it was left to them to decide whether to complete the assignments or not. The students were considered sufficiently experienced to judge this for themselves. At the end of each digital module, students were offered a learning text, containing all the content they needed to study for the written examination.

The written examination for this course consisted of two substantial questions. One encompassed a major thread in the history of history education in Belgium, such as the tension between disciplinary and citizenship goals, or the relationship between the secondary school subject of history and academic historiography. The other was a comparison between history education in different countries, for example, to what extent and via what strategies is history education meant to contribute to social cohesion, or how and why are professional historians included (or not) in giving shape to secondary school history education.¹⁰

Research questions and methodology

As half of the course was taught via live synchronous lectures in an interactive and collaborative group condition and half via digital modules

⁹ A padlet is an application to create an online bulletin board where students and teachers can display information, collaborate, reflect, and share links and pictures.

¹⁰ Besides this, students also had to write a paper as part of the evaluation, in which, based on at least two published academic papers, they had to elaborate either on an aspect of Belgian history education from a historical perspective, or on the outlook and shape of history education in a country in the world, not addressed in the course. This paper assignment is not included in the further analysis, as it has no connection with the different teaching approaches under study.

to be individually completed asynchronously, this allowed time to examine the effects of the two different teaching approaches on students' perception of the comprehensibility and ease of studying the course; on students' interest, motivation and efforts; and on their performance for the course. In so doing, connection was sought to the vast body of literature on interactive and collaborative learning and its effects. This study contributes to that literature, as it examined a group of graduate students and compared two different conditions for one group (instead of using two groups and additional control groups to test the two conditions). The following research questions guided the analysis:

- What are the effects of the two different educational conditions on students' perceptions of the comprehensibility and ease of studying the course on students' interest and motivation and on the efforts they made to engage with the course?
- What are the effects of the two different educational conditions on students' performance for the course?
- What are the differences to be discerned when comparing the results of the two previous questions? Can differences be found between the two conditions in students' perceptions and performances and, if so, how should this be accounted for?

The comparison was explicitly included as a research question because it is highly possible that the two conditions might have generated substantial differences. With regard to comprehensibility of the course content (1), live lectures offered opportunities for the lecturer to provide explanations to the students; direct questions and answers for collaborative interaction; and direct feedback on the assignments. The digital modules, by contrast, could be completed by students at their own pace, asynchronously, without interaction, yet with automatic feedback (in terms of a model answer provided after each assignment) and with the provision of a learning text. In terms of the ease of studying the course (2), while the lectures were accompanied by PowerPoint presentations and live explanations, no learning text was included as the digital modules provided a learning text. With regard to interest in the course (3), while lectures were synchronous and live and included interaction and collaborative learning activities, the digital modules were asynchronous and could be completed at the students' own pace at a time that suited them best, yet individually. Regarding students' motivation to get started with assignments (4), the lectures required some reading beforehand, yet assignments were mostly

completed during the lecture, in interaction with the lecturer and fellow students and according to a pace determined by the lecturer. In the digital modules, the assignments were done individually, at one's own pace and without being obligatory (cfr. *supra* for a justification in this respect). This means that while the effort (5) was included (and obligatory) in the lectures, the effort to complete the assignments in the digital modules was not obligatory. Lastly, all these issues could have generated an effect on students' performance (6) for the written examination related to this course as, on the one hand, students were provided with information by the lecturer during the live lectures (via PowerPoint presentation and explanation), yet, on the other hand, they obtained full learning texts in the digital modules.

In order to get a view on the above-mentioned issues, a descriptive and exploratory case study, including quantitative and qualitative elements, was set up. In particular, a questionnaire was designed in which students had to assess the live lectures as well as the digital modules with a score from one to ten on each of the issues under examination. The questionnaire included clear, unambiguous questions, such as, "How do you assess the comprehensibility of the learning content, in condition ...?" or "How do you assess the effect of condition ... on your motivation to engage with the learning content?" The unexpected character of the COVID-19 pandemic did not allow validation of the questionnaire in a pilot study. Nevertheless, it was checked to assess whether the questions were indeed well understood by the students by explicitly asking them if all questions had been clear (which was the case) and by checking whether the students' explanation accompanying their scores actually related to the questions (which was the case as well). Students were invited to explain their scores and to describe the differences or similarities they experienced between the teaching approaches. Furthermore, they were asked whether they had experienced big differences in the time they spent on the lectures versus the digital modules and whether they wanted to make additional comments relating to the different teaching approaches of the course. When the questionnaires were handed in just before the start of the examination period, a so-called anonymous other kept track of them, anonymised them, and then attached the scores on both examination questions to each student's questionnaire. In so doing, the anonymity of the students was guaranteed. The analysis was done in a qualitative way, in search of patterns in the students' answers.

The questionnaire was completed by 11 of the 15 students who enrolled for the course. Four students did not attend any of the classes as they

took up teaching jobs in a secondary school on the day the course was normally taught. They were, therefore, removed from the analysis sample. This means that the analysis was done on the basis of 11 completed questionnaires, meaning 73 per cent of the students enrolled in the course participated in the research. Initially, the idea was to supplement the results stemming from the questionnaire with data from qualitative (individual or group) interviews. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the June examination period at the University of Leuven was extended by two weeks, after which deliberations still had to be organised. As a result, because the students indicated that they wanted to leave on vacation immediately after receipt of their final results, it turned out to be impossible to organise such interviews.

Results

What are the effects of the two different educational conditions on students' perception of the comprehensibility and ease of studying the course, on students' interest and motivation, and on the efforts they made to engage with the course? And can differences be found related to those issues between the two conditions?

With regard to the participants' perceptions, the results show that the live lectures obtained better average scores for the perception of the comprehensibility of the course, for students' interest and motivation and for the efforts they made to engage with the course and then the digital modules. The only exception concerns the perception of the ease of studying the course: in this case, the digital modules obtained a (very slightly) higher score than the live lectures (see Table 1). Also, in general, more students attributed higher scores to the live lectures than to the digital modules on the above-mentioned issues, again except for the perception of the ease of studying the course (see Table 2).

When looking at the individual student level and scores instead of the overall level and average scores, it was found that three students attributed higher scores to the live lectures compared with the digital modules on each of the issues under study; one student did the opposite and systematically scored the digital modules higher than the live lectures on each issue; the other seven students attributed varying scores, although they assessed the live lectures on more issues with higher scores than the digital modules. In what follows, each of the issues and their scores are analysed.

Table 1: The average score (out of 10) attributed for each issue to the live lectures and the digital modules.

Issue	Average score attributed to the live lectures (out of 10)	Average score attributed to the digital modules (out of 10)
Comprehensibility	9	8
Ease of studying	8.2	8.3
Interest	9.1	7.5
Motivation to get started with assignments	7.7	6.1
Actual effort to complete the assignments	8.5	5.9

Table 2: The number (and percentage) of students attributing higher or equal scores for each issue to the live lectures and the digital modules.

Issue	Number of students attributing a higher score to live lectures	Number of students attributing a higher score to digital modules	Number of students attributing both an equal score	Total
Comprehensibility	8 (73%)	2 (18%)	1 (9%)	11 (100%)
Ease of studying	4(36%)	5 (46%)	2 (18%)	11 (100%)
Interest	7 (64%)	1 (9%)	3 (27%)	11 (100%)
Motivation to get started with assignments	8 (73%)	2 (18%)	1 (9%)	11 (100%)
Actual effort to make the assignments	9 (82%)	1 (9%)	1(9%)	11 (100%)

Regarding the perception of the comprehensibility of the course content, students attributed the live lectures a 9/10 on average, and the digital modules a score of 8/10. Eight students attributed a higher score to the live lectures, two to the digital modules and one student attributed both an equal score. Live lectures were hence preferred by the majority of students who indicated that they could better concentrate on the course content when listening during a live lecture or talk. Furthermore, they appreciated the possibility of being able to ask direct questions and receive an immediate answer, feedback or have a debate about it with fellow students. Also, they stated that the coherence and connections between historical facts and phenomena became clearer during the lectures, because the lecturer made them explicit while explaining, asking questions or debating points. The student who rated the digital modules higher on comprehensibility did so because the digital modules offered a clearer structure than the live

lectures. According to him, the PowerPoint presentations during the live lectures were not able to reveal the structure of each lecture as clearly.

The perception of the ease of studying the course was the only issue on which the digital modules scored (very slightly) better than the live lectures. While students attributed 8.2/10 on average for the live lectures, the digital modules received a score of 8.3/10. Four students attributed a higher score to the live lectures, while five did so to the digital modules; two students attributed both equal scores. Those students who expressed a preference for the digital modules regarding this issue did so because the modules provided them with a learning text. They indicated that this was very helpful, as it included everything they had to study. During live lectures, they stated, one had to take notes and if one paid less attention during a part of the lecture, one might miss crucial information. Other students, however, did not consider the presence of a learning text as contributing to the ease of studying the course. In their opinion, the live explanation of the lecturer made connections between the historical phenomena being addressed clearer and more explicit and helped them to distinguish the main points from the side issues. They hence preferred the live lectures.

A large majority of the students indicated that live lectures stimulated their interest more than the digital modules. While they attributed a score of 7.5/10 on average to those modules, the live lectures were attributed a 9.1/10. Seven students rated the live lectures higher, one student preferred the digital modules, and three students attributed an equal score to each medium. While all students indicated they were interested in the course material, most of them nevertheless preferred an enthusiastic lecturer and collaborative interaction to the individual completion of the digital modules. The one student who indicated the opposite did so because he considered the international comparative perspective on history education much more interesting than the historical perspective of history education in Belgium. His preference for the digital modules was hence related to the specific content rather than to the particular teaching approach.

In terms of motivation to get started with assignments, the live lectures scored higher. While the students assessed live lectures with an average score of 7.7/10, the digital modules gained a score of 6.1/10. Eight students attributed a higher score to the live lectures, two students preferred the digital modules and one student attributed both an equal score. The advantage of digital modules, some students stated, was that they could

complete them asynchronously, at their own pace, without experiencing any stress. For the rest, students particularly connected advantages to the live lectures. The interaction, cooperation, exchange of ideas and debates stirred more motivation and furthermore, fostered the quality of the reflection. The fact that assignments had to be completed during the lectures and were discussed together, increased the motivation as well, as students had the feeling that in so doing, their effort led to a tangible result.

The level of motivation to get started with assignments seemed to be reflected in the actual effort to complete the assignments. While students gave a score of 8.5/10 on average to the live lectures for actually making the effort to complete the assignments, the average score attributed to the digital modules was 5.9/10. Moreover, nine students attributed the live lectures a higher score; one student did the opposite, and another student attributed equal scores. Students particularly pointed at the added value of the collaborative interaction during live lectures as the driver to complete the assignments before and during the lectures. Because of the absence of interactive cooperation in the asynchronous digital modules – this would have hindered the students completing the modules at their own pace – and automatic feedback in terms of a model answer being generated, students did not feel encouraged to complete the assignments. The only advantage of the digital modules, one student stated, was that they indeed allowed him to complete the assignments at his own pace.

What are the effects of the two different educational conditions on students' performance for the course? And can differences be found between the two conditions in students' performances?

In order to examine a possible effect of the two conditions on students' learning performance on the written examination, two substantial questions were asked, one encompassing a major thread in the history of history education in Belgium (which had been addressed during the live lectures), and one on a comparison between history education in different countries (which had been addressed in the digital modules). When looking at the scores for the two examination questions, at first glance no difference could be discerned. The average score for both questions was 13/20.

When looking at the individual student level, it was found that two students scored better for the question related to the content seen in the live lectures, while three scored better for the question related to the content of the digital modules (see Table 3). Six students gave the same score for both

questions. It hence seems that, overall, the different teaching approaches did not clearly affect students' performance for the course.

Table 3: Individual examination scores per student on the two questions (related to contents addressed resp. in the live lectures and the digital modules).

Student	Score (out of 20) on exam question 1 (content during live lectures)	Score (out of 20) on exam question 2 (content digital modules)
1	12	8
2	14	14
3	13	14
4	14	14
5	14	14
6	14	16
7	14	14
8	14	14
9	13	13
10	12	14
11	13	12

Conclusion and discussion

The aim of this study was to examine the effects and influence of two different teaching approaches in a course titled “History and Education” on students’ perception of the comprehensibility of and ease of studying the course, on their interest, motivation and effort to complete assignments, and on their performance in the written examination. The results show that the perception of the ease of studying the course and the performance in the examination were almost equal for the synchronous live lectures in which interactive and collaborative learning was present and the asynchronous digital modules that were completed individually. Regarding the perception of the comprehensibility of the course, differences were found in students’ interest as well as their motivation and effort to complete assignments, in the sense that students attributed higher scores to the synchronous live lectures than to the asynchronous digital modules.

In interpreting the results, drawing conclusions and reflecting on consequences, caution is required. Several limitations of this study should be considered. The study concentrated on one course only, in which only a limited number of students were enrolled. All students belonged to upper-middle-class households, meaning they probably had a quiet place in their

home to engage with the digital modules and had easy online access on a device of their own, which they therefore did not have to share with other family members. Furthermore, all students were enrolled in a master's programme, meaning they were experienced students who had proved that they were capable of mastering graduate courses. The course, moreover, was an elective, belonging to the optional part of the programme, which normally means that students are intrinsically interested in the course. Another limitation is connected to the context in which the study took place. From mid-March 2020 onwards, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all live lectures were suspended and all education had to take place in a digital format. This might have had an impact on the scores for the issues related to this course, for the students might not have considered the digital modules of the specific course "History and Education" alone, but rather the whole of digital education in that period. In that sense, a comparative design including other courses in the analysis would have been ideal. Several constraints, however, such as the fact that students belonged to different master's programmes and there was limited time between the launch of the call for papers and the submission of the paper, hindered us from doing so. The extent to which students' time investment in both the lectures and the digital modules might have influenced their scores is probably rather limited. While five students indicated they spent more time on the digital modules than on the lectures, three students indicated the opposite, and three other students considered their time investment equal. When relating the scores that students attributed to the different issues with regard to their time investment, no patterns could be discerned.

Although caution is thus needed, some findings are nevertheless worth discussing. The first is that no clear effect stemming from both teaching approaches could be found on students' performance for the written examination. At first glance, this confirms an earlier finding stating that collaborative learning during live lectures does not automatically generate better learning outcomes. To accomplish that, among other reasons, meaningful interaction aimed at fostering an understanding of the topic under study should be met.¹¹ However, it should be stated that the interaction and collaboration during the live lectures were actually clearly focused on fostering an understanding of the topic being taught. How then to account for the absence of a difference in the examination performances? It needs

¹¹ DW Johnson & RT Johnson, "Cooperation and the use of technology", DH Jonassen (ed.), *Handbook of research on educational communications and technology*, (Mahwah NJ, Erlbaum, 2004), pp. 785-811.

to be stressed that the participants in this study were experienced graduate students who had shown that they were capable of successfully studying a course. This might explain our finding. Moreover, the digital modules provided the students with a text in which everything they had to learn was included. That undoubtedly facilitated the learning of the content offered via the digital modules.

Second, findings from previous research related to interactive and collaborative learning and the effects of that learning seem to be confirmed in the analysis. The live lectures seemed to strongly reinforce students' interest, motivation and effort to complete assignments, as well as their perception of the comprehensibility of the course. Particularly when compared to the scores attributed to the digital modules on the issues at stake, the results illustrate the power of interaction and collaboration between students and with the lecturer. Students referred to this themselves in the closing comments section of the questionnaire where they had the opportunity to add personal reflections. Almost all students emphasised the necessity to include more interaction and cooperation between the students and lecturer in the digital modules, for instance, via short live sessions, via a live and synchronous discussion forum, or via a short summary knowledge clip, followed by a question and answer session. Asynchronous automated feedback by the lecturer accompanying the assignments students had to complete was considered insufficient. This certainly seems to confirm the self-determination theory of Ryan and Deci, which states that connectedness, next to a sense of competence and autonomy, is a basic need of learners.¹² Moreover, that connectedness, according to the participating students, should take place in a live and synchronous manner, both between students and between students and lecturer. Indirect asynchronous connectedness, for example via a discussion forum where students can post comments and questions at one's own pace or with automated feedback, is clearly less appreciated.

Third, the conclusions of this study as well as suggestions that students made in the questionnaire are in line with previous research findings regarding online learning, namely that it is crucial that online learning processes include interaction and collaboration and, in doing so, offer support and scaffolding.¹³ That support can amongst others be realised

¹² RM Ryan & EL Deci, "Self-determination theory and the facilitation of...", *American Psychologist*, 55, 2000, pp. 68-78.

¹³ S Wilcox, "Fostering self-directed learning in the university setting", *Studies in Higher Education*, 21(2), 2006, pp. 165-176.

via online “teacher presence”, something the students pleaded for.¹⁴ This means that the asynchronous moments during which students work individually on the digital modules should be alternated with synchronous moments that offer opportunities to students for dialogue, collaboration, questions and answers, and feedback. In so doing, the asynchronous and the synchronous moments can reinforce each other’s effects, and ultimately the learning process of students. When thinking of how to give shape to education during a continuous pandemic, characterised by an alternation between synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning moments, seeking a balance between individual, interactive and collaborative learning certainly seems to constitute a successful way forward.

14 A Smits & J Voogt, “Elements of satisfactory online asynchronous teacher behaviour in higher education”, *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 33(2), 2017, pp. 97-114; F Ke, “Examining online teaching, cognitive, and social presence for adult students”, *Computers and Education*, 55(2), 2010, pp. 808-820.

Sustaining the University of Johannesburg and Western Sydney University partnership in the time of COVID: A qualitative case study

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Abstract

This article offers a qualitative case study of how COVID has changed an existing international education partnership between the University of Johannesburg (UJ) in South Africa and Western Sydney University (WSU) in Australia which involves collaboration with the not-for-profit Nsangani Trust and focuses on sustainability. Before COVID, both universities ran joint student mobility programs in the Kruger National Park (KNP) and were developing further plans for staff mobility and co-developed post-grad programs involving residency in both countries. These plans changed as a result of the COVID pandemic, which started in early 2020. Societal responses to the COVID pandemic, including national border closures, have forced academics, administrators and students to reconsider how internationalisation programs function during and after the pandemic. Using a qualitative case study based on personal experience, we argue that pre-existing university-to-university connections built before COVID will sustain linkages, but that the previous structure of engagement – based on physical mobility – can shift to new arrangements that can be

run fully digitally or used to support limited mobility when international travel resumes in the future. We position the UJ-WSU relationship in the historical context of internationalisation to both highlight the enduring nature of international engagements and suggest that changes are required to make international education sustainable.

Keywords: Environmental History; Internationalisation; Study Abroad; Sustainable Development Goals.

Introduction

This article explores how the global outbreak of the novel COVID-19 coronavirus redirected international education efforts between the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and Western Sydney University (WSU). In Australia and South Africa, COVID responses included the temporary banning of international travel except for repatriation purposes, a shift to online teaching rather than face-to-face learning, and new financial pressures on universities caused by declining revenue streams. Universities are now turning their attention to core business, and internationalisation, like all areas, faces financial pressures, including budget cuts. Despite the challenges, UJ and WSU have expressed the desire to continue international linkages even though it may not be possible to sustain them, at least in the short-term, at previous levels of physical mobility or financial support. Nonetheless, new opportunities exist to expand co-teaching opportunities with dual degrees, video conferences and electronic “exchange” of teaching and research in cost-effective ways that further expands the internationalisation mission of the universities involved.

This article offers a qualitative case study of how COVID has changed educational engagements between UJ and WSU.¹ The administrations of both universities supported bilateral mobility of students and researchers. They launched a successful and growing internationalisation program of teaching, research and staff mobility between the two institutions that centres on the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Started in 2015, the program involved Australian students visiting Africa twice a year, joint collaboration by UJ and WSU staff and students, the development of a planned co-PhD, and trilateral engagements with Africa, Australia and China. This program, like every other form of internationalisation, has been changed significantly by COVID travel restrictions and society-wide shutdowns and social distancing measures.

¹ RE Stake, “Qualitative case studies”, NK Denzin & YS Lincoln (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Sage Publications Ltd, 2005), pp. 443-466.

The research design of the study, based on personal experiences directing and engaging with bilateral student mobility and collaborative research, reflects the views of the authors, three professors and two MA students. The sections are divided into:

- a historical review of internationalisation trends;
- a case study of an overseas study trip based in the KNP which ran from 2015 to 2020;
- a case study of efforts to negotiate a co-badged postgraduate degree focused on sustainability. The historical background offers context for the two case studies. Our observations do not attempt to offer generalisations about the future of internationalisation but rather are meant to inform participants who are currently navigating international engagements.

A history of Australian and South African internationalisation

The current pause in international travel has had significant consequences for students, staff and institutions that had built up numerous mobility-based components (e.g. student exchange, studying in person at foreign universities, etc.) of internationalisation. Online elements of internationalisation, though important, took something of a backseat at many institutions that prioritised person-to-person engagements. COVID has reversed this order, as seen in the case studies, and online is now the primary, and in some cases, the only means of maintaining linkages between institutions.

Human mobility has been the backbone of internationalisation efforts. International education can be traced before World War II, but the more modern incarnation emerged in the post-World War II era when a number of countries, including Australia, instituted government-sponsored programs of student exchange using the language of international cooperation.² The American Fulbright program and Australia's Colombo plan – both which supported inbound and outbound flows of people – stand out as examples of government efforts to use study abroad for diplomacy.³ Australia developed a study abroad program to facilitate foreign relations with newly independent Asian nations. In his inaugural speech as Minister for External Affairs, Percy Spender warned the House of Representatives

2 SR Asada, *50 Years of US Study Abroad students: Japan as the gateway to Asia and beyond* (London, Routledge, 2019), p. 15.

3 Fulbright US Student Program, "Fulbright US Student Program History" (available at <https://us.fulbrightonline.org/about/history>, as accessed on 18 August 2020).

on March 9, 1950 that “no nation can escape its geography ... we live side by side with the countries of South and Southeast Asia (and) it is in our interest to foster commercial and other contacts...and give them what help we can in maintaining stable and democratic governments in power”.⁴ Welcoming Asian scholars to Australia through the Colombo Plan acted as a “watershed in Australia’s cultural development”.⁵

The neo-liberal era of internationalisation, which emerged in the 1990s and continues to this day (albeit in a paused condition), redefined the purpose of study abroad. Many international education leaders argued that both nations and graduates needed to “compete” in the now globalized market whilst also maintaining cultural understanding necessary for cosmopolitan values.⁶ Economic globalization emphasised the need to produce graduates who could compete in an integrated global market.⁷ Universities in Australia and the United State of America (USA), for instance, recruited foreign students who paid higher fees and also fit within national skills-based migration policies.

Globally, 2018 became the year for the highest enrolment, with 5.6 million students crossing international borders to study in foreign institutions.⁸ Prior to COVID, Australia had one of the largest numbers of foreign students studying in any country in the world. The latest figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics reveal that international education was worth \$40.3 billion for the Australian economy in 2019

4 House of Representatives Official Hazard, “Commonwealth of Australia parliamentary debates”, 10(9), March 1950 (available at https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/hansard80/hansardr80/1950-03-09/toc_pdf/19500309_reps_19_206.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf#search=%221950s%201950%2003%2009%22, as accessed on 10 August 2020), p. 628.

5 D Oakman, “Young Asians in our homes: Colombo plan students and white Australia”, *Journal of Australian Studies*, 26(72), 2002, p. 98.

6 S Twombly, M Salisburg, S Tument and P Klute, 2012, “Special issue: Study abroad in a new global century – Renewing the promise, refining the purpose”, *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 38(4), In: S Asada, *50 Years of US study abroad students: Japan as the gateway to Asia and beyond* (London, Routledge, 2019), p. 16.

7 M Shaw, *Global society and international relations* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1994), In: S Twombly, M Salisburg, S Tument and P Klute, 2012, “Special issue: Study abroad in a new global century ...”, *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 38(4), In: S Asada, *50 Years of US study abroad students: ...*, p. 16; S Mueller, “Globalization of knowledge”, In: K Hanson, & W Meyerson (eds.), *International challenges to American colleges and universities: Looking ahead* (Phoenix Arizona, American Council on Education/Oryx Press, 1995), In: S Asada, *50 Years of US Study Abroad students: ...*, p. 16.

8 The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Education at a glance 2020: OECD indicators*, *OECD Publishing* (Paris, 2020), p. 228.

compared to \$32.4 billion in 2017-2018.⁹ In 2008, there were 202,581 international students enrolled in the Australian Higher Education sector.¹⁰ International student enrolments in the Australian higher education sector peaked in 2019 with 442,219, an increase of 239,638 enrolments compared to 2008. Enrolments from China accounted for the largest foreign student enrolment in 2019 with 28 per cent. This is followed by India (15 per cent), Nepal (7 per cent) and Brazil (4 per cent).¹¹ Australian students participating in overseas study abroad programs remain at high numbers: 52,171 Australian students participated in an overseas program in 2018, an increase of 2,908 compared to 2017. Statistics from 2018 also reveal China as the most preferred destination for Australian students at 14.7 per cent, followed by the USA (10.1 per cent) and UK (7.6 per cent). In 2017, China (11.2 per cent), the USA (11.1 per cent) and UK (8.3 per cent) were the same top three destinations for Australian students.¹²

Prior to the end of apartheid, South Africa remained somewhat isolated from internationalisation. In the late 1980s, South Africa's international student numbers were significantly lower (2 per cent or less of total population) than France, Germany or the USA.¹³ Most students came from Europe or from the white elite in neighbouring Southern African countries, although a contingent of black Zimbabweans also studied at South African universities.

South Africa's international student market has grown considerably since the end of apartheid in 1994 and the election of the first democratic government. In 2010, 66,113 students of foreign origins studied at a South African university.¹⁴ African students comprise the majority, with 46,191 from

9 Department of Education Skills and Employment, "Research snapshot July 2020, Education Export Income by country 2019" (available at <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/Research-Snapshots/Documents/RS%20Education%20export%202019.pdf>, as accessed on 21 August 2020); H Ferguson and H Sherrell, "Overseas students in Australian higher education: A quick guide", *Parliament of Australia: Department of Parliamentary Services* (available at https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1819/Quick_Guides/OverseasStudents, as accessed 21 August 2020).

10 H Ferguson and H Sherrell, "Overseas students in Australian higher education: ...", *Parliament of Australia: ...* (available at https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1819/Quick_Guides/OverseasStudents, as accessed on 21 August 2020).

11 Department of Education Skills and Employment, "Education Export Income by country 2019," July 2020 (available at <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/research-snapshots/Documents/RS%20Education%20export%202019.pdf>, as accessed on 21 August 2020).

12 Department of Education Skills and Employment, "International Mobility of Australian Students," April 2020, (available at https://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/Research-Snapshots/Documents/RS_Australian%20student%20mobility.pdf, as accessed on 21 August 2020).

13 S Rouhani and A Paterson, "Foreign students at South African universities", *Development Southern Africa*, 13(2), 1996, pp. 287-298.

14 Department of Higher Education and Training Republic of South Africa, "Green paper for post school education and training," January 2012 (available at <https://www.sqa.org.za/docs/papers/2012/greenpaper.pdf>, as accessed 20 on August 2020).

the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and 11,130 from elsewhere in Africa. Students from Europe (3,653), Asia (1,813) and North America (1,737) comprised the largest non-African student populations. By 2013, nearly 74,000 foreign students, most of them (53,800) from Southern African Development Community (SADC) studied at South African universities, comprising 7.5 percent of the total student population.¹⁵

The development of international policies came relatively late in South Africa. When the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) began considering international students as a source of income in 2015, it noted that the question had “to be explored with caution” because foreign students could constrain the available places for domestic students.¹⁶ South Africa’s unequal development has created numerous problems.¹⁷ A DHET Green Paper highlighted the lack of national coordination in internationalisation. The Southern Africa Development Community Protocol on Education and Training operated as the DHET’s only formal policy. The Green Paper noted, “while internationalisation is a reality at individual institutional level, it remains uncoordinated, piecemeal and ad hoc at national level”.¹⁸ Moreover, inequality is still built into the system. DHET notes, “These linkages currently tend to be between the historically advantaged institutions and less so with historically black universities”.¹⁹

In the past decade, Australia has embraced the African continent. Historically, Australia’s governments have not prioritized the African region because of their focus on Asia.²⁰ Study-abroad experts note that there had been a negative view in Western countries. Thankfully, this

15 Anon., “Annexure 2, Addressing systemic higher education transformation”, *Department of Higher Education and Training*, Report on the second national higher education transformation summit international convention centre, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal 15-17 October 2015 (available at <https://www.justice.gov.za/commissions/FeesHET/docs/2015-Report-SecondNationalHETSummit.pdf>, as accessed on 20 August 2020), p. 14.

16 Department of Higher Education and Training of South Africa, “Green paper for post school education and training”, January 2012 (available at <https://www.sqa.org.za/docs/papers/2012/greenpaper.pdf>, as accessed 20 August, 2020), p. 52.

17 Department of Higher Education and Training of South Africa, “Green paper for post school education and training”, January 2012 (available at <https://www.sqa.org.za/docs/papers/2012/greenpaper.pdf>, as accessed 20 August, 2020), p. 51.

18 Department of Higher Education and Training of South Africa, “Green paper for post school education and training”, January 2012 (available at <https://www.sqa.org.za/docs/papers/2012/greenpaper.pdf>, as accessed 20 August, 2020),

19 Department of Higher Education and Training of South Africa, “Green paper for post school education and training”, January 2012 (available at <https://www.sqa.org.za/docs/papers/2012/greenpaper.pdf>, as accessed 20 August, 2020), p. 51.

20 Advisory Group on Australia’s engagement with Africa, “A strategy for Australia’s engagement with Africa”, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade”, 2015 (available at <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/a-strategy-for-australias-engagement-with-africa>, as accessed on 14 August 2020).

myopic view has been challenged in recent decades.²¹ The establishment of the Australian-African Universities Network in 2012 added a new and important policy foundation. The Australian government shifted its attention towards Africa in the mid-2010s when the Federal Government launched the Australia-Africa Advisory Group on September 4, 2015.²² The foreign minister Julie Bishop added urgency to the group when she stated that Australia “cannot...ignore” the strategic and economic importance of the region.²³ As interest in Africa soared, the need for educational engagement programs for both Australians and Africans became a strategic national priority.

These wider events coincided with the 2014 appointment of WSU’s current Vice Chancellor, Professor Barney Glover, who encouraged study abroad. There has been a steady increase in overseas study since 2015 (Image 1).²⁴ At WSU, one in six students participated in a study abroad program in 2018. This increase has occurred with the support of Go Global, the division within WSU responsible for mobility programs. Of these, 60 per cent of WSU students participated in an overseas program within the Indo Pacific region: with China (13 per cent) and India (8 per cent) the preferred destinations in the region.²⁵ On a national scale study abroad programs in Africa accounted for 1.8 per cent of the total outbound Australian study abroad programs.²⁶ At WSU, this figure for the last few years has stood at around 6 per cent, some three times higher than the national average.²⁷

21 M Pires, “Study-Abroad and Cultural Exchange Programs to Africa: America’s image of a continent”, *African Issues*, 28, 2000, p. 39.

22 Advisory Group on Australia’s engagement with Africa, “A strategy for Australia’s engagement with Africa”, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015 (available at <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/a-strategy-for-australias-engagement-with-africa>, as accessed on 14 August 2020).

23 Advisory Group on Australia’s engagement with Africa, “A strategy for Australia’s engagement with Africa”, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015 (available at <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/a-strategy-for-australias-engagement-with-africa>, as accessed on 14 August 2020).

24 Figures from Go Global, Western Sydney University. Please note data capture in 2014 was incomplete.

25 Western Sydney University, “Western Sydney University International Student Mobility 2018”, 2018 (available at https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1618434/WSU_BLA_2018.pdf, as accessed on 14 August 2020).

26 Australian Government, Department of Education, Skills and Employment, “International mobility of Australian University students. International study experiences destinations regions and countries”, 2018.

27 Western Sydney University, “Western Sydney University International Student Mobility 2018”, 2018 (available at https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1618434/WSU_BLA_2018.pdf, as accessed on 23 August 2020)

Image 1: Outbound Students at WSU University, 2015-2020

Year	Outbound Students
2015	812
2016	870
2017	1019
2018	1141
2019	1100

Source: *Go Global* (Western Sydney University's Go Global Division), 1 December 2020.

UJ’s embrace of internationalisation gained impetus with the appointment of Professor Tshilidzi Marwala as Vice Chancellor in 2018. His appointment marked a strong emphasis on internationalisation, decolonisation and the 4th Industrial Revolution. Professor Marwala has pursued a vision of making UJ and Africa a leader in the 4th Industrial Revolution while also simultaneously promoting internationalisation and decolonising the institution from its apartheid past. UJ set a goal to have 20 per cent of staff be international by 2024, and 15 per cent of students as international by 2020 in order to provide a rich educational and research environment to support the domestic transformation agenda.²⁸ International collaborations provide opportunities for South Africans that are not otherwise available domestically, and they also foster diplomatic links with key strategic partners, such as China, other African countries, and leading research nations, such as Australia and the USA. UJ’s policy of internationalisation aims to increase the number of South African black academics and students while also maintaining other types of diversity. In this context, UJ looks to partner with diverse, large institutions, such as WSU that prioritise decolonization and transformation and also have similar academic and student profiles.

UJ and WSU share a number of common visions, the most important being the need to participate with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The existing KNP study abroad trip and co-developed postgraduate degrees focus on sustainability. Furthermore, both institutions are committed to advancing the SDGs. In the 2019 *Times Higher Education Sustainable Development Goals Ranking*, WSU and UJ both rate in the

²⁸ N Mabasa, “New Vice Chancellor plans to take the University of Johannesburg into the Fourth Industrial Age.” *Daily Maverick*, 25 April 2018 (available at <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2018-04-25-new-vice-chancellor-plans-to-take-the-university-of-johannesburg-into-the-fourth-industrial-age/>), as accessed 23 August 2020.

top 5 for SDG 10 reducing inequalities (WSU #3 and U #5) due to their considerable research, teaching and community-engagement programs focusing on first-generation students. WSU's strengths in SDGs makes it an attractive partner for UJ due to Western's commitment to equality and development, keys for partnerships in Africa. UJ and WSU rates the top #5 for gender quality, life on the land, clean water and sanitation and life below water, and responsible consumption and production. The SDGs inform UJ and WSU's ongoing collaborations.

Case study one: From field-based to online learning

COVID has challenged field-based study abroad options, such as the KNP trip that WSU has run with UJ and the Nsasani Trust in the Kruger since 2015. Like many international programs, the basis for WSU-UJ's collaboration began with person-to-person contacts that led to research and teaching.²⁹ From 2011-2017, Bennett collaborated with the ecologist Dr Frederick J Kruger on a project focused on the history of forestry in South Africa.³⁰ At the time, Kruger taught in the KNP with the U.S.-based Organisation of Tropical Studies (OTS) and the Nsasani Trust, a not-for-profit trust focusing on uplifting South African disadvantaged youth using science education. Bennett and Kruger developed the idea of running an immersive field seminar combining history, ecology, management and culture. The first class ran in July 2015 with 14 WSU students and every class since then (nine in total from 2016-2020) included UJ students. The Nsasani Trust, one of the three partners of the Skukuza Science Leadership Initiative (Along with SANParks Scientific Services and OTS), provided access to housing, arranged lectures and organised permits for research in the field. After Dr Kruger passed away in late 2017, Dr Laurence Kruger and Karen Vickers have led the African side of the teaching collaboration

²⁹ The expertise and personal connections of individual faculty often inspire new programs relating to study abroad and research. See A Woldegiyorgis, D Proctor and H de Witt, "Internationalization of research: Key considerations and concerns", *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 22(2), 2018, pp. 161-176; M Kwiek, "What large-scale publication and citation data tell us about international research collaboration in Europe: changing national patterns in global contexts", *Studies in Higher Education*, 2020, pp. 1-21; M Kato and A Ando, "National ties of international scientific collaboration and researcher mobility found in *Nature and Science*", *Scientometrics*, 2020, pp. 673-694; S Kumar, V Rohani and K Rutnavelu, "International research collaborations of ASEAN Nations in economics, 1979-2010", *Scientometrics*, 2020, pp. 847-867; L Waltmann, R Tijssen and N Eck, "Globalisation of science in kilometres, 2012", *Journal of Informetrics*, 5(4), pp. 323-335; A Gazni, C Cusumido and F Didegah, "Mapping world scientific collaboration: Authors, institutions, and countries", *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 63(2), 2020, pp. 323-335; F Barjak and S Robinson, "International collaboration, mobility and team diversity in the life sciences: Impact on research performance", *Social Geography*, 3, 2008, pp. 23-36.

³⁰ BM Bennett and Frederick J Kruger, *Forestry and water conservation in South Africa: History, science and policy* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2015).

program on behalf of Nsasani.

The class takes a hands-on approach that requires learning in the field and the classroom and takes a mode two model that values knowledge from local scientists, lecturers and professors, game guards, community and even tourists. This immersive field-based experiential learning model combines field and classroom teaching, develops a transdisciplinary understanding of savanna ecology in students. The class starts literally from the ground up: we explore geology, natural history and evolution, human evolution and culture, and key historical processes. There is a strong focus on the engagement between the Park and the local communities, especially those in neighbouring Bushbuck Ridge and Hazyview municipal districts. This draws on SAN Parks' management approach which focuses on socio-ecological systems thinking: people and natural systems are inherently intertwined together. Environmental historians have been particularly influential in challenging the idea that humans and nature are separate, so the socio-ecological system fits well onto historical paradigms.

The class implements an interdisciplinary pedagogy that uses history to frame each subject. Subjects focus on fire, fencing, dispossession, migration, contemporary politics and ethical questions relating to the management of species and ecosystems. Students benefit from all majors and each can pursue a tailored and individual project from history, politics, philosophy, communication, psychology, management, law, science and more. Each of these disciplines relates to specific issues in the Park and can also be understood from a historical point of view. We focus on challenging questions: can we manage the park with a "hands-off policy?" Or: "who should have control and access to the park—locals, the nation or the world?" These are questions with legal, ethical, political, cultural and ecological dimensions that must be understood in light of the past. We also examine critical perspectives which see the Park as a space of privilege, question whether natural heritage deserves more emphasis than human heritage, and look at how tourism and social media shape the Park's policies.

South African students attend and also teach into the module. The trips average between three to four UJ students per trip. The trips also include South African research assistants, which include alumni. Having a diverse mix of students allows for exchange in perspective, and it facilitates intellectual decolonization by raising different and often challenging questions about the context, relevance and possible impact of Western

‘scientific’ knowledge systems. Funding from WSU students to the Nsasani Trusts provides in-kind contributions to support South African students. This has amounted to over 30 000 in-kind rand per student. This funding has supported 20 South African students on the trip. The Kruger has been an important feeder program for UJ’s postgraduate history program, and three graduates have received the University’s most prestigious GES 4.0 scholarship. The in-kind funding has also supported approximately 100 students for women in science and environmental monitoring programs.

With students inspired by their new experiences, the class transforms them psychologically as well as educationally.³¹ Students rate the Kruger trip among the highest of any classes offered at WSU (it has received the highest score of 5 for overall satisfaction), and feedback provided to the Nsasani Trust. A number of student quotes, used for a video (link found in notes), highlight key aspects of the experience. One student from science said: ‘I think the style of learning is something that should be more widespread if possible.’³²

Another student remarked:

And that way of learning, I think, covers all different styles of learning. We supplied our own historians by virtue of them supervising the trip. But while we were there, we engaged with a couple of world leading scientists in their field, one a botanist, one an ecologist, and also the teaching assistants... .

The transdisciplinary nature of the experience especially impressed students:

The things we learned are not necessarily, you know, restricted to our own discipline. So, you know, there were students there, animal science students. There were historians, there were students of English, there was a philosopher. There were all kinds of different students... .

The 11th trip planned for July 2020 was cancelled due to COVID. The first recognised outbreak of COVID in Wuhan, China in January 2020 and its global spread, including to Australia and South Africa, in February and March, sent a shockwave through international study abroad. Both Vice Chancellors called off all international trips and national borders shut to international tourists and visitors. Campuses shut, and students

31 J Raadik and S Cottrell, “Outdoor skills education: What are the benefits for health, learning and lifestyle?”, *World Leisure Journal*, 62(3), 2020, pp. 219-241; M Asfeldt and G Hvenegaard, “Perceived learning, critical elements and lasting impacts on university-based wilderness educational expeditions”, *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning*, 14(2), 2014, pp. 132-152.

32 Anon., “Kruger National Park”, Western Sydney University YouTube Channel, YouTube, 14 Dec 2016 (available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VgL5GlugIAk>, as accessed on 10 August 2020).

transferred to online learning. Interestingly, students continued to inquire about the trip into April and May. This suggests a strong desire to go overseas and it fits with evidence showing younger people feel more immune to COVID.³³ Students under the age of 25 will certainly be a key driver of travel recovery because their rates of serious illness and death are significantly lower, and they have a higher risk appetite.

The cancellation of the class has had a serious down-stream impact on study abroad providers, such as the Nsasani Trust and other ancillary local contractors e.g. caterers and professional guides. The KNP effectively closed from late March until the Level 2 announcement on 15th August 2020 that came into force midnight 17th August 2020. The Trust has reopened by hosting a Women in Science class with students from local regions of Mpumalanga, which borders on the southern part of the KNP. One of their strategies for 2020 and into early 2021 is to host more local students. We hope to organise a UJ trip in 2021, assuming that COVID does not lead to lockdowns at level 3 or higher. The trip will rely on DHET publication subsidy funding.

We are all waiting to see what happens with international travel and the abatement of COVID-19. What does the future hold for field-based learning experiences? A number of options seem to be plausible, with some more desirable than others. The first option is that after the pandemic ends, we go right back running trips, and given enough time and the importance of study abroad experiences, this is the most appealing. But these transitions will, at best, take a number of years so other options must be considered. Australia may remain isolated longer than other countries, such as the USA, due to its low numbers of COVID. For instance, WSU extended a travel ban until 2021. South Africa, on the other hand, has had higher numbers of COVID cases than Australia, and it subsequently opened up its borders to non-citizens subject to a COVID test.

Can there be international interaction, field work, and the same interdisciplinary learning among staff and students without travel? We are developing an online module to offer immersive-type experiences that complement future study as well as an understanding of savanna

³³ NSW Health, "In focus: COVID-19 in young adults (18-29 years). Reporting period: 1 January to 27 June 2020", 2020 (available at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Documents/covid-19-young-adults.pdf>); W Yang, S Kandula, M Huynh, S Greene, G Van Wye, W Li, H Tai Chan, E McGibbon, A Yeung, D Olson, A Fine and J Shaman, "Estimating the infection fatality risk of SARS-CoV-2 in New York city during the spring 2020 pandemic wave: A model based analysis", *The Lancet Infectious Disease*, 19, 2020, pp. 1-10.

ecosystems in both countries.

We are optimistic about providing digital opportunities but there are significant inequalities which students face. The digital space is a means to bring back some form of international education for students during and after the pandemic. Online international education can reach students who are unable to physically participate in international programs. Replicating international experiences online has challenges, the most pressing being access to data and connectivity. WSU and UJ both serve many first-generation students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Both universities support students: WSU provided their students with laptops on loan and other technology to ensure students kept up with digital learning. In line with government advice, the university was able to keep their campus open for students who had difficulty accessing WIFI.³⁴ UJ had a more difficult task of supporting students due to a stricter lockdown, greater inequality among students, and poor connectivity in townships and rural areas.

With campuses shut, many students lost access to resources such as libraries, computers and WIFI. As a result, UJ provided all their students with 30 gigabytes of free data. UJ also distributed over 1750 laptops for qualifying first year NSFAS students and 21,000 other devices for other qualifying students.³⁵

Support schemes like this remain vital even after the reopening of international travel in a post-COVID world. Ensuring students, especially those that cannot fully afford physical travel have access to digital international experiences, might provide them with the opportunity to mix and interact with those in other regions. As Leask states, “the pandemic has highlighted how connected the world is and how important it is today, and will be in the future, that all graduates (and students alike) are able to work together across national and cultural boundaries as professionals and citizens, regardless of their ability to (physically) engage in mobility programs”.³⁶

34 Western Sydney University, “Student support,” 2020 (available at <https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/coronavirus-information/students/student-support.html>, as accessed on 15 October 2020); Western Sydney University, “Coronavirus: Frequently asked questions”, 2020, (available at <https://aem.westernsydney.edu.au/coronavirus-information/coronavirus-frequently-asked-questions.html>, as accessed on 15 October 2020); Western Sydney University, “News and events,” 2020 (available at <https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/coronavirus-information/news-and-updates.html>, as accessed on 15 October 2020).

35 University of Johannesburg, “UJ committed to assisting students with access to devices and data”, University of Johannesburg news and events, April 2020 (available at <https://www.uj.ac.za/newandevents/Pages/UJ-committed-to-assisting-students-with-access-to-devices-and-data.aspx>, 15 October 2020).

36 B Leask, “Embracing the possibilities of disruption,” *Higher Education Research & Development* 39(7), 2020, p. 1390.

Developing an online class catapulted the Nsasni Trust and Organisation of Tropical Studies into the digital world. Rapanta et.al note that COVID-19 is a “catalyst that highlighted the need for educational change towards more flexible models and practices that best respond to the complexity and unpredictability of today’s fast and interconnected but and still fragile society”.³⁷ The Nsasani Trust via the Organisation of Tropical Studies, two organisations devoted to field-based study, had to develop online modules to continue teaching and develop revenue streams. These modules utilise research “practicums” which aim to bring the field to the students through innovative multimedia platforms, providing participants with practical research training, science writing skills and an immersive virtual field experience. The practicums, which run for 4 to 6 weeks, will explore the theoretical body of knowledge underpinning each topic and the relevance to contemporary conservation through lectures and discussions of key literature. Each course will comprise the following:

- In person lectures and videos from the field by staff and local experts.
- Discussion workshops led by participants and lecturers which explore the theoretical and conservation context for the challenge.
- A thorough exploration of the research design and how data are collected.
- Practical experience in remote data collection including, but not limited to, camera trap techniques and identification of animals from photos, parasite and vector identification, identification of data from automated recording units, application of data management and analysis platforms.
- Mentored data analysis and write up of chosen independent project

Practicums will provide students with an overview of emerging and conservation challenges, demonstrations of field sampling skills, real-time interactions with experts on the subject and experience in science writing. Participants will then have a good grounding in the field to begin their training in research techniques, remote/passive sample collection and processing, analytical and statistical approaches, and scientific writing. Practicums would be ideal for senior thesis or honours projects and provide the opportunity to contribute to an academic paper.

Students in Australia can take the module for credit via WSU faculty in coordination with the Trust. This is being discussed as one possible Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) model, discussed

³⁷ C Rapantha et.al., “Online University teaching during the and after the COVID-19 Crisis: Refocusing teacher presence and learning activity”, *Post Digital Science and Education*, 2, 2020, p. 941.

in the final section. This COIL changes our definition of study abroad, but crucially, it still involves student-centred learning, interdisciplinary teams, engagement and immersion in new cultures. Before COVID 19 hit, only two per cent of undergraduates in the United States were involved in international programs.³⁸ An expanded application of the pedagogical tools used in traditional study abroad trips could include domestic experiences that still provide many of the same learning outcomes. It would have the unexpected benefit of transferring the same skills to students who would not normally have gone abroad due to a lack of resources or interest.

Case study two: Building a joint postgraduate framework

The second pillar of UJ-WSU relations, the creation of co-badged postgraduate study, is being similarly reshaped by COVID. In 2017, the Faculty of Humanities at UJ and the School of Humanities and Communication Arts WSU decided to forge a closer relationship by appointing two academics to work for half a year in each country. This relationship has led to a number of student exchanges, including UJ students studying in Australia and the exchange of a WSU student to UJ. Master's students Sameer Hifazat and Basetsana Tsuwane, authors on this article, have already done work in both countries and are keen to take advantage of the opportunities offered by co-badging postgraduate degrees.

Discussions to create postgraduate qualifications began before COVID but the focus has shifted since the pandemic started. The challenges of navigating a co-badged degree are idiosyncratic due to the complexities of administration, finance and law. Australia and South Africa both have requirements about what percentage of the degree must be done in each country, rules on residency, and the degrees that require equivalent subject matter. There is to our knowledge no single source which explains the various legal requirements different countries have on residency (i.e. how long does a student need to be in country), the different ways students pay for joint degrees (e.g. which university receives money and enrolls the student), and the arrangements required. All this has to be parsed out by staff and administration at each institution.

Both institutions have policies for dual MA and PhD degrees with foreign institutions. Section 4 of WSU's policy for joint-degrees emphasizes the

³⁸ Anon., Opendoors data, "Fast facts- international students in the United States", 2019 (available at https://opendoorsdata.org/fast_facts/fast-facts-2019/, as accessed on 10 August 2020).

benefits of these arrangements:³⁹

The doctoral or research master's candidate benefits under both dual award and joint degree arrangements in that the candidate has the opportunity to work and access the latest research equipment, facilities and expertise in more than one institution, and obtains awards that facilitate professional mobility. The advantages of such agreements extend beyond the benefit to the individual candidate and should be seen in the context of enhanced research cooperation between the institutions and the principal supervisors concerned.

An MOU signed in July 2019 by the Vice Chancellors at both Universities provides the basis for further formal arrangements to be made.

Initially, discussions focused on an MA in environmental history and/ or sustainability. Environmental history sits at the core of UJ-WSU relationship, but it is part of a larger collaborative relationship that includes sustainability, health, and the humanities. The original discussion focused on running a joint MA in environmental history. This would include a trip to the Kruger where students from both institutions would learn how to do interdisciplinary field work with scientists and communities based on the “mode two” learning model. To complete an assessment, we had to compare the different degree structure between WSU and UJ to determine equivalences.

WSU has multidisciplinary master's by research that includes disciplinary training but does not formally lead to an MA in history. The Master of Research (MRes) at WSU involves a one-year Bachelor of Research, a degree which replaced the old honours year (year 4), and then a one-year research by thesis MA. Students enrolled in the Bachelor of Research undertake core units in interdisciplinary methodology and select from electives across the university. In the second year, students undertake full-time research on a thesis in a specialization field (e.g. history, ecology, etc.).

UJ's degree progression fits the older style previously used by Australian universities. The history progression includes a three-year bachelor's in history or allied field, a fourth-year Honours in history or African studies, and then a two-year Master's by research. The history Honours to MA progression at UJ has greater research requirements and less of an emphasis on interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary training than does

³⁹ Western Sydney University, “Western Sydney university dual award and joint higher degree research policy”, 2019 (available at <https://policies.westernsydney.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00200#s1>, as accessed 30 August 2020.)

the MRes. At UJ there is no option for MA in history by coursework, but many staff and students desire this option. A coursework MA costs more to run because it requires a number of classes (a minimum of two per term). An MA requires either that faculty teach more or have a larger number of students to enroll to make it viable in terms of class size and finances. After doing an equivalence analysis, it became apparent that WSU's MRes catered better to a multidisciplinary framework than a strict discipline-based model used by history at UJ.

The discussion then shifted towards creating a joint program on sustainability centred around the appointment of Senior Research Associates and Visiting Professors from WSU who specialized in sustainability and health. The visit of the WSU Vice Chancellor and Pro-Vice Chancellor for International in July 2019, which included talks with the UJ Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor of Research and Internationalization, further cemented this relationship, and a research trip with staff working across the university was planned for in June 2020 focused on "Green Futures". Green Futures focused on urban and rural environmental sustainability, with a particular focus on vegetation and trees. WSU offered financial support and the trip became part of the University's planning for an Africa agenda in late 2019. Unfortunately, the outbreak of COVID in early 2020 cancelled this workshop, which required field visits in Johannesburg and around the Kruger. A three- part series between UJ and WSU has been developed to replace this workshop, but due to the field requirements of the first workshop, Green Futures has had to be delayed indefinitely.

Further meetings with international administrators identified challenges to be overcome to create a joint MA-MRes. First, an equivalence had to be created between degrees at both institutions. A new problem arose in that UJ lacked an equivalent multidisciplinary degree in sustainability. A new degree had to be created, which could take three years, or an existing degree would need to be modified. Up to 50 percent of any degree can be modified without having to register it with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). There are a range of degrees which are "on the books" and approved by DHET but which are temporarily inactive. Ideally, the inactive degree has at least 50 percent which already fits the desired new degree (e.g., it allows for electives or has a core with the same focus). After many meetings and analysis, the Faculty of Humanities at UJ determined that it would be best to consider building a new degree.

The problem of finances became one of the next immediate problems. How would students pay for the degree? What is seemingly a simple question is actually extremely difficult to answer. We wanted students to be able to enrol at their home institutions (e.g. for South Africans, UJ, and for Australians, WSU) in order to gain access to national loans/grants and to pay lower tuition costs as residents. Australian legislation meant that this model would not work. By Australian law, a student has to enrol and reside in Australia for *joint* degree purposes which raises the costs considerably. WSU's average tuition for a MA costs \$28,080 for 2020 whereas at UJ costs can be as low as 14,634 Rand (roughly \$1,200 AUD).⁴⁰ WSU offers special discounts, and even fee waivers, on a program-by-program and student-by-student basis.

Legislative requirements for Australia meant that South African students had to spend half the time in Australia. Conversely, Australian students had to spend half the time in South Africa. This would require money for tuition, travel and accommodation for one year of the two-year program. Australian students would have less trouble given the higher incomes in Australia (minimum wage is ten times more, \$20 AUD in Australia compared to 15.57 Rand, or \$1.30 AUD in South Africa), favourable exchange rate, and lower South African tuition. Despite this advantage, WSU students tend to come from lower socio-economic groups compared to other universities in Sydney and almost all have part-time jobs as do most UJ students. No government support exists for either country. Australian students can often access OS-Help, a government program that funds overseas study with up to \$6,913 AUD for study outside of Asia (more is given if one studies in Asia), but the structure of the Bachelors of Research and MRes means that students never receive the 80 credits (one year of full study) required to access OS-Help because each degree is technically a stand-alone for financial purposes.⁴¹

There is goodwill to discuss new options, but the Master's-level program is currently an issue to be worked out over the next year. The co-badged/joint

⁴⁰ Western Sydney University, "Western Sydney university post grad 2020 international students education fees", August 2020 (available at https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1565715/2020_INTL_Indicative_Fees_-_PG_-_7.8.20.pdf, last accessed 25 August 2020); "Cost attendance and distribution", University of Johannesburg, 2020 (available at <https://www.uj.ac.za/internationalstudents/Pages/Federal%20Student%20Aid/Cost-of-Attendance-and-Disbursements.aspx>, as accessed on 20 August 2020).

⁴¹ "OS-help and overseas study", Australian Government Study Assist: Information for students about government assistance for financing tertiary studies, 2020 (available at <https://www.studyassist.gov.au/help-loans/os-help-and-overseas-study> last accessed 19 August 2020).

MA space is one that is still uncertain and in development. Both institutions have little track-record in this area due to the challenges mentioned above. WSU has only one joint agreement for the MRes. That program is funded by the Government of India with support from its elite Indian Institute of Technology group. In that arrangement, Indian students come to WSU for the second year of their MRes degree. UJ Humanities houses one joint MA with the University of West Indies, which pays for students to enrol at UJ as part of its agreement with UJ. In both cases, governments or universities fund the cost of student residency. MA programs, due to the short timeframe and high financial and residency requirements, necessitate special funding and also close cooperation between institutions.

Attention then shifted towards a co-badged PhD, which offered more flexibility and could be run across degrees (i.e. it did not require an agreement in one field). Early on in discussions, the Dean of Graduate Studies at WSU and the Internationalization Office at UJ suggested that the PhD might be an easier option. Had we heeded this advice earlier our lives would have been easier, but fewer lessons, many that have proven useful to other colleagues in our institutions, would have been learned.

The original intention of the MA sought to educate more students because more students study for MA than PhD, and it could incorporate the Kruger training and also (we hoped) use OS-Help funding (which did not work out). After a year of planning and discussion, it became apparent that the PhD rather than MA provided a sounder financial and educational structure upon which to build our relationship.

Currently both institutions are finalizing negotiations, but COVID has caused significant delays in the implementation of the MOU and its roll-out. WSU has suffered financial losses due to the decline in international student enrolments, and a freeze on all international travel has come into effect nationally. The two institutions must now work with constrained budgets. At the same time, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is reviewing Australian university MOUs in relation to foreign countries, particularly China, which has put significant pressure on international administrators and plans. UJ is currently less affected at an institutional level, but finances are also diminished and there is no international travel at this time.

Right now, the plan is to start the first cohort of PhDs in 2022. Most of these students will come from history, although it anticipated that joint research in sustainability (including ecology) and health will lead to a number of projects that span disciplines in each institution. For instance, one of the authors of this paper is completing a master's and will likely undertake the dual PhD option in history. It is anticipated that travel bans will be lifted by 2022, possibly earlier, and that PhD-level travel might once again become possible. Current Australian foreign student residency requirements allow for online study to count for "residency" purposes during COVID so this clause could be enacted if required.

A series of workshops between UJ and WSU, which also includes Shanghai University, is helping to build momentum for the PhD among students and potential supervisors. UJ and WSU are hosting a three-part workshop on *Humanities in the Time of COVID* in late 2020 with a new theme focusing on sustainability in 2021. These digital workshops feature postgraduate and staff speakers and engage issues which are timely and relevant to both institutions and countries.

There are also ongoing discussions for a dual online module in environmental history, either at the undergraduate or postgraduate level. WSU passed a new university policy for Collaboration Online International Learning (COIL); currently the process is in stage 2, developing the concept. We are also examining classes and curiosity pods that align in time and content for undergraduates and postgraduates. A proposed honours and Masters of Research unit in environmental history is currently under discussion with a final agreement ideally settled by late 2020 or early 2021. Students would study with other students in joint online sessions that included individual break-outs in each country with local faculty.

Image 2: Stages of collaborative online learning at WSU



Source: *Go Global* (Western Sydney University's Go Global Division), 1 December 2020.

Conclusion

As the two case studies describe, COVID has shifted plans for joint travel and degrees between UJ and WSU but it has not stopped planning. For obvious reasons, physical mobility has ended, hopefully temporarily, but it is likely that international travel trips will not return to the same level as prior to COVID for many years, if ever. This has significant implications for study abroad providers and not-for-profit organisations and local business which rely on funds from foreign students. The co-PhD arrangement can continue even with digital-only engagement due to the high-level work of PhD students and the increased supervisory capacity that dual arrangements create. Ideally physical mobility will return, but we must plan that its return will be slow and institutions will change. A number of digital initiatives will sustain – even grow – university-to-university and nation-to-nation arrangements until a new normal establishes itself.

A self-study of pedagogical experiences in History Education at a university during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

Educational transformation is an ongoing process. However, in 2020 the transformation in South Africa was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This global health threat was inadvertently a catalyst for considerable change within the field of education. Considering that the nature of COVID-19 was infectious, the best mode of delivery for education to students during the pandemic was digital platforms. For the History Education department at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), this was a significant transition from the conventional contact methods. While digital platforms were used under normal conditions to complement contact lectures, the transition meant that all teaching was completely dependent on digital platforms. Navigating this change was both interesting and challenging for me as a teacher and supervisor of History Education. This paper is a self-study of my experiences of engaging with online History Education at postgraduate and undergraduate levels within Higher Education. History Education modules had to be re-engineered, and pedagogical considerations had to be explored to align with the use of digital software. The online transition was not seamless and was accompanied by challenges that ranged from technological inaccessibility and teacher training for online education to academic disparities. At the onset of the transition, technology proved to exacerbate existing geo-social and educational inequalities within the learning community at the UKZN's History Education department. It undeniably took a considerable amount of time to acclimatise to the new digital platforms for online education. Eventually, there were visible successes. For instance, new online pedagogies proved effective in traversing History Education modules via online education. Training in the use of software and applications was also useful in achieving the learning objectives of History Education modules. Online resources, such as multimedia, were easier to incorporate into History Education lectures. This provided an integrative shift between theory and real-life experiences. Arguably, the COVID-19 pandemic served as a catalyst for embracing digital platforms, which we, as educationalists,

may not have otherwise implemented were it not a necessity.

Keywords: History Education; COVID-19; Multimodal Model for Online Education; Digital platforms; Higher education; Remote learning; South Africa.

Background

Comparable with a scene from the 1722 novel, *A Journal of the Plague Year* by Daniel Defoe, the scenario facing the world in February 2020 was similarly ominous and equally incredulous. The present scenario is a global health threat referred to as the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and is the cause of an infectious respiratory disease (Fauci, Lane and Redfield, 2020). By 11 March 2020, COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic (World Health Organisation - WHO, 2020). By 27 December 2020, there were 76 103 424 global confirmed cases of infected people and 1 694 717 known deaths (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2020). Since the virus was infectious, the best mode of educational delivery to students during the pandemic was remote online education through digital platforms.

For the History Education¹ department at the UKZN this was a significant shift from the conventional contact methods of teaching and learning. Thus, this paper presents a self-study of my personal pedagogical practices and experiences as a teacher within the History Education department during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since there was a gap in literature regarding History Education practitioners' experience during such a global health treat within the context of UKZN, I decided to explore how the pandemic influenced my History Education pedagogical practices in semester one of the academic year 2020 at the University.

During the nation-wide lockdown in South Africa which was enforced on 15 March 2020, the response of the University management, teachers and students were immediate. At the outset of the transition to online education, Higher Education policy-makers and practitioners were designing innovative ways to prepare staff and students to utilise various platforms for remote digital teaching and learning. Consequently, in April 2020, the University held training workshops regarding online software

¹ History Education in this paper, refers to History courses taught at the School of Education (Edgewood Campus) which focuses on teacher-training. Issues of pedagogy, methodology and theory of History are taught in History Education.

such as Moodle,² Microsoft PowerPoint, Zoom,³ and Kaltura.⁴ While digital platforms such as Microsoft PowerPoint and Moodle were used under normal circumstances by the History Department to complement contact lectures, the pandemic meant that all teaching was entirely dependent on the use of digital platforms. The University purchased software licenses for staff to have access, and data packages were negotiated with four major mobile networks in South Africa for students and staff.

Subsequently, an online educational ‘dry-run’ was initiated on 18 May 2020 at the UKZN. This dry-run was a two-week period that served as a trial period with which to test the technological systems, such as internet connection and accessibility to software, as well as to acclimatise students to the new digital platforms. History Education courses had to be re-engineered to cater to online education. In some cases learning objectives and assessments were modified to suit digital platforms.

Different preliminary initiatives were undertaken to determine initial challenges that students may have regarding online education. For instance, revision activities for History Education courses were uploaded to provide facilitators and practitioners an indication of the level of accessibility and digital skills that students had. This two week grace period greatly assisted the History Education department in that it was discovered that several students had either not received data packages issued by the University at the time, or they did not have stable internet connectivity. This meant that at the very beginning of the transition to online education, technology was exacerbating existing geo-social and educational inequalities within the learning community at the UKZN.

Methodology

Considering the above context, the overarching research question which guided this study was: how did COVID-19 influence my pedagogical practices of History Education modules in semester one of the academic year 2020? I drew upon the Self-study of Teaching and Teacher Education

2 Moodle is an open source learning platform dedicated to educational content. It promotes collaborative online learning by allowing facilitators to create private online spaces for courses. Courses can be tailored to students due to the free and flexible software available on Moodle (Moodle Pty Ltd, 2020).

3 Zoom is a cloud platform that has features which prove helpful in conducting online education. These features include video, voice and content-sharing. Zoom can be accessed via desktops, mobile devices and telephones (Zoom Video Communications, Inc., 2019).

4 Kaltura is a video platform that promotes education, collaboration, communication and entertainment via video (Kaltura, 2020).

Practices (S-STEP) methodology. Essentially, the S-STEP methodology examines the teacher as the researcher, and their practices within the educational context (Berry, 2015). I specifically drew upon the S-STEP since it would illustrate my personal pedagogical practices and experiences during COVID-19, a new phenomenon directly influencing my pedagogical practices within the History Education Department at UKZN. In keeping with the S-STEP methodology, this study adopted a qualitative approach and was based on the interpretivist paradigm. The data collection tools that were used for this study were observations (active and moderate), and Journalling.

Fundamental to obtaining first-hand data was for me to be an observer. Given that my focus was on teaching History Education through online education, I chose to engage in participant observation, which is a data collection tool that records and examines the participation of identified people in a naturalistic setting (Musante & DeWalt, 2010). This meant that I would observe my interactions with my students, as well as their interaction and behaviour with the digital content material. Through participant observations, I identified, deconstructed, and interpreted aspects of using online education to teach my History Education modules.

Furthermore, I engaged in journalling, which according to Pinnegar and Hamilton (2009), can be considered an all-encompassing activity in that, through writing, the researcher can freely express themselves in terms of professional, pedagogical and personal aspects. Additionally, journalling shows the progression of ideas, as well as recording experiences which can then be interpreted and improved (Luescher, 2016). Using journalling as a research strategy enabled me to actively engage with my pedagogy and personal ideas. It enabled me to deconstruct ideas that I otherwise would not have considered exploring.

Pedagogical considerations for my History Education modules

The Multimodal Model for Online Education, hereafter MMOE (Picciano, 2017), was used as a pedagogical approach for my History Education modules, and served as the theoretical framework for this study. This Model is an integrated construction that considers several essential aspects of online education, including students' conceptual, social, and emotional needs (refer to Image 1). The learning community involves teachers and students, and I have found that the MMOE encapsulates the role of and

impartially caters to university teachers and students (in-service and pre-service teachers) within History Education.

Image 1: Multimodal model for online education (author's adaptation of Picciano's original model)



Source: AG Picciano, “Theories and frameworks for online education: Seeking an integrated model”, *Online Learning*, 21(3), DOI: 10.24059/olj.v21i3.1225, 2017, pp. 166-190.

There are essentially seven elements that construct the MMOE. These elements will be discussed below to provide a conceptual understanding of the Model. Thereafter, I will provide examples of how I applied the MMOE in my History Education modules to explicate how these elements were used.

To begin with, the content is fundamentally module-related. The module’s learning objectives can guide teachers on what content to develop and make available to students. Content can be presented in the forms of literature, readings, notes, as well as more interactive and visually stimulating resources such as videos, interview recordings, images and games.

Moreover, while it is essential to deliver instructional content, it is equally important to consider students’ social and emotional wellbeing. In a time when a pandemic threatens the world, students may be ill-equipped to deal with the emotional, social, and educational demands placed on them. Therefore it is essential to provide them with mental stability in an academic context. The presence of the teacher and other students may offer some such form of stability. This can be achieved through same-time

applications such as Zoom, Skype, emails or any other real-time interface.

Although direct teacher instruction can significantly help facilitate students' understanding of content, students should be given opportunities to develop their understanding through self-paced/independent study. Cervetti, Damico and Pearson (2006) assert that multimodal online education is a social practice as much as it is a skills-based medium. This means that students must learn how to use online tools to be actively involved in tasks.

Further, dialectic questioning is an integral part of the educational process. This stimulates critical and independent thinking, and is a way to see if students understand and can apply the content that is facilitated in the module. This could be as part of an assessment that will carry marks, or it could be activities that entail students having to discuss their thoughts. Discussion boards are great for developing independent thinking (Picciano, 2007). They also allow students to view and respond to each other's comments and questions, and create active student participation that also increases engagement with and interest in the content of the module.

Essentially, evaluation and assessment is another fundamental practice in the educational process. Teachers need to assess whether or not students have been able to meet the learning objectives and understand the content of the module. There are several ways of evaluating and assessing students' progress. While essays, tests, and typed work can still be used, online assessments are typically becoming more creative than the traditional paper-based assessments. Examples of such online assessments include multimedia-based activities such as videos, digital images, podcasts, discussion boards, and so on.

In effect, collaboration and student-generated content is an essential factor in MMOE. Gee (2004:79), explains that an "affinity space" is ultimately created through online education. This means that students come together with a common objective primarily through the use of technological tools such as the Internet, games and threads, among others. Through active participatory tasks, students foster a collaborative environment in which they support each other's educational progress. Examples of collaborative online tools include group portfolios, multimedia projects, wiki pages, and group support mechanisms.

Lastly, as much as it is imperative for dialogue between students and the teacher and between students, it is also vital for students to reflect

on their educational progress. Reflecting on one's work is primarily an inward evaluation process (Cambra-Fierro & Cambra-Berdún, 2007). Through the process of reflection, students discover what they know, and more importantly, what they would like to know. This develops critical, independent thinking. Students can be encouraged to keep a digital journal or partake in discussion boards and blogs. By sharing their reflection with their peers, they can create an environment of critical thinking. Multifarious perspectives and common views are challenged through collaboration and self-reflection.

Application of the MMOE in my History Education modules

While the MMOE contained several essential aspects of students' educational and social needs, I omitted some elements included in the Model depending on the nature of my History Education modules. In effect, due to the diverse learning objectives and class dynamics of my modules, I used the various elements of the Model differently and tailored the modules accordingly. Two examples of how I applied the MMOE are provided below.

Undergraduate History Education module

This module principally dealt with topics of prejudice and wars. Issues of prejudice are regarded as an integral part of History, particularly regarding the South African past. Thus this module aimed to empower History Education students to teach themes from modern History. At the end of the module, the students should have developed a sound knowledge base and understanding of theoretical principles of History and be able to apply this specific knowledge in context.

The learning objectives for this module expected the student to be able to:

- demonstrate a conceptual understanding of the relationship between prejudice and the historical events that shaped the modern world;
- critically evaluate and use historical evidence related to modern History;
- exhibit a historical imagination;
- debate conflicting and controversial Historical interpretations of modern History;
- recognise that different value systems and traditions influenced the way the history of the world is interpreted.

Given that this class consisted mostly of first and second-year students, social media, such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, were used to pique their interest in the content of the module. Students were encouraged to follow people, groups, or pages that focused on topics of prejudice and wars to develop a sense of the various historiographies that exist regarding these topics. Students were then asked to share these with the rest of the class so that everyone could view the content/ discussion of the relevant post. This aided in their understanding of the fluid nature of historical interpretations while drawing on historical evidence.

Hyperlinks to History videos⁵ and articles⁶ that related to the content were made available on Moodle and WhatsApp. These documentaries often had interviews with people who were experts in the field of History and who explained the concept under study. This meant that, while students were not given the opportunity to have guest lecturers, they were exposed to experts in the field. The above resources facilitated students' engagement with historical concepts such as causation, historical significance and historical consciousness in the modern world, which manifested in the topics of prejudice and wars.

Further, Moodle chats and WhatsApp discussions were primarily used to promote a collaborative learning environment. Questions were posed to students, or scenarios were provided. Students were then required to comment on these questions and scenarios. This served three-fold objectives: firstly, it prompted collaborative discussions and promoted multiperspectivity in historical thinking; secondly, it required students to reflect on their own views; lastly, the class consisted of over 270 students, thus these discussions helped evaluate the progress of students' historical consciousness through their responses.

Due to the transition from contact lectures to online education, formative assessment was used instead of summative assessment. Assessment for this module consisted of an academic essay, an Op-Ed and a test. The

5 Examples used in this module: (a) E Blakemore, "The harsh reality of life under apartheid in South Africa", 2019 (available at <https://www.history.com/news/apartheid-policies-photos-nelson-mandela>, as accessed on 7 August 2020); (b) Anon., Discovery Science, "Darwin, Africa, and genocide: The horror of scientific racism", 2020 (available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQPrvPM38Ws>, as accessed on 20 July 2020).

6 Examples used in this module: (a) E Blakemore, "Human migration sparked by wars, disasters, and now climate", 2019 (available at <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/topics/reference/migration/>, as accessed on 4 September 2020); (b) Anon., "Black and Scottish: 'Are you a Protestant Rasta or a Catholic Rasta?'"', 2019 (available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-49894363>, as accessed on 20 July 2020); (c) G Timmons, "How slavery became the economic engine of the South", 2018 (available at <https://www.history.com/news/slavery-profitable-southern-economy>, as accessed on 20 July 2020).

essay required students to critically discuss the influence of traditional and contemporary media on intensifying women's rights in present-day society. Students could draw upon national and international examples. The question for the Op-Ed required students to reflect on the on-going xenophobic attacks in South Africa as a lived example of present-day prejudice. Furthermore, the usual module examination was replaced with an online test that consisted of two paragraph questions and short answer questions. These assignments were designed such that they would help students achieve the learning objectives of this particular module (outlined above). Essentially, the assessments evaluated students' levels of historical understanding and ability to form critical, evidence-based arguments.

Continuous assessments were also assigned to students which served as revision activities, as well as provided feedback on the level of historical understanding that each student had. Examples of these assessments included multiple choice quizzes, short documentary studies, reading reports and discussion boards. These concise activities were directly aligned to the learning objectives of this module and simultaneously accommodated the MMOE. Thus, these assessments evaluated the students' conceptual understanding of the relationship between prejudice and the historical events that shaped the modern world.

In essence, this module was structured in a way that required increased autonomy of students, whilst also providing collaborative opportunities for them to work together.

History Education Honours module

Three key elements of post-graduate studies – theory, policy, and research – were used to inform this module. The focus of the module was to provide a theoretical and conceptual understanding of issues in teaching History Education through film and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Students were exposed to relevant theories and practices by analysing the use of film and ICT as powerful tools in History Education.

The students in this Honours module would have already completed the compulsory History Education modules as part of their undergraduate degree in Education, and therefore the purpose of this module was to extend their theoretical knowledge-base to classroom practice.

The learning objectives for this module were for students to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the possibilities film and ICT offer to History Education;
- Critique issues related to the use of film and ICT in History Education;
- Initiate educational strategies in order to enhance the use of film and ICT in History Education;
- Demonstrate the ability to make a short educational history-related film.

No alterations were made to the above objectives from the previous year, as students could achieve these objectives through online education. Additionally since the nature of the module was based on the use of film and ICT to teach History, digital learning was a great way to practise what they learnt during the course of the module. For this module, all the elements included in the MMOE were used.

PowerPoint presentations with voice-over narration were made available to students. These presentations facilitated the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the use of film and ICT in History Education. By including the voice-over narration, this created the illusion of being in a class-based face-to-face lecture. In-depth elucidations of content were included to achieve a level of clarity and understanding of historical didactics. Following the upload of these recorded lectures, questions were posed to students. Discussion boards and chats on Moodle and WhatsApp were used as a platform for reflective and collaborative participation. One such discussion was based on the implications of visual culture on the teaching and learning of History.

Additionally, owing to the fact that the class size was relatively small (35 students), synchronous lectures were held via Zoom. These lectures were more interactive than the PowerPoint presentations due to the same-time interaction. Students were able to actively engage with the content, and discussions⁷ were held synchronously. These Zoom lectures were recorded

⁷ Examples used in this module: (a)=Anon., TEDx Talks, "Teaching history in the 21st century: Thomas Ketchell at TEDxLiege", 2014 (available at <https://youtu.be/8eIvGtn1NAU>, as accessed on 18 April 2020); (b) Anon., TEDx Talks, "Re-inventing education for the digital age | David Middelbeck | TEDxMünster", 2019 (available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArI6albrkuY>, as accessed on 22 April 2020); (c) ES van Eeden, "Thoughts about the historiography of veracity or truthfulness in understanding and teaching History in South Africa", *Yesterday and Today*, 15, 2016 (available at www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2223-03862016000100004, as accessed on 15 May 2020), pp. 37-65; JD Stoddard and AS Marcus, "More than showing what happened: Exploring the potential of teaching history with film", *The High School Journal*, 93(2), 2010 (available at scholarworks.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1113&context=educationpubs, as accessed on 8 March 2019), pp. 83-90.

and subsequently uploaded onto Moodle for future reference, as well as to be accessed by students who were unable to attend the Zoom lectures.

Scholarly readings and additional sources of information pertaining to film and ICT in History Education were either uploaded onto Moodle, or hyperlinks were made available to students to provide a theoretical base, as well as to strengthen their conceptual understanding of content. The readings also served to help develop their independent critical historical thinking skills and to enhance multiperspectivity by exposing them to various views related to the content.

Assessment for this module was essentially a combination of traditional assignments: an academic essay and reading reports; together with multimedia projects: a digital portfolio and production of a short film. The academic essay required students to critically discuss cultural, psychological and emotional impacts of using ICT to teach History to learners from disadvantaged communities in South Africa. This question allowed students to critique issues related to the use of ICT in History Education.

The production of a short film principally served as a digital narrative to enhance historical consciousness in a modern setting. Students had to produce a film based on the Mineral Revolution in South Africa using software such as Windows MovieMaker, Microsoft PowerPoint, Photos Application, GoPro Quik, Filmora9, and so forth. Thereafter, History Education seminars were held via Zoom in which each student was given 15 minutes to present their film. Thereafter a ‘question and answer’ session took place, and discussions were held about the content and production of the video.

Students were given the option to upload their videos to YouTube. This made their video available to their colleagues at work and other History teachers, who had no access to the Moodle website. Students and colleagues who watched the videos were able to comment on the content. In some instances, students who produced the film granted permission to other students and colleagues to show the film during the History lesson at school. Effectually, these seminars allowed for collaboration as well as social interaction between students within an academic setting with a focus on History methodology.

Ultimately, the MMOE provided a theoretical and pedagogical framework for my History Education modules. The Model propounded essential aspects of online education that ranged from academic considerations to the emotional and social needs of students. The subsequent section will present a discussion of my professional and personal experiences with the transition from contact sessions to digital remote online education.

Discussion

My role in the History Education department was multifaceted. I was the co-ordinator⁸ of four History Education undergraduate modules and one Honours module. I also supervised Masters and Honours students with their dissertations and research projects. Initially I greatly anticipated the transition from contact lectures to digital platforms. As a teacher belonging to Generation Y, I was keen on using, and acquainting my students to technology that would be beneficial to their teaching. Now that my History Education students were required to use technology as an educational platform, I was optimistic that they would be well-equipped for teaching in a world that was operating on the border of the fourth and fifth digital revolutions. Knowing that my History Education students were on a similar educational arena as the rest of the world, gave me a sense of hope that they would not be disadvantaged because of their lack of skills-based knowledge and practice.

Despite my initial anticipation of successful integration to online education, I was soon overwhelmed with challenges that were beyond my control. First and foremost was the challenge of communicating with students. Due to the national lockdown in South Africa in March 2020, a large number of History Education students had to move back to their homes, many of whom lived in areas that had inadequate/ no internet connectivity. While data was provided to students by the University, many students experienced technical issues such as slow/ no internet connection. Additionally, students who were accustomed to working in the University campus LANs now had to obtain the necessary equipment (hardware and software) to access their work. Moreover, some students experienced skills-based challenges in that they did not know how to use software such as Dropbox and Zoom, or complete activities on Moodle (Hoskins, 2020).

⁸ My role of module co-ordinator included developing course content, creating assessment tasks and rubrics, setting-up Teaching and Learning pages and selecting digital platforms for each of my History Education modules.

Furthermore, Moodle was to be the chief platform for communication with students. However, due to technical issues, students requested that WhatsApp be used for academic communication. Eventually, WhatsApp groups were created, and students were sent a link to click on to join the relevant module group. The same material that was uploaded onto Moodle was sent to students via WhatsApp. However, some resources were programmed on Moodle that could not be accessed elsewhere, such as Moodle chats, Moodle quizzes, Moodle journals, Moodle lessons, as well as dissemination of academic materials. This disadvantaged students who could not access Moodle, and in turn resulted in a cascading effect, i.e. these students were unable to access the material or complete assessments that were Moodle-based. This meant that they would automatically fail the assessment and this would significantly impact their final mark.

Further compromising the History Education modules was the issue of assessment. Prior to the transition to digital education, students submitted printed assessments. I felt that marking was easier when I used a pen to write comments. With digital education, students submitted their assessments via Moodle or Dropbox. This proved as a challenge for me since having to type out comments and indicating marks using the ‘track changes’ function was increasingly time-consuming – especially when my cursor jumped to different places of the document and my noting this only after having typed a comment for two minutes. I felt this exceedingly frustrating and longed for the traditional printed submissions, and pen marks on my fingers.

Having said that, I did appreciate the convenience of softcopy versions of assessments when detecting plagiarism. Turnitin is the University’s assigned plagiarism identification software. However due to the large amounts of submissions, or expired University licences, Turnitin was often unavailable. I found that there was indeed, an increase of plagiarised submissions in comparison to the year 2019, especially with the first-year History Education modules.

Another key challenge was the disinclination of my History Education tutors⁹ to engage with digital platforms. Two of the three tutors distinctly displayed their unwillingness to engage with digital education. Various

⁹ I am currently a PhD candidate involved in UKZN’s University Staff Development Programme (USDP). As part of the conditions of this programme, contract staff were appointed to assist me with my History Education modules. Whilst I developed content and assessment for the modules, my tutors were responsible for delivering the lectures, marking, and working with the Administrative Offices to ensure correct capturing of marks. Ultimately, the modules remained under my full responsibility and I was accountable for content, assessment and student engagement in my History Education modules.

factors could have attributed to this reluctance to use technology as a medium of education. These factors range from age, pedagogical preference towards traditional face-to-face interactions, little or no training in the digital platforms being used for online education, no experience with applications and programmes, as well as lack of intrinsic motivation (Duong, 2019; Downing & Dyment, 2013; Stewart, Bachman & Johnson, 2010).

Bearing the above challenges in mind, I often felt deflated and despondent – both physically and psychologically. Nevertheless, I knew that this feeling was possibly shared by my colleagues and my History Education students. My only option was to revive my frame of mind, and gather motivation by speaking to colleagues and attending to one challenge at a time. Consequently, the following section discusses my attempts to overcome or minimise the risk factors of the challenges that would negatively impact my History Education modules.

Dealing with the challenges

I was particularly concerned about students whose data packages had not been delivered timeously. They would lose an opportunity to engage with important activities and lectures and this would be considerably detrimental to their success of the module. Thus, to ensure that all students received material for my History Education modules, recorded lectures, voice-over PowerPoints, and recording of Zoom interactions were all uploaded so that whenever the students received their data, they could access the material and lectures.

Further, assistance was provided to History Education students who did not have the necessary technical skills to effectively complete tasks, by in-depth point-by-point instructions. Additionally, written instructions were accompanied by screenshots so that students knew exactly what to look for. These instructions were uploaded on Moodle and posted in the WhatsApp group for the relevant History Education modules.

In an attempt to ascertain plagiarised submissions, I copied phrases or sentences from assessments and pasted it on an internet search engine. If there was evidence of plagiarism, I copied the URL of the website from which the work was taken and pasted it as a comment highlighting the plagiarised portions in the document. Nonetheless, this method of identifying plagiarism is restricted because students may have used material that are not electronically captured and will therefore not be found

on the internet.

To overcome the challenge of the reluctant tutors who assisted with my History Education modules, I chose three key platforms used to communicate with them. These platforms were the UKZN email, Zoom, and WhatsApp. I held weekly Zoom meetings with each tutor in which I discussed the teaching schedule together with the online digital platform/s that would be used to teach each History lesson based on the learning objectives for each session. I provided clarity on individual lesson objectives, as well as why particular platforms would be used primarily aligned with the relevant content or assessment. For example, WhatsApp would be the best suited platform when debating a topic which aligned with the learning objective that required students to recognise that different value systems and traditions influenced the way the history of the world is interpreted.

Moreover, I encouraged tutors to attend the webinars and training sessions related to the different online educational platforms that were provided by the University. These workshops included topics such as *Navigating online teaching & learning*, *Manipulating Moodle to design continuous assessment* and *Recognition of student diversity and learning styles*. I personally found that these online training workshops on the use of different software and applications proved helpful as I learnt to creatively manoeuvre digital platforms to help students effectively achieve the learning objectives of the History Education modules.

In addition to sending teaching material, I also used WhatsApp to send my tutors screenshots of relevant emails that related to issues of teaching and learning. I also sent them screenshots of emails that I addressed to them regarding module-related information as a way to ensure they did receive the communication.

As supervisor of History Education Honours and Masters students, I also experienced challenges. These ranged from domestic to technology-related issues. Supervision meetings were held via Zoom, which was the University's preferred platform for Audio-Visual consultations. Only two of my three Masters students were able to attend these Zoom meetings. During these meetings, we experienced further difficulties. For example, one student lived in an overcrowded household, and while we were discussing her work, she had to comfort her sister's crying baby. The meeting was paused numerous times, and eventually, I had to send her the

feedback via email. The other student had similar issues with his attention being given to his children rather than focusing on our meeting. Internet connection also proved to be an issue where the video would freeze, and we would have to repeat what was already spoken.

As a solution to the predicament mentioned above, I recorded the supervision meetings held on Zoom. Thereafter, I emailed the students minutes of our meeting detailing conversations about their study, as well as the recording of the session. This served as a visual and literary supplement to the discussions, which could have easily been forgotten or misunderstood by students and myself. It also helped serve as a reference point for students should there be a need to consult what we had discussed.

Further, Zoom was useful in that documents could be viewed synchronously through the 'share screen' option, and discussions could occur instantly, creating a live feed to all attendees. This was particularly important during my supervision and History Education discipline meetings, where it was necessary to ensure that everyone was referring to the same points of discussion.

In spite of my great deal of effort to minimise the technical and academic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the History Education students still faced their own personal challenges. For instance, some students had contracted the virus, and others had to take care of their loved ones who had the virus. For this reason, provisions were made for students who were directly affected by the pandemic and who did not pass my History Education modules. These students were allocated a CR/F code¹⁰ on the mark sheet. On 19 October 2020, a Catch-Up Plan was disseminated on behalf of College Dean of Teaching and Learning. The objective of this Plan was to provide an opportunity to affected students to pass the module. The Catch-Up Plan entailed giving the students assessments that could determine their historical literacy of the respective History Education modules.

Whilst the Catch-Up Plan was a good way to cater for students who were disadvantaged by COVID-19 related issues, there were negative implications. Essentially, the Plan was a spill-over into the second semester and this increased my workload. I had to grapple with my second semester modules, while concurrently developing and offering additional support for

¹⁰ The CR/F Code refers to students who were directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and were unable to complete all assessments for the relevant History Education modules, as well as those who failed the module.

the History Education students from the first semester, as well as supervise. Moreover, I did this while working on my PhD study and contributing to the scholarly community. All this proved to be a colossal feat.

Fundamentally, my responsibility as a teacher in Higher Education is to effectively facilitate the historical consciousness and History- related methodologies of my History Education students. I concurrently acknowledge that as an academic I have a duty to share my research with my fellow History Education scholars. For this reason, I made a list of the teaching and academic tasks that I had to complete. I then tried to manage my time accordingly. Priority was given to tasks according to deadlines and submission dates.

Over the period of teaching History Education online, I have learnt to address challenges that threatened the success of my History Education modules. Even though I was dispirited and frustrated at times, I discovered ways to manage my modules such that they would enhance History Education for my students. Ultimately, I fully support the use of online education to teach History Education at tertiary level. And even though I have a considerable amount of technical and skills-based knowledge to master regarding online education, I am certain that there will be a favourable outcome if there is co-operation and mutual collaboration between History teachers and students.

Conclusion

Arguably, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated educational restructuring in South African Higher Education Institutions. In my capacity as teacher and supervisor of History Education at UKZN, I felt that the transition from face-to-face contact teaching to digital online education resulted in a myriad of experiences. I was primarily eager that my students and I would relish the opportunity of technologically empowering ourselves with the use of current software and applications. However, it soon became apparent that both the students and I had challenges. These challenges ranged from technical issues and skills-based incapacities to academic disparities.

Nevertheless, despite the initial challenges of transitioning History Education modules into the digital platform, there were significant achievements. For instance, in the process of setting-up online education, new teaching resources and theories were embraced. For my History

Education modules, I used the Multimodal Model for Online Education (MMOE) as the basis of my pedagogical approach. Through this Model, I was able to highlight the key aspects of online education, as well as identify significant influencers of students' success. Moreover, teaching became considerably more creative with the use of multimedia resources, which may not have been easily incorporated into face-to-face lectures.

Furthermore, tutors and students did eventually go the extra mile to ensure that the new online pedagogies would prove to be a meaningful experience. Tutors began to understand the importance of constantly providing guidance to students regarding the content as well as explaining ways to navigate the different platforms for accessing and submitting material for respective History Education modules. In the same light, students displayed an understanding of working autonomously to engage with readings, online activities and to complete assessments.

Online education did limit student-teacher, and student-student engagement; and the challenge of broadening educational inequalities through technology is one which must still be addressed. That being said, the digital platforms were creatively utilized to provide a space for collaboration and discussion of topics within History Education modules. It was crucial to keep students mentally stimulated and educationally grounded, especially during a trying time like the COVID-19 pandemic, and online education helped achieve this.

In effect, the role of History Education is to facilitate the growth of students into critically engaged scholars who have developed a historical consciousness, and who can, in turn, teach school learners to embrace the History discipline. I contend that, through online education, History pre-service teachers can become more empowered and, if they know how to effectively engage with online education, then they will be equipped to teach History in the school setting.

My recommendation to History teachers is that when using online education it is imperative to attend workshops or enrol in courses that focus on online teaching and learning. Familiarity with the features of the relevant software and applications can best equip them with how to plan their History lessons accordingly. In the same token, it is important to equip History students with the knowledge of how to operate the necessary digital platforms required for their participation and completion of assessments. This can be achieved by providing them with explicit instructions. While there are emerging creative

ways to actively engage History students, we must keep a watchful eye on issues of plagiarism and academic negligence. Managing History through online education is challenging on one hand, but it can also be a fulfilling information-driven experience for History teachers and students.

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Teaching History teachers during COVID-19: Charting poems, pathways and agency

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Abstract

In this article I argue that Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) has necessitated and produced some transformative teaching methods, using the frameworks of Freire and hooks. However, I argue, that their methods are incongruous with this moment of online learning because of the 'invisibilisation' of the marginalised and vulnerable students, who can and do easily disappear into the void of online learning. This makes dialogic teaching (Freire) and teaching in community (hooks) impossible. I use examples of two undergraduate history and history method (teaching history) classes, specifically looking at the teaching methods and the assessment methods. I draw thematically on what the students produced in their assessments, analysing their texts (poems, creative essays, artistic submissions), looking at how they engaged with the assignment (method) and what emerged in the assignment, reading specifically for political engagement. In this discussion, I look at both the possibilities and the limitations of online teaching. Ultimately, I argue, that the limitations outweigh the possibilities of online teaching, and that there is a danger in claiming victories or even good teaching standards in this context. The danger is that the students who disappear are written out of the script of the University, and the promises (however precarious) that post-university life in South Africa offers. My argument here, using two specific courses as evidence, is thus a contradiction and a balance: for exploring this portal, and everything it offers, but pushing back vehemently against complete online migration because, in a country as unequal as South Africa, it is unethical, unjust, and anti-critical pedagogy.

Keywords: Pedagogy; Online teaching and learning; COVID-19; History teaching; Methodology; Assessment; Critical pedagogy; Poetry; Creative texts.

Introduction

The sudden and unexpected move to Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT)

due to COVID-19 has been traumatic for lecturers and students. We are in unprecedented times, which require unprecedented measures for all of us. The context for this study is the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, March-September 2020: Through the initial phases of lockdown, the hopes for a quick reprieve, and the slow settling into the realization that this would be, at least, the rest of the year. The physical, psychological, economic, and emotional toll taken on every person in higher education has been deep and dramatic. The toll on more vulnerable people has been worse. Students were evacuated from student accommodation with no idea they would not be back for months. These students left study materials, laptops, and winter clothes, in their rooms. They had their keys taken away. Lecturers trying to propose alternate plans (specifically around social pedagogy, with C-19 People's Coalition, and alternate term solutions proposed by the Black Academic Caucus)¹ were not heard. It was all hands-on deck to teach lecturers to teach, and students to learn online. The inequalities in South Africa were not ignored, with some institutions providing data, low-data options, devices, phone friendly options and, most of all support, to all of their students.

Often the only data we had to assess who was present in the courses and who was not were the numbers of students who submitted their online assessments. That provided tangible numbers: who is fulfilling the requirements for which course. The number of students against the number of submissions. Numbers. The two courses I am using for this study are both undergraduate courses in a Bachelor of Education, one is a history content course, and one is a methodology course. I was, initially, happy because the first course that I had an assignment in, history methodology, 38 out of 39 students submitted. In being happy about 38/39 submission rate in my first online assignment, I reflected on number 39. In a face-to-face situation, I may or may not know the student, may or may not follow up with them, they may or may not follow up with me. But there is a physical space that they occupy, they are embodied, in presence or absence on campus. Online, they disappear. They are the number 39: no submission. Email: no reply. They are invisibilised. There is a politics here to who is seen or unseen, who is supported academically and emotionally, or left unsupported. In the other course I was teaching the number invisibilised

¹ This documentation can be found on the Black Academic Caucus Twitter feed, and through the C-19 People's Alliance COVID Post School working group's document "Public Universities with a Public Conscience". (Drafted through a national discussion in South Africa amongst concerned academics, April 2020, no date)

was 20 out of 180. Twenty students who did not check in, did not hand in, did not appear-who disappeared. The terms ‘embodied’ and ‘invisibilised’ can be read as opposite: the students’ bodies (their embodied-ness) is invisibilised in a non-physical online space; however, the students are ‘embodied’ as numbers, the number replacing their physical body in the course.

In this paper, I elaborate on the methods of ERT which I employed to get through the initial COVID-19 shutdown period, and reflect on the functionality and outcomes of these. I will also reflect on the ‘invisibilising’ effect of online learning using some students’ reflections as well as the absence of students from the course.

Methodology

My primary method in this paper will be reflections on my own teaching (Ashwin, 2015) drawing on students’ responses (poems, creative texts, and art) as covered by ethics protocol H18/10/10. Reflective teaching, as I have used it, is a method that involves detailed note-taking and reflection on your own practices, in this case my teaching practices during the ERT. There are several aspects of my teaching that I will examine. First, my teaching practices online: using voice recordings and WhatsApp lessons, with the WhatsApp space also used as a support framework. The second will be my assessment practices: how these were adapted, changed, or remained the same, and the effectiveness of this. The third aspect I will draw on results from the assessment practices. I want to stress that this is qualitative research, and the data here are analysed thematically, rather than analysed around marks or student performance. This is because thematic analysis gives rich qualitative data, which I draw on for my conclusions. Thematic analysis allows for data to be organized around theme: educational engagement, political engagement, personal engagement. I will draw on three different aspects of what was submitted to me during as assessments. The first aspect on which I will reflect will be the answers to an essay question that was asked to the second years, in which they could respond in essay format or creatively (poetry was one example given). I will not be reflecting substantially on the substance of the responses, but on the way the students reacted or absorbed the materials taught during ERT. The second aspect I will examine is the “Decolonial History Teachers’ Charter”, which was part of an assessment in the 3rd and 4th year methodology class

that I teach. The third and final aspect I will look at is the reflective exams which the methodology students wrote, which also gives an idea of the conditions under which students were studying, and how online teaching, and COVID-19 impacted the learning for these students.

Information and context about the courses used in this article

The two courses discussed in this article are “History Method III” and “Social Sciences II”. The two courses offer some differences and because of this each course has very different cohorts of students, and thus requires drastically different methods and levels of engagement, and content.

“History Method III” (HM) is a methodology course on how to teach history. We investigate the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) History curriculum but in regard to historical thinking, historical framing, and different strategies in teaching history. This course has 39 students. They are either third years who are taking history as their first major, or fourth years who are taking history as their sub-major. Either way, they have chosen history; they display an interest in the subject and the teaching of it, which makes it possible to delve much deeper into the more philosophical – and essential – aspects of teaching history. There is a strong focus on decolonisation in this course, where we explore the CAPS curriculum (and its shortcomings) from viewpoints of power, marginalisation, and whose narratives are told.

“Social Sciences II” (SS II), is a course of 161 students. It is a second-year course and is split into two sections: history in the first half of the year and geography in the second half of the year. Thus, students who want to teach either history or geography need to do both social sciences I and II. History and geography are very different subjects, in fact, the combination of them up to grade 9 has been questioned (Ndlovu et al., 2018), but this is beyond the scope of this paper. What is definitely tangible in the lectures (although not in online teaching) is that many of these students have either no interest in, or an active dislike of history, as roughly half of the class want to become geography teachers. The inability to gauge student interest and engagement is a big flaw in online teaching: BBB (Big Blue Button) lectures allow students to join with headphones only, so they are not called on to participate. Chats get some traction, but it is rare that this involved over 10 students. The body language disappears, and this seriously hampers lecturers’ ability to engage. SSII is also a content course, covering the History of the United States of America (from Columbus to Black Power)

and so the focus is on actual historical narratives; the slippery nature of truth; the different interpretations and manipulations of history are all taught through the history of the United States.

I went into ERT teaching these courses – among others. There were two important differences in going online in these courses. The first was the numbers – HM is a relatively small course, where I could know each student personally. SS II is a large course where I only knew the students who regularly speak in class, but do not know every individual person in the group. The second big difference is the amount of time I had spent teaching them before the onset of ERT. With HM, I had already taught them from the beginning of the year. The students had been in a course with me before so they were familiar with my teaching style and so we had an established rapport, or a community of practice as a class before the ERT. The SS II class is divided into modules, and a colleague had taught the previous module, so I only had one (tentatively two but this was already during the corona fear, so few students attended) lecture with this class before the lockdown and the beginning of ERT. Although I had had very little time with the SS II group, what was the saving grace was the fact that I had taught this same group in first year, and so they were familiar with both my teaching style and methods and I with them. Because of the differences between these groups, like age, discipline focus, class size and so forth, I had to approach the spin into online teaching in very different ways which will be detailed in the following section.

Teaching during COVID-19

When we unexpectedly closed down universities in March 2020 because of COVID-19, we stopped in the middle of the semester. Lecturers and students were all taken completely off guard. What followed were several surreal weeks of trying to get our heads around how we would and could hold² our students and continue knowledge practices in ways that were inclusive, effective, and safe. This feat felt impossible and indeed proved to be impossible. No matter what online lectures do, there is no getting away from that fact that there were several aspects that made ERT an impossible task for a percentage of our students. ERT leaves the most vulnerable students out. I have experienced this through multiple platforms in 2020. Everything discussed within this paper occurs with a caveat: it is not for

² I use the verb 'to hold' to encompass a support that is both academic and emotional. Holding is a holistic supporting that is intended to assist to not fall apart.

everybody. It did not, does not, will not work for everybody.

Absence/Presence

The university – and the internet – provided an overflow of information at the beginning of lockdown. There were various webinars for staff and students on how to use our Information Management System (IMS). Some of these both the students and I mastered (mostly the ones that were to do with submitting assignments), and some that were beyond me. It required intense engagement, intense internet access, and access to a functioning laptop. One of the things that has been revealing during the COVID-19 epidemic is the assumed identity of the staff on campus: this speaks to the inherent whiteness of the university space (where whiteness incorporates a certain type of being, with a certain type of resource access). It is assumed that staff all have access to laptops (it is impossible to perform lecturer duties on a smart phone) and Wi-Fi. This proved problematic for a large number of colleagues, and while the university did eventually provide assistance, it made the first few weeks of ERT very precarious for some lecturers and their classes.

The IMS used by our University is known as SAKAI, and has very useful, but previously under-utilised functions. SAKAI is one of the sites that was zero-rated by the cell phone companies fairly early on in the lockdown, meaning that students and staff can access the site without using any data. Teaching and learning, and various other groups and faculties, provided non-stop online assistance and information on how to most effectively use SAKAI for assessment, communication, administration, organisation, and effective pedagogy. This was presented in online webinars during which I was alternately fascinated or overwhelmed, and during which I frantically took notes or hopelessly wept. There was a terrible sense of loss mixed into this activity, alongside fear and anxiety. I mention these emotions because they become important in my methodology of online teaching: online needing to be a space of holding emotions, a space of reflexivity and resilience rather than just a space of delivering a disembodied script-like curriculum – which is what ERT threatens to be. The difficult questions are examined using curriculum theory: particularly the idea of a responsive curriculum (Griesel, 2004; Fomunyan & Teferra, 2017), the idea of an epistemically diverse curriculum (Lockett, 2001). I attempt to assess the gains made for curriculum development in South African higher education by the imposition of the SAQA interim registration requirements and the

outcomes-based method of curriculum design. I also note the gaps not addressed by the SAQA reforms and suggest that the SAQA reforms lay the HE curriculum open to the global trends of the instrumentalisation and marketisation of knowledge. I also address two other internal epistemological challenges to the HE curriculum, namely post-modernism and scientism. I then propose an epistemically diverse curriculum in which four ways of knowing and learning are developed for all HE curricula. These are the traditional cognitive learning of propositional knowledge; learning by doing for the application of disciplinary knowledge; learning experientially and fourthly developing epistemic cognition so as to be able to think reflexively and contextually about one's learning. I suggest that such a curriculum could address both the local and global dimensions of a higher education curriculum and hold a necessary balance between Mode 1 and 2 knowledge production. Furthermore, I believe that one of the central educational challenges currently facing HE practitioners is the integration of the various desirable generic skills into a traditionally content-based curriculum. I suggest that, if learners are introduced to all four ways of knowing and learning, these generic skills (both transferable and transferring skills, and a decolonised curriculum (Lockett, Morreira & Baijnath, 2019).

Teaching History Method

The HM class was at once more and less challenging than the larger SS II class. There were some key principles I took from Freire and hooks, being collectivity and vulnerability (hooks, 1994) and dialogic teaching, praxis (reflection and action) (Freire, 1996). These are all practices that require an extensive and extended relationship with students. It is very hard to build this relationship online, so where these functioned, when they did, it was because of a strong foundation that we had built in the class. This is very important to note: we are not talking about a developed online curriculum here, but an emergency move to remote teaching, that is rooted in praxis and relationships developed face-to-face (Vally et al., 2020).

This class was very cohesive, involved, and enjoyed discussion.³ While I experimented with using forums on IMS, students did not often engage there. I also experimented with using Wiki – a tool for collaborative document creation. I had hoped that these collaborative spaces would be

³ This is based on feedback from the class.

used to make notes on, which would in turn help with exams, but this also shows the gap between possibility, expectation, and reality. Many students opened up that during this period they became completely assessment driven, rather than doing work to learn for the sake of learning and becoming good teachers. Students being assessment driven is generally an issue in higher education, and one solution I have explored with this is learning-oriented assessment (Carless, 2015). This entails learning processes taking place during the task, rather than simply an assessment of learning where students regurgitate information in a “banking” type situation (Freire, 1996). Another principle I try to apply right the way through my curriculum design, pedagogy, and assessment is the concept of Constructive Alignment (CA), which will be explored below. Pedagogy and assessments are all aligned to Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), so there is continuous and contiguous back alignment between the teaching, learning, and assessment.

The Freirian concepts I use during this course are dialogic exploration, self-reflection, action, and more reflection (praxis) and ideas of humanisation as well as conscientisation (Freire, 1996). I use the idea of transformative education from both Mezirow and hooks (hooks, 1994; Mezirow & Taylor, 2011), but particularly draw on hooks’ concept of vulnerability, and truth-telling, as well as building a community in the classroom. These are my foundations in teaching practice, and what I aspire to and work towards every day. I attempted not to let go of this when COVID-19 hit – I detail this below. I especially attempted with this class to make a safe space to speak, to see and be seen, by me and by colleagues in these classes.

Platforms

At the same time as I was teaching these courses I was attending a course for a post-graduate diploma. I was both heartened and discouraged by the teaching methods used to hold us as a student group through COVID-19. This post-graduate diploma course took place on Microsoft Teams (MS Teams), where we could have a regular meeting space, hear each other’s voices, and be present for the flipped classroom methodology applied in the course. We were able to be split into groups, into pairs, into different rooms, and we could engage with different teaching technologies during the class. The chat in MS Teams provided a channel that arguably is beyond what can be provided in a face-to-face class. However, while I was able to

learn a lot about online strategies from this course, I was unable to apply them even in my HM III course which has only 39 students. This is because limited access to technology severely curtailed what I wanted to do in and with this class. We couldn't use MS teams because MS teams uses too much data, even though it can be accessed from a phone or a laptop. Some students had access to data only once the university had provided it, which was not in the first week of teaching. Some students live in areas with precarious network coverage, proving a deeper problem than data, and access to consistent electricity was also an issue. However, these were not the only problems: there was also the issue of access in terms of epistemic access and agency. This is where and why I switched to using WhatsApp. My experiences as a student and as a lecturer both shaped my experience of this period, a privilege I worked into my teaching and research. BBB is an e-meeting facility, a new platform that has performed well elsewhere (Chidambaram, 2020) which will soon be available in my university. This may provide easier access for synchronous learning with students.

Where and how WhatsApp worked

During the semester one lockdown period, we conducted synchronous learning sessions twice a week. These sessions were conducted via a WhatsApp group of which all of the students, except number 39, were part. We engaged in WhatsApp discussions of prescribed readings, using the readings as the primary engagement for a flipped classroom (Tucker, 2012; Gilboy, Heinerichs & Pazzaglia, 2015). Although not all students were online during the classes, we regularly had engagements with around 15 students being online and around 10 participating in the class. This way we were able to practice dialogic education (Fisher, 2007; Alexander, 2018). However, dialogic education, according to Freire, goes deeper than whose voice is heard, but to whose knowledge is taken seriously, who is in what power relation in the situation. This is hard to address in a systematic kind of educational structure like a university, where the power is imbued in hierarchies of rank, as well as the traditional teacher/ student power differential. Where, in the IMS, the forum is created as a non-hierarchical space where opinions and thoughts can be posted equally from students and lectures this seemingly does not play out in practice. This could be for several reasons – students are hesitant to post their own thoughts and feelings on a university platform, or are not familiar enough with the forums to feel comfortable with the technology. This ties into a

different discussion of how to get students and lecturers comfortable with technologies, but this is not the focus of my paper. One of my arguments is that WhatsApp works because many students are already on it – and have an experience agency on it. Where the world has been so deeply shaken by COVID-19, and everyday life looks so different and feels so uncertain, aspects where agency and continuity can be found are valuable, especially where it relates to learning.

WhatsApp is a chat program that is used throughout South Africa (and other countries throughout the world), that millions of people use daily to chat, to stay in touch, and in times of COVID-19, this is significant. It is easy to set up groups on WhatsApp, so it works for individual contact as well as group contact. I argue that the most important aspect of WhatsApp is that students are using it, and so have an element of agency in their processes. I tried to heighten that sense of agency by using two strategies that I draw mostly from hooks (2003). These two strategies are neither new nor radical. They come from the most basic senses of human interactions and of seeing each other. The first strategy is check-in; the second strategy is lecturer vulnerability. Checking in means just that: asking students how they are, opening the classroom space to their inner lives as well as to their academic lives, and the linking of the two. The difficulty with this strategy is that if you do not have a relationship with students, it is harder to open this up. Also, sometimes people are apt to respond superficially, and if it doesn't really surpass the superficial, then the exercise serves no purpose. Checking in is also important in terms of how the technology works: are the students stimulated, following, overwhelmed? This has been argued as a key aspect of online teaching (Chidambaram, 2020).

An example of this is a tutorial group I run that was set up purely online, with no physical contact with the students. In an introductory session I asked the student to say a few words about who they are, and even though I opened up with an expansive message about myself, their introductions were perfunctory at best. This also speaks to the atmosphere created in the greater class: whether the students see a value to social-emotional learning, collectivity and group learning and so participate, or whether they do not, and remain silent.

This leads again to the difference between online learning, emergency remote learning, and looking at students' motivations. Students are often assessed based on their motivation (Boud, 2000) the idea that assessment

always has to do double duty is introduced”. It appears as if ERT has just added to this, because assessments clearly indicate whether or not the student is passing. This put added importance on the assessments that are given, and it is important to reimagine these assessments, if possible, in a transformative and decolonised framing.

Assessment

The following discussion is about an assessment that spanned face to face and ERT, and I will examine both contexts in which this unfolded. The HM class is small enough for there to be active collective decision-making processes about curriculum and pedagogy. This is not unusual, and this aligns with Freire and hooks. However, this process is rarely extended to assessment, where the knowledge and power hierarchy is mostly asserted: the lecturer sets the assessments and marks them, the students complete the assessments and receive marks.

There is an argument to be made around decolonising assessment (Godsell, forthcoming), which involves exact processes of disrupting power hierarchies. However, here, the argument tends more toward Assessment as Learning, rather than Assessment of Learning. This is crucial during ERT because the students’ main participation in the course is through completing assessments. If we are able to use and harness this fact, using assessment as learning, we can not only shift power dynamics, but we can also perhaps use assessments for more than the purpose of delineating how well a student has grasped aspects of the course. Below, I will outline several methods that I have used during the ERT period which have the potential to be used as learning, as transformative or decolonial learning, and which functioned during ERT. These methods are multi-modal, and provided a more inclusive learning and assessment experience for learners.

The creative essay

In SS II, working with the large class, I worked with audio-lectures of 20 minutes, accompanying this with PowerPoint slides. This may be one area where post-COVID-19 technology can supplement face-to-face lectures: audio lectures that can be accessed and re-accessed whenever students need to. This allows information to be more easily absorbed. However, the phrase “easily absorbed” is also a problem. Many students gave feedback to this effect: while the audio-lectures are helpful and effective for conveying

information they do not have the impact of a face-to-face lecture. This was because none of the important, controversial topics could be discussed, codified, and explored in a dialogic way in a large class with divergent opinions. Active learning is downgraded to passive learning. Because key concepts of the class were racial oppression, modes of resistance, colonisation, belonging, and land-ownership – all salient and fiery topics in South Africa in 2020 – this course needed classroom dialogue, and time and space. The key aspect of this course – as explained above – is that it was interrupted by the initial lockdown. Thus, the assessment option had already been chosen, which I adapted. The question was “Who does the country known as the United States of America belong to in 2020?” The space I gave in answering the question was that the students could answer in essay format or in any other creative format (such as poetry, as was used in the lectures) as long as it was accompanied by an argument statement, explaining the argument – which should be evident in the creative piece. The space for this kind of expression in answering a question is argued elsewhere.

Example of outcome:

Welcome to the United States of America

Or should I say

Welcome to America?

Well Welcome to America

Welcome to the country that belongs to the rich and powerful

Welcome to the wealthy land of every beings dream

Welcome to being an American for just a split second

They say America belongs to all who live in it

They say America's land belongs to those who fought for it

They say America is for all

They say being an American has no race or culture

They say to be an American is not to be born in America,

Not to be raised in

They say it is for all because all lives matter

Welcome to America

Flipping through thick books of history.

My eyes blurry with unshed tears.

With a lump clogging my throat.

And a heavy heart

As it dawns on me that it's all a dream,

*it's been a dream, and continues to be a dream
One dream, is all the slaves wanted
Freedom, integration, equal rights, justice and unity.
What a high price was paid for it
They had to be shadows
Shadows on the sidewalk*

In the above poem the student engages key concepts of belonging, race, and critically engages history and present geographical norms by asking “What is America”. This is an excerpt of a poem, and the whole poem contained more complex arguments. This excerpt however shows sufficient historical engagement but also shows a personal engagement poignantly engaging the dream of freedom that this student had been sold about “America”.

The decolonial history teachers charter

The idea for a decolonial history teachers’ charter initially came from the students themselves, during the face-to-face lectures in the beginning of the year. One student asked if they could draw up this kind of document. This happened in a particular context of focus on decolonisation and action. In the first lesson of our HM class, we went around the room to discuss what decolonisation meant to each student: although there were a variety of answers, the foundation of the thinking was around justice and transformative change. These concepts formed the grounding of our work in the history classroom. Then we did the work of tying the ideas about colonisation to ideas about history. It is important in this that the method was Freirian – that we followed prior knowledge and ideas, dialogic teaching, that tied in with theoretical approaches to decolonisation of various scholars. I did not teach decolonisation as a body of knowledge outside of the students, but rather as a body of ideas familiar to them, tied to the writings of many scholars. In linking decolonisation to history, the foundational ideas were “whose history”, “from whose perspective” and “where does the power sit”.

Linking decolonisation to history triggered key questions about voice and power. The class was enthusiastic about this way of thinking and transforming history from the dead subject they had often learnt at school to one that was not only alive in their everyday lives, but that was alive in their desired future too.

While our classes were conducted in a dialogic way, the assignments set were set by me, as learning as assessment principles, and in line with principles of Constructive Alignment (Biggs, 2014) it is only recently that it has been implemented on a reasonably large scale. Part of the reason for this is that the massive expansion in tertiary education involves a diverse range of students and of teaching subjects so that teaching and assessment need to be reviewed on an institution-wide basis with emphasis upon outcomes at institutional, programme and unit levels. CA provides a framework for adjusting teaching and assessment to address the attainment of those outcomes and the standards reached. Research indicates that CA is effective in this but it initially requires time and effort in designing teaching and assessment and, as a systems approach, it is important that supporting institutional policies and procedures are in place. CA properly implemented enhances teaching and learning quality and thus, as a form of quality enhancement, subsumes forms of quality assurance that can often be counter-productive” (Biggs, 2014). As much as this incorporates students it does not disrupt the power hierarchies in the classroom or insert dialogic method into assessment methods.

One student in the class suggested that as a class project they collectively write a “decolonial historians charter”. It is important that the suggestion came from a student and was widely accepted with excitement by the class. I split the class into groups and at the end of every lesson we spent 15 minutes working on the decolonial history teachers’ charter. Their end goal for this is to come up with a document that can be shared widely by history teachers and can give directly and a mandate for radical pedagogical work in the history classroom.

Their work was guided by questions arising both from the class and from me. I brought in copies of the Freedom Charter as an example of what a charter could (not should) look like, and we discussed the progress made in the class. The progress was not linear or simple; the task was unclear and the end product was vague. This was important. In striving to make so much of the work we do in class clear and epistemically just, it is often possible to lose the value of opacity: when it is unclear what will be uncovered, when the answer is not already in a memo.

Some students thrived on this, some found it frustrating While the discussions continued students became more and more embroiled in what a decolonial charter might look like.

Then COVID-19 happened. Classes were cancelled for a week, then two weeks. The university refused to call the closure a shut down – it was an early Easter vacation. Then meetings of over 100 people were banned, then over 50 people. Opening University again seemed to become more and more unlikely. The university began speaking about moving online, then to develop a plan for ERT.

As we moved online, we moved onto a WhatsApp group that had 38 of the 39 students in the class. I communicated with the 39th via email, sporadically. I have discussed WhatsApp as a platform above. As we slowly came together as a class again, established time frames, readings, modes of meaning, we began to form an online social presence as a class. We discussed assessments – the dates had been pushed back, but the need for marks, the need for assessments, the need to consolidate the work we had done in semester one did not go away. However, my challenge was to align the formalised assessment with the formalised curriculum, while our discussion of decolonisation had been running alongside this, almost as a separate curriculum, more in an informal sphere. This is a fault in my curriculum planning and pedagogy, and one that I explore in a paper on “Decolonising Assessment” (Godsell, forthcoming). It questions how completely we may shift power structures if we are only able to shift up to assessment and not decolonise assessment itself.

I was ready to let go of the Decolonial Teachers’ Charter and expected most students to give up on it also. However, when we were discussing assessments, with the awareness that this was during the first lockdown and many students were struggling physically and psychologically. I wanted to rethink their assessments for social pedagogical learning, in a way that could support them in a group collectively, while still meeting the assessment standards of reliability and validity, and each assessment having appropriate rigour. However, the world was upside down – we were all gripped with fear of what was coming, economically and physically. How to create a safe, valid, reliable assessment under COVID-19 conditions? I argue that this is impossible. For the reason elucidated above I argue that any assessment will be unjust, and so not form part of a radical pedagogy. Below, I describe what did happen, and how although it still forms part of a flawed moment and system, it makes some moves towards social pedagogy and towards radical and critical pedagogy. Social pedagogy is defined, by the C-19 Post-School Education Working Group as:

... consultative, inclusive, and sensitive to the contexts of students, teachers and their communities. It works towards mutually supportive framework that will carry our pedagogic work through the current crisis, into a period of just recovery, and a more equitable future.

- *We are guided by four principles:*
 - » *Inclusivity and participation*
 - » *Equity and Equality*
 - » *Transformation and decolonisation*
 - » *Academic development and progress with integrity*

(Drafted through a national discussion in South Africa amongst concerned academics, April 2020, p. 1).

The Decolonial Teachers' Charter as an assessment came up organically during a discussion of the types of assessment that could work online. The students had already had work due. Some had started and completed that work, and submitted it while others had yet to start. I am adding this point because I want to stress that the process is messy, incomplete, and not as smooth as University spokespersons will undoubtedly say in years to come. Others were struggling to keep up in the online environment, because of devices and connections, because of data and network, because of spaces and chores, because of the paralyzing fear of the pandemic. Also, we discussed what we would do about the process of the Decolonial History Teachers' charter. I had assumed that, being overwhelmed with work, they would want to drop the idea, but they did not. This was something of value to them that they felt important and worthwhile to pursue outside of the standard curricula and outside of assessment structures that they would need to write to obtain their degrees or to proceed to the next year. I was struck by this and drawn by decolonisation around whose voices are heard in a curriculum who is recognised as human.

This puts me in conflict with schools of thought where semantic density (the number of concepts attached to certain knowledge) is privileged over semantic gravity (how contextual the knowledge is) (Maton, 2014). However, the balance between different types of knowledge needs to be achieved to overcome the coloniality of knowledge (drawn from the enlightenment: "objective" and "rational" explicitly, white and male implicitly). The PCK (pedagogical content knowledge – Shulman, 1981) is obviously important. The d-PCK (disciplinary specific Pedagogical content knowledge) more so. I am not arguing that all knowledge in the classroom comes only from the students that other sources, including the lecturer, are constantly and

critically brought into the classroom – but in allowing students a say in curricula shifts the power dynamics in the classroom.

As part of the consistent effort to move these power dynamics towards decolonisation, I asked the students if they would like to do the Decolonial History Teachers' Charter as an assessment. After some discussion we came to the following agreement:

- Students could choose whether they wanted to do the assessment that had been designed before COVID-19 or the Decolonial History Teachers' Charter.
- Those choosing the Decolonial History Teachers' charter would agree that this was a collective effort, and each person participating would get the same mark. I would not entertain complaints about some people not having worked enough: embarking on this project was a collective choice.
- They would work among themselves, that I would give no guidance towards the charter, recognising it as their coursework assignment.
- I would design a rubric which we would collectively adjust until it was agreed on by the class. This would provide clarity for both parties as this was for marks.

These agreements were important for several reasons: to ensure that participating in a different assessment process was the student's choice; to ensure that, in line with decolonial principles, this was a collective project, with a radical political understanding of collective – where the stronger also support the more vulnerable. Thirdly that this rather different assessment project would have a valid and reliable marking structure, and that that was co-designed by lecture and students. This again links to ideas of shifting power-dynamics towards decolonising assessment (see Godsell; forthcoming).

We then decided on the form and format in which the students would work: there is a collaborative document tool on our IMS which allows anonymous editing, and collaborative writing. I had put some of the notes that I had had from our class discussions and exercises on the Decolonial History Teachers' Charter, hoping to kick off a collaborative process for the charter before we decided to make it an assessment. I want to pause here and reflect on our students' apparently being primarily driven by marks, which was seemingly exacerbated, as I have mentioned, by ERT. Biggs (2011) designed an idea of 3 levels of teacher expertise: the first level is "blame the student", the second is "blame the teacher" and the third level,

the one teachers should (according to Biggs), aspire to, involves focusing on looking at what students “do” – which involves looking at the various teaching and learning contexts of the class, the teacher, and the student. The first two levels involve deficit models, and we often tend to apply a deficit model of the students (Biggs, 2011), or a deficit model of ourselves as teachers, rather than focus on what the student does. In this context, the students ended up doing collaborative learning; but if we were starting off with a deficit model, we might say they were not learning for learning’s sake but only because we are driven by marks.

Lecturers express this with great distress. However, if we use this just as a fact contextually to ERT and perhaps even online teaching, we can add that fact to our course designs and use Constructive Alignment (Biggs, 2014) to make sure we use the facts of the context, and to use assessment as learning, or Learning-Oriented Assessment, to make sure our assessments produce rather than measure learning (Carless, 2015). In other words, use the marks-oriented students to do both marked formative and learning oriented summative development.

The Charter became a collaborative piece of assessment work, that would provide some gentleness for those that struggled with the ERT situation, as there was no stipulation as to how much someone must contribute to be eligible for a mark. This might also be seen as a significant weakness of the project. While each student had needed to report to me whether they would be doing the chart or the rubric and unit design, and this gave me some idea of who was active in the class (38/39) and measured their intentionality with the project, it could be argued that the assessment is not reliable, as it does not necessarily test the individual input of each student. I would argue that every groupwork project allows for such eventualities, and as much as we can built in checks and counterbalances (peer assessment forms, self-assessment forms, group presentations) we are asking a fundamentally different thing when we are asking for groupwork, as opposed to individual work: we are asking for collectivity. I would argue that the assessment is reliable because it can be performed over and over with similar results, and that it is valid because it draws both on the methodology we use in class, the contemporary socio-political contexts in which we live, and the decolonial politics of collectivity over individuality. The following extract displays the politics of the Charter:

Preface

Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter (Chinua Achebe)

We, as student-teachers of History, recognize that our world finds itself at an unprecedented moment in human history. As we attempt to come to terms with the implications of the Coronavirus pandemic for the future of education on a global, continental and local scale, we recognize that we've been presented with an opportunity to critically re-imagine the role that Historians ought to be playing in actively building a more just, empathetic and equitable world. We deliberately identify ourselves as Historians-in-action, based on our understanding of History as a discipline that involves the active construction, deconstruction and contestation of historical narratives.

We have a duty to decolonise the history curriculum and have history become a tool for the nurturing of agency i.e. our capacity as human beings to reflect critically on the historical conditions that have affected our experiences and to act decisively upon these reflections. In order to be historians-in-action, we need to expose and shed light on African perspectives of colonization and its effects, as we have presently observed that such perspectives have limited place in dominant historical narratives. Our teaching and learning of history tends to glorify Eurocentric actions and perspectives. These perspectives prevail in much of what has been written in our history textbooks. And it is that history that we continue to teach and learn today. We have subscribed to the 'single story' for too long - an interpretation of history that has done little to disrupt unjust relations of power that continue to reproduce patterns of oppression, exploitation and domination in our society.

If we are to move forward on the basis of a more transformative conception of education; an education system that is rooted in the desire to empower and uplift our societies on a global, continental and local scale, then we need to dedicate ourselves to learning our true history and uncovering the truth of who we are. We recognize that this is a process that necessitates a critical acknowledgement of our strengths and our weaknesses. It is a process that requires us to take full advantage of the resources, skills and opportunities that we have at our disposal in order to make tomorrow better for ourselves and for future generations."

The reflective exam

Naidoo (2020) points out that unless the teaching is rooted in wanting a fundamental change of unjust systems, then the methods cannot be claimed as either Freirian or hooksian. This is then when the attempted transformative or radical methods I have attempted fall short: they fit within the system of ERT, even while the exam equivalent requires both objective and subjective

viewpoints on the world in which COVID-19 is operating, the world in which these students are becoming teachers. “Objective” is also, of course, subjective, as we cannot ever delink ourselves from the context.

Much of being a history teacher is being aware of context, and being able to link context to historical knowledge, to avoid a banking education situation, or a dry, disconnected teaching from the textbook. Indeed, from a radical pedagogy or Freirian point of view, using this to actively bring about change in the world. Adopting a social pedagogy, one developed and practiced in community, the exam set for the third-year HM students was a reflexive examination entitled “looking out, looking in”. This exam asked students to be reflective on their interior and exterior experiences during COVID-19, and link this to being history teachers, and history teaching.

This examination produced beautiful and thought-provoking answers, where students wove webs back and forth in time, around their environments, and historicised their past and present observations. Analysed thematically, the most consistent reflection was on the inequality in the country, and in the class, this was observed and from all angles of those with and those without. This was almost completely consistently followed by a historicization that linked currently equality to colonisation and apartheid creating racialised inequality. In dialogic teaching this moment of reflection – what the historical inequality had caused in the present, and your place in the systemic oppression – is the ideal reflection part of praxis. The way that this was presented varied, some in poetry, some in visual art, mostly in words but all answers showing historical reflection. This could work as a radical pedagogy when it is intended to conscientise and provide critical reflection with the act of reading (the world and the word) and writing (the world and the word) (Freire, 1983). There was a crucial point in each of the 6 responses selected for analysis where this codification and decodification – the reflection in praxis – took place.

Below is a particularly poignant example of an exam response by a student, Aasif Bulbulia.

Looking out, looking in

Instrumental used: Mos Def – Respiration (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHHSpfssBco>)

Bismillah (In the name of Allah)

i.

*[0:24] looking out, looking in
where do I begin?
feel like a matador trapped in a bullpen
under lockdown, frozen like a mannequin
we get knocked down, gotta get back up again
so i take a moment to reflect
look at all the systems of oppression intersect
the anxiety is crippling, i gotta take a breath
start to see privilege as a matter of life and death*

*a product of inequality
they wanna surf while the people live in poverty
“kill the blacks for the sake of the economy”
so self-centred, they got a complex like Ptolemy⁴*

*the world crashed like a plane over Lockerbie
calculate the aftermath
someone call the cavalry
someone bring the body bags
come comfort the families
now more than ever, we need solidarity*

*I say that,
but that word can be quite abstract
easy to talk when you can always go back
to warm beds and full bellies
turn on the telly,
police and politicians acting like
Machiavelli*

*I told the man in the mirror,
“you gotta listen here
you gotta face your fear
of being insincere
you gotta start
by taking care of your heart
if you don’t
just watch things fall apart*

⁴ Ptolemy was a proponent of geocentric theory, which posited that the earth was the center of the universe (Jones, 2000).

The above, the argument in the whole rap (accompanied by a beautiful beat) is to be brave, a call to action “You gotta face your fear of being insincere you gotta start by taking care of your heart if you don’t just watch things fall apart”, a call to face the fear, a call to radical self-care in order to take part in radical care of others and the world. This is one particular example, and this student is an activist. Not all students had this sense of purpose and urgency.

I have found that through important campaigns like Black Lives Matter, Stop Gender Based Violence, and the movement through private schools, questioning which systems are in place to encourage some learners and silence others, have taught me very important lessons for being a teacher. My privilege is always going to be a hinderance for me, and I will be more privileged than many of my learners, so I need to learn to see beyond my blinkers. To teach with compassion and fairness. I do not want to become a part of the systematic racism that so many of my teachers were a part of. I will continue to check my privilege and will strive to be the teacher so many of my peers needed in high school. I cannot change the past, but I can learn from it to improve the future (Chelsey Mattuizzo, 2020).

The above extract – taken from Chelsey Mattuizzo’s exam, shows the connection between being a teacher, a historian, and her own positionality. The extract shows reflection of what we had learnt in class: positionality, power in schools, historic systemic racism, and how we as teachers need to learn to be open to listening to what we do not know about.

These might be taken as an example that this online teaching worked – the students did exceptionally well in their assignments, integrated knower gazes into their familiar gazes onto their world and transposed a trained historical gaze onto their situations, the local, and global situations, and how this might impact their classroom. This is valuable history method for future history teachers. However, there is student number 39. Some people might say this is acceptable collateral damage – that there will always be some students who drop out during the year. I refuse this argument and this academic violence. Every student counts. Every student matters. And yes, there will be drop-outs – but we cannot claim as radical a method which is not available to the most vulnerable, which cuts out students because of the modalities of the pedagogy.

Conclusion

We are in a time of transition – as Arundhati Roy famously said, “a portal” (Roy, 2020). We have opportunities to be together while far apart – for some. We have opportunities to use multiple modalities – some of

us. While students are not in residences that at least provide a modicum of stability of food, of device connection, of network connection, we cannot teach online in South Africa without deepening a digital divide that strikes the deepest most tender fractures in our country. It puts us in a terrible position in 2020. Where do we go? What do we do? What do we not? There have been calls for “bad teaching”, to not make lecturers disposable and also to not make an impression that we can seamlessly transition to ERT and then to Online Teaching and maintain the illusion of university as a pathway out of poverty, or even a functioning cog in a neoliberal capitalist machine. The act of transitioning online tells student 39 they do not exist in a meaningful enough way for us to care about them.

This article might seem contradictory. I have detailed how I have fought for my students, and with myself, and with society and the University during COVID-19. I have detailed the methods I have used, some which work and some which didn't. I have done this because I want to share methods tending towards social pedagogy that could work and help in an ERT situation, and because I am a historian and think it is important to document work done. This special issue is a nod towards that as well. Yet, I end with an invective against online teaching, removing any face to face time. I argue for a future of a University I want to be part of, that uses technology paired with face to face dialogic, decolonized and creative pedagogies and curricula to teach our students in all of their human, student, teacher, scholar, and intellectual, and bud of hope, beings. I argue that good pedagogies need to be thought through and not rushed – that ERT was the option chosen by our institutions (not the only option) was an option we did our best with. This article is a selection of my best and worst. And an invocation towards an intersectional pedagogy that sees our students, and fights with them for social justice.

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Online learning challenges postgraduate certificate in education History students faced during COVID-19 at the University of Zululand

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Abstract

This paper intends to share empirical challenges of Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) History students faced during COVID-19. COVID-19 was characterised by, amongst other things, social distancing, which put lectures on hold in favour of online learning. A group of 32 students participated in the study. Data were collected through narrative inquiry, and a thematic data analysis method was used. The study revealed that PGCE history students faced challenges of adapting to and accessing online learning and library materials, an expectation to do a lot of academic work, individual instead of classroom or library learning, unconducive home learning space, lack of parental support, and financial constraints. Therefore, this study concludes that students struggled to cope with online learning and recommends that institutions of higher learning should consider the above challenges when undertaking online learning under COVID-19 conditions in future.

Keywords: Online learning; Challenges; PGCE History students; COVID-19; Lectures; Teaching.

Introduction

The outbreak of the corona virus pandemic in 2019 (COVID-19) came with numerous consequences. Amongst these was the prohibition of lectures, which meant that students could not have face-to-face interactions with lecturers and fellow students. The banning of lectures was in line with social distancing, which was one of the means to curb the spread of COVID-19 as a global pandemic (Clerkin Fried, Raikhelkar, Sayer, Griffin, Masoumi & Schwartz, 2020). The prohibition of lectures resulted in the forced introduction of online learning to help students continue

with their education. Scholars have presented different definitions of the concept “online learning”. For example, Benson (2002) and Carliner (2004) describe online learning as access to learning experiences via the use of some technology devices, whereas Anshari, Alas, Sabtu and Hamid (2016) refer to online learning as electronic learning (e-learning) or mobile learning (m-learning). Thus, online learning can simply be referred to as education that takes place over the internet, and may be called e-learning. Indeed, the United States Department of Education (2010) defines online learning as learning that takes place partially or entirely over the internet. All these definitions consist of three elements: technology, electronics and the internet. This suggests that online learning depends on these elements. This may suggest that students should have electronic devices like laptops, computers, desktops and smartphones for them to access online learning. In addition, students should have access to network and data for connectivity. So, without technological devices, network and data, students may struggle with online learning.

Online learning can be used to manage the processes of teaching and learning through information and communication technology (ICT) (Anshari, Alas, Sabtu & Hamid, 2016). It can be handy in managing teaching and learning processes if all parties involved are well informed about it. Anshari and Alas (2015) argue that the adoption of online learning programmes in education generally provides a new experience for students. The demand for online learning is derived from a push “to provide quality education to all students, regardless of location and time” (Chaney, 2010: 21). Being away from the university campus should, therefore not necessarily be a conundrum for students. Hence Gilbert (2015) contends that online learning has the potential to create educational opportunities for individuals who may have faced unsurpassable barriers. Without the introduction of online learning after the outbreak of COVID-19, students may not have received education owing to social distancing.

The Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) History students who participated in this study registered for full-time face-to-face classes and were affected by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. They were forced to promptly adapt to online teaching and learning for them to qualify as teachers. They had to, at short notice, acquire technological devices and data in order to cope with online learning. PGCE History students already hold BA degrees with history as a major (DHET, 2011). Students with a BA degree are expected to have acquired sufficient content

knowledge in history for them to be admitted into the PGCE programme (Nomlomo & Sosibo, 2016). However, they still need to develop their pedagogical and practical knowledge (DHET, 2011, 2015). The PGCE is therefore a generalist qualification that is intended to cap a subject specialist undergraduate degree qualification (Lange & Singh, 2010). The general purpose of the PGCE in this regard is established through national policy (Mukeredzi & Sibanda, 2016). The aim of the PGCE professional qualification is further to equip students with the competencies, knowledge and skills needed to teach disciplinary knowledge to learners (Bertram, Mthiyane, & Mukeredzi, 2013). Hence, the PGCE curriculum constitutes three key parts: core education and professional studies modules, teaching specialisation modules, and teaching practice (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2006).

At the University of Zululand, a rural higher education institution in northern KwaZulu-Natal build under apartheid for Africans, the PGCE History students were hit hard by the outbreak of COVID-19 since they did not have pedagogical background knowledge, unlike Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) students who are exposed to pedagogy and its dynamics. For this reason, since PGCE History students are exposed to pedagogical knowledge for the first and last time in a one-year duration certificate, they then to rely heavily on their lecturers for guidance and support to complete. With online learning and teaching the PGCE History students had to learn on their own, without face-to-face contact with their lecturers. In their endeavours to complete their certificates in one year, coupled with the dearth of background knowledge of online learning, they experienced some challenges. By “challenges” the researcher means difficulties in undertaking online learning successfully. The inability to cope with these challenges meant that the students might not complete their qualification and secure jobs. The aim of this article was, therefore, to explore the challenges that PGCE History students faced during COVID-19, and determine how these challenges impacted on their studies.

Literature review

A literature review constitutes the body of knowledge on the topic of research interest, and helps the researcher to acquire an understanding of what has already been done around it – how it has been researched, and what the key issues are (Hart, 2018). For these reasons, this study reviewed

the literature relating to online learning and its challenges.

Since online learning looks different to traditional face-to-face learning, there are issues to consider for it to succeed. For example, replication of collaborative learning within an online environment (Tan & Chen, 2020) could be a drawback for students. There were more chances that students could not work together collaboratively as it would have been the case with traditional learning, and this could affect students' performance. Also, accessibility issues, like internet connectivity, and the availability of technological devices like, laptops and smartphones, (Aboagye, Yawson, & Appiah, 2020; Farooq, Rathore, & Mansoor, 2020) could have an impact.

Other issues that can be questionable with online learning are academic rigour and the quality of instruction (Gilbert, 2015). There is no assurance at all academics/online instructors apply the same rigour as they do with face-to-face learning. If online learning does not maintain academic rigour, it might hinder teaching and learning. Besides academic rigour, the quality of instruction is another issue that needs consideration when one talks about online learning. It is the responsibility of online instructors to ensure the quality of online teaching. If online instructors do not ensure the quality of their teaching, online learning may not be effective. In this regard a lack of proper training (Farooq et al., 2020) in online teaching and learning may result in poor teaching, thus affecting academic rigour and the quality of instruction.

Gilbert (2015) argues that the development of community and peer interaction, that is prevalent and significant in traditional learning, may be doubtful in online learning. He goes on to argue that active community and peer interaction may lead to high persistence and learning satisfaction, which may not be the case with online learning, which may be characterised by lower persistence rates informed by lack of community and social connectedness in the online environment. Online socialisation entails a learning process of enculturation into a discourse community in which students must develop the ability to engage with content according to set norms and conventions (Starfield, 2001). This thinking is echoed by Arasaratnam-Smith and Northcote (2017), who argue that online learning falls short of the richness and complexity of face-to-face learning, and nonverbal communication suffers greatly.

With reference to the above, Salmon (2013) presents a five-stage framework of online learning. The first stage is access and motivation,

which encompass setting up and accessing the system, as well as welcoming students, and encouraging them to do online learning. The second stage is online socialisation, whereby students can send and receive messages, thus familiarising themselves with online learning. The third stage is information exchange and searching, which entail facilitating tasks and supporting use of online learning materials. The fourth stage is conferencing and facilitating the process by which students are developed to conference amongst themselves and with their lecturers so that lecturers can facilitate online lessons. The fifth and final stage is development, and it is about providing links outside closed conferences by supporting and responding to questions that students may have. These stages suggest that for online learning to be successful, participants need to be supported through a structured developmental process (Salmon, 2013), something that was lacking under COVID-19 emergency remote teaching.

A further challenge to online learning is the “one size fits all” approach, which does not seem to cater for individual differences (Gillett-Swan, 2017). Students are unique, hence even their learning capabilities differ. If online instructors or lecturers use the same approach, that can influence the effectiveness of online learning. Different approaches should be employed for different students to achieve maximum learning. Additionally, Orlando and Attard (2015) argue that online learning depends on the types of technology in use at the time, and the curriculum content being taught. The incorporation of technology in learning provides additional factors for consideration in terms of teaching pedagogy and construction of learning experiences. In this regard Jacobs (2013) suggests that it is important to identify the type of student enrolled in the course in order to design an appropriate interaction system that will allow the students not only to learn but also to enjoy the experience. For example, students with low reading abilities may find the heavy text and writing curriculum of online teaching and learning to be a challenge (Donlevy, 2003), since online learning requires students to read and write intensively. Also, according to Boling, Hough, Krinsky, Saleem and Stevens (2012), online learning should encompass higher-order cognitive skills as opposed to simply transferring content to students. This may be a challenge for those students who are not well versed in higher-order cognitive skills.

Jaques and Salmon (2007), as well as Davidson (2015) argue that anxiety associated with using technology, be it being out of a comfort zone, perception of inequity and the perceived inability to have or difficulty

in having peer interaction may be another challenge for online learning. Anxiety amongst students owing to online learning may be a common issue for online learning beginners since they are unfamiliar with it, and it can impede the success of online learning. To counter anxiety issues, Parker (2003) asserts that students should become comfortable as active learners. If students are anxious they may continue to be passive learners.

Online learning can also leave students in an isolated place when they have varying levels of competence and proficiency (Gillet-Swan, 2017) when using technology. These varying levels can also affect their confidence in online learning (Anshari et al., 2016; Gillet-Swan, 2017). Taking into cognisance that with online learning there is a lack of community and social connectedness in the learning environment (Rovai, Wighting, & Liu, 2005), students may find online learning challenging. With their differing proficiency in technology, working in silos may make students even more uncomfortable. To support their argument, Rovai et al. (2005: 04) contend that “online students feel a weaker sense of connectedness and belonging than on-campus students who attend face-to-face classes”. Donlevy (2003) strongly argues that the absence of peer interaction can harm some aspects of the learning process.

Some students rely on collaborative learning for their educational success. With the advent of online learning group discussions do not appear to be a common practice (Jaques & Salmon, 2007). In this regard Savenye (2005) argues that students’ lack of independence with online learning made for lower success rates. Students who encounter some challenges with online learning may not get assistance from fellow students as they usually did in face-to-face interactions. In other words, platforms where students can share their learning difficulties may be limited, or not feasible at all, and that can cripple their effort. However, online learning can succeed if students do not lack self-motivation and self-direction, as Gilbert (2015), Parker (2003) and Savenye (2005). In contrast, Chaney (2001) contends that students who lack motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, can easily lose sight of their original goal. In this regard You and Kand (2014) affirm that students with a lack of self-regulation tend not to assign enough time to complete given activities. In short, online learning requires students to be self-motivated, self-directed and self-regulated. If they lack these attributes, online learning may be a fiasco.

Online learning can succeed if those involved undergo continuous training and support. This suggests that online instructors and students should be familiar and comfortable with the latest technological developments and related software (Fish & Wickersham, 2010). The effectiveness of online learning therefore depends not only on students, but, also on lecturers. If lecturers are abreast of technology they may undertake the online teaching and learning process efficiently. Fish and Wickersham (2010) go on to affirm that online instructors networking with others who teach such courses universities can improve the effectiveness of online learning. If online instructors' network with others, they can bolster their own technological knowledge and skills, thus improving online learning.

Another challenge is the issue of the “haves” versus the “have nots”, which is due to the lack of funds to gain access to the technology and what it entails (Gilbert, 2015). In order to address this challenge, Gilbert (2015) argues that increasing the ratio of computers and other electronic devices to students may ultimately lead to the disadvantaged gaining access to the global knowledge that is available on the internet. In a nutshell, in order to bridge the gap between the “haves” and “have nots”, and for online learning to be effective, students should be furnished with computers and other electronic devices. In addition to these, understanding learning styles and self-behaviour is pertinent to determining success in undertaking online learning (Gilbert, 2015). Even if a student is in possession of an electronic device, if he or she does not understand learning styles and does not behave well, online learning becomes pointless.

When Adedoyin and Soykan (2020) conducted a study on the COVID-19 pandemic and online learning, they found that human distractions were a challenge for students. This study reported that family members and friends interrupted students when they, for example, undertook assessment activities at home. These interruptions are more common with female students, who, in addition to their academic work, are expected to undertake household duties (Farooq et al., 2020). Additionally, online instructors lamented the heavy workload that emanate from online teaching. This was heavy for online instructors because they were used to meeting students face-to-face. In this regard Jacobs (2013) asserts that online instruction takes more time to design and implement than traditional learning.

Jacobs (2013), also reported on the challenges of online courses in developing appropriate methods for online learning. Considering the fact

that lecturers who suddenly became online instructors were used to the traditional learning process, undertaking online learning meant they had to change their teaching methods. This became a challenge for them since they were not properly and gradually orientated to online learning but were just parachuted into it.

Theoretical base: Schlossberg's transition theory

The degree to which students transit from one educational format to another has a bearing on how they can address challenges they encounter in the process. Their transition from high school to higher education may be, for example, be coupled with challenges caused by unfamiliar teaching and learning styles, and a new environment and workload, amongst other things. To counter and meet these new learning challenges from a new environment, Nancy Schlossberg introduced "transition theory" in 1981. This theory alludes to issues that relate to transition, the individual student, and the environment in order to show the degree of impact such a transition has had on a student at a particular time and place (Carroll & Creamer, 2004). Surely, in relation to transition from face-to-face to online learning, PGCE History students come across challenges.

Goodman, Schlossberg and Anderson (2006) argue that unanticipated transitions, which encapsulate unpredictable transitions, may be challenging since the people involved are forced to adapt to a new situation they never predicted or prepared themselves for. In other words, with this kind of transition those involved have no option but (compelled by circumstance) to adapt. This is the situation PGCE History students found themselves in when face-to-face classes were suspended due to COVID-19 AT THE University of Zululand.

Since transition theory alludes to issues related to this article, it was deemed an appropriate theoretical lens to explore the kind of challenges the transition from face-to-face to online learning had on PGCE History students, who lacked proper knowledge and skills of how to cope with online learning. It was therefore crucial to explore the dynamics of transiting from face-to-face to online learning in order to understand its challenges.

Research methodology

A case study design was employed to explore the challenges that PGCE

History students faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the interest in this study was not on quantifying but providing in-depth experiences and understanding of the respondents from their own point of view (Dube, 2019), a small-scale study was approached qualitatively. It generated data using narrative enquiry, which is about people narrating stories about their challenges. Narrative inquiry helps to understand and present real-life experiences through the stories of research participants (Wang & Geale, 2015), thus allowing a rich description of these challenges, and an exploration of the meanings that the participants derive from their challenges (Wang & Geale, 2015). Since interpretivists view the world through a “series of individual eyes”, and choose participants who “have their own interpretations of reality” to “encompass the worldview” (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:26), using the interpretive paradigm was apposite for this study.

There were 75 PGCE History students, and they were all requested to participate in the study by writing, in a digital format, about “My online learning challenges during the COVID-9 pandemic”. However, only 32 students chose to participate. All these students were black Africans, most of whom were women. The racial demographics of the participants is a legacy from the past when the University of Zululand were created. Most of the participants were older than 30.

Data generated were analysed using thematic coding. In doing so, the researcher went through the responses repeatedly for more understanding, and categorised data into themes, thereafter analysing them with the intention to develop an understanding of the challenges PGCE History students faced in transition to online teaching and learning.

Ethical considerations

The researcher sought ethics clearance before conducting research, and issued informed consent letters through emails and the learner management system to students, all of whom signed and returned them to the researcher. The document explained the purpose of the study, and how it would be conducted. Students were referred to as participants in order to protect their identity. Yip, Han and Sng (2016) argue that researchers should ‘protect the life, health, dignity, integrity, right to self-determination, privacy and the confidentiality of personal information of the participants in research.

Research findings

The data for this empirical qualitative study revealed six major online learning challenges that PGCE History students at the University of Zululand faced during COVID-19.

Accessibility

The analysis of the online narrative accounts revealed that some of the participating PGCE History students had difficulties in adapting to and accessing online learning and study material from the university. The lockdown also meant that PGCE History students, like other students, could not access university facilities. As a result, they could not access study material from the library, and this worsened their stress since they were already struggling with internet connections for online learning. Since most of them lived in rural areas, connection to the internet was a serious challenge owing to low or no network at all. Hence, some were forced to walk long distances to, for example, the top of a hill so as to connect to a network. Due to network issues some students failed to submit activities given to them by their lecturers because they could not connect to the internet, and some submitted after the due date. In some rural areas from which the participating students came from, there was no electricity at all. Online learning depends on internet connection and electricity, so if both are not functional, students will surely face a challenge, and this was the case for many of the participants in this study.

Heavy workload

Online learning compelled PGCE History students to remain at home and continue with their studies. In the process, as gleaned from the data, they ended up being bombarded with a mountain of academic work. This many a time had to be done within a short space of time. Some students even lamented that online instructors were not considerate of their situation. Some students explained in the narratives they submitted that they were frustrated by the excessive workload, and some almost gave up.

Individual learning

Online learning gave way to individual learning, which most PGCE History students were pedagogically and culturally unfamiliar with. Some students explained that they were expected to read and gather information

on their own. This became a challenge as they claimed that they struggled with self-regulation and connectivity and support from their peers. Some struggled with individual learning because they had no study material. Hence, a trend that seemingly emerged is of students that were confused and demotivated by online learning.

Home distractions

Another challenge to online learning was the home distractions which made home a learning space un conducive to work. For most students, staying at home had many challenges. Some lamented that they stayed with their unemployed siblings, who were always home, so they could not use rooms for academic work. Other students, especially female students, mentioned that they were expected to look after children, and were repeatedly disturbed by family members, which denied them a chance to engage with their academic work. Some lived in homes where there was a lot of noise they could not control, so it was a challenge to focus and do academic work freely. Some students did not have enough space at home to undertake academic work.

Lack of parental support

Another finding suggests that some parents did not offer support for their children who were PGCE History students. According to some students, some parents did not allow them time to do and complete academic work; instead they expected them to perform all the daily home chores, although they were supposed to write tests and academic activities. Some parents could not even ensure that no one disturbed them when busy with academic work. For example, some students said that they had to do academic work while cooking because parents did not understand them reserving time for academic work. The lack of support from parents made online learning difficult for learners.

Economic conditions

What also emerged from the data was that the participating PGCE History students' economic conditions were a challenge for online learning. Some students complained that they struggled to buy data in order to connect to the internet for online learning. Other students mentioned that they did not have laptops they could use for online learning. With their inability to

buy data, some students could not communicate with other students and lecturers about teaching and learning activities. They complained that they could not share information, ask for clarity, raise concerns and discuss academic issues.

Discussion of findings

Being forced by circumstance to promptly switch to online learning without being prepared for it, precipitated difficulties for PGCE History students to access and adapt to online learning. Salmon (2013) argues that before students can engage with online learning they need to undergo a structured developmental process in different stages, and access to online learning is the first stage. The assertion by one of the participants that “the movement of classes online caused anxiety to me since I never got training about it” justified Salmon’s argument. The PGCE History students never received training in online learning so as to orientate them accordingly. As Farooq et al. (2020) claims, the lack of proper training can affect online learning negatively. The anxiety about online learning was not peculiar, since PGCE History students needed to move out of their comfort zone (Jaques & Salmon, 2007; Davidson, 2015), that of face-to-face interaction with lecturers and peers in an on-campus setting.

Another participant affirmed that “it was difficult to get used to online learning within a short space of time, and be expected to write and submit activities”. Online learning needs different approaches since students may be at different levels. Hence Orlando and Attard (2015) argue that online learning does not need a “one size fits all” approach. Online instructors need to bear in mind that their students’ level of abilities and means to work in such an environment may vary, so they need to employ various approaches to accommodate students at all levels of knowledge.

One other issue that made online learning challenging was the network connectivity, which was either weak or non-existent at all. This was affirmed by a participant who said: “I had a problem with online learning since I am from a deep rural area where there is low network coverage, and sometimes there is no network at all”. Thus, the rural location of some students at times denied them access to online learning so that they could not even submit academic work in time, and failed assessment activities. This was vividly expressed by a PGCE History student who stated:

I started answering quiz questions, but before reached question 10 the network dropped off. It came back after a while, so I continued writing, but before I finished all questions the time was up, and I could not finish writing. The results came back, and I had got 20%. I locked myself in my room and cried.

One can imagine the student being fully prepared for the test, but due to network failure, failing it. Another participant explained: “The greatest challenge of them all was network glitches, and I could not submit my work on time”. Network connectivity issues stood in the way of some PGCE History students’ intention to create and exchange content for learning, as argued by Salmon (2013), and Chung and Paredes (2015). The network problem in online learning is also emphasised by Aboagye et al. (2020) and Farooq et al. (2020), who argue that accessibility to the network determines the possibility and success of online learning. PGCE History students could not progressively acquire content knowledge, and interact with other students who could contribute new ideas, opinions and experiences (Rosen, 2010) because of poor or no connection at all.

Access to on campus resources and specially the library, be it the physical structure or an online equivalent, also became a problem for some PGCE History students. One participant complained that “in terms of studying, it was hectic because one could not access most required sources like books from the library”. Salmon (2013) argues that without good access to study material, online learning can be a fiasco. If the library was accessible, PGCE History students would have used it to supplement difficulties of online learning. One participant reiterated that “libraries as sources of information were closed, so it became hard for me to do my academic work”. Even if students were self-motivated and self-directed (Parker, 2003; Gilbert, 2015) without access to libraries they could not do anything to bridge the gap between online and face-to-face learning. Access to libraries would have helped those students who had network connectivity problems because they would have used libraries to supplement online learning, but the closure brought more dilemmas. This was explained by one of the students: “It is hard to do academic work in rural areas because there is no Wi-Fi and network, and we are not allowed to go to libraries to do research”.

An analysis of the data also revealed that some PGCE History students were burdened by having a heavy workload to cope with amid COVID-19. Not only was this caused by the introduction of online learning, but it was

also due to academics who wanted to finish their work programmes on time and who did so by dumping material online. One of the PGCE History students explained: “The amount of work, assignments given and slides to study was overwhelmingly large”. This overwhelming amount of work frustrated some students, and they were left with not knowing what to do. In this regard a participant explained: “I was frustrated with the volume of work given by our lecturers”. With a bulk of work to be done, and lack of community and social connectedness in the learning environment (Rovai et al., 2005), the PGCE History students suffered since they did not have someone to help them with academic work. It is for this reason that Gilbert (2015) argues that the lack of online community may be a deficit in the online learning environment. Owing to the amount of work given to PGCE History students, one of them even felt betrayed, and blamed lecturers: “There was a lot of work to do. I sometimes even say lecturers don’t think for us, they want us to fail because they give us work, yet they know exactly the problems we are facing now”. Maybe this outcry was informed by the students’ lack of familiarity with and autonomy in online learning that Savenye (2005) talks about.

The researcher indicated earlier that online learning gave way to individual learning, which meant that students had to rely on themselves for knowledge acquisition and development, with little or no assistance. Some students were unhappy with individual learning since they were unfamiliar with it. The challenge being that chances of replicating collaborative learning within an online environment (Tan & Chen, 2020) are too scanty. For one participant, “being alone as a university student at home is hard, because if you face some difficulties, there’s no one to help, unlike on campus; with everyone around you, you will always get help”. Another PGCE History student explained: “I’m familiar with attending lectures, so at first it was so difficult to study by myself without a lecturer in front of me”. These two comments proved that some PGCE History students experienced difficulties in coping with individual learning. Students value the help they get from their peers, but individual learning robbed them of that. The data also revealed that the PGCE History students depended greatly on lecturers in acquiring pedagogical knowledge and skills. Some students felt that individual learning hindered their academic performance. One participant explained: “The pandemic forced us to learn alone, and that threatened my academic performance since I had to do work on my own”. In this regard You and Kand (2014) argue that students who lack

self-regulation do not assign enough time to complete given activities. There is a great likelihood that PGCE History students had a problem with individual learning because they have not learnt how to self-regulate. This tallies with the views of Rovai et al. (2005), who suggest that without a sense of connectedness online students may be vulnerable, especially since individual learning may be in contrast to peer interaction (Donlevy, 2003).

Another online learning challenge was home disruptions, which made learning un conducive for PGCE History students. Undertaking learning at home proved not to be working for most PGCE History students who participated in this study. The data revealed numerous reasons why studying at home had negative effects on most of the students. One participant complained: “Well, my point is that at home I don’t have as much time to focus on my academic work as when I’m on campus. Too much time is wasted on home duties”. Another pointed out that: “At home I got disturbed repeatedly while trying to concentrate and do academic work”. For another student: “Staying at home has not been a conducive place for online learning because I come from a big family where there is a lot of noise which can’t be controlled, and there is no way of learning”. Another participant lamented: “The other challenge we have since we are at home is that our parents do not understand if you spend too much time on your cellphone”. Space was also an issue as one participant explained: “I share a room with my unemployed siblings, so I have to stay up till late so that they fall asleep, and I can start studying”. Farooq et al. (2020) argue that in addition to academic work, female students are expected to undertake household duties, and this is stressful for them. Parents do not understand if students spend a lot of time on a cell phone, because they do not know anything about online learning. Even if PGCE History students could regulate themselves to complete the given activities (You & Kand, 2014), if the home situation is beyond their control, there is little they can do. Chaney (2001) talks about students who may lack so much motivation that they can easily lose sight of their original goal. However, these PGCE History students did not lose sight of their goal, but the domestic situation they found themselves in was beyond their control. In other words, these students were fully prepared to undergo the knowledge construction which Salmon (2013) regards as the fourth stage of technological development; but the obligation to do home duties stood in their way.

One other issue that made online learning challenging for PGCE History students was the lack of support from parents. Parents did, generally

speaking, not bother allowing the students who participated in this study time to do academic work; the only thing they cared about was their undertaking and completing home chores. This was explained by two female participants:

I had to study while cooking at the same time; while I'm busy studying, my parents call me several times, asking me to do certain things for them. And: At home I have to clean the house, cook, fetch water, do washing and take care of children, and I can't study at night because I need time to rest because I'm exhausted.

These comments illustrate that certain parents did not support students by allowing them time to do academic work, possibly because of not understanding what online learning entails which was mixed with tradition, culture and patriarchy. According to Vasquez, Patall, Fong, Corrigan and Pine (2016), parents should play an important role in shaping a student's academic functioning. Jelas, Azman, Zulnaidi and Ahmad (2016) argue that the academic achievement of students depends on internal and external support. They classify family as one of the external support structures needed by students to achieve better.

The last issue that made online learning challenging was the economic situation of many PGCE History students. Most of them struggled to obtain data for network connectivity or laptops because they could not afford it. Some of them missed certain assessment activities, and others submitted work late because they did not have data to connect to the network. In relation to this one student explained: "The other challenge was that one of data. Online learning needs too many data bundles that I could not afford as a student, hence I missed some important information from my lecturers". A similar sentiment was shared by another participant: "The need for data bundles left me frustrated because I couldn't go a day without them so as to stay updated about module issues. So I ended up borrowing money to buy data. Sometimes if I failed to buy data I ended up not submitting an assignment on time, and was penalised". Gilbert (2015) argues that being a "have not" owing to lack of funds to gain access to the internet is a challenge for online students. Unfortunately for the students in this study, their economic situation prevented them from engaging with content according to set norms and conventions (Starfield, 2001). According to Gilbert (2015), the ratio of computers and other electronic devices should be increased for the disadvantaged to gain access. This means that giving PGCE History students laptops and data could have helped them with their

outcry about online learning and its accessibility.

Conclusion

The transition, due to COVID-19, compelled PGCE History students at the University of Zululand, to alter their life and learning styles, but they did not find it easy to cope with the new way of online learning. This study concludes that the failure to slowly and smoothly orientate PGCE History students in their transition to online learning resulted in some serious drawbacks. The inaccessibility of online learning robbed most of the students of the pedagogical and content knowledge, and the inaccessibility of study material made online learning a challenge. PGCE History students could not cope with academic work from online instructors, while homebased, individualised learning did not work for some students since they were used to collaborative learning. Home disruptions were a big challenge for students in their detrimental impact on online learning. Some parents did not understand their role in online learning. Students' financial difficulties were a big impediment to such learning. No easy solution can be recommended to the challenges faced by the History PGCE students in this study. However, what this study has done was to lay bare the challenges faced by students at a previously disadvantaged higher education institution in the transition from face-to-face to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Teaching historical pandemics, using Bernstein's pedagogical device as framework

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Abstract

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. This announcement came as a shock to countries around the world. Diverse responses across the globe exposed an ill-prepared world that lacks the historical consciousness and capacity to manage and fight off a global pandemic. Mitigation of COVID-19 requires, inter alia, knowledge of best practices, in which case memory of the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic comes to mind. This event claimed the lives of 50 million people,¹ which is more than the number of people who died during the two 20th century world wars. Responding to the arguably poor historical knowledge of pandemics, this article presents an exploratory proposal to integrate historical knowledge of pandemics with History teaching at school. Considering Bernstein's pedagogical device as a conceptual framework, the article responds to the question: how can historical knowledge of pandemics be integrated with History teaching? A small qualitative sample of online responses from History teachers (N=15) was used to gather a sense of how practicing History teachers relate to historical pandemics in the context of COVID-19. Their responses assisted in opening a discussion around knowledge production, recontextualisation and reproduction during the design process. Based on the expectation that knowledge of pandemics will be taught in the history classroom, recommendations for teacher education are suggested.

Keywords: COVID-19; History teaching; Knowledge production; Pandemic; Pedagogical device; Recontextualisation; Reproduction.

¹ It is estimated that during the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic (H1N1 virus) about 500 million people (one-third of the world's population) became infected. The number of deaths was estimated to be at least 50 million worldwide, with about 675 000 occurring in the United States. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-pandemic-h1n1.html>, as accessed on 8 June 2020.

Introduction

As the world struggles to come to grips with the devastation and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic,² teachers are anticipating curriculum proposals that will integrate historical knowledge of pandemics with their classroom teaching. Teachers at primary, secondary and higher education intuitions, across all disciplines, will be expected to create curriculum space to teach pandemics as a phenomenon. History teachers are confronted with the need to teach historical knowledge of pandemics. In the early stages of COVID-19, a group of scholars have been proactive in sharing their ideas and imaginations of a post-COVID-19 educational future to encourage informed predictions grounded on an ethics of possibilities.³ They considered, among others, how COVID-19 offers opportunities beyond the development of new digital pedagogies and they call for a rethink of the purpose of education to harness more democratic and just societies.

A citizenry with historical knowledge and memory of pandemics would arguably be better able to manage a pandemic than a citizenry with scant historical knowledge. To mitigate COVID-19 infections, countries are resorting to strategies to “flatten the curve”, which involves reducing the number of new cases from one day to the next. Strategies such as the imposition of lockdowns, social distancing, sanitising and quarantine, are being employed to achieve this: all common practices learnt from past pandemics. Flattening the curve can prevent healthcare systems from becoming overwhelmed,⁴ but alone, it cannot terminate the pandemic. Lamentably, Dr Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, recently announced that a COVID-19 vaccine could take 12-18 months to be approved for public use.⁵ COVID-19 does

2 It is necessary to explain the difference between an “epidemic” and a “pandemic”. The following explanation is taken from “Major Epidemic and Pandemic Diseases”: “A number of communicable diseases can constitute significant threats at local, regional or global levels leading to epidemics or pandemics. An epidemic refers to an increase, often sudden, in the number of cases of an infectious disease above what is normally expected in a given population in a specific area. Examples of major epidemics include cholera and diarrhoeal diseases, measles, malaria, and dengue fever. A pandemic is an epidemic of infectious disease that spreads through human populations across a large region, multiple continents or globally. These are diseases that infect humans and can spread easily. Pandemics become disasters when they cause large numbers of deaths, as well as illness, and/or have severe social and economic impacts”. Available at <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/11/12-EPIDEMIC-HR.pdf>, as accessed on 12 June 2020.

3 MA Peters and F Rizvi, et al, “Reimagining the new pedagogical possibilities for universities post- COVID-19”, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 2020, DOI: 10.1080/00131857.2020.1777655 (available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2020.1777655>, as accessed on 29 June 2020.

4 Johns Hopkins University, “New Cases of COVID-19 in World Countries”, Johns Hopkins University, USA (available at <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/new-cases>, as accessed on 27 May 2020.

5 ME Garciaa-Ojeda, “Dr Fauci’s belief that we’ll have a COVID-19 vaccine in 18 months is optimistic – but not improbable”, *The Conversation*, 13 May 2020.

not only encourage scientific research in virology, it may also influence the future school curriculum, as was the case with the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

This article is an exploratory proposal aimed at integrating historical knowledge of pandemics into the History curriculum at schools. For practical reasons, it proposes the integration of historical pandemics into the grades 7-9 Social Science History curriculum. History teaching at school is informed by the South African National Curriculum Statement, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (NCS CAPS), which is not a static and inflexible document to be followed slavishly. It allows teachers to align their learning content with the contextual needs of their learners. For example, the NCS states that one of its aims is to ensure that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives.⁶ In this regard, the curriculum promotes knowledge in local contexts, while being sensitive to global imperatives.⁷ In particular, the NCS highlights concepts associated with historical inquiry, such as an appreciation for the past and the forces that shaped it; as well as the dialectical relations between cause and effect, change and continuity, and time and chronology.

Historical consciousness, as an integral part of History teaching, refers to an awareness of how matters past, present and future, relate to one another in a way that enables the individual to create a specific kind of meaning in relation to history.⁸ In light of COVID-19, it would be legitimate for contemporary History teachers to question, for instance, why is there a lacuna in historical consciousness and public memory of the 1918 Spanish Flu, given its scale and similarities with COVID-19, and why teaching about the two world wars of the 20th century is virtually synonymous with History as a subject, but knowledge of an event that decimated the lives of hundreds of thousands of ordinary people, is not mentioned? Teacher education institutions cannot ignore these questions, especially in view of recent university protests, when students demanded curriculum reform that is relevant and meaningful to their lives.⁹

6 DBE, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Pretoria, Government Printing Works, 2012).

7 DBE, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Pretoria, Government Printing Works, 2012), p. 10.

8 LJ King, "What is black historical consciousness", A Clark, *Contemplating historical consciousness: Notes from the field* (Berghalm Books, New York, 2019), pp. 163-174.

9 During 2015/16 #FeesMustFall student protests, South African university students across the country demanded a relevant and decolonised curriculum. Higher education institutions consequently amended their curriculum transformation policies to be sensitive to students' demands.

Poor historical consciousness of the 1918 Spanish Flu is a contested issue in the literature and of direct concern to the 21st-century critical historian. If a lack of consciousness of a significant historical experience can be used as evidence of an omission in the current curriculum, then historians and teachers would want to take corrective action and learn from past oversights. But historiography is informed by underlying interests, and the critical historian would not want memory and lessons learnt from COVID-19 to fade and be forgotten, as in the case of the 1918 Spanish Flu. The purpose of this proposal is therefore to argue for the inclusion of historical knowledge of pandemics to become part of school History. Bernstein's pedagogical device (explained later) is offered to frame the integration process. As a guide towards the selection of historical knowledge of pandemics, what follows is a review of the literature relevant to historical inquiry into past pandemics.

Historical references to earlier pandemics

This section deals with prominent historical references that may be relevant as sources of curriculum-related literature. The literature deals with issues regarding the arguably poor historical consciousness of pandemics, as expressed in a work by Howard Phillips,¹⁰ which is the main source of knowledge on the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic in South Africa. This section offers a composite view of the history of worldwide pandemics between the 16th and 19th centuries, before ending with a discussion of the "Leit Motiv" model of historical enquiry into pandemics.¹¹ As a frame of reference, the History teacher may be guided by the "Leit Motiv" model by drawing on learners' lived experiences of COVID-19.

It is quite ironic that despite poor historical consciousness of the 1918 Spanish Flu, there seems to be a modest selection of literature to design a curriculum proposal. In the age of electronic communication and the internet, references to literature on the 1918 Spanish Flu are easily accessible. For example, Martin Kettle, a journalist, wrote a piece in the *Guardian* remembering the 100th anniversary of the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic which killed about 100 million people (a contested number,

¹⁰ H Phillips, "'Black October': The impact of the Spanish Influenza Epidemic of 1918 on South Africa", Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 1984, University of Cape Town.

¹¹ H Markel, "Contemplating pandemics: The role of historical inquiry in developing pandemic-mitigating strategies for the 21st century" (available at <https://bioethicsarchive.georgetown.edu/pcsbj/sites/default/files/Markel%20Meeting%202020%20Presentation.pdf>, as accessed on 11 June 2020).

contrary to footnote 1) – which caused more deaths than the first and second world wars combined.¹² Controversially, Kettle further suggests that perhaps the Spanish Flu faded from memory because a disease has no victor to celebrate, while wars have victors. While Kettle’s explanation resonates with the popular adage that history is written by the victor(s), it is an over-simplification of history from a disciplinary perspective. The same question regarding fading memories about the 1918 Spanish Flu was treated in an academically plausible way by Phillips, a leading scholar of the 1918 Spanish Flu in South Africa.¹³ Phillips’ doctoral study is arguably one of the first that traced the course of the epidemic in five main areas where it severely paralysed everyday life, namely the Witwatersrand gold mines, Cape Town, Bloemfontein, Kimberley and the Transkei.¹⁴

Phillips argues that the Spanish Flu of 1918 is one of the worst-known natural disasters, with little place in history or living memory. He further postulates that its obscurity in the national archive and memory may be ascribed to multiple reasons, ranging from its ephemeral nature to issues of historiography. First, Phillips asserts that the Spanish Flu was short lived (1918/19) rather than protracted; second, that it coincided with the Armistice that ended the First World War (1914–1918) which commanded public attention at a global level; and third, that the 1918 pandemic being referred to as a ‘flu’ and not a ‘plague’ perhaps inadvertently diminished its gravity as an epoch-making event.¹⁵ But, more importantly, the question as to why historians failed to give sustainable attention to the 1918 pandemic and prevent its fading from popular memory, may be because they were interested in political and economic issues, to the exclusion of a social history. A social history privileges the conditions and interests of the masses and primarily exposes the power relations that shape society.¹⁶ Mainstream historians were primarily preoccupied with nationalism, race relations, capitalist development and the class struggle, which left little room for day-to-day matters such as how people lived or died.¹⁷

A very popular but exceptional South African reference to the 1918 Spanish Flu is the website of St John’s College, Johannesburg. In a recent

12 M Kettle, *The Guardian*, “A century on, why are we forgetting the death of 100 Million?” (available at <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/25/spanish-flu-pandemic-1918-forgetting-100-million-deaths>, as accessed on 4 June 2020).

13 H Phillips, “‘Black October’: ...”, (Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 1984, University of Cape Town), pp. 1-9.

14 H Phillips, “‘Black October’: ...”, (Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 1984, University of Cape Town), p. vii.

15 H Phillips, “‘Black October’: ...”, (Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 1984, University of Cape Town), p. 449.

16 H Phillips, “‘Black October’: ...”, (Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 1984, University of Cape Town), p. 450.

17 H Phillips, “‘Black October’: ...”, (Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 1984, University of Cape Town), pp. 1-9.

update on its Spanish Flu history, the College connected its institutional memory thereof with contemporary experiences of COVID-19. The website reveals:¹⁸

... that the present suspension of school activities, imposed by the Covid-19 crisis, is not unprecedented in the history of St John's College as 102 years ago, the College went through times probably more challenging than these confronting the school now. Then, too, a pandemic necessitated the school's closure for a prolonged period. Then, they did not have the blessing (or the curse?) of electronic communications and so were unable to continue teaching activities during the hiatus, and the entire term's work had to be crammed into five weeks, when schools were eventually allowed to reopen.

The website refers to thought-provoking news segments from the school's newsletter on the 1918 Spanish Flu and recalls critical moments and events such as the death of some teachers, which create a vivid recollection of the school's sombre climate at that time. Teachers and learners at St John's may have an enhanced historical consciousness of the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic which will enrich their understanding of past pandemics and determine how they connect with the present, especially COVID-19. They will be able, for instance, to identify the similarities and differences between the two pandemics in an academically meaningful way, which would be highly commendable from a history-teaching perspective.

The South African History Online (SAHO) site is another popular reference point for information on seminal South African historical events.¹⁹ Relying mainly on Phillips' work as an historical reference on the local experience of the 1918 Spanish Flu, SAHO traces its spread to South Africa via the ports of Durban and Cape Town. By the end of 1918, more than 127 000 black people and 11 000 whites had succumbed to the epidemic. In general, about 500 000 people died of the epidemic in South Africa, the fifth-hardest hit nation worldwide.²⁰ For Africans the epidemic came after the hardships of the 1913 Land Act, war-time inflation, the droughts of 1914–1916 and the floods of 1916–1917. Unlike 102 years ago, when sea-travel was a popular mode of transport, the HINI virus

18 Anon., St John's College, "Johannesburg and the Spanish Flu of 1918" (available at file:///C:/Users/davidsno/Downloads/St%20John's%20College,%20Johannesburg,%20and%20the%20Spanish%20flu%20of%201918%20%20The%20Heritage%20Portal.html, as accessed on 6 June 2020).

19 Anon., South African History Online, "The Influenza Epidemic" (available at <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/influenza-epidemic>, as accessed on 6 June 2020).

20 Anon., St John's College, "Johannesburg and the Spanish Flu of 1918" (available at file:///C:/Users/davidsno/Downloads/St%20John's%20College,%20Johannesburg,%20and%20the%20Spanish%20flu%20of%201918%20%20The%20Heritage%20Portal.html, as accessed on 6 June 2020).

spread gradually across the globe. With a 21st-century technologically advanced air-travel sector, COVID-19 is spreading like wildfire and has led to a ban on domestic and international travel to limit its devastation. Contrary to the spread of the 1918 Spanish Flu that came via sea travel, the first diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in South Africa were announced on 5 March 2020, emanating from the return of tourists by aeroplane from Italy (at that time, the epicentre of the pandemic).²¹ The first patient was a 38-year-old male who formed part of a group of ten people who had arrived back in South Africa on 1 March 2020.

The history of pandemics goes back to ancient times but, in modern history, the recording of influenza pandemics goes back to outbreaks which were recognised by their common clinical features.²² The first pandemic developed from a 1580 epidemic which spread from Europe to Asia and Africa. During the 17th century, influenza epidemics occurred across Europe. Three major influenza pandemics occurred in the 18th century and spread to North America, South America and most of Europe. Influenza pandemics occurred during 1830/31, 1833/34 and 1889/90, with little or no influenza activity worldwide between 1847/48 and the 1889/90 pandemic. Because the cause of pandemics was unknown at the time, flu epidemics were named according to their country of origin (e.g., the 1889/90 pandemic was called the Russian Flu). After reaching North America, the Russian Flu spread to Latin America and reached Asia in February. By March, the flu had become a pandemic in New Zealand and Australia. In the spring of 1890, the pandemic spread to Africa and Asia. The 1889/90 pandemic is the first for which detailed records are available. Influenza activity was relatively insignificant for the next two decades and many people regarded influenza as an episodic, mild respiratory infection until 1918, with the outbreak of the Spanish Flu.²³

Notwithstanding historians' historiographical abandonment of the 1918 Spanish Flu and other pandemics, various related publications have appeared over the years. For example, the *New York Times* listed a few essential publications dealing with a range of pandemics in the past, now

21 National Institute of Communicable Diseases, "First Case of COVID-19 Reported in South Africa" (available at <https://www.nicd.ac.za/first-case-of-covid-19-coronavirus-reported-in-sa/>, as accessed on 8 June 2020).

22 BA Cunha, "Influenza: Historical aspects of epidemics and pandemics" (Elsevier Inc., Amsterdam, 2004), pp. 141-155.

23 BA Cunha, "Influenza: ...", *The Spanish Flu did not originate in Spain, but the USA* (Elsevier Inc., Amsterdam, 2004), pp. 141-155.

easily accessible.²⁴ Such texts include *Pox Americana – the Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782*, by E A Fenn; *The Fever: How Malaria has Ruled Humankind for 500,000 Years*, by S Shah; *Flu: The Story of the Great Influenza Pandemic of 1918 and the Search for the Virus that Caused It*, by G Kolata and *The Hot Zone – The Terrifying True Story of the Origin of the Ebola Virus*, by K Preston.²⁵

Of the few theoretical constructs of historical inquiry into epidemics and pandemics is the “Leit Motiv” model developed by Howard Markel,²⁶ who identified seven main themes from his historical investigation into epidemics and pandemics. Markel’s model is explained to facilitate its recontextualisation, and as practical example to the History teacher how to use it as a pedagogical device in teaching the history of pandemics.

First, “[t]hinking about epidemics is almost always framed and shaped by how a given society understands a particular disease to travel and infect its victims”. What Markel refers to here, is the availability of knowledge at the time of the pandemic. For example, in the absence of scientific knowledge, a pandemic may be ascribed to a ‘curse from God’ or a mythical event, etc. The response or treatment may be influenced by the knowledge that people have at the time. Second, “[t]he economic devastation typically associated with epidemics can have a strong influence on the public’s response to a contagious disease crisis”. With lockdown, for instance, comes a great cost to the economy and suffering at the social and individual level. Third, “[t]he movements of people and goods and the speed of travel are major factors in the spread of pandemic disease”. Historically, the bubonic plagues coincided with ocean travel and imperial conquest, and the lesson that increased travel around the globe comes with risks will now be taken seriously after COVID-19. Attention to the development of transportation in relation to the spread of disease may be highlighted under this theme. Fourth, “[o]ur fascination with the suddenly appearing microbe that kills relatively few in spectacular fashion too often trumps our approach to infectious scourges that patiently kill millions every year”. For example, in 2003, SARS (Severe

24 Anon., *New York Times*, “7 Essential Books about Pandemics” (available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/pandemic-books-coronavirus.html>, as accessed on 6 June 2020).

25 *New York Times*, “7 Essential Books about Pandemics”, 24 February 2020.

26 H Markel, “Contemplating pandemics: The role of historical inquiry in developing pandemic-mitigating strategies for the 21st century”, SM Lemon, MA Hamburg, P Frederick et al., *Ethical and legal considerations in mitigating pandemic disease*, Workshop summary, free download, 2007 (available at <http://www.nap.edu/catalogue/11917>, as accessed on 25 May 2020), pp. 1-30.

Acute Respiratory Syndrome) affected approximately 8 000 people and killed 800 – which was much more dramatic than its response to tuberculosis, which infected 8 000 000 and killed 3 000 000 that same year.²⁷ Fifth, “[w]idespread media coverage of epidemics is hardly new and is an essential part of any epidemic”. For instance, the media have the power to shape the public’s perception of an epidemic and with advanced technological media, news spread virtually in real-time. As teaching activities, the media coverage of pandemics can become research topics for learners. Learners will be given opportunities to engage with archival material to get a sense of historical research. Sixth, “[a] dangerous theme of epidemics past is the concealment of the problem from the world at large”. Countries concealed news of an epidemic to protect economic assets and trade. A case in point: in 1892, the German government initially concealed that year’s cholera pandemic because of fears that closing the port of Hamburg – at the time the largest port in the world – would mean economic ruin for many. Other examples are when concealment takes place motivated by nationalistic bias, pride or politics, as was the case with China during the first months of the SARS epidemic of 2003, and Indonesia and avian influenza. Lastly, “[o]ne of the saddest themes of epidemics throughout history has been the tendency to blame or scapegoat particular social groups”. This is also true for COVID-19, for example when the American president, Donald Trump, called the disease a “Chinese virus”²⁸ and when Africans in China faced eviction after being blamed for spreading COVID-19.²⁹ Variations of the model will occur when applying it to any pandemic, as Markel demonstrated. Markel’s model of historical inquiry provides a practical point of departure to the History teacher.

The focus of this article is on the integration of historical pandemics into the grades 7-9 Social Science NCS. The article is informed by the research question: how can historical knowledge of pandemics be integrated into the history curriculum? Bernstein’s pedagogical device serves as a theoretical framework for conceptualising the integration of historical knowledge of pandemics as part of the History curriculum. A convenient sample of history teachers (N=15), enrolled for a History of Education honours module at

27 H Markel, “Contemplating pandemics: ...”, SM Lemon, MA Hamburg, P Frederick et al., *Ethical and legal considerations in mitigating pandemic disease*, Workshop summary, free download, 2007 (available at <http://www.nap.edu/catalogue/11917>, as accessed on 25 May 2020), pp. 1-30.

28 D Scott, “Trump’s New Fixation on using a Racist Name for the Coronavirus”, 18 March 2020 (available at <https://www.vox.com/2020/3/18/21185478/coronavirus-usa-trump-chinese-virus>, as accessed on 11 June 2020).

29 OkayAfrica, “Africans in China being Evicted from Homes and Blamed for Spreading the Coronavirus” (available at <https://www.okayafrika.com/africans-in-china-guangzhou-evicted-left-homeless-blamed-for-coronavirus>, as accessed on 11 June 2020).

the University of South Africa (Unisa) served as respondents to a set of questions probing their knowledge of historical pandemics and their views on its integration into the history curriculum. Respondents completed a set of online questions and returned them to the author via email. Following this introduction and brief literature discussion of pandemics as historical inquiry, the article unfolds by discussing Bernstein's pedagogical device to frame the integration of historical pandemics and the History curriculum. History teachers' responses to the questions are discussed in relation to Bernstein's framework. The article draws some conclusions and suggests recommendations for teacher education.

Bernstein's pedagogical device and the History curriculum

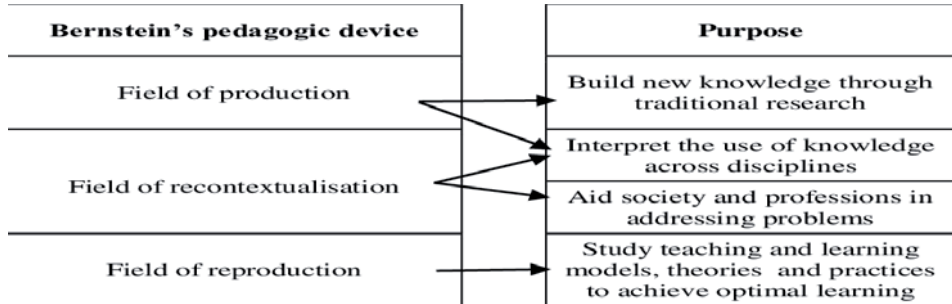
Bernstein's notion of the pedagogical device is employed in this article to integrate historical knowledge of pandemics into the Senior Phase History curriculum. Bernstein makes a distinction between what knowledge is relayed (the message) and an underlying pedagogic device that structures and organises the content and distribution of that knowledge.³⁰ To this end, Bernstein identifies three main fields of the pedagogical device, namely knowledge production, recontextualisation and reproduction.³¹ In this proposal, the focus is on knowledge content selection by curriculum planners, the pedagogisation of the content as curriculum knowledge and texts, and the mediation of the curriculum at the classroom level. The focus is therefore on the recontextualising and reproduction fields. Bernstein thus places emphasis on an analysis of the production and reproduction of knowledge via official schooling institutions.

For the purpose of this article, the following simplified diagram (Image 1), borrowed from Lubbe, is useful for elucidating the relationship between Bernstein's pedagogical device and the generative learning practices that may emanate from such devices.

30 C Bertram, "Bernstein's theory of the pedagogic device as a frame to study History Curriculum Reform in South Africa", *Yesterday & Today*, 7, 2012, pp. 1-11.

31 P Singh, "Pedagogical knowledge: Bernstein's theory of the pedagogical device", *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 23(4), 2002, pp. 571-582.

Image 1: Bernstein's pedagogical device and its application for incorporating pandemic knowledge



Source: I Lubbe, "Educating accounting professionals: Development of a theoretical framework as a language of description of accounting knowledge production and its implications for accounting academics at South African Universities", *South African Journal of Accounting Research*, 2013, 27(1), pp. 87-124.

Curriculum conceptualisation and design do not take place in a vacuum. History teachers are invariably guided, first, by the curriculum policy that defines their educational aims, and, second, by the classification and disciplinary nature of the knowledge to be taught at an institutional level. According to the NCS's policy on History teaching, the subject is underpinned by strong empirical foundations involving inquiry, as well as analytical thinking and its application. The NCS defines the purpose of studying History as seeking to:³²

... enable people to understand and evaluate how past human action has an impact on the present and how it influences the future. History is a process of enquiry and involves asking questions about the past: What happened? When did it happen? Why did it happen then? It is about how to think analytically about the stories people tell us about the past and how we internalise that information.

According to Bernstein's conceptual framework, the first field of pedagogical concern would be to determine the disciplinary nature of the knowledge intended to be integrated into the curriculum. In Bernstein's terms, the question is whether the historical study of pandemics can become a pedagogical discourse, identifiable by its own concepts and relationship

³² DBE, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Pretoria, Government Printing Works, 2012).

to other disciplines.³³ Bernstein distinguishes between every day and specialised knowledge, arguing that everyday knowledge is distinguished from the theoretical by the role each type of knowledge plays in society.³⁴ Bernstein differentiates between horizontal and vertical knowledge, to classify knowledge. Hoadley, referencing Bernstein, distinguishes between an elaborated code or a “school code”, as opposed to common-sense knowledge of everyday life.³⁵ In this article Bernstein's pedagogical device provides a framework to integrate historical knowledge of pandemics and History teaching.

Introducing knowledge of historical pandemics would require appropriate texts and teachers who can demonstrate deep conceptual understanding of the subject. For example, it may be expected from history teachers to display basic knowledge of for instance, COVID-19 as a sub-microscopic virus resorting under the discipline of virology. As a disease, it generatively intersects with a myriad of disciplines across the natural and social sciences. COVID-19, which is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, is an acute novel emerging infection.³⁶ Taking the field of knowledge production as the first concern in Bernstein's pedagogical device, historical knowledge of pandemics and disease would become the context in which pandemics may be studied as a history theme. In terms of framing the history of pandemics as a specialist field, it will draw on the sub-discipline of epidemiology. Epidemiology has been defined as the study of the emergence, distribution and control of disease, disability and death among groups of people.³⁷ The field combines the sciences of biology, clinical medicine, sociology, mathematics and ecology, to understand patterns of health problems and improve human health across the globe. From a disciplinary perspective, the historian may primarily be attracted by the sociological and ecological dimensions of the pandemic. In a historical study of the 1918 Spanish Flu, historians would, for instance, be selective of the content with a focus on who (people), when (time), where (spatial), why(causal) and how (ecological/environmental) the pandemic affected human society.³⁸

33 U Hoadley, “Analysing Pedagogy: The Problem of Framing”, 2006 (available at http://www.cilt.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/104/hoadley2006.pdf, as accessed on 8 June 2020).

34 LM Wheelehan, “The pedagogic device: The relevance of Bernstein's analysis for VET”, 2005.

35 U Hoadley, “Analysing Pedagogy: ...”, 2006 (available at http://www.cilt.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/104/hoadley2006.pdf, as accessed on 8 June 2020). p. 2.

36 UNESDOC, “Statement on COVID-19: Ethical Considerations from a Global Perspective” (available at <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373115>, as accessed on 6 June 2020).

37 T Childers, “What is epidemiology?”, *Live Science Contributor*, 5 March 2020 (available at <https://www.livescience.com/epidemiology.html>, as accessed on 8 June 2020).

38 DBE, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Pretoria, Government Printing Works, 2012).

As a discipline, History is a specialised field which is capable of theorising new knowledge about COVID-19 and past pandemics. As a disciplinary classification, the history of pandemics would draw on segments of epidemiology, but as a sub-field which is integrated in the broader study of History. Its disciplinary definition would blur its boundaries with science, society and ethics. There would therefore not be a strong independent field, but an integration and interaction with related disciplines. While there may be multiple disciplinary overlaps between the study of pandemics and History, Bernstein's field of knowledge production is useful in conceptualising the field, its relations and interaction with other disciplines, and its potential sources of new knowledge.

Considering the purpose of the pedagogical device, image 1 illustrates how the framework provides a heuristic to understand the field of knowledge production as different from the field of recontextualisation. Table 1 shows the capacity of the pedagogical device as a framework to describe knowledge production practices at institutional levels.

Bernstein's second field of knowledge recontextualisation describes how existing knowledge is ordered and disordered when knowledge selection is made and converted into a curriculum or a textbook. Recontextualisation involves the privileging of selected texts which manifest themselves as knowledge for school-going children. At this stage, the recontextualised knowledge no longer resembles the original because it has been pedagogised or converted into pedagogical discourses.³⁹ Here, a potential pedagogical discourse of historical pandemics may be identifiable by a selection of emerging concepts and events in relation to other aspects of pandemics. Curriculum design and textbook writing take place during recontextualisation.

The field of knowledge reproduction predominates in primary, secondary and tertiary classrooms. In this space, the selected pedagogic texts created in the field of recontextualisation (e.g., curriculum knowledge and textbooks) are used by teachers preparing for classroom teaching. Teachers play the role of knowledge experts, and their content and pedagogical knowledge become crucial in determining the quality of the pedagogical discourse which, in this case, revolves around historical knowledge of pandemics. Needless to say, teachers with a high competence in pedagogy and content will relay the pedagogical discourse more effectively than those with

³⁹ P Singh, "Pedagogical knowledge: ...", *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 23(4), 2002, pp. 571-582.

mediocre levels of knowledge.

While image 1 (above) illuminates the relations between the pedagogical device and the various objectives, table 1 shows the generative pedagogical practices associated with each device.

Table 1: Pedagogical devices and practices

Pedagogical device	Pedagogical practice
Field of Production	Research units, universities, academic publications, academic associations and societies. Knowledge production on historical pandemics can be raised as academic topics. (Special editions proliferated, prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic).
Field of Recontextualisation (distribution)	Knowledge interpretation, curriculum design, content selection, teacher education curriculum, textbook writing. Existing knowledge of historical pandemics became the literature source to design curricula and develop learning materials.
Field of Reproduction	Classroom pedagogies, reuse and reinterpretation of texts, mediation of educator in pacing of content, assessment practices. The field opens possibilities of knowledge reproduction and production as the theme becomes a (re) new disciplinary discourse in History.

Source: I Lubbe, "Educating accounting professionals: Development of a theoretical framework as a language of description of accounting knowledge production and its implications for accounting academics at South African Universities", *South African Journal of Accounting Research*, 2013, 27(1), pp. 87-124.

What follows is a synthesis of the History teachers' responses, presented as an entry point for considering Bernstein's pedagogical device as a framework for the integration of the history of pandemics into the History curriculum.

History teachers' responses to pandemic historical knowledge and curriculum space

While the responses of teachers did not reveal significant knowledge of pandemics of the past, their responses are indicative of their main concerns during COVID-19. Their responses displayed a mixed knowledge response with potential to develop a disciplinary discourse on historical pandemics. Some teachers mentioned the 1918 Spanish Flu and the Smallpox epidemic, but concerns were mainly epidemiological in nature. The participants referred to the need to "define a pandemic" and "COVID-19" and needed an explanation for "what is it and where does it

originate from”.⁴⁰ Since epidemiology studies the emergence, distribution and control of disease, disability and death among populations,⁴¹ the respondents were interested in knowing “the symptoms, treatment and which countries are affected”. Epidemiology uses mathematical models and graphs to illustrate the distribution and mortality per population or geographical location. Epidemiology would be a primary knowledge source from which to derive the history of pandemics. However, while accurate knowledge of the disease and its treatment may be necessary, historically relevant content would be foregrounded. Pandemics would be viewed from a historical perspective in relation to society and ecology – the main disciplinary overlapping with epidemiology.

Secondly, respondents raised issues related to “mental health and coping mechanism[s] during the pandemic” – reactions which are mainly based on their subjective experiences during COVID-19. During the lockdown period, the greatest disruption was caused by the total closure of the national and global economies, which resulted in massive job losses and financial gloom in an already ailing economy in a recession. Psychological stress is associated with “unemployment and an uncertain future [which] causes fear and panic”. Both knowledge production and distribution will be needed to link the psycho-social and health effects of a pandemic with historical knowledge. For instance, a significant consequence of the 1918 Spanish Flu was the establishment of the South African Department of Health, which did not exist prior to that.⁴²

Thirdly, the respondents referred to “school closure and its disruptive effects” on society and the school curriculum. The educational theme offers an opportunity for knowledge production, as the education sector is ablaze with new pedagogies for “online teaching and home-schooling”. Education and information technology have brought greater awareness of educational inequalities, with the privileged schooling sector being least disadvantaged during the lockdown. The respondents raised issues related to “skills, leadership and being prepared for future pandemics”. Any educational responses will have implications for teacher education, as new skills and pedagogies are emerging from the conditions imposed

⁴⁰ “Respondents” in this section refers to what was taken from the online respondents’ reflections. Themes were developed by clustering common responses into categories which were regrouped into themes. The initial six themes were reduced to four, when “prevention” and “education” became one and “psycho” and “socioeconomic” became “psycho-social”.

⁴¹ T Childers, “What is epidemiology?”, *Live Science Contributor*, 5 March 2020 (available at <https://www.livescience.com/epidemiology.html>, as accessed on 8 June 2020).

⁴² H Phillips, “‘Black October’: ...”, (Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 1984, University of Cape Town), p. 374.

by COVID-19. With historical pandemics as part of school knowledge, education is viewed as the intervention space to address the poor knowledge of past pandemics.

The NCS CAPS curriculum makes provision for one project in Social Sciences in the Senior Phase (grades 7, 8 and 9). It is recommended that the History project be assigned in either grade 8 or 9 learners, as they will have experience of project work from the previous grade. The project should be offered with the necessary support and monitoring, to ensure that the envisaged outcome is achieved. The project topic should be given at the beginning of the term, with regular periods for monitoring and feedback.⁴³

The curriculum makes provision for an oral and a written section. The theme – “The history of pandemics” – corresponds with the CAPS requirement that a project address the teacher and learner contexts. CAPS requires that the research comprise at least 300 words and two illustrations, with captions. The oral section can be an interview report on a selected aspect of pandemics, e.g. an interview with an elderly person with memories/knowledge of the Spanish Flu of 1918 or oral reporting on previous pandemics. The interview/story should be around 600 words in length. The duration of the project may extend over a term, but its management is best left to the History teacher who will intersperse project work with lessons, feedback and learner presentations.

Conclusion and recommendations

This article explored how historical knowledge of pandemics can be integrated into the Senior Phase History CAPS curriculum, using Bernstein's pedagogical device as a framework (Refer to Table 1 above). In the production field, research activities aim at the production of new knowledge, while in the recontextualised field knowledge is applied in curriculum design and reproduced via pedagogical activities at teaching level. The following conclusions and recommendation are made to facilitate the teaching of the pandemics as historical knowledge.

First, based on the responses and existing literature on the history of pandemics, there seems to be potential for the emergence and construction of a specialised pedagogical discourse within the disciplinary boundaries of History. A rich archive of historical literature points to a budding,

⁴³ DBE, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Pretoria, Government Printing Works, 2012).

incubated set of underdeveloped themes which are ready to sprout into a new branch of historical knowledge. The responses of History teachers were overwhelmingly in favour that historical inquiry of pandemics should be integrated into the History curriculum. It is recommended that higher education institutions encourage research into the historical aspects of pandemics, to enrich the existing materials available for the purpose of curriculum usage.

Second, the demarcation of the field from its primary discipline, namely epidemiology, will have intersectional boundaries that will emphasise the historical, rather than the medical dimensions of pandemics. According to the definition of epidemiology, the primary overlap with History is in respect of sociology and ecology. A historical perspective on the pandemic as a socio-ecological phenomenon may potentially generate new research interest. However, at the level of curriculum design, education and training, existing knowledge will become the main source. In this regard, the literature mentioned in this article, for example, the Leit Motiv-model⁴⁴ for historical inquiry, provides concrete references to inform curriculum and pedagogical processes. This model, for example, identified common patterns in past pandemics useful to inform historical research. It is recommended that curriculum designers and teacher education institutions build on existing theoretical knowledge, to design a curriculum to teach historical knowledge of pandemics.

Third, with reference to the recontextualisation of knowledge, the responses of teachers can serve as a yardstick for gauging their knowledge level, interests and historical consciousness. Teacher education institutions are advised to consider the relatively undeveloped state of teachers' knowledge when designing the History curriculum.

Fourth, the recontextualisation and redistribution stages overlap, as teachers are expected to rework texts and materials for classroom use and lesson plans. Project-based teaching requires appropriate pedagogical intervention, and attention should be given to both written and oral forms of assessment. Teacher education should stimulate the production of new knowledge and the conversion of knowledge into a pedagogic discourse through effective teaching.⁴⁵ Educational institutions are advised

44 H Markel, "Contemplating pandemics: ...", SM Lemon, MA Hamburg, P Frederick et al., *Ethical and legal considerations...*, Workshop summary, free download, 2007 (available at <http://www.nap.edu/catalogue/11917>, as accessed on 25 May 2020), pp. 1-30.

45 I Lubbe, "Educating accounting professionals: ...", *South African Journal of Accounting Research*, 2013, 27(1), pp.87-124.

to consciously develop a historical pandemic discourse, integrated with History as a discipline.

In conclusion, to finally return to the research question: how can historical knowledge of pandemics be integrated with History teaching; this article has shown that there are sufficient grounds in the CAPS curriculum in the Senior Grade CAPS History section, for the history of pandemics to be taught in a History classroom. The article has also shown the generative potential of knowledge production and how knowledge can be converted during the recontextualisation phase, for the purpose of pedagogy. A flexible (rather than rigid) application of Bernstein's pedagogical device, comprising of three fields offers a framework for the development of a historical pandemic discourse and the mapping of a curriculum-integration proposal, from conception to implementation.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ The author is indebted to the reviewers for their valuable critique which improved the final outcome of this article.

Teaching about dying and death: The 1918 Flu epidemic in South Africa

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Abstract

It seems obvious that while others around us are concerned with trying to understand the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ways in which it has disrupted so much of our lives and professional work, history educators should be concerned rather to look back, to study previous epidemics for the light that they can shed on today. The 1918 ‘Spanish’ flu is a logical starting place. But it presents two obstacles: first, that there is so little that is truly comparable to the 2020 experience and, secondly, that the material of 1918 in South Africa is potentially so difficult to use in the classroom. How does one, for instance, teach about the number of cases where people narrowly avoided being buried alive, escaping in the nick of time. (And what about those who were not as fortunate?)

This is an exploration of uncharted territory that presents an initial map to anyone who might be tempted to follow suit and put it to the test. As there is no ready model at hand to use to teach about dying and death in the history classroom, a sequence of five themes is proposed as a way in which one can approach the issue of mortality without coming at it head-on. The themes are explained and justified and an exemplar of a possible class activity is provided for each. The question posed is whether one should teach about dying and death in this way. The conclusion suggests what the possible benefits accruing might be.

Keywords: 1918 flu epidemic; Influenza; Spanish flu; COVID-19; Dying; Death; History curriculum; Human dignity; Empathy; Remembrance.

Drew Gilpin Faust wrote, “Mortality defines the human condition”, (Faust, 2008:xi) as the introductory sentence to her study of death and the American Civil War. Yet it finds no real place in the history classroom. While wars and disasters, plagues and genocides, civil struggles and systematic internment find places in the history curriculum, it is very seldom that mortality is ever

confronted directly.¹ Death is treated by means of causes and results, statistics, literary works, film and video, and honour and remembrance, but it almost always remains at arm's length and is not openly addressed nor studied per se. The reasons are easy to find. Mortality is too heavy and difficult, death is a topic for the aging not the youth and death has an overarching finality – it can't lead anyone into the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has drawn attention to plagues and epidemics in the past, most notably the Black Death (14th century Europe) and the 1918 “Spanish” influenza. There is, however, one major difference between the 2020 pandemic and the flu of a century ago in South Africa. In 2020 there has been a significant recovery rate and deaths constitute only around 1% of the number of infections. Its first wave of infection lasted approximately six months and there were fewer than 20,000 deaths (0,03%) of the population of the country). By contrast, in 1918 42% of the total population (six million) of the country contracted the flu and at least two percent (139,471) and likely as much as six percent (350,000) of the total population had died within four weeks in October.² It is impossible to study the 1918 epidemic without staring death in the face and coming to terms in some way with the utter devastation that the disease wrought over a very short period. So quickly and unexpectedly could it strike that one observer remembered having spoken to someone who was “hale and hearty and fit” at four p.m. but whom he discovered the next day had been buried at six a.m. He concluded: “He had succumbed very quickly overnight” (Phillips, 2018:122).

The question is whether it is reasonable to teach about dying and death on this scale in the classroom. In the absence of any models for considering this,³ we offer a sequence of five themes that opens the subject of mortality to study and investigation in secondary school history classes without dwelling on death in the first instance. They are:

- 1 The closest example in South African history is arguably the concentration camps in the South African war (Grade 10 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (DBE, 2011:18)). Textbooks typically give statistics and a few photographs of the camps, but generally avoid addressing death and dying directly. The coverage of the Holocaust and World War I is often of a similar nature. Hammond (2001:21) raises the question of whether some historical atrocities have been judged more historically significant than others.
- 2 “Official” figures, as given in the *Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa*, are: White cases = 454 653 (17% of the cases), non-White cases = 2 162 152 (83% of the cases); White deaths = 11 726 (8,4% of deaths), non-White deaths = 127 745 (91,6% of deaths). Howard Phillips estimates 300-350,000 deaths (Phillips, 2018:x). The world figure he provides is 50 million deaths, compared with 12-14 million deaths in World War I.
- 3 I have been unable to trace any studies that concern the teaching of dying and death in history teaching specifically.

- Community concern and kindness;
- Health and medical care;
- Human dignity;
- Empathy with the suffering and bereaved;
- Remembrance.

In each case an exemplar activity⁴ is presented and discussed using oral and written source material that details the scale and horror of October 1918. As it is freely available and an excellent resource, the sources are all taken from Howard Phillips' 2018 book *In a time of plague. Memories of the 'Spanish' Flu epidemic of 1918 in South Africa* (Phillips, 2018).⁵

Introductory information about the 1918 Flu epidemic

“World in the Grip of “Flu”. Epidemic on Three Continents. 180,000 Cases in Germany: 100,000 Victims in Budapest... Statement by Union Health Department. One of the Most Infectious Diseases Known: But Rapidly Destroyed by Sun and Fresh Air. Little Risk of Infection Out of Doors....” So read the headlines on the front page of the Kimberley newspaper the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* on 10 October 1918 (Alhadeff, 1976:35). From first detection in 1915 there had been instances of an unusually virulent strain of influenza related possibly to the millions of soldiers and sailors waging World War I under confined conditions at the time. It re-appeared in the United States in 1917 in a military camp. The first wave of the disease was relatively mild, but a second, highly infectious, wave began in August 1918. This so-called “Spanish” flu broke out in Freetown Sierra Leone, amongst other wartime ports. From there it was spread to Cape Town by two troopships returning from Europe, despite an attempt to quarantine the soldiers before they were allowed to go to their homes. From Cape Town the disease was spread along the railways into rural and urban communities all over South Africa. It wasn't only spread through returning soldiers and their contacts, however. People who fled towns and villages to try to escape it ended up taking the disease with them wherever they went. Migrant workers on the mines left to go to their homes in rural areas, spreading it on the way. Poorer communities especially were

4 The article explores the pedagogic issues and theoretical principles raised, which it does by proposing the sequence of five possible illustrated themes, but it is *not* an account of practice or classroom research. The exemplars simply illustrate how the themes might be applied.

5 A collection of interviews of and letters from people (1972-1983) who remembered the epidemic and wanted to share their reminiscences. The material was previously used in his PhD thesis (Phillips, 1990) and in a monograph (Phillips, 2012).

impacted (Phillips, 2018:x-xii).

This provides the historical background for an introductory exercise once the sources below⁶ have been studied.

Source extracts from interviews and letters that provide the information for the discussion and activities which follow:

1. Whole families in a cottage were deceased and nobody would know about it. Whole families lay dead for days without anybody knowing And so whole houses, whole families just died out. Now we don't know how many people died, but we do know that not all of them were buried [in cemeteries]. I believe – it was reported and I believe – that thousands of them were simply buried in graves dug on the beach in the sand and that they are still there. Long trenches were dug and bodies wrapped; they couldn't use coffins – there were no coffins. They couldn't keep up [the supply of coffins]. Can you imagine – from ten to 600?

Flu is not that. That [Spanish flu] is not- flu at all [Ordinary flu starts with] temperature, headache, pain in the back, pain in the muscles, and that's all. That's it. Occasionally there is a kind of sore throat which [leads to a] secondary infection [which develops] into bronchitis or pneumonia and that would be that. [But] the toxicity of the [Spanish flu] virus became so strong that people died. It gave them no chance(Phillips, 2018:18).⁷

2 ... it felt as though Death was hovering above the city with his dark wings outspread waiting for further victims.

Rich and poor - those who could walk - pulled together; bodies were wrapped in sack-cloth or blankets, and the dead, rich and poor, were placed in long trenches in the cemetery. People just fell down in their tracks.

Transport on trams was free, and a communal soup kitchen had been set up in the City Hall where free soup was supplied for stricken families. "Society" women and others stood side-by-side to fill jugs with soup.

Three times a day, as a very small boy I would hurry with a large jug to the soup kitchens at the City Hall, and hurry back to my stricken family before the soup could become cold.

Doctors gave their services free, as did volunteers. Daily one house after the other would be entered to see if people were still alive - often it "would be found that entire families were found dead!" (Phillips, 2018:92).⁸

3. In one house, we found the parents dead and a young... girl in another room, very sick indeed. She was delirious. We washed her, gave her some

6 Phillips (2018:132-133) also includes 16 pages of photographs and copies of documents, which may also be used appropriately to illustrate hospitals and temporary flu care, food and medicine queues, burials and orphans.

7 Verbatim interview with Dr Max Cohen (born 1902). Interviewed on 22 April 1980. [Refers to Cape Town.]

8 Letter from Maurice Kaye (born 1910), 6 November 1978. [Refers to Kimberley.]

soup and called again the next day. That second week was one I shall not forget. She seemed slightly better but did not want us to leave her. She clasped my hand and, with tears streaming down her cheeks, she begged me, “Doctor, you must save me”. That was the only time I was ever called a doctor. So time passed, day out, day in. She was improving but we still had our duty to perform. The fifth day arrived when I had to tell her that her parents were both dead. That was the most heartrending moment of my life, having to take that sobbing girl in my arms (Phillips, 2018:74).⁹

4. We didn’t know where the germs were; we didn’t know if the germs were in drains or anything like that. We knew it was contagious, but coming in [to] direct contact with a person, but it was more than that; it could have been airborne too. It must have been airborne because it just went through a street just like that, as I said, it was like a fire out of control, out of control You know, you get some people who would put up their if they spoke to you, you know, they put up their hands across their mouth like that. That often happened. But then people said, “Well, if I’m going to get it, I’m going to get it, that’s all”, Yes, there was, there was definitely [a feeling] of fatalism, lots of that: “If I’m going to get it, I’m going to get it”, you know. That was the general outlook(Phillips, 2018:72).¹⁰

5. A white man who had a shop or factory nearby (and who was married to a coloured woman) distributed lemons and milk from door to door, irrespective of who the inhabitants were. He also arranged to set up a soup distribution depot where soup made by the Muslim community was provided at 12 o’clock every day. This arrangement was made “in the heart of the epidemic”. Strained soup and lemons (at “fever time”) became usual fare for the sick (Phillips, 2018:13).¹¹

6. Do you know wild garlic? ... We took that and cut off chips, just like ... potatoes. And then we put it in a rag ... and placed it around our bodies and made sure it was firmly stuck on us. Then it stayed there. Now, if it remained there for 24 hours and you took it off, then you could squeeze it. It drew all that poison ... from the epidemic (Phillips, 2018:90).¹²

7. Any doctors that were available were on duty. All [that] people were required to do was to tie a red rag, ribbon, anything, so long as it was red, tie it outside on a pillar, gatepost or something on the verandah and you tie a ribbon outside, then any passing doctor or somebody would notify, I suppose, the health authorities that such and such a house, number so-and-so ... *and the doctor would come. If you were so bad again and you had a death and you couldn’t do anything about it, you tied a black ribbon outside and*

9 Letter from Mr NA Reinbach (born c. 1899), 14 May 1972. [Refers to Cape Town.]

10 Verbatim interview with Stan Stone (born 1905). Interviewed on 3 November 1978. [Refers to Cape Town.]

11 Notes from an interview with Gadja Gafiel-Cader (born 1899). Interviewed on 12 October 1983. [Refers to Cape Town.]

12 Verbatim interview with Joyce Kay (born 1908 or 1909). Interviewed on 26 May 1978. [Refers to Kimberley.]

then somebody would come along and see what could be done [to remove] the corpse (Phillips, 2018:34).¹³

8. It was a heartbreaking duty to go round seeing dead bodies. Some people just lay in bed - they knew nothing about fresh air - and their family would tend them and kiss them, quite oblivious of the danger. Many of these were not very fond of fresh air". When he [the interviewee] went around he was told to wear a calico mask before visiting very sick people. These masks were issued by the municipality (Phillips, 2018:120).¹⁴

9. ... the schools were closed for the holidays, as it was Michaelmas [the end of September]. As the Epidemic got worse the schools were closed & turned into hospitals, anyone who could make a bed, prepare a tray or make soup & beef tea was ever so welcome to help at these hospitals.

We knew the caretaker at the cemetery ..., when the epidemic was at its worst, [his wife] gave the Anglican minister a room at their house at the cemetery, I heard her say she felt so sorry for the minister, as he conducted funerals from Sunrise to Sunset. It was a time when people remained indoors unless they were helping a house full of sick people (Phillips, 2018:110).¹⁵

10. ... my father [who was a doctor] asked me to come out with in his car (a little 2-seater runabout called the Saxon). School had closed down.

He would start on his rounds at 7.30 in the morning, and would get into a street to see his first patient. As he emerged, he would be pulled into house after house, and I would follow after him driving the car. On one occasion, after he came out of a house in District Six, he told me that there were several people dead inside.

And so it would go on. Time meant nothing, we would get home for a bite and then be off again through the traffic-empty streets. Visits would not stop until after midnight. And even then he would be called for some emergency from his bed (Phillips, 2018:48).¹⁶

11. De Beers [diamond mining company in Kimberley] Compound was very badly hit. There weren't enough coffins for the bodies which were driven in an open van with a bucksail thrown over them to the cemetery.

... sleeping facilities in compounds were very poor. Workers slept on boards, one above the other, with many in the same room and sometimes more than one in the same bed. When black [African] corpses were driven to the cemetery, he [the interviewee] could see bodies shaking underneath the tarpaulin. At the cemetery they were buried in trenches and covered with quicklime. Whites had coffins, but the undertakers could not cope

13 Verbatim interview with John Granger (born 1879). Interviewed on 14 June 1978. [Refers to Cape Town.]

14 Notes from an interview with Charles Kohler (born c. 1907). Interviewed on 23 January 1981. [Refers to Bloemfontein.]

15 Letter from Edna Aldworth (born 1906), October 1978. [Refers to Bloemfontein.]

16 Letter from Dr Robert Lane Forsyth (born 1904), 2 November 1978. [Refers to Cape Town.]

with individual funerals and so, many whites' coffins were heaped on top of each other and driven like that to the cemeteries (Phillips, 2018:84).¹⁷

12. And then, I think afterwards there wasn't even anybody to make coffins or there wasn't any, enough wood. They just rolled people in blankets, any kind of, whatever they could and ... eventually they buried them in trenches, mass graves, common graves I remember going up to the butcher shop up the road and seeing the cart- Scotch carts Once or twice it wasn't just one body, but bodies piled on top of one another and what numbed me - it was heartbreaking - you could see a foot sticking out of the bottom because you know they hadn't properly wrapped up, just wrapped up any old how and buried in the graves. I am sure lots of people didn't even know where their people were buried. And that's how it went on as far as I can remember (Phillips, 2018:91).¹⁸

13. And they were poor, anyhow some of them in a very, very poor condition and they lived under terrible circumstances. And that was the first time I'd met death, you know. I'd hardly got inside [one of the houses] and a man fell dead on my feet. And I got used to [it] at that time. And they lived in terrible quarters, many of them barely underground, with just the only ventilation the door as you went in, with an opening (Phillips, 2018:57).¹⁹

14. A regiment of soldiers dug graves all day in the Woltemaad [sic, Cape Town] Cemetery which is miles long. They were replaced as they too fell ill. Ministers of religion stood by continuously for burial services, wood ran out so coffins could not be made, and the bodies of rich and poor alike were sewn up in sacking. The dead were laid out on the pavements and a cart transported them for burial.

In the Cape Peninsula at the peak of this terrible scourge there were ten thousand deaths in a fortnight (Phillips, 2018:53).²⁰

15. I heard that one of my dearest and closest friends, a big well-built chap, of my own age, 20, who was an agricultural student in the Malmesbury district and working on a farm - he was always in the pink of health - had died of the flu. This shocked me so deeply that I felt that it did not matter to me now in the least if I got the flu and died too. In fact I even hoped I would!

But despite the constant stream of coughing and deeply saddened, tearful people standing before and around me in that small room and stricken area, I did not even sneeze (Phillips, 2018:72).²¹

17 Notes from an interview with Dudley Drever (born 1903). Interviewed on 20 November 1980. [Refers to Kimberley.]

18 J Kay (born 1908 or 1909), verbatim interview, 26 May 1978. [Refers to Kimberley.]

19 ME (Majorie) McKerron (Doctor, born 1895), verbatim interview, 15 December 1978. [Refers to Cape Town.]

20 Letter: C de Maire St Ledger, Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart (born 1870), 30 May 1972. [Refers to Cape Town.]

21 Letter: G August van Oordt (born 1898), 23 January 1982. [Refers to Cape Town.]

Introductory activity (after having read the introductory information and the sources)

This, it is suggested, might take the form of a classroom debate.

Class divides into two (for and against) to debate the following motion:

No-one should be blamed for the suffering and death caused by the 1918 flu epidemic in South Africa.

The choice of a debate enables a tension to be set up amongst learners, who will be anxious above all to win the debate [a judge(s) should be appointed to adjudicate], rather than to discuss issues of dying and death. But, as they search for arguments to be made on either side, they will be exposed to the deeper issues that the sources bring to light. Assessing blame in this debate is both a neutral activity (in that it does not make much difference which side one is on) and one which removes much of the immediate attention from the circumstances of the flu victims. Greater depth of detail will come in the activities to follow.

Community concern and kindness

The circumstances of October 1918 are not entirely bleak. There is much comfort and personal moral challenge to be derived from the events. This enables a less demanding approach to the evidence and is intended to strengthen the grasp of the contents of the sources while encouraging students to look at the positive aspects in the sources.

By group discussion, by individual writing or by both. Divide the class into five sections, each being given one of the following topics:

- What practical things did people do help the victims of ‘flu?
- What part was played by religious belief?
- What remedies did people believe would help keep the ‘flu away from them, or help them survive when they got the ‘flu?
- What did the government authorities do?
- What risks did people take?

Study the information provided and report your thoughts about your topic.²²

²² Here, and with the other four activities to follow, teachers would need to provide further instructions and specific guidance for their class should they trial this exercise (how much time to devote to it; to use all or only some of the sources; group and pair work; how much writing expected; per group or per individual, etc.)

Health and medical care

This theme has an important role to play. It gives students the greatest opportunity to apply their knowledge, experience and understanding of the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic to 1918 epidemic. They will inevitably find that there is much that is not comparable²³ and are also likely to make many mistakes. The reality is that they know what mask-wearing is like, that they understand how people can go hungry during an epidemic, that they appreciate the role that doctors, hospitals and medical equipment can play, that they know what it is to have a government that is incapable of managing the crisis well and that they are familiar with the risks that some people take on behalf of others and the risks that face the poor in particular. The table below facilitates open-ended responses to both the 1918 and the 2020 circumstances. It is likely that there will be quite wide-ranging differences between the responses of students, which can be an aid to recognising that feelings about dying and death might vary considerably from person to person. The exercise is:

What has changed in the century since the 1918 'flu epidemic?

Complete this table, to explain the differences between what people thought about health and medical care in 1918 and what they think now, by studying the information that has been provided.

	What people did in 1918	What the generally accepted situation is now
Hanging garlic around your neck, eating lemons		
Isolation and quarantine		
Wearing masks		
Treatment at home or in hospital		
Those in crowded and inadequate housing		
Doctor's visits to home		
Everyone kept up to date with news and information		

Drawing on JH Hexter (1971), Dean (2004) summarises the role of a “second record” (which in this case is the information that students have personally experienced and gleaned about period of COVID-19 in 2020)

²³ Foster (2013:9) provides a useful list of what professional historians consider in change and continuity, viz. the balance between change and continuity, a strong temporal dimension, the direction of change, the significance of change, descriptive not explanatory analysis.

in interpreting the past (in this case the 1918 sources, which are the first record):

The second record comprises all the mental attributes and experience the historian brings to bear when working on the first record. The second record determines how the first record is viewed, interpreted and amplified...
(Dean, 2004:101).

Students will consciously or unconsciously make use of everything that they have experienced in the 2020 pandemic. They will not, however, all agree on “What the generally accepted situation is now”, nor will they necessarily agree on “What people did in 1918”, but the discussion of these issues will enable them to construct a better understanding of the flu epidemic and, as they do so, they will inevitably be drawn into its realities of dying and death.

Human dignity

There are many examples of a lack of dignity in the sources, particularly in the handling and burial of those who died in the epidemic. Death is the ultimate indignity and October 1918 presented very harsh options regarding the living and the dead. To what extent should the dignity of the dead be sacrificed in order to give the living a better chance of survival? This exercise approaches human dignity from the point of view of the human rights (the South African Bill of Rights) of and responsibilities (the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights) to the dying and the dead. It deliberately does not prescribe the content or emphasis, leaving it to the class and the individual student, providing wide scope for responses.

By studying the information provided, consider what “human dignity” is.

Read the following statements and discuss or/and write briefly about some of the statements and how they may be relevant to the time of the flu epidemic and to human dignity in 1918. Select at least two statements, one from each document.

Statements in the South African Bill of Rights (1996)

- a. Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. (10)*
- b. Everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion. (15 1)*
- c. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement. (21)*
- d. Everyone has the right to have access to health care services... No one may be refused emergency medical treatment. (27 1.a)*

e. *Everyone has the right of access to any information held by the state...*
(32 1. a)

Statements in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1986)

a. *Every individual shall have duties towards his family and society, the State and other legally recognized communities and the international community. The rights and freedoms of each individual shall be exercised with due regard to the rights of others....* (27 1,2)

b. *Every individual shall have the duty to respect and consider his fellow beings without discrimination, and to maintain relations aimed at promoting, safeguarding and reinforcing mutual respect and tolerance.* (28)

c. *The individual shall also have the duty to preserve the harmonious development of the family and to work for the cohesion and respect of the family....* (29, 1)

Empathy

Drawing attention to human dignity leads to empathetic understanding. The sharing of a common humanity with others is the starting place; the challenge is to enhance the students' awareness of others (Siebörger, 2020:71). At this point students should have been sufficiently prepared to face having to deal directly with dying and death. Allowing them to make their own choice of source material for the exercise, it is suggested, will make it simpler (and possibly more palatable and/or interesting) for them to engage with the exercise.

Empathy is when we try to understand the situations that faced people long ago and to explain why life was different for them than it is for us. We realise that it is not possible to put ourselves in the position of someone who lived at a different time and place, so we do not pretend that we are the same as they were.

Choose ONE of the sources of information (1-14) to write or talk about. It should be the passage that you think helps you understand best what happened in 1918, OR which speaks to you (and your feelings) the most, OR which reminds you most of something that you yourself have experienced or seen, OR which you think is the most reliable or accurate. Explain what it is that makes you have empathy with a person (or with people) in the passage.

Empathy as a concept in history education has had a chequered and contested existence. It flourished in the 1970s and early '80s (see Knight, 1989), dropped from sight in the 1990s and has now been critically re-interpreted and rehabilitated. Lee and Shermilt (2011) describe the challenges posed by it for students as:

- making sense of human behaviour;
- understanding why practices that seem irrational and unreasonable today were common in the past; and
- grasping what does and does not count as an empathetic explanation.

It is useful to clarify what aspects of empathy are called upon in this instance. Students will not necessarily have to make sense of people's behaviour in 1918 (though they might well find themselves both puzzled and incredulous by it), but they will, secondly, have to adapt their thinking to the highly unusual circumstances. There is certainly some understanding of irrational and unreasonable circumstances involved. The third aspect, grasping what does and does not count as empathetic explanation, is beyond the scope of this exercise.

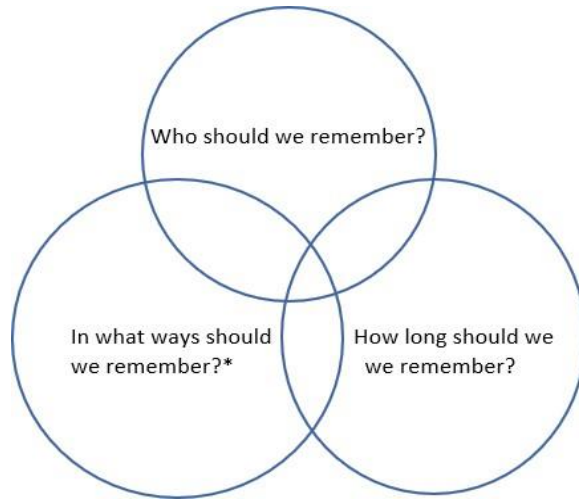
Remembrance

The theme of remembrance is not unfamiliar in school history education literature (see Lyon, 2007,²⁴ Freeman, 2014 and McKay, 2017, for example), though it is usually associated with victims of warfare or circumstances where people have done something commendable and exceptional, deserving of commemoration, memorialisation or public acknowledgement and recognition. This is not the case with the 1918 flu epidemic and the conditions of the epidemic made it even less likely that the people who died would be remembered. There were instances among the accounts of the 126 informants in Howard Phillips' research where, as in Source 15, a particular person was remembered but they were very few. He noted, however, that Sol Plaatje had dedicated his novel *Mhudi* (1930) to the memory of his daughter Olive, who died in 1921, probably of the after-effects of the flu (Phillips, 2018:95).

How do we remember people after they have died? And how do people who live long after them (102 years in this case) remember them?

Have a discussion in class around these three questions as they relate the 1918 flu, paying attention also to how they overlap with each other, as the diagram illustrates:

²⁴ Lyon (2007:46) poses the question of whether remembrance [as related to those who died in the two World Wars] should still be encouraged in history teaching, as (a) it is important for history teachers to ask provocative questions, (b) it reveals that history matters, and, (c) it is appropriate to question whether remembrance is still relevant for young people of a different millennium.



Source: Developed by the authors.

** Ideas could include anniversaries, memorials, gravestones, notices in newspapers, books, websites and on Facebook, for example.*

Remembrance provides the opportunity to focus on one's own beliefs and practices and to move away from considering death itself. It carries with it the positive element that there might be something after death (as many religions remember and acknowledge the dead in their worship) and that those living in the present might have a responsibility to those who have died before them – if for no other reason than that those who are alive today have benefitted by what medical science learned during the 1918 epidemic. One reason why there have been far fewer COVID-19 deaths than 1918 flu deaths is because the health professions could manage the disease far better, on the basis of better knowledge and experience gained from the past.

In conclusion: Should one teach about dying and death in this way?

We approached the question with a number of aims in mind. The first was to raise the level of knowledge about the 1918 flu epidemic in South Africa, particularly in the light of the fact that media often portray 1918 and 2020 as being similar in many respects (“It happens about once a century...”, for instance). When one attempts a direct comparison of the two one is forced to consider how brutal the flu of October 1918 was and how unimaginable it must have been for many people, in ways which cannot be equated with 2020. Secondly, we were challenged by the pedagogical difficulties that

1918 presented. Was it a suitable topic for the classroom? How could students be immersed in that level of reality? But having grasped that the heart of the issue is human mortality and that death and dying are central to all notions of history, the third aim was to explore “ways in” to the topic that would both not appear to be too demanding, too hard, or disrespectful.

The final aim is that having devised the sequence of five themes and provided exemplars to illustrate the means in which they can be employed, we hope that others might take this further and trial and adapt the exemplars in the classroom, thus contributing to a literature of practice regarding the pedagogy of dying and death in school history teaching.

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Hands-on Articles

Two pandemics, one hundred years and the University of Pretoria: A brief comparison

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Abstract

The effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on higher education in South Africa and the University of Pretoria inspired this brief investigation into how the university responded to the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918. This article looks at some of the traces of the effects of the Spanish Flu found in the University of Pretoria Archives. These include, apart from official documents, a handful of student reminiscences of the times which give some insights into how students in particular experienced the epidemic. These will be contrasted to personal impressions of how Covid 19 has impacted the 2020 class at the University of Pretoria. This brief comparison points to the far reaching impact the current pandemic has had on the university and higher education more generally.

Keywords: University history; pandemics; higher education; Spanish Flu; Covid 19; University of Pretoria.

The outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic and the closing of university campuses across South Africa has had a far-reaching impact on both the students and staff of these institutions, the full repercussions of which we are only beginning to imagine. In witnessing the effects of the suspension of contact classes and the return of students to their homes at the University of Pretoria (UP), I began to wonder about how the University had coped with the Spanish Flu Epidemic of 1918 and what impact this epidemic had had on the institution. This took me into the archives and into the official record of the University's history.

Just over one hundred years ago, an international pandemic also led to the closure of the University, which was then still operating as the Transvaal University College (TUC). The Spanish Flu epidemic reached South Africa in September 1918 and the following month became known locally as Black October as infections and deaths skyrocketed. Although the effects of this catastrophic epidemic had effectually ebbed by November 1918,

the University still felt its impact among its student and staff population.¹

What is interesting is that while the Spanish Flu was swift and deadly in its spread, the impact in terms of time was quite different from the experience that we have been living through with Covid 19. On the one hand, the flu epidemic also led to an extension of executive powers to cope with the crisis. At the TUC this is seen in a decision taken by the Council of the College in October 1918 which “[i]n view of the prevailing epidemic” gave the Rector power to make “such emergency expenditure as ... [he] might consider necessary”.² On the other hand, the effects of the Spanish Flu epidemic had only a short-term effect on the actual running of the College. A decision was taken to end the academic year early and exams were postponed until the beginning of 1919. It appears that after the summer holiday, activities resumed on campus. This meant a disruption of only a few months towards the end of the academic year. This is quite a contrast to the disruption of most contact classes and normal campus activities for three quarters of the academic year in 2020. The effects of the Spanish Flu are also only mentioned in the most fleeting terms in the first volume of the University’s official history *Ad Destinatum I* and this only with reference to the simmering language question at the TUC at the time. According to the author, the atmosphere at the TUC was quite tense between English and Afrikaans speaking students at the end of 1918 in the wake of the First World War. He suspects that had the College not closed early due to the Spanish Flu epidemic, this tension may have boiled over on the campus. In fact, this tension did come to the surface the following year when students burned a British flag on the College campus.³

Despite the only brief allusions in the official record to the effects of the Spanish Flu, a collection of student reminiscences housed in the UP Archives includes some recollections of this era which open a window on how the epidemic affected the student body. One student remembered:

But in the year 1918 the whole world fell under the Spanish Flu and the population of Pretoria was also affected. By the Summer of 1918 the situation was so bad, that it was impossible to continue with classes. Numerous students were affected, but, as far as I know, no residence students died, although many were seriously ill. Groups of students, which were not yet infected, joined teams of volunteers which undertook visits to

1 H Phillips, “‘Black October’: The impact of the Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918 on South Africa”, (DPhil, UCT, 1984), pp. 1, 8.

2 University of Pretoria Archives (UPA), Minutes of the University Council, B-5-1-1, 17 October 1918.

3 CH Rautenbach (ed), *Ad Destinatum. Gedenkboek van die Universiteit van Pretoria* (Johannesburg, Voortrekkerpers Ltd, 1960), p. 52.

mainly the poor areas of the town, to try and help people affected by the plague. Doctors and nurses were insufficient, but in any case, there was very little that could be done against such a plague, except to provide food (usually soup) and to try help in emergency cases. Those who were ill were advised to lie still and under no circumstances to try to wash or bath. I remember that so many people died that the horses which drew the hearses had to jog to the cemetery. Among students who still remained behind in the residences there was a general spirit of fatalism. You had to wait and see what was going to happen with you.

I remember that one night a group of students gathered together in the house “Glory Hole”. There was a feeling to lift the heaviness a little and a number of bottles of beer were acquired to help with this. Mr. Otten, a large man with a round face, who also wore glasses, played on his guitar and the other men sang together with him. It all helped to relieve the tension.⁴

The later well-known Afrikaans poet, Duke Erlank or Eitemal, was also a student in 1918. He commented that the exams of 1918 were postponed until the beginning of 1919 due to the epidemic. At the time the medium of instruction at the College was English. He and a few other students had requested to take Chemistry in Afrikaans and in response the Chemistry professor, DF du Toit Malherbe had challenged them to answer the exam in Afrikaans and had given them a book of Dutch terms to help with their preparation. Erlank remarked that epidemic gave him an advantage as the postponement of the exam meant that he had extra time to bring his Afrikaans Chemistry up to standard.⁵

He also remembered a fellow student who contracted the flu at this time. This student, John Quin (later Director of Veterinary Services and Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Science), had taken Erlank under his wing as a first-year student in 1918. Erlank remembers:

During the flu of 1918 John Quin quickly became sick. I often took care of him. The flu germs apparently did not find an entrance to my skinniness. One day I came into his room. He was sitting in his bed, and was pouring from a very suspicious bottle into a teaspoon something that he —grrrr! gnashed between his teeth. I asked him what it was. “No, old Lammetjie, the matron, Mrs Lindeque, said that I must use Epsom salts to clean my stomach.” My teeth went on edge and I asked, “But John, isn’t the stuff

4 UPA, Ad Destinatum Herrinerige, Briefwisseling met oudstudente en ander instansies, D-6-5-1-6-22: Letter, AR Pullen (Alumnus)/B Cilliers (Die sekretaris Halfeesfees Herdenkingskomitee), 14 April 1980.

5 UPA, Tuks Alumni Herrinneringe: A-Z, D-6-5-1-6-22: Letter: D Erlank (Alumnus)/B Cilliers (Director: Bureau for Public Relations), 1 April 1979.

really bad?” “Yes, old Lammetjie, but what can one do?”

Classes resumed in 1919, although student numbers decreased slightly from the previous year. There were 325 students enrolled in 1918 and only 300 in 1919. In June 1919, the Afrikaans editor of *The TUC Student Magazine* commented on the student population at the end of his editorial as follows:⁶

There are again young forces which have joined us, a number of new students. We wish them a warm welcome. There are also old forces which have disappeared from the scene; among them are those who due to illness—the results of the terrible epidemic—had to leave. A rapid recovery we wish to them all.

2020 by contrast has held some different experiences for the student body of the University of Pretoria. Instead of the mere postponement of an exam period, classes were cancelled mid-way through the first semester of the year and, for the majority of students, contact classes were suspended for the remainder of the year. This has meant an almost nine-month period in which academic pursuits have continued but in a completely altered state and in which lecture halls and campuses have been virtually empty of student life. There is also some concern regarding how the pandemic will affect higher education in the long term and what the “new normal” of the future at a university will look like.

Also contrary to the experience of 1918 where students were encouraged to assist and even volunteered to nurse the victims of the Spanish Flu epidemic, 2020 has been a year of social distancing and isolation for many students. In a brief survey conducted for one of my classes it was striking how many students commented on how much they missed spending time with their friends and the social life that is usually part and parcel of the student experience.

The shift to online learning also meant that students who had registered for contact education suddenly became distance learners. For some this was a positive change. Some of my students spoke of completing their classwork while in their pajamas in bed. Others noted that as they had nothing else to do their academic performance skyrocketed. But there were also many who through the year battled severe mental health challenges including anxiety and depression, while others suffered from lack of motivation and procrastination without the constraints and safeguard of a regular class and

⁶ G Dekker, “Editoriaal”, *Studentenblad van die T.U.K.*, 3(5), June 1919, p. 2.

campus routine. Many students have also struggled with less than ideal learning environments. Underlying much of the contact that I have had with students has been a sense of bewilderment and a feeling of not being sufficiently prepared for the sudden and sometimes drastic change in their academic year.

Perhaps the reminiscences of the students of 1918 were coloured by the passage of time and many could look back and dwell on the more absurd or lighter moments of life during the Spanish Flu. Certainly, the actual academic pursuits of the University did not seem to undergo many changes. In contrast, perhaps due our better understanding of how viruses spread and the constant monitoring of the pandemic, university pursuits have experienced staggering changes in 2020. It will be interesting to look back in half a century and consider the effect of the Covid 19 experience on university life in the long term. At the moment, while we are still in the thick of thing, one can only wonder and speculate.

A new History Education lecturer's university experiences during Covid-19: A personal reflection

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Abstract

On March 16th, 2020 I commenced my new job as a lecturer on History Education at Stellenbosch University (US), the very same day the University went into lockdown due to COVID-19. I have been a high school teacher for 11 years and so, moving to the University sectors brought with its own challenges. Added to these obstacles was now the addition of remote learning and the complete upheaval of University life. I have attempted to unpack my own experiences as a junior staff member during a nation-wide pandemic lockdown and my experiences with remote teaching and learning. This is a personal reflection which outlines my experiences, as well as lessons I have taken away from the transition to online teaching. There are many obstacles that new lecturers face however, these challenges have been exacerbated due to the sudden transition to remote teaching and learning.

Keywords: Remote teaching; Remote learning; Online; New lecturer; COVID-19; Pandemic; History Education lecturer.

Introduction

On Sunday, 15 March 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that, due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, South Africa was now in a state of emergency which resulted in the closure of schools and universities alike. On the same day as the announcement, I arrived in the Western Cape to commence my new job as a Lecturer in History Education at the University of Stellenbosch. I must admit, the sudden change in trajectory provided some doubt in terms of the stability of my job and the expectations of it. Beginning a new job in a new province has its own challenges and inserting a global pandemic into the fray caused an overwhelming volume of job-related and personal anxiety.

Given the nature in the shift of expectations between the school environment and the university environment, there will always be challenges

for a new lecturer. I had my own expectations of challenges that I could expect as well as my own expectations of the job itself and the students. My preconceptions were challenged from the beginning, some I expected and some I did not. However, the biggest challenge that I experienced was, as a new History Education lecturer, the sudden lockdown and shift to remote learning due to a global pandemic.

Experiences of arriving at lockdown

On my very first day (16 March) at US, the University made the announcement that it would be shutting down per lockdown regulations and it has yet to open fully. When US went into lockdown, the staff and students began their term break a week earlier. This allowed for staff to transition their traditional face-to-face course programmes to the university online platform (SUNLearn). On the one hand, I was grateful for the reprieve to find my feet however, I was ultimately left stranded in an unknown environment. In a very short space of time, US managed to ensure that I had the technological support to allow for online teaching and that I had met with the necessary course coordinators, and for that, I am very grateful. However, because of the speedy nature of lockdown, I did not get to meet many colleagues, nor was I able to settle down in the university structure or my office. As a result, the professional transition from teacher to lecturer was stalled and it felt like I was in limbo – not quite a “real” lecturer and no longer a school history teacher.

Under these circumstances, as a new lecturer, I experienced many adjustment issues, issues that would have occurred anyway without a pandemic, but which were exacerbated by it. One major element with which I still struggle is the transition from being a teacher to a lecturer as it is a complete shift in mindset. Perhaps, it is lockdown related, perhaps the shift would have occurred at a quicker pace had I been in the actual physical university environment amongst fellow academics in campus for the last six months instead of at home; I am not sure. However, the adjustment in thinking and thought processes has been quite challenging. What I have noted, especially with regards to myself as a teacher, is that I struggle with boundaries and thus the university teaching and administrative obligations were my central focus often to the detriment of my own PhD in History Education studies. At university level, there is a great importance placed on research and publishing and thus there is now added pressure within this

new transition phase. Finding the balance between teacher and researcher has been quite challenging and I have not always been successful.

Furthermore, being the only History Education lecturer, it was quite difficult finding my feet as well as adjusting to the new rigor of academia. Thankfully, I had colleagues outside of the university who not only helped with course development but provided a supportive sounding board to my strategies or developments. I have been a High School teacher for 11 years having taught in both South Africa and Vietnam however, the move to the higher education arena has provided a new challenge. This is a challenge that I could not have survived without the handful of colleagues I had met prior to lockdown as well as my own long-term colleagues – support is immeasurable. The need for a sounding board so you do not feel alone cannot be stressed enough because what the pandemic has created is isolation. This was particularly evident in the first four months of remote learning – the feeling of being disconnected and isolated from the US community was strong. This was possibly also an error on my part as I could have asked for help more often as the support was there when it was called upon.

Lessons learned from remote learning

During the remote learning phase, that is online, off-campus emergency education, there are six lessons I can take away. First, my main struggle was with the *dissociated nature of online teaching and learning*. This particular take away was, by far, the most emotionally taxing. Whilst I had substantial support from my Head of Department (HOD) and other colleagues, arriving the day US closed did allow for some serious disconnection to take place between my colleagues, the students, and the university environment. Being a new lecturer brings to the fore challenges in its own rights like, establishing a structured course, getting to know other peers within the faculty, generating a support structure and understanding the way US works. These aspects of settling into the new position were not made easy by the COVID-19 pandemic. In hindsight, I imagine it was a difficult situation for everyone as everyone had to transition onto the online learning platform and so colleagues were only able to reach out much later. I can empathize with this as the workload was so overwhelming, it was difficult to focus on menial tasks, or tasks as simple as responding to an email. The first four months of remote learning was excessively grueling

for me and I believe other colleagues were waging their own battle against online woes. Adjusting to the new “normal” of virtual interaction has been a challenge and further entrenches my appreciation for in-person teaching and social interaction.

I also found that I was quite disconnected from my History Education students during remote learning. Coming from 11 years of in-person, face-to-face teaching, I do prefer the contact time associated with teaching. It is almost tactile in nature. The pandemic has stolen this from teaching and despite learning still taking place, there is something missing from the whole process. History is quite abstract in nature with multiple dimensions. The abstract nature of History combined with the need to challenge what the students know, has been made more difficult through remote teaching. Many people respond differently to online teaching and learning. I do see this as being a suitable way of learning for many students and I must commend US for doing their utmost to ensure that learning has still taken place. For me, I prefer the in-person engagement with the students. I do not like the sound of my own voice droning on and on into the dark void of nothingness, I prefer discussion-style lectures with students. Putting aside the workload and adapting to a new work environment, adapting to this new form of e-teaching has been uncomfortable. Completely changing how things are “normally” done added to a level of discomfort as my safety net of teaching had now been taken away. The concept of normality changed drastically during this transition which has been a difficult change to accept.

Another component of online teaching and learning was student and administrative communication through email. As this was the only way students could communicate with me, the number of daily emails rose exponentially. I was completely unprepared for the *sheer volume of emails* I would receive. From the administration side, in the beginning, there were many adjustments that US had to make as work schedules needed to be created or revised to ensure that students would not be overwhelmed by the volume of work. In the early days of lockdown there was an overabundance of emails and bureaucratic administrative work from the University. This was challenging because often I did not know what I needed to do in terms of the administration requirements for online teaching. Being thrown into online teaching whilst only having one day's experience at US proved to be a deficit when having to adapt to this change. The feeling of being in well over my head remained constant in the first few months. Communication

and understanding the communication was an aspect that I am sure would have been made easier had I either been at the University itself or had a better understanding of how US functioned.

The History Education students I taught were a challenge in an unexpected way. Any query a student had, regardless if this had been addressed in a lecture, they would email. This element might not have been so obvious had there been in-person classes as any queries they might have could be addressed in a more casual setting rather than the formality of email. One particular aspect of the email culture that I noticed is that many students lacked a certain “netiquette” when emailing and their questions turned into demands – often articulated in a rude manner. This was an interesting lesson to learn. Another aspect of the student culture that I noticed (through email) was this overwhelming sense of privilege and entitlement in many students. Perhaps, many were just “trying their luck” and pushing their boundaries with a new lecturer. It was an interesting lesson for me because I had different and possibly naïve expectation of university students – I am not sure why, as not all students were studious when I was studying. But this idealistic perception of mine adjusted very quickly to the reality of university students. Establishing boundaries and not accepting certain demands was something I had to learn very quickly.

As aforementioned, as a history teacher establishing boundaries was a weakness of mine and this was only exacerbated during the pandemic. *Creating boundaries* with the students is important in any kind of teaching situation, but more importantly, creating boundaries for myself was a lesson learned. Adjusting to teaching at university level and adapting the course to online (also mid-Semester) was difficult, and I am glad to say that I have managed to overcome this little hiccup. However, students can be unrelenting in their demands and it was important for me to establish boundaries for what were realistic demands or concerns versus concerns that were inappropriate at their level. Creating boundaries through course expectations is an important component of lecturing. This was something I had to learn for myself as I had naively thought that students would easily accept coursework. It was also a difficult balance between making course adjustments because of remote learning versus maintaining the standard of education. It was a balancing act made more trying by the demands of some students to lessen the course work. It was more difficult as I was unsure whether this was a legitimate e-learning concern or a concern from someone not willing to put in the required effort for a degree and as a

future teacher. This balancing act has improved, and now that I am in communication with more colleagues, it is easier to make this detection.

Forming boundaries for myself has proved to be an unsuccessful task. What I miss most about the in-person work environment is the perception of work times. It is easier for me to discern between work time and home time because of the change in physical structure. This perceived notion of a “workday” has all but disappeared. I have realized, I am someone who does not thrive from working at home. I need to have the physical structure of a work environment for me to balance work productivity and personal productivity. Because there is no physical structure, the mental perception of a work schedule has meshed itself into the entire day. Additionally, living alone under lockdown in a new city has added to this confused meshing of work hours as there is no clear delineation between a workday and home time. What happens as a result, is that I am constantly at my computer as I feel I have not produced enough work. Rational or irrational, this imagined perception has infiltrated my day and taken over any sort of boundaries I may have had. I have actively tried to establish a “work” day albeit unsuccessfully. Creating boundaries was made even more difficult by the marking of online assessments.

I drastically misjudged how long it would take to mark in *online assessments*. For me, it took almost twice as long to read, mark and comment on online assessments which was made even more difficult because of scrolling. I did have a number of History Education classes and so there were a fair amount of assessments (to be fair, it was still less than when I was a teacher) that constantly needed grading. Now that my feet are firmly on the ground, I do feel more confident that I would be able to tackle the marking more timeously than before. At the time, there were many balls that I was juggling such as: adjusting and adding to the course, general settling in stress, online workshops provided by US; these often took away the focus from marking. Once the first two assessments have slipped by, it is a snowball after that. And added to the number of tasks, was the length of time it took to grade properly. The pressure to meet marking deadlines (deadlines I had set for myself and US deadlines) meant that any sort of boundary creation disappeared, and I would be at my computer, again, all evening. This habit was nurtured because of online marking and now it is still difficult to detach from the computer.

Another component that needs to be factored in is the language component. US is a dual medium university, and as such, course work needs to be offered in both English and Afrikaans (as best as possible) and assessments may be submitted in Afrikaans, should the student wish. I am from KwaZulu-Natal, and despite the sweat and tears of my Afrikaans teachers, I have not managed to maintain the language. This is putting it lightly. My extreme ineptitude in Afrikaans has been a major shortfall as this adds an extra barrier to the online teaching. US offers translation services, much to my profound relief, however, translations take time and so, I have to always be ahead of the game in terms of my course work. Online assessments are a little more challenging to translate especially when there are deadlines, however, I am still eternally grateful for the translation services available at US.

A result of the lack of boundaries and online marking is the feeling of being *screened out*. Being in front of your computer screen from morning until evening creates screen exhaustion. This is not a healthy component of online teaching and learning and it is something I am struggling with the most. Because there is the lack of social interaction one would normally find at their job, I find myself, in front of the computer all day, taking a lengthy break only to walk my dog or go to the shop. Despite knowing the irrationality behind this feeling, it does not stop my mind from making the connection between work and computer thus productivity cannot happen with no computer. However, the consistency with which I am in front of my computer nullifies productivity as my eyes and mind need a break from the screen. Being away from it induces an anxiety that is difficult to describe – it is almost a guilt-induced anxiety. This creates a Catch-22 situation for me.

Acclimatizing to the academic rigor and high expectations of US as well as adapting this rigor to the online mode has provided many challenges. This has taken a toll on my *mental health* in many ways. The isolating nature of online learning, as aforementioned, has led to the blurring the lines of work and home. Now that work is at home, I am never removed from the work environment. I am always “at work” and it is too easy to fall into the trap of “checking in” at work. The lack of clear boundaries as well as my own personal desire not to fail or make a mistake has further blurred the lines between work and home. These are my own demons at work which have been enhanced by the pandemic and the lockdown regulations.

The lack of guidance in the beginning of my career at US, understandably so, led to unsureness and mistakes which enhances my own anxiety and fear of ineptitude. In hindsight, I cannot fault US, as it would have been impossible to tell me everything regarding the term and how the University functions all in one go. It would be unlikely I would even remember each detail. When an issue did arise however, and I contacted my support structure, they were quick to help and offer guidance where necessary and where they could.

Conclusion

I thought I was well-prepared. Perhaps if the COVID-19 pandemic had waited a few months to allow for me to adjust, I would have realized how idealistic that statement is. The online platform, whilst relatively simple, needed some practice. Learning how to address the different learning needs of the students and adapting to online teaching was also a challenge. In retrospect, I think I may have pandered a bit too much to the needs of the students in a way that created an environment of overexplaining and spoon-feeding. These are teething issues that would have happened however, not having the guidance of experienced staff nearby, these were issues I needed to realize on my own.

The process of writing this article has been cathartic and a much-needed push back into the realm of academia. Writing this article has allowed me to organize and articulate my experience for my own benefit. It was more beneficial to have written this article as a reflection on my experiences rather than when I was in the thick of it. Had I written this article much earlier, it would have been difficult to see the bigger picture and to see the struggle of others around me. In the beginning, I was very self-absorbed in my own struggles to find my feet, it would not have been an accurate reflection of my experience. Because the sudden move to remote teaching, my free time evaporated at the expense of my own PhD. This article has been a cathartic release and as such has enabled me to find my voice once again and reignited my writing ability. My own writing halted at the start of lockdown and re-entering into the academic mindset and subsequent writing style has been an obstacle. The COVID-19 experience has not been easy, and I do look forward to having a “normal” university experience at some point in my career, but on a lighter note, who else can say they were at US for one day before lockdown?

The transition from the school environment to university environment was always going to be met with some obstacles. Adjusting to not only the expectations of academia but adjusting my own preconceptions to the reality in which I found myself was needed. Some key obstacles were aggravated by the move to remote learning as well as my own inexperience. Given the transition to online learning, mistakes are inevitable, and I did experience teething issues. There are several lessons that I have taken away from this unique experience (on a lighter note – who else can claim that they have worked at US for one single day before lockdown started): it is acceptable to ask for help; establish clear working hours so one does not get sensory overloaded; and finally, accepting one's mistakes and subsequently learning from them is vital to both personal and professional growth as a History Education lecturer.

Creating a collaborative learning environment online and in a blended history environment during Covid-19

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Abstract

Collaboration is key to an effective history classroom. Discussion, peer work and learner engagement facilitate the development of historical thinking skills, understanding of historical content and a careful engagement with the ethical issues posed in studying history. The realities of teaching online and then in a blended learning environment during COVID-19 have created challenges for maintaining this collaborative environment. The article discusses a number of techniques that have been employed to foster general engagement and also to scaffold assessment.

Keywords: Collaboration; COVID-19; Group work; Peer learning; Constructivist learning.

Introduction

In the context of teaching in a global pandemic, one of the greatest challenges has been maintaining a sense of collaboration and connection. In a classroom environment, there are a number of strategies that I regularly make use of, such as frequent trio work, regular informal peer assessment and physically interactive tasks, such as card sorts. In an online or blended environment, the strategies I took for granted became more of a challenge. The following article is a discussion of the methods I have used to try and keep the culture of collaborative learning alive in my history classroom during the Covid19 pandemic.

The school in which I teach is one of the privileged few in our South African context who were ready to shift into online learning fairly seamlessly. We are a Google school and had made extensive use of Google classroom prior to the pandemic. Our school also encourages innovative, technology-based teaching and I have used online quizzes and other tools in the past. All of our classrooms have computers and projectors and I make use of Google slides in all of my teaching. I am very conscious that our privileged environment is the exception not the norm in our South

African context. I know that the resources of both our school and our learners are not available to the vast majority in our country. I hope that despite this, that some of these techniques could perhaps be adapted to less data intensive media, such as WhatsApp.

Our school was the first to close in South Africa due to a parent testing positive for COVID-19. This was before wider lockdown measures were introduced. We were teaching online within a day (Presence, 2020: online). Fairly early on, our principal made the decision that we would remain online for the duration of Term 2, even for the Matrics. Our grade 10 to 12 learners had elective subjects like history every second day. We engaged for forty-five minutes on a live video conferencing session and they were expected to work asynchronously on the alternate day. Since the beginning of our Term 3 (4 July 2020), we have been using a blended approach and continue to do so at the time of writing (September 2020). We have half of our learners at school on one day, and the alternate group the next day. Our Matrics have been coming in every day. As a private school, we have also had permission for our other grades to be at school. While I have thoroughly enjoyed face-to-face teaching again, the blended approach presents its own challenges.

The discussion which follows is by no means intended to be presented as the best possible practice. Instead, I wanted to take the opportunity provided by this special issue of *Yesterday & Today* to reflect a bit on my own teaching experience and consider what has worked and what has not. In the process, I also wanted to reflect on how teaching during this time has made me think through aspects of best practice in history teaching more generally; this has personally challenged me to think about how these techniques can be introduced more consistently even in post-pandemic classrooms.

The importance of collaboration in learning history

The major challenge I found with online teaching was the issue of collaboration. It is well beyond the scope of this article to engage in a full discussion of the merits of an active learning, constructivist approach to education, but these ideas have been very influential in my own teaching practice. It is the process of “social interaction with a more competent person that drives cognitive growth” (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:123). The process through which this interaction takes place requires opportunities for discussion with peers and the teacher; it also requires a scaffolded

process of modelling skills, which provides opportunities for learners to work at these skills incrementally and then to move towards using the skills independently (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:123). Both teacher and peer collaboration allow for learners to co-construct the skills needed to be successful in a subject. In an online space, a lack of “social presence” can negatively impact both the learners’ perceived and actual understanding of the work and the development of these skills (Wei, Chen & Kinshuk, 2012:503).

“Human interaction lies at the heart of the disciplines” in the social sciences (McCarthy & Anderson, 2000:280). As such, the collaboration and social interaction discussed above becomes even more significant in a subject like history. The particular kinds of cognition which need to be developed through history education involve the ability to engage with historical concepts such as change and continuity, significance, cause and consequence, working with evidence, and historical perspectives (Seixas & Morton, 2013). The process of acquiring these ways of thinking may be through teacher focused activities (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:131). However, “children learn by thinking” and learners need to be actively engaged in order to facilitate this process of thinking (Bergin & Bergin, 2014:131). The more traditional history models which focus on transmission and recall do not sufficiently foster this (Seixas & Morton, 2013:3). The process of collaboration not only supports this cognitive process, but also facilitates navigating the ethical dimension of history teaching (Seixas & Morton, 2013:6). As such, collaboration and discussion are central to an effective history classroom.

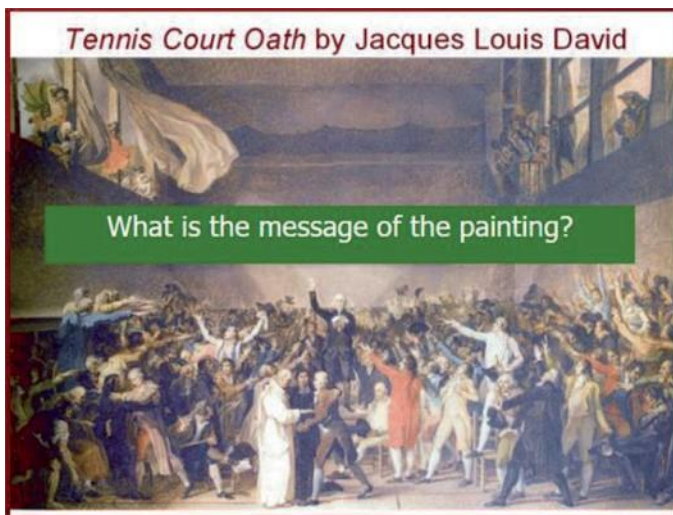
I must be quick to say that this is the kind of history teaching I aspire to. I still frequently find myself packaging essay outlines in easily digestible formats which will produce good outcomes in a Matric examination but have little educational value in teaching learners to think for themselves. Despite the immense privileges I have, I often find myself overwhelmed and too busy, and happy just to use the textbook to explain an idea, or rushing through a section “delivering the curriculum” as if it were a neat package. I and my history teaching are very much a work in progress. Be that as it may, the examples explored below are part of how I navigated my journey towards creating a classroom which fosters historically rigorous and humane thinking, even during COVID-19.

Trying to foster collaboration online

My classroom is generally set up in rows with groups of three desks. Throughout the course of a normal lesson, there would be multiple opportunities for learners to shift into their trios, either to discuss a historical source, develop an opinion on an historical issue or complete other activities. I find that this setup allows for frequent collaboration. I set my classroom up so that there is a mix of abilities within each trio. In an online learning space, this is clearly not feasible. Although my lesson plans still included the discussion points or activities, initially it seemed that there were no easy ways to ensure that all learners were engaging with these.

In a purely online space, I found that learners are far less likely to discuss and engage. I did still make use of open discussion questions but found that these worked best when analysing an historical source, such as that shown in Image 1. This kind of open question worked reasonably well in that a number of learners were able to engage with aspects of the painting's message. Once some learners had mentioned what they could see in the painting and how this tied in to its message, I was able to follow up with further questions to encourage a deeper interpretation. This cycle of questioning encouraged other learners to contribute. Although this worked reasonably well, it was still the case that only a limited number of learners gave their perspectives.

Image 1: Example of open discussion question



Source: Slideshow designed by author featuring image of David's "The Tennis Court Oath" (available at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tennis_Court_Oath_\(David\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tennis_Court_Oath_(David)), as accessed on 1 March 2020).

If I put a general question to the class, especially if it was only verbal, I generally had one or two learners who spoke the most. This was compounded by the fact that for the sake of managing data usage, most learners kept their cameras off for the entire lesson. It therefore became difficult to know whether they were engaging at all, let alone forming ideas which they were prepared to share. I found that this was particularly challenging with my grade 10s, as I had only taught them for a term and did not feel that I had a firm relationship with them yet. Although quick trio discussion and sharing was not a feasible option, I found a number of techniques which helped to get feedback from the whole class and ensure that they were all engaging.

The first technique was to use a variety of historical resources which gave each learner the opportunity to formulate a response in writing rather than needing to speak out loud over the video chat. The simplest format of this was to make use of the chat feature on the video conferencing application (in our case, Google Meet). I would pose the question to the learners both verbally and through a shared slide view. I would then ask each of them to write a response in the chat bar. Sometimes this answer would be a very simple one and at other times it would involve a more detailed response. If I thought of a question that I wanted answered, which was not on the slideshow as part of my lesson plan, I would generally type the question into the chat box rather than just speaking it so that learners were able to engage with it in both written and verbal form. This generally worked fairly well and was definitely the quickest way to get a response. However, I found that in some cases, there were still learners who did not type in an answer, or who would wait for a number of other learners to answer first and look at their response before venturing their answers. In some cases, this was a good thing – the equivalent of being able to discuss with a peer before needing to share an idea with the class as a whole. However, in some cases, I could tell that learners were mimicking their peers' answers without real understanding. The best solution to this was to make use of historical resources which required learners to respond before they could see anyone else's feedback.

The first example of this was a resource called AnswerGarden. As shown in Image 2, the task required learners to engage with some statistics on the three Estates in pre-revolutionary France. Learners needed to predict what problems French society was going to face based on this information. Their responses were recorded through an AnswerGarden

question link. They were each required to write a short response and then would see a word cloud of others' responses. Once most learners had answered, I could discuss various points which were raised in the word cloud. This worked fairly effectively because it allowed learners to think of their own response and share it. It did not completely solve the issue of some learners not responding, but the curiosity of wanting to see the word cloud emerge did entice more of them to respond.

Image 2: Example of AnswerGarden activity and responses

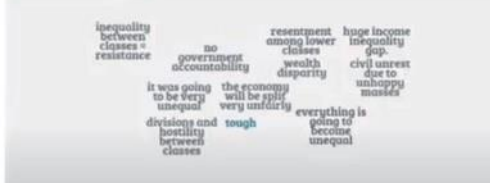
The Three Estates				
Estate	Population	Privileges	Obligations	Questions
First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 100,000 • High-ranking clergy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collected the tithes • Ownership of the press • Control of education • kept records of births, deaths, marriages, etc. • Catholics held favored position of being the one religion sanctioned by monarch and nobility • Owned 20% of the land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid no taxes • Subject to Church law rather than civil law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral obligations (rather than legal obligations) to assist the poor and needy • Support the monarchy and Old Regime
Second	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 100,000 • Nobles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collected taxes in the form of feudal dues • Monopolized military and state appointments • Owned 20% of the land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid no taxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the monarchy and Old Regime
Third	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 20,000,000 • Everyone other than aristocrats, bourgeoisie, city workers, merchants, peasants, etc., along with many parish priests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid all taxes • Offer (Church tax) • Offered tax on goods brought into cities • Clerical (second most used) • Capitalist (most used) • Singletons (income tax) • Indirect (most used) • Salts (dead tax) • Death (dead tax) • Death due to use of land owner's weapons, taxes, etc.

Do now: Follow the link and fill in what kind of issues you think French society is going to face. Use the table on the previous slide for information on the estates.

L5: [Answer here!](#)

L6: [Answer here!](#)

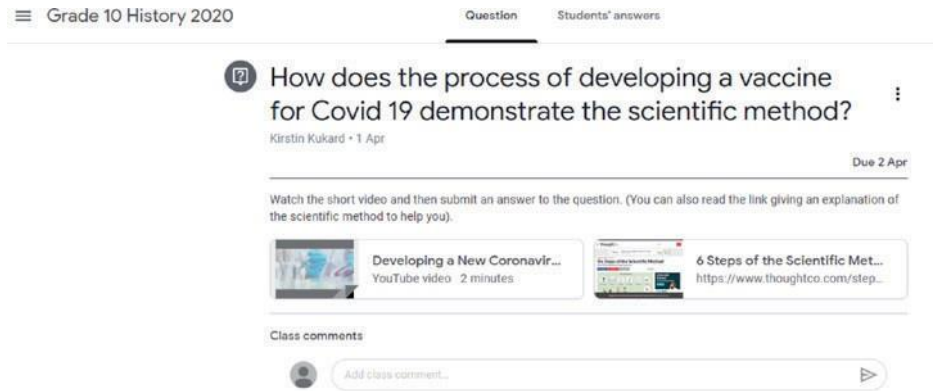
Thank! Type another answer here...



Source: Designed by the author.

Another technique which I found worked well was to pose a question in Google classroom. I could ask learners to respond to this before the lesson and begin the lesson with a discussion of the ideas which emerged. In some cases, this question was based on a video to be watched before the lesson, as seen in Image 3. This flipped classroom method also allowed for learners to engage with ideas in their own time rather than under pressure in a live lesson.

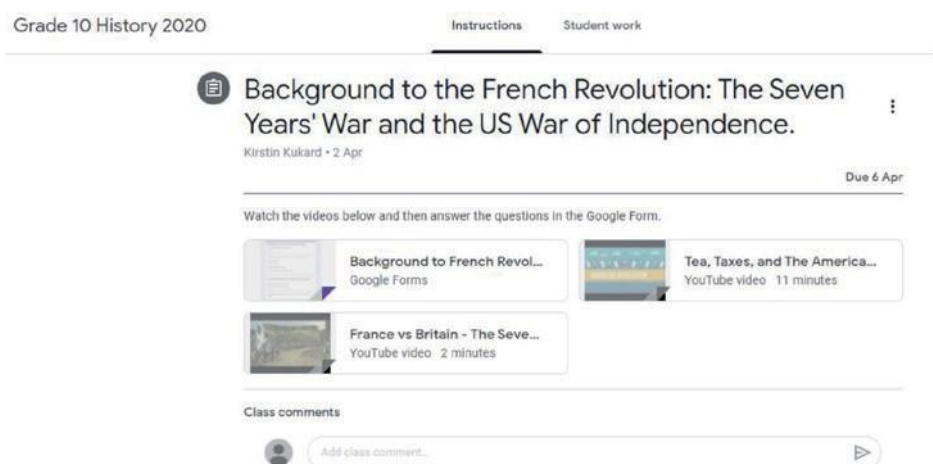
Image 3: Example of question linked to video on Google Classroom



Source: Designed by the author.

In some instances, rather than using the “Question” feature on Google Classroom, I made use of an “Assignment” feature with a Google Form based on the video such as shown in Image 4. This allowed me to engage more carefully with the learners’ responses. Google Forms allows for the form creator to see an aggregate of all learners. This provides an opportunity to clarify any concepts which may have been misunderstood. One is also able to see individual responses in order to check on how particular learners have understood the work.

Image 4: Example of Google Form questions linked to video




Source: Designed by the author.

Although these flipped classroom models work well as part of a “normal” teaching experience, I found them particularly useful during this time.

When we moved to a blended learning approach, new opportunities and challenges presented themselves. It is much easier to ensure that those learners who are physically present are engaged. It is much harder to ensure that the other half of the class who are at home are feeling as much a part of the lesson. Although some of the above-mentioned techniques have remained useful (particularly using the quick response of the chat feature), I have adopted some additional strategies.

We have begun the section of work on “Topic 4: Transformations in Southern Africa” with our grade 10 classes. Last year, we made use of a series of lessons first developed by Kate Angier and Gill Sutton. These lessons make use of a variety of active learning techniques and, when done in person, help learners to develop historical thinking skills and remain engaged in what can sometimes be a slightly dry section of work. However, we were faced with the challenge of engaging with this material in a blended learning environment where half the class was physically present and half was online. Our solution was to group learners in trios across the two groups so at least one learner would be in class at all times. They communicated over WhatsApp or in the chat feature on shared Google documents. This has proved to be an effective technique as it allows me to set longer form activities and to be sure that those online remain engaged. For example, one such activity was sorting sources on life in Southern Africa by 1750, first into categories that made sense to the learners and then into economic, social, trade and political. Learners had access to the sources through a resource on the Google classroom. They were then able to work in a shared Google document to copy sections of the sources into the various categories such as shown in Image 5.

Image 5: Extract of online version of “Foursquare” activity

<p>Trade</p> <p><u>Source D</u> Crops were a vitally important food supply but open fields could never be as tightly controlled as cattle. <i>Exchanges of cattle</i> cemented marriages between important families. A man who aspired to wed the daughter of an important family presented cattle to the father of the bride. The more significant the family, the more cattle were expected...As cattle bred and multiplied, their owners prospered.</p> <p>Owning cattle meant wealth and power.</p> <p>→ there would be power shifts because people would lose cattle, and those who previously had the most cattle and were in control of distribution of it would no longer be as powerful.</p> <p><u>Source L</u> Tribute/Clientage: <i>Young men could be asked to give their labour and work for the chief</i> (rather than their own head of homestead) tending his cattle, working in his fields or as part of a hunting party. A portion of the harvest was given in tribute to the chief.</p> <p>4. Marriage: Chiefs used marriage to make alliances and connections to strengthen his rule and avoid war.</p> <p>→ less goods could be traded as most goods (food, clothing, tools, materials) and if they</p>	<p>Social</p> <p><u>Source A</u> cattle extended the range of places where people could live comfortably. cattle were food Cattle manure was useful as fertilizer and as fuel Cattle hides could be used as clothing shields to deflect the blows of enemies <i>All these advantages made cattle the most prized of all possessions.</i></p> <p>→ Cattle were used for all aspects of life. They were used for food, housing, fertiliser, fuel and more. Without cattle people could settle wherever it was most beneficial to them, without having to worry about building extra infrastructure for the animals.</p> <p><u>Source 1B</u> Wherever people lived together in large concentrations, places to keep cattle occupied a central position. In many places the ruins of stone walls people built long ago to control and protect their cattle are often the only visible testimony that those people ever existed.</p> <p>→ Cattle provided archeological evidence that these people ever existed, the walls for their enclosures were made of stone and lasted thousands of years.</p> <p><u>Source C</u></p> 
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Source: Designed by the author and learners.

Under usual circumstances this would all have been done hard copy and involved making large posters. I feel that the tactile element of the sorting is still more effective, but the online version was a good workaround under the circumstances. I was able to move around the class (with suitable social distancing) and engage with the learner who was in class and see what the others were contributing to the document. All learners then shared their documents with me, so that we could do a virtual “gallery walk” (Facing History and Ourselves) of the documents and see how different groups had worked with the sources.

Another example of working between online and in class was with my two grade 11 classes. We were beginning the section on competing nationalisms in the Middle East. As I teach at a Jewish school, this topic needs to be taught in a sensitive, whilst historically rigorous way. My lessons are partly drawn from a series of lessons developed by Facing History and Ourselves (Darsa, 2018:16-17). The focus is on understanding the competing narratives around the history of the region. One of the introductory activities I usually do in person is to

have learners read various viewpoints on the conflict and to engage with these in the form of a “silent conversation” (Facing History and Ourselves, 2020). Under normal circumstances, the learners would move around the room silently to look at various large posters and write their responses either to the quotation, or to other learners’ comments. We would then look at a few examples of these interactions together and allow this process of listening to frame the rest of the section. Given the constraints of blended learning, I needed an alternative. Instead of physical posters, I had the quotations on a Google document which was shared with the learners. I gave them all editing access. They were each asked to go onto the document and to add comments to the quotation. As you can reply to a comment, this also allowed learners to engage with others’ comments much as they would have done in the physical classroom. We kept the same documents across both classes, so that the second class was able to see the first class’s interactions. This activity spanned two lessons, so we could reflect back on the overall discussions. Again, I do feel that the physical process would probably have been more effective but this version did at least allow us to have some of the relevant conversations at the beginning of the section of work.

Through these various technologies and techniques, I was therefore able to try and keep learners engaged in a collaborative, active learning process both online and in a blended model. I certainly still found myself slipping too much into a “teacher-talk” mode, particularly when learners seemed a bit disconnected but these techniques helped to offset that somewhat.

Collaboration in assessment

One of the areas in which I feel I have the most potential room for growth is in allowing time for regular collaborative assessment. Instead of jumping straight to a test, I hope increasingly to allow time for developing the skills of historical thinking in a collaborative format. By the time a summative assessment comes along, the goal is for learners to have mastered the various elements required so that they are able to demonstrate their ability with confidence.

The process of teaching at this time has made me even more aware of how important this is. In a pre-Covid classroom environment, we had more opportunities for frequent timed assessments. In a purely online environment, this became less of an option and I needed to find alternatives which would develop the necessary skills.

For both my grade 10s and 11s, we focused on essay writing during the period when we were teaching purely online. For the grade 10s, this was the first time that they were being taken through the process of writing an essay. In order to facilitate this process, I created a series of short videos using the free version of Screencastify. These videos were all less than five minutes long and went through all of the aspects of essay writing: how to write an introduction, using the PEEL method for developing the line of argument in the body of the essay, and how to create an effective conclusion. The PEEL structure helps learners to build their paragraphs through using an opening topic sentence (Point), elaboration (E) and evidence (E) to build the argument and then a link (L) back to the question. Learners were expected to watch these videos asynchronously so that they had time to watch at their own pace. The answers modelled in the videos were also available to the learners to refer to.

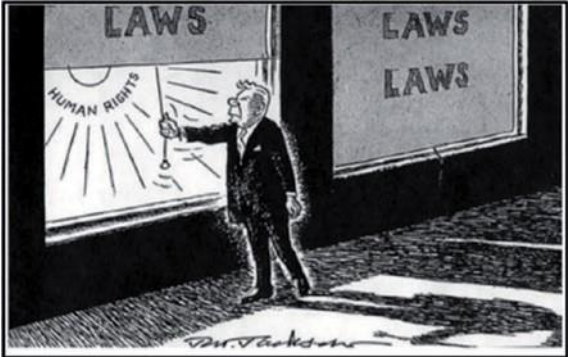
During lesson time, we made use of the video conferencing platform Zoom. I spent the first few minutes of the lesson reinforcing the key concepts of the relevant aspect of the essay and allowing for questions. I had pre-created breakout rooms and assigned learners into groups of four. In the first lesson, learners moved into their breakout rooms and discussed their position on the stance of the essay question: “‘The political situation in France was the most significant cause of the French Revolution’. To what extent do you agree with this statement?”. They had to agree on their stance as a group and work on writing their introduction. As we were writing the classic “causes of the French Revolution” essay, learners were each responsible for writing a paragraph about one cause. By the end of the first lesson, each learner knew which paragraph they would be writing and could ensure that they were prepared for the next lesson. They were also asked to share their document with me. The breakout room feature allows the host to move between rooms. I was therefore able to join each group in turn and ensure that they were on track. The chat feature also allowed learners to directly message me and ask me to join their group if they were struggling. In the following lesson, we reinforced the process of writing the PEEL paragraphs. Learners then moved into their groups again and began working simultaneously on their various paragraphs. I joined rooms that needed me, but mostly spent time on the various groups’ documents giving feedback to learners. They had a follow-up lesson, where they were asked to give feedback to their group members on their paragraphs using the quick peer feedback structure of “What went well” and “Even

better if”. They then made any necessary changes and then finalised their conclusions. These group essays were submitted for assessment through the Google classroom.

Once I had marked and given feedback on the group essays, learners were then expected to write an individual essay on the new topic: “‘Louis XVI’s reckless spending and failure to reform the taxation system launched the French Revolution’. To what extent do you agree with this statement?” They were able to draw on the group essays in formulating this essay, but needed to adapt their line of argument to engage with the relevant question. This collaboration therefore allowed for a scaffolded version of the essay writing process with both peer and teacher feedback.

Although the next example is by no means a novel one, it has shown me the importance of allowing learners to explore ideas for themselves. Our Grade 9s have been learning about the history of apartheid. Rather than teaching the apartheid laws, we asked the learners to work either in pairs or in groups of three. They produced a slideshow on Google slides, explaining what their law was about and giving some examples of how it affected people’s lives. They were then asked to find one written and one visual source and to set historical questions on each of these, such as shown in the example in Image 6.

Image 6: Example of question set by Grade 9 learners on Suppression of Communism Act



Questions

From your own knowledge, who do you think the man in the cartoon is?

What message is the cartoonist trying to convey about the Suppression of Communism Act?

How has the cartoonist illustrated this?

Name 2 human rights besides freedom of speech that the Suppression of Communism act was restricting?

Source: Designed by learners. Featured image of cartoon (available at <https://mrdivis.wordpress.com/2015/01/17/the-power-of-political-cartoons/>, as accessed on 20 August 2020).

The learners were given a few lessons in class to work on this. In most cases, one of them was in the classroom while the other was online. The

learners mostly chatted on WhatsApp, sometimes over calls, to work on the various aspects of their slides. I was able to answer questions and look at examples of their work by engaging with those who were in class, or giving feedback to those who shared their work with me. At the end of the cycle of lessons, each group presented on their law. I selected the most interesting question from their list and asked the rest of the class to answer it. The group then gave their feedback on the answer. The presentations were therefore less like a formal oral and more of a springboard for discussion. I asked frequent questions and clarified points throughout. We created a shared Google document highlighting the key features of each law as we went along as these lessons provided the teaching aspect of these laws. While some learners certainly produced better results than others, overall, they were far more engaged with the process than if I had simply taught through the laws myself. This process also ensured that every learner had a chance to speak, even if (as is the case with some of the learners) they are only attending school online.

Conclusion

The process of teaching history online and in a blended approach has highlighted once again for me how important it is to try and keep learners engaged and collaborating in the process of their own learning. The strategies mentioned above are certainly not completely new nor fool proof. I still found that my weakest learners struggled disproportionately. There were a number of learners who battled with motivation and mental health issues such as depression and anxiety during this time. Those learners who usually struggle with executive function struggled more so without the physical presence of a teacher to nudge them along. There were some learners who barely submitted any work and would avoid engaging in discussion or feedback in whatever form it took. The above strategies also favour those who have reliable internet and easy access to devices. While this is the majority of our learners, I needed to find workarounds for those for whom these were more of a struggle. I am certainly of the opinion that being in the same physical space is the best way to foster the relationships and intellectual space to learn. However, given the constraints placed upon us at this time, these strategies helped to maintain this atmosphere to some extent.

Overall, this time of isolation and forced separation from my learners has led me to be more committed to working at continuing to build collaborative learning into my regular teaching practice. While some of these techniques

may still work best (and require less effort) in a physical classroom space, the constraints of teaching history online or in a blended environment have also pushed me to think creatively.

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Stop thinking about tomorrow: Even in the era of COVID-19 History is teaching past and present

Reflections on teaching History during COVID-19

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Abstract

The rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has caused a crisis in education, with the digital divide becoming ever more prevalent in a society which is as unequal and fractured as South Africa. While ex-Model C and private schools made the transition onto online learning with comparative ease at the beginning of the first lockdown, the majority of students and teachers in South Africa were, and continue to be, faced with a lack of internet access and resources to allow for the continuation of teaching and learning. While headlines celebrated a ‘21st century revolution in education’ – essentially undermining the professionalism of teachers and calling into question the value of face-to-face interaction – the oft-neglected global majority continued to be marginalised. This is not to denigrate the innovative methods which teachers in both underprivileged and privileged settings have adopted in the face of the crisis, which range from compressing videos and sending notes via Whatsapp to spending hours on screen teaching synchronous lessons, but rather to highlight the challenges which deserve greater focus in the contemporary socio-economic milieu. For a subject such as History, this is an opportune moment not only to draw parallels to events such as the Spanish Flu (which too demanded the wearing of protective masks), but also to highlight issues of social justice which are emerging on both a local and global scale.

Keywords: Online learning; COVID-19; History education; Education inequality; Fourth Industrial Revolution; Social justice.

In the midst of South Africa’s lockdown period, Stephen Grootes – a well-known political journalist and regular contributor to the *Daily Maverick*, wrote an article in which he extolled the success of online schooling during the era of COVID-19, with the headline reading “Online learning to the rescue” (Grootes, 2020). Using terms such as “scalability” and “building capacity”, embedded in his argument was the *de rigueur* neoliberal rhetoric of 21st century education which privileges targets and

outcomes over an equal and socially just system of schooling. In a country in which 55% of the population live below the upper bound poverty line and 25% live on less than R561 per person per month (Business Tech, 2019), suggesting that online learning is the solution to South Africa's education crisis is more than just myopic: it is disingenuous. Grootes is not alone. Over the course of the past few months, in South Africa and abroad, post-apocalyptic visions of a post-Covid 19 "new normal" have seen a sudden increase in online schools catering largely for the moneyed minority. This poses a marked challenge for educationalists – and in this case, for History teachers – who are more than methodological beings behind flat screens, fighting for connectivity on Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams.

Over the course of the last decade, technology-driven teaching (or ICT integration) has become more than merely a buzzword used to describe schools with "savvy" smartboards adorning their classroom walls. In primarily private and well-resourced, mainly ex-Model C, schools, conferences and staff development workshops have been replete with sessions on digital innovation in the learning environment. Sessions on using interactive whiteboards and downloading mobile "apps" for Ipad are, by now, nothing short of anachronistic. It would, of course, be naïve to assume that multinational tech companies vying for access to the educational market is driven by altruism. In 2020, tapping into the youth's competitive spirit (or their consumer mindset), "gamification" is posed to be the next revolution – or so the "Ed-techpreneurs would have us believe. Even the contentious 2018 Ministerial Task Team report on making history compulsory bizarrely states that "History education should not be restricted to the written word because interactive digital media (playstation, mobile phones and video games) [...] can also be used to encourage students to empathise with people living in past eras (Department of Basic Education, 2018). It would seem that fundamentals such as access to textbooks and qualified teachers have fallen out of fashion. This is not, however, to argue *against* the use of technology in the teaching of History; rather, it is to question very assumptions upon which the lauding of technology as a panacea to all ills – one of the most fundamental of which, in South Africa, is the provision of consistent energy supply.

By the time the South African government imposed the "Level 5 lockdown" in order to control the spread of COVID-19 at the end of March 2020, over 1.5 billion students worldwide were affected by the closure of schools, which is equivalent to 87.4% of the global school enrolments (David et

al., 2020:2). Home-schooling, traditionally positioned at the margins of national education systems and often the subject of popular contention, has come to adopt new meaning in the stasis caused the pandemic. So, too, has the concept of the “digital divide”. In a society in which a school charging in excess of R150 000 per annum can sit merely a few kilometres away from a no-fee counterpart, the shift to online learning has done little more than to accelerate and exacerbate the glaring injustices of social stratification in the educational sphere. With a contentious examination system which is already skewed in favour of English and Afrikaans mother tongue speakers, the glaring that the large majority of South African Matric History students essentially lost four months of teaching and learning – with no adjustment to the final assessment – has further deepened pre-existing and entrenched inequities.

The fact that History teachers, along with their counterparts in other subjects, have had to face such immense challenges during the course of the pandemic has nevertheless given rise to both national and an international collegial spirit. International organisations such as EuroClio – the European Association of History Educators – and the British-based Teaching History – have established large banks of resources which have opened up communities of practice which transcend traditional borders. Online tools for communication, including the ever-present and “COVID-19 success story”, Zoom, have allowed for teachers in well-resourced schools to experiment with translating classroom activities to the digital sphere. This has, of course, not been without its limitations. Provoking spontaneous debate about the Causes of the Russian Revolution is no mean feat against blurry backgrounds and the sound of a Labrador barking in the background of the inevitable individual who has forgotten to mute the microphone.

What, then, of the silent majority, for whom data prices are exorbitant, connections are precarious and the provision of textbooks and notes beyond the school walls were essentially impossible during the “hard lockdown”? Those who, despite having had extremely limited access to educational resources, are still expected – against all odds – to complete a content-heavy curriculum? One of the most effective means of digital communication lies in smartphone mobile technology. By 2023, it is estimated that over 26 million South Africans will have access to internet-enabled cellphones (O’Dea, 2020). This is by no means a novel phenomenon. Various academic publications have highlighted the rapid proliferation of mobile technology

amongst young Africans over the course of the past few years, highlighting the potential – and the constraints - of using mobile-based technologies in the educational sphere in sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, while the cushy convenience of logging onto Google Classroom, receiving packs of notes via email, watching data-heavy video materials and seeing the familiar face of a teacher on screen may be beyond the reach of most South Africa school-goers, the “wonders of Whatsapp” (the nexus of neoliberalism) have in some cases provided, at least for the time being, a viable alternative to traditional pedagogy.

Online South African zero-rated curriculum resources for History students remain limited, with the majority of educational websites invariably focusing on STEM subjects. Nevertheless, teachers who enjoy access to the internet and to a computer have a range of options available to limit data usage. Powerpoint presentations and videos can be compressed to free of charge using a number of different applications, and reams of notes saved in a PDF format can easily be reduced in size on websites. These methods are, of course, far from ideal: having to read notes or watch presentations on a phone with a screen averaging around 10 centimetres is challenging for the best of us – to say nothing of the price tag. Nevertheless, in recent years, companies have capitalised on a growing and captive market by introducing smartphones for less than R500. While there is no doubt that, in spite of the ululating cries of the Edtech-preneurs, this kind of technology is unlikely to replace conventional teaching, it has opened up potential opportunities for both teachers (and creative corporates) to utilise new technologies in what seem to be increasingly ominous prospects for education in South Africa.

It is, however, apposite to consider some of the benefits and challenges of teaching History in an online format, given what seems to be popular trends predicted by so-called “Fourth Industrial Futurists” (a neologism which hopefully will not qualify for the 2020 *Oxford English Dictionary*). With the terms “synchronous”, “asynchronous” and “blended” learning rolling off the tongues of even the least seasoned of acolytes of the online sphere, certain questions should emerge surrounding best practice. With excessive synchronous teaching (teaching and learning in “real time”) potentially contributing to learner and teacher exhaustion, current theories seem to point towards a blended model as an effective means of pedagogy. In a History classroom, a blended approach can easily incorporate both individual and collaborative learning. Flipped classroom activities,

prepared readings and scaffolded source-based and writing exercises can be complemented by direct instruction, targeted and differentiated webinars and tutorials. “Teacher talk time” in synchronous lessons can be reduced with short videos covering content in an asynchronous format, allowing for the much-needed focus on skills development in critical thinking during live lessons.

Nonetheless, where the global COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in technology opening up innovative possibilities in the developed and certain sectors of the developing world, it has also highlighted the need for a socially just approach and responsible use of the medium to ensure equity. In South Africa, the lack of basic materials such as textbooks in schools precludes the achievement of the “technological dream”, however many tablets, robots and coding-enabled computers can be installed in urban and rural schools by the incumbent administration. Thus, a consideration of the teaching of History during the era of COVID-19 requires significantly more than a mere overview of available technologies to facilitate distance learning during the various iterations of the national lockdown. The past, as it were, cannot be abstracted from the present and, despite the omnipresent pressure to complete the curriculum, the flexibility of History to address issues of social justice has provides an opportunity for teachers and students to explore socio-political and economic structures of society through the a contemporary lens. The teaching of History in COVID-19 thus stretches beyond the obvious parallels to the 1918 Spanish Flu, although the century-old images of mask-wearing nurses and field hospitals would certainly enrich any comparative source-based exercise.

Ultimately, within the broad scope of the topics available to History teachers emerging from the context of the pandemic, it would be a great shame to relegate Marx and the nature of labour to the margins of the debate. As headlines declare “working from home is the new normal”, it appears easy – and indeed convenient – for the middle classes to forget that it is that a new definition for the working class could indeed be reduced to “those who are forced to go out to work”. Moreover, the collapsing of national frontiers under the aegis of global capitalism has, in recent months, rendered the labour market more precarious. To celebrate the flexibility of the internet in allowing for remote work is also to forget the relative dispensability of higher paid jobs. Outsourcing to lower-income countries no longer largely belongs to the realm of semi-skilled work, thus rendering a far greater number of jobs within a national sphere vulnerable

to foreign competition – jobs, in other words, are no longer protected. As a correspondent to Britain's *Daily Telegraph* newspaper remarked in July 2020, those in rich countries who celebrate the chance “to work from home” need to remember that “if their jobs can be done from home, then they can also be outsourced to India”.

To teach History during the era of COVID-19 is to do far more than just circumnavigate the obstructions to traditional classroom delivery. Yes, the availability of a wide range of innovative digital tools - from communication platforms to video compression programmes - has, amongst the better-resourced communities, allowed for content delivery to continue. This is, of course, by no means ideal: History is a subject which is best suited to discursive practices and debate, and mere content delivery is rarely pedagogically effective. In South Africa, no doubt as in dozens of other low- and middle-income countries, the majority have experienced educational exclusion over the course of 2020, further exacerbating extant structural inequality, and access to digital resources remains elusive. To teach History during the era of COVID-19, then, is to encourage students to explore the manifestations of historical trends which have presented themselves in the contemporary moment. It is to remain cognisant of the widening lacunae between the moneyed minority and the majority. It is, ultimately, to teach for a socially just society (without slipping into the trap of pernicious presentism) though the lens of historical consciousness.

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Teaching and learning History in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic: Reflections of a senior school history teacher

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Abstract

Teaching history during lockdown at an elite private school during the COVID-19 pandemic posed challenges and opportunities to draw on history and to learn new technologies. Challenges went beyond the content of history and included mental stress amongst students as a result of isolation but also empathy for victims of deepening poverty and police violence. Opportunities included international and local webinars, conferences, staff development and increased online resources.

Keywords: History; Technology; COVID-19; Poverty; Webinars; Resources.

When South Africa's COVID-19 lockdown started on 26 March 2020, I was teaching a Grade 11 class about the Wall Street Crash (1929) and the Depression in the United States of America (USA) (1930s). I was never more mindful of history unfolding before our eyes. We moved immediately to online teaching without missing a day. Most teachers and learners at our school were fortunate enough to have electronic devices like computers and smartphones. The school provided teachers with airtime (data) if they did not have uncapped Wi-Fi at home. Learners could generally access devices and Wi-Fi, but bursary students were given iPads and a dongle with airtime. Teachers had just a few days of warning – from 23 to 26 March 2020 – in which to receive information technology (IT) lessons on how to use Microsoft Teams® and other platforms and mobile apps. Teaching during COVID-19 then began in a mad scramble, with our hearts in our throats.

Comparing the USA and South Africa

Each day, the Grade 11 learners shared information about the loss of their families' jobs resulting from COVID-19 and the response of the USA government to this health disaster which threatened to destabilise that

country socially and economically. President Donald Trump's stimulus package (The White House, 2020) was noted with interest; here was an equivalent of former president Franklin D. Roosevelt's welfare handouts to "prime the pump". The White House announced on 27 March 2020:

President Donald J. Trump is signing bipartisan legislation to provide relief to American families and workers during the coronavirus outbreak. The President worked with Congress to secure bipartisan legislation that will provide emergency relief to families and small businesses that have been impacted by the coronavirus. This unprecedented relief package totals more than \$2 trillion. The CARES Act provides much needed economic relief for American families and businesses who are hurting through no fault of their own.

The report went on to say that the aid given to small businesses would be to bolster the economy:

This legislation will strengthen our economy by providing needed financial assistance to America's small businesses and workers. Small businesses that have been hurt by coronavirus will receive the help they need to survive and prosper. This legislation provides small businesses and non-profits comprised of 500 or fewer employees with almost \$350 billion in partially forgivable loans.

This was interesting from the outset as it was a Republican government focusing on aid, albeit to keep the economy buoyed.

The class had been watching the trade tariff wars between China and the USA just before lockdown. Since 2018, the dispute has seen the USA and China impose tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of one another's goods. President Trump has long accused China of unfair trading practices and intellectual property theft. In China, there is a perception that America is trying to curb its rise as a global economic power (BBC News, 2020).

Having studied President Herbert Hoover (USA president 1929–1933) and the imposition of trade tariffs, several learners voiced the opinion that President Trump did not seem to learn from history, considering the damage done by trade tariffs in the USA during the 1920s. Now his stimulus package of aid to USA families seemed to indicate that he did indeed pay attention to the past, even if he did not wear a mask. As our lockdown continued and the banning of alcohol and tobacco was announced, I wondered if our government officials should take a course in the history of prohibition in the USA and the subsequent rise of mafia control of the illicit alcohol industry. Watching the rise in alcohol- and tobacco-related criminality in

an already crime-ridden South Africa, one could only wonder whether there were links between some state officials and this lucrative network, just as there were state links in 1920s USA between Washington officials and gangsters of the speakeasies (illegal drinking holes) and bootleggers (illegal liquor sellers). The students had studied prohibition, and it made for some interesting conversations, especially in the light of the outcry from South African associations and councils trading alcohol. In July 2020, with the second ban on alcohol, one journalist summed up the downside of this decision as follows:

Whilst there is no denying that the sale of alcohol had an immediate, tangible effect on the ability of hospitals to handle the surge in COVID-19 cases, the fact that the decision was taken without any form of consultation with industry organisations is far from ideal. After all, in a country with a skyrocketing unemployment rate, and an economy deep into recession, an industry with a value chain that affects almost a million South Africans should at least be involved in some sort of discussion with the relevant government decisionmakers. As we have seen with the trade of illicit cigarettes, any gap in the market is quickly filled by those who trade outside of the law, and you can bet it won't be long before neighbourhood WhatsApp groups are once again filled with people punting wine for extortionate prices (2Oceansvibe News, 2020).

This decision therefore created fertile ground for discussions regarding the health, economic and criminal factors to consider when deciding to limit the sale of alcohol in South Africa.

USA history has been an important curriculum focus of discussions in my virtual classroom during this pandemic. Protests were being held across the country in response to the police involvement in the death of an African American person, George Floyd. His death followed a fatal police incident in Louisville, Kentucky, in which Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old African American woman was shot to death in her apartment by officers in March 2020. In February 2020, two armed White men shot and killed Ahmaud Arbery, a Black man, while he was jogging in his Georgia neighbourhood. During lockdown, a White woman called the police about a Black man who was bird watching in Central Park in New York. The subsequent protests and international focus on a resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement deeply affected the learners in my school.

On 1 June 2020, I was asked to conduct online discussions with the learners on the issues of Black Lives Matter and the deaths during lockdown. Here, I discussed the roots of racial violence in the USA, linking it to slavery,

reconstruction, the Klux Klux Klan (KKK), Jim Crow laws, inner city Black poverty in the 1960s and 1970s, the Black Power movement, and the attitude of President Trump to inner city Black poverty today.

I started my conversation with the following introduction:

The death of George Floyd in Minneapolis has spurred protests against police brutality from Memphis to Denver to Los Angeles, and students and teachers nationwide and internationally are processing the week's tragic events without the in-person community of being at school. As a South African, you may have a range of responses to this brutal murder. You may feel overwhelmed by the situation. You may feel it is happening in a far-off place and that South Africa has so many issues of its own that are pressing. You may feel you don't have enough of the facts and that your own challenges right now are more important. OR, you may feel you identify with the incidents taking place in the USA because of your passion for social justice, your own personal identity, and maybe a feeling that you can empathise due to feeling silenced, oppressed, or under-represented yourself in some way.

Many of the girls in the online discussions were history students but some were not. I had been asked to conduct the discussion with all learners in each of the Further Education and Training (FET) grades. Some matriculation level girls had the benefit of having studied the Civil Rights Movement in history, but the Grade 11s and Grade 10s had not yet learnt about this, so the discussion had to include a lot of the USA's past history of racism. The discussion then turned to South Africa and focused on the 11 people who had been shot or killed by police or armed forces in South Africa during lockdown. A brief discussion ensued about why these deaths seemed to attract less attention and less outcry. Why, in a country where there are a majority of Black citizens, did Black lives seemingly also matter little, especially in the township areas where poverty prevailed? A discussion on internalised racism followed, including the impact of racism in our society, and how this played out in some institutions which still exacted brute force on people of colour. The importance of teaching Social Darwinism and race was once again highlighted as a critical aspect of the syllabus – and one which should be taught to all learners, regardless of whether they take history as a subject or not.

The school protests around our country challenging the lack of transformation in independent and ex-Model C schools in South Africa spread during lockdown. Transformation remains a vital part of addressing racial, gender and sexual equality that is long overdue. These struggles

are reflective of the haste with which our country moved forward after the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC), causing deep anger in today's youth who feel that the ongoing divide socially and economically needs to be further addressed. I was proud of the history learners who could reflect on race, identity and intersectionality by drawing on the past struggles of women and people of colour across the world.

As poverty deepened in our country and the inner-city projects that our learners had supported closed during lockdown, we worried about the lack of teaching in the inner-city schools: the inequality in South Africa was highlighted once more. COVID-19 made the growing inequity starker, with the extra pressure having been placed on poor people of colour, who as breadwinners lost jobs and because school feeding schemes ceased to operate during lockdown. Before lockdown, there were three projects we supported as a school in the inner city. Learners from several schools also visited our school once a week, or every afternoon in the case of our academy.

We became painfully aware that many of the learners had been sent home for lockdown without textbooks. In 2015, the High Court had ordered the Department of Basic Education to provide textbooks to every child in school, yet many schools still did not have an adequate supply in 2020 before lockdown and learners shared books in school. At lockdown, therefore, learners were at home without the resources to continue their studies. This was in spite of the 2015 court decision, which was reported as follows:

... the Supreme Court of Appeal was emphatic: by not delivering textbooks to all ... learners, the Department of Basic Education and provincial department had violated learners' rights to basic education. It's the strongest judgment yet that all learners, especially the disadvantaged, have a constitutional right to textbooks (Daily Maverick, 2015).

Our concern for these learners grew as the reports of hunger spread. Many learners depended on school feeding schemes in South Africa and when schools were closed there was no feeding taking place. There are an estimated 10 million children in South Africa who rely on school meals to survive.

The State was lobbied by the formidable force of the NGO Equal Education and a COVID-19 task team made up of "civic organisations, trade unions, organisations of informal workers, faith-based organisations and community structures in South Africa" (Equal Education, 2020), the

latter being a collection of organisations on a scale not seen since the 1980s' UDF and COSATU anti-apartheid alliance. This new alliance called on “all people, every stakeholder and sector, to contain infection, reduce transmission and mitigate the social and political impacts of the COVID-19 virus”. Under pressure from this civil society front, the State announced that the Child Support Grant would be increased during lockdown as a welfare measure:

On 21 April 2020 President Cyril Ramaphosa, announced a social relief and economic support package of R500 billion to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on households. The following social assistance has been introduced to assist South Africans desperately affected by COVID-19:

Child support grant beneficiaries will receive an extra R300 per month in May 2020 thereafter an additional R500 per month from June to October 2020 will be received;

All other grant beneficiaries will receive an extra R250 per month for the next six months; and

A special COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant of R350 a month for the next six months (the “SRD Grant”) has been introduced (Lexology, 2020).

In terms of the Child Support Grant, this meant that R300 per child would be added in May 2020 only, making it R740 per child. From June until Oct 2020, this grant reverted to R440 per child, but each caregiver received an additional R500 regardless of the number of children for whom they received a grant.

Here was another opportunity for a history lesson. I was personally struck by the extension of the child support grant, as I had been a member of the Lund committee as a young Black Sash (Blacksash.org.za, undated) representative in 1995–1996 when we formulated the grant that would assist the most vulnerable children in South Africa, of all races, according to need. Under the new post-apartheid dispensation in South Africa, the grant started in 1998 at R100 per child month and was provided for children in need aged 0-5 years. Now, it is for children aged 0-18 years and is R440 per month. This grant replaced the Single Mothers' Grant that White single mothers had received during apartheid. When we were lobbying for the then new Child Grant, we had been focused on many child-headed households due to AIDS. The continued poverty in South Africa has meant the grant has served more and more vulnerable children; today, over 10

million children receive it, and it is hailed by UNICEF as “one of the most comprehensive social protection systems in the developing world” (UNICEF, n.d.).

This was a good example of how post-apartheid resources could be spread across the racial divide and how the most vulnerable could be catered for.

We were aware, however, that many of the inner-city learners were not recipients of the child grant, as they were not South African citizens and thus would not benefit from this state action. For our learners, this was another learning curve; many inner-city learners, who were children of refugees or economic migrants, were vulnerable at a time when the school feeding scheme would have at least given them a meal a day. Now, with schools shut, there was nothing.

Our learners’ response to this was incredible; they sprang into action, collecting food during the month of May for the families we could track through the project coordinators and the local church. They also collected blankets and started making masks. A tutoring scheme was developed by the Grade 10 and 11 learners from our school, for learners from the academy programme who were at home. Our learners would help by WhatsApp, email and phone, sharing resources, online sites and knowledge with these learners who would be stressing about their future.

Another scourge in our society was exacerbated during the COVID-19 lockdown – gender-based violence. Once again, the media shone the spotlight on the danger of learners who could not escape from abuse at home during lockdown:

... campaigners stressed that the police force’s gender-based violence hotline received 2,300 calls in the first five days of lockdown – nearly three times the rate prior to lockdown – showing that violence against women had gone up not down (Global Citizen, 2020).

Our learners found these reports deeply disturbing and felt helpless in the face of this issue. Speaking to one of our matriculants, she related the sense of being overwhelmed with social issues at a time when she was already stressed by the virus and her studies. Drawing on history, she related that she felt what students in the 1960s must have felt, that is, there were so many issues to fight, and she wanted to be part of working for change yet she also had to think of her own future and her studies to get to a point where she could make a sustainable difference.

I was mindful of the life lessons these students were drawing from history. Suddenly, the activism of the 1960s was real to them as they grappled to balance personal and political issues – at age 17 or 18 years. The fact that they were drawing parallels was evidence that their history lessons were meaningful; these girls had not yet left school and were still minors yet the weight of the world was starting to overwhelm them. They felt their elders had let them and the world down.

Educational webinars

I was also asked to participate as an educator and member of the Varkey Foundation Global Teacher network (Global Citizen, 2020) in national and international educational webinars during the COVID-19 lockdown. The response of teachers around the world has varied. Education departments have also responded differently. In a resource-rich country such as the UK, textbooks and weekly packs of homework were delivered to schoolchildren along with vouchers for poorer families, and online teaching took place for learners with access to a digital device. This contrasted with countries like Sierra Leone, where learners in rural areas had no textbooks and no devices. Here, some teachers contributed to lessons on the radio and raised money to buy radios for schools where learners could listen to lessons while trying to practice social distancing.

In South Africa, the vacillation of the Department of Basic Education and its tussle with teachers who felt unsafe in many schools due to overcrowding, lack of running water and flush toilets, has led to a sense of uncertainty for learners. Most were not sure whether the school year would be completed, or whether they would have to repeat the year. Most independent schools, meanwhile, were able to teach online during lockdown; they also transitioned to blended learning, as some students returned while others remained isolated.

A particularly insightful publication, *Maslow Before Bloom* (Teacher Task Force, 2020), written by five teachers from Canada, the USA and Philippines, raised the issue of wellbeing during this very stressful time. They considered how online teaching needed to address the stress of learners first, how examinations should matter less, and how education should be more creative. They emphasised that core units in a curriculum should be kept but the rest shaved to make the process of teaching in a pandemic more realistic and sustainable. Many countries in the northern

hemisphere – where schools closed in June for the summer break – shed end-of-year examinations.

In countries like Chile, little schooling took place as learners did not have devices. Teachers in my network continued to phone their learners regularly and took them lessons in lesson packs every fortnight. In India, a particularly creative teacher gave her lessons using WhatsApp and song.

At our school, it was decided to trim the mid-year examinations, but we still had some form of assessment. Matriculants wrote mid-year examinations as usual and wrote preliminary examinations in September, but the Grade 11s wrote a shortened assessment and the Grade 10s only wrote examinations in some subjects. It was interesting to experience a blended-learning approach, with some girls at home and some at school. During examinations, some wrote from home and some wrote at school. The importance of thinking flexibly and having the learners' well-being as a priority informed this approach.

Staff development

Alongside the threats, COVID-19 has led to many opportunities. There have been many great offers of online courses and resources, provided free due to the pandemic. The Gilder Lehrman Trust offered free seminars and I signed up for a series of discussions on the Vietnam War.

Jacana Media offered webinars on various topics, including discussions by University of Cape Town professor Howard Philips on his book *Plague, Pox and Pandemics*, and there were discussions by a variety of authors on South African history. The Historical Association of the UK offered free resources to teachers online during this time.

On the South African front, I have been busy creating profiles of South African women who played important roles in the country's past, but who do not feature in the current curriculum and history textbooks. This work is done as a member of Asinakuthula (asinakuthula.org, 2020), a collective of female history teachers and researchers. The name of the organisation was inspired by the poet Nontsizi Mqgqetho, who, in the 1920s, stated in isiXhosa, "Asinakuthula umhlaba ubolile" – we cannot keep quiet while the world is in shambles.

Another wonderful project that I was able to tackle during lockdown was composing articles for the Teach Rock website started by USA rock musician

Stevie van Zandt. Teach Rock is a standards-aligned, arts-integration curriculum that uses the history of popular music and culture to help teachers engage students. Together with a music teacher, I have profiled the role of music in the struggle in South Africa (Teach Rock, 2020).

Resources for students

For students in state schools, a range of publishers have offered free online resources and many support materials abound on the web. The South African Society for History Teaching (SASHT) executive discussed the importance of starting a link on the site of resources for teachers and students (SASHT, 2020). There is a sense that teachers and students have had to embrace online learning, and this has meant a change in the “new normal”.

However, for some learners, it has meant that they have been left behind and the challenge of addressing the lack of resources in some South African schools continues. The challenge will be for all teachers to rally and lobby government for equal services, including vital resources like cheaper airtime. This is a global issue that many countries face. The other looming issue is mental health and well-being; I have participated in many international webinars on this issue. In South Africa, educational psychologists and counsellors are few, yet the state of stress in our youth is increasing daily.

I have been fortunate to be able to continue teaching history relatively uninterrupted during COVID-19 yet the life lessons and stresses that have arisen amongst the learners at my school has been profound. But this also impacted on other aspects related to history teaching and learning.

SASHT Conference

The annual SASHT conference was not able to be held at Sol Plaatje University, Kimberley, in September 2020 as planned. The SASHT executive decided to attempt to hold webinars instead, on three History curriculum topics. I elected to coordinate the topic of teaching the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The invitation stated: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a part of the Grade 12 CAPS-History curriculum in South Africa. It forms part of the broader section, “The coming of democracy in South Africa and coming to terms with the past”.

Within the current global climate, this section raises a number of difficult questions. How do we as history educators navigate the challenges of this particular period in our history in the light of tensions that endure in South Africa post-apartheid? Some believe that the TRC led to South Africans being told to reconcile too quickly. Consequently, perpetrators have seldom, if ever, had to account for their actions or be granted amnesty. Questions remain. How much of this blame is correctly laid at the door of the TRC? How much is to be levelled at the failure of the NPA to prosecute? The pressure today is to lobby the NPA to re-open cases such as that of Ahmed Timol and get justice. In the context of Black Lives Matter, many of the youth have rejected the TRC and feel it did not achieve the truth that was needed for reconciliation.

Teaching this topic is difficult, and the discussion held by SASHT sought to assist teachers in answering some of these questions and navigate this difficult terrain in their respective classrooms. A panel of speakers included Piers Pigou, former investigator for the TRC; Mary Burton, former TRC commissioner and past president of the Black Sash; Leah Nasson, teacher and executive member of SASHT; and Imtiaz Cajee, nephew of Ahmed Timol and author of *The Murder of Ahmed Timol: My Search for the Truth*. There was quite a good attendance for this webinar and the interview was able to be recorded and posted on the SASHT website – an advantage of the online format. How this will affect future conferences remains to be seen, but blended learning and teaching is now the order of the day.

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Teaching and learning history in the time of the coronavirus pandemic

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Abstract

This is an academic yet personal and subjective piece written to analyse and reflect upon personal experiences with regard to the teaching and learning of history under the coronavirus pandemic. Throughout this paper, I delve into my professional and personal experiences within different contexts, namely that of teaching history at a high school in a township called Soshanguve, and that of learning history as one of my modules in a postgraduate programme that I undertook at the University of Pretoria before and during the outbreak of COVID-19.

Keywords: Teaching; Learning; History; School; Outbreak; Pandemic; COVID-19; Time; Education; Experience; Lockdown; Reality; Curriculum.

Teaching history during a pandemic: COVID-19

I am a beginner history teacher at a secondary school called Botse-Botse, in Soshanguve. I teach Grade 10 History. As an insider of the events outlined in this reflective piece, the context of the paper relates directly to my experiences.

It was in early March 2020, a day like any other, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit South Africa, and it has impacted me to my core. Various departments of the state, including the Department of Basic Education (DBE), instituted drastic measures to curb the spread of the novel virus, COVID-19. Schools were closed, and this decision was informed by the warnings issued by the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) and the World Health Organization (WHO). They highlighted the increased number of infections in South Africa, particularly amongst people without a travel history, thus indicating local transmission of the virus. Schools were identified as high-risk areas in terms of ease of transmission due to the close contact of large numbers of people.

In my brief 25 years of life, there are numerous experiences that could qualify as life changing. Every new experience was, at one time or another, the first experience. For good or bad, each instance changed the course of

my life. But the most transformative of them all has to be experiencing the teaching and learning of history during a critical time such as the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

The coronavirus pandemic was very sudden and unprecedented; it shattered our reality. Within a moment's notice, President Ramaphosa announced that we should leave schools and schools should close. While we were still processing the fact that COVID-19 had finally been detected in South Africa, the uncertainty of when and whether we would return to school was lurking. As such, one of the most difficult things I had to do in 2020 as a history teacher was to leave the classroom indefinitely and tell my learners, "I don't know" when they asked, "When will the schools reopen, Ma'am?".

Through social media, news reports, memorandums and circulars, we were instructed to leave schools indefinitely and encouraged to rapidly move to e-learning, although teachers had not received enough training and were ill-prepared. This meant that learners and teachers in many of the inadequately resourced public schools in rural areas and townships were likely to have a poor user experience. The integration of technology in education has been on the rise but it has created and continues to create a huge gap between those who have access to telecommunications infrastructure and those who do not: this means that the digital divide is widening and a structured environment is still needed to ensure inclusion.

The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic has been a rude awakening in terms of representing the inequitable setting of our country's education. In many instances, I was concerned about spending more than a month away from learners and the instructional environment as more people tested positive for COVID-19, therefore I made various attempts to recreate the learning environment online.

In attempting to reach out to Grade 10 History learners, I have witnessed how the virus has exposed, if not perpetuated, the disparities between the haves and the have-nots. This situation has been in existence for a long time. During alert level 5 of the lockdown, I tried to conduct remote classes with Grade 10 History learners and that proved to be impossible because some of the learners did not have smartphones, while others could not afford data to log in consistently. Thus, the outbreak of the pandemic is a critical time in the history of education because it has forced us as teachers to reflect and it has brought about the need to improvise and adapt.

Over six months and five levels of the lockdown, the pressure on teachers to save the academic year has increased enormously. Our school has phased in different grades: Grades 8 to 11 were phased in, at up to 50 per cent capacity as the lockdown levels became less restrictive, while the Grade 12 learners were allowed back to the school environment in early June 2020 at full capacity, to ensure that they could write their final examinations, based on a complete and untrimmed syllabi. There is a need to sanitise learners every morning when they enter the school gate, screen their temperatures and ensure that they adhere to social distancing regulations throughout the day. Our school community has worked diligently with the assistance of the district to iron out issues of social distancing, hygiene and wearing of masks and there are posters on the walls to remind learners to cough into their elbows as well as to wash their hands frequently.

I can say that the pandemic has made me more empathetic and flexible, although I want my learners to complete their tasks, because at the end of the day there must be something against which to measure whether teaching and learning of the curriculum has been successful, and that takes the form of formal assessments.

I am not oblivious of the fact that learners may be exposed to a huge amount of unofficial history and that is what often sparks controversy in history classrooms. History is a controversial subject in nature and the controversy found in some of its topics is equally important for learners to consider. It is something that I eagerly looked forward to during the history periods because it has the power to initiate a conversation or stir a debate, highlighting the importance of critical thinking (Schul, 2018:17-29) and engagement in the learning environment. These are moments that I will never take for granted and they are not easy to facilitate remotely, even if one has access to the appropriate telecommunications infrastructure.

Learning history during a pandemic

Learning history did not stop for me when schools closed, it continued through the pandemic. I observed the pandemic as a historical event. I was able to notice certain things, such as the fact that our school does not have the means to deliver lessons online, apart from relying on WhatsApp to communicate with some of the learners who have access to smartphones. Due to the lack of infrastructure and resources, I found myself constantly wondering what I could do to ensure that the Grade 10 History learners

continued to learn. Furthermore, I caught myself thinking about which content in the history curriculum was important to be taught. Then I realised that I had to change a lot in terms of assessments and lesson planning.

I realised that the risk-control decision to “temporarily” close schools did not only affect our school. While some independent schools transitioned smoothly to full remote learning because in the previous years they had already begun using blended learning as a teaching and learning method, it was impossible for our school to do the same, because, apart from not having resources, our school closed multiple times due to the fact that we had to quarantine each time there was a confirmed case of COVID-19. So, we made little progress in terms of instruction at that time.

To keep myself sane throughout these times, I limited the amount of news I watched or heard about COVID-19. I stopped scrolling through online news feeds that had anything to do with the pandemic, because at times I felt that I was experiencing a case of information overload after listening to and reading multiple departmental memorandums and circulars such as a circular that came from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE 2020; 2020:1-5) stating that “in respect of educators, the last day for the first term would be Friday 20 March 2020, to allow for the finalisation of all outstanding administrative work”. This circular seemed to contradict the president’s pronouncement which was a directive to close schools on 18 March 2020.

In all honesty, I resented the fact that I was behind with my studies, given the fact that I could not register early on when the first semester started, nothing needed to be added to that. The announcement of the closure of schools and the end of contact lessons at the university in mid- March sent my emotions into a rollercoaster that my mind had a hard time comprehending. My life will never be the same. There are many different experiences in life that have changed a part of me as a person, but nothing has so profoundly changed my views and outlook on life as this pandemic – I now see the world from a new point of view.

The coronavirus pandemic has shaped my perception and thoughts on teaching & learning history under pressure or through unpredictable events, mostly because, although I knew some information about teaching under unforeseen circumstances or events, nothing could ever prepare me for anything as historic and life-changing as a pandemic.

Moreover, since I could no longer access the University of Pretoria Groenkloof campus, I believed that COVID-19 had disturbed my access to a safe and quiet study space. Despite the above-mentioned challenges, I remain very grateful for the support of lecturers from the University and that of my BEd Honours supervisor, Professor Wassermann, who used a lot of humour during our online collaborative sessions to help us get through the silent mental blocks we went through when we were unsure of whether we were coming or going as both students and mostly emerging history teachers. It was during such moments that I would question myself as to how I could do the same for my history learners, whom I knew relied on the physical space of educational institutions to learn.

To ensure that the Grade 12 learners at our school were not behind with the curriculum content that they had to cover, we started teaching from Monday to Sunday with no break in between, and this led to some inconsistencies, especially when it came to my studies. I could no longer rely on having the weekend as my time to catch up on my studies. Therefore, to ensure that I remained productive and effective, I had to learn to adapt to a new way of doing things.

Teachers and Grade 12 learners have not had quarterly school holidays post the return to school in June 2020, thus our school community continues to work tirelessly in alert level 1 to prepare and wrap up what is left of 2020 as the final matriculation examinations approached. Personally, I believe that I and many other educators have found ways to disarm anxiety through the pandemic. This transition did not happen overnight; it has been a rigorous process that took place one day at a time.

How times have changed. Learners from our school (Grades 8, 10 and 11) now go to school according to a “schedule”: two days in, in a six-day cycle, and four days away from school. Therefore, I am now constantly striving to be better at differentiating curriculums by means of small group instruction in order to be an effective history teacher. Thanks to the pandemic, class sizes have changed from huge numbers such as having more than 50 learners in a classroom, to having just 21 learners in a classroom due to social distancing regulations. I can now interact with each one, identify misunderstandings and misconceptions and provide immediate feedback in the history classroom. Furthermore, I have come to adjust my own misplaced perspectives about the history teachers’ work in the classroom.

As I have mentioned above, nothing could ever have prepared me or any other history teacher or student for the “new normal” brought about by the coronavirus. I found comfort in the fact that I had taken history as a major in high school and throughout both my undergraduate and postgraduate studies. I cannot say that in taking history I became 100 per cent capable of responding to the teaching and learning challenges brought about by the outbreak of the coronavirus, however, I can boldly state that I am constructively equipped to respond emotionally and mentally, to continue functioning in the “new normal” because of the historical skills (Bradstreet, 2017) I gained as a history student.

I have a greater appreciation for the subject because even during the outbreak of the coronavirus, the main things that I thought of were the historical skills drilled and engraved in my psyche by my third- and fourth-year history lecturer, such as comparison and contrast, contextualisation, synthesis, patterns of continuity and change over time, and empathy (Delk & Walker, 2016). I read more about how people survived during the Spanish flu and how life then compared to life now with this new virus, although the two (coronavirus and the Spanish flu) are two different things altogether. The truth is that both outbreaks are carefully acknowledged, noted down, received contemporary commentary and will be passed down in history classrooms to future generations.

The outbreak of the coronavirus is a very critical time in my life. As an individual who constantly engages with history on a daily basis (as a history teacher and a student), for some strange reason, at a certain point, I allowed myself to believe that writing this piece would be easy because it is a reflective paper that relies on me retelling details of my lived experiences. However, I have learnt that, that is not the case. A reflective paper is so much more than that – it requires one to get in touch with oneself, to look inwards and to relive each moment of an experience. Furthermore, that requires one to get in touch with the emotions and thoughts associated with that particular experience.

I believe the above-mentioned inner work has not been done though, because I and many other educators have had no alternative but to adapt to a “new normal” and as such we have not had a chance to really pay attention to different aspects of our well-being; specifically, our mental and emotional well-being. Hence, I have taken the opportunity to write this piece as a chance not only to reflect on teaching and learning history

during the coronavirus pandemic but also as an opportunity to really acknowledge the knock-on effects of the pandemic on me, to move forward and to develop strategies to enhance my level of resilience to ensure so that in future I “don’t just survive but I thrive”. The coronavirus pandemic has created a new direction for the major subject of my academic studies and for my career interests.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has not withered the passion I have for education and school history, rather it has made me want to re-cultivate it, and it has inspired me to understand that History is a very powerful subject – it is so much more than a dull recollection of past events. Learners learn it through interaction and engagement and that means that we now have to start innovating ways to make sure that learners can still engage with each other, because they can never learn through merely listening while a teacher lays out the content of a certain topic on an online classroom or platform.

The government has emphasised the right to basic education. However, in an attempt to practice the responsibilities aligned to this right, they have also exposed the lack of focus on emotional well-being. I often wonder, because of the uncertainty, isolation and anxiety, whether history learners are actively learning history, or have they fallen back into the habit of treating history as a memory discipline? As teachers, are we now just filling in hours? racing against time? because there are so many obstacles standing in the way of producing quality results this year.

Amongst colleagues and fellow history students from the University of Pretoria, we have often discussed how the pandemic was a blessing in disguise when it came to echoing issues of overcrowded classrooms and wondered if it would prompt change and progress in the education sector.

Overall, I believe that more needs to be done to change the current situation and achieve the fourth sustainable development goal, that is, to provide quality education (Sustainable Development Goals, 2012) without compromising mental and emotional well-being. We must practice mindfulness. The essence of this practice manifests itself in a subject like history as the historical skill, empathy. It will take a while to get there but the first step will be to level the playing field, because at times my thoughts would drift and I would wonder ;how much effort will the government put in to levelling the disparities of the haves and the have-nots in schools. As we adjust to lower lockdown levels, there seems to be a pattern of just

readjusting to the “normal” we lived through before COVID-19, with a focus largely on output. I do hope that there will be a consideration for the psychological and emotional realities of history teachers and learners.

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A reflection on History Education in higher education in Eswatini during COVID-19

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Abstract

The closure of educational institutions following the rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic called for the adoption of online teaching and learning. For decades, education has suffered in sub-Saharan Africa due to inadequate resources and the nation's inability to invest in continuous professional development that aims to keep practitioners abreast of the field. Most higher education institutions had not anticipated the shift to online teaching on such a massive scale and the sector was not well prepared for the challenge. This hands-on article is a reflection on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on History Education in higher education in Eswatini. The reflection intends to bring to light the challenges encountered and the opportunities offered for a new digital pedagogy for History Education in Eswatini as a new educational landscape emerged.

Keywords: COVID-19; History Education; Online teaching; Higher education.

Introduction

Life has never been the same since the World Health Organisation (WHO) pronounced COVID-19 a global pandemic on 12 March 2020. The proclamation brought fear and anxiety, particularly in the developing world context, where there are numerous socio-economic challenges engulfing not just the health sector but the education sector as well. Eswatini is a country that has never before faced a catastrophe of this magnitude. Even though the 1984 cyclone, Domoina, had a profound impact on the socio-economy of the country as it destroyed more than 100 bridges and disrupted transport leaving some areas isolated for several days (Davies, O'Meara & Dlamini, 1985), it was nothing in terms of its impact on the socio-economy of the country compared to COVID-19. During Cyclone Domoina, schools were affected for just a week or two while a concerted effort was being made to transport students and teachers from the most devastated parts of the country. The projected impact of the pandemic,

based on what was happening in developed parts of the world, caused fear and anxiety as well as psychological stress.

As a history educator who has worked in educational institutions in various parts of Eswatini, I wondered if the education system was going to cope as it had already experienced numerous challenges that directly impacted teacher motivation. I also became worried about how all the changes that were likely to take place were going to impact History Education in Eswatini, especially since the position of history as a discipline was unstable (Dlamini, 2019). In all honesty, I did not see the country coping successfully and I felt that the position of the discipline was going to be even more unstable as more resources were likely to be channelled to the preferred subjects (Dlamini, 2019) which included science, mathematics, economics, agriculture and business studies.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on History Education in higher education

When the first COVID-19 case was reported on 14 March 2020 in Eswatini, higher education institutions were already into their second semester of the academic year. Some were, by this time, in the last quarter of their academic year, having started the semester in early January. The pandemic's spread across the country and the subsequent closure of educational institutions revealed the strengths and flaws of the country's education system.

Policy initiatives

When the first case was confirmed in Eswatini, the national response team had already been set up to assist in mitigating the spread of the virus. However, no contingency plans had been made on how the education sector or even the higher education institutions were going to cope as other countries had done. The Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) was non-committal in the initial phase of the lockdown about how educational institutions were going to cope whereas in other countries policies were promptly developed to address the crisis. By contrast, in Australia, for example, before the end of January some higher education institutions had already come up with a COVID-19 plan (Scull, Phillips, Sharma & Garnier, 2020) while in Portugal, the Ministry of Education developed a number of initiatives (Flores and Gago, 2020). Despite being overwhelmed by news

of the sudden closure of national education institutions, some countries at national level took the decision to adopt online learning with immediate effect (Donsita-Schmidt & Ramot, 2020; La Velle, Newman, Montgomery & Hyatt, 2020; Talidong & Toquero, 2020). The switch to online learning was not instant in Eswatini, as there were no prompt initiatives to draw a roadmap that would ensure continuity in learning through the use of alternative modes. Even when the switch was eventually made, there was no proper plan that outlined an organised approach to the adoption of online teaching and learning by higher education institutions.

More concern seemed to be given to an initiative which aimed at broadcasting educational content on national television and radio to assist learners who were expected to sit for externally marked national examinations at the end of the year. A timetable was provided, and lessons were presented by teachers from Monday to Friday. This initiative assumed that all learners had access to either the television or the radio, yet quite a number of learners did not. Also, history was not aired on television as priority was given to the so-called core subjects.

Lack of autonomy

The lack of autonomy by higher education institutions like William Pitcher College delayed the adoption of new modes of delivery as they looked to the MoET for guidance. Despite the college administration's willingness to adopt online teaching and learning in preparation for imminent closure, the absence of the required resources and the MoET's perpetual silence on the issue of adopting alternative teaching modes for students in higher education stalled progress. Since there was no COVID-19 plan or policy that outlined the MoET's position on how learning was to continue while still adhering to the set COVID-19 guidelines, the college lagged behind in adopting online learning. It was also unclear whether government would support higher education institutions financially as they switched to online learning.

Adoption of virtual learning in higher education: Challenges and opportunities

Uncertainty over how long the closures would last eventually necessitated innovation to save the academic year. Higher education institutions were required to report to the MoET on how they maintained continuity in learning during the lockdown. The MoET's concern as to whether there

was any learning going on during the lockdown confirmed the need to transform the education system through the adoption of creative strategies that would enable trainees to learn remotely. Needless to say, the sudden adoption of remote learning by the college within a short space of time and under severe constraints most likely compromised the quality of education since the majority of the trainees did not have easy access to the internet and they had not been exposed to this mode of learning before. Despite the fact that the college had incorporated ICT and was considered to be well-resourced technologically, that is, it had desktop computers, laptops and computer laboratories (although not adequately equipped), as well as unlimited access to the internet (even though it sometimes became congested due to bandwidth-related challenges), the teaching staff was never pressured to revolutionise their pedagogic approaches to incorporate online teaching and learning. There was no policy in place that made it mandatory for the teaching staff to use blended learning, probably because of the lack of professional development opportunities for staff to empower them to embrace technology in their teaching.

Prior to the lockdown, a very limited number of educational institutions in the country used blended learning due to lack of resources and appropriate training in the use of technology for the teacher educators. Consequently, while self-directed learning was used by some, not much emphasis was placed on the use of technology when teaching. Some educators still had problems trying to integrate self-directed learning into their pedagogy. Consequently, such teacher educators suffered considerable anxiety as the pandemic necessitated an enormous transformation of pedagogic and assessment practices in educational institutions. The lack of organised training for staff impacted negatively on History Education, as not much teaching could be done during the lockdown period even after the MoET's directive to adopt online learning. The amount of work done during lockdown was dependent on the individual history educator's ability to embrace technology. Most were largely dependent on social media to post lessons and resources for their students while others used Google Classroom and Zoom to interact with students. Their low level of familiarity with remote teaching and learning increased staff stress and anxiety. In countries like Israel, "institutions offered their teachers a plethora of lectures, training sessions and even private tutorials in order to help them learn how to use these tools and even more so, how to use them effectively in their courses" (Donsita-Schmidt & Ramot, 2020:2).

Eswatini has much to learn from such countries.

The rapid move to online teaching and learning without properly trained educators, materials or even the technology required, compromised the effectiveness of online learning in Eswatini. Similarly, the lack of equity made it impossible for trainees to benefit in the same manner as there were no mitigating measures provided to cater for the disadvantaged trainees. Attempts made by government to support all trainees during the lockdown with data bundles were unsuccessful. The restrictions imposed as part of the containment of the spread of the virus impacted negatively on the trainees because some parents could not afford to support online learning – they were not even able to afford daily essentials such as food. COVID-19 resulted in many people losing their jobs overnight, making them unable to support their families. History trainees from rural areas suffered the most as they could not access the remote lessons due to financial constraints and also to poor network coverage.

No real initiatives were made by the MoET to address the challenges that were likely to interfere with online teaching and learning during the lockdown. The teaching staff had not been prepared to teach online and there were no clear professional development policies that could have ensured that staff revolutionised pedagogical approaches by relocating to online platforms. There was also lack of appropriate resources, such as adequately equipped computer laboratories, computer technicians, and access to a stable internet with good quality and speed of internet services. There was congestion on some platforms in use. Moreover, there were no online manuals or guides for use by both staff and students. Such challenges, in addition to increased teacher workload, were exacerbated by students' varying levels of access to the numerous modes of remote learning and willingness to venture into new terrain.

It is important to note that some staff members had already started engaging trainees remotely through the various platforms when the MoET issued the directive to adopt online learning. However, all the adopted remote learning approaches provided minimal engagement in terms of meaningful human interaction. Yet, human interaction is critical in history since trainees are expected to develop historical skills and demonstrate certain competencies. Even though trainees, as future history teachers, were assigned tasks to work on to demonstrate understanding of taught concepts, very few attempted to do the given tasks thus demonstrating lack

of motivation. Lack of motivation to learn among students has been found to be one of the barriers to change in Eswatini (Dlamini, 2019).

Even though the current history syllabus promotes inquiry as well as teaching and learning for skill development, very little has been done to ensure that educational institutions embrace technology. For history students, internet access is paramount to enable them to engage in doing history as it promotes independent inquiry that reinforces the acquisition of historical skills. The shutdown of higher education institutions affected history teaching and learning at all levels. It compromised the very reasons for teaching history. Students could hardly be exposed to skill acquisition and the use of multiple pieces of evidence since remote lessons were instructor-dominated, with trainees only listening and reading but doing minimal independent work. The inability to use appropriate pedagogical approaches, as required by the history curriculum when teaching online, is likely to inhibit trainees' development of essential historical skills. History is an interpretive and inquiry-oriented endeavour that should impact classroom practice (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Online lessons that have been inadequately planned are likely to result in teachers who have an impoverished understanding of history.

Anxiety and fear

The subsequent prolonged lockdown brought a lot of uncertainty, including fears of income losses and pressure to ensure that the economy did not come to a halt. There was anxiety, uncertainty, fear and isolation within staff and student communities caused by the demands placed upon them by their employer or by the trainees' instructors. Debates on whether to open schools and tertiary institutions did not help the situation as the number of new COVID-19 cases was escalating. Such debates were fuelled by concerns about how to enable students in the later stages of their courses to graduate seeing that remote learning was not effective.

Support for staff and adaptation

The staff members who seemed to cope well were those who had previously received training from other institutions that used blended learning such as the University of Eswatini's Institute of Distance Education (IDE). Both staff and students at IDE receive continuous training on the use of online platforms like Moodle because IDE offers distance learning programmes. Online learning was therefore not new for IDE staff and trainees. However,

trainees still encountered internet access-related challenges at their various places of abode, which made it difficult for them to participate fully and do all the assigned work as scheduled.

Professional development programmes became essential to equip all staff members with computer skills. However, since these programmes were underfunded and lacked continuity, they could not have the necessary impact on staff. Such training was only done after the lockdown. Both staff and trainees received very limited training on the use of the new mode of delivery. In theory, both staff and trainees have been able to adapt but there are recurring complaints from staff and trainees emanating from their inability to keep up with virtual learning activities. It remains to be seen how academic staff utilise the platforms to fulfil institutional requirements.

Teaching online proved to be an almost impossible task for staff and trainees who lacked both the knowledge of online learning and the resources such as the necessary gadgets required by this mode of learning and internet access. Moreover, the bandwidth available in Eswatini did not favour most trainees as most came from remote parts of the country. Even those who had network coverage could not afford the required data bundles for downloading and uploading the required work. A larger proportion of our trainees have disadvantaged backgrounds with about 63 per cent of the country's population living below the national poverty line (WFP, 2018). Consequently, trainees could not easily adapt to the new mode of learning.

Assessment and practicum

The pandemic not only necessitated changes in pedagogic practices but assessment practices were also affected and that put pressure on institutional systems of quality assurance. No appropriate assessment procedures that would be in line with the way students were taught were developed; as a result, the college had to resume face-to-face classes to ensure that learners were assessed despite educators fearing for their lives. The pandemic also influenced the teaching practicum as all national education activities had been suspended. As a result, trainees could not do their practicums in schools. The college had to adopt innovative approaches that would enable trainees to demonstrate a certain level of competence in teaching. Trainees were required to peer-teach on a specific topic or concept of their choice and these lessons were recorded for moderation purposes.

Lessons learned

COVID-19 should have facilitated technological transformation in our education system. It seemed, however, that despite the alarming media coverage of the global spread of the pandemic, the education fraternity in Eswatini was caught unawares. Instead of strengthening educational institutions' online systems, for them it seemed to be only the beginning of a long journey that was riddled with serious challenges that included limited resources and which, in turn, seemed to defeat the very purpose of online learning and teaching. Efforts made were challenged by staff resistance, which was motivated by fear, anxiety, psychological stress and lack of technological expertise. Developing countries like Eswatini suffered a huge blow because of the challenges that had been manifesting in the education system for decades. Even before the pandemic, the education system had been struggling as demonstrated by the lack of access to the internet for most student communities due to limited resources (Dlamini, 2019) and by the inability to capacitate staff on the use of digital technology to ensure that they embraced blended learning.

Conclusion

Although great gains have been made in improving education in Eswatini over the years, much remains to be done to elevate education to the digital age. The pandemic highlighted the challenges that overwhelmed the education system in the country. The crisis caused by COVID-19 should be viewed as a wake-up call for the MoET to adopt continuous professional development programmes that will keep educators abreast of technology and innovation and therefore motivated to embrace change. A motivated staff is less likely to resist innovation as confirmed by Donsita-Schmidt and Ramot's (2020) assertion that although the switch to online learning was instant in Israel, lecturers were eager to learn and to share their knowledge with their peers. History educators' feelings and fears need to be considered to ensure that they are satisfied with their jobs. As Okeke and Mtyuda, (2017) observed, teachers can only perform at their best when they are satisfied with their jobs. History educators' dissatisfaction may result in some quitting the profession, which may lead to the loss of experienced history educators. Furthermore, prolonged experiences of stress can lead to burnout (Kim & Asbury, 2020).

Greater effort should be made to invest in appropriate resources and the training of staff about how to use new technologies to improve the quality of online education. The effort made by the MoET to assist staff and trainees to improve online learning with some essential resources such as data bundles after lockdown should have been implemented before the COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic has accelerated and intensified online education trends, indicating that such innovations will be valued even beyond the COVID-19 crisis. It is crucial, therefore, for government to evaluate its policies with the aim of revolutionising the education system in Eswatini at all levels to realise parity with other nations in digital education.

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In the moment of making History: The case of COVID-19 in Zambia

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Abstract

This paper discusses the unfolding of COVID-19 in Zambia between March and August 2020. Zambians were aware that international networks would lead to Zambia being affected by a disease that had caused much devastation in China. The discussion also demonstrates the ambiguous nature of economic means for survival. Thus, the search for means of survival would also become transmission lines of a deadly disease. The state used a mixture of liberal and authoritarian ways to deal with the spreading of the infections. The pandemic revealed the inadequacy of medical facilities. The discussion combined limited oral information, newspapers and published primary sources.

Keywords: COVID-19; Pandemic; Multi-sector; Responses; Collaboration.

Introduction

This article is about responses to COVID-19 in Zambia between March and August 2020 in the context of my deliberately selected backgrounds that inspire intellectual diverse reflections and research pathways. This is a contemporary theme and thus not yet ripe for historians to study and analyse systematically and in considerable depth. Yet the historian's craft can cautiously be used and rationalised in terms of some established precedents and examples by paying attention to the nature of sources and selected research methods. One such precedent will suffice here. George Washington Ochs Oakes started a journal known as *Current History* in 1914 in New York having been motivated to capture history at the moment of its making¹ because of a continuous flow of unique and diverse events that human beings cause or react to. In 1914, the outbreak of what became known as the First World War was seen by some people as deserving immediate, full coverage and accurate recording. Margaret Macmillan, a Canadian and renowned historian of the Commonwealth and the British

¹ Despite a lack of consistently high academic ratings, the informative and inspiring starting point on the history of *Current History* is Wikipedia.

Empire, analysed how what initially seemed to be an assassination of no significance built into a major and complicated European War.² Comprehensive and reliable recording of data is cardinal for constructing history. These are some of the characteristics that Moses E. Ochonu addressed in his search for sources of historical data that were not elusive, not fractured and not politicised, especially when studying postcolonial African history.³ The present engagement deals with contemporary history in Zambia that has distinctive global dimensions. This article discusses aspects of how Zambia managed COVID-19 in the early phase of the pandemic, mainly between March and August 2020. The discussion examines how Zambia reacted to the inevitability that the pandemic would be imported into the country and would later be spread from within the country.

At this preliminary stage of my research, the article is organised around three broad outlines. First, leadership of and mobilisation by the Government of Zambia. Second, a preliminary discussion of the social and economic impact of COVID-19 in Zambia, including diverse ways in which the Zambian population reacted to the news of the pandemic and to the policies implemented by the government. The Zambian population combined scepticism, resistance and compliance to policies on COVID-19. Third, I refer to general and scholarly links to earlier emergencies and pandemics in Zambia. COVID-19 dominated national debates and thus deserves multidisciplinary scholarly scrutiny. COVID-19 is a current and contemporary event and thus my participants' observations and experiences are significant organic sources. Further, using several Zambian newspapers and a few specialist reports, the article primarily deals with some key measures the Government of Zambia formulated and implemented in mobilising people in Zambia in order to minimise deleterious social and economic effects of the pandemic. It should be stressed that the complexity of the pandemic and limited medical resources in Zambia compelled the Government to purposely cultivate and promote voluntary participation of the population in all strategies in order to contain the spread of COVID-19 and in the treatment of those infected.

² M Macmillan, "The Archduke's assassination came close to being just another killing", *The Globe and Mail*, 27 June 2014. These are among the leading newspapers in forming opinions and public history in Canada.

³ ME Ochonu, "Elusive history: Fractured archives, politicized orality and sensing the postcolonial past", *History in Africa*, 42, 2015, pp. 287-298.

Government leadership in mobilising and collaborating against COVID-19

On 18 March 2020, Zambia reported the first two infections of COVID-19.⁴ This was a couple who had been on holiday in France. The couple were quarantined and their contacts within Zambia traced. They were treated and recovered. Four months later, at the end of July, the Ministry of Health reported that the COVID-19 situation had deteriorated and infection had increased from 1 632 infected cases reported on 6 July to 4 481 cases recorded on 26 July 2020.⁵ Consequently, from early March 2020, COVID-19 emerged as a regular and dominant topic of discussion in all forms of media and on interaction platforms in Zambia. Weekly bulletins by the Minister of Health, Dr Chitalu Chilufya and occasional press conferences by the republican president generated issues for common conversations. The COVID-19 pandemic became a regular front page topic in newspapers and a top news report in television and radio broadcasts.

Discussions took diverse forms. The Government focused on foreign relations and domestic context as key issues in the discussions. Because of Zambia's high economic dependence on China, at a political level and in a Ministerial Statement to the Zambian Parliament on 5 March 2020, the Minister of Health, Dr Chitalu Chilufya, cautioned that Zambia was not going to condemn China on the coronavirus epidemic reported in Wuhan City in Wei Province of China as doing so would be xenophobic.⁶ In any case, strong, economic and political ties between Zambia and China dated back to the 1960s. Appeals for friendly treatment of China in Zambia predated the COVID-19 outbreak. For example, in September 2018, the seemingly authoritative publication *Africa Confidential* reported on speculation that China would take over the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) if the country failed to pay back some loans.⁷ Despite such opinions, the Zambian Government pledged to avoid any xenophobic statements against China. This attitude was the main factor in the decision of the government not to evacuate Zambians, especially students, from China at a time that several African countries brought back their citizens. As if in a

4 *Zambia Daily Mail*, 19 March 2020.

5 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Zambia Situation Report", Zambia, 29 July 2020 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-29-july-2020>, as accessed on 10 September 2020).

6 *Zambia Daily Mail*, 6 March 2020; *News Diggers*, 6 March 2020.

7 *Africa Confidential*, 4 September 2018. On 30 January 2020, the publication reported that a Chinese company would take over Zambia Electricity Supply Company Ltd if the debt was not paid.

direct reply to the ministerial statement on 15 March 2020, a contributor to one of my social media platforms observed laconically, “I am preparing for the coronavirus even if I do not have a passport to go to China to get infected”. This subtle critique that displayed both helplessness and determination to survive the pandemic was sensitive to the complex ways COVID-19 could and would take root in Zambia. COVID-19 also attracted reflections from Zambian intellectuals. For example, Mutale Tinamou Mazimba Kaunda, a history teacher at Samfya Secondary School in Luapula Province, Zambia, wrote about COVID-19 saying, “All I can say is that it has given me a new appreciation of the Spanish Flu of 1918. I feel like I am seeing the past in the present. Truly, history does repeat itself”.⁸ Kennedy Chipundu, another history teacher at Samfya Secondary School, asserted that “there was no COVID-19 in Samfya”.⁹ Such diverse views called for pragmatic and flexible mobilisation and ruled out authoritarian actions.

These diverse views complicated which choice of intervention to adopt. Initially, planning and implementation were simultaneous. For example, on 17 March, out of the blue, all educational institutions from pre-school to university were ordered to close immediately.¹⁰ The Ministry of Health launched a national strategy that encouraged public compliance with public health measures which were considered effective in avoiding COVID-19 infections.¹¹ The President as leader of Cabinet, Ministry of Health medical personnel and a multisector Cabinet team provided collaborative leadership in mapping directions the population in Zambia needed to take in order to avoid infections such as those reported in China, Europe, the United States of America and other parts of the world. On 25 March, President Edgar Chagwa Lungu outlined measures to deal with COVID-19 as a pandemic with foreign origins.¹² The view that COVID-19 was an imported infection received high attention. The response strategy was twofold: first, to contain COVID-19 as a pandemic that originated outside Zambia and, second, to prevent the pandemic from spreading within Zambia. The President announced that with immediate effect, only Kenneth Kaunda International

⁸ Email: MM Kaunda (History teacher)/AM Kanduzo (Professor), 21 September 2020.

⁹ Discussion with AM Kanduzo, 21 August 2020.

¹⁰ UN Country Team in Zambia and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “UN COVID-19 Emergency Appeal: Zambia, May-October 2020” (available at [Desktop/COVID-19%pandemic%20in%Zambia](https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-14-september-2020); UN COVID-19, as accessed on 25 August 2020).

¹¹ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Zambia Situation Report”, Zambia, 14 September 2020 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-14-september-2020>, as accessed on 20 September 2020).

¹² Republic of Zambia, Statement by His Excellency, Dr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia on COVID-19 Pandemic, Wednesday, 25 March 2020.

Airport in Lusaka would be used by incoming and departing aeroplanes. Three international airports were closed. These were the Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula International Airport in Livingstone, Mfuwe International Airport in the Luangwa valley in Eastern Province, and Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe Airport in Ndola in Copperbelt Province. In the main, international land borders remained open to avoid a negative impact on the economy in terms of imports and exports. Despite the difficulties of cutting major international links, the decision to restrict air traffic to one airport was relatively easier than deciding on an appropriate ban or restrictions on land borders.

Over time, land entry points were subjected to severe immigration controls and restrictions. It was not easy to restrict entry into Zambia from eight neighbouring states. In his address to the nation on 25 March 2020, President Lungu stated:¹³

[Government has] 'devised a phased strategy that will take into consideration interventions for the low- and high-income groups, low- and high-density areas, rural and urban areas. It is with this in mind that essential business activity in goods and services will be kept running.

The Government feared extending the ban to eight borders but recognised that decisions of the neighbouring states would inevitably close entry into or exit out of Zambia.¹⁴ The Government observed that it would accept the closures of the boundaries which six of eight neighbours of Zambia had imposed. Zambia did not impose a lockdown that banned the population from visiting border towns such as Nakonde. The main reason given was that the low-income sections of the population depended on land-based trade directly and indirectly. In terms of direct trade, there are many Zambian itinerant traders plying their trade between Zambia and some of their neighbours, namely Tanzania, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Namibia and Botswana. Indirectly, these low-income sections of Zambian society depend on buying from large South African supermarkets such as Shoprite Checkers, Spar or Pick n Pay. These sectors make up a major part of retail trade in urban Zambia, where probably over 45 per cent of Zambia's population of about 18 million people live. These are sources of diverse commodities, which small-scale entrepreneurs buy for resale in

¹³ Republic of Zambia (ZM), Statement by His Excellency, Dr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia on COVID-19 Pandemic, Wednesday, 25 March 2020.

¹⁴ UN Country Team in Zambia and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "UN COVID-19 Emergency Appeal: Zambia, May-October 2020" (available at Desktop/COVID-19%pandemic%20in%Zambia; UN COVID-19, as accessed on 25 August 2020).

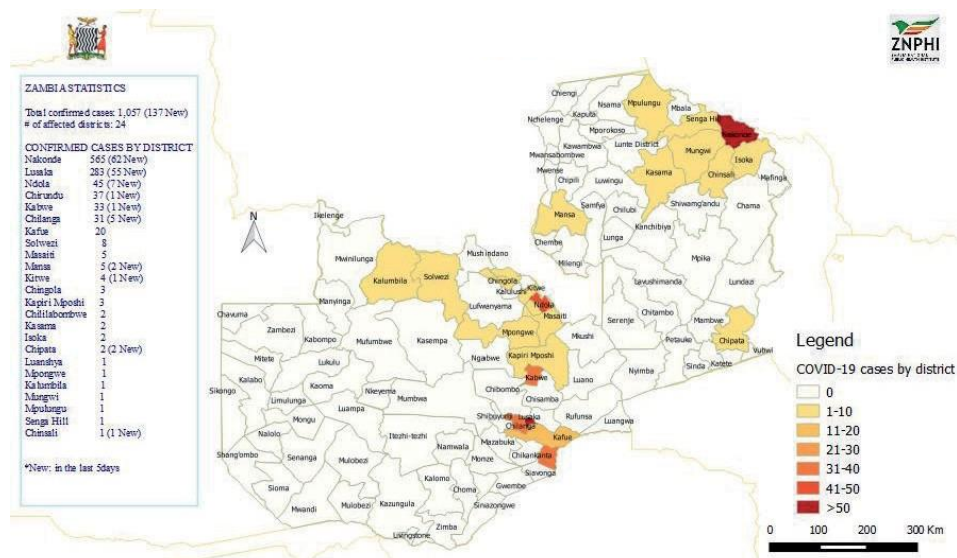
remote urban and rural areas. These entrepreneurs serve communities with poor transport links to the main trading and industrial areas. Nevertheless, the population was called upon to reduce non-essential travel, including that related to itinerant trading.

These controls or restrictions were not easy to implement. One of the difficulties was that it was a complex reversal of policy for a government that came to power in 2011 on a policy plank that Zambia was land-linked rather than landlocked. Believing that Zambia would be a hub of economic activity as the central market for what Zambia produced for the nine countries (including Burundi linked via Lake Tanganyika water transportation),¹⁵ Zambia avoided a total lockdown. Within the country, there was fear in government circles that a population of 7,6 million people in 43 districts near the borders was at risk of high and rapid infections due to border crossings and their location on major highways and transport corridors. Cross-border trade dominated the economic life of border populations. The collaborative effort of UN agencies in the country, development partners and the Zambian government was about economic difficulties that would affect about 65 per cent of the 18 million Zambians working in the informal sector. Between 45 per cent and 53 per cent of the national population reside in urban areas. Seventy per cent of this urban population resides in informal residential settlements with high population densities and with only inadequate basic services such as water, sanitation and waste management.¹⁶ Over the following months, truck drivers entering Zambia through Katima Mulilo from Namibia, Kazungula from Botswana, Livingstone from South Africa, Chirundu from South Africa, Muchinji from Malawi and Mozambique, Nakonde from Tanzania and Kasumbalesa from Democratic Republic of the Congo were tested and quarantined for 14 days. The quarantines, with the main centres shown on the map below, were in designated places such as at the Universities of Zambia and Makeni in Lusaka. These diversions of the trucks stopped distribution of essential products and thus caused commodity shortages in many parts of the country.

¹⁵ Often, Zambia is known to have eight neighbours, namely, Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania and Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

¹⁶ UN Country Team in Zambia and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "UN COVID-19 Emergency Appeal: Zambia, 17 July 2020" (available at [Desktop/COVID-19% pandemic%20in% Zambia; UN COVID-19](#), as accessed on 25 August 2020).

Image 1: Distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases by district, 27 May 2020



Source: Republic of Zambia, Ministry of Health, 27 May 2020.

The Ministries of Health, Home Affairs, Information (as the official government publicity institution), Commerce and Industry, and Communications and Transport collaborated closely in controlling movement at the main land trade entry points that brought COVID-19 infections into Zambia – at Nakonde in the north, at Chirundu in the south-east and at Kasumbalesa, the main entrance from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to the economic hub of Zambia, the mineralised Copperbelt Province. The DRC is a major market for Zambia. The DRC is also a major market for South Africa where the spreading of COVID-19. Zambia was the main transit state for trade but also for the spreading of COVID-19 between the two. That is despite South African and Zambia not sharing a border. Zambia was also a transit state for trade from South Africa to Malawi, Tanzania and other east African countries. Lusaka, Zambia’s national and administrative capital was the main hotspot for COVID-19 from March 2020, partly because it is a key destination of trade from all Zambia’s neighbours and an important refuelling station for transit traffic. Lusaka also had the biggest quarantine at the University of Zambia and the biggest COVID-19 treatment centre at Levy Mwanawasa University Teaching Hospital. The Kafue District, about 45 kilometres south of Lusaka, was another hotspot during this period. The map above

also shows that hotspots are linked to active trade between Zambia and Tanzania. This led to the Nakonde border post and its environs becoming hotspots. Copperbelt Province, whose border with the DRC extends to the North-West Province (NWP), had more towns with infections than any other except for Lusaka Province. Zambian itinerant traders were active carriers of COVID-19 infections. Thus, it became recognised early enough that COVID-19 was both imported and locally generated in Zambia. This binary feature became a dominant idea that shaped national responses to the pandemic. The map also shows the infections spreading within the country. According to the country's oldest newspapers, the *Sunday Times of Zambia* and the *Sunday Mail*, of 19 April 2020, the Ministry of Health reported that positive COVID-19 infections had risen to 57 out of the 2 292 tests that had been done, mainly in Lusaka and Kafue, since 18 March 2020. A new and significant dimension was that there were now three COVID-19-related deaths. The *Sunday Times of Zambia* further reported that there were 8 534 high-risk cases under close observation in quarantine. There was some relief in that 2 435 people were released from a 14-day quarantine. Furthermore, three out of 25 COVID-19 patients in Lusaka were discharged. It was thus emerging that COVID-19 was a complex infectious pandemic. It was generally felt that the government had adopted a wise decision by managing foreign entry by air and by land.

The knowledge that many of the infections came from outside the country was no potential strength for evidence-based reactions and preventive interventions. As stated earlier, the first report was about a couple who holidayed for ten days in France before returning to Lusaka. Shortly afterwards, a group of 15 Zambians returned from Pakistan. Several individuals in that group who had symptoms of COVID-19 were quarantined in Lusaka Province and Copperbelt Province. Two of the infected were on the Copperbelt, Zambia's industrial hub. As the most economically developed province, there were more people there than in any other province involved in itinerant trading via Nakonde on the border with Tanzania, and Livingstone, and Chirundu in the south, which sources trade items in South Africa. Thus, the foreign and domestic origins of COVID-19 infections competed for government and public interventions. There was increased understanding of the linkages between foreign and local origins in tracing contacts of the group that may have imported COVID-19 from their visit to Pakistan. In Lusaka, two people and the residential areas where they lived were immediately put under COVID-19

surveillance. The driver who had transported the fifteen people who had visited Pakistan from the Kenneth Kaunda International Airport, and who was living in Jack Compound in the southern part of Lusaka, and a maid to one family in the group, who lived in Chaisa Compound, also in Lusaka, were monitored for coronavirus. The driver and maid both lived in Lusaka. The maid had the COVID-19 infection. The *Zambia Daily Mail* of 18 April 2020 reported her release from hospital where she had experienced rare pain and care she had neither seen nor heard of before.¹⁷ The movements of the group that had visited Pakistan led to the Government identifying six hotspots in Lusaka. These were in residential areas with high population densities and with relatively poor sanitation.¹⁸

Early COVID-19 social and economic impact

The Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) produced one of the earliest social and economic reports on the impact of COVID-19 in Zambia.¹⁹ The PMRC is a think-tank established in 2012 by the present governing party, the Patriotic Front, after winning the elections in August 2011. Thus, the PMRC has easy access to what we may consider authoritative data. Yet the PMRC has strengths and weaknesses of a typical research institution. In agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the PMRC noted a fall of 23 per cent in the price of copper, which was Zambia's leading export and earner of foreign exchange between March and August 2020. The PMRC reported that the price of copper fell from US\$6 165 in January to US\$4 754 in March. The PMRC also reported a worrying rate at which the national currency, the Kwacha, lost value in relation to Zambia's major trading currencies. The Kwacha depreciated by at least 20 per cent between March and August 2020. These findings led the PMRC to conclude that while national economic growth had been projected at 3,2 per cent of the gross domestic product in 2020, the economy would shrink by -4,2 per cent because of COVID-19. There were some hostile reactions to the early and anticipated deleterious impact of COVID-19.

Probably the most pointed negative response was Glencore's rejection of government guidelines on COVID-19. Glencore, a major shareholder in

¹⁷ *Times of Zambia*, 20 April 2020.

¹⁸ The World Bank, *Zambia in the 1980s: A historical Review of Social Policy and Urban level Interventions* (Washington, The World Bank, July 1983), p. 4; UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Zambia Situation Report", Zambia, 29 July 2020 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-14-september-2020>, as accessed on 19 September 2020).

¹⁹ Policy Monitoring and Research Centre, *Zambia Reports*, 19 September 2020.

Mopani Copper Mines (MCM), invoked a *force majeure* on 8 April 2020. Glencore Plc had 73,1 per cent of shares in MCM. First Quantum Minerals Limited owned 16,9 per cent while the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines-Investment Holdings (ZCCM-IH), representing the interests of the Zambian Government, had 10 per cent of the shares in MCM. The *force majeure* would take effect on 10 April. This timetable was a dramatic play which was difficult for many Zambians to comprehend. On 9 April 2020, The *Times of Zambia* called the Glencore move a “false” *majeure*. This was a significant comment coming from a highly respected newspaper with strong ties to Zambia’s nationalist history since the early 1960s. Yet, at a minimum, the action of Glencore should be analysed and understood in the context of certain laws on mining. In terms of The Mines and Mining Development Act, 2015, Glencore saw the early and anticipated effects of coronavirus as an act of nature which had reduced the price of copper to around US\$4 800²⁰ because of declining consumption of copper, especially in China, following the outbreak of COVID-19. In the short term, the future was bleak, and the Government was acutely aware of this.²¹ Therefore, Glencore, as the major shareholder in MCM, put their mines in Mufulira and Kitwe on “care and maintenance” for three months with effect from 10 April. A total of over 11 000 workers were put on leave for three months without any assurance of their jobs after that period. Glencore’s response to COVID-19 had far-reaching ripple effects.

The Association of Supplies and Constructors, a grouping of small-scale Zambian entrepreneurs supplying a variety of services to the mining industry, were also adversely affected because MCM mining activities were expected to shrink in the context of Glencore’s *force majeure*. The Association’s services or supplies to MCM were bound to be reduced. In part, Glencore attacked sensitive elements in Zambian economic, nationalistic and patriotic traditions. In addition to uncertainty on the eventual effects of Glencore’s action, the Government was surprised that another mining company, First Quantum Minerals Ltd (FQM), which dominated the “new” “Copperbelt” in North-Western Province of Zambia, had donated money to enhance capacity in dealing with COVID-19. According to Henry Lazenby,²² FQM donated US\$530 000 to funds for managing COVID-19. This included US\$100 000 to the North-Western Province’s COVID-19 programme and

20 Forecasts show the copper price in 2021 ranging between US\$7 000 and US\$12 000.

21 ZM, Statement by His Excellency, Dr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia on the COVID-19 Pandemic, State House, Lusaka, 25 June 2020, pp. 8-9.

22 H Lazenby, “Zambia: Mining company joins fight against COVID-19”, *Mining Journal*, 8 April 2020.

US\$90 000 to the Kalumbila District's COVID-19 programme. Kalumbila District is the home of FQM in Zambia. While charity begins at home, FQM donated US\$340 000 to the national funds for COVID-19. This progressive position of FQM in Kalumbila was reported in one article in a local and radical newspaper, *The Mast*, on 17 April 2020. In another article, the popular tabloid showed that while FQM had limited influence at Kitwe and Mufulira mines because of its miniscule shares in MCM, it dominated mining investments in North-Western Province. There, FQM was forthright in standing shoulder to shoulder with Zambians and the Government in the fight against COVID-19. Thus, one of the immediate and major impacts of COVID-19 on the Zambian economy was about how to survive in trying times.

Glencore had not prescribed a remedy for survival. The mining giant provoked nationalistic and patriotic feelings among Zambians.²³ The oldest mine workers' union, the Mineworkers Union of Zambia (MUZ), and the union of most experienced and skilled workers, the National Union of Miners and Allied Workers (NUMAW), called on the Government to nationalise the MCM. The Government initiated nationalisation but was stalled by the Glencore court action in a South African court. Several civil society groups protested the decisions of Glencore. Members of Parliament from Copperbelt Province constituencies grouped and collaborated in expressing solidarity with the miners and the government. Populist print media such as *News Diggers* and *The Mast* and traditional print media, *Times of Zambia* and *Zambia Daily Mail*, reported protests in ways that strengthened the hand of Government for nationalising MCM. In part, this would mean buying Glencore's 73,9 per cent shares in MCM. Thus, the mood in the media and civil society organisations was one of condemning Glencore. This encouraged the Government. Strangers had become bedfellows against mining capital while the Government sought a bumper political harvest. Dichotomy and alliances have been highly visible features of social change in Zambia's political history since the late 1940s.

These responses reflected complex and compounded developments in the spreading from within the country and management of COVID-19. A chain of high profile COVID-19 infections precipitated major changes in many institutions. The Minister of Information, who is also a government spokesperson, was reported infected on 21 May. The pandemic infections moved high up when the republican vice-president was reported infected

²³ *Zambia Daily Mail*, 10 April 2020.

on 17 July. Two members of parliament were infected and died from COVID-19 in July. One reaction was that Parliament suspended its sitting. On 10 August, some United Nations staff were reported infected. Consequently, the United Nations offices were closed. Many institutions and working styles changed. In promoting effective social distancing in the workplace, workers were grouped and allocated some days when they would work in their offices, instead of all workers reporting for office duties daily between Monday and Friday. Meetings were reduced to those considered absolutely essential and were done through Zoom. This led to radical thinking among some employers about the size and salary structures of their employees. Equally radical was a requirement of many institutions that people seeking services should wear masks. Facilities were provided for the washing of hands before entry into any office. The body temperature of all visitors was taken and recorded as a preparation for tracing contacts where that became necessary. This apparent orderliness may have protected some salarieds in formal employment.

Joint research involving the United Nations institutions, the Government of Zambia, development partners and civil society organisations between June and August revealed disturbing social practices and occurrences related to COVID-19 in urban residential areas and the education sector, starting with preliminary reflections on impact of COVID-19 in urban, high-density residential areas. These official and written reports should have corroborated oral evidence that brought out real lived experiences in high-density, urban residential areas. These were testimonies from residents in these compounds. Jane Mwansa from Mutendere Compound who was working as a maid said:²⁴

COVID has stopped many people going to hospitals. They particularly avoid government hospitals because insistence on wearing masks and social distancing are enforced where there is COVID-19. Private hospitals and clinics attend to patients without masks.

In Bauleni Compound, Bertha Tembo stated:²⁵

... people fear to be infected at hospitals. A few people who have to go to hospital are happy that these days they do not wait for a long time before they receive treatment. Some of these [people] wear masks. That is why they are quickly attended to. My friend had no mask but was very sick. The doctors avoided her and advised her to buy a mask. When other patients

24 J Mwansa (Domestic worker - 33 years, Grade 12, House 76), oral interview, Mutendere compound, 22 July 2020.

25 B Tembo (Mother of four, 37 years, Grade 9), oral interview, (AM Kanduzi), 25 July 2020.

told the doctors that she was going to die because of masks. After that she was given medicine.

United Nations-led research reported that on 17 July that there were 42 deaths out of 1 895 infections. There were 24 people who were brought in dead (BID), “highlighting the likelihood of wider prevalence in the community” with a “higher community transmission and severe cases not seeking treatment from health facilities”.²⁶ Further, “the majority of the new cases [were] locally transmitted”²⁷ with over 80 per cent of deaths occurring outside health facilities. These occurrences were both the cause and result of low, inadequate and inconsistent national laboratory testing. The high death rate in certain urban locales was due to poor compliance with prevention measures such as the use of masks, hand-washing hygiene and physical distancing. I attest to these based on my attendance at church services, weddings and family contacts. Because of COVID-19, over 75 per cent of deaths in Lusaka occurred in high-density population areas. There was an increase of 16,9 per cent on BIDs at the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka between January and July 2020 compared to the same period in 2019.²⁸ These experiences and the COVID-19 prevalence survey done between 2 and 30 July 2020 in Lusaka, Livingstone, Kitwe, Ndola, Nakonde and Solwezi led the Ministry of Health to launch a national strategy for reducing new infections.

The cornerstone of the strategy was “to encourage public compliance to public health measures”. The United Nations agents had earlier established that “poor compliance by the public to recommended prevention measures such as use of masks, hand hygiene and limited laboratory testing remain key challenges to the COVID-19 response”.²⁹ Despite the spread of infections being known, especially in July and August, as demonstrated in the map above, the new strategy focused on residential areas where non-compliance and the death rate were higher than other geographical areas

26 UN Country Team in Zambia and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “UN COVID-19 Emergency Appeal: Zambia, May-October 2020”. Developed in May and revised at end of July 2020 (available at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/zambia>, as accessed on 8 September 2020).

27 UN Office for the coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 20 August 2020 (available at <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/Zambia>, as accessed on 7 September 2020).

28 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Zambia Situation Report”, Zambia, 14 September 2020 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-14-september-2020>, as accessed on 20 September 2020).

29 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Zambia Situation Report”, Zambia, 29 July 2020 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-29-july-2020>, as accessed on 10 September 2020).

and social groups. From late July and early August, the Ministry of Home Affairs deployed the police in generally low social class residential areas to enforce COVID-19 public health measures. Individuals without masks were to be arrested and fined K750.³⁰ Restrictions imposed in early March began to be relaxed on 10 April 2020 because of loss of income by street vendors, bars, casinos and restaurants. The COVID-19 reduction strategy also targeted people who entered Zambia. Certificates showing negative COVID-19 infection within the previous 14 days were required for travellers entering the country. Exit for Zambians, especially itinerant traders, was severely restricted. One sample of infections reported on 26 July reflects the sensitivity and evidence base of new restrictions from end of July as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Sample of areas of infection reported on 26 July 2020

In-coming travellers at point of entry	23%
Contact tracers	18%
Community Screening	24%
Among the brought in dead	35%

Source: UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Zambia Situation Report”, Zambia, 29 July 2020 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-29-july-2020>, as accessed on 29 July 2020).

Managing COVID-19 in the education sector reveals the incapacity of the Zambian Government to manage the pandemic effectively and deal with social justice. Early in March, primary schools, secondary schools and all institutions of higher learning were closed in order to prevent the spreading of COVID-19 infections and facilitate effective management of the pandemic. According to one civil society organisation, Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA), 4,4 million schoolchildren were affected. Even worse, “feeding programs for disadvantaged children were suspended”.³¹ There were 97 000 learners on the school feeding programmes. The IPA further reported that between March, when education institutions were closed, and 1 June when learning resumed, 50 per cent of primary school children spent time without learning at home. In respect of secondary school pupils, 35 per cent were not learning, 20 per cent learned through education broadcasts from the Zambia National Broadcasting Services, and less than 2 per cent used radio broadcasting. The greatest incapacity

³⁰ *Times of Zambia*, 11 August 2021; *Zambia Daily Mail*, 12 August 2020.

³¹ Innovations for Poverty Action, *COVID-19 Response Survey*, Lusaka, 2020.

was that most teachers lacked skills for distance teaching and assessment of learners' activities. This was not unusual because in 2015, Grade 9 examinations were sat in schools including those that had no computers.³²

Thus, in the education sector, the impact of COVID-19 was diverse, and a better understanding awaits further research.

The past in dealing with COVID-19

The past is usable in many contemporary challenges. This study is, in part, a link between past and future policies and studies on how Zambia responded to emergencies. The United Nations agencies in Zambia supported a survey in July which acknowledged that the country faced COVID-19 at a particularly critical time after recent outbreaks of cholera and food insecurity from consecutive droughts from 2018.³³ From June 2019 to about the time of the unfolding of COVID-19 in early 2020, there was a countrywide gassing of innocent people with the intent of drawing blood from victims.³⁴ The gassing paralysed victims who became helpless and failed to protect themselves. Targets were gassed in their houses at night. Other victims were attacked by gangs in isolated sites. There was an organised mass response in which many suspects were killed. In one unfortunate incident, a young man in Kaoma District did not know that he had participated in killing his innocent uncle.³⁵ The Ministry of Home affairs coordinated security wings in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. The Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) in the Office of the Vice-President offered expertise in managing COVID-19 as another disaster or emergency. It is thus worth noting that various role players sought to draw on how the government, various institutions or the population handled earlier emergency experiences. The multi-sector approach established at Cabinet level was deployed as the UN agencies, diplomatic offices and their development agencies, and civil society organisations collaborated in their responses to COVID-19.

32 Personal recollection.

33 UN Country Team in Zambia and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "UN COVID-19 Emergency Appeal: Zambia, 17 July, 2020" (available at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/zambia>, as accessed on 8 September 2020).

34 ZM, Press Statement by Mr Kakoma Kanganja, The Inspector General of Police on the Security Situation in the Country, 22 February 2020.

35 *Zambia Daily Mail*, 23 January 2020 (available at <https://reliefwebint/report/zambia>, 29 July 2020, as accessed 31 August 2020). Colleagues and I suspended early morning health walks because of fearing gassing.

The central strategy of these multi-sector approaches was drawn from the fact that “poor compliance by the public to recommended prevention measures such as use of masks, hand hygiene and limited laboratory testing, remain key challenges to the COVID-19 response”.³⁶ Drawing from accumulated experiences on handling emergencies and with growing evidence on possible best practices for managing COVID-19, the Ministry of Health launched a National Strategy for Reducing New Infections of COVID-19. The framework of this strategy was “to encourage public compliance to public health measures”.³⁷

On 17 July 2020, the National Epidemic Preparedness Committee was emphatic that a progressive way forward was for “greater emphasis of public compliance to public health measures”.³⁸ This contrasts with a false assertion that COVID-19 in “Zambia had claimed democracy, not human”.³⁹ Because compliance was weak, early in August, the Government deployed the police to close service businesses such as bars, casinos and restaurants. A fine of K750 was to be imposed on those who did not comply with COVID-19 public health measures. Local authorities threatened to cancel business licences for non-compliance. It is clear that COVID-19 nurtured institutional evolution and increased state intervention based on past experiences. Thus COVID-19 demonstrated intersections of social, political and economic histories.

It is evident that scholarly studies of COVID-19 will be a significant addition to social, economic and political historiography of Zambia. That endeavour will be grounded, at least, in a series of studies on the Spanish Influenza of 1918-1919. These studies deal with rumours on what the influenza was as one form of response among Africans in a colonial situation. They also deal with aspects of negligence of African populations in implementing remedies to contain the pandemic. Social and economic studies will call further attention because of the large number of deaths, including increased death rates when compared to previous pandemics or outbreaks of diseases. On this, there is a rich starting point in *Zambian*

³⁶ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Zambia Situation Report", Zambia, 29 July 2020 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-29-july-2020>, as accessed on 31 August 2020).

³⁷ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Zambia Situation Report", Zambia, 14 September 2020 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-14-september-2020>, as accessed on 20 September 2020).

³⁸ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Zambia Situation Report", Zambia, 29 July 2020 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/zambia/zambia-situation-report-29-july-2020>, as accessed on 31 August 2020).

³⁹ *News Diggers*, 15 June 2020.

social history. Walima Kalusa, at times in collaboration with Megan Vaughan,⁴⁰ wrote on complex relationships between death and politics in central Africa. It is instructive that such studies emerged during the era of high death rates due to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). It is further instructive because of multiple and mixed use of sources and research methods involved. Triangulation requires long-term study perspectives because of changing analyses of diverse content in sources and methodology. Such future research may find a valuable beginning in the present discussion.

Conclusion

Teaching or learning and research in history on COVID-19 in Zambia calls for a multidisciplinary approach. This discussion shows at least four issues in shaping scholarship and state policies. First, COVID-19 brings out new insights in the history of globalisation with diverse voices and connections. Second, local dynamics in Zambia are as diverse as agents of change at a global level. Different social classes and sectors of the Zambian population were affected differently and responded in ways that reflected their social positions and political orientations. The dynamics were persistent in the hope of containing the pandemic rather than seeming helpless and hopeless. Future studies will analyse these enduring transitions better than a contemporary investigation could. The majority of written sources are official frontline reports. Detailed oral data from frontline workers will be useful. Third, sources of data are diverse in terms of written and oral categories. Coordinating voices from these sources will be challenging yet inspiring tasks. Fourth, and finally, skills in multidisciplinary research and use of diverse sources will be essential in understanding COVID-19 as medical, social and political histories. The diversity of sources implies, in part, that learner engagement in learning and research could advance schooling.

⁴⁰ WT Kalusa and M Vaughan, *Death, belief, and politics in central African history* (Lusaka, Lembani Trust, 2013).

Decolonial History teachers' charter: A praxis guide

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Abstract

The below text is a practical charter which calls for history teachers, students, learners and then the provincial and national Departments of Basic and Higher Education to decolonise. Decolonisation is often talked about in the abstract, it is separated out into curricula, pedagogy, or university spaces. This charter takes the argument into schools and explores several aspects of decolonisation in a substantial and detailed way. The charter was developed as a collective exercise in a history methodology class by third and fourth year Bachelor of Education students training to be histori(an) teachers. The idea from the charter emanated from the students, and was initially, pre-Covid, guided by the lecturer (see footnote 1); however, once Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) began, the students took complete ownership of the project. The lecturer's only role was to make the charter an assignment, to give students impetus to carry on with the task. Students could work collectively on the Decolonial History Teacher's Charter, or work on and submit individual assignments. This is important because the desire, the heart, the intellectual work, and the collectivity all emanated from the students. The below document can serve, in our collective view, as an important guide to new and serving history teachers, students, learners, and scholars.

Keywords: History teachers; History students; History teaching; Decolonisation; Praxis.

Introduction

“Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter” – Igbo/Ukwu Proverb.

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We, as student-teachers of History, recognise that our world finds itself at an unprecedented moment in recent human history. As we attempt to come to terms with the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for the future of history education on a global, continental and local scale, we recognise that we have been presented with an opportunity to critically re- imagine the role that Historians ought to play in actively building a more just, empathetic and equitable world. We deliberately identify ourselves as Historians-in-action, based on our understanding of History as a discipline that involves the active construction, deconstruction and contestation of historical narratives.

We have a duty to decolonise² the history curriculum and have history become a tool for the nurturing of agency i.e. our capacity as human beings to reflect critically on the historical conditions that have affected our experiences and to act decisively upon these reflections. To be historians-in-action, we need to expose and shed light on African perspectives of colonisation and its effects, such perspectives have a limited place in the dominant historical narratives to which we are exposed. Our teaching and learning of history glorifies Eurocentric actions and perspectives. These perspectives prevail in much of what has been written in our history textbooks. And it is that history that we continue to teach and learn today. We have subscribed to the “single story” for too long – an interpretation of history that has done little to disrupt unjust relations of power that continue to reproduce patterns of oppression, exploitation, and domination in our society.

If we are to move forward based on a more transformative conception of education, an education system that is rooted in the desire to empower and uplift our societies on a global, continental and local scale, then we need to dedicate ourselves to learning our true history and uncovering the truth of who we are. We recognise that this is a process that necessitates a critical acknowledgement of our strengths and our weaknesses. It is a

2 Decolonisation definition: The process of untangling all threads of historical, socio-economic, and political hegemony; the end goal being to liberate the oppressed from the strands which, if left uncut, grow again into twists that tie around the neck. The process of disrupting *coloniality*, described by Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2016) as the “long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day” (Maldonado-Torres, 2016:243). In the context of education, the process of confronting and uprooting colonial pedagogical practices and processes of knowledge production that continue to have an impact on present-day methodologies and practices.

process that requires us to take full advantage of the resources, skills and opportunities that we have at our disposal to make tomorrow better for ourselves and for future generations. Below we focus on calls to history teachers, history students and history learners with directed points to question the information we are given, to humanise each other, and to decolonise pedagogy as well as curriculum.

A call to History teachers

“Consider that for more than a century, Indigenous students have been part of a forced assimilation plan — their heritage and knowledge rejected and suppressed, and ignored by the education system” (Battiste, 2017:23).

We direct this section to history teachers, as teachers play a significant role in transforming and decolonising the education system. Each teacher’s individual agency, approach, and influence, shapes students’ views of the world and the extent to which they are involved in the upliftment of their communities. For better or worse, the influence and knowledge that history teachers bring into the classroom are significant.

The charter seeks to encourage and enable teachers to ground their pedagogical practices in Decolonial principles and to appreciate the far-reaching potential of such principles. The fundamental demand that we are making is that teachers should alter their pedagogical practices to undo colonising practices and to work towards achieving a more free, just, and independent way of being. They should empower history students and learners, and help them foster their own identities, as opposed to forcing identities upon them. They should allow students to value their culture and heritage and to practice it in the classroom.

Being a history teacher and working with history means having an opportunity to engage actively in the process of decolonisation – the process of dismantling a colonial system. It is a process that involves fostering a greater sense of independence while working to dismantle unjust systems of authority. This insinuates that we should urge history teachers to take risks where risks might pay off in the growth of learners. As history teachers, we can address such issues not just by the use of evidence or historical context but by our ability to ask the right questions and to navigate ourselves and our students through the answer (McCully & Kitson, 2005).

Schools should consider the teaching of emotive and controversial histories as a necessary step in empowering students with the capacity to navigate controversy effectively. History students and learners are bound to encounter controversy in its many forms throughout their lives, stemming from the range of conflicting opinions and influences with which students will be confronted with respect to any number of issues/historical interpretations. We thus have a responsibility to use the history classroom as a site within which the appropriate critical historical skills for negotiating ideas and controversy can be nurtured. Not only may this be of benefit to ourselves as historians-in-action and our learners in the long-term, but adopting such an attitude towards the teaching of controversial histories may enable history to be seen in a new light: as a subject through which the interests of social justice may be served. In other words, if schools take the time to allow history teachers to teach these topics, we may draw one step closer to the decolonisation of history, as learners will have to learn the nuances and complexities of what took place and how it influences the places and situations in which they find themselves today. Even though some history teachers may have reservations about approaching sensitive topics (such as the racialised, gendered, classed, and unequal experiences of learners), it has to be done to have a decolonised curriculum or space within which we may work effectively.

History teachers teach the CAPS – History curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2011) and addressing this curriculum is a significant aspect of the decolonial project. If we were to refer to decolonisation in the educational context, this means that we should confront colonising practices that impacted education in the past and continue to have an impact in the present today. Wingfield (2017:2), states, "What's really important is that South African teachers, lecturers and professors must develop curricula that build on the best knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits from around the world. These cannot be limited to one country nor one continent – be it Africa or Europe".

We understand epistemic decolonisation to be a process decolonisation of the mind. We ground this understanding in the knowledge that we must wrestle our imaginations and capacity to imagine from our colonisers, or else we are doomed to repeat the colonial narrative. Biko (2002:102), puts it simply: "The most powerful tool in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed". History teachers need to be aware of this and make a conscious effort to facilitate a process of epistemic wilfulness within

their classrooms. Africans continue to struggle with “decolonisation of the mind”, to “seize back their creative initiative in history through a real control of all the means of communal self-definition in time and space” (wa Thiong’o, cited in Creary, 2012:1).

Creary (2012) asserts that the decolonisation battle remains inadequate and the fact that Africa is globally equated to chaos and disorder proves his case and the perception of Africa as being associated with chaos and disorder. It is tragic that Africans are considered subservient, where Western countries or nations who are viewed as transcendent. wa Thiong’o believes that decolonisation is not the end, but rather the dawn of an entirely new battle, which he refers to as a “liberating perspective” (wa Thiong’o, 1986:87). This refers to a perspective that can allow us “to see ourselves clearly in the relationship to ourselves and to other selves in the universe”. In other words, while we may have been taught to see ourselves as South Africans, we first have to recognise the role that the colonial imposition of South Africa's borders played in informing how we define our own history, culture, knowledge, and skills in relation to the rest of the world. It is up to the history teachers to facilitate this conversion and to inculcate this mindset of liberation within classrooms.

Epistemic decolonisation also means a critical appraisal of our own sources of inspiration (Hountondji, 1996). Regarding African authors, there is a danger of taking what they say at face value because they are African. To be engaged in epistemic decolonisation (or epistemic revolt), teachers need to be skilled in evaluating multiple sources in the African context while tracking the genealogy of that thinking. This is not to say that we should turn away from ideas initiating from Europe: as Maldonado-Torres (2016) asserts that not all knowledge produced in Europe is inherently colonial. However we must rather be deliberate and intentional in how we engage our own work to circumvent the potential to replicate colonial/modernity in our goal of liberation (Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

Because history teachers play such a vital role in the development and growth of learners and how they view themselves and their identities, this charter is intended to encourage history teachers to think outside the box and question how history has always been taught. It is intended to inspire them to teach history in a more open, real and inclusive manner which will help to restructure the entire education system. It is imperative that the oppressed of this country or any country that suffers from the effects of

colonialism are exposed to learning that centres their identity, their history, their cultural practices. It only through the recentring of the oppressed that the South Africans can come together as one and the spirit of Ubuntu can be established, promoting unity and togetherness.

A call to History students and learners³

History students and learners are encouraged to take ownership of their place as creators and owners of knowledge. History students and learners need to understand the responsibility that comes with being able to work with historical evidence to create their own informed ideas. History students and learners need to use their knowledge from a historical perspective to engage in understanding the power of an unbiased (fact based, with a focus on marginalised knowledges) notion of teaching and learning. Students and learners need to use critical thinking skills and seize every opportunity to engage in controversial issues. The history classroom should be identified as a site in which controversy is engaged enthusiastically.

Independence in learning should be nurtured, whereby history students and learners do not solely rely on the educators for responses. Independence refers to students taking on the immense responsibility for their own knowledge and the process of their learning. Students tend to allow educators to cloud our judgement with their biased views and perspectives. It's important that students/learners take responsibility for their own learning and become constructors of knowledge rather than receivers of knowledge. This means that taking and accepting knowledge without further interrogating it be limited.

The charter emphasises the importance of self-sufficiency in history classrooms for students, as well as the ability to consult different sources. When engaging in African history, learners often engage with predominantly European/Eurocentric evidence given. Thus, their views are often shaped by the evidence to which they've been exposed. It is imperative that they draw their interpretations and views from a more Africanised perspective, and through that, they should be tasked with finding their own sources that could be corroborated with sources provided in class. This can help with the aim of the charter of diversifying the sources with which we engage in class.

³ The South African system refers to high school pupils as learners and university attendees as students. We attempt to blur these hierarchical lines by grouping both together and using the terms interchangeably.

History students need to develop courage and have a say in the history they want to be taught. History students have been oppressed over a long period by various institutions and systems. They are forced into learning history that does not relate to their roots and culture. We have all been disconnected from our roots. Hence the need for courage development, which will be critical in challenging the various dominant structures with which students are confronted daily. It is imperative that students demand to have a voice in the development of a curriculum.

In the light of learners' experiences and perspectives, the charter does not serve as a voice for students but it insists on students having their own voice. One of the reasons why we are taught the history that we have in schools and at a university level is because we have also succumbed to being subordinate to ingrained colonial knowledge and power structures. Thus the aim of the charter is to dismantle any forces that have led to students feeling unworthy and unheard. Students should ask questions that spark inquiry and constructive arguments within the classroom. The overall aim of this section of the charter has been to strongly emphasise a call to students to be agents of change.

A call to the Departments of Basic and Higher Education, at both a provincial and national level

The starting point to decolonising the history curriculum is in the classroom, for what better way to decolonise the minds of the people than to start with the youth. Decolonisation of the curriculum is pertinent for establishing equity and justice within the society of South Africa.

Colonisation took place when white European colonists invaded and settled in our country. Their colonisation took many forms and laid the foundations of many of the structures that govern our lives today, such as; inequality, class, gender, language and race (Mignolo, 2011) .

Decolonising the history curriculum is a process of deconstruction and reconstruction. Essentially, we put forward that the curriculum needs to be dismantled to identify where information has been distorted and rewritten with balanced and critically thought out information and facts, which correctly fit the people it is intended for.

Part of decolonising the curriculum also includes the method of teaching. History learners need to be taught the important skills needed for having

their own reasoned opinions while learning about the importance of empathy – increasingly so, in a world where it is so easy to be influenced. Our call to the Department of Education is that the department should allow, train and encourage policy and curriculum developers including writers of History textbooks to design history curricula that centralise African History content.

The content should equally expose learners to multiple historical perspectives and let learners make their own judgement of historical events based on their historical thinking. For example, our South African history textbooks – especially chapters covering apartheid – give learners one perspective of history. They highlight the importance of Nelson Mandela and the ANC as the only key role players in the fight against apartheid while failing to create a platform for other freedom fighters, communities, and political & ideological formations that contributed to the coming of democracy.

This takes us back to the aims and conceptions of Education, such as Plato's notion of the state control of education. This is to say the state controls education and the few elites - are the ones who get to decide which content is to be taught and which content is to be ignored. This was most apparent in countries that had just gained their independence: the first thing their governments did was to change the history curriculum and design a curriculum that serves the needs of the contemporary political structure of the country. This is because history curriculum controls the structure of the society and how the society views itself in relation to other nations. With society, you can create a framework (the history curriculum) that can positively shape an entire generation or negatively indoctrinate the society or learners.

It is for this reason that we call upon the Department of Education to decolonise the current CAPS History curriculum. History should serve the needs of society. It should provide a basis upon which social justice, healing and closure for the victims of inhuman systems of the past can be sought. This could be achieved by exposing learners to multiple historical perspectives - even of those with whom they may not agree. This will help history learners understand where certain behaviours, ideas and attitudes came from and why they keep repeating themselves. For example, the 2020 murder of George Floyd by a white police officer can demonstrate how racism and injustices are still taking place today. Learners can relate

to these affairs because they have witnessed it and are aware of these issues in their everyday lives.

We call on the Department of Education to develop learner-centred approaches to our history curriculum, which open new avenues of thinking. In addition to involving learners in the process of curriculum development, this will also enable learners to form links by relating current issues to the past, for example; to reflect on the injustices and inequalities of apartheid and why those social injustices keep manifesting even today in a democratic state. A learner-centred history curriculum gives a learner agency to think like a historian.

It is also imperative that the history curriculum allow learners to study the culture, environment and history of their nation itself before studying Eurocentric histories and cultures to ensure decolonisation. It is important for learners to develop cognitive knowledge that further enhances their understanding of relevant history. This will allow learners to think consciously about ideas, giving them a sense of purpose and direction.

According to wa Thiong'o (1986:22): "... every language has its-own social and cultural basis, and these are instrumental in the formation of mental processes and value judgements". It is for this reason that we call for the Department of Education to re-look at its language policy. History is literature. It is a theory made up of language. It is a subject that can be taught in any language, the same way that it is taught in English. We call for the department of Education to include African/south African languages as part of languages of instruction, teaching and learning. History textbooks can be translated into African languages, so that learners have a choice in deciding which language they want to learn history in. This should create opportunities for learners to learn in the language of their choice. This call does not hinder any process of teaching and learning, but will build confidence and encourage learning for all races in South Africa. The status that the English language enjoys in history curriculum reflects the legacies of colonialism, apartheid and the constant celebrated achievements of white supremacy (Malema, 2014).

This is to say, the constant use of the English language, as the only central language of instruction, teaching and learning in our history curriculum when teaching black history students, is to perpetuate cultural alienation for African generations to come. This is because it is in languages where we define ourselves in relation to other nations. Therefore, by continually

using English as the only central language of instruction, Black African learners will know and identify themselves through European and western methodologies (wa Thiong'o, 1986).

To fulfil this call, the DBE should add language studies as a compulsory requirement for history student-teachers. They should include all South African languages for student-teachers to choose the South African language in which they want to major. History teachers must be trained and equipped with necessary skills and methodologies that will enable them to teach history in the language of their choice. It might take time to achieve this goal, but victory is certain.

We call on the Department of Education to design a curriculum that will give teachers powers to teach history that has solutions. The study of history should express the purpose of "what to do now". It must be a curriculum that does not hesitate to tell what the results of study mean (Williams, 1992). For example, what would be the psychological effect of studying western or European History such as the Russian Revolution, Hitler, colonial conquest in African context? It should be a curriculum that does not only teach the history of Africans defeating Europeans, but a curriculum that also explicitly shows and teaches about Black people's contributions to the world's greatest civilizations. In addition, the history curriculum must provide factual data with no edited historical information. It must be a curriculum that leaves the work to students to evaluate it as they choose without the influence of teacher bias towards what the student perceives as relevant and reliable (Williams, 1992).

Our History curriculum must not be an instrument of colonial policy designed to educate Black African students into acceptance of their role as the former colonised, weak and inferior peoples of colour, but a curriculum that embraces the great satisfaction of knowing the decolonised historical truth which will subsequently restore dignity, respect as well as consciousness to historically marginalised African peoples. This would be a relevant history to an African child who still tries to find his or her true meaning of self as an African learning decolonised History in an African context. Not only the painful History but also a History that recognises the achievements, victories or strengths of African ancestors who successfully resisted colonialism and slavery (such as the cases of Ethiopia and Liberia) (Williams, 1992), South African history learners should be exposed to history from north, south, west and east of Africa. They should be exposed

to multiple different perspectives and be assessed according to their historical reasoning and thinking capabilities (wa Thiong'o, 1986) We call on the Department of Education to appreciate the significance of this charter and to evaluate it accordingly.

A call to teacher education institutions

Mbembe (2016) speaks on the decolonisation of the university – in which he addresses the democratisation of access. He states that access to higher learning institutions ought to be easily attainable for all South African citizens, but for this to become a reality, the South African government needs to sufficiently provide for its universities and teachers.

Teacher training institutions have a major role to play in shaping not only the mindset of a teacher, but they also form a basis for teachers' pedagogical choices and how they think and act in relation to knowledge. They sculpt what we call the teacher and significantly impact the learning and teaching dynamic of a country. The country's teachers are as good as the institutions that train them. This then is why we believe that we cannot decolonise history education (and how we teach it) without dealing with one of the biggest contributors – the Teacher Training Universities. Speaking about who universities belong to in 2015 the Minister of Higher Education, Blade Nzimande cited in *Business Tech*, (Staff Writer, 2015) states that “to be Africanised means they must become universities capable of contributing in all respects (research, curriculum, etc.) to the developmental goals of our country. They must be conscious of both backward and forward linkages in the task of transforming themselves and our country.”

University and school curricula have veered off into a direction whereby it is so internationalised that we have forgotten the context in which we find ourselves i.e. South Africa. Our curriculum in nature has adopted the ideology of the positivists who “believe that social behaviour is governed by discernible laws and if examined scientifically, they should be able to find universal generalizations that can govern accurately the development of human societies” (Feinberg & Soltis, 2009:82) This is opposed to the interpretivism ideology. Scott (2014) states that the world is constructed through the interaction of individuals, each with their own subjective unique and informed experiences. The training of South African teachers should aim to equip them for the context(s) that they are going to face. Although there are universal generalisations regarding the training of teachers and

the extent to which teachers are trained to potentially operate within the international domain, most of the focus should be put into training history teachers rigorously with how they can cope within a South African context. How they can approach South African history, how they can be agents of decolonisation within the classrooms they enter. Contextual differences such as culture, beliefs, attitudes, and shared meanings and understanding inform people's perceptions and interpretations of the world around them, thus creating the possibility of difference in a similar situation (The Open University, 2014). We call out for teachers to be trained in context.

Some recommendations to teacher education institutions

- Make use of teacher practicals to develop a broader understanding of the South African teaching dynamic. What normally happens is that the student teachers encounter challenges that are unique and could be of benefit to train others. But because there is no advanced and engaging feedback mechanism, they leave the teacher training space with valuable experience that could help others. It might be helpful to invest in studying such experiences, which sometimes can vary depending on where the institution is based. Addressing them and even having a module whereby you showcase these past difficulties and provide potential solutions that will be followed up by the next group of students to see whether they were effective remedies. If not, we may examine what went wrong and how can they be fixed now. There is a need for teacher training institutions to better their instruction in producing South African teachers equipped for the South African context. All this is an aim to better the quality of the teaching and learning within the South African context.
- Teachers who adopt the role of an interpretivist researcher in their classrooms have the moral obligation to not allow educational research to be just a spectator sport, or a mere intellectual game or a way to make a good living, but rather to support the cry for a better education that encompasses all children, especially those marginalized by the curriculum (Gage, 1989). Immerse teachers in the art of researching from their undergrad studies. Some students will not venture into postgrad studies, but research is a major weapon in a teacher's arsenal. It not only equips the teacher with analytical skills but also enlightens them to realities that would elude the untrained eye. This is such an important tool even when teaching to have a "researching eye" which can be used to find out historical factors that are influencing their (current) history classroom. To be conscious of the environmental elements of the area they are teaching in and how it affects the classroom. To research the learners and what prejudices they might be bringing to the classroom that

are imbued in them by where they come from. Teacher training institutions need to train teachers to have a “researching eye” for the betterment of the history classroom.

- All knowledge is socially and collectively created through the interactive processes between individuals, groups, and the natural world (Sefa Dei, 2008:241) This principle is critical in enabling the paradigm shift needed to allow for local African knowledge to be recognised as knowledge. History students, learners and teachers would gain value being taught their own knowledges in a critical manner.
- We urge the teacher training institutions to open up space for discussions between student teachers to speak about controversial issues (race, gender, xenophobia, class divisions). The aim is that through their discussions they might themselves be comfortable with addressing such issues, and thus when entering the classroom, they might not feel uneasy teaching them critically to learners. There is a need for emotive teaching within the history classroom. Teachers who will teach in this way are teachers who have been trained in how they deal with the teaching of controversial topics. These are teachers who may be empowered with the capacity to facilitate eye-opening discussions within the classroom in a way that is sensitive to the learners’ feelings but also does not avoid the topics.
- A last call to the teacher training institutions is that practice is better than theory. In this context, it means that students will learn better from you if you practice the theory you teach. The most effective way of learning is socialisation. We are calling for all teacher training institutions to adopt a student-based curriculum, which embraces the constructivists’ ideology. This call is so that when teachers enter the classroom, they do not have to move from an outcome-based approach to teaching and learning – as experienced at the training institution – to an approach that advocates for a formative way of teaching. Use of inductive learning or inquiry learning “places a much stronger emphasis on the learners role in the learning process” (Killen, 2007:78) This is so that students can be active members in the deconstruction of their prejudices and stigma. The higher education space should be a place where student-teachers are pushed to a point of metacognition (thinking about how you think) in which they can deconstruct their own prejudices and stigmas first. With this example, we would see more teachers moving away from the traditional form of instruction to a more learner-centred approach. This would transform the history teaching space in a South African context. We are calling for a leading by example approach from all institutions who train teachers to teach them the way they expect them to teach.

Conclusion: A call for decolonial history teaching-in-action as praxis

We, as historians-in-action, hope that by undertaking to commit ourselves to the principles of this charter, we might work to build a broad-based movement for social transformation, starting in the history classroom. We aim to strengthen the bonds of solidarity between students who may come from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, who may not have all the answers regarding how to tackle the challenges we face, but who recognise that we have a vested interest in liberating ourselves from dehumanising structures of oppression. If you commit yourself to this project, know that you are committing yourself to building a more just world for future generations. You are aspiring to defend and nurture the beauty that lives within each one of us, despite deeply entrenched colonial ways of being which seek to train us otherwise, to fashion a new reality.

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Book Reviews

Our Story – Godongwana becomes Dingiswayo

(South African Heritage Publishers, Johannesburg, South Africa

2020. ISBN: 9781928326298)

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The book presents a narrative account of King Dingiswayo, a role model for peacemakers who managed to evade assassins sent by his own father for five years. Upon his return he renamed himself Dingiswayo (Wanderer), who came across as a westernized, diplomatic and intellectually smart man to the astonishment of many abaNguni kings. He came up with an innovative policy aimed at developing abaNguni Federation where amakhosi retained their clans and prestige while paying tribute to him as sovereign, after realizing that incessant battles would depopulate the land to a larger extent. He also introduced several reforms particularly to traditional practices as well as in the military, which resulted in the creation of employment on a larger scale based on trade and agriculture. Furthermore, the formation of a formidable KwaMthethwa Kingdom under him that seemingly surpassed other neighbouring Kingdoms such as those for AmaNdwandwe and the Swazi Kingdom that was in the distant north under Sobhuza, is also covered in the book. Dingiswayo became the most modern King in the Southern tip of Africa for many reasons that inter alia included, the upbringing of King Shaka and the initiation of regimental conscription. In his system of conscription, he based this formidable task on the regimental enrolment (ukubuthwa kwamabutho) that was age-based and they were given regimental names that marked their age group or peers such as Izichwe.

Chapter One presents a context of Africa's Oral Tradition. Here the author details how oral tradition played out through educational fieldtrips and excursions, where the learners got an opportunity to interact with primary evidence. Nkosikazi Khumalo, a schoolmistress took her learners on a trip to historical sites around KwaZulu-Natal. They visited Emakhosini Heritage Site, the burial site of the early amakhosi akwaZulu, the Gqokli Hill, where King Shaka defeated inkosi yesizwe sama Ndwandwe around

1818, Ulundi, the site of the final battle between the British and amaZulu on 4 July 1879 and KwaDukuza, exploring the dark and dense eNkandla forest. It is interesting how the learners critically examine the bloody battles that characterize the history of the Zulu Nation through questions. The fundamental question raised through these constructive engagements is; to what extent have treachery and senseless killings influenced life in modern times? This is to a large extent what historical enquiry seeks to achieve. In this chapter the role and significance of oral history have been clearly demonstrated. The learners were able to interrogate the past, in an attempt to understand the present and also to determine future possibilities. The second chapter does not delve deeper into the crisis and conflict at the beginning of the 17th century, it merely provides the background and the description of the four dominant groups of the Northern abaNguni clan as follows:

- The Dlamini who were the royal line of the amaNkwane, who occupied the area around Delagoa Bay for several centuries before moving south in the 18th century to settle north of u Phongolo River.
- The amaNdwandwe who lived between u Phongolo and the Black u Mfolozi Rivers, straddling the trade route from the coast to the interior.
- The abakwaMthethwa who dominated the area between u Mfolozi and u Mhlathuze rivers.
- The amaQwabe who occupied u Ngoye hills between u Mhlathuze and u Thukela rivers.

The author further provides incisive accounts mainly on the bureaucracy of these competing chiefdoms. Pivotal to the competition among these societies were land suitable for grazing and fertile for agricultural production, as well as available water sources. The issue of resources could not be resolved, it culminated in the revival of old and almost forgotten rivalries among the chiefdoms, at first simmering and later reaching a boiling point. A new social order developed with the formation of centralized systems of authority and the rapid development of armies. There is no explanation in this chapter of how these social and bureaucratic reforms affected the balance of power among the chiefdoms to a point of conflict. The presentation of Dingiswayo's family tree and the lineage of his forefathers on page 13, is commendable. It will assist in probing the genesis of the tribal conflict. However, a brief account on their political agenda informed by their heritage, would have been more welcome. It

would also assist those readers who seek justification for these conflicts. Trade relations with the Portuguese particularly at Delagoa Bay, have been mentioned on the last page of the chapter. However, the reader is kept in the dark as to the economic impact of these trade engagements. It would have been interesting to learn how the chiefdoms benefitted from such economic activities. Perhaps the reader would have been able to reasonably speculate on how these tribal battles could have been averted. Chapter 3 is missing in the book, this has somewhat affected the coherence and blending of events in the entire narrative. Chapter 4 presents Godongwana's ordeals and his journey to greatness. Here the author provides an insightful account of how the family feud got escalated into the tribal battles that claimed the lives of innocent people. It all began with a rivalry for the throne between the two sons of inkosi uJobe wesizwe sabakwaMthethwa, Godongwana and Mawewe. Their mothers were of different clans. King Jobe favoured Mawewe over Godongwana who was the eldest. When Godongwana turned 24 in 1804, Mawewe's friends and fellow initiates, desired to have Mawewe as the heir to his father's throne. They circulated a rumour that Godongwana intended to assassinate his father because he was impatient of his rule. Upon receiving this information, inkosi uJobe believed the rumour and ordered a party to destroy his son together with his adherents. Godongwana managed to escape with his younger brother Tana and thus began his life as a fugitive. It is interesting how the author takes the readers through the genesis of treachery, betrayal and killings that characterized the Zulu nation back in the day.

Another area of interest in this chapter is the chronological presentation of key events and how they unfolded:

- The killing of Tana, Godongwana's younger brother.
- The escape of Godongwana and the tribes that offered him refuge.
 - » AbakwaMbokazi
 - » AmaQwabe
 - » Mlotha
 - » Mthimkhulu
 - » AmaHlubi
- The killing of Godongwana's servant.
- Godongwana's demonstration of bravery: The milking of the remaining cattle after others had just been struck by lightning, the killing of the lioness single-handed.
- Godongwana's relationship with Dr Cowan, a Scottish explorer.

- The attack and defeat of amaQwabe by Godongwana.
- The change of name from Godongwana to Dingiswayo which means the one in distress or in exile-an allusion to the hard times he had experienced as a wandering outcast.
- The killing of Mawewe by Dingiswayo.
- Dingiswayo's victory as the ruler of the abakwaMthethwa clan.

As it was stated earlier, this chapter provides a chronological presentation of the events that characterized Dingiswayo's journey to chieftainship.

Chapter 6 presents a relationship between Dingiswayo and Shaka. The author spells out the extent of Dingiswayo's influence on Shaka. It is interesting to learn in this chapter how Shaka used his military prowess to extend Dingiswayo's sphere of influence through the battles that he fought and conquered as a young recruit into his army. The author does however point out that despite Shaka's contribution to the military conquests, Dingiswayo on the one hand, did not approve of Shaka's philosophy and fighting strategies. Shaka on the other hand, was not always in agreement with Dingiswayo's military tactics. On page 32 paragraph 1, when Dingiswayo attacked amaNgwane under Matiwane and drove them across the Buffalo River. Shaka tried in vain to persuade Dingiswayo to make this campaign one of total war. Dingiswayo would not allow the young commander to make use of his new military instrument, allowing him to scare Matiwane into a quick surrender. This he believed would be followed by submission and the incorporation of Matiwane's territory into the Commonwealth of clans under Dingiswayo. As Matiwane began his defeated migration, Dingiswayo gave him a lecture. He laid down the rules and stated his firm resolve to maintain order among the quarrelsome abaNguni clans, attempting to raise them into a great and good nation under his own paternal supremacy. Shaka thought Dingiswayo's goal may have been a noble one, but it was doomed to fail. He was annoyed frankly pointed out that Dingiswayo was merely making enemies and had no friends at all. It is interesting how the author presents diverse views held by Dingiswayo and Shaka in this chapter. Equally commendable, is the extent to which the author detail translation of Dingiswayo and Shaka's ideological military stances into practice through the fought and conquered battles, resulting in the extension of Dingiswayo's territory and sphere of influence.

Chapter 7, concludes the entire story by detailing how Dingiswayo's

death was orchestrated by inkosi uZwide yesizwe samaNdwandwe. He was the only inkosi that Dingiswayo had not been able to subdue, after successfully conquering the neighbouring clans. In his description of inkosi uZwide, the author makes value-laden statements quite a lot in the chapter, which leaves no room for other perspectives. Dingiswayo viewed Zwide as a recalcitrant king who challenged Dingiswayo in various respects. He copied Dingiswayo's methods of raising an army by mass conscription and establishing himself as a feudal lord. He increased the size of his fighting force through defeating some smaller neighbouring clans, then forcing them to swear allegiance and pay homage. Dingiswayo was enraged by Zwide's actions whose military tactics brought Dingiswayo into submission. The last stages of the chapter show how betrayal and treachery by both Shaka and Zwide led to the demise of Dingiswayo and the subjugation of abakwaMthethwa clan by amaNdwandwe under the chieftainship of Zwide.

Finally, the closing comments by the author: "Dingiswayo was a humane soul who was ahead of his time and thus not appreciated then. Contemporary society could have learnt so much from the lessons of such a leader, especially where we have not recovered or overcome the ravages and evils caused by colonialism and apartheid," is somewhat open to the discourse of ideal political leadership in modern times. In the main, the book has captured the essence of Godongwana's story so well, detailing how he came to be known as Dingiswayo. The title is suitable in terms of what the book has covered, except for minor lapses in content particularly the missing of chapter 3.

*Onontkoombaar verleden. Reflecties op een veranderende
historische cultuur*

Inescapable past: Reflections on a changing historical culture

**(Uitgeverij Verloren, Hilversum, Nederland, 2020. ISBN
9789087048402)**

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This collection of essays represents Maria Grever's farewell to Erasmus University in Rotterdam, where she founded the renowned Centre for Historical Culture in 2006 and as whose professor she is now retiring. The collection is dedicated to the topic of "historical culture", a multi-layered concept of which the author identifies three dimensions: 1. "the stories that people tell"; 2. "the formal and informal historical infrastructure" (such as schools, archives, museums); and 3. "conceptions of history", linked to terms such as "progress", "rise" and "fall". Historical culture, properly understood as a holistic access to the past, encompasses "both academic and popular history, articulated in material and immaterial culture" (p. 8).

The book, comprising ten chapters, is subdivided into four sections of which the first, entitled "Representations of the nation", explores shifting conceptions of national identity in the Netherlands in the last two centuries via two iconic female national figures. Chapter 1, focusing on visual images as powerful sources of collective memory and drawing on the work of scholars such as Jan and Aleida Assmann, Francis Yates and Pierre Nora, explores the cultural production and appropriation of the "Volendam girl", its associations with such notions as the nostalgic idea of the "good old days", and its figuration of "the 'whiteness'" supposedly characterising "the 'real' Dutch people" (p. 21). Chapter 2 examines the status of Beatrix, the Netherlands' former queen, as an incarnation of the national identity. The gender perspective underlying this section additionally directs our attention to cultural constructions of femininity and masculinity.

The second section, "Canon and Chronology", takes us further into the matter of national identity, with an emphasis on the "historical

infrastructure” that forms Grever’s second dimension of historical culture. The author challenges the assumption that the top-down construction and imposition of official histories, which this infrastructure mediates, serves to reinforce national identities and promote social cohesion; she argues instead for a non-interventionist approach to this matter on the part of governments and against the political use of the past in the service of national – and nationalist – ideologies. Chapter 3, focusing on national identity and historical awareness, is of particular relevance to the field of History Education, drawing, among others, on Peter Seixas’ work on historical consciousness and James Wertsch’s concept of narrative templates. Grever’s consideration of “[t]he risks of a canon in a globalising society” critically explores the controversial canonisation of Dutch history unfolding, notably since 2006, against the backdrop of the increased diversity typical of contemporary Western societies and of related debates on “failed integration” and a national identity allegedly in decline. The Dutch struggles echo those occurring in various countries, where the advent of the new millennium has seen the rise of calls for a shared basis for knowledge of the past rooted in chronologically organised national master narratives, and a pedagogy focused on critical source analysis and multiperspectivity has found itself falling out of favour. With reference to her country, Grever critiques the official prescription of selected facts and interpretations and their narrativisation in formal History Education around ten partly overlapping periods, amounting to an old-school “political history of the rise and prosperity of the Netherlands in a Western European context, fought over by white male heroes” (p. 72). Grever’s concern is that this approach, in curtailing the plurality of societal perspectives on the past, may in fact undermine social cohesion as opposed to producing it; she notes a particular risk in the potential further alienation of marginalised voices, notably second- and third-generation non-Western immigrants who may not identify with the history they hear in the classroom. Among the possible remedies Grever sets out in this context is the cohesive potential of presenting history as a debate, giving marginalised stories a place in history and heritage education and in museum exhibitions. An astute point Grever makes in relation to the hazardous side-effects accompanying the “top-down implementation of a national canon” and a reduced place for history in school curricula denounces the tendency, shared by countries around the world, for teachers to become “less and less regarded as experts in [their] subject matter and increasingly as implementers and process

supervisors” (p. 75). In Chapter 4 the focus shifts to heritage and its role in the construction of identity. Grever observes a fragmentation of the Netherlands’ national story in the emergence of local and regional canons and their use as a counterpoint or supplement to the national canon. The ensuing rise in the significance of local and regional history appears to her to open up possibilities for promoting young people’s historical thinking through heritage education inside and outside the classroom. Chapter 5 follows, reflecting on the relationship between history, time and identity by retracing the critical debate around the never-realised scheme of creating a National Historical Museum for the Netherlands as a showcase for its national canon, with school students as an important target group.

Section three engages with “Plural History” and with the application, in History Education and historiography, of multiperspectivity, a central concept of the didactics of historical thinking that remains a tenet of History Education in the Netherlands despite the introduction of a mandatory canon in schools. Chapter 6 examines the feasibility of using multiperspectivity in multicultural classrooms. Drawing on Siep Stuurman’s *The Invention of Humanity* and on earlier empirical research into students’ views of history and identity in the Netherlands, the author reflects on the possibilities and limits of intercultural dialogue among divergent points of view in history classrooms characterised by diversity. Her considerations revolve particularly around sensitive and controversial historical topics such as the Holocaust, which students with an Islamic background may see through the lens of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and in which context anti-Semitic sentiment may be voiced in the classroom. With reference to Stuurman, Grever wonders whether the use of multiperspectivity in History Education could bring about an “anthropological turn” at the micro-level of the (multicultural) classroom, or, put differently, a “reversal of perspective” (“de omkering van de blikrichting”, p. 123) that acknowledges and allows the coexistence of differences between people and communities. Grever seeks to envisage circumstances under which students may be able to transcend cultural boundaries by putting themselves in the shoes of others and then proceeding to examine their own perspective from this distant vantage point, a process she feels may permit the emergence of a sense of community or “common humanity”. Acknowledging that “[f]or many students, listening to each other is a difficult skill in itself”, Grever formulates the key question here as being “whether they [students] can recognise and understand different perspectives on a sensitive subject,

and whether they then can articulate their own position in relation to that history” (p. 119). In this context, she does not neglect to underscore the considerable knowledge and skills that this approach requires of teachers and the necessity of adequate preparation and training.

Chapter 7 centres on a recently created Second World War memorial site in Nijmegen, a bridge known as “The Crossing”, and its exemplification of the appeal of war-related *lieux de memoire* and their power to mediate a “wordless understanding of the past” (p. 129). Grever then moves in Chapter 8 to a critical discussion of the historiographical field, denouncing the outdated Whig approach and its celebration of the canonised series of “historiographical heroes” often found to populate university textbooks. Her call here is for a broadened perspective that might do justice to a plurality of views and add greater nuance and diversity to the trope of exceptional, “lonely geniuses”, hitherto beloved of a field with a history of neglecting women, presenting them, at best, in supporting roles, and espousing “a broad Western canon ...[that] quickly disintegrates into national variants” (p. 137). Recognising the crucial role of inequalities of power in this discourse, Grever points out that intellectual discourses centring different, lesser-known voices on the past and critiquing contemporaneous events have the potential to challenge and productively disrupt the argument that that we cannot apply our present-day norms and values to that past, specifically to historical wrongs such as the oppression of women, the slave trade and colonial exploitation.

True to the spirit of the considerations it has detailed thus far, the book’s final section focuses on “Critical Thinking and Historical Understanding”, specifically the advancing politicisation of history – and of national histories in particular – and the notion, notably fuelled by social media, of “alternative facts”. Grever’s reflections on this matter in Chapter 9 of the book take in the question of an adequate educational response to fake news and fake history, the answer to which she locates in the concept of historical thinking and its core skills of critical source analysis and multiperspectivity, and in the incorporation of new media literacy into teaching and learning. She additionally highlights the importance of providing careful explanations of the meaning of historical truth and imparting an understanding of the process of finding that truth as open-ended. While acknowledging the limits of historical thinking and its teaching in non-democratic and strictly controlled political contexts, Grever points to the potential of this approach to provide tools for

questioning narratives and discourses and in so doing exposing fake news. Again, the endeavour is a highly demanding one for teachers, and their thorough preparation for the task is of paramount importance: Grever considers it crucial for teachers to gain skills and knowledge in media literacy, to the end of better understanding online culture and students' interactions with it, and in popular historical culture, encompassing media such as video games. The book's tenth chapter examines the importance of pedagogical tact in historical understanding, citing the necessity both of putting forward valid arguments and evidence and of cognisance of the challenges associated with confronting different, shifting perspectives on sensitive historical issues. In Grever's view, a "pedagogy of tact" (p. 162) would entail approaching students' worldviews, alongside the memories and narratives they may bring to the classroom, with openness and sensitivity. The concept of historical distance, she advises, is helpful in this respect, as it also represents distance from personal connection with a potentially controversial event.

In her closing remarks, Grever reflects on the inescapability of the past (and of its many interpretations) and on the tendency of repressed histories to suddenly return with a vengeance; the suppression and imposition alike of specific memories and narratives appear in this view as vain attempts to escape the workings of a past which "cannot be squeezed into a straitjacket" (p. 172). Grever reminds us that we are inescapably connected, in ways we may not see and recognise, with the past, and with traditions whose influence on our present-day thinking and behaviour persists unabated. For all this, however, this past is not set in stone; we are continuously engaged in its re-interpretation, manifest, for instance, in the rise and fall of historical heroes and in the rejection of certain events and personalities which may follow hard on the heels of their celebration and glorification. The ubiquitous "resistance to the dynamics of these reinterpretations" finds material form in "attempts to hold on to the past" (p. 7) through monuments, statues, rituals, canons and even laws and decrees on historical memory. In this regard, Grever acknowledges the risky business of giving space to these divergent and changing interpretations in schools or museums, noting the concomitant endangerment of state control over a nation's collective memory.

Overall, the critical reflections on historical culture in this book, while written in Dutch and focusing on the Netherlands, appear of great relevance to our times beyond that country's borders, challenging us to consider the

ways we relate to and handle the past. The collection makes for engaging and absorbing reading on academic and lay representations of collective pasts which may be sensitive and emotive; their production and public consumption, including their appropriation or subversion by individuals and communities with varying power statuses; and the changing meanings of the past and their relationships to historical consciousness, collective memory and identity. Grever poses topical, thought-provoking and compelling questions, and her considerations and suggestions show an evident underpinning by both theory and practice. Ranging across the fields of historiography, History Education, heritage and popular culture, surveying national, local and translocal dynamics, and not neglecting crucial issues of gender and ethnicity, this collection, driven by a holistic and critical approach to our interaction with the past, is testament to Grever's versatility and her commitment to bridging gaps and instituting dialogue and understanding between interconnected "worlds", multiple voices and divergent perspectives. This is a scholar whose prolific, passionate and influential work will undoubtedly find resonance beyond her academic career, and it would be highly desirable for this book to be made available via translation to a wider audience.

Archaeological heritage and education: An international perspective on History Education

(Slovenian National Commission for UNESCO, Ljubljana, Slovenia

2020. ISBN: 9619358988,9789619358986)

Danijela Trškan and Špela Bezjak (eds.)

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This series of papers on the role of archaeology and heritage in history lessons in elementary and secondary schools is a unique volume of archaeology in history textbooks and classrooms as well as teaching and learning archaeology through museums and historical sites. Diverse in approach and scope, the book brings forth epistemologies and ontologies of teaching archaeology in elementary and secondary schools ornamented with case-studies from four continents and twelve countries. Cross-cutting issues between archaeology and history particularly in translating

knowledge in education and positively impacting the communities' understanding of the significance of history and heritage in their daily lives makes this book relevant to anyone interested in how the past is taught and learned. One of the fundamental questions arising from this volume is who should be responsible for the teaching or inclusion of archaeology in the curricula? As the book shows, archaeology is not a separate subject at primary and secondary schools in many countries. It is however learned in history lessons at risk because history teachers are not usually trained as archaeologists and archaeologists not trained as teachers. Instead of a blame game, the book reservoir twenty-two solid chapters clustered into six parts bringing to light numerous examples, tasks, and projects that learners, educators, and archaeologists can benefit from in teaching or learning.

The first four chapters discuss empirically the marriage between archaeology and history both as disciplines and in education. Literature review and glitches of learning from physical remains in museums, historical sites, or history media are highlighted. Teaching history by using physical remains enables developing student's historical thinking competencies and skills including the elaboration of historical concepts of time, evidence, significance, agency, accounts, empathy, continuity, and change. Moreover, physical remains enable making connections with people who lived in the past. In this book, the term organic historical reasoning—a natural process by which students make such a connection with the past is used. The section concludes with the archaeological based activities implemented in the context of the public education and outreach excavation project created for children's historical thinking and understanding of the past.

The fifth to the eighth chapter commences with ways in which young children can actively engage with historical artefacts integrated into the curriculum. Fascinating however, is how the chapters elaborate teaching young children (up to 8 years old) archaeological reasoning and the differences between knowing, hypotheses, and what is not known. Making inferences using artefacts and their past human context enables students to answer questions about material elements of the objects in connection to human life. When this kind of thinking is applied to communities whose past was wounded by colonialism, political and economic history prescribed as national history worth memorizing surpasses developing students' notion of history through material culture. Archaeology is of service to those

communities whose history has been attributed to outsiders taking away the past and heritage from their owners. The four chapters of the second section are concluded with the study that exposes the role of materiality in school and museum environments and the possibilities and limitations of each venue.

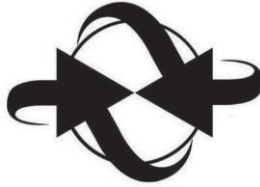
Archaeology in textbooks is covered in six chapters of the book. The history of archaeological science in history textbooks is reviewed. After the inception of archaeology in the curricula, the amount of archaeological information in history textbooks largely depend on the author. Equally, history curricula do not contain any special didactic recommendations for the use and study of material or archaeology but recommend a visit to museums, archives, and archaeology parks which proves that archaeology finds hold on an important place in history. Various museums incorporate archaeological content into educational programs which are defined by the formal education system. As indicated in this book, in most countries the archaeological information in textbook change with time to either increase (take the case of Lithuania) or decrease (take the case of Zimbabwe). It has also been established that elementary school textbooks place greater emphasis on archaeological sources on the work of archaeologists and on archaeology than secondary school textbooks. Archaeology has also been used in schools as a political tool to push a particular agenda. This occurs as an aftermath of a conflict or in search of ‘truth’ about the past. The benefit of collaboration between history and other disciplines in a transdisciplinary approach is in bringing history to life. Adding archaeological finds, effectively makes history real and activates all senses thus assisting historical inquiry in becoming less abstract. Archaeological principles can assist in historical thinking and competencies among students rather than to recall historical facts. Through incorporating archaeology in history learning, students could master competencies such as evaluating historical sources, asking historical questions, examining causality, and contextualizing historical events including understanding technological development of different historical periods and understanding of time. No doubt, that archaeology is a romantic subject and the reason for teaching it in schools was originally due to its appeal of mystery and adventure that has been conveyed in popular culture. Exploiting these qualities of archaeology for the students to understand their past better should not only be the role of educator is alone but also historians and archaeologists.

Three important venues are used for archaeology in history: the

classroom, historical site, and museum. The book presents these three venues as to where active learning approaches take place in order to encourage the active role of learners, enhance their motivation, develop their abilities and skills, enable a better understanding of history topics and promote a positive evaluation of cultural heritage. The book refers to this approach as experiential, multi-perspective, inquiry-based, and multisensory learning. Archaeological sites make traces of history in ones surrounding area accessible and tangible. Their authenticity fascinates and motivates children to look and ask questions. Archaeological sites make history tangible and active in the immediate vicinity. Nonetheless, archaeology is not mentioned in most of the curriculum even though it would be impossible to teach some of the historical topics without using archaeology particularly in topics predating written records. The book's description of activities to work with children makes this book potential for history and archaeology educators. A presentation of activities that can be done by children such as cut out characters, colouring pages, drawing, designing and describing parts, which students can perform individually in the classroom, or at museum space indicates how learning of archaeology can be approached for students of all ages and different backgrounds. Games such as the rubbish bag and rot or not are hands-on examples for all educators.

The last two chapters are about the application of historical knowledge in the protection of community heritage against destruction and assisting educators in finding resources for the classroom. The resistance of the citizens on mining projects in favour of community heritage presents an interesting case worth being in textbooks as suggested by the authors. It signals that the whole community will protect when the community is aware of history, archaeological, and cultural heritage, important historical sites. The last chapter of the book suggests English articles, books, and online resources on archaeological education. These books can help history teachers and students/ future teachers to successfully integrate archaeology in the teaching of history in primary and secondary school. The last chapter is a bit disappointing as it only gives the outline. For areas that access to other resources would be challenging, giving out a synopsis would have helped rather than the list alone. Given the list of the material mentioned in the last chapter alone, it partly indicates that to provide that annotated list and do justice to it, the chapter would have been a stand- alone manual with a synopsis of the material. That way, educators who are

Occasionally the SASHT Executive requests that the SASHT constitution is displayed in an Yesterday&Today edition to inform and/or update their members. Members are invited to request a review of any section of the SASHT constitution at an SASHT General Meeting. Prior consent of a section review must be received in written form by the Secretariat of the SASHT or the Chairperson/vice Chairperson of the SASHT (see communication details in the SASHT AGM-minute)



SASHT Constitution

The South African Society for History Teaching (SASHT)

(An Association of History Educators, Organisations, Publishers and People interested in History Teaching as well as the educational dissemination of historical research and knowledge)

1. CONSTITUTION

1.1 There shall be constituted a body known as the SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY FOR HISTORY TEACHING (SASHT). The provisions herein contained shall be known as the Constitution of the Society, which provisions may be altered by a majority of those members present at a general meeting of members, considering that:

1.1.1 the precise terms of any proposed alteration shall be set out in a notice prior to convening the meeting and/or Circulated to members via electronic medium at least a month before the meeting;

1.1.22 the purpose and objects of the Society shall not be altered without the consent of 66% of the members (via electronic medium and formally communicated/confirmed at the AGM that follows the approved/disapproved alteration.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Society (since date of founding in 1986) shall be to assist its members in every possible way and in particular:

2.1 To improve the contact between educators of History training at tertiary level and teachers in the broad educational field.

2.2 To renew a training in the didactics of History education.

2.3 To utilise the expertise of educators teaching History to assist with the training of future History teachers.

2.4 To continuously debate the content of basic and advanced educational programmes in the training of History educators with the intention to continue to improve quality.

2.5 To make history educators and student teachers aware of the relationship between History as an academic discipline and the didactics and teaching of History at school level in order to keep abreast with educational development and academic debates.

2.6. To encourage educators of History to strive towards achieving and sustaining high academic standards in the teaching methodology and in the general knowledge of History as a discipline.

2.7 To make educators of History and student teachers in History aware of the relevance or “value” of History for communities and the nation at large.

2.8 To explore, if the SASHT grows in membership, the idea of identifying and organising committees that can explore and develop certain fields in History to benefit all the educators of History in South Africa.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Membership shall consist of three types:

3.1.1 Individual membership (History educators or other academically-focused members from institutions) who are fully paid up members of the Society (Annual fees will be determined by the Executive each year and communicated timeously to members and potential members). The individual members representing an educational, institution will be eligible to vote or serve on the SASHT Executive and any committees/portfolios, and will receive electronic correspondence as well as a copy (twice annually) of the peer reviewed and DHET-indexed reviewed SASHT- connected Journal, *Yesterday&Today*.

3.1.2 Group membership (schools, academic institutions, private organisations & publishers): Will pay an annual membership fee determined by the Executive Committee on a yearly basis which will include a membership provision of more than one individual. These members will be eligible to vote but not all be eligible to serve on the committees. Electronic correspondence will be received as well as a copy (twice annually) of the SASHT-connected *Yesterday&Today* Journal obtained.

3.1.3 Individual membership outside the borders of South Africa: Will pay the annual fee as determined by the Executive Committee in Rand or in another currency as indicated on the SASHT membership form.

The individual members outside the borders of South Africa will be eligible to vote but not serve on the Executive Committee (these members could serve on other commit-

tees as occasionally identified, as well as on the *Yesterday&Today* editorial board) and will receive electronic correspondence as well as a copy (twice annually) of the SASHT-connected Journal, *Yesterday&Today*.

3.2 The following persons are eligible as members of the Society:

3.2.1 any History educator/organisation/publisher who subscribes to the objectives of the Society; and

3.2.2 is approved by the Executive Committee as a member.

3.3 Any member may resign by notice to the chairperson, the vice chairperson or the secretariat/treasurer.

3.4 Membership will be held confidential, and it is up to individual members to disclose his or her membership to the general public.

4. MANAGEMENT

4.1 The interests of the Society shall be managed by at least a ten-member Executive Committee consisting of a chairperson, a vice chairperson (when required), a secretariat and a treasurer (this position can also be combined into a secretary-treasurer position) and six to seven additional members as portfolio members and/or regional representatives. These members in the leading position of the SASHT shall hold the respective positions for a maximum of three years, after which they may be re-elected at an annual general meeting (usually to be held in September-October). Two additional members (the guest hosting a conference during the following year and a History educator abroad) may be nominated.

The temporary Executive member hosting the next conference may be nominated fully on the Executive as well, but if not he/she only has a temporary executive position to smooth the conference organization process with efficient communication.

4.2 An election of new Executive Committee members for the SASHT Executive during every third Annual General SASHT meeting should be conducted by one of the SASHT members or an executive member who has been nominated to undertake the task (and not the current chairperson or vice chairperson).

4.3 A process of nomination and election becomes necessary if Executive Committee members have served a three-year term. Both new nominees and retiring committee members are eligible for re-nominating in a re-election. Electing the new SASHT Executive of 10 members through Internet will be conducted at least two weeks prior to an annual SASHT conference. The secretariat manages the term of office of the SASHT Executive, sends out notifications to retiring/re-election status members and invites new nominations, to be done formally and on a standard SASHT nomination form.

4.4 Only fully paid-up members of the SASHT (and preferably only one member per institution in the Society having served in the Society for at least one year) are eligible for election as Executive Committee members. A nominator of a nominee and the seconder (inclusive of the nominee) must all be paid-up members of the SASHT.

The newly elected SASHT Executive from the nominations received will be formally revealed during an annual AGM meeting of the SASHT.

From the ten nominees, fully elected by secret vote and accepted, the positions of chairperson and vice chairperson should be voted for by the newly elected SASHT Executive Committee. This voting process will normally be done after the AGM meeting in the year of election.

4.5 The SASHT Executive Committee may co-opt a member to the Committee in the event of a vacancy occurring for the remaining period of the term of office of the person who vacated the position OR the opening of a vacancy due to any other reason and with the consent of the rest of the SASHT Executive.

4.6 The Executive Committee of the Society may appoint sub-committees as it deems fit.

4.7 Each sub-committee or portfolio of the Executive Committee shall be chaired by a committee member and may consist of so many members as the committee may decide from time to time.

4.8 A sub-committee may co-opt any SASHT member to such sub-committee or portfolio.

5. MEETINGS

5.1 Executive Committee Meetings

5.1.1 Committee meetings shall be convened by the secretariat/secretary-treasurer on the instructions of the chairperson or vice-chairperson or when four committee members jointly and in writing apply for such a meeting to be convened. Three committee members shall form a quorum. Most of the correspondence will be done via e-mail.

5.1.2 SASHT Executive Committee meetings will take place BEFORE an annual SASHT conference and AFTER the conference.

5.1.3 Committee decisions shall take place by voting. In the event of the voting being equal, the chairperson shall have a casting vote.

5.1.4 Should a committee member absent himself from two successive committee meetings without valid reason and/or not replying twice on e-mail requests in decision making, he/she shall forfeit his/her committee membership.

5.2 General Meetings

5.2.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Society shall take place during the annual SASHT Conference.

5.2.2 A special general meeting may be convened by the Executive Committee upon the receipt of a signed, written request of at least ten registered members of the Society which request must be accompanied by a full motivation for requesting such a meeting.

5.3 The Executive Committee may call a general meeting as it deems fit.

5.4 The following procedures shall apply to all general meetings:

5.4.1 A minimum of ten members will form a quorum. In the absence of such a quorum, the members present may adjourn the meeting for a period of seven days where the members present at the adjourned date will automatically constitute a quorum.

5.4.2 Decisions shall be taken by a majority vote.

5.5 Finances

5.5.1 All the income of the Society shall be deposited in an account at a bank and/or other approved financial institution. One to two members, consisting of either the chairperson and/or the vice-chairperson and/or the secretary-treasurer if so arranged, shall be empowered to withdraw and deposit funds for the use of/on behalf of the Society.

5.5.2 Any amount that must be withdrawn, and exceeds the amount of R3 000 should beforehand be properly communicated among the two to three empowered Executive members (namely the chairperson, the vice chairperson and, if a position of treasurer exists, the treasurer). All these aforesaid empowered executive members should be able to exercise their signing right (to withdraw and deposit funds) on behalf of the SASHT in the absence of a/the treasurer, but with the consent and approval of the core SASHT Executive.

5.5.3 Proper accounts shall be kept of all finances of the Society as set out in the regulations published in terms of the Fundraising Act, 1978.

5.5.4 A financial report shall be produced by the Executive or Secretary-treasurer (the latter if appointed as such) at the annual general meeting or upon request from the SASHT Executive Committee. Otherwise a full general account at least should be provided in the Chairperson's report.

5.5.5 Financial contributions will be collected from all persons and/or organisations, worldwide, which support the objectives of the Society.

5.5.6 Guest SASHT conference organiser(s)/Society member involved, shall be accountable for transferring the remaining income obtained from organising an annual conference into the SASHT bank account, as part of the effort to strengthen the SASHT's financial capacity. Any contributions, towards the covering of conference expenses by the Society are on a strictly voluntary basis.

6. RIGHT TO VOTE

Each individual subscribed member (and one member of a subscribed institution) has one vote at any meeting.

7. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Any amendment to this Constitution shall only be effected by a two-thirds majority decision at a general meeting or via proper E-mail communication prior to a general meeting; or a special general meeting, and further provided that seven days' prior notice was given of the proposed amendment.

Notice is to be given in the same manner as a notice for a general meeting.

8. DISSOLUTION

8.1 The Society may dissolve, or merge, with any other association with a similar purpose and objectives in each case only:

8.1.1 On a resolution passed by the majority of members present at a duly constituted general or special general meeting of members; or

8.1.2 On an application to a court of law by any member on the ground that the Society has become dormant or is unable to fulfil its purpose and objectives,

8.1.3 On a merger, the assets of the Society shall accrue to the Society/Association with which the merger is affected.

8.1.4 On dissolution, the assets of the Society shall be realised by a liquidator appointed by the general meeting or the court, as the case may be, and the proceeds shall be distributed equally amongst such Societies/Associations with similar objectives as may be nominated by the last Executive Committee of the Society.

9. MISCELLANEOUS

9.1 Every Executive member/ordinary member of the Society shall be entitled at all reasonable times to inspect all books of account and other documents of the Society which the custodian thereof shall accordingly be obliged to produce.

The *Yesterday & Today* (Y&T) Journal for History Teaching in South Africa and abroad

Editorial policy

1. Y&T is a scholarly, peer-reviewed journal (accredited since the beginning of 2012).
2. The Y&T journal is a journal for research in especially the fields of History teaching and History discipline research to improve not only the teaching, but also the knowledge dissemination of History, History of Education and History in Education. The Journal is currently editorially managed by the University of Pretoria and published under the auspices of the South African Society for History Teaching (SASHT).
3. Contributions may be either in the humanities (historically based theoretical discourses), or from education (best practice workshops, or focused content research with a fundamental theoretical basis reflecting History or other histories). Articles, in which interdisciplinary collaborations between the humanities and education are explored, are also welcome.
4. Regional content mostly considers quantitative and qualitative research in Southern Africa, but international contributions, that apply to History teaching and research in general, are equally welcome.
5. Authors may submit individual contributions or contributions created in teams.
6. All manuscripts are subjected to a double-blinded review process.
7. The language of the journal is English. However, abstracts may be in any of the 11 official languages of South Africa.
8. Contributions must be accompanied by an abstract of not more than 250 words.
9. The titles of articles should preferably not exceed 20 words.
10. The names of authors and their full institutional affiliations/addresses must accompany all contributions. Authors also have to enclose their telephone and E-mail and postal addresses and orchid numbers.
11. The Harvard or the Footnote methods of reference may be used (see the last pages of the journal for the reference guidelines for more detail on the Harvard and Footnote reference methods). The authors' choice of which reference method will be respected by the editorial management. References must be clear, lucid and comprehensible for a general academic audience of readers. Once an author has made a choice of reference method, the Y&T guidelines for either the Harvard reference method or the Footnote reference method must be scrupulously followed. The guidelines for referencing according to the Harvard method are provided on the

- last pages of the journal. The most recent Yesterday&Today journal articles could also serve as guideline.
12. Editorial material with images (illustrations, photographs, tables and graphs) is permissible. The images should, however, be of a high-density quality (high resolution, minimum of 200dpi). The source references should also be included. Large files should be posted in separate E-mail attachments, and appropriately numbered in sequence.
 13. Articles should be submitted to the editor (Professor Johan Wassermann) electronically at: Johan.wassermann@up.ac.za Notification of the receipt of the documents will be done within 72 hours.
 14. The text format must be in 12pt font, Times New Roman and in 1.5 spacing. The text should be in Microsoft Word format.
 15. The length of articles should preferably not exceed 8 000 words.
 16. Articles which have been published previously, or which are under consideration for publication elsewhere, may not be submitted to the Yesterday&Today journal. Copies of the Journal is also electronically available on the SASHT website at www.sashtw.org.za and on the Scielo platform at www.scielo.org.za
 17. For scientific research articles, page fees of R220.00 per page (for 10 pages R2 200) will be charged from the South African author's university. However, in the end it remains the responsibility of the author to ensure that these fees are paid.
 18. The journal utilizes the Portico digital preservation system in order to create permanent archives of the journal for purpose of preservation and restoration.
 19. Yesterday&Today is an Open Access journal which means that all content is freely available without charge to the user or his/her institution. Users are allowed to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of the articles, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without asking prior permission from the publisher or the author. This is in accordance with the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) definition of Open Access.
 20. The journal has a registered deposit policy with SHERPA RoMEO. This policy indicates to institutions whether they are allowed to upload a duplicate copy of an article by an author affiliated with the home institution, into their institutional repository (Green Open Access). The following link to SHERPA RoMEO can be followed: <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/issn/0038-2353/>.
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Yesterday & Today

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2. **Font size in body text:** 12pt.
3. **Author's details: ONLY provide the following:** Title, Campus & University full address, e-mail address, orchid number.

Title: 10pt, regular font; **Campus & University:** 10pt, italics; and E-mail address: 10pt, regular font. (Consult previous articles published in the Y&T journal as an example or as a practical guideline).

Example: Pieter van Rensburg, *Vaal Triangle Campus, North-West University*, p.vanrensburg@gmail.com.
4. **Abstract:** The abstract should be placed on the first page (where the title heading and author's particulars appear). The prescribed length is between a half and three quarters of a page.

The abstract body: Regular font, 10pt.

The heading of the *Abstract*: Bold, italics, 12pt.
5. **Keywords:** The keywords should be placed on the first page below the abstract.

The word '**Keywords**': 10pt, bold, underline.

Each keyword must start with a capital letter and end with a semi-colon (;).
Example: Meters; People; etc. (A minimum of six key words is required).
6. **Heading of article:** 14pt, bold.
7. **Main headings in article:** 'Introduction' – 12pt, bold.
8. **Sub-headings in article:** '*History research*' – 12pt, bold, italics.
9. **Third level sub-headings:** '**History research**': – 11pt, bold, underline.
10. **Footnotes:** 8pt, regular font; BUT note that the footnote numbers in the article text should be 12pt.

The initials in a person's name (in footnote text) should be without any full stops. **Example:** LC du Plessis and NOT L.C. du Plessis.
11. **Body text:** Names without punctuation in the text. **Example:** "HL le Roux said" and NOT "H.L. le Roux said".

12. **Page numbering:** Page numbering in the footnote reference text should be indicated as follows:

Example: p.space23 – p. 23. / pp. 23-29.

13. **Any lists** in the body text should be 11pt, and in bullet format.
14. **Quotes from sources in the body text** must be used sparingly. If used, it must be indented and in italics (10pt). Quotes less than one line in a paragraph can be incorporated as part of a paragraph, but within inverted commas; and **NOT** in italics. Example: An owner close to the town stated that: “the pollution history of the river is a muddy business”.
15. Quotes (**as part of the body text**) must be in double inverted commas: “...and she” and *NOT* ‘...and she’.
16. **Images: Illustrations, pictures, photographs and figures:** Submit all pictures for an article in jpeg, tiff or pdf format in a separate folder, and indicate where the pictures should be placed in the manuscript’s body text. All visuals are referred to as Images.

Example: **Image 1: ‘Image title’** (regular font, 10pt) in the body text.

Sources of all images should also be included after the ‘Image title’.

Example: **Source: ‘The source’** (regular font, 9 pt). Remember to save and name pictures in the separate folder accordingly.

Important note: All the images should be of good quality (a minimum resolution of 200dpi is required; if the image is not scanned).

17. Punctuation marks should be placed in front of the **footnote numbers** in the text. Example: the end.¹ **NOT** ...the end¹.
18. **Single and left spacing** between the sentences in the footnote.
19. **Dates:** All dates in footnotes should be written out in full. Example: **23 December 2010; NOT 23/12/2010** [For additional guidelines see the **Yesterday & Today Reference guidelines**].
20. Language setting in Microsoft Word as **English (South Africa); do this before starting with the word processing of the article.** Go to ‘Review’, ‘Set Language’ and select ‘English (SouthAfrica)’.

The footnote or Harvard reference methods – some guidelines

Both the footnote reference method and the Harvard reference method are accepted for articles in *Yesterday & Today*. See some guidelines below:

The footnote reference method

Footnote references should be placed at the bottom of each page. Footnotes should be numbered sequentially throughout the article and starting with 1. Archival sources/published works/authors referred to in the text should be cited in full in the first footnote of each new reference. Thereafter it can be reduced to a shorter footnote reference. Do not refer to the exact same source and page numbers in footnotes that follow each other.

The use of the Latin word “Ibid” is **not** allowed. Rather refer to the actual reference again (or in its shortened version) on the rest of a page(s) in the footnote section.

The titles of books, articles, chapters, theses, dissertations and papers/manuscripts should NOT be capitalised at random. Only the names of people and places (and in some instances specific historic events) are capitalised. For example:

P Erasmus, “The ‘lost’ South African tribe – rebirth of the Koranna in the Free State”, *New Contree*, 50, November 2005, p. 77;

NOT

P Erasmus, “The ‘Lost’ South African Tribe – Rebirth Of The Koranna In The Free State”, *New Contree*, 50, November 2005, p. 77.

PLEASE NOTE: Referencing journal titles imply that every word of the journal must start with a capital letter, example: *Yesterday&Today Journal*.

Examples of an article in a journal

R Siebörger, Incorporating human rights into the teaching of History: Teaching materials, *Yesterday&Today*, 2, October 2008, pp. 1-14.

S Marks, “Khoisan resistance to the Dutch in the seventeenth and eighteen centuries”, *Journal of African History*, 3(1), 1972, p. 76.

Example of a shortened version of an article in a journal

From:

P Erasmus, “The ‘lost’ South African tribe – rebirth of the Koranna in the Free State”, *New Contree*, 50, November 2005, p. 77.

To:

P Erasmus, “The ‘lost’ South African tribe...”, *New Contree*, 50, November 2005, p. 77.

[Please note: ONLY the title of the article is shortened and not the finding place.]

Examples of a reference from a book

WF Lye & C Murray, *Transformations on the Highveld: The Tswana and the Southern Sotho* (Cape Town, David Phillip, 1980), pp. 7, 10.

JJ Buys, *Die oorsprong en migrasiebewegings van die Koranna en hulle rol in die Transgariëp tot 1870* (Universiteit van die Vrystaat, Bloemfontein, 1989), pp. 33-34.

[Please note: The reference variety to page numbers used.]

Example of a shortened version of a reference from a book

From:

JA Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins and the New Divinity Movement: Calvinism, the Congregational Ministry, and reform in New England between the Great Awakenings* (Washington, Christian University Press, 1981), p. 23.

To:

JA Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins and the New Divinity Movement...*, p. 23.

Example of a reference from a chapter in a book

S Brown, “Diplomacy by other means: SWAPO’s liberation war”, C Leys, JS Saul et.al, *Namibia’s liberation struggle: The two-edged sword* (London, Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 19-39.

Shortened version:

S Brown, “Diplomacy by other means...”, C Leys, JS Saul et.al, *Namibia’s liberation struggle...*, pp. 19-39.

Example of a reference from an unpublished dissertation/thesis

MJ Dhlamini, “The relationship between the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress, 1959-1990” (Ph.D, NWU, 2006), pp. 4, 8, 11.

Examples of a reference from a newspaper

P Coetzee, “Voëlvlugblik ATKV 75 op ons blink geskiedenis”, *Die Transvaler*, 6 Januarie 2006, p. 8.

or

Zululand Times, 19 July 1923.

Archival references:

- **Interview(s)**

Provide at least key details such as: Name of interviewee and profession; the interviewer and profession and date of interview

- **Example of interview reference**

K Rasool (Personal Collection), interview, K Kotzé (CEO, Goldfields, Johannesburg Head Office)/E Schutte (Researcher, NWU, School of Basic Science), 12 March 2006.

- **Example of shortened interview reference** (after it has been used once in article)

K Rasool (Personal Collection), interview, K. Kotzé/E Schutte , 12 March 2006.

- **Example of an Electronic Mail - document or letter**

E-mail: W Pepler (Bigenafrika, Pretoria)/E van Eeden (Researcher), 22 October 2006.

- **National archives** (or any other archive)

National Archive (NA), Pretoria, Department of Education (DoE), Vol.10, Reference 8/1/3/452: Letter, K Lewis (Director General) / P Dlamini (Teacher, Springs College), 12 June 1960.

[Please note: After the first reference to the National Archives or Source Group for example, it can be abbreviated to e.g. NA or DE.]

A source accessed on the Internet

A Dissel, “Tracking transformation in South African prisons”, Track Two, 11(2), April 2002 (available at <http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/11-2transformation.html>, as accessed on 14 Jan. 2003), pp. 1-3.

A source from conference proceedings

First reference to the source:

D Dollar, “Asian century or multi-polar century?” (Paper, Global Development Network Annual Conference, Beijing, January 2007), p. 7.

B Sautmann, “The forest for the trees: Trade investment and the China-in-Africa discourse” (Paper, Public Seminar: China in Africa: Race, relations and reflections, Centre for Sociological Research, University of Johannesburg, 28 July 2007), p. 7.

Shortened version:

D Dollar, “Asian century...” (Paper, GDN Conference, 2007), p. 7.

B Sautmann, “The forest for the trees: ...” (Paper, Public Seminar: China in Africa: ..., University of Johannesburg [or UJ]), p. 7.

GENERAL:

Illustrations

The appropriate positioning of the image should be indicated in the text. Original copies should be clearly identified on the back. High quality scanned versions are always welcome.

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The Harvard reference method

References in the text

References are cited in the text by the author'(s) surname(s) and the year of publication in brackets, separated by a comma: e.g. (Weedon, 1977:13).

If several articles by the same author and from the same year are cited, the letters a, b, c, etc. should be added after the year of publication: e.g. (Fardon, 2007a:23).

Page references in the text should follow a colon after the date: e.g. (Bazalgette, 1992:209-214).

In works by three or more authors the surnames of all authors should be given in the first reference to such a work. In subsequent references to this work, only the name of the first author is given, followed by the abbreviation *et al.*: e.g. (Ottaro *et al.*, 2005:34).

If reference is made to an anonymous item in a newspaper, the name of the newspaper is given in brackets: e.g. (The Citizen, 2010).

For personal communications (oral or written) identify the person and indicate in brackets that it is a personal communication: e.g. (B Brown, pers. comm.).

Ensure that dates, spelling and titles used in the text are accurate and consistent with those listed in the references.

List all references chronologically and then alphabetically: e.g. (Scott 2003; Muller 2006; Meyer 2007).

List of references

Only sources cited in the text are listed, in alphabetical order, under References.

Bibliographic information should be in the language of the source document, not in the language of the article.

References should be presented as indicated in the following examples. See the required punctuation.

• Journal articles

Surname(s) and initials of author(s), year of publication, title of article, unabbreviated title of journal, volume, issue number in brackets and page numbers: e.g. Shepherd, R 1992. Elementary media education. The perfect curriculum. *English Quarterly*, 25(2):35-38.

• **Books**

Surname(s) and initials of author(s) or editor(s), year of publication, title of book, volume, edition, place of publication and publisher: e.g. Mouton, J 2001. *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: JL van Schaik.

• **Chapters in books**

Surname(s) and initials of author(s), year of publication, title of chapter, editor(s), title of book, place of publication and publisher: e.g. Masterman, L 1992. The case of television studies. In: M Alvarado & O Boyd-Barrett (eds.). *Media education: an introduction*. London: British Film Institute.

• **Unpublished theses or dissertations**

Fardon, JVV 2007. Gender in history teaching resources in South African public school. Unpublished DEd thesis. Pretoria: Unisa.

• **Anonymous newspaper references**

Daily Mail 2006. World Teachers' Day, 24 April.

• **Electronic references**

Published under author's name:

Marshall, J 2003. Why Johnny can't teach. Reason, December. Available at <http://www.reason.com/news/show/29399.html>. Accessed on 10 August 2010.

Website references: No author:

These references are not archival, and subject to change in any way and at any time. If it is essential to present them, they should be included in a numbered endnote and not in the reference list.

• **Personal communications**

Normally personal communications should always be recorded and retrievable. It should be cited as follows:

Personal interview, K Kombuis (Journalist-singer)/S van der Merwe (Researcher), 2 October 2010.

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