

From the Editor

Historia, 66, 1, 2021 comes to you as South Africa is still in the grips of the Covid-19 pandemic. At the time of writing this Editorial (April) the country remains under a State of Disaster and the estimated number of “excess deaths” stands around 140 000 lives lost: the roll-out of vaccines on a significance scale has yet to begin. These are not usual times. The extended closures of, or tightly restricted access to, archives, libraries, research sites, and offices, and the enormous strains on lecturers, teachers, and families over the course of the last year have greatly constrained the capacity of many of us to research and write. Accordingly, late in 2020, we reluctantly decided to skip the November issue of *Historia* 65, and to put our energies into two strong issues for 2021. This has been condoned by HASA, the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSaf), and the Department of Higher Education and Training.

Work for *Historia* has continued, however, and the editorial team is growing: joining Dr Chet Fransch as co-editor is Dr Suryakanthie Chetty, also of the Department of History at Stellenbosch. From later this year, Dr Clement Masakure of the University of the Free State will come on board as a third co-editor. Dr Chris Holdridge of North-West University has taken over from his colleague, Charmaine Hlongwane as review editor; and Dr Jennifer Upton is our new co-ordinating editor. More changes are underway, news of which will be published in our next issue.

This issue inaugurates “Perspectives”, a new forum which offers a place for reflection, provocation, is a teaching point, a conversation, and an opportunity for debate. Our first is titled “Making South African Historians Count”, a piece written by Stellenbosch economist Professor Johan Fourie in which he calls historians to embrace “big data” and digital history. We invited four historians to respond and they do so thoughtfully and robustly: the historians are Faeza Ballim, Gerald Groenewald, Tinashe Nyamunda, and Jennifer Upton.

If access to digitised sources has gained greater importance in recent times, so too, historians are focusing increasingly on visual images, and accordingly we receive more frequent requests to reproduce illustrations, maps and other graphics. These are trickier to format and balance in the layout: they also, understandably, cost more to print. It is with reluctance, then, that we are raising the page proof charges to R150 per regular page and R180 per page printed with colour. For authors affiliated to South African tertiary institutions, these fees are usually covered by the institution. In turn, your article will appear in hard copy for *Historia* subscribers and HASA members (subscription information is included at the end of this issue), and be available as a free download via SciELO:

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