

EDITORIAL

The Editorial Board is excited and pleased to announce that *Yesterday&Today* is making an increasing impact nationally and internationally. The table below indicates the number of views the journal has enjoyed in the eight leading countries in the world from 2015-2019. It is the vision of *Yesterday&Today* to stay devoted to cutting-edge research and to inspire, promote and support high quality scholarly work in the reporting of History education matters.

Table 1: Statistics of leading countries' views in September of each year, 2015-2019

Country	2015	2016	2017	2018
Unites States	257	732	955	1018
South Africa	189	374	500	684
Russia	96	175	183	183
Germany	113	169	177	186
China	48	93	97	104
France	53	93	114	130
United Kingdom	45	68	87	90
Canada	16	23	24	25
Total	817	1727	2137	2420

In this last issue of *Yesterday&Today* for 2018 readers can look forward to a variety of outstanding and well-argued research articles. They cover topics that reflect on the recommendations made by the Ministerial Task Team (MTT) for History to become a compulsory school subject, historical empathy as a reflection of historical thinking, controversial issues in the History classroom, the Cameroonian History curriculum since independence in 1961, the utilisation of technology (a Mobile Phone Forum and Virtual Reality-goggles) in the teaching and learning of History, thoughts on developing and designing a decolonised sport history curriculum in South Africa, and, in conclusion History in textbooks of Xhosa schools, 1850's-1950's.

Reville Nussey kicks off with the article, *Difficult relationships: How will compulsory school history and an Ubuntu-based curriculum help nation-building*

in South Africa? She reflects on the MTT's recommendations and supports the emphasis that it places on a multiple perspective approach in the teaching and learning of history, while favouring the use of an African nationalist paradigm, underscored by the framework of Ubuntu, to assist in nation-building. The article attempts to find answers to the following questions: Will the compulsory study of history necessarily change social relationships in the classroom and help with nation-building? What role could Ubuntu play in this process? What are the implications for the development of in-service history teachers if history is made a compulsory subject? The findings of the article are based on a research project spanning three years and conducted at three primary schools in Johannesburg. Nussey argues that history as a compulsory subject will not necessarily act as a cure for South Africa's social ills. She believes that further research should be undertaken for a reconciliation pedagogy that is informed by a reconstituted notion of Ubuntu. Only then will it assist teachers during in-service teacher workshops to reflect and to be challenged on their assumptions about "the other".

In their article, entitled *Reflecting the 2018 History Ministerial Task Team Report on compulsory History in South Africa*, Elize van Eeden and Pieter Warnich comment specifically on the Team's research regarding compulsory history in Africa and abroad, as indicated in the first 44 pages of the report. By utilising the historical method, the aim was to establish whether the MTT's report can be viewed as a reliable and valid document on which any future informed decisions and recommendations can be made as to whether History education can become a compulsory subject. The authors found that the indicated section of the report lacks quality in-depth research, consequently it shares no sound and constructive research to serve as a descriptive indicator to enable informed decisions to be reached on whether History education in South African schools should indeed become compulsory up to Grade 12 level. Van Eeden and Warnich further argue that the members of the MTT lack inclusivity of expertise, especially in the field of History education. In conclusion, the authors are of opinion that the idea of "Africanisation" is essentially a contested concept that requires a clearer conceptualisation before it can be applied and implemented in a future revised curriculum.

Daniel Ramoroko and Alta Engelbrecht, in *The dialectics of historical empathy as a reflection of historical thinking in South African classrooms*, relate how, through a small-scale study, they explored how two Grade 12 History teachers understand the concept of historical empathy and how it

can be utilised to engage learners in historical thinking. By making use of the Vietnam War (1954-1975) topic in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), they qualitatively gathered the research data by observing and interviewing the two participants after cultivating tenets of historical empathy in their classes. Utilising Barton and Levstik's dual theoretical framework design in the interpretation of the data, the authors found that the participants' conceptions of historical empathy were influenced by their selection of content, sources and teaching methodology. The findings further showed that both participants displayed the affective domain in their conceptions of historical empathy, while only one incorporated elements of the cognitive domain by demonstrating historical contextualisation as well as different historical perspectives.

In *Confronting controversial issues in History classrooms: An analysis of pre-service high school teachers' experiences in post-apartheid South Africa*, Johan Wassermann and Denise Bentreovato introduce us to an empirical study involving 75 high school trainee teachers in their final year. The study reports on their experiences and understandings of the teaching of controversial and sensitive issues in history during their practical teaching period at schools. Drawing their data from a collection of reflective reports, Wassermann and Bentreovato found that the student teachers' experiences varied greatly and were informed by a multitude of factors. These included, amongst others, the institutional culture of the schools where they were placed, their professional relationships with their mentor teachers and their engagement with learners, policy documents and teaching material.

In the first of two contributions from a Sub-Saharan African country, Roland Ndille, in *Our schools our identity: Efforts and challenges in the transformation of the History curriculum in the Anglophone subsystem of education in Cameroon since 1961*, focuses on the extent to which colonial curriculum reform has been achieved since independence. The article proceeds from the basis that the colonial curriculum engrained coloniality and therefore did not meet the realities of the "new" country, therefore necessitating reform in the teaching and learning of local and national contents. By utilising the critical decolonial perspective and the living theory methodology, Ndille is able to determine the extent of postcolonial history curriculum reform. He concludes by postulating that despite efforts made, they were not so significant as to make the conclusion possible that reform towards a predominantly local/national contents in history as indicated in policy documents since 1961 has been

achieved. He identifies certain challenges and believes that, if addressed properly and his recommendations implemented, the situation can improve.

In their article, entitled *The utilisation of a Mobile Phone Forum on the Winksite application in the teaching and learning of History: A case study of pre-service teachers at Makerere University*, Dorothy Sebbowa and Paul Muyinda focus on the experiences of education students in Uganda after engaging with this technology in their History education courses. A qualitative research design was followed, sampling 15 pre-services teachers. By utilising the Critical Discourse Analysis, the research data showed that the Mobile Phone Forum does enhance dialogical conversations between lecturers-students and students-students and consequently promotes a collaborative teaching and learning environment where opportunities exist to ask for information and where work can be monitored and ideas evaluated. The data further revealed the loss of direction and guidance during online and offline pedagogical “spaces” to be a significant challenge. This implies that if mobile phone forum technologies are to be fully integrated with History education at Higher Education Institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa, technical support is of the utmost importance.

In his pioneering work, entitled *Shaping a decolonised sport history curriculum through the national question*, Francois Cleophas focuses on the decolonisation of sport history at a conceptual curriculum level through the lenses of the National Question. Not many scholarly works on this topic have appeared in the past and Cleophas claims that to date the very important question that has been largely ignored by sport historians in South Africa is: How does decolonisation thinking impact on a sport history curriculum at an institution of higher learning in South Africa? He concludes that a decolonised sport history curriculum at institutions of higher learning will always display the inclination to foreground a particular ideologically-based process that emanates from the inherited traditions of the liberation movement. Cleophas calls for a recontextualised sport history curriculum that focuses on the non-racial tradition. However, he believes that university curriculum planners and other role players in sport history should take ownership by reinforcing a 21st century decolonised sport history curriculum with decolonial content. (Cleophas is also the editor of the book: *Exploring decolonising themes in SA Sport History: Issues and Challenges*, that was published this year. (See the book reviews in this edition).

In his article *History in popular literature and textbooks for Xhosa schools, 1850-1950s*, Peter Kallaway informs the reader that the teaching of history in Xhosa schools is a topic that has been surprisingly neglected. With his in-depth research, Kallaway is undoubtedly making a huge contribution to the South African historiography in all its diversity by showing the input that local scholars made in school textbooks of the era in under discussion. Special reference is made to the impact of the *Stewart Xhosa Readers*, published by Lovedale Press. Kallaway argues that his research will add to the potential challenge of understanding identity and patriotism in times past and in the present. In conclusion he offers suggestions for future research that he believes might be able to inform contemporary debates.

In his article in the hands-on section, entitled *The possibilities of Virtual Reality-goggles within the teaching and learning of History*, Juan-Carlo Homan encourages History educators to experiment more with alternative forms of technology in order to move away from the traditional method of chalk and talk History instruction. He introduces Virtual Reality as a computer-simulated environment (cyberspace/augmented reality) with goggles included, as a pedagogy tool that can be used in the History classroom. Homan provides five steps to direct the process of its incorporation. He further expands on the possibilities and advantages of this technology but warns that it is an expensive teaching aid. For this reason he provides a step-by-step illustration with instructions that History educators can follow on how to make low-cost VR-Goggles.

Also included in this issue are three interesting and thought-provoking book reviews with a South African context. The book reviews were written by Vusumuzi Mavimbela (*From protest to challenge: A documentary of African politics in South Africa, 1882-1990. Volume 4, Political profiles, 1882-1990*), Maresole Christina Kgari-Masondo (*The Black Consciousness reader*) and Leepile Motlhaolwa (*Exploring decolonising themes in SA Sport History: Issues and Challenges*). The reader will also find a first-hand report on the activities of the 2018 SASHT Conference which was held in Mowbray, Cape Town.

The Editorial Board once again extends an open invitation to the entire History community to submit articles for possible future publication in our July and December 2019 editions.

