Historical Encounters

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Postcolonial history education: Issues, tensions and opportunities

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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces a journal special issue devoted to an exploration of post-colonial history education with contributions from Ghana, Uganda, New Zealand, Canada, Botswana, Nigeria, Cyprus, Lebanon and London. It provides an overview of key issues, tensions and opportunities around decolonising the history curriculum. Relevant contexts such as the 'History Wars', subaltern studies, the conception of decolonising the mind and the possibilities of de-colonising pedagogies are explored. History education lenses around critical historical literacy, historical consciousness, multidimensional identities and multi-perspectivity are brought to bear upon the question of re-thinking forms of postcolonial history education. Specific political circumstances inform the nature of history education in every national jurisdiction; here the contemporary Black Lives Matter campaign, the fallout from the mismanagement of the fate of the 'Windrush' settlers in the UK and the recent focus of protestors globally upon colonial oppressors memorialised in statues frame the authors' reflections. However, echoing the optimism of most of the special issue contributions, opportunities to build bridges between divided communities, open up more inclusive history curricula to student voices and nuance and complicate homogeneous national narratives are identified and recommended.

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Introduction

How are young people taught about colonisation and experiences of empire? High quality history education which explores prevailing mythologies about the past, while nurturing the qualities of healthy scepticism in relation to the claims of contemporary political leaders, is a compelling civic necessity. Most post-colonial and settler nations have experienced considerable political and professional debates over representations of the national past in recent years, leading to an increasing scholarly focus on history education (see, for example, Bentrovato, Korostelina & Schulze, 2016; Carretero, Berger & Grever, 2017; Chong et al, 2016; Popp, Gorbahn & Grindel, 2019). This can include a revisionist spotlight on what is studied but also a re-thinking of how history is studied and the ultimate purposes of history education. This edition of the *Historical Encounters Journal* [HEJ] brings together case studies of history education practice from around the world which delineate a picture of history educators grappling in different ways with complexity, change, student identities, power, professional practice and the implications of a decolonised history curriculum – or at least an increasing consciousness of the implications of postcolonial history teaching practices.

The mediation of nations' official historical narratives, as engaged with by young people in schools, is highly political – something which is evident in all of the contributions in this special issue. Internationally, the writing of this introduction has coincided with the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and protests around memorialising statues devoted to individuals associated with the slave trade or colonial misdeeds. And in the United Kingdom there has been considerable fall-out from the exposure of the Windrush deportations (Gentleman, 2019)[1]. Funded research by universities (for example, Hall et al., 2014; TIDE Project, 2020) and by individual historians (e.g. Olusoga, 2016), often using the supportive medium of television, has revealed not only details about slavery, the slave trade and the colonial history of Caribbean jurisdictions, but also about the extent to which slave-owners were compensated when slavery was abolished. The challenges of existence between 'colony and metropole' have been confirmed (Cooper & Stoler, 1997; Hall, 2002).

In conceptualising this issue of the HEJ we hoped to explore the extent to which active and critical history teaching approaches are being employed in developing former colonies and settler nations and the extent to which classroom history is able to embrace contested narratives (cf. Clark, 2008; Taylor & Guyver, 2012). We shared some common research questions with contributors as prompts such as:

- What is learned about empire and decolonisation across former colonial states?

- To what extent have history curricula broadened in scope to accommodate indigenous voices, experiences and values and more pluralistic histories?

- What can be learned about national identity and citizenship from students and teachers' experiences of history education?

- How is history teaching changing in your context in response to post-colonial or decolonising imperatives?

We were also interested in what the policies of different jurisdictions and their school curricula leave out – what is not taught and learned as part of the history curriculum. We did not expect contributors to address all of the framing questions but the ones which most resonated in their own contexts. All of the contributors to this issue of HEJ see historical thinking skills and conceptual historical understanding as vital for young people's democratic citizenship, wherever they happen to be studying, enabling learners to deconstruct singular truths and stereotypical representations of the 'Other' (cf. Barton & Levstik, 2004; Lévesque, 2008; Seixas & Morton, 2013). Nevertheless, as the paper in this issue from New Brunswick demonstrates, even the recent orthodoxies of disciplinary history education are not beyond critique. Participation in more inclusive history lessons, sensitive to indigenous and minority perspectives, might be seen as a starting point in the process of helping young people to find a voice and be represented.

The empires forged by the Ottoman Turks, Britain and other European powers, inimical as they often were for the Indigenous peoples living within their territorial boundaries, provided a variety of contrasting historical contexts within which many contemporary global citizens' identities have been – and are being – forged. The idea of 'empire' operated at the levels of both concrete lived experience and narrative representation, meaning somewhat different things depending upon whether one is treating the legacies of the Ottoman, British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, or Dutch empires. Each had their own variants of what constituted 'civilising missions,' although in many cases the colonial relationship may have started for economic (trading) reasons. Each left behind different institutional, practical, cultural, and educational legacies, settler communities, or degrees of trauma as they retreated from empire.

In truth, history teachers globally – or the policy and curriculum-makers directing their practices – have not often delved too deeply into postcolonial theories and, in most parts of the world, efforts to decolonise school curricula are at a formative, emergent and/or contested stage. The term 'postcolonial' resists any attempt at a singular or definitive definition. New Zealand scholar Giselle Byrnes argued that:

> Postcolonialism does not simply signal an end to colonialism, but rather it suggests a critical engagement with colonisation … and seeks to undermine the structures, ideologies, and institutions that gave colonisation meaning. Postcolonialism thus engages with ideas of plurality and the co-existence of multiple discourses. (Byrnes, 2007)

Postcolonial theory seeks to explain such issues as privilege, domination, struggle and resistance. These ideas are "all fundamentally related to a critique of the relationship between knowledge and power and an understanding of how representations of the world in words, ideas, images and texts both create and reflect beliefs and produce actions" (Hickling-Hudson et al, 2004, p.2). The relationship between power and different representations of knowledge can be seen in some seminal postcolonial texts (for example, Bhabha, 1994; Said, 1978; Spivak, 1990). It is naturally often hard for teachers to translate these abstract ideas into purposeful historical learning activities to be undertaken by young people.

The critique of traditional history and history education from postcolonial perspectives often includes the ideas that:

- A de-mythicalisation of history (and history education) is required. Calls for curriculum renewal tend to gain traction as a natural upshot of obtaining independence from erstwhile colonial powers;

- There needs to be an acknowledgement of land or liberty taken from Indigenous peoples and support (drawing upon history) for processes of land hand backs (or appropriate compensation);

- Colonial languages have been privileged over local languages and writing privileged over orality;

- Insufficient voice has been given to Indigenous peoples, cultures and perspectives; and

- There is a need for histories which challenge hegemonic, top-down and nationalist discourses and complacent narratives of progress.

These critiques are radical and often represent a significant challenge to established curricula but they are starting to influence history education discourses and practices in some nations. Postcolonial theory can bring a sharp challenge to pragmatic empiricism (Hickling-Hudson, 2011). However, it is also the case that:

> The project of identifying the general discursive forces that held together the imperial enterprise and that operated wherever colonisation occurred is often in conflict with the need to provide detailed accounts of the material effect of those

discourses as they operated in different periods and different localities.
(Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2017, p. 172).

History education research is generally nationally focused (Levstik & Barton, 2008). This journal issue seeks to contribute to the promotion of global and comparative perspectives on decolonising narratives in history education in the context of former colonies, settler nations or nations still affected by the legacy of older empires (such as Cyprus and Lebanon explored in this issue). In order to respond to twenty-first century imperatives around inclusivity, human rights, and education for democratic citizenship, history education has to generate new ways of thinking and new modes of practice which respect the distinctive histories, contexts and conditions of postcolonial developing states as they re-frame and re-articulate their national identities.

History wars, History from below and postcolonial perspectives

From the nineteenth-century and through much of the twentieth-century one of the core purposes of history education in most nation states was as a unifying mechanism to prop up national identity and inculcate a common, shared national story. History has been taught in national school systems in part for socialising purposes and so as to make students love their country (Nussbaum & Cohen, 2002) and the historical narrative to imbibe has tended to be based upon the construct of an 'imagined' homogeneous nation (Anderson, 1991). However, increasingly – and globally from the 1960s onwards – there were overlays (or underlays) of history from below placed upon traditional national narratives. There was an increased emphasis on social history and the experiences and perspectives of Indigenous peoples, minority ethnic groups, immigrants, the working classes and women.

Linked to, but expanding beyond, the discipline of history, the 1980s saw the birth of subaltern studies as a further stage in postcolonial critique especially in South Asia (Prakash, 1994). Securing recognition of minority narratives, as has been seen in the cases of India and Sri Lanka (Pandian, 2008; Wijegoonawardana, 2012), continues to be a struggle. New histories in the late twentieth century tended to break up the previous hegemonic narratives of political and military history: 'great men', 'discovery' of new lands, 'pioneering settlement' and the complacency of contented dominion and linear stories of progress and reform. But the marriage of high politics and new forms of social history is often an awkward union at the point at which it meets history curricula, history syllabuses and textbooks, teachers' decision-making and classroom implementation. Moreover, history from below imperatives tend to set history education on a collision course with conservative historians and politicians who disapprove of critical, negative or so-named black armband (that is seeing the nation's past as negative and overly mournful, failing to see the positive aspects of nationalism and nation building) views of a nation's past

The conservative reaction to history from below pressures was significant. At the core of the History Wars (Peterson, 2016) which played out at different times in different ways in varied national contexts was a concern that the historical consciousness of young people was being hijacked by progressive academics and an educational establishment undesirably influenced by political correctness, cultural studies, literary theory, and postmodernism. In the Australian context, for example, it was Geoffrey Blainey's view (1993) that the 'balance sheet' of the past was firmly in favour of the achievements of 'White society' since 'settlement,' and that any history that had an excessive focus on past wrongs promoted a mournful relationship with the past that harmed the nation. 'New history' approaches brought an unwelcome uncertainty and criticality as far as many conservative politicians and commentators were concerned, as national historical narratives expanded to include the perspectives of the colonised as well as pre-colonial oral histories.

There was a historiographical reaction too. Three influential books seemed to exemplify and promote a conservative (or neo-conservative) western, developed world-centric, hegemonic view of history which projected fluent narratives of western domination, economically, politically and culturally: Francis Fukuyama's *The end of history* (1992), Samuel Huntington's (1997) *Clash of*

civilizations, and Niall Ferguson's (2011) *Civilization: The West and the rest* (2011). Despite considerable criticism (mixed with acclaim for the breadth of the canvas upon which the three historians painted their arguments), these texts cumulatively reinforced a discursive practice that has become popularised in the press and has continued to influence popular conceptions of the world, although they have had limited success in penetrating the professional world of history education. They represent forces that challenged the post-colonial theories of Achebe (1975) and Spivak (1999), also articulated by Prakash (1994).

Cutting across these global narratives, government adviser and public intellectual Simon Schama (2010), recommended an orientation of the English History curriculum towards the history of the British Empire – for inclusive not triumphalist reasons. He argued that the consequences of immigration (and settlement) following decolonisation, were being felt in British cities, and he recommended a recognition of the effect that this was having on the youth of those places in understanding the complexity of their own identities. Paul Gilroy (1987,1992), writing in a postcolonial paradigm, described the migration and settlement after the Second World War as the 'empire coming to Britain.' Similarly, David Olusoga (2016) described his own often traumatic 'theatre of memory' as he experienced his teenage years in Newcastle in the north-east of England as the mixed-race child of a white British mother and a Nigerian father. A paper in this HEJ issue (Guyver, see below) gives voice to the lived experiences of London migrant-settler teenagers talking about their experiences and those of their families, and how these relate to learning about history and empire (see also Haydn, 2014).

Can the subaltern speak?

The power of official historical narratives, according to Stuart Hall (1997), was their capacity to construct the colonised subject as "different and other within the categories of knowledge of the West" (p. 112). It also manifested more profoundly in the capacity of historical narratives to make the colonised see themselves as 'the Other'. For example, Achebe (1975) realized when at school in Nigeria that he was in fact the 'Other' that his textbooks were describing. He made an eloquent plea for the focus to shift from that of the colonisers to that of the colonised, giving them a voice. Spivak's seminal work *Can the subaltern speak?* (1988) articulated a similar message.

It is clear from curriculum developments in Canada and New Zealand, especially around notions of truth and reconciliation further explored in this issue (See Rowinski & Sears, and Davison below) that there is considerable support for restoring the place of the histories of the colonised to history curricula. Moreover, within the former colonies themselves, as can be seen in the Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria and Botswana case studies in this issue, there is a recognition that pre-colonial histories, often existing in the form of oral stories, need to be reclaimed and re-validated, but in a sense also modified to ways of thinking in the twenty-first century through using them as a basis for dialogue, making the teaching and learning more interactive.

According to Young (1990), "the Third World was itself created as a representation, or as a set of representations, not only for the West but also for the culture whose representation was constructed" (p. 159). Young argued that this was absolutely essential for the 'success' of the European colonisation of Asia, Africa, the Americas and the islands of the Pacific, since nineteenth and early twentieth-century "imperialism was not only a territorial and economic but inevitably also a subject-constituting project" (p. 159). Land and territory was colonised by subduing the population through force, oppressive or partially understood treaties, trade agreements and relationships; but minds were also colonised by inscribing the subdued population in the historical record as inferior, primitive or sometimes even sub-human.

The notion of 'colonisation of the mind' presents some significant challenges for the postcolonial historian, and equally a problem for history curricula in a postcolonial society. As John Willinsky (1998) argued in *Learning to divide the world: Education at empire's end*, the legacy of imperialism is ever present within Western educational discourse, having significantly shaped the construction and constitution of school subjects such as History and Geography. Education

itself was deeply implicated in the project of colonialism (as Adu-Gyamfi & Anderson exemplify in the Ghanaian case study below). Spivak (1997) recognised that decolonisation had not resulted in the freedoms in liberated, sovereign nations that one might have expected. She added that the historical discourse often "boringly repeats the rhythms of colonisation with the consolidation of recognisable styles" (p. 202). From Spivak's viewpoint, "independence from the colonial power might free us of our foreign oppressors' armies, but it does not automatically free us of the discourses in which our subjectivities and identities have been inscribed" (p. 202).

Others have pointed to the colonisation of the archive as an obstacle in the pathway of decolonising histories. Writing in the context of document production in the Dutch East Indies, Stoler (2002) argued that scholars should view archives not as sites of knowledge retrieval but of knowledge production; as monuments of states as well as sites of state ethnography – "The archive was the supreme technology of the late nineteenth century imperial state" (p. 97). Moreover, it is important to recognise the primacy of oral history in the culture of Māori, Aboriginal and other Indigenous peoples. Yet oral history only secured academic respectability in European historiography in the second half of the twentieth century, although as Paul Thompson, an early exponent, reminded us, "It was the first kind of history" (Thompson, 1978, p. 19). Some historians and anthropologists in exploring colonial history themes are re-reading the archives and undertaking oral histories with people who lived through archived events to comment on colonial narratives of them being told in the archives (see Price, 1998 for examples in the West Indies).

A number of historians in South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific have also sought to read records against their grain in the archives, recovering the lived experiences of peasants, women and Indigenous resistance leaders from the condescension of previous historic omission (e.g. Guha, 1983; Mar, 2016; Vickers & Jones, 2005). Decolonising imperial history is not easy since it has to avoid the colonisers' words found in the archives and repeated in history textbooks. The stories that nations tell themselves about themselves can quite often contain myths that tend to be self-serving, and dangerously uncritical and uncontested (Guyver, 2016). Indeed, this has been commented on as a challenge to be overcome in Uganda and Botswana (Sebbowa & Pastory Majani, and Mafela, below).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's (1981) seminal text *Decolonising the Mind* drew attention to internalised forms of imperialism in which education is a primary colonising medium:

> The biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against that collective defiance is the cultural bomb. The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland. (p. 3)

In Ngugi's terms, 'decolonisation' was a project of 're-centering.' It was about rejecting the assumption that the modern West was the central root of Africa's consciousness and cultural heritage. In Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana and Botswana we see examples of jurisdictions claiming back their histories, sometimes by re-writing and re-claiming that history for themselves (see Dike, 1956), although not without difficulties for those wishing to change the situation.

At the frontier of innovative history education some educators have started to reflect upon how the pedagogical practices of teaching might begin to decolonise (Nakata, 2007; Yunkaporta, 2009). There is an argument that it is in large part through transmissive, assimilative education policies and Western-style schooling that much of the colonisation of minds of Indigenous peoples has taken place (Battiste, 1998). Certainly most history curricula around the world reject ways of knowing which are not western in nature. The fact that Indigenous cultures are still largely oral cultures with a focus on narrative and symbolic and visual representation rather than propositional knowledge and explanation makes the task of creating a history education as anything but learning about others in potentially foreign and text-based ways challenging indeed.

Students being enabled to see themselves as part of the narrative

Postcolonial history education is further complicated by the movement of migrant and diasporic communities linked to – but not in all cases directly emerging from – the colonial experience. The increasing flow of populations, mobility of individuals and crossing of borders and the blurring of the concept of 'home' have created new challenges for history teachers. There is no one-size-fits-all cultural identity for diasporic people, but rather a multiplicity of different cultural identities that share both important similarities and important differences. Examples of the transnational challenges and opportunities afforded to history teachers are shared here in the context of London (see Guyver, below). This is tied to the need to build into history lessons an opportunity to address the historical dimension of identity when there are so many different identities in one class or school. Among students there is a lack of patience with any approach to history education which does not allow for an examination of how 'subaltern voices' and 'silent histories' can help them to understand their own and their families' places in society as part of a colonial legacy. Students with a family experience background of displacement are more likely to identify with the colonised and to want a more three-dimensional, less generalised set of narratives to illustrate this. Thus, their own double-consciousness (Gilroy, 1993) and corresponding life-world experiences of metropole (London) and colony or postcolonial jurisdiction, as core and periphery, are transferred empathetically to the lives of players in past historical events.

History can be used for building social identity, especially if in a postcolonial situation this means deliberately avoiding the sharing of a single uniform identity. This has also been a strong factor in motivating curriculum change across Canada, as migration has put pressure on traditional forms of history education. History lessons should provide identity elements for all groups (see Peck, 2010). Indeed, history lessons are – at their best – open arenas of dialogue for groups with different experiences and orientations, and there are clearly rewards associated with undertaking in the classroom the socio-political experiment of attempting to write everyone into the narrative. Both the Botswana and Uganda papers in this special issue incorporate the idea of 'Mutual Value Theory'(Boyanton, 2015) in suggesting more bottom-up and agentic forms of historical exploration by young people, drawing upon local historical events that may unsettle but at the same time also exemplify national narratives, especially when they are seen 'from below.' To be inclusive, history lessons need at least to attempt to incorporate and recognise the specific and idiosyncratic histories of many groups. In this way contemporary history education might assist in the process of capturing the negotiations between cultures that are taking place, thereby (in contexts such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada) providing a platform upon which to build a rehabilitation of Indigenous knowledge and identity.

Decolonising the curriculum represents an acceptance that education, including history education, needs to enable self-understanding. Seeing ourselves more clearly, whether as citizens or societies, is not only about admiring a reflection in the mirror. The Antiguan author, Jamaica Kincaid, puts it thus:

> And might not knowing why they are the way they are, why they do the things they do, why they live the way they live, why the things that happened to them happened, lead … people to a different relationship with the world, a more demanding relationship? (cited in Gopal, 2017).

To prompt every student in postcolonial nations to articulate and reflect upon his or her sometimes silenced past, a practice of deliberation in a classroom is necessary. This has indeed been seen to be the case in New Brunswick (Canada) and New Zealand explored in this issue.

Deliberation means conversation instead of debate, listening besides talking, and understanding rather than aiming at an agreement of one 'truth.' Instead, such an approach aims at recognition of different legitimate points of view (See Hess and McEvoy, 2014). Indeed, "constructing history for an inclusive nation which seeks understanding – not only across its own component groups but also of its neighbours – can be a force for good" (Guyver, 2016, p. 1). Lively, informed, empathetic debates around the meaning of the past and its linkages to today's affairs

does not signal national disunity and deterioration; rather it is a sign of a vibrant, self-confident democracy. Social inclusiveness is necessary if history education is to prompt reconciliation and the building of bridges between different communities (the Cyprus and Lebanon papers in this issue provide fascinating examples of the bridge-building challenges).

Critical historical literacy and critical citizenship

Not all societies welcome the embedded model of critical historical literacy and the corresponding parallel model of critical citizenship. It can seem threatening or unpatriotic Seminal developments in relation to approaches to history education have included curriculum projects originating in the School History Project (England) feeding into innovative approaches to history education (e.g. Cooper & Chapman, 2009; Davies, 2017). Work on historical thinking undertaken in North America has identified key concepts and components of historical thinking (e.g. Lévesque, 2008; Seixas & Morton, 2012; Wineburg, 2001) and approaches founded in notions of historical literacy (Lee, 2005) or 'historical reasoning' (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008), which for those authors writing in a Dutch context especially includes elements around the contestedness of interpretations of history in heritage, museum, representations and curriculum contexts (Van Boxtel, Grever & Klein, 2016).

Each of these terms associated with the syntactic or procedural aspects of history underscores the importance given to the act of scrutinising below the surface narratives, perspectives, representations or interpretations that are encountered, and involve what Lee and Ashby (2000) delineated as second-order concepts or ideas such as *significance*, *empathy*, *change over time* and *contestation*: "It is these ideas that provide our understanding of history as a discipline or form of knowledge" (p. 199). Historical thinking is thus an overarching term that embraces a range of modes of *doing* history. We take it, in this HEJ special edition, to be co-existent with *historical understanding*, and that it encompasses both acts of *historical reasoning* and engagement in *historical literacy*. We were keen to hear voices from developing countries to explore what epistemological ideas from recent debates most resonated in their contexts (and why), although it has become clear that politics continues to exercise a dominant role in determining whether the nurturing of young people as critical citizens and the creation of more inclusive narratives is resisted or welcomed.

Robert Parkes (2007) argued that:

> In reading [h]istory curriculum as postcolonial text, it becomes clear that what have remained uncontested in the struggle for histories within the … [h]istory curriculum have been the representational practices of history itself, and that redressing the neglect of historical representation opens new possibilities for [h]istory curriculum as critical pedagogical practice. (p. 384)

There are links here to the increasingly influential idea of historical consciousness as both a focus and purpose of history teaching. Raphael Samuel was one of the first to raise the question of how school children acquire historical knowledge. He bemoaned that fact that "so far as pedagogy is concerned, it allows no space for knowledge which creeps in sideways as a by-product of studying something else" (1994, p.8). This could be extended to knowledge which 'creeps in' after being exposed to other elements of history which are to be found in the everyday. History educators have long aimed to shape learners' views, values and understandings of the past by helping them to become more historically conscious in the present.

The core and periphery (or metropole and colony) paradigm can be seen to work at a dynamic level in all of the jurisdictions represented in this collection. This can be seen where double-consciousness (Gilroy, 1993) of both the near and distant fields as experienced in the habituses of the life-worlds of school students (and their families) is in a constant process of interpretive renegotiation in the hands (and corresponding habituses) of their teachers. The students and their families have experienced the political dimensions of power in personal ways, so history from

below becomes personal for them, and they are likely, to use the phrase appropriated by Hall (2002) from Cooper and Stoler (1997), to see the national, transnational and family history in *a single analytic frame*, or scaffolding. The teacher is there as a guide to help them navigate this, to make the links and bring the history to life. This is seen to be particularly relevant for minorities in every jurisdiction where the teacher's role is to enable the mutual valuing of students between themselves (Boyanton, 2015).

Historical consciousness, historical significance and representations of collective memory

Historical consciousness has been delineated as the capacity for learners to connect historical learning to life outside the school and representations of collective memory such as contained in museums and heritage interpretations (Lowenthal, 1996), popular films or on-line games and simulations. According to Rüsen (2004, p. 66-67) "historical consciousness deals with the past as experience; it reveals to us the web of temporal change in which our lives are caught up and (at least indirectly) the future perspectives toward which that change is flowing." For Rüsen the point of history education is to make sense of the past in order to create a perspective or orienting frame for understanding and acting in the present and future (See also Ahonen, 2005; Friedrich, 2010; Seixas, 2006; Van Straaten et al., 2016). Historical consciousness incorporates the development in students of narrative competence. What stories and accounts can I trust and why?

The application of some ideas around historical consciousness and postcolonial theory have been attempted to be applied in South Africa. Gail Weldon in her doctoral study (2009) comparing history education in South Africa and Rwanda, drew on thinking by Linda Chisholm (2004) about the possibility of the co-existence of official and unofficial narratives. Weldon reinforced how this had been working within the 2002-2003 second attempt at a history curriculum in South Africa. Within the new curriculum, there was no attempt to delineate a 'true' history, rather:

> [The] new 'official history', through a commitment to the idea that historical 'truth' can be subjected to rigorous analysis by entering conversations structured by the 'disciplinary traditions' and that there are complex histories within the South African experience, provided potential opportunities for 'border crossing' and for thinking one another's histories. The history curriculum became an 'open' rather than a 'closed' text. (Weldon, 2009, p. 180)

This notion of the history curriculum as an open rather than a closed text inviting border crossing may represent a possible way forward for countries with particularly traumatic and divided recent histories such as in Cyprus and Lebanon whose challenges in crafting history curricula are outlined below (See also Ahonen, 2012).

There are also connections between historical consciousness and the notion of historical significance. A number of influential contributions to debates about history teaching across varying national jurisdictions have argued for a fruitful focus upon the idea of historical significance (e.g. Cercadillo, 2001; Lévesque, 2005; Peck, 2010). In considering the use of historical significance in the classroom, Hunt (2000, p. 52-53) took as his starting point, "How can historical significance be used to answer the question, 'Why are we studying this?'" He argued that history teaching is enlivened when young citizens feel that they can engage with issues that they see as still relevant to their lives today. This would certainly apply to the historical issues and content examined in most of the jurisdictions represented in this special issue. It is interesting that in Cyprus, in a situation of potential conflict where strong differences are defined by the nature of internal and external loyalties (Cyprocentric, Hellenocentric and Turkocentric), a key solution as a kind of curriculum bridge is being offered by allowing different groups to appropriate a shared disciplinary approach to history (Onarkan & Aliusta below). This can be seen in the work of Hedegaard and Chaiklin (2005) describing their experience of enabling children from immigrant communities in New York to contribute their varied experiences to a common theme.

The 'Rhodes Must Fall' movement and memorialisation of Captain Cook

The disruptive resonances of the colonial past have broken through into public consciousness and public contestation in different forms in different places in recent times. Sometimes the debates coalesce around monuments and statues as visible representations of popular memory. In South Africa it was seen in the momentum of the 'Rhodes Must Fall' Movement at the University of Cape Town (Mbembe, 2016) – a decolonising of the university in this case involved a rehabilitation of the campus's public space from legacy statuary. The 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook setting sail from Plymouth on HMS Endeavour in August 1768 to carry out a variety of duties on behalf of the British government, including mapping the fabled Great Southern continent revived debates in both New Zealand and Australia about memorialisation of Cook in statue form. A statue of Cook was removed from a hill on the North Island of New Zealand following protests by the local Māori community and a unanimous council vote to re-locate the statue to a local museum and possibly replace it with a statue of Raikaitane, the Māori chief at the time of Cook's landing. Leaders of the local Ngāti tribe noted that historical records showed that Cook's crew shot nine of their people, killing six (Pearlman, 2018). Ironically, Australia meanwhile announced plans for a new statue of Cook as part of a wider $50million heritage re-development at Botany Bay at the site of first contact between *Endeavour* crew members and Aboriginal peoples. Australia's then Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull and his successor Scott Morrison argued that the monument would be inclusive and an "opportunity to show the view from the ship and the view from the shore," but a leading Aboriginal activist, Pastor Ray Minniecon, was quoted as saying "It's still an invasion and it's still an unwanted invasion" (Bevege, 2018, n.p.). The journalist reporting the plans for the statue added:

> British colonisation brought Australia into the modern world with a successful economy, new technology, an independent judiciary, a democratic parliament and a documented land-ownership system; but it also dispossessed the tribal first Australian people of their sovereignty. (Bevege, 2018, n.p.)

This is a journalistic example of a kind of spuriously balanced but insensitive narrative, in response to which (in order to unpack it or re-balance it) young people would require special skills, particularly in the light of the questionable inclusion of "a documented land-ownership system" (Bevege, 2018, n.p.) which raises further questions about truth and reconciliation, as well as the role of legislatures and the judiciary in settling disputes. It can be helpful for young people to reflect on the political philosophies and underpinning attitudes behind false equivalence and partial arguments in media representations. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that however distasteful it might seem, the roles of Cook and indeed Rhodes, and even the slave-owner and later public benefactor Edward Colston (whose statue was toppled in Bristol in June 2020 (Olusoga, 2020), in the history of their times still need to be examined and evaluated, even if the old hero-worshipping and celebration cannot be justified.

Conclusion

The contributors to this *Historical Encounters Journal* issue comprise a mix of well-established, mid-career and young researchers and academics who study various actors and factors involved in history education ranging across policy-making, school curricula, textbooks, civil society organizations, teachers and teaching practices themselves. The two editors of this special issue, white male academics of Anglo origin, are acting as both insiders and outsiders, and sought to negotiate with project participants paths towards a mutual recognition of shared experiences of postcolonial history and/or how this history with all its depth and range is interpreted by educators in postcolonial societies.

The contributions highlight the reverberation of the colonial past in History classrooms around the world – in Africa, in settler colonial nations, in a cosmopolitan city and in countries (Cyprus and Lebanon) where the scars of recent internecine conflicts are still raw, emotional and ongoing.

Often it would seem that a shared or even negotiated approach to thinking about each other's histories rather than the histories themselves would be the way forward.

Naturally, many important unanswered questions remain which link back to the elements of postcolonial critique of much contemporary history education introduced at the opening of this editorial:

- How is a de-mythicalised history curriculum to be independently negotiated and agreed? (The contributions in this issue from the perspectives of Cyprus and Lebanon are salutary in this area)

- How can acknowledgement of Indigenous peoples and minority ethnic groups in curricula be more than token and genuinely acknowledge past dispossession or other effects of colonization or postcolonial displacement? (The Botswana paper in this issue has suggestions on better ways of representing the experiences of minority groups in the country)

- Can new ways be found in history classrooms which respect the insights of the 'decolonising the mind' literature. For example, how can children be helped to think differently about 'Country' (in its Indigenous sense) and oral traditions?

- How can initial teacher education and in-service education around history teaching decolonise its pedagogy and practices and give voice to Indigenous and other ethnic minority peoples, cultures and perspectives? What will this look and feel like?

- How can a professional and independent voice be brought to the sensitive process of re-making history curricula, drawing upon the literature related to historical conceptual understanding and historical consciousness?

- How do countries, peoples and educators find a path to teaching local, national and global history that is sensitive to place and context?

The outcomes that are sought from historical learning include the ability to discuss, listen to and empathise with differing perspectives; consider a range of opinions and values; and come to reasonable conclusions. These qualities and critical attributes operate as a path to the development of a sophisticated historical consciousness, which young people can use as a tool to navigate, understand, and interpret their social world in the present. In an information age where the internet and social media are feeding a world of fake news this has rarely been more important.

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Endnotes

[1] 'Windrush' here refers to a group of Caribbean migrants who believed wrongly that the UK authorities had kept the original records of their immigration. They had to fight for recognition of their citizenship rights, and this was supported by The Guardian, and in particular by journalist Amelia Gentleman. News of the scandalous and discriminatory treatment of several vulnerable individuals broke at the same time as the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London in April 2018. Some of those who could not find the relevant paperwork had lost the right to work, could not afford their accommodation, and were waiting to be deported, despite having families in the UK, and having not lived in their former countries for decades. The Conservative Government at the time had promised a 'hostile environment' for illegal immigrants, even for those who had arrived as children and had worked for the greater part of their lives. The Commonwealth is an organisation of 54 member states, most connected historically as former colonies with the British Empire (except for Rwanda and Mozambique). The Commonwealth since 1965 has had an independent Secretariat, with several Secretaries-General, allowing for the representation of a succession of the different regions. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is Head of the Commonwealth. The scandal of the Windrush discriminations and deportations was that it was one Commonwealth member, in this case the one with most power, doing injustice to others while hypocritically seeking to uphold a set of shared values, including those relating to human rights, as set out in the Commonwealth Charter of 2013.

History education in Ghana: a pragmatic tradition of change and continuity

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ABSTRACT

History education in Ghana has been situated within the pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial trajectories and debates. Whereas there is a conscious effort by history teacher associations, academics and other interest groups to advance and develop the teaching of the subject at different levels of the educational system in Ghana, little attention has been paid to how the textbooks have conceptualised the cultural, ethnic and indigenous histories with their attendant differences and how they have affected or complicated narratives in the postcolonial setting of Ghana. Essentially, this contribution highlights how historical themes on empire, colonisation, decolonisation and the Commonwealth, and associated events, are explored in historiography and in the curricula of Ghana. This involves an examination of the dynamic relationship between political traditions, curriculum, historiography, and scholarship at university level. Overall, the paper highlights the political contexts that have shaped the various stages and manifestations of the history curriculum as it concerns British influence, decolonisation, independence and postcolonialism in Ghana before, during and after the development of the Nkrumahist and Danquah-Busia traditions.

KEYWORDS

African historiography, Achimota model of education, Nkrumahist and Danquah-Busia traditions, Contemporary issues, History education, Ghana

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Introduction

E.H. Carr defined history as "a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the past and present" (Carr, 1961, p. 3). The context and content of what constitutes African history has always been a source of controversy between Africans and Europeans, historians, philosophers, anthropologists and sociologists among others. The writing and studying of African history have been on a dynamic journey.

Postcolonial scholars and governments have tried to return Ghanaians to their roots – an initiative known in Ghana as *Sankofa*. This *Sankofa* drive has influenced scholars and statesmen to implement measures and embark on projects that seek to elevate Ghanaian history and inculcate in the younger generation a sense of belonging and national pride. There have been some challenges in achieving this objective because History has not always been a compulsory subject at most levels of Ghanaian education; at Junior Secondary level since 2007 it has been integrated with subjects such as Citizenship Education, Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education (RME) and Christian Religious Studies (CRS).

However, since the election of a new government in 2017, in Ghana's current education system History as a subject appears richly and fully in the primary curriculum, from Basic 1 to Basic 6 (NaCCE, 2019). In these earlier years of schooling there will now be an opportunity to teach thoroughly the chronological and substantive structure of Ghana's pre-colonial, colonial history and events immediately after independence. Although it might seem to have some of the shortcomings of a nationalistic canon, the fact that it adopts enquiry routes and makes considerable cognitive demands on younger students, places the structure in a category which the Australian historian John Hirst (2016), advising against a mere canon of events for a national curriculum, described as "landmarks, but with questions." There is now a shift in focus from worship of traditional Gold Coast or Ghanaian heroes to a contextualisation of the role of significant figures like J.B.Danquah, Nkrumah, and other members of the so-called 'Big Six' who achieved mythic status as a result of events on 28 February 1948 which led to the Accra riots. That key event itself, including the lead-up to it and its consequences, is subject to evidence-based scrutiny. In this new curriculum, the role of women is stressed, and space is given to the study of high achievers, men and women, across all walks of national life (e.g. in the economy, diplomacy, sport, technology). Across the shorter junior secondary phase, history appears within the still extant 2007 Social Studies Syllabus but is linked to an understanding of citizenship, social justice and politics. History is an elective subject at senior secondary level (i.e. not compulsory for all) and is examined within a West African examination framework alongside similar syllabuses for Nigeria, Liberia and The Gambia.

For many years there was an absence of a bridging narrative connecting the past with the present in debates about history education in Africa – and Ghana in particular. Admittedly, some scholars have attempted to bridge the gap by tracing the historical context of education in Ghana from the colonial epoch through to the postcolonial era. Examples of such contributions include Foster's (1965) *Education and social change in Ghana*, Peterson del Mar's (2012) *A pragmatic tradition: The past in Ghanaian education*, and Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh, and Addo's (2016) *Educational reforms in Ghana: Past and present*. In addition, works by Zachernuk (1998), Saphir (2001) and Coe (2002) have analysed colonial history education to assess ways that knowledge and culture were managed during colonial rule, and explored how historical literature and anthropology were fashioned to justify and promote the imperial agenda. These texts indicated that although there were conscious efforts to inculcate history in the people, the agenda fitted a dominant view at the time of European superiority. The existing literature barely explores the twenty-first century dissemination of historical knowledge. The current article seeks to fill the gap by considering the contemporary issues affecting history education in Ghana. Overall, the paper highlights the political contexts that have shaped the teaching of history as it concerns British influence, decolonisation, independence and postcolonialism in Ghana before, during and after the development of the Nkrumahist and Danquah-Busia traditions.

Major changes from colonial to postcolonial historiography

A key feature of the patronising attitude of some European and British writers can be identified as a denial that African history even existed before the arrival of Europeans (Hegel, 1956; Newton, 1940; Trevor-Roper, 1963). This attitude has been challenged and commented on by later writers (Kiwanuka, 1973; Keita, 1974; Mazrui, 1982; Fugelstad, 1992; Kuykedal, 1993; Boubia, 1997; Zackernuk, 1998; Babacar, 2005; and Aissat & Djafri, 2017).

As Boahen (1966), Ellis (2002), Philips (2005) and Afolayan (2012) have shown, African historiography has gone through several stages at different periods spanning from medieval to post-medieval periods. Ancient and classical writers wrote about Africa but their works were not regarded as systematic. Islamic and Arabic writers followed suit, and left first- and second-hand accounts of African states. The next phase in the development of African history witnessed the writings of European traders, travellers, missionaries and other adventurers whose accounts about Africa represented an era of colonial historiography. The last phase of African historiography saw nationalists and liberationists of African descent who sought to restore autonomy, authenticity and reverence to the African past. In this paper, it is mainly the latter phase in the development of African historiography that is considered.

The quest to refute European conceptions about the African past compelled a group of African nationalists to write from an African perspective. African scholars and Africanists in opposition asserted the existence of an African history. According to Mazrui (1982), in December 1962, Nkrumah noted in his opening address to the First International Congress of African Studies that:

> The central myth in the mythology surrounding Africa is the denial that we are a historical people. It is said that, whereas other continents have shaped history and determined its course, Africa has stood still, held down by inertia. Africa, it is said, entered history only as a result of European contact. Its history, therefore, is widely felt to be an extension of European history. (Mazrui, 1982, p.16)

A Nigerian, K. Onwuka Dike (1917-1983) was the first to break the ice concerning the use of 'unconventional sources especially oral evidence' as part of the scholarly work for his PhD, later published (Dike, 1951; 1956). This shift marked an important milestone in the development of African historiography as it provided the impetus for change from a focus of African history which centred on the European activities in Africa to what Africans themselves had achieved. Dike also highlighted that European languages were not the only written languages used in writing African history. Many of the people of sub-Saharan Africa for several centuries used Arabic, Swahili and Hausa as official and literary languages for many different types of written correspondence (cited in Mazrui, 1982, p. 312). This was meant to show the varied evidence of African history – which most Europeans ignored or refused to acknowledge. J. D. Fage (1921-2002), clearly influenced by Dike, in his 1964 professorial inaugural at the University of Birmingham on 'African History for the Outside World', insisted that African history had many examples of 'purposive movement' and did not belong to the unrewarding gyrations of barbarous people (Mazrui, 1982, p. 312).

Against this background, there were individual and collective efforts at retelling Africa's past by individuals such as C. C. Reindorf (1834-1917), J. M. Sarbah (1864-1910), Joseph Boakye Danquah (1895-1965), Casely Hayford (1866-1930), Kobina Sekyi (author of the satirical play, *The Blinkards*, 1915) and Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972). Their efforts manifested in creative works, essays, articles, and to some extent their own lifestyles, a challenge to – and rejection of – all aspects of European cultural imperialism. Danquah's *Akan Doctrine of God* (1944) was based on Akan culture and tradition, allowing him to use a locality known to him to propagate the advancement of African civilisation especially through African-based institutions and conventions (Danquah, 1944, pp. 1-10).

The Achimota tradition

A practical application of the Phelps Stokes Commission report (1925) was the curriculum created for the newly established Achimota (originally named Prince of Wales College and School, Achimota, later Achimota College, nicknamed Motown) in Accra, which was a major experiment in bi-cultural education. History specialists were required to conduct investigations into traditional sources and develop curricula based on the African experience. Therefore, the educators were conscious of the necessity for European elements in the curriculum to be mixed with a background of African history. Students were encouraged to conduct their own investigations into native customs and folklore. Ultimately, Achimota was to produce students who were Western in their intellectual attitudes towards life, with a respect for science and capacity for systematic thought, but who remained African in sympathy and desirous of preserving and developing what they viewed as deserving of respect in ethnic life, custom, rule and law (Coe, 2002, p. 29).

In 1925, A. G. Fraser, the principal of Achimota College argued that history education was about training true leaders. He noted that:

> Schools cannot nationalise the African. We cannot re-make the African in his own image. But we can try to see that he understands the new factors that are coming into his country so rapidly, the meaning of changes that they are effecting, and the nature of the traditional laws, customs and lore threatened. We can show him parallels elsewhere and help him to study them and think on them. We can get him keenly interested in and thinking over the life of his village. But the adaptation of the new to the old, the synthesis, we must leave him to make ... Our task is not to give rules and lay down lines and make moulds, but to develop the powers of insight and initiative of our pupils, to get them to try to ask questions, and to try and suggest further thinking. (Fraser, cited in Zachernuk, 1998, p. 489)

Indirectly, Fraser argued for the exposure of Africans to all knowledge systems, both foreign and local so that they could critically apply them to their immediate environment and local conditions.

In 1927, when Governor Guggisberg founded Achimota College, there was interest in the development of an African curriculum and this caused the College to give precedence to the study of African languages and culture. Botwe-Asamoah noted that behind these commendable efforts was a deliberate attempt to:

> ... produce a type of student, who is Western in his intellectual attitude towards life, with respect for science and capacity for systematic thought, but who remains African in sympathy and desirous in preserving and developing what is deserving of respect in tribal life, customs, rule and law. (Botwe-Asamoah, 2005, p. 142)

A key contributor in the development of the history syllabus in Ghana was W. E. F. Ward, who taught at Achimota. His textbooks would remain influential long after independence. Ward's aim was "to teach young Africans to understand and appreciate Africa's past and to foster a true pride of race," therefore young children should begin their study of history by learning about their own home district, and in the faith that ideally history is to be taught as scientifically in Africa as in Europe (Zachernuk, 1998, p. 489). Although Ward's view about wanting history lessons to impart moral values by teaching about 'the great men of the past', has now been challenged on the grounds of inclusion, egalitarianism and social justice, his wish to train the 'historic sense' is still relevant. Ward's 1934 primary school text, *Africa before the white man came*, included ancient Egypt and the great Sudanese empires and created a link between North Africa and West Africa. It mapped and described at least twenty-one independent African states before 1800. He attributed African backwardness to the Atlantic and Oriental slave trades.

The sequel examined by Zachernuk (1998, p. 489) and Coe (2002, p. 31) focused more on European actions. Others assisted in the cultivation of African arts and crafts, dress, traditions,

customs, and traditional drumming. In order to achieve this vision, the subjects taught included: History, Southern Languages (Ewe, Fante, Ga, and Twi), Agriculture, Art, Music and Games, Native Folk-stories, Local History and Customs. In the history curriculum taught by Ward, the first two years of history included Gold Coast history and modern European history, while the last two years concentrated on the growth of the British Empire. He saw the need to learn about local history before moving on to world history. Despite this vision, a great part of the education provided consisted of the transmission of European culture – art, music, drama, literature – to African students (Coe, 2002, pp. 30-31).

Although this represented a great achievement in historical education, the challenges remained considerable. For instance, by 1927, most of the staff were Europeans and tried to inculcate African customs into the African though they learned African customs and languages one and half years before the commencement of the school. There were only two African staff. Notable among them was Dr. Kwegyir Aggrey. After his death, there was no one to push for the African agenda. In 1930, there was a drive to Africanise the staff, yet those who were sent to Britain for training returned and did not necessarily go back into teaching but rather diverted into other fields, such as the civil service (Coe, 2002).

To fill this gap, Africans were eventually occasionally brought in to help train the students. Chiefs and other prominent Africans gave lectures on local histories, folklore and customs. However, these were brought in as junior or part-time staff. Sadly, these supplementary African staff were not experts at teaching in the formal way as expected at Achimota – as they were knowledgeable in demonstrating rather than teaching. In addition, most of these African music and dance histories were taught as extra-curricular activities rather than actual subjects worthy of attention. The African elements of the curriculum were less evident as the school progressed, to the extent that, by the end of the colonial period, its curriculum was virtually the same as the others on the African Gold Coast, and indeed in England (Coe, 2002, p. 33).

Ironically, the African elites opposed the concept of Africanisation of the curriculum as proposed by the Europeans, and this is apparent in an earlier Legislative Council debate (April 1921, cited in Kimble, 1963). Nana Ofori Atta (1881-1943) considered it unwise to restrict studies to the African scene while Casely-Hayford (1866-1930) considered it a dangerous policy. The latter advocated that Achimota should concentrate on secondary education as commonly understood which included Classics as a compulsory part of the curriculum. In 1935, political nationalists attacked the way Ward taught African history in an attempt to reveal that the school was an imperial institution. They also criticised the lack of senior African staff at the school. Another angle of attack came from African Christians who disliked the practice of forcing converts to participate in what they saw as 'pagan' practices such as drumming and dancing, as they were suspicious of the school's non-denominationalism (Coe, 2002).

The origins of the Danquah-Busia and Nkrumahist traditions

The personalities and events examined here in relation to Ghana's history education are interwoven and interrelated. In many ways the lives of the key players in Ghana's postcolonial political story reflect a strong interest in education, and their different contributions to Ghana's legacy can be explored in school history education today. Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972), was originally 'leader of government business' (1951-1952) before becoming Prime Minister of the Gold Coast (1952-1957). He was also Ghana's first Prime Minister (1957-1960) and Ghana's first President (1960-1966). He had played a leading role in the campaign for independence and in the Pan-African movement. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the University of Ghana out of the University College of the Gold Coast.

Kofi Abrefa Busia (1913-1978) mixed an academic career pursued in several places (at Oxford, back in the colonial Gold Coast and subsequently in the Netherlands at Leiden while in political exile) with a political one. This for Busia was first as a colonial district commissioner (1942-1949), as a member of the Legislative Council (from 1951), then as a leader representing the opposition until he left Ghana in 1959, eventually returning in 1966 (after the downfall of Nkrumah) to

become prime minister 1969-1972 under the Presidency of Edward Akufo-Addo (father of Ghana's current Head of State), and one of the original 'Big Six', followed by yet another – but final – period in exile.

Similarly, the life-story of J.B. Danquah (1895-1965) demonstrates a fusion of political and academic aspirations and achievements. In Danquah's case his career in politics consisted of founding a political party (the United Gold Coast Convention), which after Nkrumah's CPP broke away from it, became one of opposition rather than government. Both Busia and Danquah would publish significant work, in Danquah's case a classic, *The Akan Doctrine of God* (1944), which sought to reconcile aspects of Christianity with Akan traditional beliefs. Each was interested in building bridges between Northern-Western, European-British traditions and African ones, especially in the areas of religion, morality, philosophy, political structures, culture and literacy, but importantly both brought rigour to their studies of African history and culture. Danquah's work on the Akan is now studied in Basic 1 in the 2019 primary history curriculum: "Discuss the role of Dr J.B. Danquah in linking the civilisations of the ancient Ghana Empire to the Akan of the forest region of Ghana." (History of Ghana Curriculum for Primary Schools, Basic 1, 2019, p4) His later campaigning is studied in a Basic 5 (primary) unit: "Examine sources of evidence about the role of Dr Joseph Boakye Danquah in the Gold Coast Youth Conference." History of Ghana Curriculum for Primary Schools, Basic 5, 2019, p 37)

Also linked to an Akan heritage, Nkrumah could identify in some ways too with these lines of thought. His major interest, that of achieving Ghanaian independence was driven by his energetic activist Pan-Africanism, fuelled by left-wing socialist and even Marxist radical egalitarian ideals, but also by American civil rights aspirations. Over Nkrumah's years at the centre of Gold Coast – then Ghanaian – government (1951-1966), his nationalism and philosophy would be accompanied by adherence to an increasingly authoritarian style. Nevertheless, the fact that Ghana would be the fourth former colonial jurisdiction (after India, Pakistan and Ceylon) to gain independence from Britain says much for Nkrumah's commitment and energy.

With the others, evidence of this bridging process between the traditional and the modern can be seen in Busia's University of Oxford DPhil thesis of 1947, subsequently published in 1951, 'The position of the chief in the modern political system of Ashanti: A study of the influence of contemporary social changes on Ashanti political institutions'; and in Danquah's 1928 work *Gold Coast: Akan laws and customs and the Akim Abuakwa Constitution*. Danquah had worked with Nkrumah, drawing on pre-colonial history to find a suitable name for the new jurisdiction, that is Ghana. Already trained as a teacher, with experience in the Gold Coast, Nkrumah went to the USA. While first at Lincoln University and then at the Ivy League University of Pennsylvania, he gained two master's degrees, one in Philosophy, the other in Education. He worked with the American linguist William Everett Welmers, providing the spoken material that formed the basis of the first descriptive grammar of his native Fante dialect of the Akan language.

Despite their common interests and originally shared political party, later, both Joseph Boakye Danquah and Kofi Abrefa Busia would fall foul of Nkrumah. Danquah stood against Nkrumah in the 1960 presidential election. No stranger to prison as he had been detained, indeed with Nkrumah himself, from 12 March 1948 for a month after the Accra riots, Danquah was arrested then detained from 3 October 1961 to 22 June 1962; and again, from 8 January 1964, dying in custody of a heart attack, aged 69, on 4 February 1965. Significantly, in 1964 Ghana had been declared a one-party state with Nkrumah president-for-life. However, this was not to be for long, as a military coup would oust Nkrumah on 24 February 1966. He lived in exile until his death in 1972. Danquah was given a national funeral after February 1966 and his status was restored. While in exile, although published after the fall of Nkrumah, Busia would write a strong condemnation of Nkrumah's style of government in his *Africa in search of democracy* (1967).

Key events leading to Ghana's independence: The origin of the 'Big Six' tradition

Dr J.B. Danquah had founded the UGCC in 1947, and it was taken forward by businessman-merchant George 'Paa' Grant, Nkrumah himself, and four other members of the 'Big Six' group (Ebenezer Ako-Adjei, Edward Akufo-Addo, Emmanuel Obetsebi-Lamptey, and William Ofori Atta). There was move to boycott goods imported from Lebanon/Syria and Europe, mainly because of the high prices being asked for them in shops. Another economic factor was the spread of 'swollen shoot', a plant virus affecting the cocoa crop. But a significant example of UGCC activism, and a reminder of protests elsewhere in the British Empire, was their support of veterans of World War Two who were not receiving expected post-war benefits, and a demonstration about this perceived example of injustice at this time of inflation took place outside the Governor's residence at Christiansborg Castle in Accra on 28 February 1948. This led to the shooting of three unarmed ex-soldiers (formerly of the Gold Coast Regiment) by Police Superintendent Colin Imray, his own men having not reacted to his order to open fire. Imray was interviewed about this and the rest of his career in the colonial police by the Imperial War Museum in 1992, the data amounting to 15 reels of film recording (IWM, 1992).

These events led to the Watson Commission (reporting soon after the events, in June 1948) and the Coussey Committee Report (the committee having been established in March 1949) recommending a more inclusive Legislative Assembly under a new constitution. Nkrumah, at odds with the UGCC, described the constitutional proposals as "fraudulent and bogus", forming a break-away party, the Convention People's Party (CPP) in June 1949. The motto of the CPP was "Self-Government, Now", and the CPP adopted a policy of positive action (e.g. strikes) rather than take the constitutional course planned by the new Governor, Charles Arden-Clarke, whose own account was published (1958). Nkrumah would be arrested and only released from prison after the CPP won a majority of seats in the 1951 election. It is worth noting that these events, the commission, committee and report are now studied in Basic 5 and Basic 6 in the 2019 primary history curriculum.

Nkrumah's interventions with education at school and university level (1957-1966)

After independence, there was an urgent need to Africanise the content of History education in Ghana. To combat the Eurocentric nature of the educational system in Ghana, Nkrumah's government took over from the missionaries the full responsibility for Ghana's educational policy and practice. The government created an *Accelerated Development Plan for Education* to carry out its policies. Nkrumah also halted the expansion of missionary schools. However, Botwe-Asamoah (2005) notes that there was no mention of changes in the content of the courses taught to the African students. The government policy was simply an administrative change in terms of material, financial and human resources. Nkrumah's priority in his educational policy was the kind of mass education and adult education designed to enable everyone to become literate. In addition, he believed that the class periods set aside for civics in the schools, which included the study of African history and traditions were, on their own, insufficient to combat centuries of British cultural hegemony in Ghana. Thus, History education after independence (1957) experienced little change in the curriculum. A letter from the Principal Officer of Education to the Minister of Education (29 July, 1957) revealed that the curriculum in the middle school was still based on textbooks by European authors.

In August 1957, several concerns were raised concerning this Syllabus. It was argued that there was insufficient attention paid to West African history with its great ancient empires like the Ghana, Mali, and Songhai Empires but rather focused on European history, remote kings like Louis XIV, or great travellers like Marco Polo instead of Ibn Battuta who contributed so much to West African history. Even with the history of the country, Ward's focus was on the nineteenth-century wars between Asante and the coastal states and interactions with the Europeans on the coast, neglecting the histories of other ethnic groups.

A new Syllabus was drawn up in 1958. It included topics such as the Roman Empire, Christianity, the spread of Islam, Barbarian invasions, Arab influence in Africa, the early history of West Africa including the Mali, Ghana and Songhai Empires, the famous traveller Ibn Battuta, Chinese civilisation, early voyages, the coming of the Europeans into Africa, early history of the Akan, Ewe and Ga, the early civilisation of Egypt, Jews, Iraq, Cretans, Phoenicians, the Indo-European (Aryan) people, Greeks, Persians, and Alexander the Great.

Nkrumah attempted at this time to effect changes in the University's curriculum but met stiff resistance from the faculty and staff who saw it as an infringement on their academic freedom (Ashby 1964, cited in Botwe-Asamoah, 2005). They even tried to prevent Nkrumah from entering the University without authorisation but in reaction Nkrumah stated, "a university must relate its activities to the needs of the society in which it exists" (Ashby, 1964, p.87). Nkrumah's motivation to intervene and reform the University was met with protests not only within the college but also, from all over the world.

Once Ghana gained fully-fledged independence by becoming a republic in 1960, Nkrumah worked on liberating the University of Ghana from what he saw as the grip of imperialists. In May, 1961, a memorandum from Nkrumah to the University stated that "all appointments of members of the academic staff [would] automatically be terminated"(Finlay, 1968, p. 57)when the association with the former degree-awarding body, the University of London, ended. He further indicated that persons would be appointed without re-applying, but it might "be necessary to terminate certain appointments and to revise the conditions of service of others" (Ashby, 1964 cited in Finlay, 1968, p. 57). In his first University address as a chancellor, Nkrumah emphasised that colonial ideas and practices would not be tolerated and that a major task of the universities would be to further "complete mental emancipation and the education of the miseducated [so] that we can achieve ... rapid transformation" (cited in Finlay, 1968, p. 150; and in Botwe-Asamoah, 2005, p. 150).

Scholars have argued that Nkrumah initiated meaningful changes in his quest to Africanise education in general – with emphasis on History education. However, this ideology was misguided. He sought to use his political sentiments to position himself as a power centre from which all course content emanated. According to Finlay (1968), the fear of the Prevention Detention Act kept faculty members silent. Measures implemented to ensure compliance included embedding Party corps leaders within the university, establishing Convention People's Party (CPP) student publications, demanding that all commencing students take a two-week orientation course at the Ideological Institute, reviewing all scholarships annually on the basis of good performance and good conduct, and reconstituting the CPP branches in the universities. An Inspection Committee was appointed to survey all bookshops and libraries, review their book orders, check their holdings and remove publications, which did not reflect the party's ideology (Finlay 1968).

Social studies from 1987 and drives towards curriculum reform from 2017

In 1987, the Ministry of Education and Culture under Mohammed Ben Abdallah noted and proposed that the nation's curricula should:

> inculcate in every child an awareness of history and traditional custom [and should] provide Ghanaians with a sense of cultural dignity and identity so that they can . . . free their minds from dependency on the cultures of other people. (cited in Peterson del Mar, 2012, p. 27)

A series of initiatives by the USA and Britain such as the African Summer study 1961, the Oxford Conference of 1967, the Social Studies Mombasa Conference of 1968, the African Social Studies Programme (ASSP) of 1969, and the 1987 Evans-Anfom Reforms by the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) resulted in making Social Studies a core subject. It recommended the combination of the separate subjects of Geography, History and Civics as a single subject (Boadu, n.d.). Compulsory History at the middle level was replaced with Social Studies because the

curricula of Social Studies was meant to be an interdisciplinary subject which encompassed History, Geography, Economics and Government. It emphasised the holistic integration of nation-building content around relevant issues and topics that included environmental concerns, population, attention to attitudes, values, beliefs and the skills of problem solving (Yalley 2017, p. 101). However, the content of history in the Social Studies curricula was relatively negligible and inconsequential to meet the goal of strengthening the sense of patriotism and national unity. This view was supported by Dwomoh (2018, p. 5) who argued that the light-touch history content in the current Social Studies curriculum (2007) may fade away if care was not taken, although his comments have to be set against the 2017-2019 changes in the primary curriculum (Basic 1 to Basic 6) where history content is considerable.

Peterson del Mar (2012) first questioned why, despite efforts by historians and government to return Africans to their cultural roots, the textbooks in schools appeared to criticise colonial customs while eulogising colonial achievements. He also identified efforts made by the writers of Ghanaian Social Studies and History textbooks to superimpose national identity over cultural identity. In *Social Studies for Senior High Schools*, Boateng (2009) noted that the tendency to identify more with one's ethnicity than with a nation hampers national integration and development. She argued that ethnicity can be dangerous for a nation because it can not only bring conflict, warfare, nepotism, and divisive, ethnic-based politics, but in addition obstruct national integration. Boateng further noted that ethnic music and dance vary greatly from group to group but 'highlife' music and patriotic songs cut across ethnic lines and can make people forget about their affiliation and think of national objectives. She emphasised the need for measures to promote national identity including a common language, which cuts across ethnic lines, and instruction in Ghana's multiple cultures (Boateng, 2009, pp. 28-29). According to Peterson del Mar (2012, pp. 28-29), *Sankofa*, is as much a process of removing "outmoded customs as of preserving those parts of our cultural heritage that are relevant and valuable to the solution of our society's problems and national development." Peterson del Mar (2012) described Ghanaian textbooks as didactic and prescriptive because they embodied a pedagogy that emphasised the mastery of facts over the exploration of dynamic and open-ended processes. He further highlighted that the books were meant for only one purpose, to meet the requirement of the GES (Senior High) syllabus in order to prepare the students for examination.

Peterson del Mar (2012) continued the critique of textbooks' treatment of Ghanaian history and culture and argued that their approach was seen as much more pragmatic than romantic, more conservative than inspiring. Unlike many other accounts, the textbooks did not address uncomfortable subjects such as slavery and female genital mutilation, and their treatment of colonisation was relatively sympathetic. The British were credited with unifying, modernising, and undertaking a civilising mission in Ghana. Traditions that did not serve the interests of unity and progress were presented largely so that they could be dismissed. As a result, there is much to confirm a continuation of a situation described by Massialas in 1975 that the curriculum materials used in schools were not consistent with the social and political systems of Ghana.

As part of the Social Studies syllabus for junior high schools (2007), the Ghana Education Service Syllabus looks at the history of states before colonisation. It discusses migration of ethnic groups into the area now known as Ghana: the traditional homes of the major ethnic groups, reasons for migration, effects of migration on ethnicity, thus justifying the cosmopolitan nature of Ghana; the arrival of Europeans; looking at the reasons why Europeans came to the Gold Coast, methods of trading, missionary work of early Europeans, establishment of schools, the trans-Atlantic slave trade, British colonisation, major political events that led to the independence etc.; cultural expressions in Ghana through marriage, festivals among others (Boateng, 2009; Ibrahim, 2014; Akadi, 2015). At junior secondary level, every student undertakes Social Studies as a compulsory subject which contains elements of history. Beyond that, History is an elective subject and 'Government' as a course also contains elements of history.

After the 1987 changes, and in the 2007 version of Social Studies, the government integrated History as part of the study of Citizenship and Social Studies. It must be noted the content in at least one of the textbooks associated with this course is inconsistent with Ghanaian literature

written by advanced scholars. This highlights the importance of allowing university scholars to have a stronger voice in the control of the production of knowledge. In their textbooks, Ibrahim (2014) and Akadi (2015) enumerated the repercussions of colonial rule on Africa and listed more positive effects than negatives. They include the introduction of formal education by opening schools and colleges, provision of infrastructure, plantation farming, architectural development, machines, common currency, establishment of peace, law and order, bringing all ethnic groups together to form nations, the ending of the slave trade, the development of international trade, common language, cultural enrichment and reduction of ethnic conflict (Ibrahim, 2014, pp. 55-66; Akadi, 2015, p. 38). However, Akadi in chapter three of his work captured the title *Ghana as a Nation* with a subsection on 'History of Ghana from 4th to 13th century', causing confusion by creating the notion of the existence of a nation before colonial rule. Most of the textbooks project an allegiance to the state above ethnic loyalty and neglect to stress the fact that allegiance to an ethnic group not only progressed to allegiance to the state but that the two allegiances are not necessarily incompatible (Akadi, 2015).

The latest change to History education is the effort made from 2017 by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) to start a process which will eventually include a history curriculum for all three stages of education: primary, middle and secondary. This is unprecedented because History has remained an optional subject since the 1987 educational reforms. This new primary curriculum focuses mostly on pre-independence events with only a little extension into post-independence Ghana, although the age of the students' needs to be borne in mind (NaCCA, Ministry of Education, *History of Ghana Curriculum for Primary Schools [Basic 1-6]*, 2019).

From the tradition of a single founder to a more pluralistic tradition

From independence to the present, there has always been contention about whether or not Ghana has a founder or founders. After Ghana became a republic in 1960, Nkrumah sought to place himself at the centre of the narrative of both teaching and learning within the universities by setting the pace for the Africanisation of African history. This, in the long run, has affected views relating to Ghana's foundations. Nkrumah purported to be the founder of Ghana's independence without any recourse to his previous political allies and later opponents such as the other members of the 'Big Six' whose influence and platform led to his emergence on the political scene. On the other hand, the Danquah-Busia traditions are associated with two political parties which flourished in the 1957-1966 period at the crucial time of independence. These are the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) and the United Party (UP), and their existence shows that another political tradition existed as well as Nkrumah's Convention People's Party, so Nkrumah cannot be regarded as the sole founder of Ghana, for without the political platform provided by the UGCC, he could not have mobilised the nationalists to fight for independence. Lentz (2017, p. 252) notes that Nkrumah's opponents saw his attempt to erect his statue, coins and stamp as a presumptuous gesture of self-aggrandisement and self-stylisation in national paraphernalia.

Scholarship in Ghana's history succinctly treats national independence periodically and thematically according to the role each person or party has played. To illustrate with a few works, Adu-Boahen (1975), Buah (1998), Grocking (2005), Amenumey (2008), look at a range of early nationalist groups such as the Aborigines Rights Protection Society, the National Congress of British West Africa, the West African Student Union, the Gold Coast Youth Conference as well as post-Second World War political parties such as the United Gold Coast Convention, Convention People's Party, National Liberation Movements, Northern Peoples Party, Togoland Congress among others. Each group played its part in the attainment of self-government and subsequently independence, and demonstrated that political pluralism in working towards this aim was possible. In Nkrumah's defence, Adu-Boahen (1975, pp. 155-162) argues, among other things, that without the emergence of Kwame Nkrumah as the secretary within the party, it would have remained an essentially elitist and bourgeoisie urban party. Nkrumah's youthful exuberance,

Marxist and communist orientation and pan-Africanism outlook greatly accelerated the UGCC into a mass-based party.

Similarly, Amenumey (2008) analyses the formation of the UGCC by the conservative and moderate political elite such as those who became members of the 'Big Six; group (J. B. Danquah, Obetsebi Lamptey, E. A. W. Ofori Atta, Edward Akufo-Addo, Ako Adjei) and, in addition George Grant, R. S. Blay, R. A. Awoonor Williams, and J. W. de Graft Johnson. Since they could not dedicate themselves fully to the tasks of political struggle, Ako Adjei recommended the services of Kwame Nkrumah. Nkrumah in 1949 broke away to form the CPP due to ideological and methodological differences. Through his aggressive stance, independence was won (Amenumey 2008).

Gocking (2005) also emphasises the role of Nkrumah and the CPP in the fight for independence. Though he analyses the UGCC as part of the nationalistic groups that were formed after the Second World War, he dedicates a chapter to the CPP and its leadership role in the independence struggle without doing the same for the UGCC. He presents the UGCC as a conservative group that sought to replace chiefs on the Legislative Council and received the blame for the 1948 riot by Governor Gerald Creasy. Nkrumah on the other hand is presented as the actual figure solidly behind Ghana's quest for independence.

In capturing concepts of nationalism and the fight for independence, F. K. Buah (1998) lumps the formation of organisations such as the Association of West African Merchants (AWAM), the 1948 boycott of (Chief) Nii Kwabena Bonne, and the UGCC together as associations formed out of the frustration of the Gold Coast merchants. Buah and Gocking present Nkrumah as a nationalist and pan-Africanist whose passion about Africa attracted the attention of the intelligentsia because they themselves were too busy and conservative for the fight for independence. Therefore, Nkrumah's personality and charisma, his ability to draw in Ghanaian youth and workers was what won him popularity and eventually led to independence (Buah 1998, pp. 152-153; Gocking 2005, p. 91). Therefore, these works acknowledge the existence of a political culture and personalities before the emergence of Nkrumah. However, their objective was not one which sought for immediate independence as did Nkrumah. These works mentioned above have remained very influential in the teaching and learning of history in Ghana. They help to explain why Nkrumah has remained a central figure in the narrative of Ghana's history.

This contested set of traditions has been inherited by the two dominant parties in contemporary Ghana, the NPP (New Patriotic Party, now associated with the Danquah-Busia tradition) (Nkrumah's opponents) and the NDC (National Democratic Congress, Nkrumah's proponents). When ex-President Mills declared 21 September as Founder's Day in 2009, there was opposition from the main opposition party, the NPP. In 2017, on assuming office, President Akuffo Addo quickly effected changes to fit his party's philosophy that Ghana does not have just one founder. The 21 September public holiday was re-named Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Day, and 4 August was declared Founders' Day. This has popularly been tagged as the 'power of the apostrophe' by several scholars including Elizabeth Ohene who notes how a national debate can erupt as a result of an apostrophe (Ohene, 2019).

In order to reverse what they consider as the Nkrumah-centred historical narrative, the NPP government in their *History of Ghana Curriculum for Primary Schools (Basic 1-6)* (NaCCA, Ministry of Education, 2019) has initiated the process of not only making history compulsory but also, as has been seen, the inclusion of all pioneers and contemporary personalities who have contributed to Ghana's independence. Included in the Syllabus is the formation of the UGCC and CPP as well as the contribution of these two parties towards the independence of Ghana. All of the 'Big Six' names are studied to teach their individual and collective roles in the independence struggle. The uniqueness of this curriculum is that it does not only focus on political leadership but makes efforts to include personalities who, from independence to the present, have contributed diversely to Ghana's development. The following personalities and their contributions are studied:

Basic 1
Theodosia Okoh – National flag
Amon Kotei – Coat of Arms
Baba Yara – Football for Ghana
Ephraim Amu – Music
Kofi Antubam – Art and craft
Kow Ansah – Film
Mrs Charity Zormelo-Fiawoo – first woman university graduate
Squadron Leader Melody Danquah – First female pilot
Elizabeth Ohene – First female editor of a national newspaper (Daily Graphic)
Justice Georgina Wood – First female Chief Justice (and)
Justice Joyce Bamford-Addo – First female Speaker of Parliament

Basic 3
George Grant – Businessman
Winifred Tete-Ansa, Esther Ocloo – Nkulenu Industries
B.A. Mensah – Pioneer Tobacco Ltd.
Kwabena Pepra – Paramount Distilleries
J.K. Siaw – Tata Brewery
Alhaji Adam Iddrisu – Global Haulage

Basic 5
Dr R.E.G Armattoe – Science and Medicine
Kofi Annan – international diplomacy
Osibisa – popular music
El Anatsui – sculptor
David Adjaye – Architect
Ozwald Boateng – fashion
Efua Sutherland – playwright
Prof Francis Allotey – science and History
Prof Akua Kuenyehia – law
Prof. Frimpong Boateng – Surgeon
Abedi Ayew 'Pele' – Football
Azumah Nelson –Boxing

Table 1: Personalities who from independence to the present
have contributed diversely to Ghana's development

Source: NaCCA, Ministry of Education,
History of Ghana Curriculum for Primary Schools (Basic 1-6), 2019, pp. 2-46

Conclusions

Knowledge production and the associated process of its dissemination are key ingredients to the success of society, and the wielders of powers will always want to determine what kind of knowledge this is, and how it is produced. It is supposed to be objective, an independent venture devoid of political interference, yet the teaching and production of historical knowledge in schools and universities havealways been subject to political influences. Different epochs in history affect differently how history is written and studied. The colonial Eurocentric perception of the backwardness of Africa affected the production of historical knowledge as history education glorified Europe at the expense of Africa. Immediately after independence, there were efforts by both legitimate and military juntas to determine what is produced as history. These governments have sought to influence history to make it fit their own agendas. This explains why the dominant political traditions in Ghana: the Nkrumahist and the Danquah-Busia traditions have featured prominently in the production and study of historical narratives. The two main competing political ideologies have sought to use political power to influence how history is written and studied (see Armah, 2019; and Lartey, 2019). Another key element of history production is the

subtle divorce between historical scholarship and what is produced in the textbooks as history. While Ghanaian history scholars have written to decolonise scholarship, this is not reflected in the textbooks produced for primary schools, nor for junior and senior high schools.

Arising from the literature published within the colonial and postcolonial eras, it is possible to assert that the first university in Ghana and the universities and colleges, which emerged from the 1920s, produced African scholars who pushed forward the production or development of a new approach to writing and the production of African history in Africa and Ghana in particular. The debate continued into the post-independence era, and this included the spectacle of the new African government, specifically Nkrumah, seeking to infiltrate the ranks of the university. The indigenisation of systems and knowledge was promoted and Africans' participation in the training of their own kind necessitated the expansion of new ideas concerning Africa's and Ghana's intellectual epiphany, which would gradually erode and further challenge the Eurocentric status quo.

The closest possible solution to permit the curriculum to be politically neutral lies within the domain of intellectuals from Ghana's universities who are not politically tainted. When such a class of intellectuals produce historical documents or design a syllabus, which has been subjected to appropriate intellectual scrutiny or critique, it stands to pass the test of what we refer to as proper historiography. It is also crucial to emphasise that the content of the history books is as vital as the syllabus/curriculum designed to teach history in Ghana.

Finally, it is necessary to summarise how the debate has evolved. Initially it focused on a contrast between A.G. Fraser's call for the training of Africans where they would embrace dual cultures – African and the global arena, including Europe – as against the model espoused by Ward and others. The latter group's paradigm of history education was anchored in forms of teaching and learning which placed the African and the Ghanaian at the very centre and core of study with a commendable element of intellectual rigour. In many ways this is what Nkrumah wanted too. The Danquah-Busia tradition involves some cross-pollination between Afro-centric and democratic political ideas, particularly the co-existence of different political traditions or parties. Although Fraser's concept of education in the Achimotan system contrasted with the concept of W.E.F. Ward and David Balme (Principal of the University College of the Gold Coast, 1948-1957), there was not a great deal of difference between them. It is significant to emphasise that although those debates were valid at the time, the current debates on History education in Ghana draw on the relationship between History education and political ideology, and highlight a possible tension between party political loyalty and an understanding of knowledge bases that can contribute to a plural democratic system. It is thus essential to balance attempts by political interest groups who wish to project the glory of any one particular historical and political hero with a more scholarly awareness of the complexity of independence narratives in Ghana's history and in the record of history education in Ghana. To ensure such a disciplinary approach in this enterprise, an ongoing but rigorous dialogue between university historians, government and teachers of history will be essential. The desirable outcome, enabling pupils and students to come to their own conclusions, should be that which gives the critical tools to use evidence informed by awareness of varied but relevant scholarly works and interpretations.

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Dialogues over decolonisation in East Africa: A case study of History education in Uganda

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates History education in Uganda by interrogating data emerging from interviews with secondary History teachers. Two strands of literature are brought to the data analysis: one strand relates to how decolonisation has been conceptualised in interpretations of History education in Uganda; a second strand relates to what the most appropriate pedagogies might be to underpin History teaching and learning in this postcolonial setting. The pedagogical text is informed by the work of Bruner, Vygotsky and Hedegaard. This work feeds into reflections on how mutuality (Boyanton, 2015) and opportunities for dialogue, ownership and internalisation might be established and developed. We explore how psychological, social, emotional and cultural aspects of learning play a part in establishing a link between identity, relevance and significance which takes into account how teachers and learners give and receive value through a search for authenticity. The research findings confirm the need for students to be able to see themselves in the narrative, but they also include recognition of a broader imperative to understand the personal and local within wider regional and global contexts.

KEYWORDS

Decolonisation, History education, Inclusion, Cultural rediscovery, Mutual value theory, Ownership

CITATION

Introduction

Decolonisation is a central and yet problematic concept in social sciences education, and there are many questions surrounding it. Decolonisation in Africa is a social project dating from the 1950s and 1960s, which entails three discourses involving post-colonial Africans. These discourses include among other things: power to self-govern (self-governing nation-states); power relating to ownership of the economy and economic resources; and power to run and design education systems. In this paper, we focus on decolonisation in a broader sense to elucidate and position History education as one of the essential tools post-colonial African governments employed immediately after Independence to seek to throw off colonial influence in East Africa, taking Uganda as a case study.

We conceptualise decolonisation from three viewpoints:

1. Decolonisation according to Senghor (1971) is the abolition of all prejudice and all sense of a superiority complex in the mind of the coloniser and also of all elements contributing to an inferiority complex in the minds of the colonised.

2. We draw from the work of the Kenyan writer, Wa Thiong'o (1986) on decolonising thinking and acting. He suggested that a sound educational policy is one which enables students to study the culture and environment of their own society first and then apply those understandings in relation to the culture and environment of other societies.

3. Decolonisation is viewed as embracing and valuing local perspectives and not solely the perspectives of the colonisers and their allies. It is important to incorporate indigenous languages and cultures into the curriculum in a more meaningful and systematic manner (Mampane, Omiride & Aluka, 2018).

There is an unfolding global debate about decolonisation linking both to what schools and universities teach and whether curricula are relevant to today's students. Post-colonial East African governments worked to Africanise their curricula from elementary (primary in some jurisdictions) to tertiary levels (Ssekamwa & Lugumba, 2001; Mngomezulu & Hadebe, 2018). Social Studies (and the disciplinary areas of History and Civics) took the lead in conscientizing young people and the public in general about their culture, history and survival as people. School syllabuses were reshaped to make them more relevant and sympathetic to African indigenous knowledge and less European-oriented. Across East African nations, Tanzania made an initial effort to achieve this by the Education Ordinance of 1962 and Uganda and Kenya by the Education Acts of 1964 and 1965 respectively.

Debates and trends in the decolonisation of history education in Africa

The term decolonisation is rooted in the mid-twentieth-century anti-colonial movements in Africa and Asia that sought to dismantle European colonial rule, as well as promote indigenous self-determination and antiracist social movements in settler colonial and European nations during the 1960s and 1970s. Although several notable moments and steps have punctuated decolonisation efforts, it may be understood as a set of diverse, ongoing dialogical conversations, rather than a distinct event or set of events (Stein & Andreotti, 2016). While it is not a central focus of this paper to argue why History education is important, the authors follow Chiodo and Byford (2004) in seeing History as a school subject whose role, among others, is to orient learners towards the beliefs and values of all cultures in order to understand the world and enable learners

to participate in it. History education involves learning about past events to recover the history, culture and languages of colonised peoples and, applying these understandings, to inform and influence the present (Grange, 2016).

One of the most debated questions in History education is whether decolonisation is possible in Africa, and indeed elsewhere, if education – and learning history in particular – continues being conducted in the languages of the colonial masters (Brock-Utne, 2016; Ramoupi, 2014). Ramoupi contends that for effective teaching and learning, students should be taught History and other subjects in a language that supports the creation of knowledge and skills that connects them directly to their culture and heritage. The idea of teaching African history in the languages of the colonial masters (English, French or any other European language) echoes the colonial legacy and can be seen as the product of colonial education in Africa. In order to realise a true decolonisation in history education, there is a need to contest the language hegemony. That is to say, History in Uganda needs to be taught in the languages that connect learners to their history and heritage. However, since Uganda houses several indigenous languages, there is a continuous debate on a univocal language that cuts across all Ugandan schools. Kiswahili, which is officially used in Kenya and Tanzania, has since been proposed together with a dominant language used in the particular region where the school is located. It is difficult to develop ideas and beliefs through the language of the former colonial oppressor. Such awareness is helpful to avoid making History classrooms (and indeed other lessons) a colonising space. We argue for the need to decolonise History content and pedagogy and make it relevant to indigenous students.

The current situation of history education in Uganda

Studying the colonial episode of History education in Uganda (Holmberg, 2017) begins at primary level where children are taught Social Studies under the theme of living together. History is compulsory at the Ordinary level (O-level) and taken as an optional subject at the Advanced level (A-level). This assessment nomenclature was a British legacy. The History curriculum at O-level places emphasis on widening students' understanding of the political, social and economic development of East Africa, and Africa in general. The O-level History curriculum, which has been in existence since colonial times, is criticised for being knowledge-based with little emphasis on skills, values and an inadequate focus on the issues faced by today's learners (Uganda Media Center Blog, 2020). The curriculum is based on British written accounts that harbour a Eurocentric colonial mentality and focuses on studying the history of Europeans in Uganda (Mino, 2011). This Eurocentric focus is also reflected in the way History is taught, embracing largely the same didactic instructional methods used by the missionaries and Europeans during the colonial period (Mino, 2011; Holmberg, 2017). Most schools in Uganda take European History: 1789-1970 at their A-level as an option to other papers. As a result, high school students obtain epistemic ideas on European history that may not closely align with their own history in Uganda. This is not to suggest however that, the coverage of European History: 1789-1970 as a case study is pointless. But it would seem necessary first to identify the most important factor needed to decolonise history education in Uganda; and what emerges is a strong case for the inclusion of Ugandan history itself which is largely absent in the Secondary curriculum at both O-level and A-level. This means an inclusion of Uganda's political, economic, social and cultural aspects so that students (and indeed their teachers) feel represented in the academic version of the History curriculum. Several steps and studies have been undertaken in Uganda on decolonising the curriculum and related pedagogies through curriculum review processes at the elementary/primary level (Altinyelken, 2010; Sikoyo, 2011); secondary level (Nambi, 2018); and higher education (Mamdani, 2016). These studies have mostly focused on aligning the curriculum to the local context, local languages, learner needs, life skills and learner-centred pedagogies.

Dialogues over the decolonisation of history education at the secondary school level in Uganda are reflected in the lower secondary school curriculum reforms that were implemented in February 2020. In fulfilment of the recommendations of the Government White Paper (1992), the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) through the National Curriculum Development Centre

(NCDC), embarked on reviewing the lower secondary curriculum to focus on concepts, attitudes, skills and values (Uganda Media Centre Blog, 2020). The four-year revised curriculum for History and Political Education transits from a knowledge-based curriculum to a competence- and skills-based curriculum that seeks to foster deep learning by placing the learner at the centre of the learning process (MoES & NCDC, Lower Secondary Curriculum History and Political Education Syllabus, n.d.). These schemes recognize that teacher-instruction is not enough and that ownership and internalisation can only take place through the medium of active learning.

All students who joined Senior One (February 2020) enrolled on the revised curriculum for History and Political Education. The content of History and Political Education entails the following thematic areas. For Senior One: Understanding our past; Senior Two: Colonisation and the struggle for Independence; Senior Three: Uganda; Senior Four: Interactions with the world (MoES & NCDC, n.d.). The related recommended pedagogy aligns to an approach where the teacher is a facilitator and guide of the respective learning activities. In addition to this, there is a requirement for the integration of ICT in the learning processes, including debates, group discussions, project work, field visits to historical sites and cultural institutions, as the employed learning activities feed in to generic skills such as communication, critical thinking, problem solving, creativity and digital skills. This connection between the study of the past and students' needs certainly enhances their motivation in learning about the past (Stockdill & Moje, 2013). The nature of student-teacher relationships in the study of History can be a complex one and is explored in the next section using a range of theories which contribute to understanding (a) how individuals might gain a greater sense of ownership and internalisation; (b) how students might feel a deeper sense of authenticity and empowerment in transactions between themselves and their teachers; and (c) how different groups in the class might recognise the need for an increased sense of mutual value in seeking to understand each other, especially when different identities are involved.

Theoretical underpinnings

The idea of a more dialogic (and mutualist) approach links the African indigenous oral tradition to some twentieth-century 'advances' in pedagogical thinking, such as are found in the work of Vygotsky (1896-1934) on the role of the significant 'other' in learning through the 'zone of proximal development' (e.g. in the 1978 and 1986 translations of his work), and Bruner (1915-2016) on involving even the youngest children in the essential discipline of a subject (1966) through a 'spiral' curriculum. Bruner himself in a later work (1996) described knowledge as 'what is shared within discourse, within a 'textual' community'; and Hedegaard (1990) developed this, drawing on a Vygotskian paradigm. This approach might also draw on Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of *cognitive apprenticeship* as *situated cognition*. The model could involve children (or students) working intensively like apprentices in a traditional trade, learning from a 'master' (or mistress) of that trade or skill. Thus, listening could be enhanced with an element of questioning and interacting. Hedegaard (1990) saw Vygotskian scaffolding as bridging the distance between understood knowledge, as provided by instruction, and active knowledge, as owned by individuals. The key concept here, which links with the decolonisation, both of the curriculum and the mind, is 'ownership', and this involves more self-awareness, participation and internalisation in the process of gaining knowledge.

The relevance of mutual value theory (MVT)

Mutual value theory (MVT), within the broader family of social constructivism, is a formulation of Dengting Boyanton (2015) in the field of educational psychology. It can also be applied to an active approach to decolonisation and reclaiming ownership. The theory draws from other learning theories including: the social cognitive perspectives of Bandura (1986) and the constructivism of Bruner (1966, 1996) and Vygotsky (1978, 1986). MVT acknowledges that despite the fact that the previous learning theories differed in terms of key conditions for learning

to occur, still they supplemented each other. The central element for learning as brought in by MVT is value (Boyanton, 2015). Boyanton argues that it is unrealistic to claim that factor A affects learning (as established in the previous theories of learning). The more important thing is how much value students assign to factor A and it is therefore the assigned value that will determine the quality of their learning motive and efforts. This is particularly relevant in postcolonial settings where regaining value becomes a driving force. Principally, mutual value theory builds on two key elements, each having implications for teachers and learners if learning is to occur in the classroom context. The first are what Boyanton calls authenticity factors (non-cognitive) which relate to the psychological, social, emotional and cultural aspects of learning (Boyanton, 2015, p.13). This is particularly relevant in embracing authentic individuality in the classroom and celebrating the different narratives that students might bring to history lessons. Secondly, MVT is concerned with cognitive factors (powerfulness) which involves directly using students' cognitive faculties in learning, and moving to a mode where teachers and students are acting in mutual recognition as co-learners. Finding authenticity and gaining a sense of personal empowerment are very relevant in curriculum decolonisation debates (see also Bertram, 2019).

Identity and dialogue

MVT theory emphasises the importance of a mutual exchange of value as an underpinning element in dialogue in the classroom context where the student and the teacher can each function at the same time as a value-assigner (giving value to others) and a value-receiver (who can take value judgement from others). For meaningful learning to occur, the quality of the dialogue should demonstrate that students value one another, value what the teacher is teaching, value the subject matter and value the way each is involved and how s/he participates in the lesson both emotionally and cognitively. Correspondingly, the teacher should value her/his learners and provide participative and representative learning activities which take into account both cognitive and non-cognitive factors in order to create powerful learning. Consequently, valuing one another is strongly linked with respecting different identities, and appreciating that those identities may carry diverse narratives and perspectives. Valuing can extend from the classroom and school out into the wider community, drawing on the concept of dialogue as a mutual exchange of understandings.

The colonial experience reduced African higher education to a tool of communication between the coloniser and the colonised with African indigenous knowledge rarely featuring in this interaction (Adebisi, 2016). Adebisi argued that this educational incompatibility led to a significant level of unemployment, erosion of African cultures, as well as language problems with a limited focus on the needs of the African child. History education should emphasise a practice that focuses on learners' family, cultural and local needs if they are to see the importance of learning about the past. And yet, decolonisation cannot achieve a return to precolonial Africa because acculturation is also a fact of history, and not only in Africa. Formal education cannot be wholly replaced by indigenous knowledge: decolonisation should point forwards, not backwards. This can be achieved through an equal relationship of dialogue so that education 'expresses the consciousness' of the teachers and students. In this paper, we closely align with the recommendation of Wa Thiong'o (1986) for a sound educational policy which enables students to study the culture and environment of their own society first, then in relation to the culture and environment of other societies.

Historical thinking and decolonisation

This paper explores and interprets the construct of the decolonisation of History education through the lens of Ugandan secondary History teachers' perspectives, underpinned by a range of both general and history-specific pedagogical theories as well as literature on decolonisation. These literatures (theories of pedagogy and of decolonisation) can intersect, especially as the current vogue for historical thinking (Seixas & Morton, 2013) suggests opportunities to engage locally and individually with the concepts of historical significance, evidence, continuity and

change, cause and consequence, historical perspectives, and the ethical dimension. The internal histories of peoples and nations in East Africa offer ample opportunities and evidence to illustrate all of these historical thinking concepts, and – because of their proximity and relevance – for both teachers and learners to take ownership of them. The research inquiry included an exploration of the content knowledge taught to students at O-level and related pedagogies and well as exploring teachers' suggestions around the content knowledge and pedagogies aimed at decolonising the curriculum.

Research questions and working hypotheses

This paper focuses on addressing two research questions:

1. What are the History teachers' perspectives on the topics/content taught and pedagogies related to slavery and colonialism at O-level?; and

2. What are the possible ways of decolonising the History curriculum and related pedagogies at O-level?

The data collection method chosen involved interviews with open-ended questions with Ugandan history teachers in order to evaluate their thinking about history education. The results were analysed in the light of the working hypotheses below:

1. A need for ***ownership*** (including a sense both of ***belonging*** and ***attachment***) at the level of process and inquiry in order to engage with the narrative.

2. In connection with this, a recognition of the importance of the use of ***dialogue*** (conversation, listening, discussion, discourse, debate as well as collaboration and negotiation); moving towards a model in which knowledge is seen as ***an exchange of understanding*** between learners, across the community, and between learner and teacher.

3. A need to seek and/or recognise (i) ***mutuality*** in dialogue and (ii) ***mutual value***. This may involve ***empathy, standing in other people's shoes***, as well as understanding the ***moral consequences of actions in the past*** from the viewpoint of contemporaries and from the present.

4. ***Inclusion*** of all students, especially marginalised groups; this involves a recognition that others have different identities.

5. Finding ***relevance*** and ***significance*** in the curriculum to current concerns.

6. Finding links between ***ownership*** and ***identities***.

7. Developing ***independence*** and ***criticality*** in attitudes to the sources and narrative(s) and an ability to ***think historically***; a willingness to complicate and disrupt the narrative is included in this*.*

8. A recognition that answers will ***anticipate, reflect or fulfil or even challenge*** the expectations embedded in the ***decolonisation literature***.

Participants' background information

Participants included 24 secondary school teachers from three types of schools in Central Uganda: government-aided (10); privately owned (12); and church-founded (2). Gender was as follows: male (14); and female (10). Numbers associated with three levels of qualifying education were pre-service teacher-training (7); Bachelor's degree (12); and Master's degree (5). Experience of teaching fell into four groups: 0-5 years (10); 6-10 years (4); 11-15 years (2); and more than 16 years (8). The level of teaching was Ordinary (O) Level (8); Advanced (A) Level (8); and both O- and A-level (8).

Findings: History teachers' perspectives

Research question 1: How significance depends on relevance in the content taught

Twenty of the participants indicated that the history content knowledge taught around colonialism, slavery and imperialism was relevant but should be taught in such a way that it has an influence on students' lives in the present and is aligned to students' day-to-day life experiences. This was reflected in an excerpt from a participant's response to the semi-structured questionnaire:

> Topics on the above theme should be taught in the history classroom because the current generation should understand the African past and why Africa is the way it is today. This will enable them to appreciate and find solutions and make decisions in the current situations. These form part of our past which has greatly impacted our present way of life and will automatically affect our future. (Participant 6)

Another participant added:

> Learners should know how colonialism has influenced and shaped East Africa's development and underdevelopment. Moreover, learners can know how underdevelopment in Africa is influenced or engineered by the western world. These enable learners to obtain knowledge and evolution of the present Independent African governments. (Participant 16)

Other participants similarly underlined the importance of curriculum content aligning to learners' lives in the present and the importance not only of reflexive pedagogy but also of critical thinking, and moving away from the culture of the right answer. This clearly relates to Hypothesis 7.

> The methods used to teach such topics ought to be reflective in nature. Reflection on the benefits of colonialism for example, the formal education helped in fighting ignorance; they introduced new technological skills in roads, health etc.; these enable learners to think critically that in case they are faced with problems these topics also help both the learner and the teacher to know what happened in the past and they can relate the past and the present to influence the future. (Participant 10)

> The curriculum must bear in mind a) critical thinking, b) integration. Critical thinking on the side of the learner so as to produce thinkers who are answer-orientated [rather] than [just] rehearsing the historical facts. (Participant 2)

On the other hand, a minority of the teachers (4 out of the 24 participants) indicated that themes around colonisation, imperialism and slavery should not be included on the History Syllabus. Two participants noted:

> These topics don't in any way stimulate critical thinking and innovation as they are [too] distant to enhance interactive development with future generation learners. (Participant 2)

> Remove topics on collaboration and resistance and give more attention to post-Independence history [because] there is need to focus on the contemporary needs of society. I don't see the relevance of such knowledge to my students and its application in problem solving. (Participant 9)

Use of dialogue and mutuality in the pedagogies used

Out of the 24 participants, 15 revealed that they preferred to use dialogical and active learning methods in teaching about the past. Interactive methods included: group discussions, inquiry methods, demonstration, questioning, debate and role-play. Asked about the rationale for engaging in dialogical methods of teaching history, the following responses provide a sample of their perspectives:

> In a group discussion, the students will be grouped to represent different trade routes: southern, northern and central routes. Inquiry introduces the learner to what colonialism is, so as to integrate European colonialism into their analysis of trading patterns and engage in the discussion on this basis. They highly involve the consumer who is the student. Less is heard from the producer who is a teacher. Hence, research skills are developed with ease. (Participant 2)

> Discovery and inquiry methods because they enable the students to discover their own ideas on various historical aspects and widen inquiries to be connected. While demonstration helps the student to put and have a clear picture of what really happened in the past. (Participant 6)

> Such methods enable the History teacher to 'freely' interact with his/her students that is crucial in the teaching and learning process. Students also find a role to play for example in group discussions. (Participant 7)

Research question 2: What are the possible ways of decolonising the History Curriculum and related pedagogies at O-level?

To obtain responses for research question 2, we sought examples of how decolonisation vis-a-vis the History curriculum was being addressed. The emerging themes of inclusion, ownership, relevance and dialogue arising from the data are notable. What follows is a list of suggested topics that cater for decolonisation of the curriculum for inclusion in Uganda's post-Independence History curriculum.

Inclusion

Out of the 24 participants, 20 agreed that there is need for deeper and wider inclusion of political, economic and social elements in the history of Uganda in the Ordinary Level History Syllabus. This is reflected in the qualitative perspectives below:

> Students need to know Uganda history more especially the history after Independence, also cultural heritage, geopolitics, family and the history of various local places should be included in the curriculum because students need to know why everything is the way it is today. (Participant 6)

> I don't feel part of the History curriculum; with exception of the Buganda Kingdom and the Bantu migration more is needed about how these Ethnic groups helped to shape the cottage Industry. For example, how did the Baganda develop the country? (Participant 2)

The comments of Participant 2 about the Baganda imply a demand for more depth and criticality to the study of that tribal group. Other tribes are mentioned as being there, such as Ngoni, Bantu, Luo, and Plain Nilotics (also Participant 2), but there was a sense that some tribes did not have sufficient presence, like the Banyole in Butaleja district in Eastern Uganda, or the Iteso and Sabiny (Participants 16 and 17), or the Basoga and the Batoro (Participant 17). Here there is reference to the concern of the classic postcolonial author, Wa Thiong'o (1986), about the use of local languages (Participant 12). The importance of providing (and respecting) local contextualisation was also explored in the work of Altinyelken (2010). Interest was expressed by participants here

as elsewhere about investigating how local governmental structures were organised (Participant 2), and how justice was administered and disputes settled in different parts of Uganda (Participant 11).

Participants often articulated a need to include the history of all of Uganda's current ethnicities including the minority groups. For example: the Bagungu, Batwa, Bamba, Bavuma, Lendu, Kakwa, Bakenyi, Bakonjo, the Kia in Kasese and Alur in Northern Uganda, as well as the Basongora and Banyabindi in Western Uganda. To illustrate this point one participant had these observations:

> I don't feel represented in the curriculum because we are a minority group. I just hear from rumours but nothing has been written down about my own tribe, Batwa. We are taught too much of Buganda and other centralised regions as a dominant tribe. (Participant 16)

There were also some perceptive comments touching on the nature of government and how democratic processes, conflict resolution and international relations have worked in the past, as well as how Africans understood the meaning of human rights. Here is a collection of the range of subjects and themes other participants wanted to see included:

> Economic Integration into the East African Community. (6 participant responses)

> The Ugandan Economy before and after Independence. (3 participant responses)

> The economic systems of various regimes, e.g. Common Man Charter 1969, Economic war 1972; 1971 coup in Uganda and the expulsion of Ugandan Asians (4 participant responses).

> The mixed economy of the 1980s, the Etandikwa 'Prosperity for All' Schemes 1995 and 2006, privatisation 1999, NAADS (The National Agriculture Advisory Services) and Operation Wealth Creation, as well as economic activities like trading, hunting and agriculture, i.e. Buganda, like coffee growing. (Participant 5)

> The political party state in Uganda to cater for the roles in state- and nation-building, challenges, positive contribution of political parties in Uganda and the future of political parties. Political developments/transition/change in Uganda since Independence; post-Independence governance in Uganda from 1962 to-date, the political crisis in Uganda 1966-67. (7 responses)

> Democratic programmes, e.g. Constitution/constitutionalism/constitutional history of in Uganda since Independence: 1962; 1967; 1995. (10 responses)

> The NRM Revolution 1986-2020/to-date (contemporary history); the history of personalities of liberation leaders especially the NRA/war, NRM; NRM Liberation War. (9 responses)

> 1980-86 Luweero Civil War. Relationship between of Uganda and her neighbours. Documenting the history of Uganda; Post-Independence prospects and challenges (historiography of Uganda is sketched and not detailed). The 1992 White Paper; Devonshire White Paper and Ssenteza Kajubi Report, roles of Africans in civilising fellow African[s]. (5 responses)

> Key personalities in Uganda's history; contribution of post-Independence leaders and rebels in Uganda covering their strengths and weaknesses; Milton Obote, Idi Amin, Yusuf Lule, Okello, Lutwa, Yoweri Museveni and rebels like Kony need more attention. (5 responses)

> Also, coverage of how Africans in the past resolved conflicts; how Africans understood human rights. How leaders involved their masses – inclusive leadership; how Africans maintained peace and justice. (4 responses)

The mention of constitutional history by 10 participants (above) feeds into a sense of what the ingredients might be for higher levels of citizenship education. Concerning the reasons why the suggested topics (above) should be included under the themes of Decolonisation, Independence, Post-Independence and Contemporary period, was this comment:

> It helps to tackle the political challenges Uganda has been facing since Independence: It enables us to promote our culture since it is one of the aims of Education: inculcating cultural aspects in very important. (Participant 13)

Ownership: Aspects of Cultural/ Family History covered by the History Curriculum

The research findings also revealed the cultural importance of decolonising the History curriculum. The excerpts below illustrate this further.

> There is need to decolonise the History curriculum because we need to make our students love and appreciate their cultures other than learning about abstract European history. They need to love their cultures, dressing codes, social ways, language and backgrounds. African students need to love their cultures, identify as much as the Europeans love our minerals. (Participant 6)

Another participant expressed similar views, showing an appreciation of the central importance of inclusion of all ethnic groups that make up Uganda. It also demonstrates an appreciation of suitable curriculum frameworks, with a recommendation for a balance of local, national and global with built-in choice for the global, making the history of Europe an optional alongside that of China:

> The National Curriculum Development Centre (Uganda) should introduce a compulsory paper for O- Level and A- level that covers the cultural heritage, identity and family history so that all tribes are represented and it should be a core paper. Therefore, students should cover two core papers: (i) a history of Uganda, (ii) history of Africa, and [in addition] an elective history of Europe or China. (Participant 16)

Within the research findings, a link can also be made between ownership, culture and identities. Social aspects of kingdoms include initiation ceremonies, marriage, roles of elders, parents and children in the social set-up of kingdoms. A sense of belonging was stressed by two participants while values and customs attracted three responses. An appreciation of the important roles of culture and development, ethnicity, social composition and state formation was captured in the following excerpts:

> I don't feel represented in the curriculum because it doesn't cover my cultural heritage, identity, family history/Sabiny or local history. I just hear from rumours but nothing has been written down about my cultural and local history. (Participant 16)

> The current curriculum does not cover cultural heritage. They could consider including the family history of the rulers after Independence. Cultural history of the food, dance, music and drama must be given enough coverage in the Syllabus. They should concentrate more on the cultural history of Uganda like tribes. This will enhance cultural tourism and also promote unity and a sense of belonging for example through music, dance and drama; they should also include the history of cultures and society so that people come to know about their respective cultures [also]. (Participant 2)

> Topics on cultural history will enable learners to know more about their cultures and how they relate in society; culture and society; documentation of history enable[s] teachers and learners to discuss significant events in the history of Uganda so that key issues aren't left out. (Participant 11)

> Learners' cultures, interests should be covered more than anything. Such topics inculcate a sense of belonging and great love for our cultural heritage since all tribes in Uganda are diluted. (Participant 10)

> Cultural history: how cultures and heritages have led to the development and growth of certain areas in Uganda; cultural ceremonies, backgrounds and origins; music, dance and drama which store our regional cultures, our cultural histories are not documented such as Kadodi dance, emphasis on the history and cultures of local communities. (Participant 9)

> Include local history in the curriculum and examine it. (Participant 18)

Participant reflections on the representation of recent Ugandan history

In the interview extracts below, there is much identification of significant local, national and regional history, even stressing how certain groups can be praised as trail-blazers, like the 'African Elites' (Kumalo, 1966) and an awareness that East Africans themselves made a great contribution to the development of the region.

> Knowledge about the African Elites will help students appreciate that Africans were willing to put their lives forward for development. And also, that if mis-governed the masses have a responsibility to refuse those who mis-govern them just like the African Elites did. They will help in de-linking African Economies. (Participant 7)

> The young generation needs to know that Africans (blacks) played an important role in civilising East Africa and Africa at large and not Europeans only. (Participant 12

There is also a perceptive juxtaposition of colonialism with neo-colonialism, 'the Asian dragon' and the influence of China, Taiwan and Singapore.

> They make more sense to the current study and future generations than the old history that envisions [what] Eurocentric news does or doesn't capture. The above topics are very important and can help Uganda deal with its current problems which are largely caused by colonialism and neocolonialism. (Participant 8)

> The curriculum should reflect and contain African achievements, challenges and [what is] behind the process. It can help us fully understand our relationship with our neighboring states like Kenya and Sudan. There should also be something to do with: How Uganda/ Africa can develop amidst challenges of neo-colonialism just like the Asian Dragons like China, Taiwan, Singapore among others. (Participant 7)

Although one teacher believed that adhering to a broad East African perspective might dilute the details and dimensions of a fully inclusive Ugandan narrative, by contrast Participant 5, echoing the concerns of Participant 7 above, makes an appeal for reaching out by travel, observing:

> It can help us fully understand our relationship with our neighbouring states like Tanzania, Kenya and Sudan. Importantly, we should emphasise tours to historical and archaeological sites such as Bigo Bya Mugenyi, Tanda Pits and Nakaima tree in Mubende. Moreover, history should be for learning experiences, people should have a close relationship between the past and current [times] in order to draw lessons. (Participant 5)

The majority of these reflections show an awareness of the need for a kind of mutuality (Hypothesis 3), especially in appreciating that neighbours are facing the same problems, thus in allowing 'border-crossing' to understand the histories of neighbours (Giroux, 1992).

There is overall agreement in the literature, confirmed by that coming out of South Africa (Weldon, 2009) and elsewhere in the world after curriculum reform, that one of the problems in History education is the dominance of a traditional, singular official narrative of the past. There is certainly clamour for a balance of perspectives from across Uganda's different ethnic groups. As was anticipated in the working hypotheses, there is evidence of agreement about a need for a contextually relevant curriculum that will reflect significance, and for educators, teachers and students to be agents of curriculum and pedagogical change that will make their voices and perspectives heard. What emerges from the interviews is that mutuality should extend to the community itself.

Dialogue and teaching methods

The qualitative participant response data here starts with general lists of dialogical methods of teaching, but continues with some detailed observations and suggestions for their application in the Ugandan context. A number of methods as shown in the table below were suggested.

Methods	Number of responses
Group discussion	9
Guided discovery	12
Inquiry method	4
Experiential learning	4
Role play	8
Debate	4
Projects	3
Story telling through legends	12
Visiting historical sites	12
Learners interviewing different people about the past (e.g. elderly)	3

Table 1 Participants' responses on the methods appropriate for teaching History lesson

In addition to the methods presented in Table 1, there seemed to be a general agreement among participants that active learning, exploring local history (field-studies and projects) by seeing the places (and evidence of events or situations) in person, perhaps also through role-play or making connections with the community (e.g. through interviews [Participant 7]), would enable students to get inside the events and stand in other peoples' shoes. This could apply to accessing tribal history; the example given by Participant 13 is about using storytelling to explain the migration and settlement of a tribe like the Banyole in Eastern Uganda.

There is also a link with creativity (Participant 5). Members of the community are seen to benefit too by becoming partners in an increasing mutuality across the educational system (Participants 9 and 24). This corresponds with Hypothesis 2 where knowledge is seen as an exchange of understanding not just between learners and teachers, but also between them and the community or wider society. Interviews were recommended as ways of exploring memory and local history, and these of course add an element of authenticity to inquiry. Music, dance and drama were all mentioned as ways of increasing not only student involvement but also investigating the meaning and significance of events. Social learning through sharing and discussion was also prized (Participants 3 and 12). These responses in many ways confirmed the

latent propositions in the working hypotheses, especially the need for a strong commitment to active learning in order to achieve ownership of the learning matter through internalisation (Participants 8 and 10). Participant 13 draws on the notion of deep understanding (which corresponds with Boyanton's relating of 'powerfulness' to authenticity), by exploring culture through participation in role-play, music, dance and drama. The following sentiments highlight why the methods above were identified by participants as key pedagogical content knowledge for decolonisation:

> They are participatory and create interest in learners and at the same time, they can improve creativity of learners. These teaching methods are basically learner-centred and enable the learner to obtain knowledge, apply the knowledge to solve problems and thus creating relevance of the content to the learners. (Participant 8)

> I think the active methods can help to teach history content because learners are able to participate in each and everything and they can act and play what happened in the past using role-play method and this will enable them grasp the content better. (Participant 10)

> The content necessitates a connection between educational institutions and society and thus, students should interact with society members. For example, through field studies and projects. Through interviews students are able to know the history of local places. Certain things need to be taught using field-work and role-play which enable learners to understand and enjoy more historical events rather than just being theoretical which creates boredom more than activeness. (Participant 9)

> Brainstorming and role play encourage activeness in class; the teacher is in a position to identify learners' understanding. It encourages hands-on teaching, which enables deep understanding or mastering of content because learners learn by seeing. Role play will enable students to participate and act out roles of the past that will display cultural values for example music, dance and drama. (Participant 13)

> A guest speaker who is knowledgeable about historical facts can shed light on some issues. Guest lecturers and visitors attract attention of the learners and some provide firsthand information with relevant examples. This also strengthens the community's involvement in the education system. Guest speakers always have something new and crucial to share about the past that may be origin[ated] from a primary source that may not appear in any textbook. (Participant 24)

Further comments about decolonisation of the History Curriculum and related pedagogy

A further selection of interview data touches on regaining ownership both personally and locally, with Participants 6, 12, 13, 15, 17 and 19 recommending a shift away from too much European history (17 mentions 'cultural imperialism' in connection with too much European history). Participant 8 wants the examinations board assessment procedure to be decolonised, and Participants 9 and 10 recommend active teaching and learning methods. Participants 10, 11, 17 and 18 want practical engagement, and not just listening to stories. Participant 22 wants discussion as a key to active learning. Participant 16 wants all of the tribes of Uganda to be studied so that everyone is represented and included. There are some interesting thoughts here too on core and choice as curriculum principles. Participant 18 wants some topics that are no longer relevant to be phased out, like the history of East African coastal towns and the long-distance trade topic. Here is a small sample:

> Use traditional systems that have worked in our neighbouring countries. For example, taking the example of Rwanda, a country that was faced with numerous challenges after the 1994 Genocide but using traditional justice systems (Gacaca courts), the country was able to at least manage the post-conflict period effectively and today development is vivid in Rwanda through community engagements and 'inclusive' leadership at least at lower levels. Thus, students should much be exposed to their traditional experiences and heritages. (Participant 7)

> Abolish the history of coastal towns in East Africa if not it should be taught with a relevance to the present situation. Long-distance trade [as a topic] should be phased out because it will not happen again due to the advancement in technology. (Participant 18)

> The topics covered around East African history are relevant; however, there should be more content coverage on Ugandan History especially the post-Independence history and even the methods of teaching should change. Topics in European history seem irrelevant at A-level apart from a few like World War 1 & 2 where Africans were involved we should study the history of Uganda as it's more relevant to us. (Participant 21)

> There is need to re-centre narratives that have been rendered invisible and misrepresented by the structures of colonialism. (Participant 24)

The last comment reflects what Linda Chisholm wrote about the revised (2002) South African History Curriculum, which aimed 'at permitting the unofficial, the hidden, to become visible' (Chisholm, 2004, p. 188). This also provides a context for Weldon's observations (2015, p. 101):

> This would hopefully provide opportunities for young people, in Giroux's terms, to become border crossers. According to Giroux's concept of border pedagogy, young people need to be provided with opportunities to engage with texts that both affirm and interrogate the complexity of their histories. They should not be seen as a cohesive group, but young people whose 'multilayered and often contradictory voices and experiences intermingle with the weight of particular histories that will not easily fit into the master narrative' (Giroux, 1992, p. 34). (Weldon, 2015, p. 101)

Conclusion

How far do the participants' perspectives confirm the propositions in the working hypotheses? Ownership, mutuality, active learning, dialogue and discussion, relevance and inclusion undoubtedly emerge as key positive factors in the responses. The participants also list and reflect on what they themselves value for the present and the future and how best this might be communicated. Local examples of conflict resolution are given (for example, Gacaca courts in Rwanda). This reflects a wider awareness of the need for 'glocal' solutions (Mampane et al, 2018) in this case finding within local wisdom an approach to the global, for example the use of the goodwill-based 'ubuntu' framework as a paradigm for reconciliatory (or inclusive) narratives as evaluated in the decolonising literature of Assié-Lumumba (2016) and Brock-Utne (2016). Neo-colonialism from China and other parts of Asia is also mentioned. The teaching methods which are identified and favoured emphasise those which allow activity, ownership, mutuality and the process of internalisation to run parallel with the content itself. Where the content is seen as exclusive of the histories or cultures of some ethnic groups, then those methods cannot be used meaningfully. This corresponds with Keet's critique (2014) of 'epistemic othering' and shows that decolonisation is an ongoing process of resistance.

The richness of Uganda's cultures in music, dance, costume and storytelling is celebrated, and the use of the local communities as partners in the process of education is strongly recommended, feeding into – but also broadening – the concepts set out in the working hypotheses of mutuality,

authenticity and powerfulness or empowerment. The wider significance of community involvement in inquiry-based learning undertaken by local schools is that older generations can share a dialogue based on unofficial history (or memories) that sit alongside other more official narratives. As a method it also has several virtues. It is both diverse and inclusive, as it is applicable across the nation's regions and ethnicities. It involves an exchange of understanding, and it touches on the fifth and sixth benchmarks of historical thinking, historical perspectives and the ethical dimension, the latter to investigate and perhaps even deploy, the working of the ubuntu paradigm. As one of the participant interviewees eloquently states, the need to 're-centre narratives that have been invisible and misrepresented', gets to the heart of the problem, and this indeed can certainly be applied to Uganda, both locally and nationally, but might also be applied to wider regional and global contexts.

The findings suggest how decolonisation vis-à-vis the curriculum might be included. It is important to acknowledge that the decolonisation mission is a challenge; it is not an event but a process that involves careful planning; listening to many divergent voices; reflecting on what is possible and not possible in a school or university context; and implementation and review of all actions (Mheta et al., 2018). African knowledge traditions have hitherto been on the periphery due to over-reliance on western and northern knowledge traditions. But does this mean an outright abandoning of hegemonic knowledge traditions and replacing them with the previously marginalised knowledge traditions? We argue that it does not. There should be ways of working with existing knowledge traditions in a manner that will make them more relevant to the African context. This also draws on the deeper meanings within the 'ubuntu' paradigm. The paper is by no means prescriptive but opens dialogue on rethinking the Ugandan school History curriculum and the ways in which it is organised and taught. It is hoped that the paper will prompt more discussions and dialogical conversations on the decolonisation of history education in Uganda, the East African context and African history generally.

Figure 1 Map showing the distribution of language families in Uganda, with names of most of Uganda's languages (Dingemanse, 2006).

Figure 2 A Map showing the regions of Uganda (Burmesedays, 2010)

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Endnotes

[1] Ubuntu is a Nguni Bantu language term that might be translated to mean a quality that includes the essential human virtues, e.g. compassion and humanity; its use can be seen in a quote from South Africa's Interim Constitution (1993), "… there is a need for understanding not vengeance, ubuntu not victimization". (See Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 200 of 1993, National Unity and Reconciliation)

The quest for inclusive and transformative approaches to the history curriculum in Botswana

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ABSTRACT

History has the potential to unify and is often used to inculcate a sense of national identity to foster nation-building. However, this objective can prove difficult to achieve because of the tendency for nations to politicise historical narratives. In Botswana, assimilationist policies have historically privileged the ethnic Tswana historical memory whilst submerging identities and historical experiences of a number of Botswana ethnic minorities. Moreover, the pervasive authoritative national 'epic' narratives curtail development of an authentic and empowered historical consciousness, as the latter is premised upon interpretive and dialogic interactions. This paper argues for historical education that is based on negotiated, mutualist, and inclusive approaches. It foregrounds regional particularisation to enable the unearthing and integration of diverse historical narratives to foster civic identity and the necessary preconditions for a shared sense of national identity.

KEYWORDS

Botswana, Batswana, National identity, Civic identity, Nation-building, History curriculum, History syllabus, History education, Historical consciousness, Transformative approaches, Inclusive history, Social constructivism, Ethnic minorities, Regional particularisation, Dialogic interaction

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Botswana: current socio-political background

Botswana became independent in 1966 after 81 years of British occupation. The country is a signatory to international frameworks, instruments and protocols on human rights, democracy, peace and security, through membership of international bodies including the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Nations. The Charter of the Commonwealth (2013, Section 4) advocates promotion of diversity, multicultural understanding and various forms of equality. Under the pillars of Tolerance, Peace and Understanding, the Charter emphasises "diversity and understanding the richness of multiple identities." Botswana is also a member of the African Union, whose long-term strategy termed *Africa Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want* (AUC2015) calls for "An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics" (2015, p. 2). The country's national policies and frameworks also espouse the spirit of equal rights and shared citizenship. Both the former *Vision 2016 Towards Prosperity for All* (1997), and the current *Vision 2036: Achieving Prosperity for All* (2016), contain pillars that reflect a desire to promote democracy, human rights, and to celebrate cultural heritage.

The Botswana *Vision 2036* (2016) stipulates that "marginalised population groups will be empowered to positively contribute to the country's development" (pp. 19-20). Ostensibly, Botswana has the necessary frameworks to guide the formulation and implementation of inclusive legislation. However, the country has come under attack for exclusive policies that militate against civic citizenship and a shared sense of national identity (Selolwane, 1998; Solway, 2002; Werbner, 2002; Mazonde, 2002; Nyamnjoh, 2007). The criticism also applies to some of Botswana's exclusionary education policies and practices (Le Roux, 1999; Pansiri, 2012; Ntshwarang, 2012; Mulimbi & Dryden-Petersen, 2017).

Botswana is often portrayed as homogenous, masking the fact that it is multi-ethnic and socio-linguistically diverse with approximately 30 distinct indigenous groups (Nyati-Saleshando, 2011). Parsons (1985) drew attention to "the fallacy of Botswana's mono-ethnicity" (p. 27) due to the pre-eminence of Tswana hegemony, which has subsumed extremely diverse ethnic groups making up a significant non-Tswana population including the baKgalahadi and the Lete (originally Nguni-speaking) "who are now wholly assimilated into Tswana language and culture" (p. 27). Other groups include the baKalanga in the north-east, baBirwa and baTswapong in the Central district, baSubiya (Chikuhane-speaking) in the Ngamiland and Chobe where WaYei and Hambukushu (Thimbukushu-speaking) and various Khoesan linguistic groups are also found. In Ghanzi and Kgalagadi Districts the great majority are not even Bantu as many speak various KhoiSan languages, whilst others speak Germanic (i.e. Afrikaans) languages (Parsons, 1985; Batibo & Smieja, 2000).

During their excursion into present day Botswana, successive dynasties of the current baTswana principal ethnic groups precipitated far-reaching socio-political transformations that resulted in the domination of the various non-Tswana ethnic groups whom they encountered in the hinterland. Ethnic Tswana domination of minority ethnic groups was cemented by the colonial government through its social engineering policies. In particular, the land reserve policy was the basis for mapping disparate ethnic identities into administratively expedient geo-political units. In this manner, ethnic minority groups which had hitherto lived in relatively autonomous dispersed settlements were reconstituted, bounded and minoritised under Tswana *merafe*[1] (Motzafi-Haller, 1993; Werbner 2002; Molosiwa, 2013).

Through the process of 'Tswanification' (Werbner, 2002), the post-colonial government recast the country's many non-Tswana cultures in a Tswana image. In this respect, the country's name, *boTswana* (the state of being Tswana) and the referent label for its citizens, *baTswana* are telling in that they suggest a (false) consensus around a homogenous, but otherwise ethnically particularised national identity, which has only the appearance of ethnic neutrality (Gulbrandsen, 2012; Nyamnjoh, 2002, 2014). As Andrew Murray (1990) noted, the definition of nation has been manipulated to provide Tswana culture with a monopoly of political legitimacy in Tswanadom's new guise, the Republic of Botswana (Murray, 1990cited in Nyamnjoh, 2006). Tswana identity is therefore complex and contestable. Given the intimate connection between ethnic identity and

own-group historical memorialisation, the configuration of Botswana's national identity around Tswana ethnicity has also influenced a bounded and undifferentiated national History curriculum that fails to acknowledge the diverse nature of Botswana society. In their study of the Social Studies teaching context, Mulimbi and Dryden-Petersen (2018) noted that current education policy and the Social Studies curriculum in Botswana are largely silent on potential inequalities or differing perspectives between minority and majority ethnic groups (p. 369).

District	Bantu Minority Languages and Dialects	Khoesan Minority Languages and Dialects	Majority (dominant) languages [and other languages, i.e. Indo-European or Germanic languages]
Ngamiland (Nhabe)	Thimbukushu; Thigciriku; sheYei; Otjiherero	Kxoe; ǁAni; Buga; Ts'ixa; Ju/'hoan; ǂX'ao//'aĩ	seTawana
Chobe	Chikuhane (also called seSubiya)	Ganadi?	seTawana
Ghanzi	sheKgalagadi; Otjiherero	Naro; ǁGana; /Gui	[Afrikaans]
Central	Ikalanga; seBirwa; seTswapong; Otjiherero	Ganadi; Danisi; Shua; Deti; /Xaise; !Goro; Tsire-Tsire; ǂHuä; Tshoa; Kua	seNgwato
Northeast	Ikalanga		seRolong
Kgalagadi	sheKgalagadi; Otjiherero	Nama; *!Xóõ*	[Afrikaans]
Kweneng	sheKgalagadi	ǂHuä; *!Xóõ*; /Gui; Kua	seKwena
Southern	sheKgalagadi	*!Xóõ*	seNgwaketse; seRolong
Southeast			seLete; seTlokwa
Kgatleng			seKgatla

Table 1 Botswana Ethno-linguistic groups

Source Developed from information given in Batibo, H.M. & Smieja, B. (Eds.). (2000). *Botswana: The future of minority languages*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

There is a growing assertiveness of minority ethnic groups, which resonates with global activism driven by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and UN-wide programs to promote inclusiveness in education and wider social programmes. In this respect, minority rights advocacy groups have challenged the primacy of the Tswana ethnic groups, against the original constitutional recognition of only eight principal groups for the House of Chiefs as had been recommended by the Balopi Commission (Government of Botswana, 2000; see also Government of Botswana, 2008). This changed after the passage of Bill No. 34 in 2005 when the constitution was modified in an attempt to make it 'ethnically neutral.' The *House of Chiefs*, an advisory body to Parliament, was (after the *Bogosi Act of 2008*) renamed *Ntlo ya Kgosi* and its membership was expanded to over 30. This Act clarified aspects of change around the role and position of *diKgosi* (formerly known by the colonial name of 'chiefs'). Whereas it is true that the constitutional amendment inserted other ethnic groups, this move was not meant to place them at par with the principal groups, as they are still subordinated to the majority since they sit in the advisory (extra-parliamentary) *Ntlo ya Dikgosi* not as paramount chiefs unlike the ones from the eight recognized principal groups but rather as subordinate tribal authorities. The Constitution provided that in respect of the districts of Chobe, Kgalagadi, North East and Ghanzi the members "shall be selected, from their own number, to the *Ntlo ya Dikgosi* by persons for the time being performing the functions of the office of *Kgosi* within each of those areas" (Constitution of Botswana, 1966, revised 2016, para. 78, section 2). Importantly, the amendment still makes clear the principal ethnic group superior status by leaving intact the tribally-designated Land Boards, which are named after the principal ethnic groups. Overall, even though the constitutional amendment resulted in a change of name and size of membership, this has largely constituted partial rather

than full recognition of minorities. Furthermore, there have not been substantive changes in curriculum content (see especially the conclusions of Mulimbi & Dryden-Petersen, 2017).
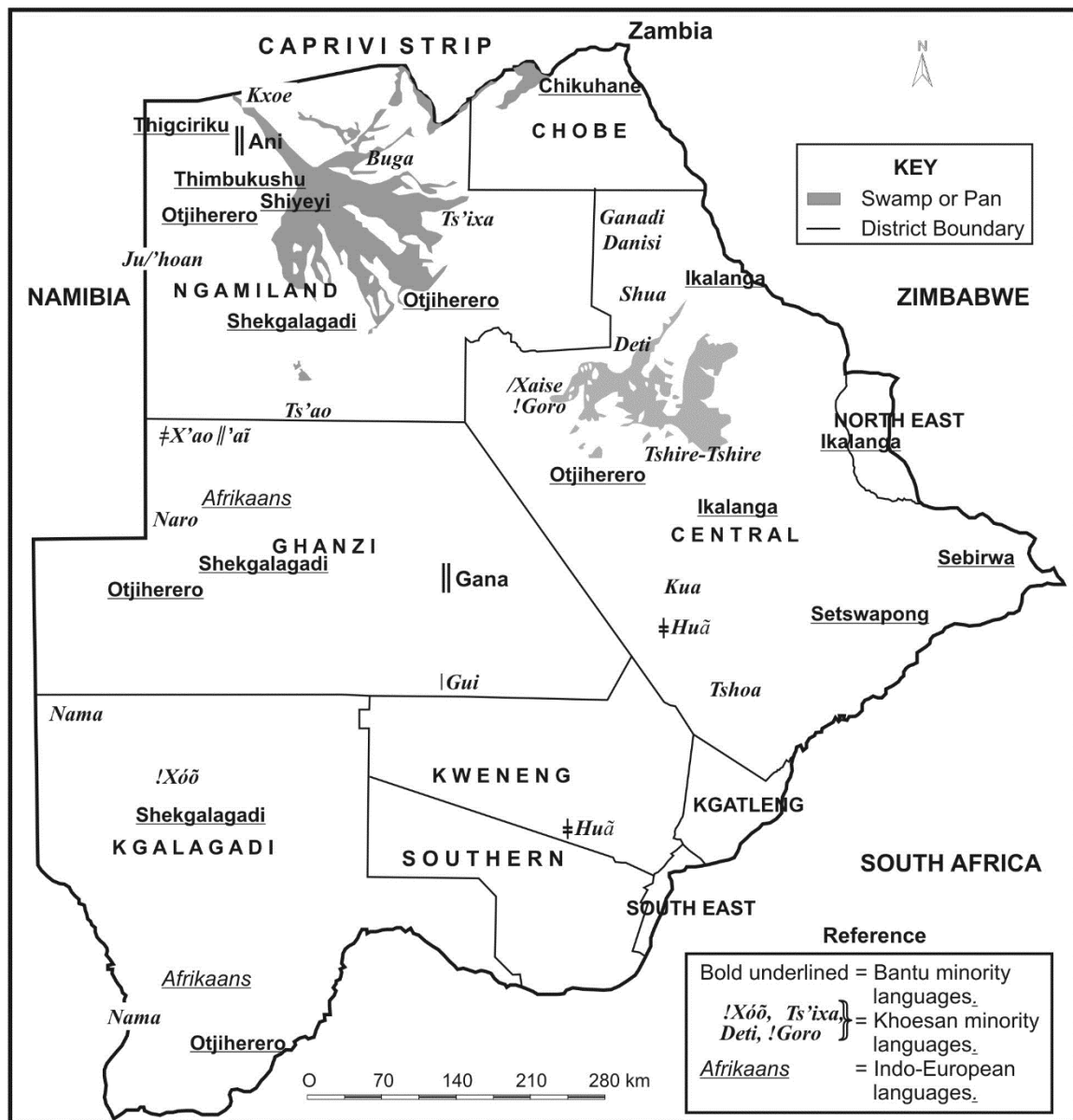
Figure 1 Map showing distribution of minority languages linked to ethnic groups
Source Lily Mafela own commissioned map developed from information given in Batibo and Smieja, 2000.

Theoretical reflections

History is often used centrally within school curricula to instil a sense of national identity for nation-building purposes. However, as a subject with a potential for much political manipulation, school history operates in a highly contested space, and tends not to represent all viewpoints (Ahonen, 2001; Haydn, 2012). This is due to the fact that history classrooms serve as societies in miniature and reflect broader political processes which govern knowledge production and transmission. In order for history to provide a sense of shared identity, it has to be taught in a manner that facilitates mutuality and authenticity in knowledge production through dialogic classroom interaction. The work of Vygotsky (1978) and later interpretations of his work (Eun, 2019; Hedegaard, 1990, 2003; Hedegaard & Chaiklin 2005) are instructive on ways to promote

more dialogic, mutualistic and authentic classroom interactions, particularly in diverse learning environments (see also Boyanton, 2007, on the concept of mutuality).

A more critical approach to history education is needed to foster nation-building in a context in which all voices can be heard and where some corresponding parallel and counter-narratives can be examined. Conversely, inculcation of national identity through school history is often dependent upon the transmission of grand narratives of events that are regarded as key to a nation's history. While grand narratives play a critical role in nation-building, they tend to remain unquestioned, occupying an authoritative position within the curriculum (Trofanenko, 2008, p.580; Halverson, Goodall & Corman, 2011). By their nature they are based on a singular interpretation of 'epic' events of the nation's past. They therefore fail to foster authentic national identity, and tend to curtail historical consciousness, which is based on interpretive and dialogic interaction.

The foregoing is akin to what Seixas (2000) referred to as the 'best story' in a seminal chapter, which is linked to his later (Seixas & Morton, 2013) critical benchmarks for the development of historical thinking. This echoed Bruner's and Dewey's view of knowledge as a discourse – negotiated, mutualist and inclusive. Bruner (1996, p. 57) recommends a 'mutualist and dialectical' pedagogy in which understanding is fostered through discussion and collaboration:

> No less than the adult, the child is thought of as holding more or less coherent 'theories' not only about the world but about her own mind and how it works. These naïve theories are brought into congruence with those of parents and teachers not through imitation, not through didactic instruction, but by discourse, collaboration, and negotiation. Knowledge is what is shared within discourse (Feldman, 1991) within a 'textual' community (Stock, 1983). Truths are the product of evidence, argument, and construction rather than of authority, textual or pedagogic. This model of education is mutualist and dialectical, more concerned with interpretation and understanding than with the achievement of factual knowledge or skilled performance.

It is not simply that this mutualist view is 'child-centred' but it is much less patronising toward the child's mind. It attempts to build an exchange of understanding between the teacher and the child: to find in the intuitions of the child the roots of systemic knowledge, as Dewey urged. This idea is consistent with Hedegaard's (1990) and Eun's (2019) call for co-construction and co-creation of new understandings by means of Socratic dialogue.

Building a shared national identity requires an approach that foregrounds mutuality and disciplinary history, whilst allowing for teaching of key national events from a collective 'best story' approach. This approach gives teachers power and authority to embark on local history projects and to use the historical data generated to teach the local/regional manifestations or particularisation of an 'epic' or 'significant' event. Equally importantly, diverse narratives provide the context for dialogic interaction, which is a pre-condition for development of historical consciousness.

Furthermore, the Vygotskian zone of proximal development dialogic learning process also encourages authenticity and with it, the possibility of empowerment. This occurs through facilitation of an intrinsic approach to the teaching and learning of history, whereas learning other people's histories and never one's own smacks of an unsatisfactory extrinsic, imposed approach which contradicts social constructivism. But even this is not as simple as it seems because in order to respect *Botho/Ubuntu* there needs to be some exchange of understanding of these differences, which could be achieved through shared themes, and a sense of mutuality in looking at these themes together but through different lenses. The *Botho/Ubuntu* concept is based on a value system that counters dehumanising experiences by adopting restorative and nurturing approaches in the quest for equitable education experiences (Biraimah, 2016).

One illustration of the idea of common or shared experiences comes from television historian and author Michael Wood who in his BBC series *Story of England* (2010) sought to tell the story of England from earliest to most recent times using sources of evidence linked to a cluster of villages

around Kibworth in Leicestershire. In this project, Michael Wood worked with local school students and with members of the community, involving them in the research through site visits, small-scale archaeology, imaginative reconstructions and archival work. He reflected on the principles and purpose of his project at the beginning and end of the resultant book. Wood and his filming team had committed themselves to live in the community for the year. He observed that:

> It is easy to generalize, as William Blake remarked, but 'to Particularize is the Alone Distinction of Merit'. Historians needless to say are not quite the same animals as poets, but, inspired by Blake's advice, this book contains a very simple particularising idea. It tells the story of one place through the whole of English history. Alternatively, it could be said that it tries to tell the story of England through the eyes of one place. It is a narrative in which as far as possible the subject is the people, not the rulers. Of course, rulers play their part in the story, but the important action takes place not in the palaces of the rich and powerful, but in the houses and fields – and in the minds – of the ordinary people. And ordinary lives are no less dramatic, as I hope will become apparent in the tales that follow, from the Vikings to the Somme, and from the Lollards to the Suffragettes. (Wood, 2010, p. xxi)

Wood stressed the importance of seeing the lives of people in different communities as evidence of their agency in, and contribution to, how history developed in different places. He also commented on the trend towards narrowed, collectivised or politicised identities, expressing the same doubts as Peter Seixas (2000) in his concern about the effects of always having a 'best story':

> There is at the moment an obsession with defining identity, with categorising and even trying to measure it and teach it. But when we look at history from this perspective, through the eyes of one community over time, then what appears is obvious: that identity doesn't come from the top down at all, it is not genetic, it is not fixed, safe and secure, for it can be reshaped by history and culture; so it is always in the making and never made; but it is the creation of the people themselves. (Wood, 2010, p. 401)

It is significant to remember, bearing in mind Wood's (2010) perspectives above, that diverse African communities too can have agency in the creation of their own histories, through the stories they relate about their own lived experiences.

This paper suggests a combination of Wood's (2010) ideas with Hedegaard and Chaiklin's (2005) 'radical-local' approach. Such an approach would require development of a curriculum where teachers as researchers could co-creatively engage in disciplinary history with their students by particularising, by looking at it from the point of view of ordinary people so that there is engagement with the gradual development of society over time in the Woodian (Wood, 2010) way, in terms of how people's rights and duties evolved, how the people were actors in their own history, including before, during and after colonial times.

This approach embodies a model of how children and teenagers can become active learners and researchers of history in the microcosm of the classroom to reflect a new (or revived) vision of the civic macrocosm of the nation-state. In this context, history education can be linked with citizenship in that all groups must not only be seen to be, but should also participate equally, in building authentic civic identity, as a necessary pre-condition for equality of citizenship. This would arguably be a more embracing and effective approach to forging a shared national identity in Botswana.

The history and evolution of history education in Botswana

In tandem with developments elsewhere on the continent, Botswana also inherited socio-political systems that thrived on negation of Africa's worth and past. In this respect, it is relevant to recall

Hegel's inward-looking and self-serving statement when he stated, at a particular stage in his writing (originally given as lectures at the University of Berlin in 1822, 1828, and 1830), that he was about to leave Africa not to mention it again, claiming that Africa was no historical part of the world as it had no movement or development to exhibit (Hegel, 1956). Resonating with Hegel's position on the status of African history, in the 1960s British historian Trevor-Roper added his twist to the issue by making the bold and false claim that:

> Perhaps in the future, there will be some African History to teach. But, at present there is none: there is only the history of the Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness and darkness is not the subject of history. (Trevor-Roper, 1965, pp.9ff, cited in Fugelstad, 1992)

Botswana's national development trajectory compares closely with that of many countries in Africa in respect of the fact that power relations were at work in the attempt to harmonise ethnicity, in a move towards achieving ethnic singularity within the nation-state. In Botswana the new Africanism was encouraged by President Seretse Khama in a famous speech (written by Lebang Mpotokwane) given in May 1970 when the University of Botswana Lesotho and Swaziland began to develop two national centres outside its base at Roma in Lesotho:

> We were taught, sometimes in a very positive way, to despise ourselves and our ways of life. We were made to believe that we had no past to speak of, no history to boast of. The past, so far as we were concerned, was just a blank. Only the present mattered and we had very little control of it ... It should now be our intention to try and retrieve what we can of our past. We should write our own history books, to prove that we did have a past; and that it was a past that was just as worth writing and learning about as any other. We must do this for the simple reason that a nation without a past is a lost nation, and a people without a past is a people without a soul.

The newly independent Botswana state adopted the national goals of unity, self-reliance, democracy, development and social harmony. *Botho* or *Ubuntu*, meaning humanity, as has been seen, was subsequently added. These societal ideals have also guided the teaching of history in a quest to forge unity (see Bode, 1927, p.25, cited in Hazlett, 1979).

Ostensibly, history teaching in Botswana is aligned with wider national development objectives, through a carefully crafted curriculum framework that is geared towards equality of educational provision. The significance of historical study for nation-building can be gauged from each of the Commissions of Education that were set up periodically (1976, 1993 and the latest one, the Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan [ETSSP] of 2015). The policies that guide these periodic reviews of the education system always use statements that tacitly assume a reassuring and socially-binding role for school history in establishing a shared sense of national identity. The persistent and continuous invoking of the post-independence 'anti-tribalism' rhetoric also served as an effective strategy to quell separatist ethnic identity, which was deemed to be detrimental to national unity. Consistent with this approach, the first President of Botswana, Seretse Khama (1921-1980, Head of State, 1966-1980), launched a relentless onslaught against what he regarded as the evil of 'tribalism' during his tenure of office. In one of his early public speeches, he stated that:

> I appreciate that many of our people at this time of rapid social change are bundled into positions which make them look around for familiar reference points. They take comfort in the sense of identity which they derive from family and hence tribe. This is understandable but it becomes dangerous when it leads people to think in exclusively tribal terms. It becomes a threat to stability and security when a man in a responsible position thinks of himself as a tribesman before he thinks of himself as a Motswana ... Now in one sense our (secondary) schools tend to be Botswanas in miniature. That is to say they are multi-tribal communities. It is therefore essential that our children should not be exposed to influences which might lead them to place tribe before country. (*Sir Seretse*

The classroom is here referred to as a microcosm of Botswana, whereas the official position was curiously ignoring the fact that curriculum content and practice should have ideally reflected this reality. Therefore, it is interesting that while recognising the value of having multi-tribal communities, as reflected in the composition of the secondary school population, Seretse Khama was nonetheless also critical of what he considered to be 'tribalistic' tendencies by particular ethnic minorities, a view which mirrored the prevailing socio-political climate. Seretse Khama's blast against 'tribalism' in 1969 was aimed at two sources threatening to break up the ruling Botswana Democratic Party: Chief Bathoen II of Ngwaketse adding a 'feudal' wing to the supposedly socialist Botswana National Front, and wild rumours that some Kalanga senior civil servants were planning a coup. The President's call to nationhood was essentially premised on the popular slogan '*We are Tswana*'. As Werbner (2002) opined, the slogan 'was backed by the assimilationist policy of the ruling party' (p. 676).

In a similar appeal, Sir Seretse Khama urged that:

> While we must all appreciate the value of each other's language and culture, we have rightly made Setswana a compulsory subject in all our schools for all our citizens, irrespective of race or tribe. We cannot afford to educate leaders who cannot communicate with the majority of our people in a language they understand ... (Seretse Khama, Speech to the Botswana Teachers' Union, 1969, quoted in Botswana Gazette, 2000)

This statement was made despite the fact that there were, and still are, many regions of the country in which the mother tongue is not SeTswana, such as the areas of baTswapong, baBirwa, baKgalagadi, baKalanga, Khoisan in Western Kweneng, the Central District, Chobe and Ngamiland (Nhabe), which are also inhabited by baYei, baSubiya, and baHerero (see Figure 2). In these areas children still struggle with SeTswana as the medium of instruction. It is worth noting that Ikalanga (the baKalanga language) had previously served as the medium of instruction in some missionary schools in the north-eastern parts of the country until independence (Andersson & Janson, 1993, p.81).

The government is currently planning to introduce a more inclusive language policy, which will ideally promote affirmative educational experiences for minority learners. More importantly, an inclusive language policy will facilitate the documentation and teaching of diverse community histories, which may have been hitherto hampered by language barriers.

Some official statements uttered in the early post-independence period provide a glimpse into the nature of educational content, pertaining to heritage issues. In this respect, the Minister of Education at the time, Hon. Kebatlamang Morake lamented that:

> Botswana's education system has been based on models from the developed countries. Despite a curriculum and syllabus review in 1968/69, and the continuing efforts to develop improved curricula, the syllabi still retain strong traces of their European origins. (Speech by Hon. Kebatlamang P. Morake, Minister of Education, *Botswana Daily News*, March 12, 1975)

The criticism of the history content was further buttressed by Naomi Mitchison, a prominent community activist, when she lamented the poor state of education in Botswana in general, further observing that "the curriculum, especially in such subjects as history ... seems to be geared to great figures in the European and American past ..." (Mitchison 1975, p.1). Recently, Sandy Grant buttressed this point when writing about his experiences of living in Botswana:

> In the 1971 edition of *The Teacher*, I returned to the same issue in an article titled, 'History and Politics'. In this I quoted the President's observation made in the Botswana Teachers' Union Conference at Lobatse, 15 December 1969 'that our educational system must not only be expanded but reformed.' I noted that 'a

> cursory glance at the primary school syllabi for history and geography ought to confirm that what is needed is an immediate and drastic overhaul. Is it sufficient to peck at the syllabus, to alter it here and there, to change the odd detail but to leave the focus untouched? Voortrekker history now taught in our schools is the folk history of a foreign country. Of what possible interest or value is it in Botswana? Its danger lies in the fact that it is also an intrinsic part of the South African cult of white supremacy. Either we expunge such stuff from the schools or we allow education to slide into rapid disrepute. Either the politicians or the educationalists are right — but not both. (Grant, 2020, p.34)

On a related matter, a visitor touring the baNgwaketse capital of Kanye chanced upon a history lesson where the teacher told him, "We are discussing the conflict between Church and State in fifteenth-century Europe", about which the visitor pondered sardonically, "How much time, I wondered, had been devoted to the conflict between church and tribe in nineteenth-century Bechuanaland?" (Young, 1966, p.113). Clearly, the remnants of colonial history persisted into the post-colonial period. However, it is important to note that the teaching of history neither remained stagnant nor did it maintain a focus only on an imperial historical narrative. Incorporation of some aspects of the histories of the principal groups that were initiated under colonial rule continued in the post-colonial period. As indigenous history was gradually incorporated it focused on the settlement and nation-building stories of the principal groups and their *diKgosi*, particularly Kgosi Sebele (born c. 1841, ruled the baKwena, a major Tswana group, 1892-1911), Kgosi Khama (born 1837, d. 1923, ruled the baNgwato, 1875-1923, grandfather of Sir Seretse Khama), and Kgosi Bathoen I (born 1845, ruled the baNgwaketse 1889-1910), who were important players as *diKgosi* influencing the developmental path of their *merafe* (Mafela, 2014). The three *diKgosi* have been symbolically immortalised through the construction of a grand, national monument that stands tall and imposing, in a prominent part of the new Central Business District in the capital Gaborone. This is further testament to the pre-eminence of Tswana hegemony in the country's socio-political space.

A proposal for a transformative and mutualist pedagogical approach to the history curriculum

The later post-independence period witnessed a gradual change in school history content, in tandem with the development of a more nationalistic orientation of the Botswana education system. Whilst the successive post-independence political leaders and policy-makers lamented the alienating nature of the curriculum, and urged a reorientation of History as a school subject, this seems to have only been targeted at 'decolonising' the curriculum rather than making it genuinely inclusive. Therefore, moving away from the colonialist History curriculum did not necessarily make way for ethnically inclusive school histories. This has not been helped by the fact that the modern Botswana state has stifled ethnicity research by hiding behind the cloak of national unity, arguing that such research would cause tribal conflicts as happened in other parts of the continent (Molosiwa, 2016). Local history projects could provide a firm platform for inclusion of minority narratives into the Botswana historicised memory, provided that they would incorporate the voices and perspectives of the minoritised ethnic groups. The danger inherent in the current history curriculum practice is that the relevance of the subject for the lives of a diverse groups of learners is not immediately apparent, because it is not aligned to their (and their communities') immediate needs and lived experiences. As it is, the History syllabus and its teaching may alienate minority communities and learners, which will further diminish the status of the subject across the curriculum.

A recent study that surveyed the multicultural nature of Botswana classrooms concluded that the primacy of the Tswana hegemony is hugely evident because "[even] the textbook units focusing on history and cultural sites reimagine[d] the heritage of distinct ethnic groups into a national identity dominated by ethnic Tswana perspectives" (Mulimbi & Dryden-Petersen, 2017, p.147). Thus, as the Syllabus extract below demonstrates, history is portrayed from the

perspective of the ethnic Tswana who are held as the norm from which others deviate (Mulimbi & Dryden-Petersen, 2017).

Refreshingly, the winds of change are blowing in the form of academic discourse that illuminates the multifaceted, albeit nascent narratives around the designation of Botswana as a heterogenous nation (see Nyamnjoh, 2002). These include the undergraduate research projects that unearthed vast amounts of Botswana history. Incorporating such groups as the baKalanga, baKgalagadi and baBirwa, baYei, baSubia, the texts embody minority narratives which run counter to the prevailing notions of a singular Tswana historical thread (Bobeng, 1976; Mongwa, 1977; Ramsden, 1977; Nkosana, 1980; Mautle, 1981; Gadibolae 1984; Kebiditswe, 1984; Sekgwama, 1987). For up-to-date information on these student dissertations, see under University of Botswana (2016) History and Archaeology Student Research Projects. These accounts explore contested and controversial issues, and deal with the dynamics of the settlement of Tswana *merafe* in present-day Botswana, while others explore dimensions of the inherently unequal relations between the minorities and majority groups. There are other sources that could be used to incorporate multi-ethnic histories, so that teachers could also use them in schools to augment co-created knowledge, in the form of emergent histories that add an important dimension to mutualist and authentic knowledge generation (see Molosiwa, 2013, 2016). Whereas the high level of these dissertation projects may not be attainable in secondary schools, nevertheless their methodology and approach to content, particularly the focus on minority group narratives, would allow for ownership and internalisation of the history being investigated through active, agentive learning. Across the school and local community this has much to recommend it.

This paper therefore advocates an approach which enables a telling of the story of Botswana through the eyes of one place, such as a specific district, where the curriculum could creatively seek to find out how change and continuity happened locally, linking the local with the national and regional. Examining this evidence could lead to a discussion of what is significant locally, and what the ethical implications are of noted developments. For example, some of the issues that could be covered include the origins and settlement patterns of the people found in the local area, their encounters with other groups during and after settlement, as well as unearthing stories pertaining to their socio-cultural and political realities, throughout the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras.

UNIT 4.1	FROM DIFAQANE/MFECANE TO THE MINERAL REVOLUTION	
Topics	**General Objectives**	**Specific Objectives**
	The students should:	*The students should*
Nineteenth Century Botswana 1840-1880s	Understand the growth of modern Botswana through thorough analysis of post Difaqane settlement/state formation with reference to various forms of incorporation and missionaries and traders influence.	Locate on a map the territories of Sechele, Sekgoma, Gaseitsiwe and Letsholathebe. Discuss post-Difaqane/Mfecane state building by Sechele, Sekgoma, Gaseitsewe and Letsholathebe in the mid-19th century. Analyse the political, social, economic and environmental impact of Cape trading on Botswana. Describe the missionaries' and traders' impact on the 19th century communities.
The mineral revolution up to 1910	Understand the impact of diamond and gold discoveries in Southern Africa.	Explain the socio-economic results of the mineral revolution in Botswana and Southern Africa.

Table 2 Module Four – Nineteenth-century transformation of Southern Africa
Source Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education, 2000, pp.4-5

Below the paper proposes how the model might be applied to a part of the current Botswana Certificate of Secondary Education Syllabus using two topics and four specific objectives. The syllabus is currently undergoing review.

Explanatory comments

Objective: Locate on a map the territories of Sechele, Sekgoma, Gaseitsiwe and Letsholathebe.

Comment: The Syllabus perpetuates the status quo in that the leaders mentioned are all from the principal groups, the baKwena, baNgwato, baNgwaketse and baTawana respectively. The minority ethnic groups are automatically excluded because they do not have territories named after them due to colonial and postcolonial assimilative policies and practices. Cases in point are baBirwa, baKalanga, baTswapong and Khoisan who were territorially bounded under baNgwato; and baSubiya, baYei and Khoisan who were territorially bounded under baTawana. The baKgatla-ba-ga-Mmanaana were also bounded under the dominant baNgwaketse (see Morton & Ramsey, 1990).

Addressing this objective inclusively would require reflection on minority groups' narratives about their settlement in their present territorial abode. This would also necessitate going beyond the issues of minority subjugation and marginalisation, and beyond discussion of the purely political and military narratives of settlement, which tend to favour perspectives of principal groups. There is a need to examine minority groups on their own accord, to unearth narratives of their interaction with their socio-ecological landscape and how this shaped their identities and livelihoods.

Objective: Analyse the political, social, economic and environmental impact of Cape trading on Botswana.

Comment: Trading happened in all communities, but the Syllabus focuses on the experiences of the principal groups. This is facilitated by the textbooks which focus on the mainstream research agenda reflecting the 'best story' approach, pertaining to the particularisation of the 'nation' on the 'ethnic Tswana'.

Here again there is an opportunity for an approach that provides room for particularisation of the national story in a manner that also acknowledges diversity of experiences and affords an opportunity to unearth other perspectives.

Objective: Describe the missionaries' and traders' impact on nineteenth-century communities.

Comment: Missionary labours were not restricted to principal groups, but in as much as missionaries ventured into the geographical domains settled by ethnic minorities, such expeditions remained peripheral to missionary endeavours, never quite attaining the same level of importance or 'historical significance' as the majoritarian narratives. However, the approach recommended here would explore counter-narratives of ethnic minorities with regard to their engagement with missionaries, and their unique experiences with Christianity (for example, see BA dissertation by Tshokolo, 2004).

Objective: Explain the socio-economic results of the mineral revolution in Botswana and Southern Africa.

Comment: The actual teaching of this aspect of the history is based on the experiences of the principal groups, whose narratives are reflected in prescribed and supplementary textbooks. Yet this part of the Syllabus provides a good opportunity for regional particularisation and comparison, based on narratives that would be co-created with the people themselves in their own voices, in the local oral history projects by students and teachers working in their communities.

From a pedagogical point of view what is recommended is that a constructivist lens should be brought to understanding the histories of 'ethnic' groups in Botswana in line with the view of Michael Wood "that identity doesn't come from the top down at all, it is not genetic, it is not fixed, safe and secure, for it can be reshaped by history and culture; so it is always in the making and never made; but it is the creation of the people themselves" (Wood, 2010, p.410). Identity needs to be seen in this way as historical, contingent, multiple and situational.

The model also foregrounds agency through building of community-based narratives. In this respect Wood stresses the importance of seeing the lives of people in different communities as evidence of their agency in, and contribution to, how history developed in different places. In his recent, *The Story of China* (2020, p.3) he writes "... I have used as a regular device the 'view from the village' in the belief that the big story can be fruitfully illuminated from the grassroots".

Regional particularisation therefore allows for the bringing out of this agency through exploring the varied ethnic groups' resilience and adaptability to ecological and socio-cultural challenges. These alternative narratives serve to counter the disempowering narratives that contribute to infantilising ethnic minorities, as well as perpetuating narratives of minority group socio-linguistic extinction.

The proposed approach resonates with research findings on multiculturalism, which has demonstrated that teacher acceptance of learners and treating them as equals with care and understanding is a positively affirming trait that can promote a positive learning atmosphere (Brock-Utne, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995).

Closer to home, this method also gained endorsement when it was incorporated into post-apartheid South African historical pedagogic practice, in which teacher testimony became an integral part of memory-making and dialogic teaching in the classrooms. Through the use of oral history narratives, teachers became creators of knowledge, by relating their own experiences, told from their own point of view. The teacher testimonies became the focal point of dialogic and interpretive classroom practice (Dryden-Petersen & Siebörger, 2006). The approach served to counter apartheid-era historical narratives, and facilitated interpretive perspectives.

Teaching a more representative historical narrative would also be a good expression of *Botho*, as a necessary precondition for achievement of social harmony. This is because civic equality is central to building a united nation, but it cannot be achieved if some sections of the society are unable to share as civic equals (see Mulimbi & Dryden-Petersen, 2018; Gutmann, 1999, p.306, cited in Mulimbi & Dryden-Petersen, 2018, p.368).

The implementation of this approach would rely mainly on those teachers who have undertaken the history projects, many of whom are still active in the teaching profession. Historically, there have been several routes for history teacher training comprising: the BA+CCE; the BEd (Humanities); the BEd (Secondary) the BA+PGDE (replacing the BA+CCE); and the BEd (Special Education). Each of these routes required student teachers to take history and education courses, albeit the opportunity was restricted to those who had demonstrated the competency to execute a fully-fledged research project. The number of history majors has dwindled substantially over the years, and with that the numbers of those who have done the dissertation. Despite this, it would still be possible to implement the recommended approach through the use of workshops in well-tailored continuous development programmes, so as to cascade the innovation, in tandem with established practice when implementing in-service innovation.

Finally, given the envisaged role of historical subject matter in nation-building, it could be argued that history should be reinstated as a core subject, so that learners are exposed to it at some point in their educational career. Otherwise, continuing its relegation it as an optional subject would appear to defeat its stated purpose as a unifier for nation-building purposes.

Recommendation for control of education in a transformed history teaching environment

The transformative history teaching approach would also require reconfiguration of curriculum policy and its practice. Whilst in some countries, such the U.K., each constituent sub-jurisdiction (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) has its own curriculum arrangements, and in Australia and South Africa where a measure of local variation of historical content operates within the framework of a national curriculum, the Botswana school curriculum is wholly centrally controlled. The curriculum development is undertaken by special taskforces, which operate under the watchful eye of the Ministry of Education. Final curriculum decisions are made at the Ministry of Basic Education, with some teacher representation in syllabus formulation. Even then, the curriculum proceedings and syllabus discussions are governed by an overarching policy that conforms to prevailing ideas about what constitutes significant historical issues. Hence, decision-making around syllabus content remains outside the purview of many teachers and communities. Bureaucratic decision-making functions to circumvent the possible addition of controversial topics, which might go against the perceived methods of achieving national unity. This of course denies teachers and learners the opportunity to co-create and co-own knowledge, a key feature of the BA dissertations as an example of 'good practice' that must be expanded. The current practice predetermines the nature of classroom pedagogical discourse, and in turn interferes negatively with authentic teacher-learner interaction that could be promoted within the scaffolding provided by the zone of proximal development.

This challenge could be overcome by adoption of the 'Woodian approach' as outlined above, especially bearing in mind Wood's comment: "But the grand sweep is only one perspective; it cannot easily give a sense of the slow organic process by which all of our communities have grown, and still continue to" (2010, p. xxiv).

The recommended approach also requires the Syllabus to be restructured for regional particularisation, such that it allows regions to use an optional case study approach for designated portions of the syllabus where schools can engage with the local communities for teacher-led oral history projects carried out in conjunction with their students. The current plan to incorporate the use of regional languages in education will support this initiative, underpinned by a recognition that language is an embodiment of a people's culture and heritage. Such projects would flag the importance of oral history, which has a critical role to play particularly because much of African history is still contained in the oral traditions of communities.

Conclusion

History teaching has historically reflected the socio-political dispensation of colonial society that promoted Tswana hegemony over non-Tswana ethnic groups. The post-independence Botswana history curriculum was therefore constructed around an illusory homogenous national identity.

The articulation of educational policy has consistently given priority to a unifying and nation-building official narrative which fails to acknowledge the complexities of tribalism, geography, identity and alternative minority ethnic group interpretations of events in Botswana's formation. Consequently, Botswana's school historiography and the linked Social Studies and Civics syllabi have persistently taught a historical narrative based on denial of the complexity and diversity of the national story.

In conclusion, it is apt to reflect on the question Solway (2002) asked: "Can a meaningful sub-national identity be formulated that does not compromise the state's integrity and at the same time, promotes equity?" (p. 729). What might have been adopted at the beginning, indeed in 1966, was a dual position, where all ethnicities were accepted as having the potential to contribute to the national vision and enterprise, and where a shared civic identity could be pursued which would not be dominated by a particular ethnic group but where equality and justice for all could be respected. In conclusion therefore, the paper proposes a more disciplinary, localised and active

history education approach, in steps towards co-ownership and co-creation of a more inclusive historical narrative.

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Endnotes

[1] Merafe could be loosely translated as Tswana 'polity', 'kingdom', or 'state' headed by a *Kgosi*. Tswana merafe (singular morafe) included other groups of diverse ethnic origin (see Schapera, 1952; Gulbrandsen, 2007).

Acknowledgements

About the author

Lily Mafela is a historian and history teacher educator, and is currently serving as the Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Botswana. She studied history and history education at universities in Botswana, the UK and the USA. She has published widely in the fields of history and education, with a particular focus on issues of gender and social inclusion in historical writing. She has conducted research and led consultancy projects for the Government of Botswana and multilateral agencies on education and school history issues. Lily also served as Rapporteur of the International Scientific Committee of the *UNESCO Project on the Pedagogical Use of the General History of Africa* (*PUGHA*), which was commissioned in 2009 and completed its work in 2016. The PUGHA Project aims to promote interdependence, peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding through transformative approaches to the teaching of African history.

History education in Nigeria: Past, present and future

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ABSTRACT

Before and after the introduction of western education to Nigeria by Christian missionaries, the teaching and learning of history was given pride of place, although the contents of school history privileged the Bible and English history by celebrating the importance of the arrival of the colonial powers with their religion. This position, indeed this narrative, was challenged and contested by Nigerian nationalists even before 1960. Therefore, the need to overhaul the curriculum content arose after independence in October 1960 which led to the organisation of the 1969 Curriculum Conference. Part of the outcome of the conference was the emergence of the first Indigenous education policy in 1977. However, in 1982 History was delisted from the basic school curriculum and retained only as an elective subject in the Senior Secondary school. The outcry from stakeholders since then (over thirty years) recently reached a crescendo and has yielded a positive change, as History was reintroduced into the school curriculum in the 2018/2019 academic session. This paper, therefore, addresses the following questions, with recommendations on how the study of History might be promoted at all levels of education in Nigeria:

- What was the position of history education in the past?
- Why was it delisted from the basic school curriculum?
- What were the consequences of the delisting?
- How did it find its way back into the basic school curriculum?
- After reintroduction, what next?

KEYWORDS

CITATION

Introduction

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, is a vast and diverse country, a federation of 36 states with a Federal Capital Territory. It has a population of over 140 million according to the 2006 National Census (Federal Ministry of Education, 2007, p.2), but the United Nations cites an estimated figure of 201 million by July 2019. Nigeria is made up of nearly 250 cultural and linguistic groups, but "three major tribal groups certainly dominated the country's three original regions: the Yorubas in the West, the Ibos in the East and the Hausa-Fulani in the North" (Smith with Sanger, 1981, p.77). Figure 1 below shows the major ethnic groups in Nigeria.
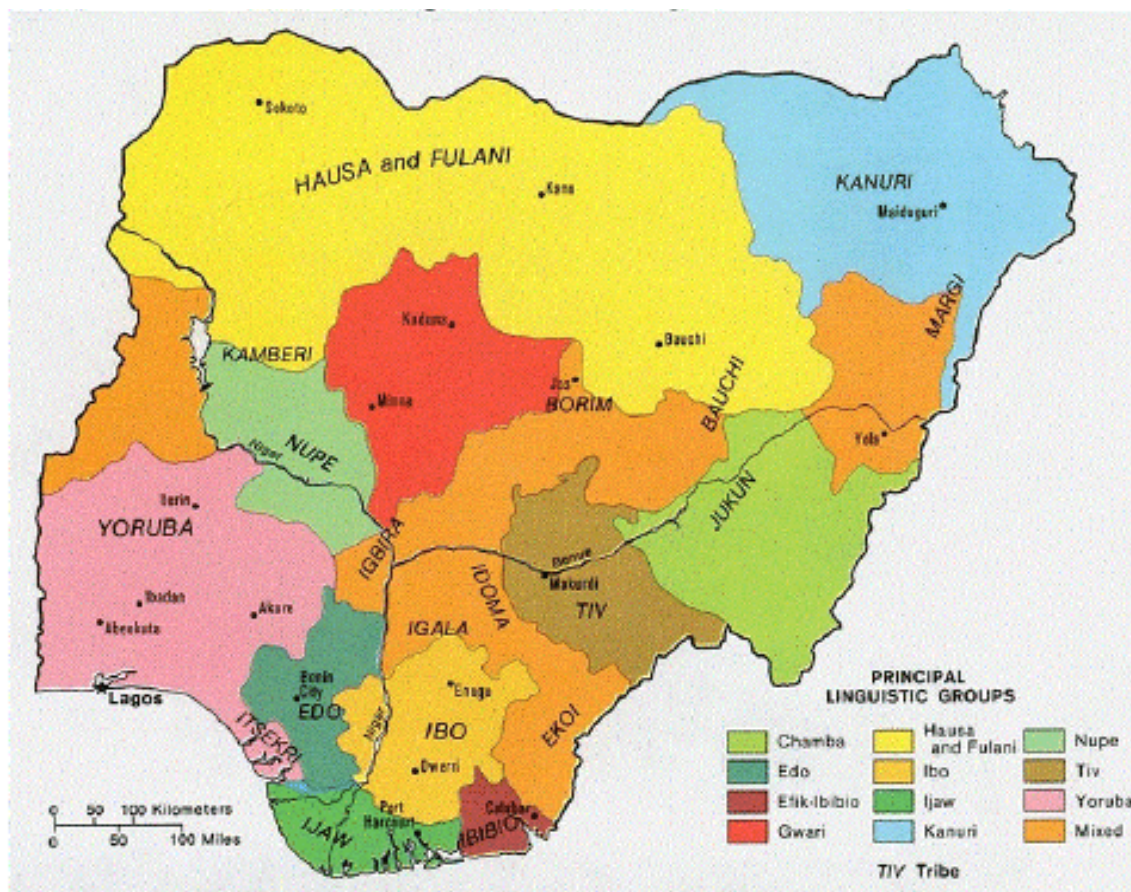
Figure 1: Nigeria map showing the ethnic group constituents (Bakare, 2015, p. 1)

The two main religions are Christianity (largely in the South) and Islam (in the North), which are based on different cultures. These diverse cultures and religions have in turn influenced the content of education and history in Nigeria. The process of curriculum formulation and development in recent times has attempted to involve all minority groups and religions, although inevitably there has been some contestation and disagreement, with some groups (such as Hausa-Fulani) having a more powerful voice than others. Clearly, some groups have been more influential than others and some minority groups are likely to have felt excluded at different times (e.g. in the Eastern region of Nigeria after the Biafran War). In addition, traditional animistic

religious faith and practice exercise a pervading influence with some of the population (Taiwo, 1980). The British, through a combination of wars, treaties, trade agreements, and territorial mergers occupied most of Nigeria (divided into the Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria) by the beginning of the twentieth century, with the two protectorates being amalgamated in 1914.

Constitutional/governmental changes followed in the decades after the amalgamation of the two protectorates. Under the last two Governors of Nigeria, Sir Arthur Richards (1943-1948) and John Stuart Macpherson (1948-1954), after the end of the Second World War, there were constitutional reviews in 1946 and 1952. These both accommodated and anticipated a nationalist push for independence. The Richard Constitution divided the country into three regions: North, East and West, and established Houses of Assembly in the three regions. The Macpherson Constitution of 1952 transformed Nigeria into a federation of three regions, with a federal territory at Lagos (the national capital). Legal autonomy for regional education was created in stages as a result of these reforms. Self-government was granted to the Eastern and Western regions in 1957, to the Northern region in 1959, and finally political independence to the Federation of Nigeria on October 1, 1960.Following a transition period as a Dominion, and after another constitutional change, it became a Republic in 1963. After independence, there was a clamour for both the educational system and the curriculum to be overhauled. Unfortunately, the high hopes raised by political independence were not to be realised as a consequence of the political instability that set in with a succession of military coups d'état (with only one four-year interregnum of civil rule, from 1979 to 1983) that characterised the first three decades of national sovereignty. The situation is set out in Table 1 below.

S/N	NAME	YEARS	TYPE OF RULE
1	Chief Benjamin Nnamdi Azikwe	1st Oct 1963 - 16th Jan 1966	Civil
2	Major General Johnson Thomas UmunnakweAguiyi Ironsi	17th Jan 1966 - 29th July 1966	Military
3	General Yakubu 'Jack' Dan-Yumma Gowon	1st Aug 1966 - 29th July 1975	Military
	The Nigerian Civil War (the Biafran War) was fought during this period from 6 July 1967 – 15 January 1970	Note: Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu wanted to lead a breakaway state in Biafra, but the attempt failed	
4	General Murtala Rufai Ramat Muhammed	30th July 1975 - 13th Feb 1976	Military
5	Chief Olusegun Mathew OkikiolaAremu Obasanjo	13th Feb - 30th Sept 1979	Military
6	Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari	1st Oct 1979 - 31st Dec 1983	Civil
7	Major General Muhammadu Buhari	31st Dec 1983 - 27th Aug 1985	Military
8	General Ibrahim Gbadamosi Babangida	27th Aug 1985 - 26th Aug 1993	Military
9	Ernest AdegunleOladeindeShonekan	26th Aug 1993 - 17th Nov 1993	Civil
10	General Sani Abacha	17th Nov 1993 - 8th June 1998	Military
	It is worth noting that Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth of Nations from 11 November 1995 to 29 May 1999. A Nigerian, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, was Secretary-General of the Commonwealth from 1 July 1990 – 31 March 2000		
11	General Abdulsalami Abubakar	9th June 1998 - 29th May 1999	Military
12	Chief Olusegun Mathew OkikiolaAremu Obasanjo	29th May 1999 - 29th May 2007	Civil
13	Umaru Musa Yar'Adua	29th May 2007 - 5th May 2010	Civil
14	Goodluck Ebele Azikwe Jonathan	5th May 2010 - 29th May 2015	Civil
15	Major General Muhammadu Buhari	25th May 2015 -	Civil

Table 1 A list of Heads of State in Nigeria since full Independence
(Edited by the authors from various sources,
including The Office to the Secretary to the Government of the Federation [The Presidency], n.d.)

There has clearly been a link between the fate of school history and political developments in Nigeria. The first of the military coups was in January1966 led by Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi and a counter-coup in July of the same year (see Table 1 above). The hostilities that followed led to a civil war (the Nigerian or Biafran Civil War) that broke out in May 1967 and lasted until January 1970 and claimed millions of lives. Significant educational developments included the organisation of a 1969 curriculum conference towards the end of thiswar. The trauma of this conflict cannot be underestimated as there were between 500,000 and 2 million civilian deaths from starvation, in addition to the 100,000 military deaths. Nevertheless, a curriculum conference was suggested and held in 1969 organised by the Nigeria Educational Research Development Council (NERDC). The conference was a culmination of expressions of general disaffection with the existing education system which was regarded as having become irrelevant to national needs, aspirations, and goals (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2011). Also, there had been an outcry by educators, parents, government functionaries, laymen, scholars, and the press, against the ills of the educational system.

Following the 1969 Curriculum Conference an associated report was published in 1972, and this would be the first Indigenous (decolonised) education policy. The implementation of the report was unfortunately truncated because General Yakubu Gowon was deposed in 1975 through another coup led by General Murtala Mohammed, who was assassinated in an abortive coup in February 1976. He, in turn, was succeeded by Lt-General Olusegun Obasanjo. Eventually, The National Policy on Education (NPE) of 1977 adopted a 6-3-3-4 system of education (6 years of study for Primary, 3 for Junior Secondary, 3 for Senior Secondary, and 4 for Higher education). Despite the prevailing context of political instability, the document was revised in 1981, becoming operational from 1982 as a National Policy on Education (NPE). However, as soon as this had happened the status of History was compromised as it became an elective subject.

As part of the new educational policies, History was merged with related Social Studies subjects at the Primary and Junior Secondary school levels. However, there was widespread political pressure and lobbying by stakeholders over the next four decades for the return of History as a separate school subject, and as a result of this, in 2017 History was restored. This paper explores how a Nigerian 'history war' highlighted the significance of History's role in the development of Nigerian as a nation state and analyses links to related issues of nationalism, patriotism and identity and the cultural background of a tribal society with diverse ethnicities, religious beliefs and practices and values. The importance of social, political and indeed educational cohesion was reinforced by the traumatic memory of the tearing apart of the country during the Biafran War of 1967-1970.

Statement of the problem

The merger of History with other subjects at the Primary and Junior secondary school levels in 1982 led to under-achievement in the teaching and learning of History, as Social Studies emerged. The Federal Ministry of Education (FME), (2017a, p. vi) observed that "Learners went through schools without having an adequate understanding of the history of their own country: how it evolved through time and space; and the nature, character and dynamics of intergroup relations, among others." This was similar to Whelan's (2018, p.1) reflection on the cessation of history teaching in Ireland, that Irish people:

> … are confronted with the prospect of an Ireland in which a great number of
> pupils leave school with next to no knowledge of the history of their nation and
> the wider world, and without the faintest impression that history is worthy of
> study in one's own time.

This gap gave birth to generations of young people who could not understand the socio-political and economic realities of the country within the context of Nigerian historical evolution. It is important to note that "there can be no smooth today without recourse to yesterday. To be specific, as a nation, we should note that our *yesterday (history) is our archives, speaker for today and*

prophet of our future" (Akanbi, 2018, p. 28). How could children learn from a history that they did not know? In the editorial comment of the Leadership Newspaper *of July 1st, 2012 it was observed that "Today, our children grow up without understanding the various* components of their country and how those components evolved. They are unable to appreciate the various cultures in their country because they have been denied formal access to information about their past" (para. 1, 2). For Omolewa (2016, p. 6):

> The question that may be asked is how did this significant change happen? How could history be so conveniently expunged? Were the historians, including the history teachers at all levels of the educational system, the amateur and professional historians, so careless that they did not follow the events that were unfolding at the time and were they sleeping or simply caught unawares? What was the role of the general public in these developments?

In line with the above questions, this paper will therefore focus its discussion on the following themes:

- The study of History as a subject in pre-and post-colonial Nigeria
- The politics of delisting history education from school curricula (post-independence Nigeria)
- What is the position of History now in Nigerian schools?
- Can the reintroduction of History into the school curriculum now catch up in filling the gap created since 1982?
- What significance do the values of History education have for Nigeria?

It is important to note that, between Independence in 1960 and 1999, when Nigeria rejoined the comity of democratic nations after a period of suspension from the Commonwealth (1995-1999, ironically when Chief Emeka Anyaoku, a Nigerian, was Secretary-General), the military had ruled the nation for thirty years. Whereas at Independence in 1960, Nigeria had three regions (later becoming four with the creation of the Mid West region in 1963). At the onset of military rule, however, Nigeria progressively moved from the regional structure to having 12 states created by General Yakubu Gowon before the Biafran civil war in 1967;19 in 1976 by the late General Murtala Mohammed; 21 in 1987 to 30 in 1991, by General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (President or Head of State 1985-1993); and finally, to 36 states (and a Federal Capital Territory) by 1996 through General Sanni Abacha. Each state is further divided into several local government jurisdictions, of which there are a total of 774 in the entire federation of Nigeria. Using ethnic groups, and/or common political history as the basis for effective allocation of resources, Sanni Abacha (President 1993-1998) further divided Nigeria into six geopolitical zones as represented in Figure 2 below.
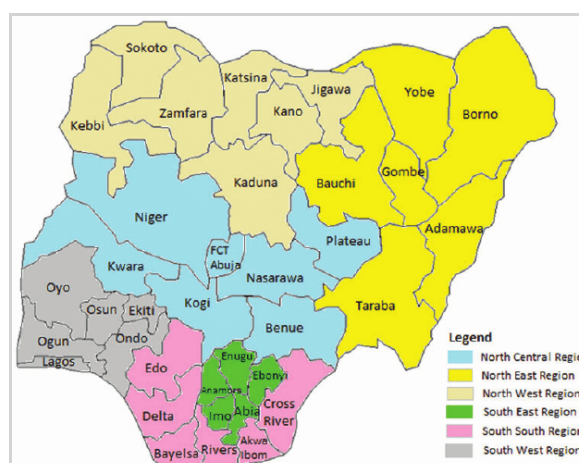

Figure 2: Map of Nigeria showing the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja
Gayawan, E., Arogundade, E. D., & Adebayo, S. B. (2014, p. 37).

It is important that citizens learn from the historical evolution of the Nigerian states, because it is laden with experiences and "life is lived forward, but understood backwards" (Kierkegaard, 1843, p. 306). How would the younger generation know about the beginning of Nigeria: its pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial histories, as well as its journey from protectorates to regions, and from regions to states? It is to be hoped that in a multicultural and multilingual society like Nigeria, exposing students to history education will bring mutual understanding and respect for individuals and their diverse cultures thereby strengthening Nigeria's sense of unity in diversity. There are important local and regional stories to weave into a multi-dimensional national story. In a sense, a reform of history education can address within the classroom the wider problems in society: a recognition of ethnic diversity within and across the population; the role of women in history (and society); and encouragement for an approach to history that sees history as a discourse, an ongoing multi-faceted dialogue that allows for freedom of speech, different interpretations, and different narratives. It is possible that some narratives may be contradictory and difficult to reconcile, and it takes a skilful teacher to be able to manage such discussions. Indeed, with older school students it might be possible to introduce the notion of contested narratives, but this can clearly sometimes be politically sensitive.

The study of History as a subject in pre and postcolonial Nigeria

When the Christian missionaries introduced western education in Nigeria and schools were established, Omolewa (2016) submitted that there was a kind of continuity in that the traditional status of history as an important subject was retained, and the teaching of history was given adequate space in learning and teaching. However, the content of history teaching was transformed, with the Bible (despite its unsuitability) becoming an attractive source of history teaching in mission schools. The intervention of the colonial government in education through Education Ordinances also made provision for the study of history, beginning with an 1887 Ordinance, which changed the content of the history that was to be taught – and emphasised the teaching of English and European history. Across the indigenous pre-colonial Nigerian tribal societies there was a vernacular history that had a key role, but at that time this was replaced with the new biblical, and British (although mainly English), and European colonialist history.

This focus prompted the early educated Indigenous Nigerian elite, and indeed some of the missionary community from the 1920s onwards, to challenge the absence of the study of African history in the school curriculum. The fact that "educated natives of Yoruba are well acquainted with the history of England and with the history of Rome and Greece but of the history of their own country they knew nothing whatsoever," (Johnson, 1921, p. vii) displeased Reverend Samuel Johnson who later wrote *The History of the Yoruba* in 1921. Clearly, some missionary educators in the early twentieth century were concerned about the detrimental effect of colonial policies and were prepared to challenge the colonial governance.

The division of Nigeria in 1951 into three regional administrative units – West, East, and North, empowered each region to legislate and make laws on education. Thus, historical awareness became "an important intellectual force in the decolonisation struggles of the 1950s in Nigeria" (Federal Ministry of Education (FME), 2017a, p.vi). While the teachers were taught –and the students learnt– the biblical and Anglo-centric (or Eurocentric) history, they nevertheless developed an awareness of the power and role of Nigerian history. Noting the fact that "learning our history is very important for taking the right decisions in the future" (Odimayo, 2018, n. p.).

This, according to Ajayi (1985, p.1) was exemplified by Nigerian historian, Kenneth Dike, "who could not accept that Africans had no history beyond the activities of Europeans." Dike would later establish the National Archives of Nigeria and was its Director 1954-1963. Acknowledgement of a distinctively Nigerian identity, and the rich diversity of tribal and ethnic groups, was what the nationalists were driving for, and they would pick up the power and role of vernacular/folk history as a driver for the independence movement. Dike (1951, 1956) promoted a sense of history as an essential ingredient of national life. With a background in folklore, he recorded an "intellectual breakthrough as to the meaning and place of history in African societies ... when he

insisted on a theme focusing on the activities of Africans and requiring the study of Oral Traditions" for his Ph.D. on trade and politics in the River Niger delta, 1830-1879 (Ajayi, 1985). Up to the time of Nigeria's Independence on October 1, 1960, English history was still studied, but since then African and Nigerian history have been embedded in the history curriculum which was as a result of the agitation of nationalists (especially Herbert Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikiwe). Therefore, since the middle of the twentieth century (that is after 1946 to the period of independence), secondary school students were able to tell stories of old Ghana, as well as the Mali, Songhai, Oyo, and Bornu Empires and the legacies they left for modern Nigeria. The contents of History textbooks reflected these topics as typified in Ajayi and Crowder(1974; *History of West Africa: Volume Two*) and Boahen (1976;*Topics in West African History*).

Postcolonial revision: The politics of delisting history education from school curricula

The independence that Nigeria gained from the [British] colonial masters in October 1960, alerted the people, especially nationalists, to the necessity of embarking on the processes of educational emancipation and an overhauling of the educational system. The Nigerian consensus throughout the 1960s was that for the process of independence to be firmly rooted there was a need for total decolonisation of the academic content, principles and practices of education at all levels. As has been seen, it took almost a decade after Independence for the conference of 1969 to be convened. This addressed, in particular, the inadequacy of the school curriculum to develop individual Nigerians and the nation at the rate and tempo to put the country on the world map in the sense of making provisions for an education system that would yield positive economic results for Nigeria (Adaralegbe, 1972). In this way the first Indigenous policy on education evolved: The National Policy on Education (NPE), introduced in 1977. However, history had a minimal role in the official curriculum, and neither its status nor the nature of its content would reflect the views of the nationalist movement from 1920-1960.

From the various iterations of the NPE including 1977, 1981, 1998 and 2004, History was only a strand (and latterly not even a named strand) of Social Studies. Specifically, from 1977 History was a part of the Primary curriculum under the heading of 'Social norms and values and of the country through civics and social studies' and was studied alongside Geography in Secondary education (FRN, 1977). From 1981, History was subsumed within Social Studies in the Junior Secondary curriculum (FRN, 1981). From 1998 and after 2004 and 2014 History was not 'named up' at all in Primary and Junior Secondary education, with the nomenclature delineated as 'Social Studies & Citizenship Education' (FRN, 1998, 2004, 2014). History was retained in the Senior Secondary school curriculum although only with the status of an 'elective' subject (not compulsory for all). Delisting of History, according to Katsina (n.d.), may not have been unconnected to the feeling that Nigerian leaders, military and civilians, were uncomfortable about the critical attitudes of some historians towards what they regarded as undesirable contemporary national policies.

By 2014, the Senior Secondary education curriculum was divided into four areas namely, "(1) Science & Mathematics (2) Technology (3) Humanities, and (4) Business Studies" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014, p. 18). By this arrangement, History fell under humanities as one of the twelve electives. The effect of this organisational measure was that fewer students now studied History or were offered it. This action emanated from the erroneous belief that the 6-3-3-4 system adopted by Nigerian education was to be technological and vocational; therefore, history education was not seen as being relevant, ignoring its crucial role in shaping personal and communal identity, commitment, patriotism and citizenship and all that it entails.

But to Oloruntimehin (cited in Oyeranmi, 2007):

> To advocate that studies in the Sciences and Technology should be pursued to the relative neglect [humiliation] of the Humanities and Social Sciences is to express appetite for the materialism which technology creates rapidly, but

without [what is] required for the organic growth and stability. Every one of us including the scientist and technologist has to be a citizen. Without the socializing influence of training in the Humanities (especially History), the aggregation that we represent as citizens cannot be properly called a nation. A nation that lacks clear self-identity and which is structurally incoherent cannot be strong whatever its wealth and the amount of gadgetry at its disposal. (1976, p. 10)

It was indeed an error because: "For even in the United States, the haven of innovators, pupils are not robbed of the opportunity to be engaged in a keen study of the history of America" (Omolewa, 1987, p.24). Omolewa noted the irony of the influence of American agencies working in Nigeria, arguing that:

The history of the liquidation of History as a subject in the junior schools began with the United States' agencies ... What has followed has been the misfortune of the National Policy on Education which provides for the elimination of history at the Junior Secondary school and a cramming into the second-tier Senior Secondary of a history curriculum that ought to take six years to teach ... A further consequence is the tragedy that most students will now leave schools without a knowledge of history, and as the Historical Society of Nigeria put it on Wednesday 21 January, 1987, at a meeting with the Minister of Education, "Nigeria will soon become a country whose lettered citizens have no idea of their own History". (pp. 23-24)

Interest in History by some government functionaries descended to a ridiculously low level in a particular state, with the consequence that History education was seriously endangered. Thus, in Osun State, in south-west Nigeria history teachers were compulsorily retired in the year 2000 and were told that they were not relevant to national development at all. As reported by Eno-Abasi (2016) in *The Guardian*, this action was contrary to what a renowned author, Professor Anezionwu Okoro, speaking in Enugu at the maiden meeting of the Board of Trustees of Coal City Literary Forum (2016), said:

I cannot imagine a country developing without studying history and this is something that should be urgently looked into ... reintroducing the subject in schools would contribute its quota towards reinventing the society, as well as arming the younger generation with salient information. The disappearance of History, which used to be a vibrant core school subject in the country still baffles many, especially considering the value of the subject to nation building, the development of an individual, his society or the larger community.

History as a subject, indeed, used to be vibrant after the colonial education administrators recognised the agitation for its inclusion in the school curriculum in the pre-and post-independence era before it was delisted in 1982. In the same report, Okoro's view was further strengthened by the former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations, Chief Emeka Anyaoku endorsing this view: "Without the knowledge of the past, there will be no fruitful projections for the future. The knowledge of the past is very vital to the development of the country, and we can only solve present societal problems when we know what was obtainable in the past" (cited in Eno-Abasi, 2016, n.p).

The State government seemed to forget that "every situation has its roots in the past, and the past survives in the present; the present is indeed the past undergoing modification" (Omolewa, 2016, p.2). Because history was delisted from the basic school curriculum, students at the senior secondary stage who were opting for History as an elective subject had no prerequisite knowledge to build upon or to motivate them to study it. This led to the "increasing unpopularity of history as a school subject among the timid or lazy or unadventurous students" (Kelle, 1986, cited in Omolewa, 1987, p.24). The consequence was that students' enrolment to study history started dwindling both at the senior secondary and the post-secondary school levels.

When it was discovered that there was a drastic fall in the enrolment of secondary school students in History and that students were no longer interested in choosing History as a subject, Jekayinfa (1994) carried out research to find out factors associated with students' interest in History in Nigeria. Using an appropriate factor scale, a list of criteria emerged from a variety of previously published factor and attitude scales, which identified: (1) Worthwhileness of History in terms of its perceived benefits; (2) Understanding of History lessons; (3) Attitude of History teachers; (4) Inducement of high grades in History-related disciplines at lower levels (to attract more students to offer history); (5) Peer group influence; and (6) Parental influence. The factors were measured on a three-point ordinal scale ranging from agree, neutral, to disagree. On the six factors explored for their influences on interest in History, it was agreed by a majority of respondents that (1) Social benefits of History and (2) High grades in History-related subjects at the lower level were among the factors that attracted students to History.

However, other factors were responsible for the decline in the number of students choosing History. It may not be unconnected with the fact that some of the elective subjects introduced multiple-choice questions within examinations and history still presented an essay form of questions. Second, the Nigerian government's interest in building a science and technologically developed nation led to a higher education admission policy of the ratio 70: 30 for Science related courses and Humanities respectively. This policy emphasis discouraged students from having an interest in History as a subject. Such an admission policy contained in the national policy on education further served to marginalise the study of Humanities in general and History in particular.

Since the time History was delisted, there has been much clamour and many calls in newspapers, open debates, conferences and workshops for the re-introduction of the teaching of History as an independent subject at all levels of schooling. Two prominent Historical Associations: the Historical Society of Nigeria (HSN), and Historians of Education Development Society of Nigeria (HOEDSON), and other stakeholders including Ikime (1987), Omolewa, (1987, 2012, 2016), Esogbue (2008), Oluwatoki (2012), Adesina (2012); and the staff of the *Daily Post* (2015), expressed reservations about this development (the delisting of History), recording their belief in the need for the re-introduction of history in the school curriculum. For these stakeholders, adopting and sustaining democracy would only work when people were well-grounded in their history, especially their modern political history. These stakeholders, therefore, rejected Social Studies because they were of the opinion that, through Social Studies, students did not have the opportunity to engage fully with the realities of Nigeria's past and history chronologically.

Furthermore, Nigeria is a member of the Commonwealth, and the fourth paragraph of the Harare Commonwealth Declaration by Heads of Government (1991), re-iterating and affirming the second principle set out in a previous Declaration by their predecessors in Singapore in 1971, could only be practicable through history education. Thus, both Declarations state that:

> … we believe in the liberty of the individual under the law, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of gender, race, colour, creed or political belief, and in the individual's inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which he or she lives.

This statement is particularly relevant to Nigeria as a nation. The Declarations make it imperative for citizens to have an in-depth knowledge of their history which Social Studies as then formulated did not provide in the Nigerian context. For example, the migration history of some of the tribes that make up Nigeria, in particular the Fulanis that are now dominant in the northern part of the nation, and the generally associated issues of insurgency and kidnapping, plus cross-border trading and interaction with other African nations are very important. Students would therefore need an analytical approach in history that respects diversity in the Nigerian content, learning about previous mistakes, heroic exploits, religious intolerance, and some of the other emerging issues identified above. It was therefore not out of place when the Minister of Education in Nigeria – Mallam Adamu Adamu – in the foreword to the new curriculum said, "I also congratulate the

Historical Society of Nigeria (HSN) and other well-meaning Nigerians who persistently struggled for the re-introduction of History into the Basic Education level" (FME, 2017a: p.iv).

What is the position of History now in Nigerian schools?

Some historians have observed that almost all of the problems facing Nigeria as a country come from the neglect of history because a people not prepared to face its own history cannot manage to face its own future (Jekayinfa, 2014). Fafunwa (1974, p.13) stressed the role of history in educational reform and national development when he submitted that:

> History is to a people what memory is to the individual. A people with no knowledge of their past would suffer from collective amnesia, groping blindly into the future without guide-posts of precedence to shape their course. Only a thorough awareness of their heritage allows them to make their public decisions as they make their private ones. For possible educational reform, reflection on previous events and policies will assist considerably in planning any future course of action.

Tragically, Nigerians have suffered collective amnesia and would have continued with groping blindly into the future without guideposts of precedence to shape it, if history had not been reintroduced into the school curriculum. Therefore, to discontinue the demagogic attack and give room for total development, knowledge of historical events and interpretations is helpful (Koke & Saleniece, 2015). Though Furlong (2013, p.5) submitted that, "the challenges of educating the next generation of this world of hyper-complexity are huge," all hope is not lost in Nigeria. The starting point in the opinion of the authors is that the reintroduction of History in schools must eventually be made compulsory at all levels so that learners will appreciate where we are coming from, where we are, why we are where we are, and how to work towards responsible democratic citizenship and sustainable development to secure the future. Part of the curriculum content for JSS One: *Meaning of History; Sources of History; and Importance of History,* therefore, is a way of engaging students with the discipline of history as they develop an awareness of historical thinking. To begin to make the desired impact of remediating what has gone awry in Nigeria, the teaching of history must not be left in the hands of the teacher alone; the principle of 'each one teach one' must be adopted both at home and in the larger society. This implies that more than at other times, the government and people of Nigeria must be fully committed to the teaching and learning of history. If homes and schools are assertive and proactive in making history relevant to national development, the gap that has been created by not studying history for decades might be bridged.

The Federal Ministry of Education in 2016 developed its plan on *Education for Change: A Ministerial Strategic Plan (2016-2019)*, which contains several initiatives and activities to be executed, including the reintroduction of the teaching of History in primary and secondary schools. It is important because it recognises the necessity for Nigerians of all generations to learn and know the history of Nigeria's unity in diversity.

Consequently, the National Council on Education (NCE) at the 61st Ministerial Session, in September 2016, approved the disarticulation of History from the Social Studies curriculum and confirmed that History should now be taught as a separate subject at the Basic Education level (Thisday, 2017). The Federal Government fulfilled its promise by producing, through NERDC, a new history curriculum that was approved at the 62nd meeting of the NCE held from July 24 to 28, 2017 in Kano, beginning from the 2018/2019academic session; and in this way, the return of History to schools became real (Editorial, *Leadership Newspaper,* 2018). This was seen as a demonstration of the government's keen commitment to the re-introduction of History at the Basic Education level. Omolewa, not without irony, commented that politics itself had reflected the cycle of history, in that "every situation has its roots in the past, and past survives in the present; the present is indeed the past undergoing modification" (2016, p.2).

The new curriculum came in three different documents namely: *History for Primary 1-3*(FME, 2017a), *History for Primary 4-6*(FME, 2017b), *and History for JSS1-3*(FME, 2017c). The content of the History curriculum launched for the Basic Education level is as presented in Table 2.

	Junior Primary One	Junior Primary Two	Junior Primary Three
Topics	1.MeaningofHistory/Family History 2. Peoples and Places in the Community 3. Heroes and Heroines in the Community 4. Traditional Rulers 5. Title Holders 6. The Local Government Chairperson	1. Indigenous People of the State. 2. Nigerian Peoples 3. Major Towns in the State 4. Heroes and Heroines in the State 5. History of the State 6. Major Traditional Rulers in the State	1. Nigerian Peoples 2. Some Early Heroes and Heroines in Nigeria 3. Towns in Nigeria
	Senior Primary Four	Senior Primary Five	Senior Primary Six
Topics	1. The four early Regions in Nigeria 2. States Creation in Nigeria 3. Colonial Administrative Headquarters 4. Federal Capitals 5. Heroes and Heroines in Nigeria I & II 6. Some Nigerian Peoples I, II, & III 7. Important Historical Features and States in Nigeria I & II	1. British Rule in Nigeria 2. Nationalists and Nationalism in Nigeria 3. Some Nationalists in Nigeria 4. Nigerian Independence 5. Traditional Religions in Nigeria 6. Islam and Christianity in Nigeria 7. Traditional Occupations in the Locality and in the State 8. Traditional Occupations of the people of Nigeria: the Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo	1. Civil Rule in Nigeria 2. Military Rule in Nigeria 3. Oil Economy 4. The Growth of Industries in Nigeria
	Junior Secondary One	Junior Secondary Two	Junior Secondary Three
Topics	1. Meaning of History 2. Sources of History 3. Importance of History 4. Historical Sites in Nigeria 5. The Major Centralised States in Pre-Colonial Nigeria	1. Non-Centralised States in Pre-Colonial Nigeria 2. Inter-Relationships of some Centres of Civilization in Pre-Colonial Nigeria 3. Ghana Empire 4. Mali Empire 5. Songhai Empire	1. Origin and Organisation of Trans-Saharan Trade 2. Early European contacts with Nigeria 3. British Colonisation of Nigeria Territories 4. The Evolution of the Nigerian State 5. The Amalgamation of Nigeria 6. The Independence movement

Table 2: Basic Education Level History Curriculum
(Federal Ministry of Education, 2017)

Table 2 is the curriculum content for the re-introduced history alone for the basic education level. The re-introduction was launched on March 27, 2018, and this was widely reported in the media with headlines such as:

> 1. 'FG (Federal Government) reintroduces subject into school curriculum' – *Pulse* magazine (Bayo Wahab, 03/27/2018
>
> 2. 'How sustainable is the reintroduction of history in secondary schools?' – *The Nation* (Cited in Adeyoriju, Fadahunsi, Chukwu, and Honawon, 02/19/2019)
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> 3. 'Bring back our history' – *TheGuardian* (Eno-Abasi, 05/19/2016)
>
> 4. 'Council on Education Endorses Separate Religious Studies, Revised Curriculum for 2018' (subtext: 'Reinstates study of History') – *This Day* (07/30/2017)
>
> 5. 'FG reintroduces history as an independent subject in school curriculum' – *The Cable* (Jamilah Nasi 02/16/2019)

It should be noted, however, that in the reintroduction of history education, the 'Big Six' historical thinking concepts identified and embraced by much of the international history education community, namely: historical significance, cause and consequence, historical perspective-taking, continuity and change, the use of primary source evidence, and the ethical dimension of history (as discussed in Wineburg, 2001, and Lévesque, 2009; but as particularly defined in the form as set out by Seixas and Morton, 2013) have not been fully embedded in the curriculum. The authors opine that as time goes on, stakeholders will accept most of them, or a suitable selection of the teaching and learning principles behind them, into the history education curriculum to make it more balanced.

Another important thing to note is that the new curriculum in Table 2 caters for history at the basic level of education, as History was never delisted from the curriculum of the Senior Secondary school. Students who were interested in studying History have access to the curriculum/syllabus provided by the West African Examination Council (WAEC), the examining body that issues the final secondary school certificate. Also, in universities and other higher institutions where students study history, there are areas of specialisations like Nigerian history, West African history, African history, European history and World history with their differing curricular content.

Conclusion: Challenges and recommendations

"The messages from history are that the 'futures' to which transformative drivers are directed will be strongly influenced by the 'remembered' past" (Brennan, King & Lebeau, 2004, p. 37). Producing a successful generation in Nigeria without the knowledge of history would be practically impossible because there is always that inter-organic connection between the past, present and the future (Onyekpe, 2012). That historical knowledge helps to cast light on the problems of the society should be a truism in Nigeria, because we are a complex society with varying degrees of cultural practices, beliefs and affiliations; unless this history of our complexities is taught and known by people, especially the younger generation, violence may become part of our community life. The capacity to convey a society's mores and values also lie within the remit of history education. How are our children supposed to internalise the values of honesty, patriotism, cooperation, a consciousness of and respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms, as well as integrity, tolerance and hard work which are celebrated in the history of our various peoples but which seem to be lacking in the Nigerian public service today?

It may be argued that nobody can change the past, but it is instructive to note that the knowledge of the past can inform decisions on how to conduct our affairs today in order not to make the same mistakes that had been made in times past. Santayana (1905, p. 12) wrote that "The past is a repository of lessons about what does and doesn't work in a given situation, and the society that is ignorant of these lessons will, unfortunately (and unnecessarily) repeat the mistakes of the past." Errors are being repeated because people have failed to learn from history. How can Nigerian children avoid the mistakes of the past, when they do not even know enough about what has happened in the past? Simply neglecting history could lead to serious social, political and economic problems. Jekayinfa (2014) used the expression 'the superhighway to damnation' to describe the outcome of failing to include history in schools.

Taking into consideration all the observations above, and with the reintroduced history, all hope is not lost as regards filling the gap created by the non-teaching of history since 1982. What is required is effective teaching and learning from now, including communication with parents and grandparents about the content-matter of the revised curriculum. History education adds value to any society which holds it in high esteem. Renewal of educational policies is inevitable in order to be in tune with global developments. Whatever system of education is adopted by any country should not exclude the study of history, and its removal from the school curriculum by any nation could spell doom for that nation. Nevertheless, the discourse on bringing back history education into Nigeria schools does not stop at its reintroduction.

A major challenge is how to train teachers who are well-grounded in the content to be taught and in the necessary understanding of the discipline of history and creative, inclusive ways to teach it. However, it is good to note that the colleges of education that are responsible for training teachers for the basic education level – primary to junior secondary – have taken proactive action by embedding most of the items in the new history curriculum into their syllabus since 2012 in anticipation of its reintroduction (FRN, 2012a & 2012b). Also, Nigerian universities never stopped training historians and teachers of history. Despite this, more efforts should be made to give effective initial training to history teachers in colleges and universities, and to offer retraining for mid-career teachers in history education, bearing in mind the diversity of Nigeria's cultural and ethnic groups so that what has been gained by bringing back history education into schools in Nigeria will not be 'hanging by a thread.' It is important to note that in some developed countries like the USA (Vinovskis, 2015) and Latvia (Koke & Saleniece, 2015), history as a subject is held in high esteem, and Marwick (n. d., p. 1) noted that "all developed countries have their National Archives ... This is in recognition of the simple fact that knowledge of the past is essential to society."

If many developed nations hold history in high esteem, Nigeria should not do otherwise. It is, therefore, recommended that incentives should be given to students who wish to study history education to become teachers of history. It may be in the form of a fully paid scholarship or fee reduction. History must be a compulsory subject at all levels of education in Nigeria, because a knowledge of the history of the jurisdiction where any citizen lives, enriched by the principles of historical thinking, will enable that person to function better as an active citizen. The implication, therefore, is that you cannot contribute to any form of development within a state unless you know its history. Teachers need to introduce their students to 'doing' history as a kind of democratic exercise where evidence is weighed and discussed/debated. Also, in a multicultural society where many different ethnic groups may share a classroom, it might be seen as desirable to have an 'identity' element in the teaching and learning of history, where all groups are respected and included. For example, the cultural, economic and social history of different ethnic groups must be taught and learned together by students and not separately. This may present some practical difficulties, but the journey of engagement by Nigerian history educators is at least underway.

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Endnotes

[1] Assisted by Clyde Sanger, Canadian Arnold Smith CH, who served as the first Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations, 1965-1975, wrote *Stitches in Time* as a memoir. In this there is a whole chapter dedicated to the role of the newly-formed Commonwealth Secretariat as a peace-broker in the Civil War: 'War in Nigeria, The Tangled Path to Peace Talks', pp. 76-105. Kenneth Dike features in this narrative as he was a supporter of a separate state for Biafra.

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Alice Arinlade Jekayinfa is a Professor of Social Studies Education. She taught History Methods, History of Education and Social studies for more than two decades at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria, where she retired in June 2019. The research being reported is part of the recommendations given in her inaugural lecture in 2014 on how important a subject like History, which had been relegated in Nigeria, should be reintroduced into the Nigerian schools' Curriculum.

Teaching decolonised New Zealand history in secondary schools

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ABSTRACT

In September 2019, the New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, announced that it will be compulsory to teach New Zealand history in all of the nation's schools from 2022. To some extent the announcement was a surprise because the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) is far from being prescriptive and allows teachers autonomy to decide what and how history is covered in the classroom. It was also however, a foreseeable outcome of long-standing and common place assumptions that young people know little or nothing of New Zealand's history (Belich, 2001; Neilson, 2019) and that this can be remedied by making the study of New Zealand history compulsory in schools (Gerritsen, 2019; New Zealand Government, 2019). This article seeks to test these assumptions and in doing so examines the case for teaching New Zealand history, especially from the perspective of a decolonised and inclusive national narrative. It also acknowledges the emergence, within secondary schools, of culturally sensitive and place-based approaches to the teaching of New Zealand history. The article does this by first, describing three recent examples of teaching New Zealand history that adopt these approaches; the last of which, draws upon my classroom practice as a history teacher and teacher-researcher. It then suggests that *Te Takanga o te Wāi* (Ministry of Education, 2015)[1] provides a useful framework to further ground these practices in a theory that balances Indigenous and western approaches to teaching history. In the wake of Jacinda Ardern's announcement that New Zealand history will shortly be compulsory in all schools, the article concludes by proposing that a lightly prescribed framework of New Zealand's colonial history in the curriculum will provide history teachers with a more coherent professional landscape.

CITATION

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Introduction

For those looking in from afar, New Zealand is often described as a young country; the "last large and habitable place in the world to be discovered" (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2019, n.p.). Its history spans the settlement of Māori, the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, whose ancestors arrived from Polynesia around 1200 CE, to a present-day diversity, where one in four New Zealanders was born overseas. Any brief history of the country is anchored by events in 1840 when representatives of Queen Victoria and more than 500 Māori tribal leaders signed *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* / Treaty of Waitangi; one result of which was that New Zealand became a British colony. While the Treaty aspired to bring Māori and the British Crown closer together, different interpretations of what had been agreed and breaches of the Treaty led to conflict. The New Zealand Wars (1843-1872) that followed, witnessed the widespread confiscation or sale of Māori land.

What *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* had promised Māori regarding land and other resources had not been upheld, the legacy of which continues into the present (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2019). Other signposts in New Zealand's history mark periods of: progressive social change (women's suffrage in 1893, and later state pensions and state housing); economic growth (exporting of frozen meat and dairy from 1882); and a developing sense of national identity (independent dominion status in 1907 and a distinctive Anzac (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) 'spirit' forged in the First World War). More recent history highlights New Zealand's widening role in the Pacific and Asian region and for a variety of reasons its loosening of ties with Britain. As the historian James Belich has theorised however, this separation from Britain has been an uneven process (Belich, 2001). He has characterised the 1860s to the 1880s as a period of progressive colonisation followed by its collapse and then the later emergence of a re-colonisation that saw New Zealand 'retighten' its relationship with Britain until the 1970s when the forces of decolonisation again took over. Alongside these broad patterns, Belich also highlights one other significant force in New Zealand's recent history, namely "the remarkable twentieth-century resurgence of the Māori people" (Belich, 2001, p. 12). What also seems remarkable is the claim by Belich and other historians such as O'Malley and Kidman (2018), that young people in New Zealand do not learn about this history in secondary school (Husband, 2016).

Young people's knowledge of New Zealand history

One way of approaching the claim that young people know very little about their nation's history is to ask how much New Zealand history is being taught in secondary schools. The answer seems to be relatively little because history is not a compulsory subject and is only taught as an optional subject in the last three years of schooling; from years eleven to thirteen. This means that only a small proportion of students will study history during their time at secondary school. In 2018, approximately ten percent[2] of senior secondary school students were enrolled in history courses (Ministry of Education, 2019). In the same year, a teacher survey (*n*=320) administered by the New Zealand History Teachers' Association (NZHTA) found that only one in five students opting to take history in Year 11 and 12, will come across New Zealand's nineteenth-century colonial history in their course of study (O'Connor, 2018). While the figure is higher in the final year of schooling, at anywhere between 20 and 50 percent, the survey results show that of the small minority of students who opt to study history, a much smaller number encounter New Zealand's colonial past.

The correlation between studying a nation's history at secondary school and having a knowledge of that history as a young person however, is not as straightforward as might be first thought. As Wineburg has put it, looking back it seems that almost regardless of what has been taught in the classroom "kids don't know history" (Wineburg, 2001, p. viii). He warns against despairing how little history young people know and instead makes the case for focusing on: what students do know; why they know it; how their personal histories align (or not) with national and world histories; and, how they learn about the past in and out of school. It is important to realise however, that Wineburg's warning emerges from a context where United States history is being taught in secondary school and what he sees as a distraction is the seemingly endless debate of replacing one list of United States history content to teach to students with supposedly a better list of content (Stearns, 1993).

From Rogers (1978) and Shemilt (1980) to Seixas and Morton (2013), history education researchers have argued that history students can be taught to approach the past in much the same way as professional historians do. In this sense, learning the skills of the historian and understanding how they think becomes the priority. It follows, that if historical thinking is being taught in New Zealand secondary schools then there is little to worry about because students can apply this critical way of thinking whenever they encounter New Zealand's history, either in or outside of secondary school. And certainly, in the last decade, publications and conferences that serve the professional community of history teachers in New Zealand, suggest a great deal of local support for a historical thinking pedagogy (Harcourt & Sheehan, 2012; Davison, Enright & Sheehan, 2014). Seen narrowly however, as an exclusive pedagogy, there is a danger that teachers assume that historical thinking supplants a need to focus on a quasi-canonical framework of historical content knowledge about New Zealand that secondary students should know. A tendency not to focus on the latter is perhaps more likely because the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) (Ministry of Education, 2007) makes no attempt to set out what the significant historical events that took place in New Zealand might be.

Why is so little New Zealand history taught in secondary schools?

The rarity of encountering New Zealand history in secondary schools can potentially be attributed to the country's highly autonomous and non-prescriptive school curriculum. The current NZC document gives history teachers an almost blank canvas to choose to teach what they wish. Should they choose to do so, they are able to largely ignore New Zealand history. This is because within the curriculum's social science learning area, of which history is a part, there is no prescription of any historical content. And, while the NZC's achievement objectives for history does ask teachers to pay attention to events that are of significance to New Zealanders this can be so broadly interpreted that it is almost meaningless in terms of guiding curriculum choices. As a result, history teachers tend to design courses that are a patchwork of topics from conflict in twentieth-century Europe to the winning of civil rights in the USA (O'Connor, 2018). These topics reflect a pattern of history teachers selecting outwardly facing contexts that are beyond New Zealand's shores (Levstik, 2001). To some extent however, this focus on the non-prescriptive nature of the NZC misses the point that the curriculum documents and indeed the country's *Standards for the teaching profession* (Teaching Council, 2019) both highlight the importance of Indigenous (Māori) history to New Zealand society.

The NZC clearly acknowledges, within teaching and learning programmes "the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 9). The New Zealand standards for the teaching profession elaborate on what this type of aspiration might look like in practice (see Figure 1).

In other words, all New Zealand teachers are being asked to direct their practice towards learning contexts where Indigenous histories, language, identity and culture are affirmed. If, as the NZHTA survey (O'Connor, 2018) suggests, a significant number of history teachers are struggling to achieve this aspiration then there are likely to be a range of reasons. These can be grouped into three categories: an inertia about shifting away from the teaching of largely

Eurocentric historical content knowledge; a desire to avoid the contentious nature of New Zealand's colonial nineteenth century history; and, a perception that New Zealand history is under-resourced and/or boring.

STANDARD	ELABORATION OF THE STANDARD
Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership Demonstrate commitment to tangata whenuatanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership in Aotearoa New Zealand.	• Understand and recognise the unique status of tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand. • Understand and acknowledge the histories, heritages, languages and cultures of partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. • Practise and develop the use of te reo and tikanga Māori.

Figure 1: The first of six standards for the teaching profession in New Zealand
(Teaching Council, 2019).

The tendency to teach European history in New Zealand classrooms, especially early-modern British history, is a symptom of neo-colonialism (Belich, 2007). Put simply, this implies that teachers hark back to a sense of Britishness. For many years Tudor and Stuart England has been a popular component of senior history courses in New Zealand secondary schools (Belich, 2007). This inertia however, was not confined only to history teachers. A key opportunity to more widely engage teachers with New Zealand history in the 1990s was also thwarted by the conservatism of the then Department of Education which wished to maintain the status quo of teaching mostly European focused history in secondary schools (Sheehan, 2010). The Department's *Forms 5-7 History Syllabus for Schools* (Department of Education, 1989) gave European history a dominant position among the topics available to teachers. While it did include topics such as New Zealand history and Māori perspectives it gave little direction as to how they might be taught. Also, it left unchanged the wide range of existing Eurocentric topics taught by history teachers who had been following the 1987 school certificate examination prescription for history, the 1988 sixth form certificate history national course statement, and the 1988 university bursary prescription. Each of these assessment documents favoured content drawn from European history. Furthermore, because the introduction of the 1989 history syllabus was not supported with significant teacher professional development or with any compliance procedures, teachers had little incentive to change what they were doing (Hunter & Farthing, 2004). Teachers are also influenced by a range of conservative perceptions within their community, from parents and students to colleagues, which also might explain their reluctance to engage with contentious local and national histories (Sheehan, 2017).

New Zealand's colonial history includes many injustices and contentious issues that are perceived as difficult to approach in the history classroom and therefore avoided by some teachers. There is also a sense that history teachers are more comfortable engaging either with largely uncontentious New Zealand history topics such as the 1915 Gallipoli campaign or a contentious past when it is safely drawn from an overseas context. Learning about the contentious parts of New Zealand's history has for some Pākehā (New Zealanders of European descent) upset an ideal image of the country's past which contained "simpler and more rosy conceptions of national identity" (O'Malley & Kidman, 2018, p. 307). Learning about the injustices of the Jim Crow era America does not test the assumptions of the local community in the same way as exploring the injustices experienced by Māori in the nineteenth century. Trying to understand, however, why teachers might not want to engage with a local and contentious context is quite difficult. After all, in recent times there has been a sustained emphasis in the historical thinking literature on using different concepts such as perspective taking to teach exactly this type of contentious history (Seixas & Morton, 2013). Drawing upon classroom experiences, history education researcher Michael Harcourt suggests that where students are not practised at historical thinking it is possible to see "a certain desire [for the history teachers] to avoid issues and historical events that students may find difficult, or may not want to learn about at all" (Harcourt, 2015, p. 146).

Another perception is quite simply that New Zealand history is hard to resource in the secondary school classroom and that students find it boring. This rationalises not teaching New Zealand history by contending that "there were not enough good resources [on New Zealand history] and because students thought it was boring and teachers were afraid of losing enrolments from their senior history classes" (Gerritsen, 2019, n.p.). Regarding resources, a 2018 national survey of teachers (*n*=237 teacher responses from 165 schools) found that only half of the survey respondents indicated that it was easy to find teacher guides, tools, and exemplars to support teaching about New Zealand (McDowall & Berg, 2018). It also found that "the problem is not only—or not so much—a lack of resources, but rather a lack of awareness of resources" (McDowall & Berg, 2018, p. iv); with teacher confidence and familiarity particularly low regarding Māori and local histories. The survey authors concluded that rather than simply produce more resources the solution might be to "design tools to assist teachers and students to create, archive and share their own resources about the histories of their local areas, such as the functionality provided at Digital NZ" (McDowall & Berg, 2018, p. 35). Allied to the misconception of a lack of resources, is the perception that New Zealand history is boring.

A concern of some teachers is that a course on nineteenth-century New Zealand history would be taught to a half-empty class (Biddle & Redmond, 2018). Equally, there is a view that students who have encountered New Zealand history in primary or intermediate (middle) school as part of social studies will find it boring to repeat similar content. This point was raised when Year 10 students (aged 14 to 15 years) were interviewed. One student commented that her interest in studying New Zealand and the First World War was "a bit low, probably because ... we have gone through that quite a lot [in primary and intermediate school]" (Davison, 2013, p. 168). History teacher and president of the NZHTA, Graeme Ball, has similarly acknowledged that "sometimes in Year 9 or 10 at our particular school [a large, coeducational, suburban secondary school] when we start to talk about the Treaty [of Waitangi] or something, they'll be 'oh we've done it, we know it'. You dig deeper, they know almost nothing about it" (Gerritsen, 2019, n.p.).

This suggests a lack of coherence when teaching aspects of New Zealand history across primary, intermediate and secondary sectors which potentially contributes to the perception of some students that New Zealand history is boring because they have done it before. While the scope of this article focuses upon the context of secondary school, this is a reminder that what students learn about New Zealand's history before (and indeed after) secondary school is significant.

Until very recently, what was being taught in secondary school history classrooms had generated very little public debate in New Zealand. Usually and perhaps unsurprisingly, it was about what history young New Zealanders did not know. For instance, in 2008, the *Sunday Star Times* [a New Zealand newspaper] reported about the dismal knowledge of New Zealand's past, among a group of 137, Year Four and Five students (aged nine and ten years). These students had taken part in a New Zealand culture and heritage quiz, and only 14 of them had got more than half the questions right, with most students scoring between 10 and 40 per cent (Scanlon, 2008). However, such articles were relatively rare and did not cause the sort of panic about students' knowledge of historical events that has been seen in the USA (Ravitch & Finn, 1987) or foster something akin to the so-called history wars in Australia (Macintyre & Clark, 2004) and the USA (Nash, Crabtree & Dunn, 1998). In the last five years though, this has dramatically changed.

The call to make New Zealand history compulsory

In 2015, two secondary school students from Ōtorohanga College3, Waimarama Anderson and Leah Bell, spoke publicly about being frustrated with not having the opportunity in school to learn the history of Māori-Pākēha4 relations, including the New Zealand Wars. By December of that year, having collected over 12,000 signatures, Anderson and Bell had presented a petition to parliament, calling, among other initiatives focusing on commemoration, for this to be addressed by including New Zealand history as a course of study within the country's school curriculum. The argument being put forward was not only about teaching more New Zealand history but teaching those

aspects of the nation's past connected to injustice and land loss. Appearing on local news media, the students explained why they were seeking change:

> Anzac Day[5] gets taught in schools. But the Land Wars don't. We have done heaps of stuff, over years, I have done poppy-making [commemorating World War One] for example, through all my primary school years, but we have never ever once talked about the Land Wars or the issues in our country over land. (Radio New Zealand, 2014)

Leah Bell's mother, Linda Campbell, who teaches at Ōtorohanga College, felt that young people were being "ripped off from learning their history... ask around [she said] how many of our youth know anything about their own local, let alone national, land and Land Wars history?" (Price, 2016, n.p.).

Inspired by the voices of Waimarama Anderson and Leah Bell, in 2018 the NZHTA, for the first time, took on an advocacy role to promote New Zealand's nineteenth century colonial history in secondary schools. It stated that "an exploration of New Zealand's colonial past is essential as a foundation for understanding what it means to be a bi-cultural citizen" (NZHTA, 2018, n.p.). In its conference of the same year, the NZHTA unanimously passed the resolution that it adopt an activist approach to the teaching of New Zealand's colonial history (NZHTA, 2018). In a subsequent survey, seventy-eight per cent of teacher members agreed with the intent of this resolution. The following year, the NZHTA led a petition to Parliament, asking for New Zealand's colonial history to be included in the school curriculum. It recognised "a zeitgeist moment... [a] time that we took the next step to, in a meaningful way, give young people their history" (NZHTA, 2019, n.p.). Just a few months later, in September 2019, the New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, announced that New Zealand history would be taught in all schools from 2022. The announcement acknowledged that the coalition Government had listened to the "growing calls from New Zealanders to know more about our own history" (New Zealand Government, 2019, p. 1). The NZHTA warmly welcomed this news (Ball, 2019a) whilst also making it clear that the compulsory teaching of New Zealand history should be accompanied by professional development and sufficient funding of teaching resources to help upskill teachers.

History educator, Tamsin Hanly, has produced her own resources on New Zealand history that she markets directly to schools (Hanly, 2015). Hanly argues that teachers she has interviewed, "either didn't know any or not very much New Zealand history ... [but] these teachers wanted guidance and resources. A lot of teachers felt that they were monocultural around things Māori and therefore they didn't teach it in any context" (Hanly, 2017, p. 5). Because teachers have not been taught New Zealand history themselves, they could not share knowledge of Māori histories. Hanly believes that there has been little change from the time she left school in the 1980s, not knowing anything about Māori histories, to the present. Her argument is that the resources and guidance for teachers is inadequate. As a response she self-published her own teacher guide to New Zealand history and supported it with a professional development programme. The latter is important because it is designed to foster teacher awareness and confidence in teaching New Zealand history; a point also made earlier on by McDowall and Berg (2018). Other organisations have also begun to take far more interest in resourcing the teaching of New Zealand history.

On one level those resources can be found online such as through the Ministry of Culture and Heritage's history website and in the on-line encyclopedia of New Zealand. Both have extensive and relevant information and resources. It presents Māori histories from an iwi [a large group descended from a common ancestor and associated with a specific place] perspective and readers can access material in either English or *Te Reo* [Māori language]. In print, publishers such as Bridget Williams Books [BWB] have produced numerous books of New Zealand history. A recent example, *Tangata whenua: An illustrated history* (Anderson, Binney & Harris, 2014) provides teachers with considerable contextual information [all key BWB texts on New Zealand history are placed, free, in school libraries]. Furthermore, from more specialised educational publishers there are new resources such as the secondary school textbook *Expanding World, New Country: 19th Century New Zealand from 3000BCE to today* (Ball, 2019b) and *New Zealand Wars* (Werry, 2018).

On another level, resources come from the collective memory of Māori and are passed on from one generation to another using *waiata* [songs to mark important events], *whakatauki* [proverbs] and *pepeha* [short sayings]. As the historian Judith Binney has commented, orality has been a way to remember and the stories told face to face have become "markers, guides, comfort and warning" (Binney, 2010, p. 351). While disciplinary history can be highly cautious of oral evidence, Binney's point is that written documentary evidence is also problematic, and often misleading. New digital tools, as McDowall and Berg (2018) argue, offer ways for teachers and students to record and share these oral resources.

The case for teaching decolonised New Zealand history

If we agree that more New Zealand history, especially its colonial and indigenous history, should be taught, then why so? The Māori Affairs Committee, which reported on Anderson and Bell's petition to parliament, articulated why knowing about one significant aspect of that colonial history, the New Zealand Wars, matters:

> The New Zealand Wars covers a period of sustained conflict throughout the country from 1843 to 1872 between Māori on one side, and settlers, the Crown, the New Zealand Government, and Māori on the other side. The New Zealand Wars were primarily a result of disputed land purchases and conflict over sovereignty... In addition to the devastating loss of life, the main consequence of the New Zealand Wars and subsequent legislation was the widespread confiscation of Māori land and resources. The intergenerational impact of these events continues to define the context for Māori-Pākēha relations which in recent times have sought redress through the Waitangi Tribunal and Treaty settlement process ... Much Treaty settlement legislation refers to the detrimental effect of land confiscation on Māori development. (Māori Affairs Committee report, 2017, p. 7)

The argument being made is that to understand this legacy and to consider how it could be redressed it is first necessary to explore its history. The Waitangi Tribunal, since 1985, has done this by investigating Crown breaches of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* dating back to 1840. Judith Binney (1940-2011), who like many other New Zealand historians had been involved in providing evidence to the tribunal, pointed out that its detractors tend to criticise its use of historical inquiry "to address, and remedy, present discontents" (Binney, 2010, p. 334). As she argued, this critique, often referred to as presentism, is problematic because it can become "a euphemism for suppressing – yet again – the voices, memories and understandings that had been marginalised in their own times" (Binney, 2010, p. 334). The failure to teach New Zealand's colonial history to the majority of young people in New Zealand is a further example of this suppression. The consequences of such suppression are painfully felt; expressed here by academic and activist, Hana O'Regan, to an audience of teachers:

> [O]ur children are often confronted with the effect of our history, but not enlightened as to the cause. The danger of this is that they are left to think – often unconsciously – that the educational challenges and negative stereotypes many of our *whānau* [extended family, family group] face today – are because they are 'Māori'. (O'Regan, 2018, n.p.)

If we agree that there is a case for teaching decolonised New Zealand history and that, as the NZHTA put it, a zeitgeist moment of change has arrived, it seems logical to support doing something about it. That support however, does not seem to be universal. While the coalition government had cross party backing in parliament for its decision to make New Zealand history compulsory in schools, it is notable that of the 189 written submissions made in select committee to Anderson's and Bell's petition, 138 were strongly opposed (O'Malley & Kidman, 2018). These submissions "claimed the petition was playing on the guilt of Europeans for the treatment of Māori in the past, fostering racial division and drawing on misleading, selective, 'politically correct'

views of the past" (Sheehan, 2017, n.p.). When local communities hold these negative beliefs about New Zealand history it can be difficult for students and their teachers to think differently. Levstik (2001) in her study of history students attending four schools in New Zealand, found that when their beliefs about the past differed from the beliefs of the local community, it was difficult for students to empathise historically. She gave the example of Reed [anonymised pseudonym], a student with a Pākehā background, who did not want to understand a Māori perspective. This was because the Māori perspective about the past included the injustices of colonisation and was at odds with his version of history which tended to see racial injustice and land confiscations as something that only happened overseas. The challenge of shifting Reed's belief that "Māori somehow gave the land away" (Levstik, 2001, p. 89) to the colonial settlers, was considerable. It is almost twenty years since Levstik wrote her article however, and arguably such beliefs are now far less likely to be found among young people. As O'Malley and Kidman argue, Anderson and Bell's petition reveals an openness among Māori and Pākehā young people in wanting to learn about New Zealand's colonial history (O'Malley & Kidman, 2018).

From a different perspective, Ormond and Morgan (2015) highlighted that while it might be desirable to see New Zealand history serving the purposes of the present, that is explaining the impact of colonisation on today's society, they caution that "understanding of the past [does not mean] always looking to trace the origins of today's circumstances" (2015, p. 157). They argue for a less instrumentalist and narrowing approach to history in schools. This is a reminder that the purposes of teaching history at secondary school are manifold and often in tension with one another. In this sense, Wineburg's (2001) point that both the familiar and unfamiliar past are useful ways of engaging students, is helpful. Ironically, it is New Zealand's colonial history that for many students is likely to be the unfamiliar past. Its strangeness "offers the possibility of surprise and amazement, of encountering people, places and times that spur us to reconsider how we conceptualise ourselves as human beings" (Wineburg, 2001, p. 6). The familiar past is perhaps easier, because students know what they will find, but nonetheless important to anchor them in time and place. Again, it is ironic that for many students this familiar past can be found in overseas and seemingly distant contexts. Wineburg's point of course is to avoid the dichotomous thinking of wanting to teach only the familiar or unfamiliar past and instead do both.

Teaching and learning decolonised New Zealand history now: Three examples

In the last few years, within secondary schools, there has emerged a variety of approaches to the teaching of New Zealand history. What these can look like is briefly described in the following three examples.

First, Ricky Prebble, a history teacher at a Wellington high school, has led a cluster of history teachers in his local area under the Māori History in the School Curriculum project. The cluster's role focuses on making links with local *iwi*, in this case *Te Āti Awa*, and working together to create resources that will support the teaching of Māori histories (Prebble, 2015a). Drawing upon the cluster's experiences, Prebble has highlighted the importance of being open to new learning and recognising who are the local experts and guardians 'who can assist in engaging students with Māori history' (Prebble, 2015a, n.p.). He goes on to say that it is the fostering of this relationship, the face-to-face meeting with *iwi* that is most important. Prebble also acknowledges that this can be difficult because it may not be obvious to a history teacher who they should approach if a school does not have a pre-existing relationship with a local *iwi*. A model of local clusters of history teachers will likely help to address this issue of individual teachers struggling to make connections.

Second, Michael Harcourt, a history teacher and researcher, also teaching in Wellington, has devised a toolkit of five pedagogical principles, which draw upon the work of Canadian and US teacher educators (Peck, 2010; Epstein, 2009), that can serve as a framework for teaching New Zealand history (see Table 1).

1. Recognise the identities and interpretive frameworks of students and teachers
2. Actively confront controversial history
3. Connect the past to students' lived realities
4. Recognise and evaluate historical agency
5. Be responsive to place

Table 1: Five principles of culturally responsive history teaching
(Harcourt, 2015)

The first principle emphasises valuing students' different accounts of the past and how they intersect with the teacher's views about history. It pays attention to how students and the teacher relate to their own and each other's ethnicities. This aims to encourage sufficient self- awareness for the assumptions that are brought to contentious history to be shared and discussed. In seeking to deliberately teach contentious history, such as New Zealand's colonial past, the second principle acknowledges that without such an intent there is a tendency for teachers to simply ignore this history. As Harcourt points out, not teaching New Zealand's colonial history likely sends a message to students that "Māori history is less significant than other history" (Harcourt, 2015, p. 39). The third and fourth principles draw on the idea that student engagement is strong when students can make connections to historical characters and understand that these characters have (or had) some autonomy to influence their circumstances. The latter helps to challenge often unspoken theories that cast historical characters in two-dimensional terms as powerless victims or exploitative victors. The final principle by asking what happened in the students' local community is closely aligned to a Māori perspective that foregrounds the importance of place. Harcourt also highlights that it is connected to decolonisation because when students look at the history of local places from an Indigenous perspective, they are likely to recognise past injustices and what these might mean for the present and future.

Third, in 2018, I took part in the multi-agency *Increasingly Digital Project* (Bolstad & Keane, 2019) which investigated, alongside a small group of teachers, how digital and non- digital resources are used to help teachers and students encounter New Zealand history. It particularly focused on resources from *He Tohu*, a permanent exhibition at New Zealand's National Library in Wellington, comprising of three documents: the Declaration of Independence of the United Tribes of New Zealand; Te Tiriti o Waitangi; and, the Women's Suffrage Petition. It also brought together resources commemorating the *Endeavour's* 1769 arrival in New Zealand, in a temporary exhibition called *Tuia Encounters 250*. The National Library's website serves as a portal for teachers and students to access relevant resources and learning activities and it has also sent to every secondary school a set of fifteen curiosity cards[6] to foster student inquiry about New Zealand's history through images of significant objects and accompanying inquiry questions. I have used these resources to develop a unit of work focusing on the intersections of the Māori world, Tupaia [a Tahitian priest] and James Cook in 1769. The focus is on developing an understanding and empathy for each of these three perspectives; and not simply using one as a dominant lens. Students take an inquiry approach, posing historical questions, based on particular artefacts related to the topic, to spark an investigation. I have used the *Increasingly Digital Project's* curiosity cards with the intention of helping to guide students, through inquiry, to deep historical thinking and exploration. What is perhaps helpful is that by focusing on the way New Zealand intersects with other forces, in this case British and Tahitian, the mistake of what Belich calls a fortress New Zealand attitude is avoided (Belich, 2007). Indeed, it is Belich's argument that a decolonised approach to New Zealand history is one that sees it "intertwined with global history" (Belich, 2007, p. 10).

Teaching decolonised New Zealand history now and in the future: A framework

Te Takanga o te Wā is a set of teaching guidelines (Ministry of Education, 2015) that could provide a place-based framework for introducing secondary school students to New Zealand history. Although aimed at younger students, it promotes the universal idea that teachers collaborate with local *iwi*, *hapū* (kinship group, sub-tribe) and *whanau* (family group) to engage students with the stories and histories associated with the school's location. As well as making a connection with place, the framework embraces the idea of 'look[ing] to the past to inform the present and the future' (Ministry of Education, 2015, p. 2). It does so by drawing upon five themes that are integral to an understanding of Māori histories: *whakapapa*, *tūrangawaewae*, *mana motuhake*, kaitiakitanga and *whanaungatanga*.

Whakapapa is a concept that acknowledges that young people are part of something with a great longevity. It stretches back to their grandparents and beyond whilst including themselves in the present and extending into the future. Like a timeline, it provides a way of looking at how young people are positioned on a continuum. It is particularly relevant to looking at Māori migration to New Zealand and drawing upon oral histories. The expertise to know what has remained the same and what has changed over time, in the local area, is something that local *iwi* would help the teacher and students explore.

Tūrangawaewae is about belonging and identity. It involves seeking to find out what is significant about a local place and asking 'how do I fit in?' A sense of students' *tūrangawaewae* might be established and/or strengthened by exploring their family histories and getting out into the local environment to find out more about it. A visit to the local *marae* [a Māori meeting house] provides a way of engaging with the *tūrangawaewae* of the local *iwi*.

Mana motuhake relates to Māori self-determination and the struggle to preserve this during a process of colonialism. It therefore includes the stories of historical loss of land and conflict as well as resistance and protest. It is also the addressing of grievances and settlement. As such it illustrates to students the significant consequences of past actions and what they mean for the present and future.

Kaitiakitanga can be thought of as guardianship of the land and involves students examining local relationships with the land from the earliest settlement. It especially requires students to "compare and contrast the difference in levels of guardianship of the land and the expectations it engendered during the hundreds of years of Māori guardianship and the decades of Pākehā ownership" (Ministry of Education, 2015, p. 11).

Whanaungatanga is the basis of identity and where we come from. It builds from *whānau* and the idea of nuclear and extended families. And from there, explores other connections to wider groups and how they might act collectively within the local area and beyond. Table 2 displays the themes, questions and prompts highlighted in *Te Takanga o te Wā* that might emerge when exploring these five concepts in the classroom. They suggest that approaching history using these themes foregrounds identity, place and story as well as the agency of young people and local experts.

Themes	Questions and prompts	Sample of focusing questions
Whakapapa	Where do I fit in? Who is around me?	How did early Māori live? What was Aotearoa New Zealand like when they got here?
Tūrangawaewae	Where is my place? Where do I fit in?	What stories does the whare whakairo [carved house, meeting house] tell? What does the existence of Māori place or road names and the inclusion of Māori names on monuments or in cemeteries tell us about our community?
Mana motuhake	Each local area has its own story Holding on to mana motuhake	(none provided for this theme)
Kaitiakitanga	Conflicting values Restoration and rāhui [temporary ban / conservation measure] What is around me? Taonga [a treasure / a prized object] is history	In the context of a taonga why is this artefact special? What does it tell us about you?
Whanaungatanga	Who do we come from? Passing on and sustaining culture Change makers A show of unity Children are an important part of the history of Aotearoa New Zealand	How were family and tribal relationships changed by conflict, intermarriage, and forced or unforced migration? How were communities changed as their leaders were killed, imprisoned, or undermined?

Table 2: Themes from Te Takanga o te Wā
(Ministry of Education, 2015, pp. 5-15)

Conclusion

The view that many young people know little or nothing of New Zealand's history is reasonably justified. There are many reasons why this might be the case, including: too few students following a pathway in secondary school that includes the subject of history; and, until very recently a high autonomy curriculum that meant teachers could avoid, if they wished, the contentious nature of New Zealand's colonial history. The assertion however, that they include the idea that New Zealand history is boring and poorly resourced is unwarranted. Newly published resources, from Graeme Ball's secondary school textbook *Expanding world, new country* (Ball, 2019b) to digitally curated artefacts at the National Library of New Zealand, illustrate the engaging nature of New Zealand history and a commitment to making the country's past accessible to teachers and students.

Until a very short time ago, it might have been said that simply acknowledging that New Zealand history is rarely taught in secondary schools will do little however, to change the status quo. More than thirty years ago the prominent New Zealand historian, Keith Sinclair, lamented that "[history] has nearly no place in our school timetables" (Sinclair, 1986, p.1). That a generation of new historians have said much the same thing in this decade, suggested that the status quo had been remarkably durable (O'Malley & Kidman, 2018). Then, in September 2019, the Prime Minister's announcement that New Zealand history will be taught in all schools from 2022, rather dramatically changed things.

As history teachers begin to ask what will happen in the lead up to 2022, there are already promising signs about what the teaching of New Zealand history in schools might look like. *Te Takanga o te Wā* (Ministry of Education, 2015) provides teachers with a framework regarding how New Zealand history could be taught in ways that embrace both historical thinking as

described by Seixas and Morton (2013) and a culturally sensitive theory of place-based histories. As this article has highlighted, there are examples of this approach being used in the classroom to deliberately engage with the contentious nature of New Zealand's colonial history (Prebble, 2015b; Harcourt, 2015). Alongside this practice will soon sit an agreed national framework of content knowledge about New Zealand history within the NZC document. At this stage, the coalition government has signalled that this will likely include the following:

> The Arrival of Māori to Aotearoa New Zealand
>
> First encounters and early colonial history of Aotearoa New Zealand
>
> *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* / Treaty of Waitangi and its history
>
> Colonisation of, and immigration to, Aotearoa New Zealand, including the New Zealand Wars
>
> Evolving national identity of Aotearoa New Zealand in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries
>
> Aotearoa New Zealand's role in the Pacific
>
> Aotearoa New Zealand in the late twentieth-century and evolution of a national identity with cultural plurality

Table 3: Framework of content knowledge about Aotearoa New Zealand history
(New Zealand Government, 2019, p. 1)

Another way of thinking about content is as a series of elements, as outlined in James Belich's Dominion Day symposium address (Belich, 2007). Accordingly, the framework would include New Zealand's nineteenth century colonial history with an emphasis on its "trans- national, trans-disciplinary, trans-cultural, innovative, and dramatic [elements]" (Belich, 2007, p. 10). To take just one of these elements, the trans-cultural, there is an opportunity to teach the migrations and interactions of Māori, Pākehā, Pacific Islanders and the Chinese. Exploring the histories of how these global cultures come together locally in New Zealand is what Belich calls a civic nationalism or more descriptively "a point of mediation between the global and the local" (2007, p. 10). The expectation is that studying New Zealand history could help secondary school students develop a highly inclusive idea of what it is to be a New Zealander. Prescribing New Zealand historical content, to serve a moral purpose that might be called civic nationalism or more simply understanding how the past has shaped New Zealand's present, is not without controversy.

The process of prescribing content produces a healthy scepticism among history teachers who are suspicious of centralised attempts to control what is taught (Enright, 2016). Yet, done well, prescribing at least some of what is taught in history classrooms can avoid the politically motivated and narrow version of history that is of concern here. Drawing upon the experiences of teachers in England and Wales, Husbands, Kitson and Pendry (2003, p. 139) have noted that a history curriculum with a relatively light prescription can quickly become part of the professional landscape and not only "a resource to be deployed in supporting pupil learning," but a means for greater coherence.

It is apt to conclude with the voice of one of those most closely associated with advocating for this new landscape that includes the compulsory teaching of New Zealand's colonial history. Responding to the announcement that New Zealand history will be taught in all schools from 2022, Leah Bell, a student from Ōtorohanga College and co-sponsor of the 2015 petition to parliament calling for just such an action, said that "this is such an exciting prospect for all of us here in Aotearoa [New Zealand] to explore our history, to garner a greater sense of unity and understanding of who we are" (cited in McCarthy, 2019, n.p.).

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Endnotes

[1] *Te Takanga o te Wā* is a set of guidelines for teaching Māori history, published by the Ministry of Education. It is aimed at teachers in Year 1 to 8 classrooms (primary and middle schools) but is also relevant to secondary school settings.

[2] In 2018, 329,051 students were enrolled in New Zealand's National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA); the country's public qualification for senior high school students. Of those, 31,016 were enrolled in NCEA History.

[3] Ōtorohanga College is a rural secondary school in the Waikato district of New Zealand's North Island.

[4] Pākēha refers to New Zealanders of European descent.

[5] "Anzac Day occurs on 25th April. It commemorates all New Zealanders killed in war and also honours returned servicemen and women. The date itself marks the anniversary of the landing of New Zealand and Australian soldiers – the Anzacs – on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915." Retrieved 8 November, 2019, from https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/anzac-day/introduction.

[6] The National Library's curiosity cards can be accessed online: https://natlib.govt.nz/schools/teaching-and- learning-resources/teaching-tools-resource-guides/curiosity-cards-for-inquiry.

Acknowledgements

About the Author

Martyn Davison is a history teacher. He began teaching in south west England in 1996 and took the plunge to New Zealand's Pacific shores in 2002. He encourages students to think critically and empathically about the past. Martyn's doctoral research explored the role of empathy in the history classroom. He is currently collaborating with the history community to implement curriculum changes that will see New Zealand history being taught in all schools by 2022. Martyn believes that teachers are strongest when they generate, as well as consume, educational change. The author can be contacted at the email address below.

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Unsettled Histories: Transgressing History Education Practice in New Brunswick, Canada

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we examine national trends in Canadian history education with regard to decolonising history education and how those trends have been manifested in the context of the province of New Brunswick's Anglophone education system. We begin with outlining three key characteristics of Canadian history education: it has been assimilationist and destructive for the languages, cultures, and collective memories of Indigenous Peoples; it has turned in recent years to an emphasis on teaching historical thinking; and there is an ongoing scholarly and professional debate in Canada about the best way to include attention to Indigenous Peoples and their history in Canadian schools. We show how these trends have been and are present in New Brunswick and argue that unsettling traditional approaches to history education involves rethinking approaches to historical content and processes as well as taking seriously the capacity of young people to engage deeply with the past.

KEYWORDS

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Introduction

During the 2009 Massy Lectures, Wade Davis addressed a large crowd at the University of Toronto on the subject of Indigenous and ancient wisdoms in the modern world. The well known professor and anthropologist from the University of British Columbia was articulating an evaluative response to questions he had often received throughout his career: What does it matter if traditional cultures and belief systems disappear around the world? What impact does the loss of another culture somewhere else in the world, through assimilation and extinction, have on life, say, growing up in Canada?

A decade later, the need to articulate a response to these questions should appear unneccessary, especially given Canada's truth, reconciliation, and healing process and the subsequent steps being taken across the country to both support and implement the 94 Calls to Action put forth by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools (TRC) (2015). Governments, post-secondary colleges and universities, as well as public education institutions, have slowly begun responding to the TRC's recommendations. However, as Davis expressed with concern that evening, and of particular relevance for history education, "if someone needs to ask the question, can he or she possibly be expected to understand the answer?" (Davis, 2009, p. 165).

While public debates in Canada regarding Indigenous knowledge systems, wisdom, and ways of being may well be predicated on the idea that cultures ebb and flow in and out of existence, a perceived consequence of the arc of developing civilizations over time, attitudes of ambivalence are often perpetuated by those who have not had to endure cultural assimilation, racism, or systemic abuse. The persistent myth of Canada, for example, as "a young, modern society, free from the old hierarchies, cultural prejudices and embedded traditions of the Old World… a classless, meritocratic and democratic society, open to newcomers and to new ideas" (Kymlicka, 2003, p. 162), operates as a privileged sentiment often presented with nationalistic sincerity. A recent Prime Minister, for example, stated, apparently without irony, that "Canada has no history of colonialism" (Vancouver Sun, 2009, n.p.).

It is this privileged ambivalence and mythic nationalistic sincerity that should offer collective concern. Given the current climate of public history debates in Canada and around the world, it is important to assess how prepared public education and teachers of social studies and history are to deal with discussions about decolonization and contested histories with young people. Additionally, it is important to address the efficacy of recent trends in history education as part of a collective response to individuals asking *why does this matter?*

In seeking to address that question, we agree with Clark and Sears (2020, p. 262) who "contend that the injustices of the past both in terms of the experiences of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and many other parts of the world, and in how their history has been portrayed or ignored, in academic and public history, mandate separate and substantial attention to Indigenous perspectives in history education." This article is meant to contribute to that aspect of conversations about the theoretical underpinnings of history education by examining a specific temporal context.

New Brunswick, the focus of our paper, is the only officially bilingual province in Canada, with dual Francophone and Anglophone systems of education. As well, there are numerous community operated First Nation[1] schools that have evolved in the wake of the federally-run Indian Day, Industrial, and Residential School systems. In this paper, we examine national trends in history education and how they have been applied in the context of New Brunswick's Anglophone system. Specifically, we explore the adequacy of attention being given to decolonizing history education. We are non Indigenous, Settler, English speakers who have benefited from living in a colonial context that privileges our background and perspectives. As such, we do not claim to represent the perspectives of the peoples of the Wabanaki Confederacy, Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik and Passamoquoddy, who have occupied the territory about which we write from time immemorial.

We are, however, experienced history educators seeking to write in the spirit of reconciliation called for in the report of the TRC (2015).

In what follows we examine policy, curricula, and practice to explore the question: is decolonizing history education in New Brunswick possible under current educational realities? We begin by outlining national trends in history education in Canada before providing some context to New Brunswick. We then turn to analyzing the application of these trends to New Brunswick with specific attention to how Indigenous perspectives, histories, and contemporary issues are addressed in curricula and practice. Finally, we offer ideas for moving forward and explore how expanding critical history education opportunities alongside Indigenous perspectives may provide the best vehicle to support decolonization in New Brunswick history education.

The Canadian Context

Canada is a settler colonial country with a history of complex relationships between and among Indigenous peoples, European settler populations, African-Canadians, and more recent immigrant minorities from around the globe. Kymlicka (2007) argues that struggling to work out these relationships has been "central to Canadian history" (p. 39). As part of that struggle the Canadian state has, he contends, developed a unique institutional response to diversity with regard to three classes of minorities: Indigenous Peoples, French Canadians, and immigrant/ethnic minorities. Within this framework the experiences of African-Canadians has been largely muted. According to Afua Cooper (2006) "The erasure of Black people and their history is consistent with the general behaviour of the official chroniclers of the country's past... bulldozed and ploughed over, slavery in particular ... erased from its memory. This in a country where the enslavement of Black people was institutionalized and practised for the better part of three centuries" (p. 7). Any comprehensive examination of colonialism and decolonization in Canadian education would require an examination of the experience of African Canadians, as well as peoples of other backgrounds often brought to, or allowed into, the country to serve the interests of European colonizers. In response to current trends in policy and practice within the Canadian state, and due to the limitations imposed by an article length treatment of the subject, we have focused our article on Indigenous Peoples. Readers should be aware this is only part of the story of colonialism in Canada.

Recently, for a range of reasons but largely due to the report released by the TRC (2015), there has been significant focus by Canadian governments on the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the Canadian state. The former Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, established the TRC following his national apology on behalf of Canada where he admitted, "Two primary objectives of the residential school system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture" (CTV News, 2008, n.p.). While the last of these federally supported schools, and residences, closed in the 1990s, the current government says it has made implementing the Calls to Action of the Commission, and reconciliation between Indigenous and Settler Peoples more generally, a key priority (Government of Canada, 2019).

Justice Murray Sinclair, the Chair of the Commission, commenting on the horrific history of abuse and cultural degradation described in the report said, "Education is what got us into this mess . . . but education is the key to reconciliation" (Watters, 2015, n.p.). Flowing from this, a number of the 94 Calls to Action set out by the commission are related to education generally and several of those have to do with history education. Table 1 provides a summary of the latter.

> 62. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:
> - Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students . . .
>
> 63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:
> - Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
> - Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
> - Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect
>
> See the full set of calls to action at:
> http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

Table 1: Selected calls to action from the TRC

In Canada administrative and legal authority for education is constitutionally delegated to the provinces and territories rather than the federal government. Some provinces have taken steps to improve curriculum and teaching in this area, while others lag behind. In Alberta, for example, all social studies curricula have to pay substantial attention to both francophone and Aboriginal perspectives across a range of topics and issues covered (Alberta Education, 2005). New Brunswick, the province where we work and on which this article is focused, is taking steps to initiate new programs in this area but those are much less developed than in Alberta. This kind of variation is typical across the country.

Having said that, there are three national trends that are important for contextualizing our discussion of history education in New Brunswick. There is not space for a detailed exploration of these here, but in brief they include:

- Canadian education in general, and history education in particular, has been assimilationist and destructive for Indigenous Peoples. Mi'kmaq scholar, Marie Battiste (1998; 2013; 2016a; 2016b) has spent her career describing and documenting what she calls *cognitive imperialism* in Canadian schooling. She describes this as "whitewashing the mind as a result of forced assimilation" (2016b, p. 2). Similarly, Clark (2007) traces the history of how Indigenous Peoples have been dealt with in school history textbooks across Canada. She concludes by arguing:

    > The narrative in Canadian history textbooks is overwhelmingly one of progress—progress in taming the wilderness and the people who lived in it at the time of European arrival; progress in establishing orderly (European) systems of law and government; progress in building efficient networks of transportation, communication and trade. (p. 111)

    Consistent with this, since the nineteenth century history education in Canada "has been dominated by an authoritative, colonial, nation-building narrative intended to instil nationalistic identity and patriotism" (Gibson & Case, 2019, p. 255).

- The past twenty years has seen a revolution in approaches to history education in schools. In Canada and around the world educators are embracing a new approach to teaching and learning which includes knowing historical information but moves beyond that to focus on developing historical thinking. There are a number of specific frameworks for historical thinking, but common to them all is an emphasis on developing student competencies with the key disciplinary processes of historical work – students are expected not only to know what historians know, but also how historians know (Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2004). The

approach to historical thinking delineated by Seixas and Morton (2013) is the dominant one in provincially mandated curricula across Canada.

- There has been vigorous scholarly debate in Canada about the best way to include attention to Indigenous Peoples and their history in Canadian schools. Central to these debates is the question about whether traditional, disciplinary approaches to teaching history, such as those embodied in historical thinking approaches, are in and of themselves colonialist in that they are grounded in a Eurocentric epistemology. Indigenous scholars and others have made the argument that it takes much more than a change of topics to Indigenize the curriculum, change must also include a reframing of the nature of knowledge itself. Battiste (2016b) puts it this way:

  > Since the 1970s provincial education authorities have taken great strides to include multiculturalism, heritage and treaty rights, and human rights in research, policy reform and inclusive educational practices. But education has not yet transformed the social constructions of Eurocentrism. (p. 3)

  Some argue that historical thinking is grounded in these Eurocentric knowledge constructions and "imposes a settler grammar over the study of the past" (Cutrara, 2018, p. 253). Others make the case that "the significant and important changes that history educators must undertake to address the TRC's Calls to Action can be implemented without radical epistemological restructuring of the discipline of history, as some would suggest" (Gibson & Case, 2019, p. 253). The debates are vigorous and by no means close to being settled.

All three of these national trends – a tradition of assimilationist and patriotic approaches to history education; a recent move toward historical thinking as an organizing framework for history teaching and learning; and a growing commitment to address Indigenous history in the context of contentious debates about how best to do that – provide context for our discussion of history education in New Brunswick.

The New Brunswick Context

Consistent with the settler colonial fabric that provides the contours of Canadian society, New Brunswick is not isolated from the enduring realities of European imperialism and colonization. The contemporary arrangement of reserve communities in present day New Brunswick and displacement of First Nation families is rooted in deliberate efforts to undermine Indigenous sovereignty, culture, language, treaties, and ancestral lands.

The original inhabitants of the territory, the Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik, and Passamoquoddy, have lived on these lands from time immemorial well before the arrival of European settlers in the early 1500s and continue to do so. According to hereditary Mi'kmaw chief, Stephen Augustine (2016), ceremonial friendship treaties were established early with European settlers forming the foundation of relations today. However, as Augustine explains:

> We did not surrender our sovereignty or our land. We negotiated peace and friendship, allowing various European powers to create settlements on our shores and share in the vast resources … the treaties were never understood as a surrender of our lands or of our Aboriginal rights. Actually, the treaties that we negotiated with the English in the 18th century had as their purpose recognition and guarantees or our Indigenous rights. (p. 17)

Peace and Friendship Treaties evolved in the 1700s as an attempt to maintain just relations, collective security, and to address the rapid influx and encroachment of Europeans due to colonial wars. However, these agreements "were not land-surrender treaties, nor were they treaties agreeing to relocation … they were about mutual respect, mutual peace and mutual prosperity" (Palmater, 2016, p. 24).

After Canada became a confederated Dominion in 1867, the task of working through the perimeters of these relations within a newly established nation among many Indigenous nations passed from the British Crown to the Government of Canada. As the pattern of encroachment, re-settlement, forced relocation, and conflict with Indigenous Peoples expanded across the central, western, and northern portions of the country, negotiating treaty agreements was no longer a choice but a necessary condition of survival for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The numbered treaties that exist in the central and western parts of the country are the outcome of this colonial expansionism. Historian James Daschuk argues the treaties "became the means by which the state subjugated the treaty Indian population" (p. 125). According to retired Supreme Court Chief Justice Beverly McLaughlin, what unfolded during this period is nothing short of a "cultural genocide" (*Globe and Mail*, 2015, n.p.).

As treaties of peace and friendship in Wabanaki territory were developed within the context of mutual respect, peace, and prosperity, they are unique in that they were negotiated without explicit conditions of surrendering territory. Consequently, the historical context of present-day New Brunswick has much to offer broader dialogues and debates regarding decolonization, education, and national historical narratives. Implementing the TRC's 94 Calls to Action, particularly as it relates to Indigenous epistemologies as part of historical learning, is especially important in a region where treaties, Indigenous rights, and settler-colonial histories are poorly understood by the public and education system at large. If there is any agreement to be found, many see education as a critical pathway forward in addressing the unsettled past.

National trends in history education, the perpetuation of New Brunswick operating as a settler-colonial territory, and issues such as those addressed by Wade Davis offer an important point of departure in exploring the current state of critical history education in schools (Seixas, 2004). This raises important questions such as, are we prepared to ask critical questions about ourselves and the sites we mediate in our lives? Moreover, as the foci of education, how are public pedagogies supporting young people as active agents of historical discourse and learning? In understanding what is at stake, is there any urgency to a growing international concern that when it comes to learning complex histories "little is taught or learned in schools" (Low-Beer 1986, p. 113 in Sheehan, 2012, p.107)?

For Wabanaki Peoples living in present-day New Brunswick – Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik, and Passamoquoddy – the array of experience related to undermined knowledge systems, languages, and cultural operates as an enduring contemporary reality (Battiste, 2016a). Inter-generational trauma, systemic racism, and the persistent exposure to language loss and the threat of cultural extinction has not lessened with time. While the current decolonization efforts have expanded the dialogue, these realities are stubbornly fixed and ubiquitous.

Scholarship in historical thinking demonstrates young people's capacity for developing significant knowledge and skills about the past and other aspects of social phenomoena (Brophy & Alleman, 2006; Barton & Levstik, 2004, 2008; Wineburg, 2018). Brophy and Alleman (2006), for example, argue that "primary-grade students are interested to learn a much greater range of social studies content than many educators give them credit for" (p. 433). However, social studies and history education, particularly at the elementary level, has been hampered by being considered a low priority with a number of structural conditions flowing from and including virtually no professional learning opportunities as well as subpar curricula and resources (Sears, 2018).

As it relates to current trends unfolding in history education in Canada, the persistant belief that "children and adolescents are not capable of something so cognitively demanding" (Barton, 2012, p. 198) forms the foundation of a much broader context confronting the experiences of young people when learning about complex histories in school. While developing the necessary cognitive dissonance needed to recognize and trouble the operation of official histories is itself a difficult task for teachers, decolonization requires constant, and repeated, exposure to those realities to enhance conceptual understanding.

As disciplinary history methods continue to draw increased attention in provincial and territorial social studies and history curricula across Canada, it is important to ensure Indigenous epistemologies regarding historical learning are not hampered by what scholars have identified as "the (over) proceduralism of historical thinking" (Ng-A-Fook & Smith, 2017, p. 66) and potential settler grammar (Cutrara, 2018) disciplinary history is capable of reinforcing. This is a sound critique and cause for concern, especially given the limits of disciplinary understanding among many teachers assigned to teach history.

Unsettling Histories

Although there has been considerable effort over the past decade to revise social studies and history curricula, provincial governments across Canada have long been plagued by curricula and mandated textbooks with an affinity for silencing, promoting historical erasures, and perpetuating racist stereotypes of Indigenous Peoples. When Chief Dan George offered his *Lament for Confederation* in July 1967, in British Columbia, as a response to events celebrating Canadian Confederation, his critique of settler colonialism involved identifying history textbooks as an enduring source of both racism and colonial power (Carleton, 2011). George's challenge to the embedded racist stereotyping of Indigenous Peoples in textbooks was quickly followed by scholarly and political works, including *Teaching Prejudice: A Content Analysis of Social Studies Textbooks Authorized for Use in Ontario* (McDiarmid & Pratt, 1971) and *The Shocking Truth About Indians in Textbooks!* (Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, 1974) among many others who have since offered important critiques on the representation of Indigenous Peoples and national myths. Recently, Cree scholar Dwayne Donald (2011) pointed out that because "the significance of colonialism as a social, cultural, and educative force has not yet been meaningfully contemplated" both the historic and contemporary "learned habits of disregard" (p. 91) continue to persist despite efforts at educational reform.

In 1952, a decade prior to Chief Dan George's *Lament for Confederation*, the Province of New Brunswick, published *New Brunswick and Its People: The Biography of a Canadian Province* (MacNutt & Trueman, 1952)*.* As described by its authors, the purpose of the publication was to provide information about the history of the province, designed to assist those wanting to know more about regional history.

In keeping with many textbook accounts on nation formation in Canada, the publication followed a linear progressive scheme that traced New Brunswick's "birth", through "childhood", onto "adolescence", and finally to "maturity" marking the "steady and well-founded progress made in the economic and social life of New Brunswick" (1952, p. 46). In the first chapter, simply called *Birth*, commentary is offered on early explorers to the region with specific focus on Samuel de Champlain, the French-English rivalry, the British conquest, and the Acadien Expulsion in the 1750s. This is followed by a chapter titled *Childhood* describing the Pre-Loyalist, the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the Revolutionary War in the United States, the coming of the Loyalist as the "foundation of the province" (p. 19), and the War of 1812. The third chapter *Adolescence* describes the development of natural resources, boundary disputes with the United States, Crown lands, and the building of railways, before the final section titled *Maturity* shifts to a discussion of Confederation in 1867 and "religious and educational development" as markers of the province's "coming of age" (n.p.).

Propogated as an abridged history of New Brunswick, the text performs the work of historical silence, erasure, and racism. Where there is mention of Indigenous Peoples, it is done so under the heading *Before the White Man Came* where the authors provide a few paragraphs regarding the territories and its people prior to the arrival of Europeans, offering little context to the rich and complex histories, traditions, languages, and cultures of the Wabanaki only to say that "they have left little except their names and their legends" (1952, p. 4).

Few details are given by the authors regarding the full impact of the Indian Act[2] on Indigenous Peoples living in the region nor is there mention of the government's compliance in using

education and federally-run Indian Residential and Day Schools as a tool, in what Indian Affairs Annual Reports describe, as emancipating children from a percieved condition of ignorance and superstitious blindness.[3] Of course, neglected are any discussions directing attention to centuries of colonial violence, broken promises, and failed treaty relations. Also missing is any outward sense of the accomplishments and valued contributions of First Nations.

This invisibility continues to be normalized in public narrative schemes today, as are other simplistic representations of Indigenous people as 'warriors', 'exotic', 'problems', 'protestors', and 'uniquely spiritual', a pattern that emerges in education curricula and in textbook depictions used in schools across the country (Clark, P. 2007). According to Aboriginal educator Susan Dion (2000), fundamental to understanding these racist stereotypes and embedded assumptions is a recognition that "there is far more to being First Nations than beads and feathers and that our identity is not something that can be pulled on and off like a pair of jeans" (p. 354). Apart from tropes positioning Indigenous people as other, relationally to dominant society, Dion (2004) notes that spaces need to be reclaimed where "Canadians are called upon to begin the work required to face a shared history that requires responsible attention" (p. 74).

Government sanctioned textbooks are not complex histories but often function as dominant narrative schemes acting to conceal the past rather than to reveal its complexities. By offering simplistic understandings of the past to create notions of insider/outsiders, they involve discursive tools to mix history, memory, and myth to communicate what Hobsbawm (1990) called "the nation's programmatic mythology" (p. 6). The mythology described above can be easily traced throughout early and contemporary history texts in the public domain and in schools, memorials, museums, place names, and geography throughout New Brunswick.

Settler-colonial histories in New Brunswick have persisted as exclusionary *progressive* tropes of nation building focused on the legacy of British Empire Colonialism and the adoption of British institutions and practices, what Battiste and Semaganis (2002) have described as a form of "cognitive imperialism" (p. 93). Battiste (2013) points out that this white-washing of the mind has given licence to "dominant English languages and European discourse" (p. 26) further diminishing Indigenous languages and knowledges, perpetuating a cycle of systemic discontinuity, trauma, and settler-colonial violence.

New Brunswick's programmatic colonial mythology persists on multiple levels in both public and private discourse revealing the need to help young people makes sense of how these long-standing structures of colonization persist. Failing to give students access to complex analytical processes and re-claimed histories hampers the development of important cognitive tools needed for productive social and political engagement, and for critical historical evaluations. The idea of living in a post-colonial society is largely a romantic notion and it will remain just that unless public pedogogies re-imagine and explicitly recognize that "not everyone enters our common spaces under conditions of equality" (Stanley, 2006, p. 47).

While contemporary narratives have shifted with policy and practice over the years to include the voices of Francophones, they often fail to adequately address difficult histories and policies of the past impacting contemporary languages, cultures, and identities. While other provinces, such as in Alberta, have mandated attention to these perspectives throughout the K-12 curriculum, New Brunswick provides limited opportunities and resources for teachers to do so. Cutrara (2018) observes that even when attempts by teachers are made to integrate the perspectives of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis into history classrooms many "are not necessarily moving beyond simply telling these stories and toward a more complex exploration of colonialism in Canada" (p. 253). Similarly, Scott and Gani (2018) have found significant, ongoing resistance among teachers when encouraged to provide sustained attention to Indigenous perspectives in social studies classrooms.

Where schools do offer direct opportunities for teaching about complex histories and Indigenous issues, there is little evidence to suggest they are used to contest, offer nuance, or to unsettle. Rather, classrooms often focus on material cultural history or function as spaces for information gathering without the expressed goal of decolonizing and debating the contested past.

According to Dion (2009), even when Indigenous counter-narratives are provided to support classrooms, teachers and students often seem unaware of their ongoing positionality and attachment to dominant narratives that serve to silence and deligitimize Indigenous experience.

Difficulties within New Brunswick are compounded by a paucity of research illustrating what exactly is being taught and what students are actually learning in social studies and history classrooms. Although research in citizenship and diversity education in New Brunswick (Hamm et al. 2018; Peck et al. 2008) has revealed noticeable gaps in student understandings of ethnic and cultural diversity, there is limited scholarship illustrating how classroom history pedagogy is unfolding. Anna Clark's (2009) comparative research on Canadian and Australian students is the only clear example in which students and teachers alike are demanding greater agency and complexity when learning and teaching about the past.

Indigenous scholars have rightfully challenged practices they perceive are solely focused on "teaching history well, pastoral care, and citizenship education" (Dion, 2009, p. 178). As a result, it remains unclear the extent to which social studies and history education in New Brunswick achieves what it mandates, supports the needs of teachers, prioritizes Indigenous epistemologies and historical perspectives, and attends to the embedded prior knowledges of young people with an array of cultural backgrounds and contexts.

Illusions and Cemented History Education Practice

In 2010 the New Brunswick began infusing elementary social studies and high school history curricula with the conceptual and procedural knowledge of historical thinking (Seixas, 2006; Seixas and Morton 2013). In Canada, historical thinking is primarily filtered through the influential work of Peter Sexias' six big concepts (establishing historical significance, using primary evidence, identifying continuity and change, analyzing cause and consequence, taking historical perspectives, and understanding the ethical dimension of historical interpretations) and has been widely accepted as an approach that helps young people developed enhanced historical consciousness and greater conceptual understanding.

While debate about reconceptualizing learning history has continued in scholarship, with some Indigenous scholars arguing "the closer we move toward historical thinking… the further we will get from answering the TRC's Calls to Action" (Cutrara, 2018. p. 254), teachers have primarily remained on the periphery of these dialogues in large part due to standards of professional practice, limited disciplinary expertise, and lack of access to pertinent history education literature. While Sandwell and Von Heyking (2014) argue that many educators are beginning to demonstrate abilities in engaging students in the complexities of historical learning, anecdotal evidence suggests that various forms of "celebratory heritage" (Seixas, 2014. p. 14) approaches persist in New Brunswick schools.

Far from building capacity to support competencies for critically evaluating historical interpretations, decolonization, and exploring concepts such as nation, culture and identity, celebratory heritage uses iconic representations and stirring celebrations to foster a strong sense of national identity and social cohesion amongst citizens of a nation state. Celebratory heritage has its place where and when opportunities are provided to critique its practice, influence, and impacts on people's lives. However, the unintended consequence of celebratory heritage without critical reflexivity is that it often perpetuates settler colonial racist attitudes and undermines the efforts of decolonization.

Some updated curricula in New Brunswick encourage students and teachers to learn about the past by developing historical thinking competencies and understandings of Indigenous societies through inquiry. Given the limited dedicated time afforded history education, it is unclear what actually is being taught and what students are learning. Moreover, it is alarming that the New Brunswick K-12 social studies curriculum does not outline any detailed Indigenous epistomologies, world views, and perspectives, how they differ globally, in what context, and why understanding these various knowledge systems is relevant for decolonizing historical learning.

At the elementary and middle school levels, curricula overviews and outcomes do offer declarative statements highlighting what students "will do". For example, the grade 5 social studies curriculum overview reads:

> Students will examine the roles of historians and archaeologists in investigating the past and will use historical inquiry to consider how primary sources are discovered, evaluated, and used to construct historical knowledge. In studying this, students will gain an understanding of how we learn about the past… First Nations and Inuit societies in what later became Atlantic Canada are the focus for exploring decision-making in societies. Interactions between societies is examined through interactions between the British and French and between the British and French and First Nations and Inuit (New Brunswick Department of Education, 2013, p. 37).

However, apart from traditional representational tropes of Indigenous people, there is limited evidence to suggest that teachers are able to manage what curricula prescribes. Nor is there any realistic expectation of how students are examining the disciplinary roles of historians and archaelogists while also developing critical historical understandings of the complex socio-historical interactions of European colonizers, First Nations and Inuit.

In grade 4, the curriculum is focused exclusively on the concept *Exploration* suggesting that "students will develop both an understanding of what exploration is, and the various aspects of exploration including stories of impact on both the people exploring and the people, place, or idea bring explored" (New Brunswick Department of Education, 2012, p. 32). However, framed in this way poses the risk that students will merely explore romanticized official narratives of Canadian history without being encouraged to unearth the enduring impacts of colonization. Nor is there any outward sense that Indigenous epistimologies are utilized to deepen conversations about the embedded notions of exploration within the Canadian context.

At the middle school level, grade 6 and 8 social studies curricula provide a complete erasure of Indigenous peoples' cultures, experiences, and histories living in Canada, and there is limited emphasis on the impacts of imperialism and globalization impacting Indigenous societies and cultures around the world. For example, in grade 6 one of the outcomes articulates that "students will be expected to illustrate an understanding of how cultures from around the world have contributed to the development of Canada's multi-cultural mosaic" (New Brunswick Department of Education, 2006, p. 25). Unfortunately, the embedded discourse simply reinforces Canada in the narrowest sense as "a classless, meritocratic and democratic society, open to newcomers and to new ideas" (Kymlicka, 2003. p. 162) and does little in addressing decolonization as Indigenous scholars prescribe.

More than any other level, grade 7 appears to offer the most genuine promise for meaningful engagement in debates about the operation of colonization, its history and continued persistence in New Brunswick and Canada. Focused entirely on the concept of "Empowerment" this level marks the first time that a direct reference to the Indian Act appears anywhere in social studies curricula. Additionally, unit overviews articulate how Indigenous people have been undermined economically, politically, culturally, and socially in Canada.

One outcome in particular expects students to "Explain how the expansion and development of Canada during the 1870s and early 1880s affected various peoples and regions" while another asks students to "evaluate the conditions of everyday life for diverse peoples living in British North America in the mid-1800s, including Aboriginal peoples, African-Canadians and Acadians" (New Brunswick Department of Education, 2005, pp. 22-23).

However, one finds the outcomes do very little to trouble the concept of 'nation' within a settler colonial context, nor is the representation of Canada as an expanding and developing nation directly critiqued for debate and discussion. Additionally, nowhere is there a discussion about what nationhood means to Indigenous people within a historical and contemporary perspective. The textbook approved by the Government of New Brunswick for use alongside the grade 7 social studies curriculum does provide substantial opportunities to explore a variety of important in-

depth themes related to Indigenous, African-Canadian, Acadian, and ethnic-minority experiences and issues. Unfortunately, like many racist representations noted in mandated textbooks, the full effect is that contemporary resources fail to disrupt romanticized and Euro-centric Canadian nation-building attitudes, myths, and narrative schemes that have dominated over the past century.

As Cutrara (2018) and Dion (2009) suggest regarding history teaching practice, in these circumstances without adequate resources, time, and professional development opportunities teachers employ story-telling and information gathering techniques rather than staging classrooms as debates and spaces for open critique. Additionally, schools and teachers resort to utilizing guest speakers and periodic school-wide events to highlight material culture, ethnic diversity, and multi-culturalism without addressing the inequities that exist within and among these relations. Without balancing these opportunities with meaningful discussions about conflict and violence inherit in the past and present, and how we come to interpret these histories, we do young people an injustice in preparing them for the challenges they will face in their lives and to the goals of decolonizing education.

Outside the individual discretion of teachers across the New Brunswick K-12 Anglophone system, the only course devoted entirely to studying Indigenous histories and perspectives is a grade 12 elective Indigenous Studies course, currently being revised. However, despite its most recent iteration, employing an optional course at the very moment young people are shifting into their adult lives may not be the most productive strategy in which to respond to the TRC's Calls to Action. Scholarship makes clear that these opportunities must occur at much earlier grade levels when young people are prime ready for exploring debates and discussions over the contested terrain of complex histories.

According to the grade 11 Modern History curriculum:

> Students need to be equipped with the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to become active citizens … and if students are to become individuals who will, in an informed way, be engaged and make a difference in their community and/or their world, they will need history instruction consistent with best practices and current research for teaching and learning … students will need to be able to critically analyze social, political, and economic forces that have shaped the past and present and apply those undestandings in planning for the future. This is why history, whether as a part of social studies, or as a separate course, is an essential part of every NB students' education (New Brunswick Department of Education, 2012, p. 1-2).

Beyond the currated language of New Brunswick social studies and history curricula, limited understanding remains regarding how critical history opportunities are being offered as "an essential part of every NB students' education" (New Brunswick Department of Education, 2012, pp. 1-2). Certainly, important questions persist over how decolonizing history education is being treated as an essential feature of every students' experiences from K-12, nor is it clear how teachers are adequately prepared and supported to use Indigenous perspectives in the classroom.

If national trends correlate in any manner to the New Brunswick context, it is highly probable that the general low-priority given to social studies in Canadian education is impacting pathways to decolonization and the abilities of teachers to utilize Indigenous epistemologies, and the tools of historical thinking, to support students. Some researchers suggest that difficulties translating trends in history education and Indigenous scholarship into classroom practice has been slowed by the culture of professional teaching in Canada. Recently, a well-respected New Brunswick social studies teacher discerned:

> Few teachers engage in practices in their own lives that reflect historical thinking – much to the same degree that we teachers do not think critically – we are institutionalized to a degree – we jump at the sound of a bell – we walk through the same doorframe at the same time every day. Our routines are often established for us. It is difficult to create another culture. One of the few times

that we pretend to be applying the skills of reasoning is at the negotiation of a
new contract (Morton, 2012, p. 206).

Compounding this problem is Barton's (2012) concern with how children and young people continue to be perceived as incapable of handling the nuances of historical thinking and learning. So too is his suggestion that "in too many classrooms students are not provided with the scaffolding necessary to participate in the complexities of historical understanding; instead, the subject either is ignored altogether or students are simply asked to absorb settled and unproblematic narratives" (p. 198).

In these circumstances, missed opportunities to develop nuanced capacities for unsettling and challenging difficult histories become cemented as commonplace practice. Gibson and Case (2019) observe that it may be counter-productive to increase curricular resources and learning supports unless "non-Aboriginal teachers are knowledgeable and open-minded enough to sensitively teach about the complexities of Indigenous perspectives and interpretations of history" (p. 277). We would be well advised to heed these warnings; failing to do so is not an option anymore.

Conclusion: Finding a Pathway

Battiste (2013) admits that "any attempt to decolonize education and actively resist colonial paradigms is a complex and daunting task" (p.186). She insists that:

> Educators must reject colonial curricula that offer students a fragmented and
> distorted picture of Indigenous peoples, and offer students a critical perspective
> of the historical context that created that fragmentation. In order to effect change,
> educators must help students understand the Eurocentric assumptions of
> superiority with the context of history and to recognize the continued dominance
> of these assumptions in all forms of contemporary knowledge (p. 186).

For this to occur, efforts at disrupting and resisting dominant Eurocentric pedagogies must seriously consider "education within the context of Indigeneity and Indigenous knowledges, as well as opening up opportunities for critically examining the various complex layers and tensions inherent in historical and colonial relations" (Styres, 2017, p. 195). However, some Indigenous scholars have argued that the writing back to empire approach "has not produced changes in the way history is understood and taught in schools... as historians and history teachers [want] to find common ground with historiographies that appear worlds apart" (Marker, 2011, p. 98).

Although some scholars are wary of the potential rift that exists between Indigenous epistimologies and disciplinary approaches to historical learning (Cutrara 2018), this does not necessarily imply a chasm that cannot be bridged. While Gibson and Case (2018) seek dialogue for finding common ground, Marker (2019) argues that if children and youth can come to understand and become aware of the centrality of land and ecology in "Indigenous mindscapes as they learn about the history of colonization that shattered sustainable ways of life" (p. 197) there is the potential for a substantial paradigm shift in educational opportunities.

For this reason we are increasingly drawn to expanding and theorizing the concept of historical-mindedness. Shifting away from the 'settler grammar' many Indigenous scholars are concerned with in contemporary iterations of disciplinary frameworks of historical thinking, Osborne (2006) describes historical-mindedness as "a way of viewing the world that the study of history produces... it is the result of the enlargement of experience that arises from the study of other times and other places [and] it is the ability to situate the immediate concerns of the present in some kind of comparative perspective and to see the world as it appears to others" (p. 125). In other words, historical mindedness offers a critical encounter with the world and our place in it asking us specifically to evaluate "ourselves and our capabilities as historically situated human beings" (Osborne, 2006, p. 128). Addressing the primary weakness of historical thinking, "its attitude towards knowledge...which it variously ignores, takes for granted, or treats as

instrumental to the attainment of historical thinking" (Osborne, 2006, p. 125) historical-mindedness combines a concern for narrative, situated context, and knowledge systems that has the potential to reconfigure the goals and purposes of studying history, our relationship to community and cultural ecologies, and perhaps revising our thinking about diversity and cross-cultural sustainable living. This opens space for the consideration of Indigenous knowledges and epistemologies in the classroom.

Importantly, additional theorizing of historical-mindedness may provide increased attention and engagment with oral histories in a manner that historical thinking approaches do not easily accommodate. Noting the absence of oral history education in current efforts to prioritize disciplinary history, Ng-A-Foot and Smith (2017) suggest that "solely focusing on disciplining the past can work to exclude the narratives of those who have stories to tell that are yet to be reflected in "official" textbook versions of Canadian history" (p. 66). The authors go further in arguing that oral history education could offer "a pedagogical site for teachers and students to challenge grand narratives that are still reproduced through the disciplinary techniques for doing history... as a praxis for pushing the limits of historical thinking in education" (p. 66).

We feel this is an important objective to pursue, one that historical-mindedness is particular well-positioned to expand. As oral narratives are positioned prominently in Indigenous history epistemologies, it is appropriate that any dialogue focused on decolonization and Indigenizing history education specifically must revisit approaches that could serve, in practice, to do the opposite of its intention. Trangressing history education practice entails "sacrificing some conventional ways of teaching Canadian history" (Marker, 2011, p. 111). Now, more than ever, may be an opportune moment to do just that.

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Endnotes

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[1] The Canadian Constitution Act of 1982 recognizes three groupings of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: "the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada." First Nations are particular groups from among the "Indian" peoples.

[2] The Federal legislation governing relations with a significant portion of Canada's Indigenous Peoples

[3] Access to Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990, are available online through Library and Archives Canada

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Those who control the narrative control the future: The teaching of History in Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot schools[1]

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ABSTRACT

History education in both the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot educational systems in Cyprus is dominated by ethnocentric approaches. In the case of the former this is the idea of history education promoting a Hellenocentric narrative which aims to cultivate a Greek national identity, while in the case of the latter the promoted Turkocentric narrative seeks to cultivate a Turkish one. In the Greek Cypriot educational system this narrative tells the story of Cyprus as part of the Greek nation and the hardships that Greek Cypriots have suffered from their enemies and especially the Turks (Perikleous, 2015a). A similar narrative in many aspects exists in the Turkish Cypriot educational system; however in this the roles are reversed (Onurkan-Samani & Tarhan, 2017). In this sense one can argue that the teaching of history in both communities is utilised as a medium not only to create a collective memory but also to antagonise one community to another. These narratives are challenged by Cyprocentric ones in both communities which support the idea of promoting a Cypriot civic identity shared by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. This article discusses aspects of history education in Cyprus during and following the British colonial rule on the island. Despite the fact that the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot educational systems evolved separately, especially after the decolonisation of the island, important similarities can be identified both in terms of their development and in terms of their current state.

KEYWORDS

Greek Cypriot education, Turkish Cypriot education, narratives, Hellenocentric, Turkocentric, Cyprocentric, social engineering approach, disciplinary approach, social education approach

CITATION

Introduction

For most of the nineteenth-century, Cyprus was part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1878, the Ottomans ceded control of the island to Britain which declared Cyprus a Crown Colony in 1925. In 1960, with a compromise reached between Britain, Greece, and Turkey, the Republic of Cyprus was established as a bi-communal independent state based on partnership between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. The 1960 partnership, however, lasted only three years because of disagreements between the two communities related to the Constitution and other inter-communal matters. In 1963 inter-communal conflicts broke out leading to the introduction of a UN Peace Keeping Force (UNFICYP) by the United Nations Security Council in 1964, which has been in charge of peacekeeping in Cyprus since then.

Disagreements remained unresolved in the next decade and up to the present day. In 1974 a coup, which was staged by a Greek Cypriot paramilitary organisation and the Greek Junta to overthrow the Greek Cypriot president of the Republic of Cyprus, prompted a military intervention by Turkey. According to the official Turkish Cypriot narrative, "Turkey militarily intervened under Article IV of the Treaty of Guarantee of 1960, [in order to remove] the threat of further violence and even greater loss of life on the Island" (Deputy Prime Ministry and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d., n.p.). According to the Greek Cypriot official narrative this was a "full scale invasion against Cyprus… [Although this] … was in violation of all rules of international legality, including the UN Charter, Turkey proceeded to occupy the northern part of the island" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006, n.p.). As a result, the island was divided and a significant part of the population was displaced. In 1983, the Turkish Cypriot authorities declared the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which has since remained internationally unrecognised except by Turkey. In turn Turkey does not recognise the Republic of Cyprus which is governed by Greek Cypriots and is the only internationally recognised government entity on the island.

With the physical division and the existence of two different governmental systems that do not politically recognise each other, the main communities of the island had no physical contact for four decades. Hence, for the new generations, the main sources of information about the other community were essentially their families and school. In 2003 a number of checkpoints opened allowing crossings to both sides. This allowed contacts between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots; however, many people have not passed to the other side yet and the political division between the two communities remains.

This article discusses recent developments in history education in Cyprus. While sections that discuss both educational systems were jointly written, those discussing each system were separately written by the individual authors. The authors of this article were personally involved in developments in history education in Cyprus during the last two decades. However, every account will always be influenced by its creator's own contextuality and positionality. Having this in mind we believe that the readers will recognise that this article remains valuable in order to understand Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot perspectives in relation to history education on the island of Cyprus.

History education during British colonial rule

The two main communities of Cyprus have had different educational systems throughout their common history. From the Ottoman Period onwards (1571 - 1878) education in Cyprus was mostly the responsibility of the respective ethno-religious communities. The two different

systems also existed during the 82 year-long British colonial rule (1878-1960). Until the 1930s, the British colonial government was quite tolerant towards the different ethnic orientations of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot education systems and allowed a considerable degree of autonomy to the two communities in terms of handling their own educational affairs, including the use of textbooks from Greece and Turkey (Persianis, 2010; Philippou, 2014; Samani, 2006; Suha, 1971). However, this changed in the 1930s with a significant reduction of Greek and Turkish history in the substantive content prescribed by the 1935 Curriculum for primary education. The import of school textbooks from Greece and Turkey was also banned for a period of time (1931-1948) known as the 'without-book period' in the history of Cyprus (Güneş, Çapraz & Erdönmez, 2018).

According to the British authorities this was necessary in order to a) address the problem of history being distorted by Greek and Turkish teachers, and b) give the proper attention to the history of Cyprus through the 'correct' perspective of the island's past (Palmer, 1936 cited in Persianis, 2010). This change can be explained by the fact that during the 1920s and 1930s the British began to see education as a vehicle for what they viewed as an unhealthy nationalism which fuelled the two communities' demands over the island's future (Onurkan-Samani, 2007; Philippou, 2014). It also coincided with a general change in British colonial policy in Cyprus which became extremely strict and intolerant to any signs of nationalism after the 1931 uprising of the Greek Cypriots (Perikleous, 2015a).

The teaching of Greek and Turkish history returned as a distinct subject for the respective communities with the 1949 Curriculum (Persians & Polyviou, 1992; Polydorou, 1995). After the end of the Second World War, the British partly abandoned the strict policy enforced after 1931 and attempted to negotiate a new constitution with increased self-administration for Cypriots. At that time (particularly in the context of the decolonisation in India) the British realised that Cyprus could not be ruled in the imperial manner of previous years. Greek Cypriots expected that union with Greece would be awarded to them after their contribution during the war while the Soviet Union's growing influence among Cypriot workers increased anti-British incidents and the possibility of new revolts. In this climate "loyalty through development and political reform" (Faustmann, 1999, p. 75) became the new guiding principle for British policy on the island.

According to Yiangou (2004), unlike British educational policy in other colonies, in which British history was compulsory in order to challenge local nationalism, in the case of Cyprus, the teaching of the island's history was encouraged in order to suppress Greek Cypriot nationalism. This was because while in other colonies local nationalism reinforced demands for independence, in Cyprus, Greek Cypriot nationalism reinforced the demand for union with Greece. This phenomenon was not unrelated to the fact that in Cyprus two communities, which identified as members of nations that existed outside the British Empire, were living within the Empire.

Colonial educational policy regarding the teaching of history is a relatively under-researched area in many former colonies. This allowed the prevalence of the belief that colonial policy was homogenous around the world and was essentially an effort to impose a narrative that favoured the European colonisers and devalued indigenous cultures. The teaching of the history of the colonisers and the emphasis on the history of the colonised since they were ruled by the Europeans were, according to this belief, a common aspect of colonial history curricula (Vickers, Kan & Morris, 2003). However, this was not the case in Cyprus.

History education in Cyprus between 1960 and 2000

The independent Republic of Cyprus, which was founded as a partnership state in 1960, did not have a central ministry of education and educational issues were handled separately by each community through two separate bodies called Communal Chambers (Onurkan-Samani, 1999; Perikleous, 2015a). The fact that the two communities preferred to implement almost the same curricula – and use the same textbooks – as in Greece and Turkey for the teaching of Greek and Turkish history (Onurkan-Samani & Tarhan, 2017; Perikleous, 2010), gives us an idea of how

Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots viewed themselves at the time; both communities aimed to promote and preserve the national identities of the motherlands. In addition to influences from Greece and Turkey, the educational systems of the two communities – and particularly the teaching of history – were substantially affected and shaped by the internal conflict conditions which existed on the island between 1963 and 1974 and the physical division of the two communities.

Turkish Cypriot educational system

During the twentieth-century and the beginning of the twenty-first, in the absence of a curriculum, designated textbooks essentially defined the teaching of the subject. The first Turkish Cypriot textbook for the history of Cyprus, titled 'History of Cyprus from the beginning to the present', was written in 1966 by Turkish Cypriot history teacher, Vergi H. Bedevi. This was shortly after the intercommunal conflicts of 1963-1964. A subsequent textbook approved for use in schools was written in 1971 by Vehbi Zeki Serter, a member of a nationalist right-wing party. This text and its updated editions under the names of 'History of Cyprus' and / or 'History of Turkish Cypriot Struggle' were used in secondary schools for almost three decades, from 1971 to 2004 (Karahasan & Latif, 2010).

The last edition of the Serter textbook (2002) included sections on the geographical location of Cyprus and its geopolitical importance for Greece and Turkey. It covered the Byzantine, the Catholic, the Ottoman, and the British periods. Most of the textbook, however, was devoted to the Ottoman period. The arrival of the Ottomans on the island in 1571 was presented as the most important historical event because, as emphasised in the book, this was the beginning of the history of Turks on the island. The textbook approached the history of Cyprus as part of Turkish history referring both to Ottomans and Turkish Cypriots as Turks while the term 'motherland' was used for Turkey throughout the book. The existence of Greek Cypriots was rarely acknowledged and references to them were usually related to conflicts that took place on the island. According to the textbook, Greek Cypriots are a 'hybrid' group who although they self-identify as Greeks, in reality are not related to the population of Greece. The period that received the most attention was the years between 1963 and 1974 which were described as 'the history of the struggle of the Turks of Cyprus.' The textbook's narrative for this period focused mainly on the suffering of Turkish Cypriots while the hardships suffered by the Greek Cypriots were rarely mentioned. Overall, it can be argued that the first history textbook used in the Turkish Cypriot educational system provided an ethno-nationalist narrative that prescribed a very specific national identity for new generations of Turkish Cypriots. Furthermore, it cultivated the idea that the two communities could never live together and thus the permanent division of Cyprus was the best solution.

In terms of teaching methodology, the textbook contained long narratives without any activities for students and was illustrated with limited black and white pictures including pictures displaying the suffering of Turkish Cypriots such as martyrdoms and massacres. It followed a traditional teacher-centred approach where teachers conveyed knowledge that students were supposed to passively receive and memorise. Opportunities for the students to actively engage in the construction of historical knowledge were absent.

Greek Cypriot educational system

History teaching in Greek Cypriot education during the twentieth-century was also heavily influenced by the Greek educational system. Greek history was the most prominent part of the teaching of the subject and, as in the case of Turkish Cypriot education, it was taught through the same textbooks used in Greece. The period after 1974 saw the rise of Cyprocentric views in education which took the form of establishing the history of Cyprus as part of the teaching of the subject and the development of textbooks and curricula in Cyprus (Philippou & Klerides, 2010). This was mainly because ethnocentric ideas and the *Enosis* (union) ideal became unpopular among Greek Cypriots after the 1974 events, which had begun with a coup by supporters of union

with Greece. Nevertheless, the teaching of the subject did not decisively move away from Greek Cypriot education's ethnocentric/ Hellenocentric orientation (Philippou & Klerides, 2010). The 1981 History Curriculum for primary education was an example of this tension. According to this document, students should learn the most important events of the history of their country (i.e. Cyprus) and develop feelings of patriotism (Ministry of Education of Cyprus, 1981). However, according to the same document, students should also acquire a national identity (i.e. Greek) and preserve national heritage. The curriculum's ethnocentric character was also evident in the prescribed content that focused on Greek history rather than the Cypriot one. In 1993 a right-wing government rose to power and ethnocentrism in education became even more prominent. The 1996 History Curriculum for primary education, which was a moderately amended version of the one introduced in 1994, stated that the main purpose of history teaching was "to help students to get to know and appreciate the history and cultural heritage of Cyprus and Greece and to form national consciousness as members of the Greek nation and as inhabitants of the semi-occupied Cyprus" (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1996, p. 133). As in the case of Turkish Cypriot education, the textbooks did not offer any activities designed to promote historical thinking and students were expected to memorise the factual knowledge contained in them.

The narrative in the Greek textbooks was one about the Greek nation being a brave and freedom-loving people who struggled against their enemies and civilised the world. Greek Cypriot textbooks presented Cyprus as a Greek island since at least the thirteenth-century BCE and all Cypriots as essentially Greeks who typically fought bravely for freedom (Perikleous, 2010). Encounters with other people were usually presented, in both cases, as conflicts in which the Greeks and the Cypriots were the heroes fighting against enemies who wanted to enslave them. Turkish people were presented as the main enemy since the fifteenth-century CE. They were those who had dissolved the Greek Byzantine Empire and enslaved the Greeks (including the Greek-Cypriots) for four centuries. In many Greek Cypriot textbooks the Turkish-Cypriots were only referenced during the description of conflicts on the island.

Overview

History teaching in Cyprus during the twentieth-century was an example of what Seixas (2000) calls a 'best story' approach which aimed to transmit a single definite narrative (the best story of the past) in order to reinforce a sense of belonging and to promote the dominant values of the society. In the case of Greek Cypriot education this story was a Hellenocentric narrative that aimed to cultivate a Greek national identity, whilst a Turkocentric narrative sought to cultivate a Turkish identity in Turkish Cypriot education. In the Greek Cypriot educational system this narrative told the story of Cyprus as part of the Greek nation and the hardships that Greek Cypriots had suffered from their enemies and especially the Turks (Perikleous, 2015a). A similar reverse narrative in many respects existed in the Turkish Cypriot educational system (Onurkan-Samani & Tarhan, 2017).

These ethnocentric approaches were rivalled by Cyprocentric ones that instead of promoting a national Greek or Turkish identity, favoured a Cypriot civic identity which included both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Proponents of these approaches in both communities aspired to educate future generations who felt primarily Cypriot (whether they were Turkish Cypriot or Greek Cypriot) and shared a similar narrative about Cyprus being at the crossroads of civilizations. This pointed towards a more consensual narrative of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots co-existing and living peacefully for centuries and creating a shared culture (Kızılyürek, 2002; Perikleous, 2015a). However, these Cyprocentric approaches did not have a substantial impact upon the teaching of history during the twentieth-century.

History education in Cyprus in the twenty-first century

Turkish Cypriot educational system

In 2003, with the ascension to power of a left-wing party which supported a federal solution based on political equality, the already established role of history education within the Turkish Cypriot system was questioned. The new government was against the nationalist policies and the ethnocentric perception of history reflected in history textbooks (Beyidoğlu Önen et al., 2010). Therefore, a commission consisting mostly of local academics, historians and teachers was set up to develop new history textbooks with the aim of developing Turkish Cypriot cultural identity, inquiry skills, empathy, responsibility, respect for diversity and active participation in social life. In total, six textbooks titled 'History of Cyprus' were developed. These new textbooks were in contrast with the previous ones in terms of content, appearance, pedagogical approach and underlying assumptions (Papadakis, 2008). The new textbooks attempted to eliminate elements of ethno-nationalism focusing more on inclusive historical knowledge. As Beyidoğlu Önen et al. (2010) state, content referring to a 'national enemy' and the 'Other' was removed. The new textbooks were Cyprocentric in geographical and cultural terms with a tendency to move towards a model of civic nationalism that promoted loyalty to the Turkish Cypriot state open to the idea of a future joint state, presenting Cyprus as the homeland of all communities living on the island (Papadakis, 2008). Instead of employing an ethno-nationalist perspective, the textbooks recognized the existence of the other communities (i.e. Greek Cypriots, Maronite Cypriots and Armenian Cypriots), referring to them as 'Cypriots too', who can live together in peace. The word 'Turks' for Turkish Cypriots and 'motherland' for Turkey are not often used in these textbooks.

In terms of appearance, the new textbooks were colourful and well-illustrated. This was also the period during which an educational reform that aimed for a shift from traditional teaching to a constructivist student-centred learning approach was launched (Ministry of National Education and Culture, 2005). Hence, the new textbooks were based on this student-centred approach that put students at the centre of teaching and took their characteristics, needs and interests into consideration. Unlike traditional teacher-centred approaches of teaching history that focused on knowledge transmission, the new textbooks mainly contained student-centred activities embedding the aim of promoting higher order thinking skills including historical thinking, multi-perspectivity, critical thinking and inquiry skills. Furthermore, the textbooks implied that a united Cyprus based on political equality was the best solution on the island. Thus, the maps of Cyprus included in the textbooks were not divided. The textbooks were in use for five years from 2004 to 2009 and during this time the main criticism against them, by right wing political parties, journalists and historians, was that the new generations would lose their national identity (Beyidoğlu Önen et al., 2010).

Despite their substantial differences with the previous texts, especially their focus on cultivating abilities related to historical inquiry and deserting traditional ethnocentric narratives, the 2004 textbooks did not abandon the idea of promoting social aims through the teaching of history. This is evident in their focus on promoting a specific narrative (i.e. Cyprocentric), a specific identity (i.e. Turkish Cypriot) and a specific idea about the appropriate solution for the current situation in Cyprus. In this sense, they were one of the many examples around the world where a disciplinary approach was employed as a means to promote social aims related to reconciliation in conflict societies.

Upon the return of the previous right-wing government in 2009, the history textbooks were once again revised and rewritten. Changing history textbooks was one of the now ruling party's promises during the election campaign (Beyidoğlu Önen et al., 2010). Therefore, soon after the elections, a committee of academics mostly from universities in Turkey was set up to rewrite the history textbooks. The textbooks claimed to shed light on 'historical realities' (Ministry of National Education and Culture, 2009). Compared to the previous ones, the new textbooks differed mainly in terms of content. As promised, there was a return to teaching national history in an ethnocentric way, through the use of a nationalist and militaristic discourse (Beyidoğlu Önen

et al., 2010). Unlike the previous textbooks, the new ones presented the history of Turkish Cypriots on the island from a strictly Turkish Cypriot point of view ignoring the shared past and experiences of the two communities (Karahasan & Latif, 2011). As in case of the first history textbook, the suffering of Greek Cypriots during conflicts was not voiced. In these new textbooks, history was defined as a 'science that highlights historical facts' (Ministry of National Education and Culture, 2009). In terms of the appearance, they were also highly colourful and illustrated. However, the main problem with these textbooks, which were used until 2018, was the effort to promote a nationalist way of teaching history but to an extent maintain the student-centred methods of the previous textbooks. This phenomenon created confusion for teachers and students alike (Onurkan-Samani & Tarhan, 2017).

In 2013, the Basic Education Curriculum Development Project (TEPGEP), funded by the Turkish Embassy and run by a Turkish Cypriot university, under the responsibility of the Turkish Cypriot educational authorities, was set up in the Turkish Cypriot educational system (Ministry of National Education and Culture, 2016). Within this project, a basic education curriculum for the history of Cyprus was developed for the first time in the Turkish Cypriot educational system. This was the 'Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot History Curriculum' for lower secondary education which claims to be "student-centred based on Progressivism and Reconstructionism as educational philosophies aiming to promote historical thinking" (Ministry of National Education and Culture, 2016, p. 27).

Parallel to the curriculum, three school textbooks were also written by a committee consisting of Turkish and Turkish Cypriot academic historians and history teachers. In contrast with the official Greek Cypriot narrative, the Turkish Cypriot textbooks do not refer to the existence of a Greek population in Cyprus during the pre-Ottoman period. The terms Greek Cypriots and Rums of Cyprus only appear in the second and the third textbook, along with the term Turkish Cypriots. The periods of conflict between the two main communities of the island are presented from a Turkish Cypriot point of view. However, the narrative related to the missing persons of these conflicts also refers to the Greek Cypriots.

All three textbooks are colourful and highly illustrated consisting of units that provide substantive knowledge in the form of narratives, followed by a variety of activities. Despite the fact that the Basic Education Curriculum refers to the aim of promoting historical thinking, the textbooks focus on providing substantive knowledge and do not provide the students with much opportunity to construct meaning and develop critical, historical and reflective thinking.

Greek Cypriot educational system

The dawn of the new millennium marked the beginning of changes in Greek-Cypriot history education too. The report of the Educational Reform Committee (2004), which was appointed by a newly elected government supported by the centre-right, centre-left and leftist parties, called for changes in order to a) abandon the Hellenocentric (ethnocentric) ideological orientation of Greek Cypriot education, b) promote interculturalism and multiculturalism, and c) acknowledge the existence of the Turkish Cypriot community. The report criticised the import of Greek textbooks and suggested that new history textbooks should be written by Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot experts. It also argued that history education should become a means of promoting peaceful co-existence and rapprochement between the two communities in Cyprus. (Perikleous, 2015a).

This report was the beginning of a process which led to a comprehensive educational reform for both primary and secondary education. The reform was officially commenced in 2008 by a leftist-led coalition government and continues until today under the current right-wing government. In 2010 a new history curriculum (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010) was published. Although it contained general references to the development of historical thinking, multiperspectivity, the use of sources and understanding change, and continuity, strong elements of a traditional ethnocentric/Hellenocentric approach still existed in it. This is evident in its description of the aims and purposes of history education and in its prescribed content which

essentially supported the same Hellenocentric dominant narrative of the twentieth-century, albeit less explicit in promoting Greek superiority and in drawing attention to negative aspects of other groups (Perikleous, 2015a, 2015b). One could argue that the 2010 Curriculum's ethnocentric approach was in contrast with the Cyprocentric politics of the predominantly leftist government at the time. This was more than likely due to an effort not to cause reactions by attempting a balanced position between the two opposing views and also to the fact that this was still a coalition government in which Hellenocentric parties also participated. The political appointment of only historians and no educators for the development of the curriculum attests that the matter was treated as an issue of politics rather than one of curriculum thinking and related pedagogy.

Although the 2010 History Curriculum did not bring any substantial changes, its implementation process in primary education introduced a new approach that was radically different from the traditional Hellenocentric one and its Cyprocentric opponent. This process, which was undertaken by a group of teachers at the Department of Curricula, included the development of teaching proposals for Year 3 (ages 9-10) and in-service training for primary school teachers. Both the teaching proposals and the in-service training introduced a constructivist inquiry-based approach which instead of promoting a specific narrative, aimed to develop historical literacy, that is the combination of substantive knowledge and disciplinary understanding. Unlike the case of the Turkish Cypriot textbooks of 2004 that employed a disciplinary approach to promote social aims related to the promotion of Cyprocentric views, the teaching material for the implementation of the Greek Cypriot 2010 Curriculum in primary education focused on intrinsic aims by prioritising disciplinary understanding rather than any kind of identity or narrative. This was based on the idea that disciplinary understanding (the way knowledge is constructed in the discipline of history) allows students to deal with conflicting views of the past and gives meaning to substantive knowledge making it usable and worthy to be remembered (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2012). The implementation process in secondary education emphasised the use of sources; however, it retained a focus on conveying factual knowledge rather than developing disciplinary understanding. With the election of a right-wing government in 2013 the implementation process was essentially halted in order to be re-evaluated. Since then no more teaching material has been developed and in-service training is limited.

The latest version of the History curriculum was published in 2016 (Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.) and in some aspects adopted the suggestions of the implementation process for primary education. According to this the main purpose of history is the development of historical thinking and consciousness. The means for this is the cultivation of historical literacy, coherent knowledge of the past and an understanding of the methods and logic of the discipline of history.

Despite the changes in terms of methodology, the prescribed content to be taught in the 2016 version of the history curriculum remained essentially the same as the one in previous curricula: ethnocentric without allowing much space for different interpretations. Also, apart from the teaching material for Year 3, which was developed during the first year of the implementation of the 2010 History Curriculum, no new history textbooks have been published after the introduction of either the 2010 History Curriculum or its 2016 version.

Overview

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, ethnocentric approaches in both educational systems were seriously challenged by Cyprocentric ones, and views of education as a contributing factor to rapprochement between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots found their way into official texts. This can be explained by the ascension of Cyprocentric parties to power, the partial removal of travel restrictions in 2003 which allowed the contact between the two communities, the debates over the 2004 referendum for a solution in Cyprus, which brought forward voices that supported reconciliation and coexistence, and the phenomenon of nationalism being challenged globally (Perikleous, 2015a). The efforts of international organisations (for example, Council of Europe, United Nations) to promote reconciliation on the island were also a crucial factor for this development.

The same period also marks the emergence of disciplinary inquiry-based approaches of history education on the island, initially as a crucial element in suggestions by international organisations for promoting mutual understanding on the island. However, advocates of the original purpose of disciplinary approaches also influenced developments on history education in Cyprus.

Discussion

Even though the two educational systems in Cyprus developed separately, at the moment, they face a similar situation. On one hand there is an officially expressed policy (in terms of curricular texts) for the introduction of constructivist approaches in history education which aim to develop disciplinary understanding and abilities of historical inquiry. On the other hand, the officially prescribed factual knowledge to be taught (as described in the curricula and presented in history textbooks) remains ethnocentric and mono-perspectival. Furthermore, the official textbooks used in both educational systems follow traditional approaches of conveying facts without any substantial provisions for the development of ideas related to disciplinary historical thinking or abilities related to the construction of historical knowledge.

The existence of this tension is buttressed by the key role of history textbooks. History textbooks are far more visible to the public than the curriculum which is essentially meant to be used only by the teachers. While curricula can be found only in teachers' libraries and are accessed online usually by teachers, textbooks are practically in every household with school-aged children. Textbooks and factual knowledge prescribed by the curriculum are much more specific than methodological aims in terms of the kind of history that is being taught. Lists of topics in curricula and texts contained in textbooks explicitly suggest a specific narrative, while methodological aims referring to the development of historical thinking do not. Furthermore, the development of historical thinking is, for many, an abstract idea with which is difficult to disagree.

Although teachers' pedagogical choices are affected by a variety of internal and external factors (Husbands et al., 2003), international literature suggests that textbooks have a crucial role in the teaching of history and that they are often more influential than curricular documents (Foster & Crawford, 2006). Despite the absence of research data on teachers' practices in Cyprus, anecdotal evidence (including the authors' experience as educators and teacher trainers) confirms the key place of textbooks in history teaching in both educational systems. Therefore, one can argue that between the constructivist methodology described in the curricula and the traditional approach of the textbooks, teachers are more likely to teach according to the latter.

Due to their higher visibility and specificity and also the key role of textbooks in history teaching, public opinion, the media, politicians and even educators are more sensitive to changes to the school narratives (in textbooks and curricula) than changes related to methodological suggestions. Unlike the latter, the school narratives in both educational systems tell stories about the past which do more than to inform students about the past. They tell students the story of who they are (Greeks and Turks). As evidenced by several debates which took place in Cyprus during the last decades these narratives remain dominant and do not allow space for the Cyprocentric ones that challenge them (see for example Perikleous, 2015a; Onurkan-Samani & Tarhan, 2017). Klerides and Zembylas (2011) describe this phenomenon as a form of *immunology* where Cyprocentric narratives are prevented from passing the border of history textbooks in order to threaten ethnocentric identities. We suggest that the phenomenon goes beyond textbooks and that this imaginary border includes the narratives prescribed by curricular texts and educational policies too. The rather ethnocentric narrative of the 2010 Curriculum for Greek Cypriot education, which was arguably the result of an effort to avoid reactions, despite the Cyprocentric view held by the predominantly leftist government at the time (Perikleous, 2015a), is an example of this phenomenon. In the light this, the co-existence of constructivist inquiry-based methodologies, suggested by the curricula, and ethnocentric narratives, included in the curricula and textbooks, that promote national identities is not a paradox. It can be explained by the fact that changes of pedagogical methodology in history education policy documents are not perceived as threatening identities as much as changes in the prescribed narratives do.

The dominance of ethnocentric narratives in both systems can also partly explain the fact that a 'third [bi-communal] space' (Makriyianni, Psaltis & Latif, 2011) exists in the form of bi-communal NGOs and initiatives, which aim to promote reconciliation through history teaching, has not managed, at least until now, to substantially influence developments in the teaching of the subject in the two educational systems. For example the most prominent of these organisations, the Association of Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR), even though it has strong support from organisations such as the Council of Europe and the United Nations, and during the last two decades has produced a significant amount of high quality teaching material and provided training opportunities for history teachers, has not managed to substantially influence the two educational systems (Counsell et al., 2013; Psaltis et al. 2013). The AHDR's teaching materials and training seminars challenge the ethnocentric narratives and, in this way, threaten the integrity of deep-seated identities in both communities, causing resistance (see AHDR, n.d. and AHDR, n.d.b).

Another example of how the dominance of the two conflicting ethnocentric narratives does not allow changes in the teaching of history is the case of the Bi-communal Technical Committee on Education (TCE) which was established by the leaders of the two communities in 2015 with a mandate to: a) review research and good practices and also undertake new research on education's potential to contribute to conflict transformation, peace, reconciliation and the countering of prejudice, discrimination, racism, xenophobia and extremism; b) suggest a mutually acceptable mechanism for the implementation of confidence-building measures in schools and to promote contact and cooperation between students and educators from the two communities; and c) to make recommendations regarding the coordination of the two educational systems (UNFICYP, 2015; United Nations, 2016). The establishment of this committee was a significant development since it was the first official common project, related to education, undertaken by the two communities in the history of Cyprus. The TCE's work and particularly its *Imagine* educational programme were praised by the United Nations Secretary-General in his reports on the UN operations in Cyprus (United Nations, 2018; 2019). One would expect that the teaching of history would be one of the key aspects of the TCE's work. However, so far, nothing related to history education has been delivered or suggested by the TCE. Although no official explanation about this phenomenon has been provided so far, it is likely that it is due to concerns about possible reactions caused by changes that could be considered as threatening to the official narratives.

Conclusion

During the last century history education in Cyprus has been characterised by a game of competing identities (Perikleous, 2015a). This rivalry reflects different political aspirations about Cyprus and the island's relationship with the British Empire (during colonial times) and the so called 'motherlands': Greece and Turkey. As in many other places in the world, the different groups in Cyprus approach the teaching of history as a tool for social engineering. As Shemilt points out, in a "social engineering model… [of history education] … specific lessons from the past are taught with the intention of shaping students' attitudes and behaviours in the lived present" (2011, p. 70). The prevailing idea is that those who control the narrative in school history in a community of people, essentially control the future of the community itself.

This is not a localised phenomenon. Different depictions of the past are the main cause of the so-named History Wars that occur in a number of societies, which quite often take the form of public debates between historians, educators, politicians, and commentators over the kind of history students should be taught. This is also a major feature of the debates over the teaching of history in former colonies. However, as in the case of colonial educational policy, differences can be observed in the way such debates manifest in different former colonies. For example, in Australia and New Zealand, a key issue in these debates is the balance between the history of the European colonisers and their achievements on one hand and the history of the Indigenous peoples and the injustices that they have suffered on the other (Guyver, 2013). In the case of Cyprus, as discussed earlier in this article, the history of the British colonisers was never part of

this debate. Instead, the controversy is caused by different views about the balance between the history of the island and the two communities' perceived motherlands (Greece and Turkey) and by conflicting assumptions of how the relationship between all four groups should be depicted.

These differences between educational systems in former colonies are related to how colonisation and decolonisation occurred in each case. In Australia and New Zealand, the settlement of people was a main feature of the colonisation process. During decolonisation these people became the first citizens of the new countries. This explains, at least partly, the strong support for a narrative that adopts the perspective of the coloniser and suppresses the history of the Indigenous peoples and their suffering. In Cyprus this did not happen. British colonial rule did not include the settlement of people on the island and the citizens of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960 were the locals who lived on the island a long time before colonisation and considered themselves as members of nations that existed in places other than Cyprus. This identification with the 'motherlands' resulted to the dominance of the Greek and Turkish narratives in school history while the history of Cyprus itself remains of secondary importance until today. Even when the latter is taught, the prevailing narrative is again one that tells the story of the island from either a Greek or Turkish perspective. It can be argued that the role of the coloniser's history, in the case of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot educational systems is fulfilled by the history of the 'motherlands.'

There are three different directions in which history education on the island could move. The first one is the preservation of the current situation with the prevalence of ethnocentric narratives which promote the identities of the 'motherlands' in order to cultivate citizens who will strive to protect their community as part of a greater nation. The second one is the replacement of the current ethnocentric narratives with a Cyprocentric one which will promote a common civic identity for all Cypriots. The third one is a radical change of decisively shifting the focus of history teaching from a social engineering model to what Shemilt calls a 'social education model' (2011) that prioritises historical literacy over social aims such as identity building. In this disciplinary model the teaching of history aims to develop knowledge of the past and an understanding of how we know about the past without prioritising a specific narrative. Instead it aims to make students aware of the existence of multiple narratives and help them develop a mental apparatus to navigate through them. In this case, there is no effort to develop a certain kind of identity.

A move from the current Hellenocentric and Turkocentric approaches to a Cyprocentric one is not likely to take place without a shift in the current political situation. The example of the short-lived history textbooks with more Cyprocentric views in both communities supports this argument. Furthermore, as Falk Pingel (2011) points out, experience in textbook revisions globally shows that successful changes aiming to promote reconciliation and mutual understanding usually take place in contexts where the opposing groups have already settled their political conflicts. Therefore, this move seems to be highly unlikely before a political solution is agreed.

A shift towards what Shemilt (2011) describes as a social education approach would be an arguably even more radical development. It demands the abandonment of the current social engineering model which means to reject history's role as a tool for identity building. It also means accepting that the story of the ethnic or ideological other should be told too. Although for now advocates of a Cyprocentric approach seem to favour multiperspectivity and argue for a teaching of history that develops historical thinking, it is debatable whether these views include the perspective of their ideological other, the ethnocentric one. Debates within each community over history, in which all sides demand the teaching of 'true history' and deem the other's narrative as a 'forgery of history', suggest otherwise. It is unlikely that the supporters of either the ethnocentric or Cyprocentric identities would accept a teaching of history that does not aim to develop any kind of national or civic identity. This is of course not a local phenomenon but a global one. The idea of history education as a key component of preserving modern states remains strong, and arguably an educational system in which the teaching of the subject is completely disassociated from identity formation does not exist.

The case of history education in Cyprus is not unique. Debates and developments which change the balance between different narratives that promote different identities and between socio-political and disciplinary aims in history teaching have been happening around the world for decades. As Stuart Foster points out "victimization of school history by external ideological forces appears to be the most unfortunate and chilling curriculum lesson to be learned" (1998, p. 162) from these debates. This is also true in the case of Cyprus where usually the educational community is absent from these debates, and arguments voiced by politicians and public figures who do participate, are often ahistorical, revealing a simplistic and superficial understanding of pedagogy driven by political interests. In view of this we argue that there is a need for strong communities of history education teachers and academics, within and between the two educational systems in Cyprus, who will promote the discussion of the issue of history teaching in pedagogical and disciplinary terms. The involvement of academic historians in this process is also crucial. Since different perspectives of pedagogy, the past, history and history education exist also within the circles of history educationalists and academic historians, the pedagogical and disciplinary nature of the discussion will not necessarily lead to a consensus. It can, however, create a space for the exchange of informed arguments and provide resistance to the abuse of the subject by political agendas and uninformed policy makers.

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Endnotes

[1] In George Orwell's (1949) dystopian fiction novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four,* the ruling class, called the Party, uses the slogan "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past" to describe their manipulative attitude to the knowledge of the past.

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Decolonising Lebanon's post-conflict sense of national identity via history education: An impossible task?

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates an important example of national identity formation in the Arab world and the role played by education and historiography. In Lebanon, like other states in the Middle East that became independent of colonial rule, a new form of national identity gradually developed following independence. Conflicting notions of national identity arose which resulted in a form of neo-traditionalism whereby political identities remained fluid and under-developed. Instead of developing a post-national decolonised identity, a debilitating and destabilising paradigm emerged, leading to the failure of decolonisation. By examining the failures of the construction of post-independence national identity, the paper will argue that these factors have led to instability and an overall crisis of legitimacy in Lebanon. By analysing these failures, recommendations are made to emphasise the importance of the role of history in education and how it may contribute to reconciliation and nation-building through civic participation.

KEYWORDS

National identity formation, Postcolonialism, Nationalism, Curriculum reform, Post-conflict history teaching, Lebanon.

CITATION

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Introduction

"All means all!" has become the popular slogan of Lebanese nationals since mid-October 2019. From late 2019, hundreds of thousands of Lebanese have challenged centuries of primordial and political control in demanding a new government free of the corruption and political partisanship that has blighted the Lebanese political and social landscape for decades. The protestors succeeded in forcing the government to resign, and ongoing protests have continued to criticise the entire political class as politically corrupt.

Whilst the credibility of traditional political leaders has been undermined, a new wave of nationalism is emerging among Lebanese demonstrators. Regardless of sect, political orientation and geographical location the majority of Lebanese have been united by disgust at an ongoing lack of basic services, poor employment and/or education opportunities, and the lack of institution building. Reports of cronyism, nepotism and political scandals continue in this new landscape where ordinary citizens are emboldened to express their views. Thus, when the slogan 'all means all' is spoken, a new type of political national identity is emerging – one that is seen in this paper as linked to a need for a de-colonised post-war Lebanese identity.

Historically, Lebanon's national political identity and culture has been shaped by three prominent and deeply entrenched realities: first, primordialism (traditional, tribal, religious, sectarian, patriarchal and parochial forms of identity); second, Arab nationalism; and third, state nationalism. These three influences have each, in turn, built upon existing variables and contributed to the formation of national identity. This overlaying of identities has produced contradictory dynamics in nation-building and inherently unstable foundations that threaten to undermine the formation of any cohesive post-colonial national identity. This article argues that post-independence national identity in many Arab countries such as Lebanon has been unsuccessful for three reasons which are closely interconnected. These are based on the many existing political-cultural identities in the Arab region, international and intra-regional interference, and legitimacy problems in Arab politics.

In turn, this highlights one of the major complexities of national identity formation in the Arab world – especially in the case of Lebanon's heterogeneous character and its approach to historiography. Like many newly independent states in the Middle East, a form of unifying national identity was invoked gradually when independence was achieved, or directly after. Conflicting notions of national identity arose which resulted in a form of neo-traditionalism whereby political identity neither discarded its primordial characteristics nor built upon them. Instead of developing a post-national decolonised identity, a debilitating and destabilising paradigm emerged, leading to the failure of decolonisation. By examining the failures in constructing post-independence national identity, the paper will argue these factors have contributed to an overall crisis of legitimacy in Lebanon and ongoing instability. The fractured and multilayered history of Lebanon as has been described by Wettig (2004, n.p.) as follows:

> Some call the Phoenicians our ancestors. Others call them the people who were previously in Lebanon. Some say the French were a mandatory power who were here at the request of the Lebanese. Others say they were colonizers.

This paper will first detail the importance of creating a cohesive national identity in post- colonial and post-conflict in Lebanon, which endured 15 years of bloodshed from 1975-1990. Creating and maintaining a cohesive national identity is fundamental to successful decolonisation and successful post-war reconciliation. The 'colonisation of political thought' has been an enduring phenomenon since Ottoman rule to the present time. The region's inhabitants have had a number of identities imposed on them ranging from: a broad Ottoman-Islamic colonial entity; then one based on European colonial constructs, followed by a pan-Arab identity; and a state national identity in some countries based on Islamic ideals. The formation of a re-framed national Lebanese identity is required for a successful move to sovereignty, independence and full participation in the international community. This assertion will be supported here by a literature review which examines relevant post-colonial theory.

Finally, this will lead to examining how the Lebanese government is going about de-colonising and re-constructing Lebanon's national identity via its education system. Highlighted here is one of the major complexities of national identity formation in the Arab world and the role education and historiography play. To understand the roots of Lebanese national identity it is crucial to highlight significant political and historical developments. It is necessary to examine the direct influence of Ottomanism on present day Lebanon, and how its subsequent disintegration and loss to the Europeans led to the formation of the state. By revisiting this historical period, it will pave the way to understanding better the nature of contemporary Lebanese national identity. The paper will explain what has occurred since the end of the Lebanese civil war (acknowledging that there is still much conflict in other forms), the creation of a new curriculum and its impact on reconciliation and nation-building. This paper draws primarily on empirical evidence but also upon interviews undertaken by the lead author. By analysing past failures, recommendations are made whereby the role of history pedagogy and practice is given greater prominence in education, especially in terms of contributing to reconciliation and nation-building.

Historical context and background

It is important, first, to provide readers with some historical context. Past political challenges have contributed to the post-war approach to the history curriculum and its application in Lebanon. It is necessary that the complex layers of Lebanon's history be re-examined in order for reconciliation to commence, a sense of closure to arise among its inhabitants and ultimately (possibly?) a sentiment of cohesive nationhood to emerge. The territory known as 'Lebanon' today has been invaded, occupied and colonised by many empires and countries, and historically was part of the Syrian Fertile Crescent or geographic Syria. The most prolonged and consequential occupation was by the Ottoman Turks that lasted almost four centuries, from the early sixteenth-century until 1918. During the Ottoman period significant autonomy was granted to the area of Mount Lebanon in particular. The end of the First World War saw the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and a secret agreement between the French and English to divide the lands of the Middle East. Lebanon in effect became a French mandate. The area was – and continues to be – ethnically and religiously diverse, more so than other parts of the Middle East. As a result of the shifting empires and foreign rule the geographic makeup of the area changed too. For example, the Christian Maronites were originally from the Valley of Orontes (beginning in modern-day Lebanon and crossing north through Syria, Turkey and turning westward encompassing parts of the Mediterranean coast).

The Ottoman occupation was marked by feudal competition and antagonism which characterised the politics of Mount Lebanon. This rivalry was both cross-sectarian and intra-confessional, a situation in marked contrast to other Ottoman provinces. Lebanon's stability (such as it then was) was based on feudal relationships and its power structure (El Khazen, 2000). The divisions were further magnified in the mid-nineteenth century with the enforcement of the *mutasarrifiyya* (administrative) political structure, which resulted from these and other socio-political and economic factors. This was a precursor to greater intervention by European powers in the Lebanon. The end result was regional political interference, European intervention, the establishment of a committee of great powers and Istanbul's determination to maintain its borders and sovereignty which helped to create conditions whereby the Maronites were compensated. This was at the cost of the Druze,[1] both politically and socio-economically, and contributed to Maronite nationalistic ideals of creating a 'Little Lebanon'.

It was thought that the *mutasarrifiyya* assisted the Maronites in establishing the foundations for an independent Christian Mount Lebanon, making them demographically, politically and economically dominant. Moreover, the Maronites considered Mount Lebanon as their homeland and saw the *mutasarrifiyya* as a means to attain their own independent state. However, the Ottomans were not willing to forego all their political power in the region and leave it to the whims of ethnic cleavages or feudal families. Rather, an Ottoman governor was appointed to oversee the

everyday running of the *mutasarrifiyya.* This in turn further assisted in developing a quasi-national consciousness amongst the *mutasarrifiyya* inhabitants.

Although sectarian disorder remained controlled until the twentieth-century, the Ottoman system of cantonisation, exclusion and subjugation of minorities remained in force against non-Sunni Muslim communities. It compromised the notion of a future 'Lebanese' nationhood emerging. This was a diverse ethnic society, albeit one which predominantly held onto narrower notions of political belonging based on primordial chauvinism. Although Western influence and colonisation provoked the sectarian and ethnic divide amongst Arabs and other inhabitants of the region, the seeds of ethnic conflict were initially sown during the Ottoman period when the *millet*[2] policy was enforced against non-Sunni inhabitants and through the implementation of other divisive policies such as the *imarah* (rank or office of the Emir) and *mutasarrifiyya* systems.

The negative ramifications of such a political system were manifold. First*,* the *mutasarrifiyya* system was a colonially imposed construct, imposed by the Europeans (notably the French) and enforced by the Ottomans. Second, the system forcibly divided people along confessional lines, although identification along confessional lines was not a prominent form of identification at that time. Third*,* it contributed to the division among Lebanese citizens in the early twentieth-century by endorsing the concept of Lebanonisation or Balkanisation as opposed to nationalism whether it was in the form of a multi-sect inclusionary Lebanon, Arabism or greater Syria. Fourth, this system in turn set the foundations for the 1926 Constitution and the 1943 National Pact, which effectively endorsed the reinforcement of traditional primordial forms of identity dressed in a cloak of modernity. All 17 ethnic and religious cleavages were recognised by the newly established political system introduced by the French in the form of consociational democracy.[3]

In 1920 the French annexed various Ottoman provinces and created a 'state of Greater Lebanon.' Since then Lebanon has endured several civil wars, the main and most destructive one being that of 1975-1990. As the conflict progressed and evolved in nature so did the reasons, but the three most enduring themes which were revisited repeatedly were those of: reforming the political system; the national identity of Lebanon; and Lebanon's sovereignty (Abul-husn, 1998). The Taif Agreement, otherwise known as the National Reconciliation Accord, or Document of National Accord, was signed on 22 October 1989. It officially terminated the civil war and gave social, political and legal experts the necessary tools to re-examine Lebanon's process of nation-building and conflict resolution. A new power-sharing formula between the prominent Lebanese communities and different militia chieftains was accepted via peaceful means. In turn, the Taif agreement 'reinforced confessionalism by reforming it' (Asmar, Kisirwani & Springborg, 1999, p. 1) and it was ratified by the Lebanese parliament on 5 November 1989.

Political challenges

The obstacles preventing a harmonious national identity in Lebanese society are multi-levelled but linked to other factors. Two equally significant and contributing factors are: the role of external (regional and international) intervention; and fundamental disagreement among its citizens over the historicity of the Lebanese nation-state. One segment of society, the political right, largely affirms the Lebanese state, while the political left disputes or denies it (Khalidi, 1983). Some conservative politicians have been major proponents of Lebanese nationalism linking this to their connections with the outside world. They aspired to implement their own exclusionary visions of Lebanon as a modern continuation of Phoenicia, Hellenised and Westernised, and a home for persecuted religious minorities, particularly a Christian safe haven in a dominant Muslim region. The political left on the other hand, regarded Lebanon's national and political development within the broader paradigm of Arab-Islamic history, whether through Arab national ideology or pan-Islamic religious ideology. These ideologies have become blurred and inconsistent at times even to their most fervent supporters.

The post-Taif period demonstrated that these diametrically opposed notions of Lebanese history have not been reconciled. For this to take place the Lebanese need to, as the historian

Kamal Salibi has persistently argued, "reach a consensus on what makes of them a nation or political community, and this can only be achieved if they manage to agree on a common vision of their past" (Salibi, 1993, pp. 17-18). Although it is accepted that culture and identity are not stagnant but continually change, a formula of a common (or at least a shared) national history is required to ensure a nation remains cohesive. The Lebanese will first have to reach a consensus on what makes them a nation or political community and this can only be achieved if they manage to agree on a shared vision of their past. It is evident that the various factions fail to agree on what official national version of Lebanese history might emerge.

Nationhood and memory

Choosing to avoid an interpretation of past events or controversial issues will only cause more problems in the country's long-term future. It is necessary to undertake an honest appraisal of Lebanon's long history. With this in mind, Gelvin argues that nations are not "natural and eternal entities merely awaiting political realisation or their 'awakening from slumber'. Rather, nations and concomitant national identities are constructed..." (1999, p. 73). Initially the construction of the Lebanese nation and its national identity were being sought by key Lebanese figures. Post-independence, however, the construction process ceased, and this contributed to state disintegration. Prior to the country becoming independent, Lebanese authorities successfully convinced their populace that independence was worthwhile. Once it was achieved, however, these same authorities did not work to overcome the deep societal divisions, or to construct a shared national Lebanese identity. Instead, the political structure of confessionalism, created by the Ottomans and endorsed by the French, was reapplied through the formal political model and institutions. Many traditional political notables retained their positions along sectarian lines, while ordinary Lebanese citizens remained influenced, and from some perspectives coerced, by their respective political/religious leaders. The ability to change this situation – that is, 'awaken them from their slumber' – arose again the early 1990s when peace returned to Lebanon and the opportunity arose to develop a reconstructed national identity.

Gelvin (1999) asserts that many scholars of the Middle East continue to accept, unchallenged, the historiography of nationalism in the region. This paper argues that by accepting the historiography of nationalism and political identity in the region, the psyche of the region's inhabitants will remain in a state of 'colonisation'. The problem is that inhabitants of a country or region are not given an opportunity to consider the multiplicity of political options or identifications available, with Tunisia being the only exception during the Arab uprisings of 2010; and here it was a return to authoritarianism that eventuated. Many are generally forced to accept political constructs and ideologies put before them, initially through colonial-imperial forced constructs and then the illegitimate rule of their respective political leaders. Consequently, no real process of decolonisation of political thought, post-nationalism or consciousness has developed over the years to truly 'liberate' Arab inhabitants. Nations such as Lebanon, through a combination of primordialism, regional and international intervention, neo-patriarchy and the legitimacy problems dominating the Middle East region, are yet to construct a unifying identity (Ahluwalia, 2001).

Liberation and political freedom do not come about with the raising of a national flag or the reciting of a national anthem. Instead, the peoples of most countries that were once colonised have yet to find – or have taken a number of decades to become – free and sovereign citizens. Many newly independent states did not realise the intensity of the impact of colonialism on their country and their citizens until long after independence. The economic, cultural, psychological and political damage inflicted by colonial occupation continues to bear its scars today, although different countries within the region have experienced various forms of colonisation and are therefore at different stages and apply assorted techniques to decolonise. Writers such as Fanon (1965; 1967), Said (1993), Memmi (1965; 2006) and others insist that the impact of colonialism and imperialism does not end once independence is achieved. Both Fanon and Said are ambivalent regarding the national elites and seek to discredit the nationalist parties in favour of a more

decentralised political rule. Believing that true liberation cannot take place without the total liberation of mind, body and soul of the colonised, they assert that it is not enough to be physically free of the colonisers. Said (1993) argues there is no need for the colonised to seek the recognition of the coloniser. Rather they must understand the historical complexities of colonisation. Upon doing so the colonised can work towards creating the 'whole man' or as Gandhi stated: 'Rather than see itself as, or in the image of, the master the slave is now urged to see itself beside the master' (Gandhi, 1998, p. 21).

The theoretical importance of Fanon and Said to Lebanon lies in their analyses of the issue of domination, notably the domination of power and knowledge, whereby the path towards true liberation can only be achieved by re-examining a nation's history and its path to salvation. This is the only way to transcend the era of colonial occupation (Ahluwalia, 2001). By attaining social consciousness, the traditionally dominated are a step closer to liberation, but without it, it is highly likely that "decolonisation merely becomes the replacement of one form of domination by another" (Ahluwalia, 2001, p. 48). By universally accepting the unification of self and other, the world is one step closer to attaining a liberated existence, where the dominant and the dominated work together (Ahluwalia, 2001).

Three components which allegedly ensure a healthy and cohesive political community have been listed by Deutsch (1953): first, the ability of its members to communicate with one another; second, the readiness to share a common political culture; and third, the need to demonstrate greater loyalty to the main political, administrative and cultural institutions than to any other political authority. In the case of Lebanon, the majority of its political and social leaders did not adopt these three components. This was especially evident during the 15-year civil war, but also has been evident, to varying degrees, since the inception of the Republic. For example, at every election that has taken place in the post-civil war period, excluding the 2017 and 2018 municipal and parliamentary elections, it was evident that the Lebanese continue to demonstrate more loyalty to their political religious leaders than to the central political institutions and democratic practices (Habib, 1995). Although more recent municipal and parliamentary elections show a similar trend, a new independent movement of non-affiliated civic candidates emerged as popular choices. Nevertheless, the numbers were marginally too small to make any real impact. Additionally, in May 2019 the Foreign Minister, Gibran Bassil, accused Sunni politicians of assuming key state posts "on the corpse of the Maronite political establishment, taking all the Christians' rights [to public posts]" (Dakroub, 2019). This highlights the hurt and loss still being felt by segments of the community and exemplifies the failure of reconciliation post-conflict.

As with nationalism, the notion of national identity is forged by knowledge and memory. In order for a sense of sameness to arise over time and space, a sustainable memory needs to develop so it can become a core component of an individual or group identity. Although neither memories nor identities are fixed, they do represent or construct reality – either subjectively or objectively – in that people are constantly revising their memories to suit their current identities (Gillis, 1994). Gillis wrote that "identities and memories are not things we think *about* but things we think w*ith*" (Gillis, 1994, p. 5). As a consequence, identities can affect one's politics, social relations and history. Such identities can be used and abused, affecting not just one person but also others through social interaction and political manipulation/influence. There is a need to understand these memories in order to discover their historical significance and how they have created and sustained national identity over the years. Generally, governments and opposition representatives throughout the world speak of protecting and enhancing national identities through the preservation of heritage and tradition, the introduction of language legislation, promotion of cultural festivals and the preservation and encouragement of the arts and sports-people who represent them globally.

It should be emphasised that this is not necessarily a smooth process. During times of national reconstruction following a devastating war or civil war, countries can experience periods which call for forgetting rather than remembering, as was the case in Germany and Japan in the immediate post Second World War period (although it should be made clear that for Germany, at least, there has been consistent remembering of atrocities committed prior to and during the Second World War in both the school curriculum and society more broadly), or more recently in

1990s war-torn Yugoslavia. Benedict Anderson delineated this as agreeing to a 'collective amnesia' (Anderson, 1983). When a country has experienced rapid and/or destabilising events and old traditions no longer offer valid answers or solutions to social and political problems, the ruling elite may resort to restructuring past memories and histories according to a current and future agenda. Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), Fanon and Said have observed that such periods often stimulate the creation of new cultural forms that replace the antiquated older traditions (Zerubavel, 1994).

The invention of 'new' traditions legitimises the emerging social and political elites. In some cases, their success depends largely on the ruling party's ability to reconstruct the past in a form that is acceptable to the majority of citizens. Nevertheless, there is a potential for only partial success or failure if these 'invented' traditions deviate too greatly from 'genuine' tradition, heritage and history from the point of view of the citizens. Importantly, one needs to question whether it is politically wise for a country, which is reconstructing its national identity to 'forget' its immediate history in order to successfully rebuild its shattered nation and identity. Or is it necessary for the formation of 'collective suffering' to acknowledge the past in order to move onto the future? A heritage of tragedy may well be more effective than one of triumph, as Renan wrote over a century ago, arguing that "suffering in common unified more than joy does ... Where national memories are concerned, griefs are of more value than triumphs, for they impose duties and require a common effort" (Renan, 1882, in Lowenthal, 1994, p.50).

Renan believed that communal identity may also require forgetting many shameful episodes, disabling tragedies and conflicting loyalties requiring a form of collective amnesia and editing each nation's past (Lowenthal, 1994, p. 50). Making some memories accessible to consciousness, while blocking others, may be necessary in order to avoid painful memories. However, blocking the memories of an upsetting past may limit understanding of that particular historical period. It is necessary that social scientists, historians and ruling parties recognise the errors made by colonial rulers and their successors. Without confronting such a period, national culture and identity may remain under-developed because it has not had an opportunity to confront and engage with its full history and deal with it appropriately.

Lebanon's education system and the effect of the civil war

Before its civil war, Lebanon enjoyed some of the highest standards of education and literacy in the Arab world (97%) with over 80% of children of school age attending schools (Library of Congress, 2012). Lebanon has a long history and its numerous religious communities were important to the establishment of diverse school systems. These include Western clerical institutions such as the Jesuit schools which began operating in Lebanon in 1625, Presbyterian missionaries in 1866, Catholic institutions and finally, Islamic schools which are funded by the Gulf countries most notably Saudi Arabia. Palestinian refugees in Lebanon did not have access to any public education until the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was established and registered all Palestinians in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2005). In 1975 the educational institutions in Lebanon were well embedded which created certain sectarian divisions, partitions and obstructions contributing to the outbreak of the civil war.

The Lebanese education system is largely centralised with the same curriculum being taught in both private and public schools. Primary school education, which covers grades 1 to 8, is almost universal with an enrolment ratio of 95.4% of the population. Secondary education which involves grades 9-13, reached 81.5% in 2007 (UNESCO, 2008) while the adult literacy rate reached 88% (UNICEF, 2007). In 2009-10 there were almost 285,000 of the 1,112,111 students in the country in public schools, with the remainder in various levels of private schools. Most parents stretch their budgets to the extreme to keep their children in private schools; a practice strongly influenced by Lebanon's religious and internationalised culture, with many Lebanese families highly critical of most public schools. The Lebanese education system is controlled by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) through a licensing system. In order for students to

receive the Brevet Diploma (graduation from middle school) and the Baccalaureate Diploma (graduating after completing the final year of high school) this system enforces requirements and regulations for graduates to comply with.

For many Lebanese people, 13 April 1975 marks one of the darkest days in the country's history. An attack on a busload of Palestinians in Beirut sparked a civil war that raged for 15 years, leaving some 150,000 dead, the capital divided along sectarian lines and sections of the country in ruin. However, students in Beirut today give a range of answers about the significance of that date. For example, according to Noor El-Hoss, a student in West Beirut's Al Iman School, 'I think it was a very important occasion for Lebanon. But I don't know what happened'. A fellow student, Zeina Naous, explained, 'We are studying about ... World War Two. We are not studying about the civil war, or what happened to Lebanon' (Maktabi, 2012, n.p,). This reinforces the point that as – as commented in Beirut's newspaper *The Daily Star* by journalist and feminist blogger Hannah Wettig – "few issues in Lebanon are as contested as its national history. Every sect has its own version of the civil wars. However, the civil wars are not the only points of contention" (2004, n.p.).

According to Hajjar (2002) the three different sectors of schooling – French, British and American – have divided the community. Furthermore, history is subject to varying interpretations and it is being taught within the different sectors along sectarian lines (Euro News, 2012), despite the fact that the Ministry of Education had formulated an agreement whereby all school sectors were to use a common history textbook.

Post-civil war developments

One of the major reasons for the disruption to education was not solely due to the civil war, but also the fact that more than 150 schools were destroyed by Israelis raids, forcing many families to relocate as well as a result of the Lebanese factions fighting amongst themselves. People had lost their homes, livelihoods and had nowhere else to go and for this reason many teachers, professors and educators migrated abroad. Some schools were pressured by militias to enrol unqualified students and employ unqualified teachers. Despite being allowed to return to a designated level of education after the destruction of their schools, many students had lost their parents, their homes and access to schooling for a length of time. Indeed, many schools were used as distribution centres for humanitarian aid (Mikdadi, 1983) or as centres for the dissemination of propaganda and recruitment of young soldiers to various militias.

There was consensus that primary and secondary school standards, especially in public institutions, needed to improve (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, 2007-2009). Lebanese schools lack subject–oriented qualified teachers in various disciplines. Low student to teacher ratio in both primary (17:1) and secondary school levels (7:1) contribute to financial constraints and cutbacks in budgeting and resources (The World Bank Group, 2006). Similarly, the National Centre of Educational Research and Development indicates that the construction of the new school curriculum must cater to students' need for knowledge, values and attitudes as well as knowing how to complete activities and develop life skills. This approach was further developed alongside the reform of the curriculum in the 1990s and eight learning areas were introduced and planned in all schools (NECRD, 1995). This reform took place in 1996 in three stages: first, the construction of an educational ladder, second, designing an appropriate curriculum and organising appropriate textbooks; and third, the provision of associated teachers' preparations for all school sectors equally.

The Taif Agreement made specific reference to education, and the most important aspect of this was its revision of the school curricula to emphasise national unity, with a specific focus on civics and history: "Revision and development of curricula in such a manner as to strengthen national identity and social integration encourage spiritual and cultural openness …. Unification of textbooks in the two subject matter areas of history and national education (is a must)" (Bahous et al., 2013, n.p.). This same statement marked one of the goals in the Plan for Educational Revival, which was approved on 17 August 1994 by the Cabinet of Ministers as a working document. One

month later, the CERD which was responsible for school curricula, began revising the curriculum, assembling a team of nearly 350 persons serving on various committees. Despite these good intentions, a 2012 book titled *Learning and teaching history: Lessons from and for Lebanon* (Gussaini et al., 2012) highlighted the barriers to agreeing to and implementing a national curriculum. A study by Abouchedid and Blommestein (2002) contended that prototypes of political socialisation strongly influence the religious agenda in Lebanon, including in schools. Most schools' so-called hidden curriculum (Toronto & Eissa, 2007) is reflected in their ethos, teachers, community services and religious activities. Boujouade and Ghaith (2006) stated that the curriculum reform was evaluated in 2003 and several concerns about disagreements were expressed especially on the need for stronger connections between schools, colleges and universities in order to link the country's academic and social needs. Some of these issues highlighted the fact that the previous curriculum would be outdated and limited only to traditional teaching subjects. The biggest concern was based on teachers' lack of previous knowledge and exposure in their teaching preparation programmes as well as their recent training to deliver the new curriculum (Boujaoude & Ghaith, 2006). This problem lingered for a long time and especially in the public system due to the lack of funding for training teachers.

In addition to the pedagogical and human resource impediments, there were also problems with the way historiography was approached. Abouchedid and Blommestein's study (2002) exploring the teaching of history in the different school sectors, reporting that no less than seven different history textbooks were used. Each one presented an interpretation of past events acceptable to one section of the Lebanese community. Political propaganda is also prevalent in private, subsidised private and public schools which relates to the ideology of a particular party, or militia that provides them with support, protection and finance (Cervan, 2011). The Hariri-funded schools are the only institutions in which political topics cannot be discussed. Essentially, the teaching of history in Lebanon is compromised by the fact that more than two decades after the end of the country's civil war, generations of young Lebanese are growing up with little formal education about the conflict. Lebanese society contains many deep divisions, and the country's recent past is widely considered too contentious to examine in depth. In fact, to avoid inflaming old and still deeply felt hostilities, Lebanese history textbooks stop in 1943, the year the country gained independence (Maktabi, 2012). In 2012 the country's Minister of Education, Hassan Diab, blamed this situation on the politics, saying "After more than 20 years ... the teaching of history in Lebanon remains, as it has always been, subject to the interests of various political groups" (Maktabi, 2012, p. 1).

The curriculum

After the war and civil unrest, the Lebanese education system is still clearly in a state of recuperation. One of the first things that had to be done in order to restore the country was rescuing the education system, and subsequently a new 'ladder' (a term used to refer to the policy or documents devised at the time in Lebanon) as devised and approved by the Cabinet on 25 October 1995 (for the following, see Bashshur, 2005). Soon afterwards, a plan with specific curriculum targets for various school levels was completed. For example, an additional examination was required for entry to most higher education institutions where the focus is on language competency, science and mathematics (Aljarida Alrasmyya, 1997). A reformed curriculum, with a focus on social, economic and national perspectives was launched in 1998. Over 16,000 teachers were trained from public schools and 6,000 from private schools, specifying that 12 years are needed for schooling. One year was added to primary school education and one removed from the middle years' cycle. History, geography, literature and civics are all still being taught in Arabic, while the schools' educational and religious background determines the language in which all other subjects are taught using either English or French. In addition to three different foreign schooling systems, Lebanon has three types of school entities: public, privately subsidised religiously affiliated schools, and private non-subsidised schools. Private schools are preferred by most Lebanese as they believe they provide better education, discipline and values. Unfortunately,

many people could no longer afford public schooling due to their new-found poverty caused by the civil war. The government was forced to open more public schools due to the increased demand for education and consequently the demand for affordable public schools (Harrison, 2011).

Subject matter committees began working on revisions and writing new education materials; committees for all subjects were appointed and approved. However, the subject of history was singled out and delegated to a special committee, composed of people representing various religious/political groups. Rumours started circulating about disputes and conflicts among its members, and the alleged reshuffling of memberships and resignations. When a copy of the new national curriculum was submitted for government approval (8 May 1997), with a new package of material covering all subjects, history was missing altogether (Bahous et al., 2013).

According to Bahous et al. (2013), three years later in 2000 the cabinet received and approved a brief document titled, 'General Principles and Specific Goals for the Teaching of History' – approved on 10 May 2000 and submitted to the press on the same day. When it was made public it became clear that it was a very bland document, having been put together by a committee of six people who convened 50 meetings. When presented to the press on 10 May 2000, only one member out of the original six had survived the duration of its work; all the other members had either resigned or were replaced. Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing what viewpoints or arguments were exchanged during the three-year period (of the history committee), and what caused changes in membership, and more significantly, what reasons prevented the original committee from adopting modifications as requested by the higher one. The most important point to make is that despite what the curriculum guidelines stated, it remained difficult to translate these guidelines into actual teaching tools – that is, textbooks.

Meanwhile, textbooks in all other subject-matter areas were issued and distributed to schools starting with the academic year 1997/98. History textbooks had to wait until 2001, when the first batch was produced. Nonetheless contentious issues continued to compromise the project, and according to Wettig (2004, n.p.), "although the Lebanese Curriculum and its Objectives (1997) were finally agreed upon, the concrete writing of textbooks proved impossible." Wettig (2004, n.p.) states that "in 2001 new history books were issued for elementary grades 2 and 3 and soon objections were voiced against including 'Arabs' among other 'foreign conquerors' that 'occupied' then eventually left Lebanon in previous times".

Bahous et al. (2013, p. 66) document how in 2000 "the General Principles and Specific Goals of the Teaching of History, i.e. the overarching aim of the school subject, was finally produced and approved by the government." Yet, there was a lack of consensus by the CERD on what constituted the social reality of Lebanon. Should schools teach that Lebanon is "a homeland for all of its people and as being 'Arab in identity'?" CERD insisted that this had to be changed to 'Lebanese identity' and 'Arab affiliation'. For Bahous et al. (2013, p. 66), "this modification shows that the Taif agreement had failed to resolve the historical tensions in Lebanon between those claiming that the country is part of the Arab world and those denying it. Terms such as 'committed to Arab culture' were removed from other paragraphs as well". Consequently, for Bahous et al. (2013, p. 66) "these debates and the changes made by CERD hence underlined that the Lebanese politicians were still not in agreement about the basic identity, history or destiny of the country." Nehme (2006, pp.47-48, cited in Bahous et al., 2013, p.67) found the following:

> The objectives for teaching history were many and both vague and precise. They included: 'raising national awareness, developing the national collective memory, recognizing the importance of the Lebanese culture and the contribution of the Lebanese in the broader Arabic civilization, recognizing the impairment that had been caused by internal disputes, identifying the role played by foreign powers, extending appreciation toward religious values (Christianity and Islam), and recognizing the treachery entailed in Zionism.

The bureaucrats in charge of the Lebanese History curriculum attempted to overcome differences of historical interpretation by appealing to historical processes, presenting the historical

documents to students without any interpretation. Wettig (2004, n.p.) reported that according to Masoud Daher, a history professor at the Lebanese University and a member of the committee commissioned to work out the new curriculum controversies about the true course of history, disputes were overcome by allowing the "documents speak for themselves in many parts of the new books."

It appears that Daher and his fellow History curriculum bureaucrats moved much of the Lebanese History Curriculum content offshore, where there was less controversy. Wettig (2004, n.p.) reported him as stating:

> We included American, European, Asian and African history ... I am sure it will be one of the best books in the Arab world… We studied books from France, the United States, Germany, Japan to see how they teach ... We didn't modernize the traditional material, but wrote a completely new book. In fact, maybe this book will be a shock for traditional historians.

Even then, there was continuing controversy. Marlin Dick (1999, n.p.) from the *Daily Star* reported how advocates for the inclusion of "the Armenian genocide of 1915 commemorated around the world every April 24 [and] often referred to by Lebanese politicians from a range of political affiliations, and is the subject of a 1997 parliamentary resolution" was struggling to be included in either the History or Civics curriculum. Dick (1999) anticipated this content would be included in the Civics curriculum. The curriculum was one hurdle but general agreement on textbooks was another, more severe obstacle.

Munir Bashshur, professor of education at the American University of Beirut, describes in his chapter *The deepening cleavage in the Lebanese Educational System* published in 2003, how the first curriculum review committee, set in place in 1995, did not only work much longer than expected on its task, but how then, when finally the first batch of textbooks was produced, a campaign broke out against these new textbooks, writing "the work of this committee and its deliberations were handled almost like a state secret" (cited in Bahous et al., 2013, p. 67). National distrust only increased. According to Bashshur, "rumours leaked out about arguments and conflicts among its members ... and when a copy of the new national curriculum was submitted for government approval (in 1997), with a new package of material covering all subjects, the subject matter of history was absent" (cited in Bahous et al., 2013, p. 67).

Bahous et al. (2013) describe how "CERD had to issue a statement that those particular pages were to be removed from all existing and future copies of the textbooks" (2013, pp. 69-70). Previously, Bashshur concluded (2003) that more than a decade after the Lebanese civil war ended and after the Taif agreement, the different Lebanese groups could still not agree on how to write their history. Efforts to unify the curricula went to no avail. A decade after Bashshur's research this is still true. There is, in other words, 'no history' after the Lebanese civil war.

In 2011 after the Lebanese Association for Educational Studies (LAES) third conference on Education Learning and Teaching History: Lessons from and for Lebanon, a teachers' guide booklet titled *Teaching History in Lebanon by Creating Learning Spaces* was developed (Lebanese Association for Educational Studies, 2012). This booklet was created so as to provide support for teachers of history in Lebanon with new teaching practices to engage their students. This booklet also aimed to promote and strengthen relationships between stakeholders in schools, government, communities and universities. Maadad (2013, p. 132) reported that according to one school principal who wished to remain anonymous, "this booklet did not travel far.":

> It brought to the surface sensitive topics to the classroom. Teachers also found it hard to apply in their classroom, as it was deeply focused on higher-order of thinking and the learning process model which often requires access to past events in order to think critically. Such events were not often accessible to all due to the variety of history in textbooks. (Maadad, 2013, p. 132)

In a separate face-to-face interview with another school principal, this one in South Lebanon in a low socio-economic school, Maadad (2013, p. 132) reported that the principal said: "bringing

history back to the classroom created a division between the students especially the year 8 and 9 groups that came from different religious backgrounds and have been informed of the truth of the Lebanese war differently. Letting go of the past is the only way to move forward."

Where to from here?

It is unrealistic to expect the 'escape' from history and societal integration of a newly independent state to take place within one generation, especially considering that it took European nations centuries to find a unifying nationalistic or civic outlook from its body politic and reflected amongst its citizens. However, the problem in Lebanon is that the attempt at integration has been riddled with primordial, as well as domestic and external political manipulation, which in turn has promoted mutual segregation rather than national integration under a pluralistic umbrella. It is within this context that a formula for national integration and cohesiveness now needs to be implemented in Lebanon in order to secure its future longevity, security and independence.

The paper has highlighted one sphere which aids nation-building: the education system. The education system, amongst other things, is a major player in socialising children and young people on community relations. In most cases it is towards a common national cause as opposed to calls for separatism and exclusiveness. Religious institutions can also play a major role in enhancing social integration and community particularly in ethnically diverse societies. The question is not of writing an alternative history alongside a traditional one; instead, it means re-evaluating national history from within, that is, questioning the assumptions and determinations upon which national historiography is founded. This is because history, like culture and identity, are ongoing processes that link the past with the present and strengthen social contracts. Such national histories are founded on enduring shared values, culture and symbols, which reinforce and perpetuate a nation's self-image. Preservation of national historiography and political continuity can only be secured through negotiation, compromise and reconciliation with the past in order to attain the formation of bonds of natural solidarity and cohesion. In sum, Lebanese history textbooks and education need to be all things to all its citizens in a post-national Lebanon. All views need to be included regardless of inconsistency.

Therefore, in order to attain the changes that have been suggested in the literature, the Lebanese community needs to develop and sustain a sense of cohesive political community by agreeing to a shared historical vision. Lebanon is in an awkward situation, as it has not had a history of solidarity, homogeneity or a unified past which makes the task all the more challenging. It is not, however, impossible – Malaysia and Singapore are good case studies to consider. The challenge is to create a historical myth which will not be historically objectionable or offensive to one or more groups and which will stabilise, unite and represent a nation at large.

Finally, this paragraph serves as a post-script. As the political, financial, and economic situation in Lebanon continued to deteriorate, 2020 unexpectedly provided a public health challenge to the globe with the COVID-19 pandemic. Lebanese and refugees alike in Lebanon have not been spared. Moreover, on 4 August 2020 Beirut was rocked by an explosion which saw 2750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate stored at the port of Beirut blow up, leaving over 190 people dead, 6000 injured and over 300 000 homeless within a matter of minutes. This led to the resignation of the Diab government and anger has poured onto the streets reigniting the October 2019 demonstrations. Accusations of corruption, and political and economic maladministration continue to run rife. Meanwhile, the currency has lost 80% of its value, more than 50% of the population live on or below the poverty line, and unemployment is over 30%. International aid has become conditional upon political and economic reform, and former colonial power France has re-entered the scene providing leadership which finds itself lacking among Lebanon's political elite who have all been accused of being complicit and responsible for the Beirut bombings. At the time of writing a new government is being negotiated. It is walking a tightrope attempting to fulfil the requests of both its nationals and the international community, yet feeling the pressure of the long serving political players (domestically and regionally) who have for decades ensured they have access to power and resources. There clearly is a disconnect between Lebanese nationals

and its long serving political elite, which might serve the purpose of overdue reform and change. Ultimately the outcome of this current calamity will determine the writing of the next chapter of Lebanon's history and its school curriculum.

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Endnotes

[1] The Druze constitute one of the 17 recognised minority groups in Lebanon. It is a monotheistic and Abrahamic religion.

[2] Millet system: was introduced by the Ottomans as an autonomous self-governing religious community – the size, power and duration of these autonomous regions varied across the Empire.

[3] Government by grand coalition or power sharing arrangement, as opposed to majoritarian democracy. Usually adopted by states with internal divisions along ethnic, religious or linguistic lines.

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Doing justice to their history: London's BAME students and their teachers reflecting on decolonising the history curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines qualitative data emerging from interviews in five London schools with different groups of BAME ([British] Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) students aged between 14 and 18 (a total of 33), and seven of their teachers. The students are questioned about their reactions to the taught curriculum especially in the light of their sometimes complex but common postcolonial identities. The methodology followed here, that of Bourdieusian relational phenomenology (Atkinson, 2020), mirrors both the literature review and the conclusions, in that the history of the movement of peoples as a consequence of colonisation and empire not only explains the way Britain is but also defines an imperative for societal and curriculum change. The contextual literature relates to some of the history of migration and settlement including in London, and to some aspects of historiography, especially the work of Peter Fryer (1984/2018), Catherine Hall (2002), Rosina Visram (1994, 2002) and David Olusoga (2014, 2015) to demonstrate that Black history is British history and that there is a mutual responsibility to rediscover what has been hidden and forgotten. But that history, with its power relations, is also intertwined and interrelated with relationships between citizens in society today. The core and periphery paradigm (Mycock, 2017) is clearly reflected in the concept of double-consciousness (Du Bois, 1903; Gilroy, 1993) as both a personal and curriculum dimension. The findings demonstrate the importance of a history education that connects migration, empire and postcoloniality, for all citizens, including those wielding official power. Four themes emerge for analysis: double-consciousness; curriculum and pedagogy; understanding power relations; and citizenship, social justice and curriculum change.

KEYWORDS

Double-consciousness, core and metropole, relational phenomenology, habitus and field, power relations, social justice, curriculum and society, colonisation, empire, decolonisation

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Introduction

This is a study, conducted through interview-conversations in April and May 2018, with groups of teenage BAME students, mostly female, and their teachers, in five secondary schools across London reflecting on decolonising the history curriculum that they had been taught or were teaching. The study explores how they evaluated personal identities and family histories in relationship to their history education. The interviews were undertaken on the understanding that neither the schools nor the teachers or students would be named, but that the identity-heritages of the interviewees would be revealed. The difficult decisions associated with representing the findings of this investigation have been about how to organise the results and make the necessary abbreviations or compressions of extended and detailed conversations. Rather than presenting this school-by-school it was decided to synthesise the findings through four themes which are discussed under the methodology below.

Literature review

Whereas the interview-conversations themselves reveal the reading preferences of both teachers and students, the research data has to be put in a wider context of both the UK and particularly English society (bearing in mind the multiple jurisdictions of the UK) at this time (April/May 2018), and where the History curriculum stood, with its related dynamics. Similarly, the discussions in the schools reveal how BAME dimensions had enhanced the taught curriculum with examples of British rather than American campaigners for justice (e.g. Paul Stephenson, Claudia Jones and Asquith Xavier), and some focus on victims of injustice (e.g. Kelso Cochrane and Stephen Lawrence[1]). Migration, with related citizenship and inclusion implications, had become a core issue both in society itself and in the curriculum. The EU Referendum campaign (Feb-June 2016) was strongly associated with a debate about taking back control at different levels, including of who enters the country. The debate about how earlier migrants had been treated came to the fore at this time (April 2018) with revelations of individual cases in the Windrush[2] scandal.

The last national curriculum changes had taken place five years earlier in the summer of 2013, after some robust debate in response to the government's much-criticised draft history curriculum (February, 2013), which was set out as a celebratory canon of mainly English historical events, many of them military. This was modified after interventions within government-convened meetings from individuals associated with interest groups, significant among them the Historical Association, the Royal Historical Society and the Schools History Project. The motivation within these redrafting sessions was not so much about how the curriculum might be decolonised, but about how it might be reframed to offer a sensible relationship between the proposed substantive content and an inquiry approach. The national curriculum itself as a cohering educational force in society had been undermined by two factors. First, in some if not many schools the old-style three-year Key Stage 3 History course, covering 11 to 14 year olds, had been reduced by senior managers to two years with Year 9 being used to extend the lead-in to

GCSE examinations, especially to support subjects which were considered to be more important than History. The other factor was a structural change whereby old local authority schools were becoming centrally-funded academies, often within multi-academy trusts (MATs) none of which by law had to study the national curriculum. History courses in each MAT might be different. This situation has recently been examined by Mary Woolley (2020), following earlier concerns by Stephen Ball (2015). There would be no guarantee of students leaving school at aged 16 or 18 having an understanding of migration or empire unless their teachers were committed to achieving it.

In April 2018 when the interviews were started there were revelations in *The Guardian* about the treatment of vulnerable individuals from within the Windrush Generation, with mainly West Indian/Caribbean heritages. There were deportations or threats of deportation as part of the UK Home Office's aggressive 'hostile environment' policy. The associated rights to work and remain in the country were being denied to those who could not find the correct paperwork. Details were being published on a daily basis at the time of the April 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM),[3] which was being held in London. These reports were later published in book-form by Amelia Gentleman (2019). Her pursuit of individual cases was notable, particularly the impact that government policy had on the lives and families of Sarah O'Connor, Anthony Bryan and Paulette Wilson. For these unfortunate victims, the political *was* personal, feeding into their double-consciousness in a real way.

The original Windrush arrivals (22 June 1948) had been interviewed by Peter Fryer whose *Staying Power* (1984/2018) would become a seminal work. Awareness of a sense of mutually experienced effort during wartime and of new opportunities for work in a devastated post-war Britain catalysed this particular migration, and individual experiences would be further illustrated by Stephen Bourne in *Motherland Calls* (2012), and by David Olusoga in *The World's War – Forgotten Soldiers of Empire* (2014). The Windrush Generation suffered from discrimination and racial abuse on the streets of London when they first arrived, and subsequently. The related locales, broadly speaking of 'metropole' (in this case London) and 'colony' (in the case of Windrush and in 1948, the various large and small island jurisdictions in the Caribbean, that were then colonies of the UK, or had similar status) have been discussed by Catherine Hall (2002) drawing on the work of Cooper and Stoler (1997), making a strong recommendation that the two histories (of the metropole-based power and the once colonised world) should be seen in the same analytic frame, stressing that the one could not be understood without the other. The missing element in this narrative was the wider history of the British Empire, and the fact that the West Indies had been where slavery had operated. In addition, there was the link to Africa as those same enslaved people were transported across the Atlantic from West Africa, some being brought in from places closer to the centre of the continent.

As Visram has stressed, "What is important is the relationship between these several histories. Black history is part of British history. As such it is central to school history" (1994, p. 60). Hall's work reaffirmed this view that Britain cannot be "understood in itself without reference to other histories" (2002, p. 9). She went on to assert that the nation can be understood "only by defining what is not part of it, for identity depends on the outside, on the marking both of its positive presence and content and of its negative and excluded parts" (p. 9). Mycock reflected that there is "a correlation between the extent of migration from the colonial periphery to the post-colonial metropole and the intensity of the 'politics of empire' and history education" (2017, p. 402).

Imperatives to transform societal and school experiences would come from different directions and at different times. Reni Eddo-Lodge (2016) would put into words her unhappiness about "how we understand ourselves through the eyes of someone else" (p. 78) and her sense of "a kind of displacement that went hand-in-hand with Britain's collective forgetting of black contributions to British history" (p. 79). Her complaint was that they were always American examples of the struggle for human rights that she had to study at school, when there were in fact British examples much closer to home, like the campaigning of Paul Stephenson in the Bristol Bus Boycott of 1963. Eddo-Lodge tells the reader that her family would never let her forget her Nigerian roots, but she describes herself as British-Nigerian. In a famous passage W.E.B. Du Bois

echoes almost exactly what she describes. This 'double-consciousness' was a "sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity." Being both Black and American he identified as one who "ever feels his twoness … two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (Du Bois, 1903, pp. 3-4).

The notion of double-consciousness would be developed by Paul Gilroy who claimed that "it acquires an ethno-psychiatric flavour specific to colonial and semi-colonial social life" (1993, p. 161), and implied that he prefers the term 'double vision.' Nevertheless, what becomes clear is that the double-consciousness or double vision is required on both sides of the debate, Black and white.

Television would play its part in normalising awareness of double-consciousness in people's identities, especially in the *Who Do You Think You Are* series, which drew on the multiple locations of the family histories of celebrities like Alistair McGowan [Scotland, India], 2007; Hugh Quarshie [Ghana, Netherlands], 2011; Nitin Ganatra [Gujurat, Kenya], 2013; Adil Ray [Pakistan, Kenya, Uganda], 2020; Anita Rani [India], 2018); Reggie Yates [Ghana], 2019; Naomi Harris [Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Grenada], 2019; and Sunetra Sarker [India, Bangladesh], 2019. David Olusoga's *A House through Time* (BBC, 2018-2020), three sets of programmes, located in Liverpool, Newcastle and Bristol, achieved in many of its case-studies the objective of seeing the metropole-colony dynamic in a single analytic frame. He would through his other television work bring home two significant developments. The first, *The Unwanted – The Secret Windrush Files* (BBC, 2019) was a poignant follow-up to the 2018 Windrush revelations in which individual stories were told of how the official 'hostile environment' and the unequal, unjust power relations associated with it, felt and looked in the unofficial lives of individuals. The second, *Britain's Forgotten Slave-Owners* (BBC, 2020) provided the background to the work of the UCL research-team, led by Catherine Hall, on *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership* (Hall et al., 2014), demonstrating that the industrial revolution and the growth of railways would not have been possible without the re-investment following vast compensation payments made to individuals who had lost income from slave ownership.

Linking these elements back to society itself, that is to both 'the public' and a significant institution, the Home Office (which is also responsible for the police force), and to a linked awareness of the importance of curriculum change across society, is this extract from Wendy Williams's *Windrush Lessons Learned Review* (March, 2020):

> The Windrush scandal was in part able to happen because of the public's and officials' poor understanding of Britain's colonial history, the history of inward and outward migration, and the history of black Britons. A lack of institutional memory or comprehensive understanding of the impact of the complex immigration situation created by successive legislative changes, set against an unwillingness or inability to learn from past mistakes, or to engage with experts and local communities, has compounded this situation. Officials need to understand the past to inform the present and the future of immigration policy. (p. 139)

Her 'Recommendation 6' was for Home Office staff re-education along exactly the same lines as identified above, and for annual reporting of the same. Of similar concern was the high number of stop-and-search incidents between police and the BAME population, despite denials that there was institutional racism in the force. It is ironic that the Home Office's own publication offering guidance for those aspiring to British citizenship should itself be less than inclusive (or diverse). It includes a chapter of officially approved history on which immigrants would have to submit themselves for testing. However, on 21 July 2020, 181 historians in an open letter published by the Historical Association (HA, 2020) subjected the history section of *Life in the UK* (LIUK) (2013) to excoriating criticism. The signatories argued that this complacent narrative of British power and exceptionalism, which failed to give any credit for indigenous agency in independence

struggles, and downplayed both the impact of colonialism and the richly diverse legacy of postcolonial migration, was in urgent need of amendment.

These concerns also emerged as central to the TIDE-Runnymede Report on *Teaching Migration, Belonging and Empire in Secondary Schools*. Its authors (McIntosh, Todd & Das, 2019) noted that "migration and empire are not marginal events: they are central to our national story. As it stands, the story we are telling is incomplete" (p. 4). They also make the important observation that "to adequately prepare students to be tolerant, confident citizens, these topics must be understood as integral both to our history and to the richness of British culture" (p. 4). So, not only is the image of Britain presented to migrants an inadequate one, similarly the image being taught to the 'settled' population is also a distorted one, in urgent need of change, and for the same reason that the LIUK booklet is widely considered now to be unsuitable. A shared vision for citizenship has to have a deeper, broader historical dimension with a sense of mutual responsibility.

The momentum for change has gathered pace in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement and since the death in custody in the USA of George Floyd on 25 May 2020. The toppling less than a fortnight later in Bristol on 7 June, 2020 of the listed statue of Edward Colston (1636-1731), beneficiary of the slave trade through the Royal African Company and later local philanthropist, indicated that feelings about celebrating the life of a such a man were running high. An extended debate in the House of Commons on 20 October 2020 coincided with Black History Month, and revealed a widespread and perceptive interest in these matters, including from MPs with postcolonial heritages (Hansard, 2020).

What follows is a section on the thinking behind the methodology of this research project, but at a deeper level the relational phenomenology which underpins it is itself a feature of the corresponding power-play at work in society.

Methodology

The collecting of data with groups of 14, Y9 students, aged 13 and 14, 12, Y11 students, aged 15 and16, three, Y12 students, aged 16 and 17, and four, Y13 students, aged 17 and 18, amounting to 33 (30 female, three male) and their teachers (a total of seven) was conducted through interviews which developed naturally into conversations. This took place on five different days (April 30; 3, 11, 16, and 22 May, 2018) in five different locations (South London, East London, West London, and North London). Tables 1-5 include details of the teachers and of the heritages and year groups of the students. An explanation of the significance of the school year can be seen in Table 6. The different sets of questions are given in Table 7. Having taught in London himself, for many years as a Head of History, Martin Spafford[4] (the interviewer) asked his colleagues in the London history teaching community if they could request in their own schools volunteer BAME students who would be willing to meet in relatively small groups to discuss curriculum and identity matters from their own perspectives.

The presentation of all the data as later transcribed by the interviewer (which stands at over 75,000 words) would not have been possible in a single article. The problem has been to decide on how best to analyse this data. The solution has been found in a combination of (a) Bourdieusian theory as developed recently by Atkinson (2020), especially that of relational phenomenology, and (b) the adoption of a thematic approach arising from a reconfiguration of the questions and responses into corresponding sets of 'habituses' and 'fields', with an emphasis in this case on habitus being associated with personal dispositions and fields as the areas in which these dispositions work (See Tables 8 and 9). The dynamic for analysis, which has conveniently allowed for the emergence of four themes, has arisen from identifying sets of habitus-field reactions. Nevertheless, it has proved impossible to equate themes exactly with corresponding fields and habituses, as Habitus 1 relates to both to personal and to curriculum fields (Themes 1 and 2), and Field 3 relates to Themes 3 and 4.

The interviews can be seen as conversations and thus as forms of discourse about personal and school experiences of how decolonising the curriculum is linked to inclusion and diversity. These embrace citizenship concepts as well as curricular elements. The methodology also draws on Finlay's interpretation of the two 'iterative stages' of phenomenological research, and thus the conversations within these interviews can be seen as linking the students' and teachers' lives in the metropole (in this case London) (a) *holistically* to past and present lives in the wider world and (b) *dialectically* (Finlay, 2012, p. 174), where '[s]hared ways of being were learnt in micro-exchanges of learning within groups' (Sales, 2012, p. 75).

Table 8 shows how the relationship between Habitus and Field works with a corresponding element of relational phenomenology and relates to the themes (see Table 9).

Findings

Theme 1: Double-consciousness

This theme can operate at several different levels, drawing on different objects of consciousness, including the geographical and historical dimensions of family life (the students' life-world experiences), and within that the habitus-field inter-play as reflected in awareness of past and present family involvement in the relationship between the 'periphery' (broadly, the former 'colony') and the 'core' as the locus of former colonising power and present place of residence (the 'metropole'). In this section double-consciousness as an element emerging in the interview-conversations will be examined in the context of reflections about aspects of family life, and then in the next section in reflections about how these life-world experiences impact on the students' views about the history curriculum and how it might be amended.

Visits mentioned in the conversations included family holiday visits to the Middle East [Somalia], Africa [Ghana], and the Far East [Vietnam]). Ghana was also the destination of one of the teachers (T7) for research into her university dissertation on family history. Her knowledge of Ghanaian culture would feed back into her teaching when she taught her class a Ghanaian song which caught the spirit of independence. Two of Ghana's maritime castles linked to the slave trade featured (St George's d'Elmina and Cape Coast Castle). The Nkrumah Memorial Park in Accra was visited (by student G-F11C) and fed back into a better contextual understanding. "Ghana was under English rule until Kwame Nkrumah who freed us from the British Empire."

The overseas trips were linked to discussions about the extent to which the students felt they could still identify as belonging to their countries of origin or felt themselves to be totally British. Family generosity was appreciated but so was the chance to get back to London. A male student in School E who identified as mixed Vietnamese (mother) and Cumbrian (father) regretted not having had school input on the Vietnam War *before* visiting Da Nang and the massacre site at My Lai. The father's belief that he was descended from Vikings added to the richness and brought a migratory element to the British identity. Many of the students and at least one of the teachers (the teacher with an Irish heritage in School C) identified as Londoners.

Some of the family histories suggested a more traumatic past. In School D a Y9 student linked to both São Tomé and Princípe and Portugal had a grandmother who it seemed knew about or might even have witnessed a massacre in 1953. Although slavery there officially ended in 1875, labour conditions were little better than slavery and the 1953 revolt by oppressed contract labourers (the grandmother was probably one of these) was violently put down and the bodies thrown into the sea. This was commemorated annually on the beach, but the memory of this colonial conflict, which had fed into demands for independence, was passed on within this family.

In more than one case students had parentage mirrored the multi-angular nature of the slave trade, with one parent from the Caribbean and another from mainland Africa:

School A students
Y9 – Nigeria/St Vincent
Y9 – Dominica/Nigeria/Ireland
Y12 – Sierra Leone/Liberia/Guinea/Jamaica
Y13 – St Lucia/Zambia

The Y9 student (above) with links to St Vincent could be even more specific about the location, which was an island named Bequia to the south of St Vincent, where there had been a Scottish presence. Indeed, her mother, undoubtedly descended from slaves, had had a Scottish maiden name. The *Legacies of Slavery* UCL website indicates that in 1817 there were 482 enslaved Africans on Bequia.

Within family memory there were accounts of experiences in the metropole itself. One student (D-F9A [Dominica/Nigeria/Ireland]) told about how there had been a proactive and deliberate move to gather the paperwork together to apply for and gain citizenship soon after arrival, because the family had sensed that one day there might be an attempt to 'send them back.' Recent events linked to the 'hostile environment' had proved that this had indeed been a necessary precaution. This family with members working "in banks and stuff" had saved enough money to be able to do this. There was a strong sense of having distanced themselves from the Caribbean as they had lost the patois and had slowly been assimilated into London society. The recently revealed cases evoked some sympathy in the students. These Windrush scandal victims "didn't have the foresight."

Student A-F9E (India/Jamaica/Dominica/France) couldn't understand until she was older what her grandmother meant by "all that I have done for you." In fact, it meant living in what was then a racist anti-immigrant society characterised by prejudicial exclusionary signs put up by landlords or landladies. It was the Bristol bus boycott which led to some legal changes in race relations, both in employment and in housing.

Another student B-F9A (with heritages linked to the Philippines and China) who was raised in the Philippines was expected by her mother to change in the way she related to people because she was in London or Britain. But although it seems she could relate positively and seek to treat people equally she nevertheless complained of there being a 'silent prejudicity' in society where she felt a negative sense of being different.

The Y13 School A student (A-F13A) with links to both St Lucia and Zambia was among the most articulate and sophisticated in her responses. She had a strong locational sense enhanced by two strands of family influence: her uncle and her grandfather, whose views in some ways complicated a polarised postcolonial narrative. She linked Cecil Rhodes with De Beer diamonds who were still employing people in Zambia and other parts of Africa.

> Yes, because I think it's the De Beer diamonds and I was like, I was looking up diamonds and I was, like, De Beer's nice, and then I think it was my uncle who said, oh yes, Cecil Rhodes was, like, a founder of De Beer. And then I started looking into that and, yes, that's an interesting part of history. And yes, that's quite interesting, and then learning about the freedom fighters in Zambia, so like when it arose. So, like, my grandad, he was like, he was head of education at the Commonwealth, so his friends, they were like the freedom fighters, so that was interesting.

She was not in favour of mixing up all cultures into one mixing pot, because she saw cultures and cultural practices, like *sharia* law as having context-specific rather than universal validity. She was against a cosmopolitan multiculturalism, but in favour of a 'symbiosis,' a living together, a toleration of cultures, but not a hegemonic relationship. Thus, she claimed that:

> a culture is a culture for a reason…But if from the side of pluralist multiculturalism, I think it goes on to what you were saying about having that diversity within unity which is everyone's allowed to celebrate their culture and

> represent it and, you know, almost have it within society and have that, like, that symbiosis rather than, like, mashing it together.

She used the word 'represented' more than once, and applied it to the link between being in society and the history that was studied in school, although she like one or two others, including at least one of the teachers (T1, of Nigerian heritage) speaking about an earlier experience, had found that they and their culture were represented more in English (literature) lessons than in History.

Theme 2: Curriculum and pedagogy

This section examines how the existing frameworks (including both the curriculum itself and the way it is taught) within which the colonisation, imperial and decolonisation elements appear in the history curriculum are *experienced* by these students and *enacted* by their teachers.

> There seemed to be a strong relationship between respect to individuals shown in history lessons and the students feeling that they themselves were valued. This was the case in School A with the Y9 students discussing the film *Pocahontas* where there was resistance to the native Americans being described as 'savages,' and a plea for more depth and more biographical detail rather than generalisation. This was echoed in School B with an extended conversation involving students with heritages linked to Algeria (C-F11B), Pakistan (B-F11B) and Somalia (A-F11B). Student B-F11B (Pakistan) said: "I always imagine, I don't want to be offensive or anything, I just imagine a white guy with a beard hopping off a ship and saying, like, hi this is mine", that he had walked up a beach (they were thinking of Roanoke in 1584) and just claimed the land for himself. This prompted two comments from the student with an Algerian heritage (C-F11B): "It's not what country it was but the treatment of that country"; and "It's not about seeing colour … it's how you treat colour."

There were mixed views about the value of Tudor history, with one student claiming to have really enjoyed the Y10 Elizabethan unit (which had included the first attempts at colonisation). Others had not liked the repetition either in primary school itself (although the national curriculum had originally been designed to avoid repetition) or the fact that 'Tudors' was studied at both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Henry VIII's attitude to his wives came in for much criticism in School D, as they did not approve of his killing of women. Although the interviewer in conversation tried to argue that this was a period of great change, the students with heritages linked to Algeria (C-F9D), Somalia/Yemen/Saudi Arabia (B-F9D), Montserrat/USA (F-F9D), and São Tomé & Principé/Portugal (A-F9D) disapproved of any hero-worship of this king as, in the words of Student A-F9D he "never changed the world," rather contradicting the interviewer, although these students were thinking of stopping racism and genocide. Another view of the traditional 'kings and queens' approach was that it seemed that Tudors or Tudors-and-Stuarts were followed by a complacently proud narrative of how powerful Britain became through imperial expansion with no thought for the impact.

Teachers 4 and 5 (School C) did not teach kings and queens and adopted a history from below approach, encouraging their students to become more reflective and critical, modelling their teaching units and lessons on the structure of a dissertation, inquiry-based, chapter by chapter, also encouraging the use of extracts from historians. Teacher 7 (School E) of Ghanaian heritage, allowed one her students with links to Ireland, to teach a lesson about the Irish Troubles.

Theme 3: Understanding power relations

Power relations are seen in these conversations to operate at several levels. The power of the government to decide on a universal policy that all schools would have to follow was regarded as having positive value if the curriculum requirements were for all schools and inclusive (according

to the School D teacher [T5], a Lead Practitioner [History] of Jewish heritage). But this was being frustrated by others wielding different powers, such as school senior managers deciding on reducing the time for the Key Stage 3 programme, or exam boards promoting syllabuses that fell short of the need to include links between empire and migration. The interviewer (Martin Spafford), the teachers and the students all commented on power relations between socio-economic groups as a factor in history. Enslavement in the 18th and 19th centuries could be seen in factory conditions in the UK, and in the harsh treatment of white sailors on slave ships.

The concept of 'the personal is political' works at several different levels, but it was used specifically by Teacher D (as above) to refer to his approval of 'stories from below', not naming Raphael Samuel but referring to his school of thought (feminist and Marxist) (see Samuel, 1994). His method was to explore big themes though an SHP-style inquiry-led approach related to individuals like Equiano, Claudia Jones who initiated the Notting Hill Carnival to commemorate the tragically cut-short life of Kelso Cochrane, and the story of Kelso himself. His own research, linked to work as an OCR examiner, had led him to read letters from the East India Company, about slave ships being attacked in in the 1670s. He said, "It's the story, the narrative which is more engaging to me and always has been. That's what I like to share."

Both teachers and students saw a need to see history from below from a 'colonised' point of view. The colonised (mainly in Africa, the Caribbean, and South Asia) were clearly identified by the students as individuals with their own stories (not marginalised) who were in a power relationship with the coloniser. Colonisers, and indeed the corresponding histories about them, were regarded as showing signs of complacency and insensitivity about the power being exercised, mainly because the accounts did not sufficiently place the colonised into the reality of the power-narrative. There was a plea by the students and their teachers for the restoration of these forgotten or marginalised stories, a plea also seen in the work of Fryer (2010), Bourne (2012) and Olusoga (2014, 2015, 2016).

Studying both the pre- and postcolonial histories of formerly colonised jurisdictions after they became independent nations, albeit in many cases having a continuing relationship with the former colonising power (and each other) through the Commonwealth, was seen as an area that had been neglected. Blame was placed by teachers on the government for changing the 2007/2008 curriculum which had required this element (i.e. precolonial civilisations), but now it was merely allowed. This deficit was believed to diminish the status of the citizens of the relatively 'new' postcolonial countries, because a great deal had happened in those locations (with which the students had ongoing family links) before and after colonisation, and ignorance of these histories tended to feed back into street-prejudice about migrant-settlers from these places.

Theme 4: Citizenship, social justice and curriculum change

It is clear that all of the teachers believed that history education was strongly linked to a range of citizenship dimensions, including the enablement of agency or advocacy. A much-used text across the schools was Mohamud and Whitburn (2016) on *Doing justice to history: Transforming Black history in secondary schools*, although the teachers did not generally see 'Black history' as separate from history as a whole. These authors themselves recognised the salience of Bourdieu's theory of habitus to explain in biographical examples different forms of response (and thus of agency) to injustice.

School A's teacher (T1) encouraged his students to use their right to vote and to be aware of how society can scapegoat others, as happened in Germany in the 1930s. Both teachers in School B (T2, T3) in East London were deeply aware of the importance of discussing current affairs and setting them in an historical frame. They knew that there were different views about migration among the students (and their families), but like T1, wanted to explore in a rigorous way how such prejudices can lead to discrimination. T4 and T5 (with heritages linked to Ireland and East Africa) used their unit on the Matchwomen, Irish migrants from families affected by the Famine, to show how these women had campaigned against injustices over pay, and had been empowered to travel

the world to tell their stories. Other stories told in School C about injustice did not have such successful outcomes, such as the Morant Bay rebellion in Jamaica in 1865, which led to the hanging of activist Paul Bogle. Similarly, the narrative about the West India Regiment did not end as expected. The example of Paul Stephenson and the Bristol Bus Boycott was also widely used, significantly because this campaign in 1963 led to changes in employment and housing legislation.

A lack of understanding between communities was seen to have a curriculum basis. The teacher in School D said:

> It absolutely is important *[in a school without diverse intake, also].* I remember some reports came out in the mid-90s or so about teaching in monocultural communities and some of the biggest challenges in those communities – or in communities that are not particularly well integrated, in Oldham and places like that – part of the reasons why we don't have strong community cohesion in those places is because there is a lack of understanding of where we've come from and how these histories are intertwined and interrelated. For too long the history narrative has been narrow, Eurocentric, male dominated – but we know the arguments about that. That phrase 'being hidden from history' has happened for too long so it needs to be challenged.

In his poem, 'The British – serves 60 million', Benjamin Zephaniah (2000) writes:

> Add some unity, understanding, and respect for the future,
> Serve with justice
> And enjoy.
>
> **Note:** *All the ingredients are equally important. Treating one ingredient better than another will leave a bitter unpleasant taste.*
>
> **Warning:** *An unequal spread of justice will damage the people and cause pain. Give justice and equality to all.* (p. 39)

Synthesis and discussion

This section will briefly examine how the themes relate to each other, in the spirit of relational phenomenology. Double-consciousness is a personal factor which can and does feed into a curriculum dynamic. It had been enthusiastically appropriated by the teachers, even those who did not have BAME backgrounds; and is something that the students brought to their understanding of curriculum, empathising with those adversely affected by unfair power relations. The ability to identify with those at the receiving end of empire, colonisation and even decolonisation, gives them an enhanced sense of perspective and significance. There are strong signs that the teachers were making every effort to construct syllabuses that are relevant to the demographic of their students. The students appreciated this and applied their double-consciousness to some of the more mundane British history topics, re-interpreting them, using what one School C student (with heritage links to Ireland/Grenada) called *retro-think*. Another student (with links to Ghana, also in School C) could define her experience of double-consciousness as being linked to both the London/British culture and the Ghanaian one. The same student was able to articulate the sense of a need more strongly to connect these elements with her friends in the classroom. The British-Ghanaian teacher in School E was however able to provide the connection by teaching her class a Ga language song which reflected the spirit of independence, and which the class were singing for days afterwards.

Conclusions and recommendations

In many ways the conversations reported on in this study are about the relationship between (a) a process of assimilating a history curriculum at different age-stages, either pre-exam (Key Stage 3), or exam (i.e. GCSE or A-Level) and (b) aspects of society itself. This process has involved a double or multiple consciousness of significant factors that have come together. The students, their families and their teachers, most of whom are already British citizens or soon will be, are members of a society which they are seeking to influence and change. The critical-dialogic calibrating process brought to the different sets of learning situations seen in these interview-conversations mirrors an expectation of change both in the curriculum and in society. The life-world experiences seen in this study show that these two elements need to breathe out to accommodate new narratives and perspectives, and to recognise injustices, recent and in the more distant past. The thinking behind the history section of the Home Office's *Life in the UK* booklet demonstrates a rather old-fashioned view that the host-society has a fixed history which has to be learnt, whereas what emerges from the exchanges in these five schools is that the positive and deliberate accommodation of new narratives 'from below' organically enriches, contests and unsettles the old canon. The treatment of minorities in society, a long story, reveals a power dynamic experienced personally by many of the interviewees and their families. This is a multi-faceted story of society and curriculum facing each other, sometimes uncomfortably – a story that needs to be re-examined and re-defined in schools, for all students who attend them.

The fundamental challenge is for the nation-state itself to process, accommodate, assimilate and reframe the narratives of all its citizens, of whatever ethnicity or colour, and to enable mutual understanding of all people's histories at a national level to reduce prejudice. Both the flaw and in a way the strength in Simon Schama's arguments (2010) at the beginning and end (2013) of the last round of official curriculum debate lay in his stating separately first that migrant-settler groups needed to understand their own histories (he mentioned those from South Asia living in British cities), and second that "history is about other people" (2013, n.p), but these two elements need to be stitched together. A *national* history curriculum has to enable and support this conjunction. In this respect a national curriculum is not about national history, it is about finding a suitable curriculum *for* the whole nation. As Teacher D said, these histories which link the core and the periphery, or the colony and metropole are "intertwined and interrelated." And, as the School A eighteen-year old student linked to both St Lucia and Zambia said, what is needed is a unity in diversity, a symbiosis. So, what is becoming an imperative is finding the means whereby these 'intertwinings' can be explored, and this is just as crucial for mono-cultural (i.e. 'white' British) communities as for those with high immigrant-settler numbers. Thus, the recommendations of Wendy Williams (2020) coincide with the priorities of the participants in this study.

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Appendices

Table 1: School A students in Y9, Y12 and Y13 and their teacher

School A		
State-maintained Catholic Girls' School (all students female) South London		
30 April 2018		
Interviewer: Martin Spafford		
Year group	Student or teacher identifier	Heritage or heritages of student or teacher
Y9	A-F9A	Nigeria/St Vincent
Y9	B-F9A	Philippines/China
Y9	C-F9A	India/Kenya
Y9	D-F9A	Dominica/Nigeria/ Ireland
Y12	A-F12A	Sierra Leone/ Liberia/ Guinea/ Jamaica …
Y12	B-F12A	Ghana
Y12	C-F12A	Uganda
Y13	A-F13A	St Lucia/Zambia
Y13	B-F13A	Sri Lanka/Portugal
Y13	C-F13A	Cyprus
Y13	D-F13A	Ghana
T1	A-MT1	male teacher, Black British, West African heritage [Nigerian] (present at all interviews above)

Table 2: School B Y11 students and their teachers

School B		
State-maintained Mixed Comprehensive School in East London (all students female)		
3 May 2018		
Interviewer: Martin Spafford		
Year group	Student or teacher identifier	Heritage or heritages of student or teacher
Y11	A-F11B	Somalia
Y11	B-F11B	Pakistan
Y11	C-F11B	Algeria
T2	B-FT1	Female w/White British heritage Head of History Present at interview with students
T3	B-FT2	Female w/White British heritage history teacher Present at interview with students

Table 3: School C Y11 students and their teachers

School C		
State-maintained Catholic Girls' School in West London (all students female)		
11 May 2018		
Interviewer: Martin Spafford		
Year group	Student or teacher identifier	Heritage or heritages of student or teacher
Y11	A-F11C	Jamaica
Y11	B-F11C	Ireland
Y11	C-F11C	India
Y11	D-F11C	Kenya/Somalia
Y11	E-F11C	Zimbabwe/Nigeria
Y11	F-F11C	Ghana-1
Y11	G-F11C	Ghana-2
Y11	H-F11C	Ghana-3
Y11	I-F11C	Ireland/Grenada
T4	C-FT1	Female w/White Irish heritage Present at interview with students
T5	C-FT2	Female b/Black East African heritage Present at interview with students

Table 4: School D Y9 students and their teacher

School D State-maintained Mixed Comprehensive School in North London 16 May 2018 Interviewer: Martin Spafford		
Year group	Student or teacher identifier	Heritage or heritages of student or teacher
Y9	A-F9D (female)	São Tomé & Principé/ Portugal
Y9	B-F9D (female)	Somalia/ Yemen/ Saudi Arabia
Y9	C-F9D (female)	Algeria
Y9	D-M9D (male)	Bangladesh
Y9	E-M9D (male)	Somalia/ Yemen
Y9	F-F9D (female)	Montserrat/ USA
T6	D-MT1	Lead Practitioner (History) male teacher – w/White British (Jewish heritage) Present at interview with students

Table 5: School E Y9 students and their teacher

School E State-maintained Mixed Comprehensive School in East London 22 May 2018 Interviewer: Martin Spafford		
Year group	Student or teacher identifier	Heritage or heritages of student or teacher
Y9	A-F9E (female)	India, Jamaica, Dominica, France
Y9	B-F9E (female)	Ghana
Y9	C-F9E (female)	Jamaica, Cuba
Y9	D-M9E (male)	Vietnam, Cumbria
T7	E-FT1	Female Head of History (b/Black British – West African [Ghana]) Present at interview with students

Table 6: Explanation of school year nomenclature

School year	Stage related to National Curriculum or examination course
Y9	The third year of secondary education (student ages 13-14). It is officially anyway, the last year of Key Stage 3 (KS3), the stage before the GCSE exam course.
Y11	The fifth year of secondary education (student ages 15-16). Y11 is the year when GCSE examinations are taken.
Y12	The sixth year of secondary education (student ages 16-17). The first of the two A-Level years
Y13	The seventh and usually last year of secondary education (student ages 17-18). The second of the two A-Level years. The results of A-Level (Advanced Level) exams are taken into account when students apply for university.

Table 7: Student and teacher interview questions organised under themes

Question number	THEME 1: Double-consciousness: relating their lives to the world	
	Student questions	Teacher questions
1	How do you see the relationship between your own identity and history (e.g. the history of members of your family) and being British in your own way?	Drawing on your own experience of teaching in a BAME community can you see any effective practical solutions to address the need for diversity and inclusion, perhaps also bearing in mind question 4 below?
		Would some, many or most BAME students believe that they have more than one identity?
	THEME 2: Curriculum and pedagogy: relating their lives to the curriculum	
2.	How far do you feel that this is reflected in what you are taught?	In what ways might it be possible to design history education programmes that address not only the necessity to 'cover' the syllabuses or curricula, but which allow for more personalisation to include diversity, related specifically to the make-up of the students in the classes?
		Are there any landmark events that relate to the questions above about inclusive narratives and diversity that are transnational, supranational or international that many or all BAME students might be able to identity with?
3	What examples can you remember of teaching about the history of empire, colonialism and decolonisation, etc?	Can you please give some examples of *what* historical themes and events around empire, decolonisation, and the Commonwealth are taught?
		What particular pedagogic and professional knowledge do you draw upon in teaching themes related to empire and post-colonialism? (This relates to how historical themes and events around empire, decolonisation, and the Commonwealth are taught.)
	THEME 3: Understanding power relations: relating their understanding of power relations to curriculum and society	
4	How did you feel about your lessons about empire and the way they were taught?	Are you aware of any links between history education debates in the BAME postcolonial contexts with which you are familiar and wider global discourses about history education?
5	Would you like to see any changes in what is taught?	Should professional or other bodies (e.g. the Historical Association, SHP, even the Royal Historical Society, or the Commonwealth) [this was extended to include the government] be doing more to ensure more diversity in history education?
	THEME 4: Citizenship, social justice and curriculum change	
6	If yes, what changes?	If they should be, then how or in what way?
		Have you experienced the need to give citizenship education for BAME students a historical dimension that they can identify with?

Table 8: Overarching methodology: Habitus-Field relational phenomenology as a way of exploring 'decolonising the curriculum'

Habitus	Element of relational phenomenology	Field
Habitus 1 Human consciousness (including double or multiple consciousness[es]) and locational awareness gained through personal and family experience (students) or through personal and professional experience (teachers) (life-world experience)	*Relating their lives to the world and others* **[Theme 1]**	**Field 1** The life-world experiences of *others* in the immediate, wider and global 'demographic' in time and space
	Relating their lives to the curriculum **[Theme 2**]	**Field 2** What is taught and learnt about empire, colonisation and decolonisation in school history
Habitus 2 Personal and professional experiences and understandings of power relationships in everyday life, in the family, in school, as encountered in the history curriculum, and in the wider society (including everyday understandings of identity, plurality, diversity and inclusion)	*Relating their understanding of power relations to curriculum and society* **[Theme 3]**	**Field 3** Fields in which power relations are at play: in everyday life, in the family, in school, as encountered in the history curriculum, and in the wider society
Habitus 3 A personal and professional sense of justice and commitment to change related to inequalities in the wider society	*Relating the students' and teachers' sense of social justice and commitment to change to power relations in curriculum and society* **[Theme 4]**	

Table 9: Overall research question, theme-related sub-questions and focus of work based on relational phenomenology

Overall research question	How are the habitus-field relationships in Table 8 *as related phenomena* explicated both holistically and dialectically in the context of these four sets of theme-related questions as a way of exploring 'decolonising the curriculum'?
	Themes, theme-related sub-questions and related phenomena
Theme 1	**1. Double-consciousness: relating their lives (habitus 1) to the world (field 1)** How are the phenomena of and relationships between 'metropole and colony' (or core and periphery) explored in the conversations in accounts of the life-world experiences of the students and their teachers?
Theme 2	**2. Curriculum and pedagogy: relating their lives (habitus 1) to the curriculum (field 2)** How are the phenomena/relationships (in Theme 1) reflected or developed in the conversations as factors in decolonising the curriculum and the associated pedagogy? (i) curriculum: how are the existing frameworks within which the colonisation, imperial and decolonisation elements appear in the history curriculum *experienced* by these students and *enacted* by their teachers? (ii) pedagogy: what pedagogical methods are *discussed* and which are seen *being most effective*?
Theme 3	**3. Understanding power relations: relating their understanding of power relations (habitus 2) to curriculum and society (field 3)** (i) To what extent is the personal also political in the perceptions of these students and their teachers? (related to everyday understandings of the power relations behind the workings of identity, plurality, diversity and inclusion) (ii) How do teachers and students work together to achieve agency and see themselves in the narrative?
Theme 4	**4. Citizenship, social justice and curriculum change: relating the students' and teachers' sense of justice and commitment to change (habitus 3) to curriculum and society (field 3)** How do citizenship dimensions related to reflections about justice, inequality and curriculum change emerge as observations, concerns or recommendations from the conversations (not just for BAME students but for all English or even all UK students)?

Endnotes

[1] Stephen Lawrence, aged 18, was murdered in a racially motivated attack in Eltham, SE London on 22 April 1993. His parents settled in Britain from Jamaica in the 1960s. Kelso Cochrane, aged 32, of Antiguan heritage, was murdered, also in stabbing attack, on 17 May 1959.

[2] The original ship, the *SS Empire Windrush* brought 500-plus postwar, much-needed migrant workers from the Caribbean to London in 1948. The 'Windrush Generation' is a name applied to these and subsequent migrants, but more recently, particularly in 2018, the scandalous treatment of later migrants from the Caribbean has been highlighted by *The Guardian*, and in particular in Amelia Gentleman's work (Gentleman, 2019).

[3] Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGMs) are customarily held in a Commonwealth capital city every two years, although because of Covid-19 restrictions the next one after London 2018 will be held in June 2021. They are consultative and policy-making gatherings to which representatives of all fifty-four Commonwealth jurisdictions are invited.

[4] Martin Spafford taught history for many years in secondary schools in East and West London and has previously taught in eSwatini, Rotherham and Egypt. He is an Honorary Fellow of both the Historical Association and the Schools History Project. He was a co-author of textbooks for GCSE courses on migration history.

Acknowledgements

About the Author

Robert Guyver was a primary teacher for 21 years, an advisory teacher, and a lecturer in initial teacher education in Plymouth. To contact the author please use the email address below.

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