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History departments at South African universities

This monitoring brief provides an overview of History Departments across South Africa at a particular point in time. The brief does not attempt to interrogate the information provided in any depth, nor to assess the extent to which departments at specific institutions have transformed or decolonised their curricula. It is purely a summary of the public information provided by these departments, compiled as a starting point for further analysis of curriculum transformation.

Recent calls for the ‘decolonisation’ of the university curriculum follow on from earlier calls for ‘transformation’ and ‘Africanisation’. This has led to widespread debate regarding what a ‘decolonised’ curriculum should entail, and how this is different to the curriculum changes which have been made by most (if not all) universities since 1994. In *Briefly Speaking 3* we explored the nature of these debates.

...a starting point for further analysis...

This monitoring brief provides an overview of History Departments across South Africa at a particular point in time in an attempt to understand the extent to which calls for Africanisation and/ or

decolonisation are reflected in the topics taught and in the staff composition of departments. The brief does not attempt to interrogate the information provided in any depth, nor to assess the extent to which departments at specific institutions have transformed or decolonised their curricula. It is purely a summary of the public information provided by these departments, compiled as a starting point for further analysis of curriculum transformation. The overview is based on the information provided on the universities’ webpages in August 2017 (or in handbooks referred to on the page connected with the Faculty, School or Department), and therefore may be outdated or incomplete.ⁱ Departments were given an opportunity to comment and provide additional or updated information. Updated staff details have been included as have minor changes to the course content.ⁱⁱ

This overview focuses on three main elements: first, how the Department defines or explains history on its introductory page; secondly, the modules offered; and finally, the staff complement and their research interests (either as provided on the page, or as understood from publications provided on the website). Only permanent staff are considered, therefore post-doctoral fellows, research associates, etc. are excluded. Where other interesting facts were noted, these are also mentioned.

Not all institutions offer history, or have specific departments devoted to history. For instance, while the universities of technology may have history-inspired modules for journalism diplomas and teaching diplomas or degrees, none of these institutions referred to a specific history department or module on their website. The same can be said for **Walter Sisulu University** and for the **University of Mpumalanga** (which offers a Degree in Development Studies) and for **Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University**, which offers programmes only in the health sciences.

New universities

An interesting place to start, is with **Sol Plaatje University (SPU)**, one of the two new universities. As this institution first admitted students in 2014, it clearly developed its curriculum while discussions around decolonisation were taking place, and with demands for transformation, Africanisation and for a context-relevant curriculum in mind.

The SPU does not have a webpage devoted to a separate history department. Rather, it offers three programmes in the School of Humanities, all with a possible history element. The first is a Bachelor of Arts, where history is an elective. The introductory page explains that the degree 'intends to develop skilled graduates who are able to engage critically with the world and apply disciplinary content to the resolution of problems'. An interesting aspect of this degree is the compulsory first-year module in Heritage Studies which aims 'to provide students with an interdisciplinary academic field that takes a critical look at the way we preserve, present, participate and interrogate heritage and the unofficial objects and symbols of heritage'.ⁱⁱⁱ

The second option is a Higher Certificate in Heritage Studies. The one-year course 'provides students

with a theoretical and practical grounding of knowledge and skills about the heritage sector' and the website suggests possible careers or progression to the BA and BEd degrees. The final option is the Bachelor of Education (BEd) with History or Social Sciences as area of specialisation.

The humanities rule book (available on the website) provides more information on the history options and on the university's understanding of history. In the opening paragraph, where the handbook explains how SPU is different from other institutions, it describes how 'our location in this region gives our students and staff unique opportunities for learning, research and community development'.^{iv} It goes on to explain that 'Kimberley and the Northern Cape host a remarkably rich archive of human and natural heritage ... both in formal collection and in informal communal and natural environments'. The School of Humanities offers two programmes – 'a one-year Higher Certificate in Heritage Studies, developed in consultation with ... disciplinary specialists in South Africa and abroad' and a three-year Bachelor of Arts focused around 'knowledge about the human experience with an informed and practical understanding of what that knowledge represents in contemporary society, and how it can best be managed for the future'.^v The degree focuses on core humanities subjects, including both history and heritage studies. The Certificate includes a course on the Prehistory and History of Southern Africa in the second semester.^{vi}

For the BA degree, history is an elective which can be selected as a major. The first year includes compulsory modules on Cultural Heritage and Society in South Africa.^{vii} The history courses at first-year level are: 'Introduction to History' and 'Twentieth Century South Africa and Africa up to the

Second World War'.^{viii} The second-year modules are: 'The World in Crisis' and 'South Africa and Africa after the Second World War'; and the third-year modules are: 'Introduction to Public History' and 'Survey of Contemporary South African and African Challenges'.^{ix}

'An Introduction to History' introduces students to university-level history and to related skills and concepts such as critical thinking and how to evaluate historical facts. These skills are applied to aspects of late-nineteenth century South African history, focused on the Northern Cape, and especially Kimberley. The course on twentieth century South Africa and Africa before World War II highlights the role of nationalism. In this context, students are exposed to various forms of imperialist and minority rule across the continent, and learn to 'evaluate and compare different forms of colonial rule and analyse the growing resistance towards it'.^x

'The World in Crisis' uses the different international ideologies of the twentieth century to develop 'critical thinking, objective reasoning and debating'. The courses considers the complex interplay of international politics and the 'severity of war'. The second semester course on South Africa and Africa follows on from the first year module, highlighting rapid change in the post-war period. The module introduces ideologies such as apartheid and Pan-Africanism, allowing students the opportunity to understand the complex environment of resistance and decolonisation.^{xi}

...complex issues which
currently face the
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The third year module on Public History provides 'an introductory overview to the public history field in its diverse venues and manifestations' and helps students to understand how professional historians think and do public history. This includes applying methodologies such as 'museum exhibits, site interpretations, historical societies, historic preservation, oral history and digital projects'. The final module on contemporary South Africa and Africa grapples with complex issues which currently face the country and continent. Academic lectures are supplemented by guest lectures, documentaries and films.^{xii}

The SPU history staff complement and profile are not featured on the website, and instead staff for the entire Faculty are listed in the handbook, without an indication of discipline or research specialisation. The staff complement is quite small, which can be expected given the fact that SPU is still a new university.

Historically-black universities

As a next step, it is useful to consider the type of courses on offer at the historically-black universities (which have not undergone a merger). This includes the universities of **Venda, Limpopo, Zululand, the Western Cape and Fort Hare**.

At the **University of Venda (UV)**, there is no individual history department, but the Department of Development Studies (located in the School of Human and Social Sciences) is a multi-disciplinary department, with political science, international relations, philosophy, history, religious studies and development studies. Students can enrol for a BA or BA Honours specialising in history. No detail is provided on the history courses on offer, and while staff members are named, their research interests and publications are not mentioned.^{xiii}

...play a leading role in redressing the past imbalances...

Aside from the teaching of history at UV, a history focus is evident in the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge Systems (no details on website except for the name of one staff member) and in the Indigenous music and oral history project. The website explains that:

With the institutionalization of racism and apartheid before the advent of the democratic South Africa of 1994, the dominant arts were those of the politically and economically dominant white race. The music of the indigenous black groups was seen as primitive, ungodly and devoid of artistic excellence. It was therefore not championed in public discourse (politically and academically). It was not perceived as a national asset and therefore could not be promoted through either education or formal training. It is to this end that the University of Venda was mandated to play a leading role in redressing the past imbalances in the arts and culture of the historically marginalised people of Limpopo through affirmation, promotion and development of their intangible cultural heritage.

The website explains further that the project aims to understand music through knowledge of history, culture, customs and traditions, and that oral history is used in this regard. The project focuses on four previously marginalised language groups (Xitsonga, Tshivenda, isiNdebele and Sesotho sa Leboa), and makes use of academics from various fields (oral history, anthropology, music and African Languages) in a multi-disciplinary and inter-

disciplinary team, which also includes the musicians themselves.

The project is run in partnership with the Department of National Arts and Culture, and aims to 'collect, document, preserve and promote the Indigenous Cultural Heritage of the previously marginalised people of the Limpopo Province'. Two staff members are mentioned on the website, which also details an implementation strategy. The project focuses on both the local context and history, and on interpreting and sharing this more broadly.

The **University of Limpopo's (UL)** School of Social Sciences includes five departments: Criminology and Criminal Justice, Cultural and Political Sciences, Psychology, Social Work, and Sociology and Anthropology. History and Folklore Studies falls within the Department of Cultural and Political Sciences. As there are no details on the history courses or on the specifics of the individual departments, it is best to consider the school as a whole. The School of Social Sciences 'aspires to be an innovative premier school for Afrocentric advancement of social and human development'. It highlights how its rural location places it strategically to 'ameliorate problems of poverty and under-development through the use of locally developed resources. The programmes delivered by the school have been crafted in response to the needs of the university's immediate environment as well as national imperatives'. Staff members are named on the website, but there are no details about their research interests or publications.

Details on the **University of Zululand (UZ)** History Department cannot be found on the website, but the page includes a link to a handbook with the necessary details. The university offers history from first year through to doctoral study. The first-year course in 'Theory and methods of history'

introduces students to writing history, issues of bias and critical reading, and historical methods.^{xiv} In the second-semester course on South African history, students are introduced to history dating back to the Stone Age, and to the arrival of blacks and whites, the colonial period, race and racism, and the Mfecane and Great Trek.

In second year, 'General topics related to 19th and early 20th century Europe' covers state formation in the nineteenth century, concepts like absolutism, nationalism and democracy, and the World Wars and their significance.^{xv} In the second semester, 'General topics related to 19th and early 20th century South Africa: The impact of mining' considers the 'impact of mining, industrialisation and urbanisation ... on the South African economy', the Anglo-Boer War and Union, early twentieth century history and the basis of a racially divided state, the World Wars, and the start of the freedom struggle.^{xvi}

The third year is divided into four modules. The first, 'Archival skills and introduction to cultural museum studies and Heritage Legislation' considers archival legislation and procedures, and how to make use of the archives. The second module 'The Zulu Monarchy and KZN leaders in Retrospect' considers interactions and racism from 1948, the Treason Trial, the ANC and PAC, South Africa post-1994 and specific leaders from KwaZulu-Natal.^{xvii} In 'Colonial and post-independent Africa' the Scramble for Africa is studied, as well as colonial administration and resistance to it, African nationalism after the Second World War, and independence in Africa and the Organisation for African Unity.^{xviii} The final module, 'Totalitarian regimes and the Nuclear Age' covers the Cold War, the fall of the USSR, Modern America and Civil Rights, and the United Nations.^{xix}

The department also offers Honours, Masters and Doctoral degrees.

At Honours level, there are two core modules. The first considers the practice of history, historical sources and South African historiography. It includes a visit to the archives.^{xx} The second considers the philosophy of history and different approaches to history writing, and general historiography from the Enlightenment to the present.^{xxi}

Optional paper 3 covers 'methodology of, and themes on the history of pre-literate societies in the history of Southern Africa', source material, and concepts of pre-colonial societies. Paper 4 considers 'Themes on the political, social and economic history of KwaZulu-Natal' since the eighteenth century. Paper 5, 'Themes on the history of contemporary South Africa since 1948', includes political and socio-economic development, the international context, and adaption to technologies. Paper 6 is focused on African history after 1945, including the liberation struggles, the OAU and influences from Europe, America and China on Africa. Paper 7 on Europe after 1945, considers the Cold War, co-operation in the European Union, the USSR in Eastern Europe, and the Bosnian crisis. Paper 8 highlights and assesses specific world leaders since 1945 including J.F. Dulles; Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai; Chiang Kai-shek; Stalin; Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Gorbachev, Yeltsin and Putin; and also covers key events such as the Korean and Vietnam wars and Cuban missile crisis and relations with Africa.^{xxii}

The staff in the department are listed, without research interests. They are Professor H.S. Simelane, and three lecturers – Dr. M.Z. Shamase, Dr S.H. Ntuli, and D.H.D. Ngobese.

...scholars who will be distinguishable by their specialist expertise...

The history department at the **University of Fort Hare (UFH)** emphasises the local context and resources in their vicinity. On their introduction page they refer to making use of the Liberation Archives, housed at the University, and to the University as 'home to many of the liberation heroes'. As such, the 'department's vision and aim is thus to produce history graduates and scholars who will be distinguishable by their specialist expertise in specific fields, and thus be able to disseminate general historical knowledge, and specifically, a total history of the Eastern Cape within the context of South African History'. At undergraduate level, the courses attempt to integrate South Africa's past with that of Africa and of the wider world – with courses focused on the formation of the modern world and society and on themes and factors which have influenced the current nature of South Africa and Africa. These courses start in the pre-colonial period and continue into the twentieth century. At Honours level, the courses cover the theory, philosophy and methodology of history, including historiography; the Eastern Cape in the 19th century, covering politics and society; African environmental history, considering the impact of politics, economics and technology on the environment; and Twentieth century African and World history, covering the end of colonial rule (post WWII) and the independence of Africa leading to the African Union. The University of Fort Hare also offers both a Masters and Doctoral degree in history, with topics selected in line with the research expertise of the academics.

The website explains that academics in the Department have varied research interests, with a focus on the local context (for instance research into traditional leadership studies in the context of Eastern Cape) and local resources (such as making use of the Liberation archive for research into the South African liberation struggle; and women in the struggle). There is also a focus on museums and heritage and on environmental history. The research interests of individual academics are not listed.^{xxiii}

The **University of the Western Cape (UWC)** history department prides itself on being 'at the forefront in teaching and research in visual, public and social history'. The courses taught are 'designed to provide students with critical insights around the writing and re-writing of history and textual analysis. Our courses are directed at transformation in society particularly in the education, land and heritage sectors'. The department has established an open-access academic journal (*Kronos: Southern African Histories*) with an international editorial team. The department focuses on both teaching and research, and has won the University's teaching award three times and the Art Faculty's award for collaborative teaching. The department makes use of innovative teaching methods including debates between lecturers and 'multimedia visual and performative presentations'.

Undergraduate courses focus on Africa (pre-colonial to post-independence). The first-year course 'discusses and debates changes that took place along the eastern and western coast of Africa between the eleventh and the nineteenth centuries. The central theme of the course is the production of history. It focuses on how historians collect evidence from various sources of knowledge, how they interpret and use such evidence to

produce history, and how these processes sometimes produce different or conflicting interpretations, opinions and arguments. The course is aimed at assisting the students identify and understand different interpretations of the same historical events, develop means to assess the value of conflicting interpretations and, most importantly, enable them structure their own historical argument.'

In second year, world history is explored through studying two themes, namely: 'the Atlantic slave trade and its abolition; and studies in imperialism in the modern era'. The course makes use of film and fiction alongside conventional history. Issues considered include 'the extent of cultural continuity between Africa and the New World; the authenticity of disputed slave narratives; the culture of the abolitionist movement in Britain and the United States; the concepts of collaboration and anti-colonial resistance in nationalist historiographies in Africa and India; and genocides associated with late imperialism'. There is also an aspect considering the nature of the relationships between Africa and the coloniser post-independence, and a focus on gender in African history and changing notions of masculinity and femininity in Africa.

In third year, the courses explore contemporary Africa. 'The first semester dwells on the history of Africa at large, from the Berlin conference to recent times, leading the students in a pan-African journey through the frictions of colonialism, the dilemmas of nationalism, the fortunes of socialism, civil conflict and popular cultures'. The second semester explores key themes in South African history such as segregation and apartheid; the role of race, class and gender in the shaping of society; resistance

histories; and the relationship between the past and the present.

The UWC history department offers Honours, Masters and Doctoral degrees. The honours course introduces students to researching and writing history, and 'focuses on the challenges of writing history in a post-apartheid South Africa'. During the Masters programme students are taught to consider sources critically, with core courses on methodology and historical writing. A focus of the Masters programme is to:

'demystify the conventional practice of History or historical production. We grapple with the dynamics of historical 'sources' and the institutions that house them, such as museums and archives. Those materials that historians cite as evidence or primary sources come in a variety of mediums. These include written documents in the archive, oral traditions and histories, visual representations such as photographs, and museum artifacts. All of these are put under scrutiny. The term 'primary sources' is in fact misleading because it suggests a pure origin, a fount of unproblematic information, and even truth. But each form of historical trace carries the mark of its maker, and offers us an interpretation rather than a fact. The construction of any single piece of evidence – out of which we reconstruct 'history' - also creates silences because of what it excludes. In the MA programme we repeatedly ask about those silences, because they tell us about power, inside and outside the African continent.'

The UWC history department also offers the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies in partnership with the Robben Island Museum. This is a broad, critical engagement with the field, which

includes theoretical aspects as well as an internship in a museum or heritage institution. Elective options include Oral history and heritage; Public History and Tourism; and Visual History.

The entries on academic staff on the UWC department's website are:

Professor Ciraj Rassool (who directs the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies) has experience in museums and archives, where he has acted as trustee, advisor and has served on Councils. His research focuses on 'public history, visual history and resistance historiography'.

Professor Leslie Witz (Head of Department) focuses on 'how different histories are created and represented in the public domain through memorials, museums and festivals and tourism' and led an NRF project on 'The Heritage Disciplines' which 'explored how the relationship between disciplinary knowledge and different publics was negotiated through investigating how academic disciplines were invoked, utilized and contested in the production, delimitation, dissemination and reception of heritage in post-apartheid South Africa'.

Professor Patricia Hayes (SARChi Chair in Visual History and Theory) researches political and documentary photography in southern Africa and is seconded to the UWC Centre for Humanities Research.

Professor Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie focuses on India-South Africa histories, and has researched Indian communities in Cape Town. Other areas of expertise include biography, forced removals and land restitution, South African cities and aspects of the liberation struggle.

Professor Andrew Bank's research is focused on South and southern Africa, considering slavery and racial ideology, San history and culture, and the history of social anthropology and anthropological photography.

Extraordinary (now retired) Associate Professor Susan Newton-King researched the economic and political history of the South African frontier, although her more recent interest lies in 'family, identity and social networks in Cape Town during the Dutch period'.

Associate Professor Paolo Israel researches Mozambique, and the intersection between popular culture and politics. More broadly, his interests 'include the historiography of Mozambique; African popular culture; the theory of history and the anthropology of belief'.

Dr Phindezwa Mnyaka's (Senior Lecturer) research focuses on photography and colonialism in South Africa, with a special interest in the Eastern Cape. She is also interested in theories of aesthetics and modes of history writing.

Ms. Nicky Rousseau's (Senior lecturer) 'research interests include histories of liberation, truth commissions and transitional justice, violence and human remains'. She was previously a researcher for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and formed part of the team which wrote the TRC report.

Dr Dave Scher (Senior lecturer) researches post-1948 South African political history, and has an interest in Jewish History.

Dr Koni Benson (lecturer) writes on gender, urban and public history. Her research is on interventions in histories of contested development and the mobilization, demobilization, and remobilization of

struggle history in southern Africa's past and present. Since 2006 she has been coproducing life histories of unfolding political struggles of collective resistance against displacement and for access to land and public services. She is interested in creative approaches to African history that link artists, activists, and archivists.

Mr Riedwaan Moosage's (lecturer) research focusses on questions of political violence, enforced disappearances, human remains, critical forensic practise and discourse in relation to 'notions of missing-ness'.

Ms Bianca van Laun (lecturer) researches the bureaucratic apparatus surrounding the application of the death penalty in South Africa, particularly during the 1960s.

Comprehensive universities

Comprehensive universities were developed through merging traditional universities with universities of technology. Comprehensive universities with history departments include the **University of Johannesburg (UJ)** and **Nelson Mandela University (NMU)**. The **University of South Africa** is also a comprehensive university, with a substantial history department, but the nature of its offering is different considering its distance mode.

...teaches students to
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The Department of Historical Studies at the **University of Johannesburg** consists of 'eight scholars whose research specialities are in various aspects and regions of South African history from

the early modern era through to the present'. The website explains that studying history 'enhances our understanding of how the world we live in has come to be, and our awareness of how societies and different cultures function and change over time'. Furthermore, it indicates that the study of history teaches students to read and write critically and to analyse texts and arguments. The history department was established as part of the Rand Afrikaanse Universiteit (RAU), but is undergoing 'a particularly exciting phase of reinvention' after being merged with the Vista University history department in 2005.

The undergraduate history programme begins with 'The Making of the Modern World', followed by 'Contemporary South Africa in Historical Perspective'. At second-year level, students start with a course on Africa (up to 1800), followed by themes on the history of the USA (from 1865 till the present). In third year, the courses are divided into quarters, and there are options for some quarters. The courses include 'Gender and Sexuality in southern Africa'; 'Atlantic Slavery'; 'History of the Black Press'; 'Postcolonial Africa'; 'Environmental History'; 'History of Marriage'; 'Global histories of consumerism'; and 'Drugs, medicine and addiction in historical perspective'. These courses also highlight some of the research interests of the academic staff in the department.

The Historical Studies Honours programme includes compulsory modules in methodology and historiography and a research paper. Elective modules can differ from year-to-year, and can include modules on African history (pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial history and historiography); the urban history of Africa and South Africa; South Asian history (precolonial, colonial and post-colonial); gender in Africa; family

and social history across the world; and a possible student-selected theme where the student completes research and reading on a topic of their choice under the supervision of one or more lecturers. The department also offers Masters and Doctoral degrees.

The academic staff and their research fields are:

Professor Louis Grundlingh who researches modern South African history. He focuses on the history of Johannesburg and urban history more broadly; the history of masculinity; the history of leisure and sport; and the history of war and society.

Professor Natasha Erlank's main research interest is the relationship between gender and African Christianity, within the colonial context. She also focuses on modern South Africa and public history and memory, including the history of Johannesburg, forced removals and urban history.

Associate Professor Thembisa Waetjen is particularly interested in issues of migration, citizenship, culture and gender, focused on twentieth century South Africa. She is currently working on the issue of health and colonial medicine, with a focus on drugs, medicine and addiction.

Associate Professor Gerald Groenewald (also the Head of the Department) focuses on colonial South African history, particularly of the Cape of Good Hope, including issues of slavery, society, gender, crime and punishment, and religion. He also interested in the history of the family; Afrikaner nationalism; and material culture.

Dr Midas Chawane (Senior lecturer) specialises in African oral and cultural history, as well as urban history and African diaspora (including the Atlantic

Slave Trade). He also focuses on identities, and has written on the Rastafari.

Dr Khumisho Moguerane (Senior lecturer) researches the British Empire in southern Africa (including Bechuanaland) focusing on how colonial rule was experienced and perceived. She pays specific attention to issues of nationalism, race and power.

Dr Nafisa Essop Sheik (Senior lecturer) researches modern South Africa (especially Colonial Natal) with a focus on gender, race, law and society. She is also interested in historiography and the philosophy of history.

Dr Stephen Sparks (Senior lecturer) researches modern South Africa with a focus on apartheid and Afrikaner nationalism, and aspects of urban history; industrialisation; and the history of science and technology.

Dr Juan Klee (lecturer) researches apartheid history, focusing on the National Party and the interplay between sports and politics. He is currently working on the history of the RAU.

At the **Nelson Mandela University**, history is a sub-unit of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and History. Currently (agreement ending in 2019) third-year Education students enrol for first-year history, making up at least half of the 250 to 300 students. In their feedback, the department indicated that: 'The history curriculum has transformed steadily over the years from its University of Port Elizabeth roots, and it will continue to transform further as we strengthened the South African and African history modules'.

At undergraduate level, the history of South Africa is covered over a period of three years. In first year, an overview is provided from the seventeenth to

late nineteenth centuries. In second year, the module on the political history of South Africa covers themes and trends from 1924 to 1976. In third year, two South African modules are offered, one dealing with post-apartheid South Africa and the other with resistance and transformation.

The second module on offer in first year provides a brief overview of world history from the Classical period up to the eighteenth century. In second year, two more modules are offered, both focused on Africa. The first is on modern African history and philosophy in the twentieth century, and the other covers the history of African human migration, including pre-modern migration, forced migration and social control, slavery, human trafficking, ethnic cleansing and genocide.

At third year level, two additional modules are offered. The one focuses on African history and globalization, including colonialism and Africa's response to it; decolonisation and the rise of African nationalism and Pan-Africanism; as well as African unity and globalisation. The other is the history of the Cold War, covering key themes post-1945 across the world.

At honours level, there are two compulsory courses, one on historiography and the philosophy of history and the other on research methods. Elective modules are offered on themes from twentieth century South African history; African history; and twentieth century world history. Students must select two modules and complete a research assignment.

Two-full time staff members are responsible for History within the department, namely Prof Mkhize and Dr Herbst.

Professor Nomalanga Mkhize's research focuses on land and agrarian questions, with a focus on

nineteenth century South Africa. She is also interested in issues of gender, language and youth subcultures.

Dr Robert Herbst (Senior Lecturer) is a specialist in the Rhemish Missionary Society.

The **University of South Africa** (UNISA) reflects on the history of the department on their introductory webpage, indicating that they have been 'teaching courses in African, European and World history since 1946'. The department has a 'special focus on South African history which reflects our grounding in a society which in recent years has experienced enormous social changes leading to the democratic elections of 1994 and subsequent constitutional change under the African National Congress.' While details on the courses of offer are not available on the website, the page indicates that the department offers courses on 'the historical forces of colonialism, apartheid and political liberation that have shaped our present democracy. Since we are part of the African continent and on account of our Dutch and British colonial past, we also offer courses that explore these connections'. Furthermore, the UNISA history department offers undergraduate modules on world history and African history, with degrees specialising in Global Studies, African Studies and interdisciplinary Historical Studies.

The department also offers Honours, Masters and Doctoral degrees. The website explains that 'Unisa historians have always focused very strongly on topics that are relevant in South African scholarship, especially in the fields of colonial history and the history of apartheid'. In addition, 'some students also explored the different ways in which South African history has become part of a wider network of global relations'. Despite this South African focus, the webpage also mentions the ability of academics

in the department to supervise themes in British history, German history and select themes from world history and intellectual history.

The Head of the History Department is Professor Russel Viljoen, who researches early and colonial societies in the Cape (including the Khoikhoi and colonial identities); medical history and the history of disease (especially smallpox); and Khoikhoi music and art. He is a NRF rated researcher (C2), and had been awarded a number of fellowships.

Professor Alex Mouton's research interests are in South African liberalism, and the Afrikaans press during the apartheid period. He specialises in the writing of South African political biographies. He is a NRF rated researcher (C3).

Professor Tilman Dederling focuses his research on the history of Namibia and South Africa (especially the League of Nations), although he is also interested in modern German history, world history and globalisation. He has focused in particular on the history of technology (history of air power) and the South African-German relations. He is a NRF rated researcher (B2) and Member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf).

Dr France Ntloedibe (Senior Lecturer) specialises in the study of African diaspora, slavery, the slave trade and slave culture. He has also worked more broadly on nineteenth century American history, particularly African American history, and on nineteenth and twentieth century African history. He is also interested in the history of religion. He has received a number of awards and grants.

Dr Suryakanthie Chetty (Senior Lecturer) researches issues of gender, war and identity, as well as the history of science (particularly Geology).

Mr Nicholas Southey (Senior Lecturer) focuses on historiography, with an interest in Cape history (particularly religion and society) and in the history of sexualities. He is also interested in the modern history of America.

Mr Wendell Moore (lecturer) is interested in issues of urban agriculture and urban history, with a focus on food security and livelihood strategies. He is also interested in the history of hemp, agricultural systems and decoloniality. Moore also researches Coloured identity and history, including township planning.

Ms Henriette Lubbe (lecturer) researches twentieth century South African history. She specialises in the teaching of history and professional development for teachers. She is also interested in participative community-engaged research, and voting behaviour.

Traditional universities: merged

Having considered the comprehensive universities, the discussion now turns to history departments in those traditional universities not yet discussed. For the purpose of this discussion, these will be divided into three categories: merged institutions where a previously-white institution has been merged with a previously-black institution (**UKZN and NWU**), historically advantaged, previously-white English institutions (**Wits, UCT and RU**) and historically advantaged, previously-white Afrikaans institutions (**UFS, UP and SUN**).^{xxiv}

...range of
sources...used to make
the courses relevant...

In January 2004 the historically-white, English language University of Natal, and the historically-Indian University of Durban-Westville were merged to form the **University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)**. The Historical Studies programme, which is part of the School of Social Sciences, offers history courses on both the Durban and Pietermaritzburg campuses. The website explains how history teaches 'skills for both retrieving and interpreting the past in order to better understand the key challenges of our own time', and how the programme covers major themes in both World and African history. In addition, the website emphasises how 'research and teaching interests among others include colonialism, post-colonialism, modernity, and globalization; the making and re-making of identities such as class, religion, gender, race, and sexuality; and visual representation and newly emerging electronic media, amongst other interests. A range of sources, oral, documentary, and visual, are used to make the courses relevant and meaningful, and to develop skills in documentary study and criticism'. Career options are suggested.

At first year level, the UKZN history programme is divided into two modules considering the modern world. The first, covers the period from about 900 to about 1750. It considers the period before European hegemony was established, and the various factors which brought people from across the globe into contact, including economic and political factors, as well as technological and cultural factors. The module also considers the experience of the colonised – Africa, Asian and American – and forms of contact and resistance. The second module focuses on the last 250 years and the concept of Empire. It covers the nature of various empires in the east and west over the last 1000 years, and focuses on the impact of more recent imperial

systems in establishing the foundations of the modern world, and the tensions and debates which characterise current society. American neo-colonialism is also explored. Forms of opposition and resistance are considered.

In second year, the issue of 'Law, Crime, and Society in History' is examined, considering how social context affects 'ideas about law, crime, property, freedom, power and rights'. Other issues explored include 'changing definitions of crime and punishment; criminalisation of the poor; the role of law in colonialism and capitalist development; crimes of modern states; how traumatic histories should be remembered and addressed'. The module interrogates historical cases, such as 'the death penalty, the Mau Mau in Kenya, apartheid and the TRC in South Africa, sati in India, as well as examples from the history of the United States and the Soviet Union' while also allowing students to explore current debates.

At third year level, there is a module exploring African History, focusing on women in colonial Africa. The course explores how women experienced and reacted to 'complex political, economic, and social forces of colonialism in their daily lives'. It challenges notions of homogeneity and examines the role of 'class, race and gender, ethnicity and notions of sexuality'. A related module 'examines the history of disease, health and healing in the context of changing economic, political and cultural relations in Africa'. The course considers differences between the colonial and post-colonial periods, and interrogates the meaning and understanding of 'health', 'healing' and 'disease'.

The module on the history of the USA from after World War II until the 1970s examines external factors affecting America and the impact of America's foreign policy, focusing on the Cold War

and American conflicts in this period. Internally, the transformation and rapid urbanisation of the country is studied, against the social context of continued tension based on, for instance, race, gender and sexuality. The module examines the Civil Rights Movement and other struggles.

At honours level there is a module on race and racism, which explores notions of race in an historical context. Various texts are consulted in order to examine different understandings and interpretations. A module on history and society examines the different ways in which the past is constructed. This historiographical course examines ways of writing history and remembering, highlighting the impact of political, economic and socio-cultural factors. A module on women in the twentieth century studies feminism and its different strands, taking political and cultural differences and similarities into account. The module on missions and churches focuses on historical methodology and the use of archival sources in writing history.

The academic staff in the department cover a range of research interests.

Professor Goolam Vahed received his PhD from Indiana University, Bloomington, USA. His research interests include identity formation, citizenship, ethnicity, migration and transnationalism among Indian South Africans and the role of sport and culture in South African society. He has published widely in peer-reviewed journals and his recent co-authored books include *Schooling Muslims in Natal: Identity, State and the Orient* Islamic Educational Institute and *The South African Gandhi. Stretcher-Bearer of Empire*.

Professor Kalpana Hiralal has carried out research on the Indian Diaspora, immigrant women, and women and politics in South Africa. She is

particularly interested in issues of gender, agency and identity in relation to the Indian and African diaspora and anti-apartheid struggle. She has been awarded grants to support her research and awards in recognition of it.

Dr Vanessa Noble (lecturer) researches the history of medicine, taking into account the social history of health, healing and diseases in Africa. Her particular interest is in 'biomedicine, especially the history of medical education and professionalization; missionary medicine; medical institutions; different categories of health care providers; the complexities of medical pluralism and brokerage; histories of scientific knowledge production and circulations, including transnationally; race, class and gender differentials in science and medicine; the links between politics, activism and medicine; and histories of public health and community-oriented primary health care in the region of southern Africa'. Issues of women and gender also form part of her research. She is a member of the UKZN Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives Advisory Committee.

Mr Mphumeleli Ngidi (lecturer) has completed his Master's degree on sport, particularly soccer, in a local community environment. His use of oral history has broadened his focus to consider issues of memory, identity formation, class and race in Durban and surrounding townships. He is currently completing his doctorate on forced removals from Cato Manor, and how these are remembered.

North-West University (NWU) was formed by merging a historically-white, Afrikaans university (Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education with campuses in Potchefstroom and from 1966 also in Vanderbijlpark), and a historically-black university (the University of North-West in Mahikeng) as well as the Sebokeng Campus (near

Vanderbijlpark) associated with the historically-black distance institution, Vista. The institutions merged on 1 January 2004, and the NWU continues as a multi-campus institution.

History is... ‘people-orientated’

History falls within the School of Social Sciences in the Faculty of Humanities. The website explains that ‘History deals with the acts, thoughts and emotions of people within a societal context’, and that History is the study of people’s actions which are of value to society, and as such is ‘people-orientated’. The study of History enables a better understanding of modern times.

Details on the different courses and modules offered at NWU are not provided on the website although it does indicate that students can continue to an Honours, Masters and PhD in history. Course details have been provided by the department and are included below.

At first year level, a module on South African History serves to cover a broad spectrum of South Africa’s major historical trends (from Mrs Ples to Mandela) and to explain how South Africa fits into broader patterns and processes of world history. Students are introduced to a variety of sources. In the World History module, students are introduced to events that have shaped world history from pre-historic times to the present, taking into consideration how man had used and abused the environment. Different approaches to world history are discussed. A third module introduces students to Heritage and Cultural Tourism.

In second year, a module on ‘Reflections on Africa (and South Africa)’ explores the development of

knowledge within African and South African political history; the roots of democracy with an emphasis on its visibility in Africa and South Africa; and key themes in pre-colonial, colonial and decolonised Africa ‘within a framework of political, socio-cultural and economic patterns of existence and processes’. In the module, regional and local histories are explored in order to raise an awareness of how local colonial heritage can be critically observed. Another module, ‘Analysis of Contemporary Historical Themes’, does not prescribe a clear theme, rather giving the lecturer scope for creativity. Currently the module focuses on gender history. A final module on ‘Heritage and Cultural Tourism – representations of South Africa’s past’ considers trends in the development of the South African tourism industry and critically considers techniques suited to analyse South Africa’s past.

In third year, ‘Historical Perspectives’ introduces students to the practice of history, perspectives used by historians, areas of specialisation, historical methods and historiography. In ‘Nature, Theory and Practice of History’ students learn about intellectual history, approaches to solving historiographical problems, and the use of relevant theory and methodology with the aim of mastering the most important steps in historical research. ‘Heritage and culture tourism in post-colonial South Africa’ focuses on knowledge of the communities and heritage resources associated with the history of South Africa, and on methods and techniques of historical research.

The department has explained that courses at postgraduate level are currently under revision, and the field of regional history is widely encouraged. At Honours level, nine modules are offered and at least five must be completed. Three modules are

compulsory – The method and theory of History; The writing of Historiography; and a research project. Optional modules includes a theme in South African history; a theme in African history; a theme in World history; Regional and local history in South Africa; Gender history in Africa, and Culture and heritage studies in global contexts.

The academic staff are divided across three campuses, with those on the Mafikeng and Vanderbijlpark campuses referred to as 'History', and those on the Potchefstroom campus as 'History and Ancient Culture'.

On the Mafikeng campus:

Extraordinary (now retired) Professor Bernard K. Mbenga's research focuses on the histories of the Batswana people and communities. His interests extend to missionaries in South Africa; the dikgotsi (Batswana chiefs); relations between the Tswana and the Voortrekkers; and the purchasing of land by Africans in the Transvaal.

Mr Emile Coetzee (Junior Lecturer) focuses his research on contemporary South Africa, considering politics, military history and crime and punishment. Coetzee has also completed a post-graduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies, and is interested in the opportunities for 'Dark Tourism' in South Africa.

On the Vanderbijlpark campus:

Professor Elize S van Eeden (subject chair for History and acting deputy director for the School of Social Sciences) researches regional economic history, with a focus on the 'Ecohealth & Wellbeing of Mining regions'. She is also interested in the concept of "Homeliness" in regional and local history studies and the practicalising of these in the History teaching practice – also from a decolonised

stance. She initiated annual conferences in both multidisciplinary regional history and the ecohealth and wellbeing aspects thereof.

Dr Claudia Gouws (Senior lecturer) researches environmental history and the history of cultural identity and diversity. She specialises in rock art and is a SASCH accredited Cultural Historian (GR 2).

Ms Charmaine Hlongwane (lecturer) is interested in social history in twentieth century South Africa. She researches gender history, childhood, and youth history.

Mr Lesiba Tumishang Leta (lecturer) is interested in South African History and Culture and Heritage Studies. So far his research has primarily focused on the socio-economic impact of forced removals on urban South Africa with specific focus on Sophiatown. He has robustly explored the importance of oral history in constructing and reconstructing the history of forced removals in Sophiatown in order to understand the ramifications of forced removals on the social landscape of modern urban South Africa. Current interests are sports history, transport, heritage studies, and the pedagogical and epistemological nature of History as a subject in secondary institutions of learning.

On the Potchefstroom campus:

Professor Kobus du Pisani researches South African political history, focusing on the period 1966 to 1978. He is also interested in environmental history, masculinity, and biography.

Associate Professor Gerhard Oosthuizen researches military history, focusing on the South African Border War (1966-1989). He is also interested in Namibian history, and the issue of land struggles in the North West Province.

Mr Charl Blignaut (lecturer) is interested in gender history and Afrikaner women's history. He is also interested more broadly in South African history in the twentieth century, and in the history of the Ossewa-Brandwag.

‘...to think independently, imaginatively and critically...’

Traditional universities: historically-English

The History department at **Rhodes University (RU)** explains that they have ‘abandoned old-fashioned approaches to History’ based on ‘rote-learn dry factual material’. Instead they ‘stimulate you to think independently, imaginatively and critically’. They explain further that history is not only about the past, but rather helps students to understand ‘the world, the continent and the country that you are living in now’. The history course at RU is designed in such a way that students not majoring in history can select to enrol for any module that interests them.

At first year level, there are two courses on world history, which include aspects of African and South African history. The first, ‘The Origins of the Modern World Crisis’, covers the period up to 1945. However, rather than a traditional survey course, it focuses on themes to help understand the contemporary world. Themes covered include ‘human evolution; the impact of farming; religion; patterns of food consumption; imperialism; militarism and warfare; nationalism; racism; capitalism; socialism’. The follow-on course, ‘The Modern World Crisis’, continues from 1945, and

covers ‘the total crisis affecting and threatening humans today’. The focus goes from the broad (like ecological issues affecting earth) to the local, and to possible futures and solutions. Some of the themes covered are ‘the impact of technologies; the growing power of corporations; the emergence of an unofficial and unelected global government of the rich; moral degeneracy in politics, financial institutions and every day life; alienation and narcissism’.

In second year, the first module considers how ‘certain key events of the 20th Century have been represented and how they have come to be remembered’. The course tries to understand how representations shape memory, and how the public engages with memorials, museums etc. The course makes use of representations of key events (like the World Wars and Russian Revolutions) in fiction and non-fiction writing, films, music, cartoons etc. The second module, focused on southern African history, is a thematic study. Some of the key themes explored include slavery in the Cape, land dispossession and economic inequality, conflicts in the nineteenth century, apartheid and the liberation struggle, and post-apartheid South Africa.

In third year, eight modules are offered and students must complete four.

The first is a ‘History of Modern South Asia’, focusing on the ‘social, cultural and political impact of colonialism on the sub-continent’. The course also considers the post-independence period, and the partition of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

An ‘Introduction to Public History’ exposes students to the ‘practice of making historical information accessible to the public. In so doing, it provides a bridge between the academic pursuit of fresh historical interpretation and the ways in which this

knowledge can be shared with the wider public'. The course explores historical sites outside the university, and also makes use of various methodologies such as archives, oral history and museology.

Students can select to complete a course on either 'The Making of Modern South Africa' or 'South African Environmental History'. The first provides an overview of the twentieth century, considering political, social and economic events that shaped modern South Africa. The second, examines various themes, and the lessons learnt, including 'indigenous ecological knowledge and practice; the impact of colonialism and settler agriculture and pastoralism; the exploitation of wildlife resources; environmental degradation; the rise of conservationism and the move from protectionism to contractual parks'.

The fifth course deals with 'Africa in Crisis', considering economic concerns (structural adjustment, the IMF, World Bank etc.); political issues ('kleptocracy and the criminalisation of the state', genocide, civil war etc.); social issues (famine, demographics, gender, etc.); and environmental challenges (global warming etc.).

The sixth course, 'Contested Pasts: History and Memory', considers the role of memory in society. Some of the debates include who decides what should be remembered and the role of the state and other institutions in shaping collective memory. The course considers memory by interrogating controversial issues in South Africa and other regions.

The final term offers modules on Zimbabwean history and on gender in southern Africa. The first considers key themes in Zimbabwean history, such as 'land and agrarian politics; urban history and

society; information and propaganda; labour and politics; violence, ethnicity, nationalism, and current topical issues'. More broadly, the course interrogates problems of governance in Africa. The course on gender provides a 'broad overview of the historical changes in the status and ideologies defining gender roles in South African society'. The module stretches from pre-industrial society to the present, and considers how ideologies are enforced and resisted.

At Honours level, students are required to complete three modules and an extended essay. The courses on offer are:

Historiography (compulsory), which examines approaches to writing history, focusing on recent times.

African Intellectuals, which engages with different source types (dating from the pre-colonial period until the present) to 'trace the broad arc of the development of African intellectuality'. The course examines issues such as the nature of intellectuality, and the role of literary and oral culture.

Themes in Environmental Justice explores movements in different parts of the world, and their successes and failures. The 'course arises from the conviction that the extent of the world environmental crisis requires all of us to actively contribute towards replenishing our environment, rather than merely seeking solutions towards 'sustainable development'. It rests on the premise that existing definitions of environmental justice and sustainable development are flawed' and alternative definitions are sought.

The inter-disciplinary course on Cold War Studies examines the origins, legacy and significance of the Cold War, and the Cold War in different regions, including southern Africa.

Oral Studies Methodology 'introduces students to a range of issues and practical experience in the art of generating social data from oral sources'. Uses for oral evidence are explored.

'Themes in Land and Agrarian History' examines land and land ownership with an historical point of view, focusing on South Africa and dispossession. The course considers the changing nature of access to and ownership of land, and the effect on society, the economy and social structure.

The Department also offers Masters and Doctoral degrees, where a research project should be selected in line with the research areas of the various supervisors.

The Head of Department is Professor Gary Baines, and his research is centred on South African culture, with a focus on film, literature and music. He has written extensively on the history of Port Elizabeth, and has explored public history and memory. More recently, he has researched the South African Border War, its representation and how it is remembered.

Associate Professor Julia Wells has an established research focus on black women and resistance in South Africa, which includes studies on gender. She is involved with a project on Developmental History, using arts and history for economic development, and is interested in oral history and public history. She has also explored traditional leadership.

Associate Professor Enocent Msindo researches African social and political history. Some of the issues he has focused on include ethnicity, nationalism, and chieftaincy, and on marginalisation in precolonial, colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe. Other research interests include media history, propaganda and information policy in Africa, and how this relates globally.

Dr Alan Kirkaldy (Senior lecturer) focuses on environmental history and environmental justice. Other research interests include mission history in South Africa, and the issue of homophobia (focused on Rhodes University).

Dr Vashna Jagarnath's (lecturer) research focuses on aspects of the Indian community in South Africa. Other research interests include the history of South Asia and African intellectuality.

Theresa Edlmann (Director of the Legacies of Apartheid Wars Project) focuses her research on conscription and the apartheid-era South African Defence Force, including psychosocial legacies. Her interest extends to peace activism, peace-building and conflict transformation. The Legacies of Apartheid Wars Project (established at RU in 2011) 'is a research-based initiative, with the aim of interrogating and responding to the contrasting phenomena of both pervading silences and adversarial public debate about the current implications of apartheid era conflicts. Its aim is to provide a cross-disciplinary platform for a variety of (often marginalised) experiences and voices to be acknowledged, engaged with and documented'. RU acts as a hub to co-ordinate research and documentation.

The **University of Cape Town (UCT)** history department is the oldest university history department in sub-Saharan Africa. The department offers majors in both history and economic history, but these cannot be combined. UCT's feedback indicated that their curriculum has been updated for 2018, but their curriculum as at the time of data collection is retained in this discussion in keeping with the 'snapshot' taken. ^{xxv}

At first-year level, two courses are offered, and both are offered in two versions, one offering additional

tutoring and writing support for students on the extended programme. The website indicates that these courses are only offered from 2015, suggesting revision of the courses at that time. The first is 'Worlds in contact', which 'examines the characteristics of, and the contacts between, the divergent societies of the world between the early centuries of the Common Era and the onset of global imperialism in the 19th century', including 'political, economic, social, and cultural developments in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Pacific and the Americas and the nature of the encounters between societies in these regions'. During the module, students make use of various sources including maps, travel accounts, music and film. The second is 'Worlds in collision', which considers conflicts in the last two centuries, and their political, economic, social and cultural impact. The conflicts covered include 'European, settler and anti-colonial nationalisms, war, revolution and imperialism with a case study of the First World War and its impact, urbanization and the technological, social and cultural transformations that accompanied it, the collapse of the Western European empires and of the Soviet Union, and the context and consequences of 9/11'. A variety of sources are used, and the way events are remembered is considered.

The second year course, 'Breaking the Boundaries: Studies in Transnational Histories' was no longer offered after 2015, and was replaced by 'Empires and Modernities' (offered in two versions, one with additional support) and 'Conflict and Conquest: South Africa to 1900'. In the second semester, two courses were no longer offered after 2015 – 'The Holocaust' and 'Origins of the Contemporary World'. There is no change in terms of 'Themes in African History', while 'Subjects to Citizens?: South Africa since 1900' was offered from 2015 and 'Africa

in Question: Ancient & Pre-colonial Africa - Between the Past & Present' from 2016. In economic history, there are no changes, with 'Twentieth Century Industrialisation' offered in the first semester and 'Approaches to the Economic History of Africa' in the second.

Only the contents of the courses offered after 2015 will be outlined below.

Empires and Modernities: builds on the first-year courses on World History, introducing key concepts in modern history, such as 'reason, science, progress, market, community, democracy, revolution, public, circulation and culture'. Themes focus on 'the practice and experience of empire in Africa and the Global South. The key goal of the course is to provide students with the understanding that these concepts are open to contending interpretations and therefore must always be situated in their historical contexts as they are often used differently across contexts.'

Conflict and Conquest: South Africa to 1900: covers key themes in southern African history including the impact of colonisation and topics such as 'warfare and state formation amongst African societies; a consideration of the dynamics of early Dutch and British colonial society; slavery and other forms of unfree labour; frontier violence and group formation; land conquest and dispossession; imperialism and resistance; the mineral revolution and its transformation of the social, political and economic life of South Africans'.

Themes in African History: 'examines key political, economic, social, cultural, demographic, and environmental transformations that mark African history between c.1500 and 1960'. The topic is very broad, and for this reason specific themes are selected to provide 'insights into the complex

African pasts and in particular transcend the South African-African and North African-sub-Saharan divide’.

Subjects to Citizens?: South Africa since 1900: ‘consciously seeks new ways of thinking and re-imagining twentieth century South African history by locating it in African and global contexts’, focusing on ‘race, culture, nation, economy, state and citizen’.

Africa in Question: Ancient & Pre-colonial Africa - Between the Past & Present: ‘What is Africa and what might its ancient and pre-colonial pasts tell us about present African realities? Despite the passage of time, some stubborn Eurocentric myths about Africa as an "Other," pathological, dominated by unchanging "tribal" traditions and customs, isolated from world development and without or beyond history persist. In short, a "dark continent." How do we challenge these imaginations and representations without merely finding European equivalents and glorious histories of kings and queens, civilization and states while the meaning of history remains unquestioned?’ The course considers the emergence of African societies, making use of African historiographies and various other sources, and considers human origins, interactions, Ancient Egypt and Nubia, social and state organisation etc. ‘The course aims to equip students with a critical appreciation of Africa’s complex pasts that go well beyond the so-called truths of colonial historiography.’

Twentieth Century Industrialisation: explores industrialisation in the twentieth century in different parts of the world, with particular attention on the state’s role in economic and social development and to industrialisation’s impact on modern war.

Approaches to the Economic History of Africa: ‘explores debates and approaches to the study of economic history in Africa, placing South Africa’s economic history within the context of the continent as a whole. It introduces new perspectives on African economic and social history developed in the global south’. Important questions are interrogated such as ‘why countries which are resource rich have not been able to use these resources to improve living standards and encourage broad-based economic development’; the role of international business and the changing place of Africa in the global economy.

In third year, history students follow a full year course on ‘Historical Approaches’ which explores historical methods and concepts, including historiography, primary research and history writing. A course in ‘Medicine in the Making of Modern South Africa’ was not offered after 2015. Semester courses on offer are ‘Film and History’, with no course outline provided online, and the courses described below.

‘...racism, colonialism and nationalism in the making of African genocides’

Genocide: African Experiences: explores the ‘roles of racism, colonialism and nationalism in the making of African genocides’. The module covers case studies including the destruction of the indigenous peoples of the Canary Islands, the San of the Cape, the Herero of Namibia and the Rwandan Genocide.

Memory, Identity and History: considers how ‘people remember, forget and silence their past’ in

constructing their identities. 'South African and international historical literature will be used to develop comparative case studies on trauma and memory in the post-authoritarian countries such as South Africa, Rwanda and post-war Germany. A central theme linking these diverse case studies is the impact of traumatic experiences on the making of life, community and national histories, and the significance of reconciliatory processes such as the TRC'.

Minorities in the Modern World: explores 'the often troubled, sometimes torturous, and occasionally extraordinary experience of ethnic and religious minorities in South Africa over the past 200 years'. Different immigrant communities are considered, as well as their 'cultural baggage' and interactions. The course highlights questions of 'identity', 'homeland' and 'diaspora'.

In Economic History, students follow the same year-course on methods and concepts, and complete a research paper. Aside from this, the only first semester course is 'Economies of Feasts and Famine' which 'is concerned with famines, approaches to hunger, poverty and inequality, and the institutions that societies establish to remedy these maladies' considering 'which developmental theories and economic policies have been applied in specific contexts and of the institutional arrangements through which these practices have been exercised'.

The UCT Historical Studies department offers Honours, Masters and Doctoral degrees. The website highlights the how the department 'systematically trains graduate students in the art of writing empirically solid, conceptually alive and socially relevant histories through a diverse but balanced platter of coursework, a series of lively seminars, workshops, conferences, and colloquia,

and intimate and meticulous supervision of primary research'. Despite a focus on South African history in the past, the department has had an increase in studies on other parts of Africa and the wider world. As such, they encourage studies 'with a comparative or transnational perspective'.

At honours level, courses include a compulsory course on methods and approaches to history writing, as well as courses on Historiography; Pre-industrial Western Cape society; African environmental history; Oral history; Economic history debates; South African economic history; Racism, colonialism and genocide; Everyday history; Indian Ocean history; South African rural history; as well as a possible additional topic by a visiting specialist.

Academic staff in the department are:

Professor Nigel Penn has researched the Khoisan societies of southern Africa and colonial society more broadly. 'He is interested in using the techniques of microhistory and cultural history to illuminate the contacts that occurred between different societies and individuals in the colonial context of southern Africa and Australia'. He is a C1 NRF rated researcher.

Associate Professor Mohamed Adhikari focuses on coloured identity and politics in South Africa. More recently, he has begun research on genocide, with a focus on settler colonialism and genocide.

Associate Professor Sean Field works in the field of oral history, and is also interested in public history. His research focus is on forced removals and apartheid displacements, and the communities involved. He is also interested in memory and violence.

Associate Professor Shamil Jeppie researches the social history of Cape Town and Durban, with an interest in the Muslim communities. His other research focus is Timbuktu, and he leads The Tombouctou Manuscripts Project. He is interested in the development of the humanities and historical studies in Africa and the Global South.

Associate Professor Adam Mendelsohn focuses on modern Jewish history. Part of his research considers the Anglophone Jewish diaspora, and how they adapted to their host societies, and the connections they maintained. Another aspect of his research is about the Jewish community and race in apartheid South Africa and in America during the Civil Rights era.

Associate Professor Lance van Sittert specialises in (South) African environmental history. 'His research is informed by a formative training in Marxist social history and concerned to trace African environments and their constitutive elements as shifting terrains of social construction and contestation over time.' He is particularly interested in interdisciplinary work with the natural sciences; environmental justice, and indigenous environmental knowledge. He has a C1 NRF rating.

Dr Bodhisattva Kar's research interests include 'histories of development and disciplines; primitivism; nineteenth and early twentieth-century history of South and South East Asia; connected and comparative histories of frontiers; nationalist formations; and joint-stock companies'. He aims to bring together cultural and economic histories.

Dr Mandisa Mbali researches health policy and activism, both in South Africa and transnationally. Her research has focused on AIDS policies and activism, also considering broader issues of 'health,

gender and sexuality and the politics of race and ethics in international health'.

Dr Maanda Mulaudzi researches African and agrarian history, focusing on social aspects and 'ongoing encounters between African societies and European colonial history'. He focuses on the uneven incorporation of rural societies into the capitalist world.

Dr Anandaroop Sen's 'research interests include legal history; histories of violence, histories of capital and discourses of primitivism. He is keen on linking colonial legal histories, practices and discourses of the exceptional and emergency with the emergence of different techniques and regimes of colonial violence.' He has researched colonial law and violence in the eastern frontiers of British India.

Ms Camalita Naicker researches issues of land, labour, trade unions and migration in South Africa. Recent research considers the Marikana Massacre and land occupations. She considers ways of using political practice to organise and offer resistance.

'... focus on the social history of Africa and her peoples'

The History department at the **University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)** explains on its website that it has a 'long and distinguished history', both in terms of the academics who have led and taught in the department, and in terms of their past students. The department has 'developed a focus on the social history of Africa and her peoples'. The site explains that history not only helps us to understand how we got here, but also 'how we now operate and how we might operate in the future'. A section on the website, 'Why do history', explains some of the

benefits in studying history and provides quotes from some former students. It then cites a number of academics, politicians, thinkers and the like to highlight the value of history. The website also provides an extensive list of career options and explains that history 'offers training in assessing evidence, in writing accurately and economically, in constructing an argument and in approaching a subject from one's own angle'.

The Wits history department offers courses from undergraduate level through to doctoral degrees. Furthermore, the university has an NRF Chair in Local Histories, Present Realities (under Professor Phil Bonner and Dr. Noor Nieftagodien) and the History Workshop. The History Workshop was founded in 1977, and is an academic, interdisciplinary (mainly social sciences) research and writing group, focused on the social and popular history of South Africa. In the 1990s, it has to reconsider its role and focus as the political order changed, bringing a greater focus to public history and community-driven projects. The website explains that one of the concerns when the History Workshop was established was the need for research on the people and communities neglected due to 'apartheid and colonial scholarship' which focused on the 'story of white progress'. Another key focus was to open up history to those who were being written about. The use of oral history has been important for the History Workshop.

The website explains the structure of lectures and tutorials, the requirements and pass marks, lecturer consultation, departmental rules and other administrative issues. There is also a section explaining how to write and present essays (including sections on style, sources and plagiarism), how to assess contradictory interpretations, and

other helpful information for students. There is no information on courses and their contents.

The website explains that most staff members are 'experts in their own fields; they publish in international journals, give papers at conferences both in South Africa and overseas, and have more than a purely local reputation'. The staff section gives the names of those in the Department, with details on some. Those in the NRF Chair and History Workshop are listed separately, with no details on research interests, and for this reason they are not included in the discussion on staff below. The following staff are listed, but with no details on their research interests: Professor Peter Delius (Emeritus Professor); Associate Professor Sekibakiba Lekgoathi; Dr Andrew Macdonald (lecturer); and Dr Prinisha Badassy (Lecturer)

Professor Clive Glaser researches South African history in the twentieth century, with a focus on issues of youth culture and politics and crime. He is also interested in migration in South Africa, and the making of modern South Africa.

Associate Professor Mucha Musemwa (Head of School) focuses his research on Sub-Saharan Africa and the environmental history of Africa. He has completed research on water in Zimbabwe (during the colonial and postcolonial periods) and on contestation over resources. He is a journal editor, and Vice-President of the Southern African Historical Society.

Dr Maria Suriano (Senior lecturer) is interested in the 'social, cultural and intellectual history of Africa', including youth and popular culture, leisure and urban studies, and gender. Her focus area is East Africa, where she has researched music, cultural connections with the Indian Ocean region and 'the Swahili press and debates on cultural issues

conducted by African intellectuals'. She has also researched the interactions between Tanzanians and the ANC/MK in exile there.

Traditional universities: historically-Afrikaans

The **University of Pretoria** has a Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, which offers both history and heritage and cultural tourism at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, as well as museum studies at post-graduate level. Only the history courses will be discussed below.

The department was started in 1908 as one of the first departments of the then (English-medium) Transvaal University College. It was only in the 1930s, with the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, that the university's official medium of instruction was changed to Afrikaans (although according to the official University language policy, students could complete assignments and exams in either Afrikaans or English). In the 1990s, English was again introduced as a teaching medium, making UP the first, and for a period the only, bilingual university in South Africa. From 2019 Afrikaans will no longer be used as a medium of instruction at the institution.

Over the years the department has changed from the Department of History, to the Department of History and Cultural History in 1988, and then to the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies at the end of 2001. The website says the aim of the department is 'the education and training of students with the general aim of academic growth, and the ultimate development of historians, museologists and specialists in the field of heritage and cultural tourism, as well as professional training for a variety of other professions'.

The department is also involved in a Tourism and Research Skills Development Project with the National Department of Tourism. 'This collaborative

research sets out to create an understanding of cross-border tourism and guiding in southern Africa with a view to make recommendations on a harmonised regulatory and training framework for cross border guiding in southern Africa'. The project has provided opportunities for students to gain experience in the tourism industry and conduct research and has also provided opportunities for employment and bursaries for further study.

The first year history course starts with a survey covering 'The making of the Modern World', which includes themes from the history of Asia, Africa, the Americas and Europe, and their various contributions to the Modern World. In the second semester 'Africa and South Africa' provides a survey of African and South African societies from the earliest times till the present, focusing on significant themes and events.

In second year, 'Themes from African history' covers various themes through the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. Social, political and economic events which have shaped Africa are discussed. In the second semester, the 'Rise and fall of segregation and apartheid' outlines the theoretical foundations of segregation and apartheid, their entrenchment in society, and resistance to these policies leading to the end of apartheid. The social, cultural and economic effects of apartheid are considered.

'Historical trends in the modern world' is intended to help students understand historical trends in the modern world by introducing different types of history (intellectual, environmental and gender) and by reflecting on the nature of history itself, to enable students to successfully analyse the diversity of these historical trends in the modern world. In the second semester of the third year, 'Globalisation, diversity and change' discusses

theories of change and the impact of globalisation on the economy, the nation-state, nationalism, ethnicity and culture.

At Honours level, a compulsory historiography and philosophy of history module is provided, which provides a survey of the major traditions of historiography (Western, Chinese and Islamic), together with the so-called 'minor' traditions, with an emphasis on African historiography. The second segment of the module provides an overview of the development of South African historiography with an emphasis on competing historical narratives through time. The compulsory Theory and methodology course introduces students to historical research methods and sources. A research paper, on a topic selected by the student, is also compulsory.

Elective modules are offered on a theme from South African history, World history and South African Socio-cultural history. The module on African history considers the African experience from the period of European colonisation through to the post-colonial period, highlighting factors that have shaped the continent, and introducing students to historiographical approaches.

The UP history department's staff complement is:

Professor Alois Mlambo (now Emeritus Professor) researches the history of Zimbabwe, and southern Africa more broadly. His particular interests are in higher education, student protests, and the social sciences. He is also interested in land and immigration, and in civil aviation and manufacturing. He has received awards to support his work, and is the founder of a southern African university partnership to promote history.

Professor Karen Harris (Head of Department and also Director of the University of Pretoria Archives)

focuses on overseas Chinese studies, with a particular focus on South Africa. Her interest is in the social and labour history of the Chinese in South Africa, dating from the Dutch colonial period through to the twentieth century. Another research interest is cross-border tourism in southern Africa, and the emerging film tourism genre. Among other positions, she is Chairperson of the Historical Association of South Africa (HASA) and on the editorial board of various journals.

Dr Thula Simpson (Senior Lecturer) researches the history of the ANC, with a focus on Umkhonto we Sizwe and the armed struggle. He is also interested in the ANC's interaction with protest movements inside South Africa during the apartheid period. Other research interests include South African historiography and historians, and African revolutionaries. He is the editor of a journal, and has received grants to support his research.

Dr Gairoonisa Paleker (Senior lecturer) researches film history in South Africa, focusing on the current 'drive to revision particular aspects of this history'. She is also interested in the history of Jazz in Pretoria, and in the 'social cultural history of the railways in South Africa'.

Dr Ian Macqueen (lecturer) researches both South African and Global history. His interests include South African intellectual history (with an emphasis on the history of Black Consciousness), the history of progressive movements in the 1970s, and the history of Christianity in South Africa.

Dr Glen Ncube (lecturer) researches 'Medical humanities with a special focus on medicine in colonial Zimbabwe'.

Mrs Karina Sevenhuysen (lecturer) researches twentieth century South African history, with a focus on urbanisation, housing and the creation of

black townships, and the ideologies and philosophies that shaped them. She is also interested in South African cultural history.

Ms Charlene Herselman (lecturer) researches tourism, with a focus on literary tourism. She is also interested in film tourism and the history of film, as well as cross-border tourism.

The **University of the Free State's (UFS)** Department of History is one of the university's oldest departments, established in 1905. The departmental website provides some of the history of the department, and mentions some of its previous academics. The department offers history up to doctoral level. The University of the Free State's Department of History is split between two campuses, with Dr Jared McDonald and Mr Wouter de Wet working on the University's QwaQwa Campus, and the other five staff members working on the University's Bloemfontein Campus.

In first year, the 'Introduction to the twentieth-century history of South Africa and Africa' focuses on colonial experiences and changes on the continent. In the second semester, 'Twentieth-century world history' introduces students to world history in the twentieth century, with a focus on globalisation, with reference to South Africa and Africa.

In second year, 'The rise of nationalism in South Africa and Africa and the resistance to it' considers apartheid and the struggle against it, as well as national struggles for independence in other parts of Africa. In 'Twentieth-century global clashes' the World Wars and Cold War are covered, highlighting their consequences and the position of South Africa and Africa during these conflicts.

'En route to the new South Africa and the African Renaissance, c. 1976-2000: a historical perspective'

covers the period of African independence and the final struggle to end apartheid in South Africa. This third year course focuses on transition. In the second semester, 'How to make history' introduces final year students to historical methods (including oral history) and sources (including films, books, archives and website), and to historiography.

In Honours, students must complete the module on 'Subject theory, research methodology and modern historiography' which explores 'History as a scientific discipline', and how it differs from other disciplines; historical methodology such as critically assessing various sources; and schools of history thought. They must also prepare an independent research report on a topic of their choice.

'Terror and autocracy in historical perspective', is an elective module which focuses on the twentieth century and issues of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Another elective is 'Human rights violations, truth and justice in historical perspective', which highlights transitional justice and options nations face after human rights violations, such as truth commissions, prosecutions and pardons. The issue of accountability is debated.

At Master's level, students can complete a dissertation or coursework with a mini dissertation. The structured programme includes modules on 'Research methodology and related matters' and various South African modules: one covering the period 1899 to 1939 (including the Anglo-Boer War and its aftermath, the union of South Africa and the formation of the ANC) another on the period 1939 to 1961 (covering South Africa in the Second World War, and the introduction to apartheid and early resistance) another on the period 1961 to 1980 (including the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe, isolation of South Africa, resistance and repression, homeland formation, the rise of Black

Consciousness and independent trade unions, and the Soweto uprising) and one on the period after 1980 (covering the turbulent 1980s, the negotiations and the first democratic election).

The staff in the UFS history department are:

Professor A Wessels (Head of Department) researches twentieth-century South African military history. He is also interested in aspects of South African cultural history.

Dr MM Oelofse (Senior lecturer) researches oral history, human rights and truth commissions. She is interested in the 'hidden voices' and 'untold stories' of ordinary people. She also focuses on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Dr JA Stemmet (Senior lecturer) is interested in South African political history, especially the period after 1970 and the disintegration of apartheid. He is also interested in the South African film industry and in the media, censorship and freedom of speech.

Dr CM Twala (Senior lecturer) researches the history of the liberation movements, with a focus on the ANC. He is also interested in cultural and oral history. He is on the editorial board of a journal and other boards, and has received awards and grants to support his research.

Dr Jared McDonald's (Senior lecturer) research interests include the Cape colony and colonialism, 'Khoesan loyalism, indigenous responses to British colonialism in southern Africa, and the work of the London Missionary Society in the region'. He is also interested in childhood, including that of the Khoesan, and children as victims of genocide; in the pedagogy of history; and in nineteenth century explorers. He is a journal editor.

Mr Buti Kompfi (lecturer) researches traditional leadership and the political and liberation history of South Africa and Africa. He is also interested in cultural history, oral history and globalisation.

Mr Wouter de Wet's (lecturer) main field of research is the history of South African sport.

...central thrust is to explain change over time...

The **University of Stellenbosch's (SU)** Department of History dates back to 1904. The Department's webpage explains that 'History is a subject of many dimensions, but its central thrust is to explain change over time. How we deal with change, in our personal life or in wider society, depends on how well we are informed. This department aims to provide students with the necessary intellectual skills to understand processes of change and historical debate'. The department offers courses from undergraduate to Doctoral level.

In first year, an 'Introduction to the main global patterns and developments in history' covers concepts such as nomadic societies; the agrarian revolution; the emergence of complex societies; modernity; the industrial revolution and the modern globalised world. The second semester provides an introduction to South African History, starting with the settlement of different groups in South Africa; moving to clashes and migrations in the nineteenth century and the development of mining; and ending with apartheid's rise and fall, Afrikaner and black nationalism and South Africa and the World.

The second year starts with a module on the making of Western history, which covers key themes such

as state formation and the modern state, the Renaissance and revolutions, as well as discussions on wealth and poverty, socialism, capitalism and communism and changing attitudes. The Second semester on 'Africa and South Africa: Colonisation and the Rearrangement of Societies' considers the nineteenth century and the 'political, cultural and economic impact of the colonisation', it focuses on South Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, considering the Cape, the contested interior and the mineral revolution.

In third year, 'Twentieth Century History: A Global Perspective' covers themes from social, political and environmental history including demographic and political shifts; issues of gender, race and class; changes in civil society; and aspects of history writing. The second semester considers South Africa in the same century, covering the Anglo-Boer War; wealth and poverty; Afrikaner nationalism; apartheid; black political organisation; women and change; and American cultural influences. There is also a course on 'Metascience' which considers the philosophy of history, history sources and historiography, public history, heritage and commemoration.

At Honours level, 'The focus is on the theoretical aspects of History as a scholarly discipline and on selected themes from International, African and South African History. Theoretical History consists of three compulsory components and in the case of themes from South African History a choice of two components from a list of options'. A mini-thesis is also required.

The staff in the department are:

Dr Anton Ehlers (Departmental Chairperson) researches various themes in twentieth century South Africa, with an interest in economic

development and entrepreneurship, Afrikaner nationalism and symbolism, and poverty and poverty alleviation strategies.

Distinguished Professor Prof Bill Nasson researches twentieth century South African history, with a military and social focus. His interests include the Anglo-Boer War, World War I, empire and education.

Professor Albert Grundlingh focuses on South African history in the early twentieth century, and issues related to Afrikaner nationalism, memory, war, education and sport. He is also interested in history as a discipline, and the historian.

Professor Sandra Swart is an environmental historian, focusing her research on South Africa. She is also interested in memory and representation in South African history.

Associate Professor Wessel Visser researches South Africa, highlighting economic development and labour history, political history, the impact of external circumstances on South Africa, and historiography.

Dr Chet Fransch researches issues of gender and race in South Africa, with an interest in the Coloured community, forced removals and citizenship.

Conclusion

This overview of history departments suggests that all departments have grappled with the importance of focusing on the local context, and on the African continent. South African modules form the core of all programmes, and in many instances the courses on World History or on specific events or countries outside of the continent, relate back to South Africa and Africa. There seems to have been an attempt in some Departments to include the history of Asia and the Global South (no direct mention of South

America), although this is not the norm. When it comes to methods, many of the courses make specific mention of oral history, and some of public history, heritage and memory.

Tebello Letsekha, in an article on Africanisation, discusses three African schools of history to highlight different interpretations of African history.^{xxvi} He explains how the 'Ibadan School of thought ... was about the content of scholarship and the relevance to national objectives'.^{xxvii} He explains how this led to the post-colonial students having the opportunity to encounter historical stories 'told by their people for their people'.^{xxviii} The Dar-es-Salaam School of History focused on the history of the ordinary person. The Dakar School of History was concerned with utilising 'the tools of science to valorise Africa-centred historiography'.^{xxix} Letsekha supports calls for 'endogenisation', which is not only linked to 'geographical location, race or ethnicity', but rather to the 'changing cultural and material situation of the communities and learners they serve'.^{xxx}

Considering Letsekha's 'schools', it appears as if the main focus in South Africa has been on the writing of a more inclusive history, including marginalised communities and the history of the ordinary person. Aside from the Indigenous music and oral history project at UV and the History Workshop at Wits, both of which mention the history of the excluded as their core interest, all other institutions also mention the history of the liberation struggle, and many have individuals working on regional or local histories. This is also evident in the focus on issues of gender and race. What is not as clearly evident, is an attempt to valorise or celebrate Africa, as was the case with the Dakar School of History, although it is possible this would form part of some of the courses and research. What is more evident in the

history courses on offer, is an attempt to deal with the current challenges – economic, social and political – facing the continent.

On the website of the UP history department, Dr Glen Ncube summed up some of the pertinent debates raised during a 2016 class discussion, where students engaged around issues of African history, the discipline, and the decolonisation of education. This was published in *The Conversation* and is reproduced here:

African history has gone through many incarnations as an academic discipline.

Most recently, there's been a global turn in African historiography. This shift has been prompted by a greater awareness of the powerful forces of globalisation and the need to provide an African historical perspective on this phenomenon. This has helped to place the continent at the centre of global – and human – history.

It's important to explain the role of Africa in the world's global past. This helps assert its position in the gradual making of global affairs. As an approach, it's a radical departure from colonial views of Africa. It also complements the radical post-colonial histories that appeared from the 1950s and 1960s. And it may offer another framework for thinking through the curriculum reform and decolonisation debate that's emerged in South Africa's universities over the past few years.

The history of African history

Afrocentric history emerged strongly during the 1950s and 1960s, in tandem with Africa's emergence from colonial rule. Newly emerging histories served as an antidote to the pernicious views of imperial and colonial historiography. These had dismissed Africa as a dark continent without history.

But demonstrating that Africa has a long, complex history was only one step in an intellectual journey with many successes, frustrations and failures.

The long 20th century ended. A new one beckoned. It brought new sets of challenges. South Africa euphorically defeated apartheid. The decolonisation project that started during the 1950s in west and north Africa was completed. These achievements were overshadowed by a horrific post-colonial genocide in Rwanda. Another genocide loomed in the Sudan. Coups, civil wars and human rights abuses stained the canvas on which a new Africa was gradually being painted.

Africa's woes were deepened by the emerging HIV/AIDS pandemic. State-driven, pro-poor policies and programmes founded during the early post-colonial period atrophied. This decay was driven by hegemonic global neoliberal economic policies.

And the study of history on the continent took a knock. Student numbers declined as post-colonial governments shifted their priorities. Global funding bodies focused their attention on applied social sciences and science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines.

Nearly two decades into the new century there's been another shift. The subject of history, alongside other humanities disciplines, is attracting growing attention aimed at averting their further decline. This can be explained in part by the subject's own residual internal resilience and innovative research in newer areas of historical curiosity. There's an emerging interest in history as a complementary discipline. Students of law, education, and political science are taking history as an additional option.

In South Africa in particular, history cannot be easily ignored, although it is contested. The country is still redefining itself and charting its new course after decades of apartheid and colonialism. However, a great deal of newer interest in history as a subject can

be ascribed to university student movements. These movements have garnered greater public attention for ongoing debates about decoloniality and decolonised curricula.

Decoloniality is a radical concept. Its main aim is to degrade the coloniality of knowledge. In South Africa, the decolonisation movement has been tied to bread and butter issues: tuition fees and access to higher education. Decoloniality affords both the language and the reason for seeking to dismantle what are regarded as western and colonial systems and structures of knowledge production and dissemination.

Rethinking decolonisation

But while decolonisation is riding a wave of academic interest, the histories of precolonial Africa are receding as an area of primary research focus. The histories of resistance to colonialism continue to resonate with current struggles for transformation and decolonisation. They have long been popular among historians in and of Africa. Indeed, several social and political movements have used decolonial interpretations of African history as their currency.

However, questions continue to be asked about the kind of history curriculum that should be studied at university level at this moment. And what are the purposes of such curricula? Is an African history module a necessarily transformed one? What new conceptual and methodological tools should be deployed to describe and explain colonial encounters from a decolonial lens? What modes of ethics should inform such approaches?

The challenges go beyond the conceptual aspects of decolonisation in the domain of African history. There are historical structural formations, hierarchies and tendencies within academia that are rooted in coloniality. These make it a huge challenge to articulate newer forms of knowledge. At the same time, decoloniality should operate through other

forms and frameworks. This will allow it to find application beyond its own self-defined frames.

In addition, new approaches should challenge received wisdom and develop new kinds of curiosity. Newer curriculum should, for instance, grapple with the fact that there is no single Africa. A unitary model of Africa is a colonial invention. Ordinary people's identities form and evolve via multiple networks and knowledge forms. An Africa approached from its diverse histories and identities could help forge new, purposeful solidarities and futures.

Author's note: These were some of the issues discussed during a postgraduate seminar I convened in the Themes in African History module offered by the University of Pretoria's Department of Historical & Heritage Studies. The insights offered here are my students': Jane Mampane, Kudzai Mhere, Nobungwele Mbem, Genis Stephanus Gabriel Du Toit, Laura Sophie Schnieders, Nicole Sithole and Tanyaradzwa Muranda.

Some institutions suggested that more funding was needed for the discipline in order to encourage innovative projects with a broader African focus, while others mentioned funded initiatives to research regional and local histories. Many responses recognised the need for such a project, and recommended a need to go deeper and to look into the dynamics of specific departments and courses in order to get a clearer picture of the level (or lack) of transformation and decolonisation. It was mentioned that narrow specialisation remains a stumbling block to the researching of broader African historiographies, and that programmes need to be relevant to students' environments. Taking this into account, the CHE encourages researchers to take this topic further, and welcomes suggestions for further issues of *BrieflySpeaking*.

As indicated in the introduction, this *BrieflySpeaking* does not attempt to comment on or analyse the history offerings across South Africa. It reflects a point in time (possibly outdated as websites are not always updated), reproduces the image which departments choose to put forward regarding their own programmes, and provides information which the CHE (or other researchers) can use to dig deeper.

In their responses to the document, departments noted the limitations of the report, and cautioned against taking the 'public relations' on the website at face value.^{xxxii} However, it was also noted that the document reflects the 'uneven dynamics of what is happening to the discipline across the board' and how changes to the curriculum are being made continually (evidenced in the 2018 UCT curriculum).

ⁱ The webpages were accessed during August and September 2017, and may have been updated thereafter, but these changes are not reflected in the document.

ⁱⁱ North-West University (NWU) provided the course curriculum, which was not available on the website, and this has been added. UCT provided an updated curriculum for 2018, but this has not been included due to the 'snapshot' nature of this discussion. The updated (for 2018) UCT history curriculum can be viewed here:

http://www.students.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/434/study/handbooks/2018/2018-1-17_HUM_UG_handbook_V6.pdf.

ⁱⁱⁱ Humanities rule book, p. 4.

^{iv} Ibid., p. 3.

^v Ibid., p. 3.

^{vi} Ibid., p. 12.

^{vii} Ibid., p. 21.

^{viii} Ibid., p. 22.

^{ix} Ibid., p. 23-4.

^x Ibid., p. 58-9.

^{xi} Ibid., p. 59-60.

^{xii} Ibid., p. 60-2.

^{xiii} Associate Professor: RR Molapo (HoD), BA (Hons), MA (UCT), Phd (UWC); Senior Lecturer: JDN van der Westhuizen, BA (Hons), BD, Dip.Theo Cum Laude (UP); Lecturers: EB Bvuma, BA. PAED (UNIN), BA (Hons) (UNISA), M-Dev (UL), P. Dzimiri, BA, MSC – International Relations (UZ), PhD International Relations (UP), P.G Dip. HETL (Stellenbosch), Cert. Management of Defence & Multinational Peace Missions (Wits), Cert. Security Sector Governance (Wits), SF Mathagu, B. Admin (Hons) (UNIVEN), MA-Politics (UNISA), Dip. Journalism (TF. Cardiff) N Sibawu, BA, (Hons) (UFH) (Cum Laude), MA (UFS) (Cum Laude), H Tshamano, BA (Hons), UED (UNIVEN), MA (UJ), MJ Masipa, BA (Ed), B (Ed), M-Dev (UL), F Ramudzuli, BA, BA (Hons) UED (UNIVEN), BA (Hons), Cert.

(Forensics), Dip. Security & Risk Management, PG.Dip. Archival Science (UNISA), MA (RAU), MBA (Mancosa), Cert. Project Management (Technisa), R Mashamba, BA (Hons) (UNIVEN), MS Mokgola, BA (IR) (UNIVEN), Political Science (Hons) (UL).

^{xiv} Handbook, p.133.

^{xv} Handbook, pp. 133-4.

^{xvi} Handbook, p. 134.

^{xvii} Ibid.

^{xviii} Handbook, pp. 134-5.

^{xix} Handbook, p. 135.

^{xx} Handbook, p. 135.

^{xxi} Handbook, p. 136.

^{xxii} Ibid.

^{xxiii} Prof DS Yekela (HOD); Associate Professor: Prof JP Hendricks; Lecturers: Ms N. Maliza Lecturer, Mr C Andreas, Mr K Gopalan; Adjunct Professors: Prof JB Peires and Prof S. Morrow.

^{xxiv} These categories are not absolute – see for instance the section on the language policy at UP.

^{xxv} The updated (for 2018) UCT history curriculum can be viewed here:

http://www.students.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/434/study/handbooks/2018/2018-1-17_HUM_UG_handbook_V6.pdf.

^{xxvi} T. Letsekha (2013), 'Revisiting the debate on the Africanisation of higher education: an appeal for a conceptual shift' in The independent journal of teaching and learning, volume 8, pp. 5-18.

^{xxvii} Ibid., p.13.

^{xxviii} Ibid., p.13.

^{xxix} Ibid., p.13.

^{xxx} Ibid., p.13.

^{xxxi} As these responses were not made publicly, they are summed-up here and quoted without reference to the person or institution making the comment.