

THE HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF AFRIKANER ADOLESCENTS – A SMALL SCALE SURVEY

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Introduction

After the National Party came to power in 1948 large scale changes were implemented to the educational system. These changes included the introduction of mass education and the enforcement of Apartheid in all spheres of life, including schooling.¹ Most importantly, in the context of this paper, the National Party Government took firm control of History education and, until 1994 with the end of pigmentocracy, History school textbooks were written, curricula were devised, and the subject was generally taught from an Afrikaner-Nationalist perspective which, in crude terms, portrayed whites in general, and Afrikaners in particular, as heroes and people of colour as villains. Likewise History at certain universities was dominated by the agenda of the state.² In Orwellian terms it was a case of he who controls the present controls the past, and he who controls the past controls the future. Consequently all South African learners were taught a History in which the struggles of the Afrikaner against both the Africans and the British were glorified. In turn the History of people of colour was portrayed as not so glorious. This changed after 1994 when History education, like all other aspects of South African society, was transformed. The new curricula envisaged, and eventually implemented, was a paradigm shift away, both in terms of content and methodology, compared to the Afrikaner Nationalist-orientated curricula of the past.³ As a result, Afrikaners in a reversal from their previous position of dominance and power, found themselves on the fringes of History. This did not go unnoticed and recently a lively debate took place between Professor Fransjohan Pretorius of the University of Pretoria and Doctor Fanie du Toit the project manager of the Turning Points History series in the pages of the Afrikaans Sunday newspaper, Rapport. Pretorius felt Afrikaners and their History were being marginalised, while Du Toit denied these accusations and argued for

a broader inclusive South African History.⁴ In the context of the above, more than a decade after all South Africans have gained their freedom, it is necessary to ask: Where does this leave Afrikaner adolescents and History, especially in the light of the History of History education in South Africa and the positions of power and dominance Afrikaners had in the past? This is a pressing question especially since none of the Afrikaner adolescents currently at school were ever exposed to the ideology of Afrikaner Nationalist-orientated History as the previous generations had been simply because they have undergone all their schooling in the post-1994 period. Instead, over the past decade, they had been exposed to the ideology as enshrined in the very liberal South African constitution which guarantees rights and freedoms for all - a philosophy which is embodied in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and the History Curriculum.⁵ The NCS, in turn, is supported by a range of new generation textbooks⁶ screened by a national committee, and in some instances published with the full support of the National Government.⁷

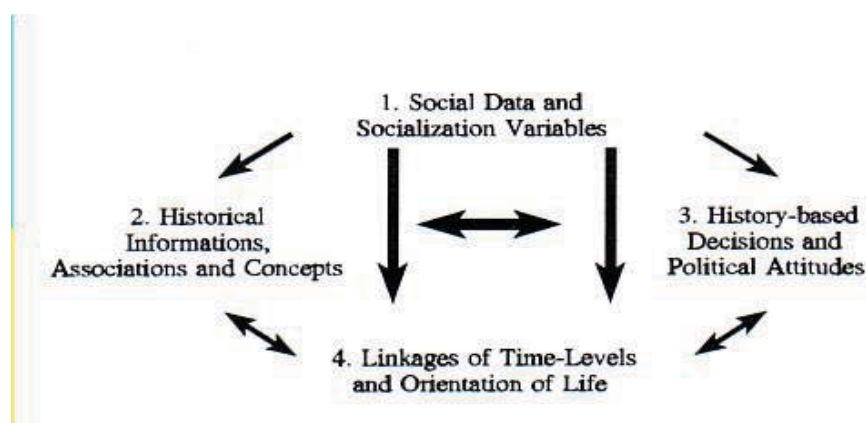
The purpose of this study is therefore to investigate, against the backdrop as outlined above, the Historical Consciousness of Afrikaner adolescents in 2006.⁸

Historical Consciousness

Over the past decade much has been written about Historical Consciousness and what it entails. *The Youth and History*⁹ project surveyed 31 000 15 year-olds in 26 European countries during 1994/1995.¹⁰ Similar research was also undertaken in the USA¹¹ and Australia.¹² According to Peter Seixas, one of the leading researchers into Historical Consciousness, contemporary analysis of the concept draws on many disciplines and intellectual traditions. These include Education, History, Memory Studies, Psychology and Museum Studies. Although this diversity could make for an interesting debate, it presents a problem when common ground is sought. In fact the range of voices is at times so varied that it is difficult to determine if they are involved in the same discussion. As a result Seixas argues for the need to find common ground.¹³ In the light of the above, and for the purpose of this paper, the working definition adopted by the Youth and History project, namely that Historical Consciousness is “the connection between the past, the pres-

ent and the future” (See Figure 1 below for a graphic depiction) will be used. The foremost reason for this, apart from accepting this as a convincing conceptualisation of Historical Consciousness, is that this small scale research project is not only using the same questionnaire as the Youth and History project, but is likewise investigating the connection between adolescent conceptions about the past, their evaluation of the present and the expectations of the future.¹⁴

Figure 1: Diagram of Historical Consciousness¹⁵



Methodology

The methodology employed in researching this paper involved administering questionnaires to a small sample population at a purposive selected Afrikaans co-educational school in a predominantly English speaking part of South Africa. The school was chosen because it provided accessibility to Afrikaner adolescents from across the socio-economic spectrum that could serve as respondents.¹⁶ The research population comprised 49 Grade 10 learners (n=49). All the respondents were white, Afrikaans speaking and 15-16 years of age. 63% were girls and 37% were boys, while 96% described themselves as Christian, and 51% regarded their income as average “when compared to other families in South Africa.” Girls were overrepresented in the sample, possibly because of the events planned in anticipation of the derby sport day against an Afrikaans school from another area. This gender-bias would

have affected the outcome of the research to a certain extent. Another limitation which emerged was the narrowness of the study - it was only conducted amongst 49 Afrikaner adolescents within a single school. However, while this will not necessarily allow for broad generalizations to be made, the survey conducted is still an excellent yardstick to measure the Historical Consciousness of Afrikaner adolescents.

A quantitative study such as this, according to Cresswell, falls within the empiricist paradigm which views reality as “objective”; “out there” and “independent” of the researcher.¹⁷ Within this context free paradigm it is thus deemed to be fairly possible to measure the Historical Consciousness of Afrikaner adolescents objectively, and use the data gathered to generalize, predict, explain, and come to some understanding.

According to Sanders and Pinhey a questionnaire is “... a form or document that contains a set of questions, the answers to which are to be provided personally by respondents.”¹⁸ Questionnaires are widely used in research as they have the following advantages: large quantities of information can be assembled in a short space of time and it is easy to administer and provides a fair overall reliability. In short, questionnaires are good to gauge people’s opinions.

Questionnaires are, however, not without problems. Dane, Cohen and Manion,¹⁹ have identified these as relating to both the structuring and the organisation of the questionnaire and include aspects such as: the time-consuming nature of developing a questionnaire; problems relating to the development of categories, items and the recording and coding systems used in the questionnaire and the lack of motivation and commitment to the questions on the part of the respondents. By the same token questionnaires are problematic in the sense that the agenda is set by the researcher and the respondent is constraint to follow pathways. This serves to provide an impersonal static picture with facts and views given as almost concrete and fixed. Since the respondents do not have an opportunity to state, within the range of questions and answers provided, what they want, it does not allow for a dynamic flow of ideas. An equally pressing problem is the lack of validity and reliability.²⁰ Validity refers to the correlation between what a measuring device, in this case a questionnaire, is supposed to measure and what it really measures. Reliability-

ty, in turn, refers to the consistency with which an instrument measures what it sets out to measure.²¹ Fortunately, in the case of the questionnaire used in this research project, it had previously been administered to 31 000 adolescents in 26 countries.²² As a result problems of validity and reliability were greatly reduced, except for when certain questions were adapted to the South African context or omitted completely.

The questionnaire used in this paper was adapted from the one designed and developed to research the Historical Consciousness of European adolescents and consisted of four major sections with subsections – all geared towards measuring Historical Consciousness.²³ The major sections were:

- Relevance of and motivation for History
- Chronological knowledge, Historical associations and Historical-Political concepts
- Political attitudes and decisions based on Historical experiences
- Relations of past, present, and future

In adapting the questionnaire from its original format, and when translating it into Afrikaans, a concerted effort was made to achieve absolute clarity in terms of what was expected from the respondents. To this end the stems used in the questions were phrased in such a way that the language was clear and concise.

This questionnaire consisted exclusively of structured or closed questions – 31 in total. Structured questions have the advantages of straight-forward data tabulation and since this is not time-consuming, it is easy to code or answer.²⁴ Closed questions, on the other hand, allow for the gathering of unproblematic facts and to determine points of view. The main disadvantage of structured questions is that it limits the response and does not allow the researcher to probe attitudes, values and opinions.²⁵

Generally a Likert rating scale - a non-numerical measurement on a scale indicating level of agreement - ranging from 1 to 5, was used. (See Figure 2 for an extract from the questionnaire). The justification for using a Likert scale is that it provides the respondents with opportunities to express their opinions and to indicate the degree to which the claims expressed the perceptions of the respondents. Where necessary, when creating tables for the purpose

of analysis, the 5 point Likert scale was collapsed into a three point scale – for example very little and little and a lot and very much were integrated. It was judged that this would not overly alter the general tendencies.

Figure 2: Example of question from questionnaire

- In your opinion: How important is the following aims at the study of History? (Merely circle your point of view)
- Knowledge of the past(very little/ little/ somewhat/ a lot/ very much)
- To understand the present(very little/ little/ somewhat/ a lot/ very much)
- Orientation for the future

For the purpose of this study the questionnaire used was applied under the supervision of the researcher.²⁶ It was expected of respondents to complete the survey without the intervention of the researcher. Questionnaires completed under supervision are generally less time-consuming and are often the only viable way of carrying out research.²⁷ Administering questionnaires in such a manner provides an opportunity to provide guidance.²⁸ This is both a strong and weak point of the data gathering process. During the administration of the questionnaire under discussion numerous questions were asked by the respondents about the language used and the Likert scale employed.²⁹ The researcher answered these questions, but at the same time consciously attempted not to intervene in the research process.

The survey was analysed by using the SPSS program to conduct descriptive and inferential statistical procedures.³⁰ The resulting information was presented in the form of percentages, ranked according to the arithmetic mean. The data was further analysed by means of tables and graphs. Percentages were calculated for all questions which used the Likert scale. This was done to reveal trends such as similarities and differences between the sub-sets. Percentages are suitable

for this as they supply a frame of reference for reporting research results by standardising raw data and are also easier to read and comprehend than frequencies.³¹ Responses were further quantified by noting their rank with regard to the target dimension.³² This ranking was done by the use of the arithmetic mean or average. The arithmetic mean or average is obtained by adding all scores and dividing it by the number of scores.³³ The sample size used in this study was such that the above statistical analysis was judged to be appropriate.

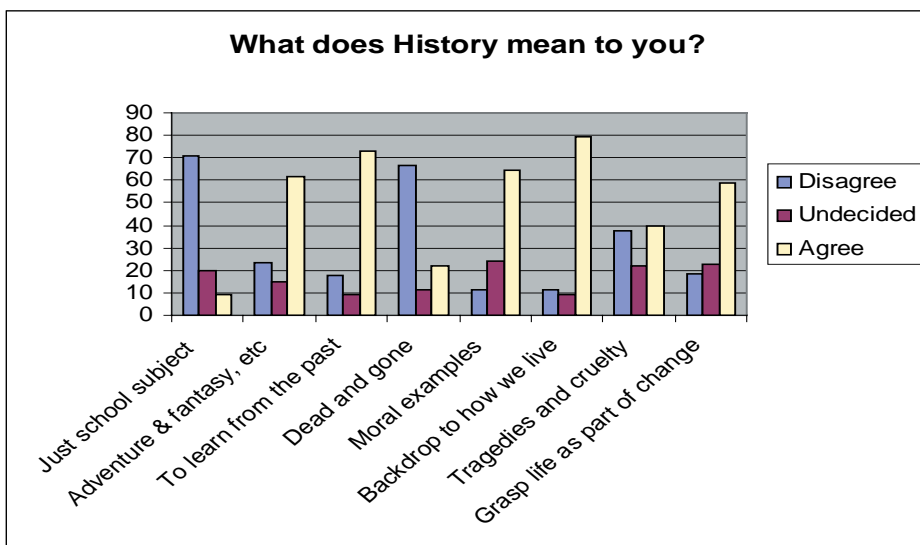
Data analysis and results

The survey conducted consisted of 31 questions and yielded a significant amount of research data. Due to constraints of space and time, and considering the research question posed, it is impossible, illogical and unnecessary to provide an analysis of all 31 questions. As a result only a cross-section of the data gathered was used to analyse the Historical Consciousness of Afrikaner adolescents and to draw some general conclusions. This was done in terms of the four major categories as outlined earlier. Furthermore it was decided, for the purpose of this paper, to use valid percentages in compiling the various graphs for analysis. The reasoning behind this was to provide accessible and an easy to digest set of statistical information.

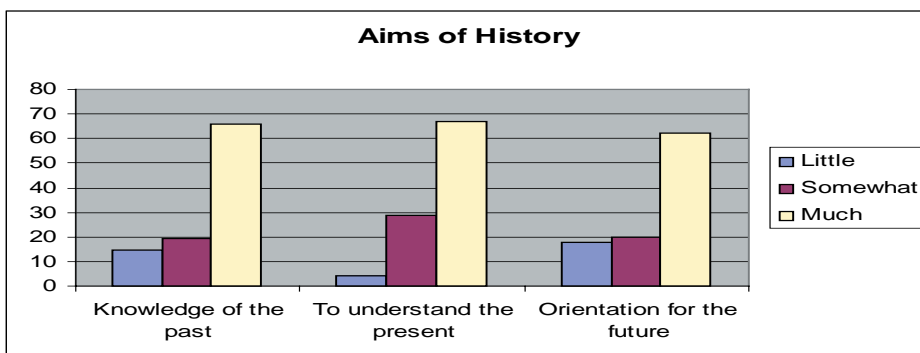
Relevance of and motivation for History

◆ Concepts of History

Question 1: What does History mean to you?



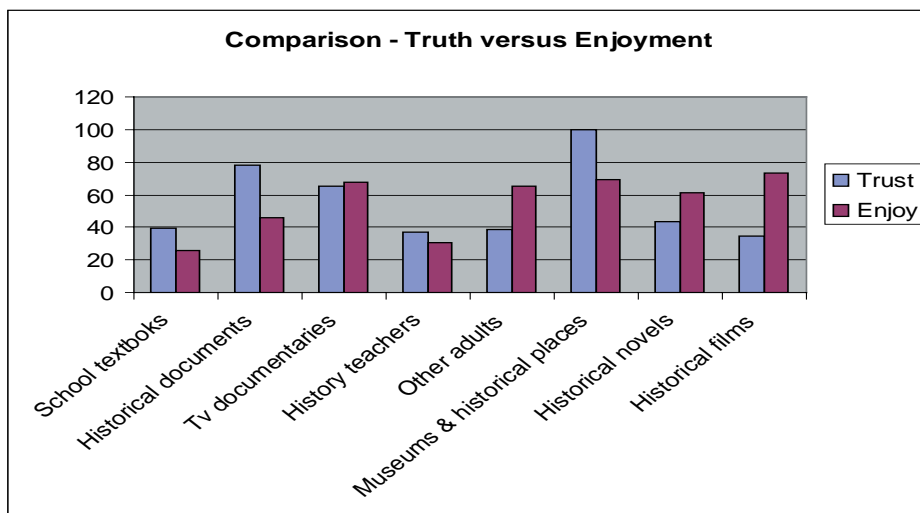
Question 2: How important are the following aims in the study of History?



From the graphs related to questions 1 and 2 it is clear that the Afrikaner adolescents surveyed attached great value to History. It is furthermore evident that they do not subscribe to the archaic notion that History is merely related to the past and is thus separated from the present and the future. Evidence for this is that they regard it as much more than a school subject dealing with aspects of the past that are dead and gone. Instead 65% of the respondents view it as providing the backdrop to how we live at present, while more than 70% see it as providing us with an opportunity to learn from the past. The most convincing proof of this positive view of History is provided by the responses to question 2 where more than 60% of the respondents viewed

the aims of History as threefold – knowledge of the past, to understand the present and orientation for the future. This is in sharp contrast to the views of the majority of learners in South Africa to whom, in the words of Luli Callinicos, “history teaching had seemed irrelevant.”³⁴

Questions 3 and 4: What presentations of History do you enjoy? - What presentations of History do you trust?

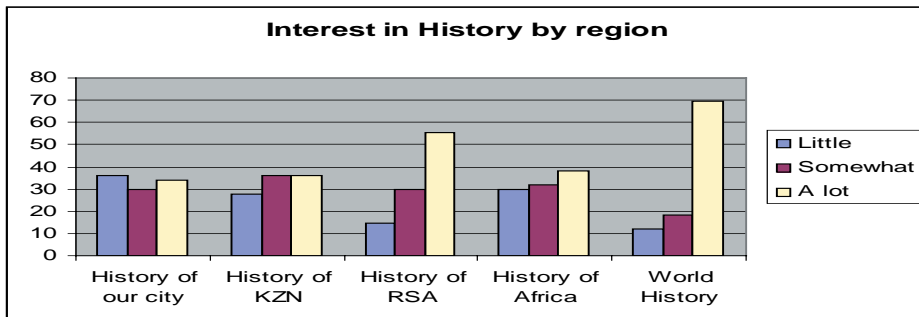


The responses to which of the presentations of History they trusted and enjoyed expressed a range of contradictions. While Historical novels and films, and the presentations of adults other than teachers, were enjoyable they were viewed with suspicion. This seems to indicate a clear preference for fictional and audiovisual material framed by a different Historical Consciousness. An explanation for this tendency, as argued by Angvik, is that the “need of entertainment” supersedes the “wish for education.” On the other hand while Historical documents were viewed as highly reliable it was not regarded as an enjoyable presentation of History. Museums and other Historical places which make for an interactive, constructivist and visual learning experience were viewed uncritically and regarded as both extremely trustworthy and highly enjoyable. The reason for this is in all probability a case of “seeing is believing” while having fun at the same time – in other words the worlds of entertainment and education meeting. Alarming, at least for the school in which the survey was conducted, is the lack of trust and enjoyment placed in the History educators. Textbooks, which along with educators

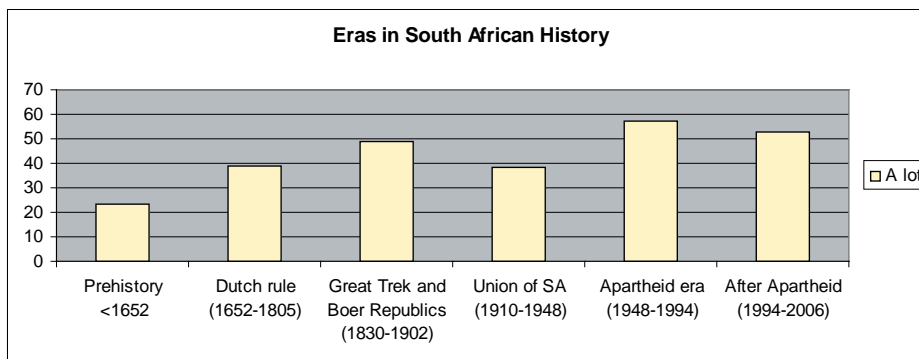
should form the cornerstone of History Education and the shaping of Historical consciousness, were likewise viewed with suspicion. A possible cause of this, as pointed out by Pretorius in his criticism of the Turning Points series, is the portrayal of Afrikaners and their History in textbooks.³⁵ Furthermore, a survey of the 21 authors and consultants of the textbooks recently published by Shutters, Oxford and Maskew Millar Longman indicated that none of them were Afrikaners. If the old adage of “first study the historian before studying his/her History” holds true then none of these authors would treat Afrikaner History with much sympathy.

Motivation and Interest

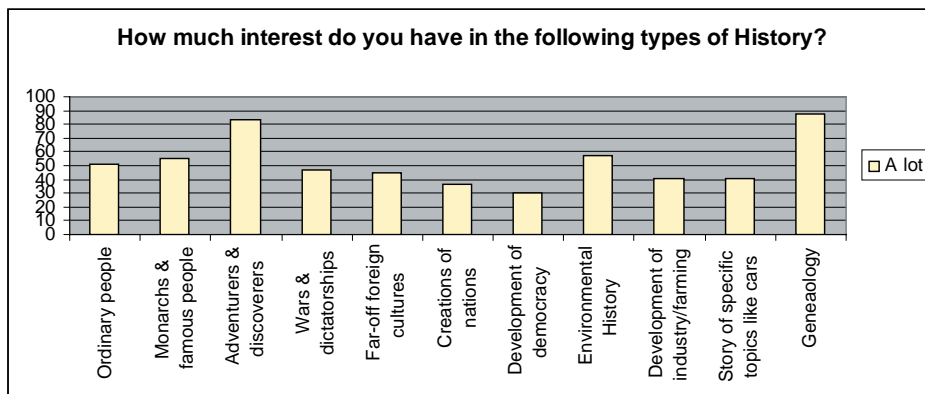
Question 5: How much interest do you have in the History of the following Geographical regions?



Question 6: How much interest do you have in the History of the following eras in the History of South Africa?



Question 7: How much interest do you have in the following types of History?



In terms of motivation and interest, as can be gleaned from the responses to questions 5, 6 and 7, a range of Historical preferences and interest exist amongst the research population. Pertaining to the History of regions a distinct preference was expressed for “World History” followed by “South African History”. It is clear, from the analysis of the data, that that local History (that of the city and the province) and African History attracts very little interest. The indifference in local History could possibly be explained by the fact that they preferred “meta narratives” rather than micro-history of everyday events or regions. Why then the lack of interest in African History (38.3%) despite feeling strongly about collaborating with Africa (66%) in question 14? A possible reason is supplied by Jörn Rösen who calls it “ethnocentrism” and explains it as “one’s own people historically stand for civilization and its achievements, whereas the otherness of others is a deviation from these standards.” As a result “Non-Western History normally plays a marginal role.”³⁶

In terms of South African History the Apartheid and post-Apartheid eras, with slightly more than 50%, attracted a great deal of interest. The reasons for this are probably three fold – it is contemporary History and the learners have to a certain extent lived and experienced it. Secondly it is an aspect of History that has received a lot of classroom coverage as required by the curriculum and on which much audiovisual material exists. At the same time they do not seem to suffer from or complain about

“a surfeit of Apartheid” like other learners of their age do.^{xxxviii} Two possibilities exist for this. Firstly the interest expressed by the Afrikaner adolescents surveyed in this dark or negative aspect of Afrikaner History means that they have integrate negative Historical experiences into the Historical self-consciousness which is in itself a necessary step for creating Historical Consciousness.³⁷ In other words they are grappling positively with a painful past. A more disturbing possibility is that the Afrikaner adolescents surveyed, like those surveyed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as quoted by Hermann Gillomee,³⁸ held positive views on Apartheid because it is viewed as a master narrative of an Afrikaner success story and one of the view aspects of the History taught in which they can “see themselves” as a group of people.

Iconic highlights of Afrikaner History in the past, the Great Trek and the Boer Republics, drew marginally less interest than Apartheid. Possible reasons for this are that only the Anglo-Boer War (called the South African War in the educational documents) appears as a cameo in the curriculum leading up to the grade the respondents found themselves in. Despite this lack of “curriculum time” the fact that such a high level of interest exists in these two topics is an indication of the enduring memory of these events. In contrast pre-History, or the History of South Africa prior to the arrival of Europeans, received very little interest. This was the case despite the fact that themes related to this topic, such as Human Evolution and Southern African Kingdoms such as Mapangubwe, were covered in the years leading-up to Grade 10. This is a clear indication that the pedagogy in this case made no real inroads into the Historical Consciousness of the learners surveyed.

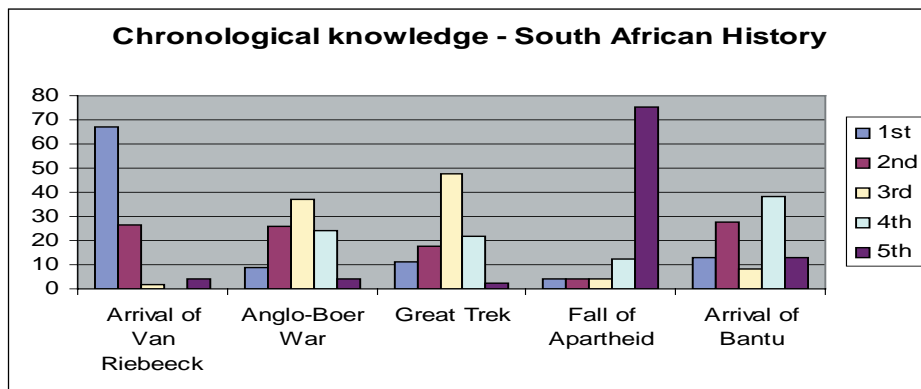
As far as types of History are concerned, the survey revealed that Genealogy and the History of royalty, celebrities and Environmental History were favoured. While the interest in the History of famous people can, to a certain extent, be attributed to the endless coverage of their lives in the print and electronic media. The strong interest expressed in Environmental History is interesting but consistent with the general value attached to environmental matters – see questions 13, 14, 16 and 17. Likewise the complete lack of interest expressed in the History of the development of democracy, the lowest score at a mere 29.8%, is in line with other aspects of the survey related to politics (65% indicated that

they had no interest in politics) and democracy as covered in question 12. A possible reason for the lack of concern with politics is that the Afrikaner adolescent might view it as a waste because of the current position of disempowerment Afrikaners find themselves in when compared to the pre-1994 period. The strong interest in Genealogy (87.3%) is possibly best explained by Barton and Levstik who claim that it is “one of the most basic forms of Historical identification” that is common inside and outside schools. ³⁹

Chronological knowledge, Historical associations and Historical-Political concepts

• Chronological knowledge

Question 8: Place the events in the order in which it happened in the History of South Africa. Place the earliest event first and the most recent event last.



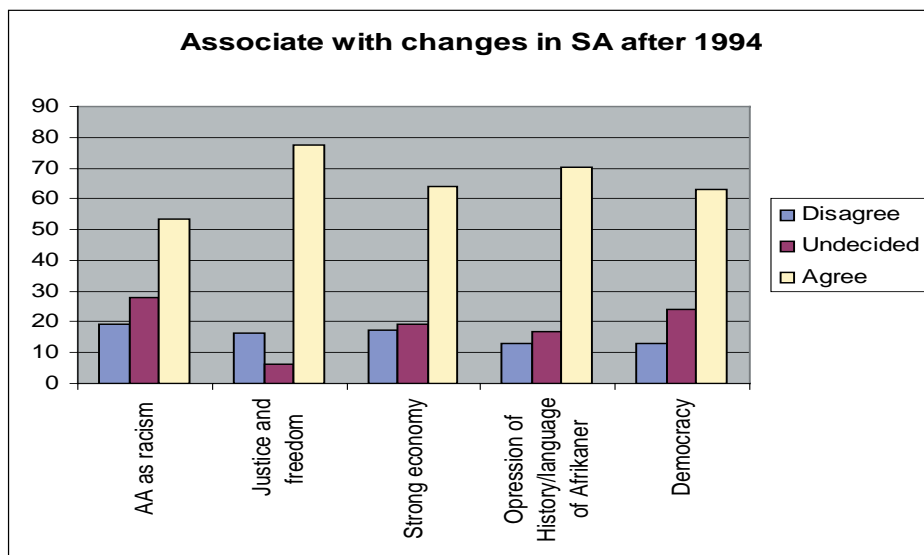
Question 9: Place the following ships in the correct chronological order (1) is the oldest and (5) is the newest.

The rationale behind questions 8 and 9 is to gain a rudimentary understanding of the chronological understanding of Afrikaner adolescents. A range of variables, such as for example instruction on a topic, would have influenced the responses. From the analysis of the above questions it is clear that the respondents were generally highly successful in ranking the ships in the correct order, possibly because of the visual nature of the source. What proved more problematic was dealing

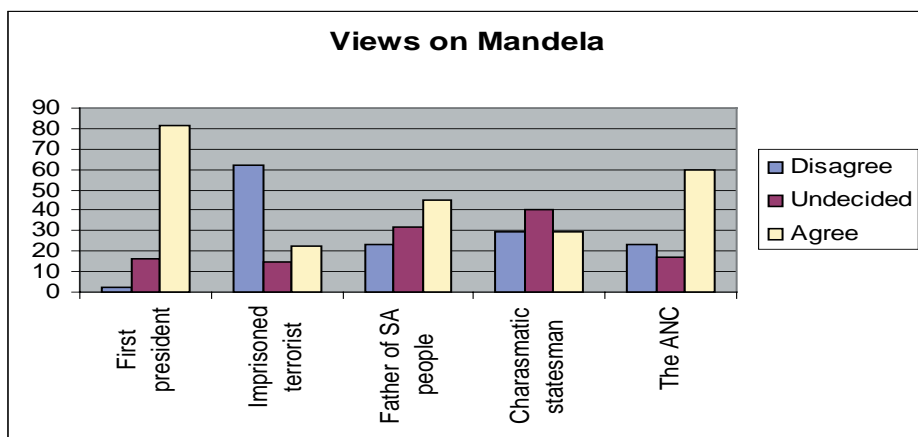
with the chronology of major events in South African History. What the adolescents found easy to place was the fall of Apartheid and 75.5% got it right. Other events proved more problematic to place. As a result the arrival of Jan Van Riebeeck - the start of European settlement in Southern Africa – was viewed by more than two thirds as the first event. Although his arrival hardly features in the latest History curriculum the ranking is an indication of the persistence of the memory of Apartheid era teaching which stated that Van Riebeeck arrived before the Bantu settlers. As a result the arrival of the Bantu settlers which should have been ranked number one is ranked second by 27.7% and fourth by 38.3% of the respondents. The latter response is probably a reading of the South African landscape over the past decade as millions of immigrants from other parts of Africa have made their way to South Africa. Ironically the Great Trek and the Anglo-Boer War, which under question 6 received a substantial amount of support as an era of interest, were not placed with great confidence in the timeline of events. Especially the Anglo-Boer War was viewed as a difficult event to place – despite the centenary commemorations which ended four years ago. Possible reasons for this are that it forms a miniscule part of the curriculum and then goes under the name South African War and that the commemorations for a range of reasons had lost its impetus by September 1999.⁴⁰

- **Interpretations of the past**

Question 10: With what do you associate the changes in South Africa after 1994?



Question 11: With what do you associate Nelson Mandela?



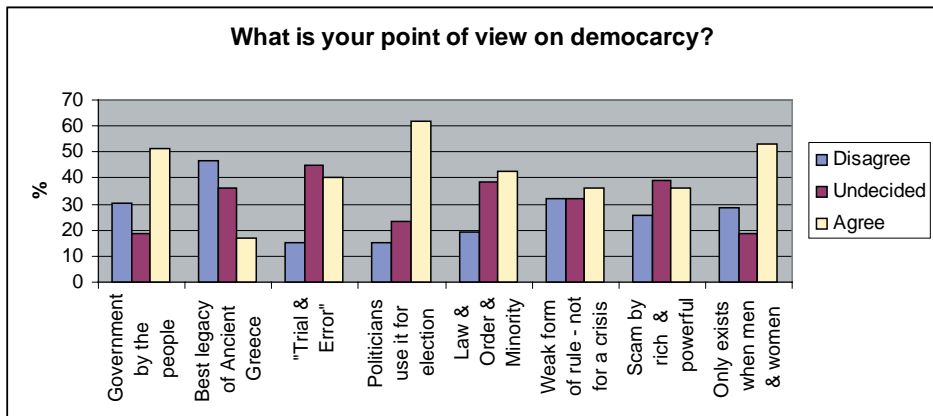
The purpose of questions 10 and 11 was to gain insight into how Afrikaner adolescents interpreted the New South Africa which was created a couple of years after they were born and its iconic first president, Nelson Mandela. The Afrikaner adolescents surveyed, as an ethnic group, held very strong, and at times contradictory views, about post-Apartheid South Africa. Although they viewed it as a democracy with a strong economy that provides justice for all they also, paradoxically, felt that affirmative action (AA) (53.2%) was a form of racism and that the History and language of the Afrikaner were being oppressed. Especially the latter

point of view was strongly supported as 73.2% of the respondents subscribed to it. Possible reasons for this are provided by the prominent Afrikaner Historian Herman Gillomee who claims that Afrikaners are cynical about the politics and frustrated about the future because their ideology, Afrikaner Nationalism, has crumbled.⁴¹ From this political and ideological position the New South Africa is viewed as a marvellous place socio-politically and socio-economically speaking, to which they, in the Historical Consciousness that they have constructed, do not belong. Consequently a distinct danger exists that a separate and aggressive tribalism could develop amongst Afrikaners.

In the light of the above, former President Nelson Mandela received mixed views. Although the vast majority associated him with being the first president of South Africa they also strongly associated him with the ANC. Viewing Mandela as a “charismatic leader” and the “father of the people of South Africa” only received but lukewarm support, and not the universal adulation normally bestowed on him. What the respondents (61.7%) did feel very strongly about was that he was not “imprisoned as a terrorist.” Although the nature of the survey failed to elicit an answer to this point of view, it can be assumed that the powerful presence of Mandela in the media and in real life served to erode earlier accepted beliefs for his imprisonment. In the process a national myth has been created.

◆ **Historical-Political concepts**

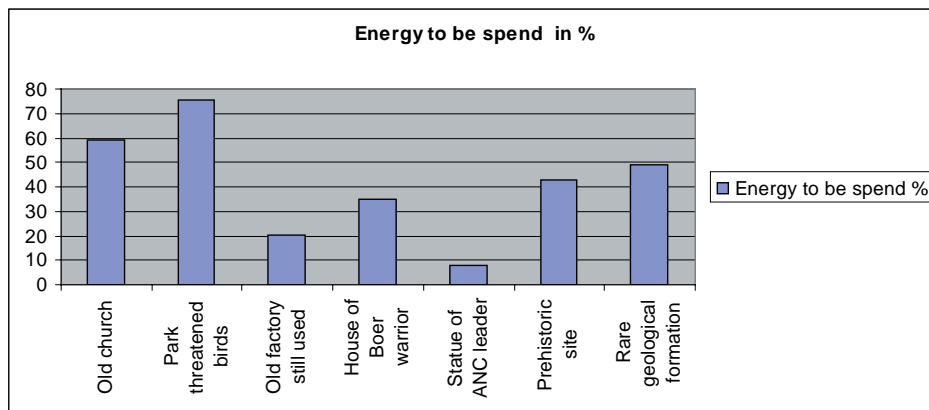
Question 12: What is your point of view on democracy?



The responses on how democracy was viewed proved to be contradictory. What the Afrikaner adolescents felt very positive about was that it was government by the people BUT that it is something used by politicians during elections. Equally worrying for a young democracy such as South Africa's is the indecision respondents had pertaining to democracy as a means of securing law and order, the rights of minorities as well as the position and role of the rich and powerful in the process. This notion was in all probability been shaped by experiences since 1994 which served to undermine the previous position of power and advantage of whites. As a result the respondents acknowledged the existence of democracy (question 10) as an integral part of the post-1994 landscape but, at the same time, in their Historical Consciousness as constructed in this period, viewed themselves, as explained in the previous section, as marginalised and distant from it.

- ◆ **Political attitudes and decisions based on Historical experiences**

Question 13: Imagine a new highway is planned for our city. In the process the sites listed below are threatened. How much energy would you spend on the protection of each?

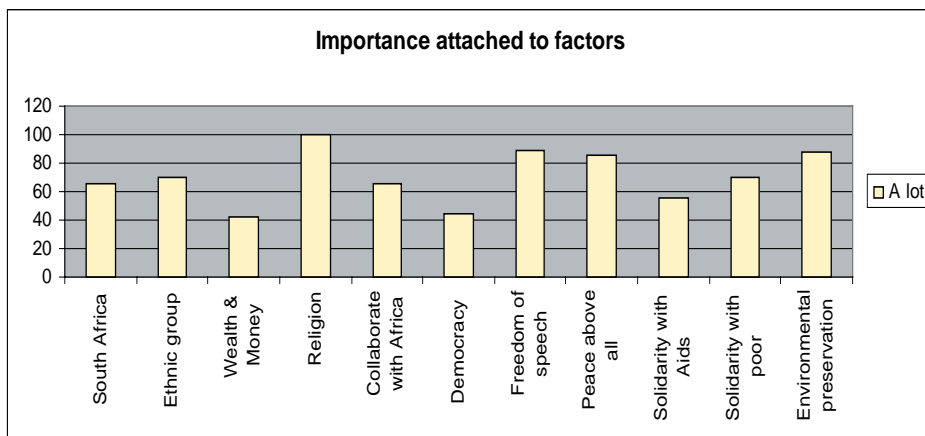


The rationale behind question 13, in terms of Historical Consciousness, was to determine how Afrikaner adolescents linked past experiences and present decisions by argumentation. Topping the list, in terms of energy expenditure in saving certain sites in the face of development, is a park which contains the nests of threatened birds. Similarly a substan-

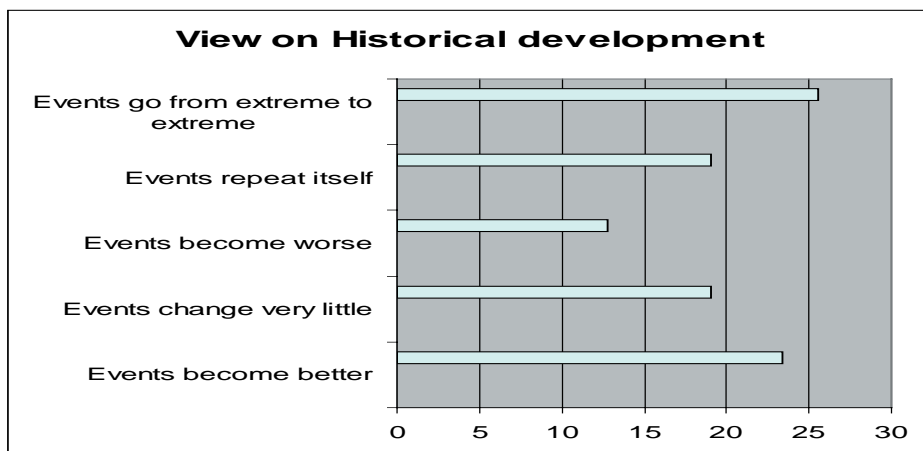
tial amount of energy would be expended to save other outdoor/environmental sites. The concern with the natural environment correlates positively with the interest expressed in question 7 for Environmental History and in question 14 in environmental preservation. The sincerity of this interest is supported by the fact that the respondents felt stronger about protecting the park with endangered birds than they did about protecting an old church. This is especially significant in light of the fact that 96% of the respondents regarded themselves as being Christian and that all (see question 14) regarded religion as extremely important to them. Surprisingly, particularly in the light of the sentiments expressed in question 10 that the History and language of Afrikaners were being oppressed since 1994, is the fact that only 34.7% of the adolescents would expend a lot of energy in saving the house of a Boer warrior. The reason for this is possibly one of aesthetics and morality which implies that it is of greater importance to save natural and religious sites. Unsurprisingly, in a clear statement of political ideology, very little energy (8.1%) would be exerted by the research population to save the statue of an ANC leader.

• **Relations of past, present, and future**

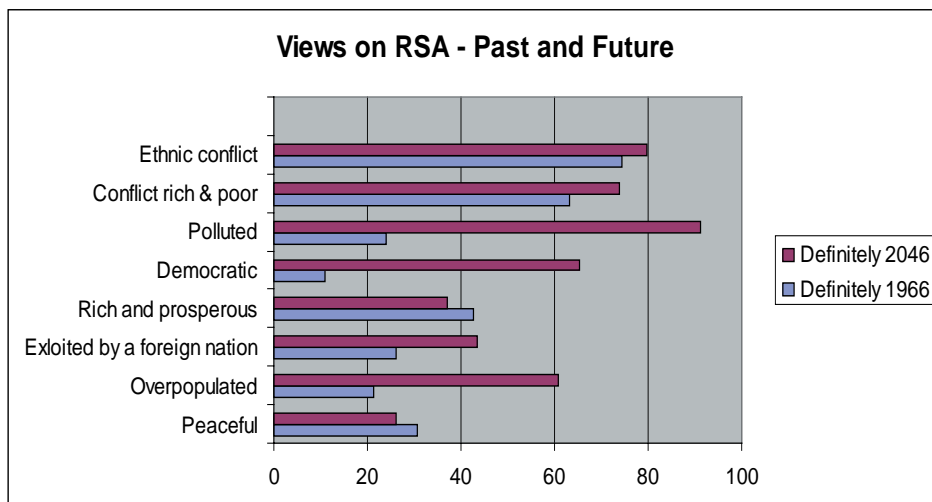
Question 14: How important is the following to you?



Question 15: People tend to see History as a line in time. Which of the following lines do you think describes Historical development best?



Questions 16 and 17: What do you think life was like in South Africa 40 years ago?/What do you think life will be like in South Africa 40 years from now?



How then do Afrikaner adolescents, in the light of the working definition of Historical Consciousness as being the “the connection between the past, the present and the future”, view the relationship between the past, present and future in South Africa? As can be gathered from question 14, religion, peace at all costs, environmental preservation and freedom of speech top the list of factors they hold dear. Although freedom of speech is one of the cornerstones of democracy, the respondents, as part of a pattern revealed by the analysis of the data, clearly indicated

that they did not attach much importance to the broad philosophy of democracy but merely one aspect thereof – namely the right to speak out and criticise.

Although 65% of the respondents viewed themselves as South Africans rather than Afrikaners, this did not translate into practice as they attached slightly more importance to the ethnic group they found themselves in than to South Africa as a country. This hints at a feeling of marginalisation and not belonging to the post 1994 “born frees” but rather to a separate grouping with a different language and History that prefers to be unique. The surveyed group furthermore expressed substantial solidarity with the poor (69.6%), and were less concerned with those suffering from HIV/Aids (55.3%). Wealth and money were not considered as important. A possible explanation for the former point of view is that 51% of the respondents regarded their income as average “when compared to other families in South Africa.”

Considering the factors which the research population held true, how then do they view, in terms of Historical development, the past (40 years before – circa 1966) and future (40 years from now – circa 2046) of South Africa? In other words – how do they interpret the past and the future in present time? An analysis the responses to questions 16 and 17, as illustrated graphically above, indicates that ethnic and class conflict is seen as part of the past, present and future of South African existence, with the distinct possibility that it will even escalate by 2046. Violence and conflict was therefore seen as a static aspect of the South African existence over time.

The views held by the surveyed adolescents on other aspects hinted at deep changes in the fields of politics, economics and the environment over time. While the South Africa of 1966 was viewed as undemocratic, it was conceived as relatively prosperous and definitely unpolluted and sparsely populated. In contrast the South Africa of 2046 is being envisaged as a democratic but polluted and overpopulated place which could possibly be exploited by a foreign nation. Attempts were made, when analysing questions 10 and 11, to provide some reason for this pessimism of the future. Although the latter point of view does not correspond positively with the lack of support expressed in question 15

for the statement that “events become worse over time”, Angvik argues that change is denied when asked about directly but accepted when it is done in an indirect manner as questions 16 and 17 did.⁴²

Conclusion

If a profile had to be compiled of the Historical Consciousness the Afrikaner adolescents surveyed have created it would possibly look something like this:

Someone that is Afrikaans speaking; very religious; shows no interest in politics; acknowledges the existence of democracy but does not embrace it at all; attaches great importance to History and views it as important in understanding of the past, the present and the future; enjoys Historical novels, films, museums and stories adults tell about the past; distrust History textbooks, and their teachers while preferring to trust Historical documents, documentaries and museums. In addition, they enjoy the study of Meta narratives of World and South African History and specifically themes around Apartheid, the Great Trek and the Boer Republics. Otherwise they enjoy learning about the History of their families, celebrities, famous people and royalty. Their view of the New South Africa is a contradictory one – although they recognize the democracy, good economy and the justice and freedom it brought, they also view it as a place where affirmative action is a negative presence and where the language and History of the Afrikaner is oppressed. As a result Mandela is not embraced as an idol and they would exert no energy at all to save the statue of an ANC leader. Instead they would rather expend energy on environmental matters while they treasure freedom of speech and want peace. However, at the same time they are actually aware of being Afrikaners. Finally they view the South African past, from their present position in time, as an undemocratic but unpolluted, relatively prosperous place with a low population density. In contrast the South African future is anticipated as a democratic place that is severely polluted and overpopulated. Finally in their view, like in the past, the future will be characterized by conflict between rich and poor and the various ethnic groups.

In conclusion it is important to remember that Historical Conscious-

ness, as a mental construct, is invariably influenced by “dynamic temporal, spatial, spiritual, cultural and ideological contexts.”⁴³ These include the post-Apartheid political, economic, social and educational experiences of the adolescents surveyed. The latter is of particular importance as we have to realize the “consequences of Historical knowledge amongst those who are exposed to it.”⁴⁴

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