

Research Programme into 'Historical Consciousness' at the End of Secondary Education and the Development of Standards for Flemish History Teaching

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1. Flemish research into 'historical consciousness': the context

Since 1993 work has been devoted to the composition of standards in Flemish secondary education. The proposals for the first two years (pupils within the age group of approximately 12 to 14) were finalised in the summer of 1996. It will come as no surprise that in Flanders too the proposed standards have resulted in serious controversy.

Firstly, the problem emerged concerning the number of standards and the freedom of movement that these standards grant the people planning curricula. One has to realise that the educational system in Flanders is strongly varied on the ideological level⁴, and that the various educational organisations are very much set on their own independence. This is why the remaining latitude was considered to be too limited by the various educational organisations.

Secondly, the delicate matter as to how far the role of history education ranges in connection with the impartment of moral values came into question. This problem is directly connected with the formulation of attitude-based standards. Again, discussion arose concerning the margin which was granted to the various educational organisations whose syllabi ought not to suffer.

The third problem was concerned with the interpretation of a minimal historical information network and in particular with its section on declarative knowledge. Both the 'World History' approach of this network in the first grade of secondary education, and the proposal to work with an advance organiser, provoked a debate.

The fourth problem surfaced only later when the Flemish Nationalist wing put forward the demand to pay more attention to the development of 'Flemish consciousness' in the standards.

In this respect it should be noted that in the proposals for the standards a basic role was appointed to 'historical consciousness' -generally formulated-, a role which was not made more explicit in the proposals, nor was it given the interpretation the Flemish Nationalist wing intended.

In the proposals 'historical consciousness' was bracketed with the historical information network without explaining what the relationship between these

³ This research programme was set up by Prof. **W. Goegebeur** Ph.D. (VUB - Dutch Language Free University of Brussels), project director and spokesman, Prof. **F. Simon** Ph.D. (University of Ghent), Prof. **R. De Keyser** Ph.D. (Catholic University of Leuven) joint directors. The research assistants were J. van Dooren and P. Van Landeghem. The reference number is: Ministry of the Flemish Community, OBPWO 94.13.

⁴ Les systèmes éducatifs en Belgique: similitudes et divergences, Bruxelles-Eupen 1991 (OCDE: Examen des politiques nationales d'éducation).

two consists of more particularly, or how this relationship comes into being. This is partly the result of the unfinished debate on 'historical consciousness' which was held in 1987-88 in the 'Mitteilungen' of the 'Internationale Gesellschaft für Geschichtsdidaktik' and which was continued in 1995 in 'Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht'.⁵

One can conclude from this lack of clarity that in the Flemish standards 'historical consciousness' was simultaneously considered as an obvious yet awkward -because difficult to grasp-ultimate objective.

As a result of the social controversy which was at times very fierce and in order to lend the Flemish research into teaching methodology the necessary support, the Flemish regional government decided at the end of 1994, after having followed the advice of an administrative and an international academic committee, to fund an interuniversity research project which was entitled: 'The acquisition of 'historical consciousness' as a condition for moral teaching: the development of a tool for analysis'.

The aim of the commissioning party was clear: to set up a research project which would allow for the formulation of answers to the largest possible number of problems, and thus result in proposals for standards for the second and third grade (pupils within the age group of approx. 14-18) starting from a scientific basis.

This research was carried out between 1 March 1995 and 31 March 1997. At present the results are being discussed in a steering committee and will be published in book form in 1998. Wherever possible an attempt has been made to avoid the duplication of the practically simultaneous international 'Youth and History' research project⁶; the latter was for that matter mainly comparative and cross-cultural in nature and was primarily oriented towards another age group, since the Flemish research project was concerned with final-year students in secondary education (17-18 years of age rather than 15).

2. The research plan

Various research plans ought to have been drawn up in order to meet all the questions which were raised by the social debate. This however, proved to be impossible on a material basis and therefore a selection had to be carried through.

⁵ Fontaine, P.F.M., What is history didactics?, in International Society for History Didactics, Informations, 8. Jg (1987) 95-105; 9. Jg (1988) 5-24; Walz, R., Geschichtsbewusstsein und Fachdidaktik, in Wissenschaft und Unterricht, 1995, 306-321; Pandel, H.-J. & Ruesen, J., Bewegung in der Geschichtsdidaktik?, *ibid.* 322-329.

⁶ Angvik, M. & von Borries, B. (eds.), Youth and History. A comparative European survey on historical consciousness and political attitudes among adolescents, Hamburg 1997.

2.1. The problem of the relationship between values education and history standards

The initial proposals with regard to the standards linked to values were formulated in a fairly modest manner by limiting these proposals to unsubstantial ideologically or morally oriented⁷ attitudes (such as displaying accuracy, showing awareness of changeability, ...) or by only including the initial impetus or onset to the formation of attitudes (such as having attention for...) or by admitting those values about which there currently is a broad social consensus (such as respect for human rights).

In this regard the research team considered it appropriate to start by examining which attitudes and which values are more suitable than others for the teaching of history.

The point of departure consisted of the choice to grant a central position to those values which had been the subject of areas of social tension over the long-term perspective. Values such as wisdom, friendliness, self-respect, the ability to love, the pursuit of happiness etc. which are more essential to private life than to society as a system, were therefore considered more suitable to humanist value lessons, religious instruction or even biology lessons rather than to history instruction.

For that reason the research team started from the Rokeach values survey⁸ but immediately moved towards more socially oriented research such as that of the European Values Study-Study Group⁹ in order to obtain a better overall picture of what meets the possibilities of history instruction as a socially oriented discipline.

Of course it is impossible to consider all the socially oriented values within one single research plan. With a view to the 'learning through experience' theory of P. Freire or D. Kolb¹⁰ and in order to demarcate the area of research more precisely, an appeal was made to the work of W. Klafki¹¹, to name yet another source of information regarding the question of which problems and areas of tension are felt to be particularly acute at present.

Starting from this two-headed approach, that is to say the long-term outlook from a social viewpoint and the level of current social concern, the socio-political value of 'cultural pluralism' (vs. 'ethnocentrism') and the institutional political value of 'commitment to democracy' (vs. a distrust in democracy eventually resulting in authoritarianism) were chosen as content bases for the research.

In case one wishes to secure the illumination of values¹² as a fundamental core objective in the history syllabus for the section on attitudes, an appropriate method of

⁷ Jarrett, J.I., *The teaching of values*, London & New York 1991.

⁸ Rokeach, M., *The nature of human rights*, New York 1973.

⁹ Halman, L. & Vloet, A., *Measuring and comparing values in 16 countries of the Western World*, Tilburg 1994.

¹⁰ Kolb, D.A., *Experiential learning. Experience as a source of learning and development*, Englewood Cliffs (New Jersey), 1984.

¹¹ Klafki, W., *Neue Studien zur Bildungstheorie und Didaktik. Zeitgemässe Allgemeinbildung und Kritisch-konstruktive Didaktik*, Weinheim 1991.

¹² Rath, L.E. & Harmin, M. & Simon, S.B., *Values and teaching: working with values in the classroom*, Columbus, Ohio 1966.

working is starting from values in order to determine the historical content and thus allowing for the formulation of future standards. This would permit to surpass the traditional syllabus approach to the establishment of historical content, which usually starts from the question of what might be the best dilution of the current academic presentation of historical issues. Such a question can of course never be answered in a satisfactory manner. On the contrary, starting from values and value systems allows current social experience to be linked to historically rich and varied areas of tension over the long term.

Starting from this angle permits one to determine which areas of tension and which key concepts are worth retaining in the history syllabus. Furthermore, with an eye to the information network, this approach enables pupils to investigate a differential completion of historical areas of tension and key concepts.

2.2. The problem of the relationship between values and 'historical consciousness'

The question regarding the attestation of historical consciousness with pupils of the final year of secondary education can be stated in connection with the areas of values the research team had chosen to retain, namely socio-cultural pluralism and commitment to democracy.

The problems of historical consciousness among pupils and their acquisition of an historical information network, could thus be dealt with in a single questionnaire (mainly consisting of Likert items). In the research plan it was decided to present the questionnaire repeatedly to five classes in academic secondary education and also to five classes in technical secondary education within the three main Flemish educational organisations. This way we reached 475 respondents.

It would actually have been useful or necessary to verify to what extent the teachers of these classes consciously attempt to generate historical consciousness, since -at least at a theoretical level- this particular objective already holds a central position in the teaching of history within these three main educational systems, together with a number of values and attitudes such as tolerance, equity, sense of right and wrong, equality, eagerness to learn, creativity, flexibility, sense of responsibility, (...). This, however, postulated an additional procedure which was not feasible with the available staff. The result was the formation of a research gap: it ought to be verified whether historical consciousness and values are mainly the outcome of the teaching process rather than of the extracurricular information. Furthermore, the question arises whether the 'results' of the various classes are connected with conscious or unconscious, stronger or more remote efforts on the part of the teachers to achieve the objective of fostering historical consciousness?

From experience within Flanders the directors of this research programme know that objectives, in particular core objectives such as 'the acquisition of historical consciousness' -i.e. not strictly operational goals- do not have a central position in the formulation of the teaching strategies of most teachers.

In addition in-class observation would have been a desirable supplement to the project.

2.3. The problem of the minimal historical reference framework

With regard to the question as to whether the minimal historical reference framework which is considered advisable in the first grade of secondary education -built up from the knowledge and skills already acquired in primary education- can be applied in the form of an advance organiser, a field survey by means of a Delphi inquiry would have been a possible method of research. Presently, this particular problem is passed on to syllabus developers.

The same research method could also have been used for a further determination of the history content considered to be advisable and necessary for this information network with regard to historical events, areas of tension, mechanisms, processes, structures and concepts. Once again, the Flemish standards provide few if any clarification.

In order to determine from which historical content in the areas of values which we selected, one ought to start with when phrasing the questionnaire, the research team took into consideration two factors:

- it has been verified which content was already contained in the current syllabi of the various educational systems;
- furthermore, in the basic academic literature an inquiry has been made into which areas of tension are considered to be determinant for the development of each of the values we had retained, and which concepts can moreover be developed as key concepts.

2.4. The problem of defining the concept of 'historical consciousness'

Although an ultimate objective such as 'the acquisition of historical consciousness' seems almost self-evident for history instruction, it is an objective which is not easy to define in operational terms. Apart from that it is surprising that the French or English-language history didactics literature does not devote a great deal of attention to this core objective, but that it rather considers a series of less extensive or partial aspects (skills and attitudes). The research team was faced with the problem of the reasons for this situation.¹³

¹³ In *Geschichtsbewusstsein empirisch*, Pfaffenweiler 1991, 130, B. von Borries expresses the opinion that the language barrier could be the main reason for this discrepancy. Cf. nevertheless N. Allieu, *De l'histoire des chercheurs à l'histoire scolaire*, in *Savoirs scolaires et didactiques des disciplines*, M. Develay (ed.), Paris 1995, 160-162.

2.4.1. 'Historical consciousness': a concept difficult to define

In order to present a definition of this concept a reference is usually made to K.-E. Jeismann who himself refers to R. Aron (1961) and Th. Schieder (1974). In Jeismann's opinion historical consciousness is:

'die ständige Gegenwart des Wissens, dass der Mensch und alle von ihm geschaffenen Einrichtungen und Formen seines Zusammenlebens in der Zeit existieren, also eine Herkunft und eine Zukunft haben, dass sie nichts darstellen, was stabil, unveränderlich und ohne Voraussetzungen ist. Mehr als blosses Wissen oder reines Interesse an der Geschichte, umgreift Geschichtsbewusstsein den Zusammenhang von Verhangenheitsdeutung, Gegenwartsverständnis und Zukunftsperspektive'.¹⁴

Jeismann's definition can be broken up into three parts:

- the first part is borrowed from what is stated in part of the literature on psychology regarding the concept 'consciousness': it is a state of mind, an internal state of 'being aware';
- the middle part of the definition refers to the core characteristic of history as has already been described by Heraclitus: 'panta rhei';
- the third part refers once again to psychology and states that consciousness is in fact a state of mind in which observations, feelings and memory play a substantial part.

In further psychological analyses it is sometimes stated that consciousness assumes a whole series of abilities and skills, such as the ability to observe and experience, to react in a particular manner, to respond to emotion, to visualise something, to formulate ideas and devise plans, all this by proceeding from a suitable level of sensitivity.

In the field of historical consciousness these skills then refer to the links between the past, the present and the future. Basically this means that historical consciousness requires an enhanced sensitivity for skills involving topics such as change or continuity, cause and result, agreement and dispute.

However, research into an internal subjective state of 'being aware' or into the process of 'becoming aware that something (in this case a historical connection) is present' appears to be difficult to put into operation. In addition psychology textbooks speak of states and gradations within the concept of 'consciousness', which could even be placed on an axis linking two extremes (unconscious - conscious), and consequently do not presuppose the same mental processes.

Historical consciousness is therefore one of those hypothetical constructs which one can apparently observe via manifestations (whether individual or collective) and in

¹⁴ Jeismann, K.-E., in Bergmann, K., et al., *Handbuch der Geschichtsdidaktik*, Seelze-Velber, 40-43.

addition to which one can determine whether these are either spontaneous or well-considered manifestations. But at the same time it is difficult to determine the accumulation of experience which is required for the establishment of this so-called historical consciousness. Nor is it clear why it manifests itself as a result of certain stimuli but not of others. All this hampers the understanding of the concept within the research.

Moreover an accentuated sensitivity in an individual for a rather uncommon method of dealing with information -namely linking past, present and future in one mental process- evokes a number of conditions. These conditions can be summarized as flexibly working with both the decontextualisation of experience (generalising various situations) and its contextualisation (adapting historical information to a specific situation). This leads to the conclusion that historical consciousness, as is sometimes stated in the theory that 'there is no person without some kind of historical consciousness', leaves that person only weak and limited tools when confronted with a question regarding an acute social issue. We could state, to prolong the reference to psychology, that an individual, informed by or preoccupied with one single source of information, can be regarded as obsessional since his specific state of consciousness is focused on one particular conviction.

It is mainly because of these varied states of consciousness that 'historical consciousness' might not be the most appropriate term to depict the ultimate goal of history education. This is also apparent from the fact that a number of different 'statures' are accorded to this consciousness in the didactics literature we examined.

2.4.2. The 'stature' of (the manifestation of) historical consciousness

Our study of the academic literature provided a number of different 'statures' for the manifestation of historical consciousness or for historical consciousness itself.

Already in 1973, P.F.M. Fontaine referred to the concepts of 'awareness', 'involvement' and 'interpretation' ('giving meaning to') as the objectives of the teaching of history.¹⁵ P. Gieles and L. Dalhuisen referred to an attitude¹⁶, whereas J. Ruesen tends towards calling historical consciousness a value or value system.¹⁷ The co-ordination team for the 'Youth and History' project, led by B. von Borries and M. Angvik, speaks about the core of individual and collective identity which has an effect on values, interests, attitudes and actions.¹⁸

The statements of Gieles and Dalhuisen and the formulation of Ruesen, are in fact extensions of one another, supposing one accepts that an attitude is the concrete expression of a value orientation.¹⁹

¹⁵ Fontaine, P.F.M., *Historisch-didactische cahiers*, 1. Doelstellingen, Groningen 1979, 88-90.

¹⁶ Dalhuisen, L.G., *Geschiedenis op school in theorie en praktijk*, 1, Groningen 1982, 87.

¹⁷ Ruesen, J., The development of basic values in historical consciousness: Paper pres. at the 18th Int. Congr. of Hist. Sciences, Montréal, 1-2 Sept. 1995.

¹⁸ *Supra*, n.4.

¹⁹ Baekelmans, R., *Identité et tolérance*, in *Scientia Paedagogica Experimentalis*, vol. 25, 1988, 205-215.

Consequently, it is a matter of granting 'stature' to the core objective of history instruction which enables to deal with both, the state of mind which is the accumulated result of a whole series of experiences with the reference to historical coherence and the orientation of relying on this coherence.

It was precisely in order to name this accumulated mass of experience that in the proposals for the standards of history teaching in Flanders, the historical information network and historical consciousness were mentioned in one and the same breath. However, it appears to be desirable to add a section that identifies this particular orientation of relying on the coherence between past, present and future. Hence it seems to be an appropriate proposition to distinguish between historical consciousness, historical attitude, and social behaviour which relies on such an attitude.

Nevertheless, valuing the coherence between the past, the present and the future and appealing to this coherence means that various sources of information -*among which historical sources*- can influence one's opinions, convictions and behaviour. Within a research project the aforementioned problem concerning the possibility of separation and clearance of the contribution of historical content arises.

2.4.3. The determination of the content of 'historical consciousness'

How can the coherence between past, present and future be explained at a more concrete level? In order to do so the main reference which ought to be considered is H.-J. Pandel who distinguishes seven dimensions in historical consciousness: three fundamental ones, namely awareness of time, awareness of reality and awareness of historicity; and four others, that is to say awareness of identity, political awareness, socio-economic awareness and moral awareness.²⁰

At this point we would like to refer to the schematic representation of the historical information network we laid down in the proposals for the Flemish standards, in which, in addition to the dimension of time and the dimension of historical space (each with a number of specific categories), we also distinguished an encompassing social dimension. This dimension which we called 'sociality' is characterized by differences in social relationships.

Pandel's proposal may therefore be amended: in addition to an awareness of time and historical space, it may generally be stated that there are a number of different ways of being sociable which reveal themselves in various manners of social behaviour. We thus consider the awareness that there are a number of different ways of being sociable which lead to the development and evolution of social reality fields (socio-economic, socio-political, socio-cultural, etc.) not as a sort of complementary dimension but as a basic dimension as well.

²⁰ Pandel, H.-J., Dimensionen des Geschichtsbewusstseins, in *Geschichtsdidaktik*, 12. Jg. 1987, 130-142.

This sociality is based on individual or collective processes of interpretation. It is precisely in these processes that orientation of values and value systems surface and that their meaning becomes apparent. One of these is the value attributed to historical coherence. As a matter of fact it is this central position of value orientations and value systems which makes it desirable to grant a fundamental meaning to their clarification in history lessons and in a research project concerning historical consciousness and the historical attitude.

Pandel is, however, right in his proposal to approach and describe these content dimensions by means of a correlation matrix.

Pandel adds a further content dimension to historical consciousness which he calls the 'sense of historicity'. This concept stands for change or continuity, which are, in our opinion, situated on the interface of the three previous dimensions (time, space and sociality) and thus constituting the core of these three dimensions.

Finally, Pandel distinguishes one more essential dimension which he calls 'the sense of reality'. As such, this dimension is different from the other two which he granted a central position in that it rather refers to skills and more particularly to those skills which are linked to the methodological core of history since the idea of 'critical approach' is irrevocably part of this sense of reality.

In addition, the research team feels it ought to be mentioned that this area of skills in its relationship to historical consciousness is not yet defined in sufficient detail. The question rises as to which skills are more necessary than others for developing this historical consciousness.

Anyway, Pandel's theory adds an element to Jeismann's definition, which remained rather vague when it came to the procedural aspect of this subject, although the capacity to make judgements (re: his definition) should be regarded as inherent to (a certain level of) historical consciousness.

We have already outlined, with regard to the dimension of sociality, that our research involved two value areas and two problems of relevance in current society, which result in very different ways of social behaviour. On the basis of the work of Pandel we would like to add awareness of time as a fundamental issue in a research project concerning historical consciousness and the historical attitude, together with the awareness of change. Awareness of historical space will have a more important role than others in certain problems and tensions. With regard to procedural knowledge we took the view that the ability to relate facts, the ability to argue proceeding from historical coherence and the ability to express a balanced judgement, taking into account that same coherence, are essential skills.

2.4.4. Different states of consciousness

In connection with the problem we have emphasised earlier regarding the often suggested idea of a 'spontaneous generation' of historical consciousness, the research team would like to note that it is possible to make a distinction between what one

might call a 'naive' historical consciousness (in the same way that Le Douanier Rousseau is a 'naive' painter) and the advanced historical consciousness which is the result of a specifically directed teaching process. However, J. Ruesen drew this differentiation even further.

Ruesen proposed to distinguish no less than four levels or stages of development in historical consciousness.²¹ In this respect one could refer to academic psychological literature where a distinction is made between various states of consciousness. These various levels of historical consciousness were well illustrated by von Borries in 1987-88²² in this Journal and by Ruesen himself in his 'Historisches Lernen' with the example of 'human rights'.²³

As our research was oriented on pupils in the final year of secondary education, we considered the genetic level of historical consciousness to be a desirable condition. Granting significance to experience which is solely based on tradition or collective heritage, thus on one single source of information, is in our view not an adequate condition for the ultimate goal of history instruction, neither from the point of view of the methodological requirements of the study of history, nor from that of the essence of history as already expressed by Heraclitus.

2.4.5. The underlying 'structure' of historical consciousness

Von Borries and his colleagues made an attempt to discover an underlying 'structure' in historical consciousness consisting of a cognitive, affective and evaluative dimension.²⁴ Hence we suspect that they too consider the manifestation or expression of historical consciousness as an attitude.

However, the material which forms the basis of their attempts to distinguish the historical component in these dimensions, changes from one research programme to another. Supposing this was only due to the varying nature of the social fields in which historical consciousness is supposed to manifest itself, this would not result in any problems: historical consciousness can never be examined as a static construct. Nevertheless, one of the main difficulties which occur (the authors also name other problems, which might indicate that their attempt to identify the structure of historical consciousness results in a kind of *non possumus* situation) is the choice of one or the other basic scale: it was not always easy to identify the reasons for the varying options. Nevertheless, von Borries and his colleagues make it abundantly clear in their research that historical information (in the broadest sense of the term) is just one of the sources which direct the behaviour, and that the demarcation of the role of this information is not easily conducted.

²¹ Ruesen, J., *Historisches Lernen. Grundlagen und Paradigmen*, Köln 1994.

²² International Society for History Didactics, 9. Jg., 1988, 11-12.

²³ Ruesen, 234.

²⁴ One of von Borries's many studies is *Geschichtsbewusstsein empirisch*, Pfaffenweiler 1991.

The sum of the subsequent research projects of von Borries and his colleagues can be found in the impressive 'Youth and History' project.²⁵

Our research project, which was naturally much more modest, centres around two specific socio-political values and their related attitudes. Moreover, our project starts from a more narrow and at the same time more concrete definition of the ultimate goal of history instruction, on the basis of what has been stated above with regard to the historical dimensions and their mutual relationship, emphasizing the role of values and the historical gestation of value systems, and also with regard to the differentiation between historical information network, historical consciousness as a value, the historical attitude and social behaviour based on this attitude.

3. (Another) working definition of the goal of history instruction

The aforementioned observations have led the research team to undertake a more rigid working definition of the ultimate goal of history instruction which could then be used as a reference point for the research project. Therefore we suggest the following:

historical consciousness is a hypothetical construct which refers to a mental condition (an internal state of 'being aware') that is the result of a whole series of processes of 'becoming aware of' which run through an individual, a social group or a society, who, when confronted with current areas of tension and value systems, grant their social experiences a meaning which relies on historical clarification and anchoring. These processes of clarification and consolidation then permit them to evaluate areas of tension and underlying values proceeding from a qualifying yet critical view, with an eye on their own value orientation and future behaviour.

Such processes of awareness also develop when, in case of a confrontation with areas of tension and value systems from the past, these events are linked with the present and the future.

The commitment to invoke this kind of 'historical' interpretation ascribes value to the coherence between past present and future.

This results in a historical attitude and social behaviour based on this attitude.

In our research programme the efforts could then be directed towards identifying the measurable aspects of information framework, attitude and behaviour.

²⁵ Vide supra, n.4. R. De Keyser, joint director of our research programme also co-ordinated the Flemish section of this project.

4. A schematic presentation of the establishment and manifestation of the historical attitude

In order to examine the development and expression of the historical attitude our research plan was based on the following diagram (see page ~~117~~).

5. The establishment of a tool for analysis of the historical attitude

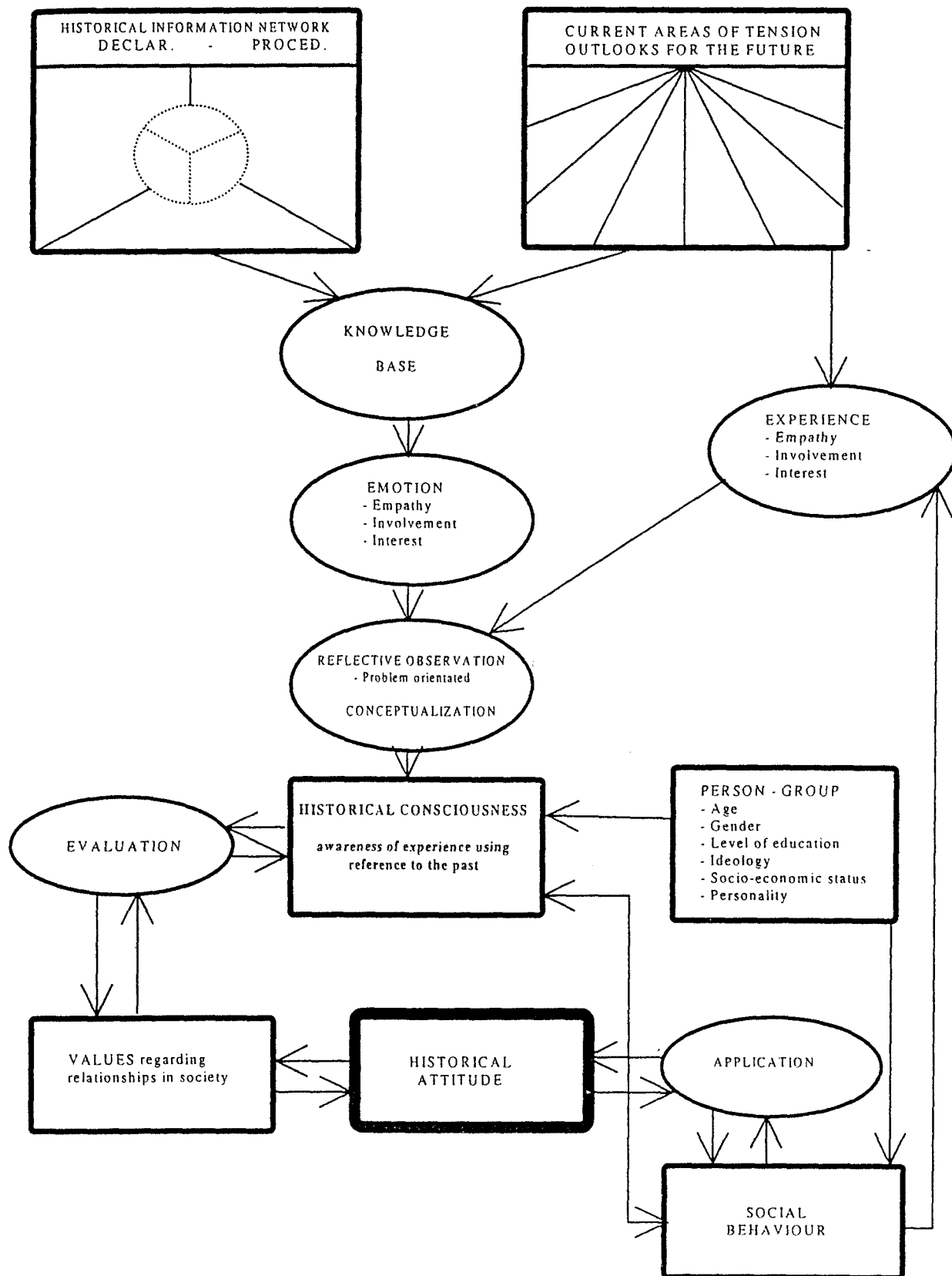
The above diagram demonstrates what input for 'historical consciousness' and what output of the historical attitude we wished to involve in our research. When drawing up our questionnaire we also had to consider the requirements postulated by the client, who wanted to know which level of knowledge and skills the pupils in the final year of secondary education reached. This is, however, directly related to the information network.

Furthermore, in connection with the value judgements derived from our working definition the question was raised as to which interests, which opinions and which convictions exist in these young people after a six-year lasting history instruction.²⁶ Current history instruction in Flanders starts from the popular idea of 'meliorating education' and is explicitly oriented towards the establishment of socio-cultural pluralism and a commitment to democracy.

Thus for each of the areas of values retained, a single pattern of research was sustained, based on our definition of the ultimate goal of history instruction and the diagram in which the position of the historical attitude was sketched. Therefore items and scales were compiled regarding the following:

- historical and current cognitions which include (only) one category of awareness of time (chronological arrangement in time within one social domain); the recognition and understanding of change; knowledge of important historical areas of tension within the retained value domains; knowledge of key concepts; the skill to relate events and produce well-reasoned arguments;
- emotions: interest, involvement and empathy with regard to historical and current areas of tension;
- current evaluation of areas of tension and evaluation based on historical grounds (i.e. by referring to historical arguments);
- intentions regarding current dealings and outlooks for the future.

²⁶ For the above reasons we are unable to say, 'after six years of fine tuning of historical consciousness'.



The results provide information regarding the 'feeling of being informed' (a concept which we gladly took over from von Borries c.s.), and also regarding current and historical knowledge in a declarative as well as a procedural manner.

This declarative knowledge (knowledge of historical concepts, areas of conflict and chronological knowledge) can be researched in greater detail with regard to its internal cohesion.

Furthermore, the results provide a view of current ideas, opinions and attitudes concerning the various areas of values and the intentions directing dealings in relation to the present and the future.

When analysing these results one can verify the eventual connection made by pupils between present, past and future, starting from a number of correlations between current interests and historical interest and involvement, between knowledge, judgement and attitude, between basic knowledge of history and current attitudes, between judgements regarding areas of tension from the present and judgements about similar areas of tension from the past.

Based on our working definition of historical consciousness, we reached the conclusion that considerable attention must be paid to 'within subject' analyses of the relationship between judgements concerning non time linked areas of tension and judgements based on historical situations and tensions.

6. Historical consciousness, the historical attitude and the teaching of history

In order to research historical consciousness and historical attitude a degree of spontaneity in the answers of the respondents is required. This spontaneity is difficult to establish via traditional methods of questioning.

The traditional approach does, however, offer the possibility to investigate where the stronger or weaker correlations between various input factors and output elements of the historical attitude are located within a correlation matrix, in order to improve the history teaching methodology.