



**WORK IN PROGRESS**



**MIDLANDS  
STATE UNIVERSITY**



# Using historical consciousness to conceptualise critical pedagogy in secondary school history teaching in Zimbabwe

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# PRESENTATION OUTLINE



- Background of the paper/ my positionality
- Contribution of paper
- Argument
- History philosophy
- Conceptual issues
- Competence based curriculum
- Ubuntu
- Practical suggestions for classroom practice

## Background/ my positionality



- History school teacher and citizenship and teacher educator
- Taught in rural areas (marginalized and hard to reach)
- Experimentation with teaching methods

## Contribution of paper



- Contributes to debates on pedagogical practices in secondary school history
- Zimbabwe's school curriculum has shifted from a knowledge based curriculum to a competence based curriculum.
- Not much debate on how this can be accomplished despite a general consensus on learner centred teaching

# Argument



- Historical consciousness as the highest level of engagement in a history classroom
- It is a preferred level ahead of historical literacy and historical awareness because of its deep alignment to historical thinking and reasoning

# History Philosophy: what is it?



- Philosophy of History means nothing but the thoughtful consideration of it- Hegel
- It invokes notions of human agency, change, the role of material circumstances in human affairs, and the putative meaning of historical events.
- It raises the possibility of learning from history.
- And it suggests the possibility of better understanding ourselves in the present, by understanding the forces, choices, and circumstances that brought us to our current situation.

# Developments in History philosophy



- i) Speculative –theological approach (Absolute or Divine)- Unquestionable truths
- ii) Enquiry – Age of enlightenment: the new science: Vico and Herder
- History as a process of dialectical change: Hegel and Marx (thesis-antithesis and synthesis)
- Later systems: Post modernist- Multi-perspectivity



# **Pedagogy: Three levels of engagement**



- **Historical literacy**
- **Historical awareness**
- **Historical consciousness**

# Historical literacy



- Historical literacy' is a behaviouristic term
- Demands a mastery of the basic historical information, which enables historical reading and discussion
- It does not require a personal meaning-attribution to history

## Historical awareness



- Ability to link a specific piece of historical information to some well-known basic events and phenomena
- It is a pragmatic requirement but it does not entail being personally bothered about history
- If one cannot do this, the implication is an inability to make sense of the past when encountering its traces or presentations

## Consciousness/ Black consciousness (BC)



- Usually defined from the field of psychology but that's not the field which excites us today
- Biko (1973) BC is the realization of the need to rally together around the cause of our oppression
- To realize that to [mimic the other], is to insult the intelligence of whoever created you
- It takes cognizance of the deliberateness of diversity in humanity

## Historical consciousness



- Is an interaction between making sense of the past and constructing expectations for the future
- Its a rational, intellectually honest way of using history
- It is by no means a product of school alone, but a process of individual growth through reflexive relation with society

## Sir Seretse Khama (1970)



- We were taught, sometimes in a very positive way, to despise ourselves and our ways of life
- We were made to believe that we had no past to speak of, no history to boast of
- The end result of all this was that our self-pride and our self-confidence were badly undermined

## Sir Seretse Khama 1970



- We should write our own history books to prove that we did have a past, and that it was a past that was just as worth writing and learning about as any other
- We must do this for the simple reason that a nation without a past is a lost nation, and a people without a past is a people without a soul

(Parsons 1983)

# Competence –based curriculum



- Critical thinking
- Research
- Problem solving
- Conflict resolution
- Communication
- Decision making



# Ubuntu



- I am because you are (being human through other people)
- Deliberation
- Accommodation
- Trustworthiness
- Respect

# How do we deal with this



- Have a positive attitude, none but your self can change you
- Be your self (original) and participate in reflective practice
- Be a problem solver
- Learn the art to communicate and deliberate with others
- Respect others for who they are they will certainly do the same

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**THE END!!!**



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