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Afrikaner identity in the born-free generation: Voortrekkers, Farmers and Fokofpolisiekar

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies.

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ABSTRACT

The broad aim of this project is to examine the attitudes and opinions of the younger generation of Afrikaners born in or after 1994 at the birth of democracy in South Africa, also referred to as the ‘born-free’ generation, through the medium of long-form journalism. The project consists of two parts. The first is a theoretical and scholarly exploration of Afrikaner identity, including its history and how it is positioned in South Africa today. This is to highlight the baggage that the younger generation could be inheriting from the older generations, which have been described as suffering from a profound identity crisis since the advent of democracy in 1994. The research also examines some of the debates around Afrikaner identity that has played out in the media, as well as some of the writing about it. This includes debates around the Afrikaans language, as the language has been closely associated with Afrikaner identity from the outset. The second part of the project is a long-form article based on interviews with young Afrikaners. They were asked questions to probe how they see themselves in relation to the concept of an Afrikaner identity and how they see their place and future in South Africa. The article also contains elements of my own experiences as an Afrikaner and the issues around identity pertaining to that. While most of the research is not repeated in the long-form article, the article was informed by the theoretical and scholarly piece.

Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters of Arts by Coursework and Research Report in the Department of Journalism, at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Theoretical Introduction	1
1.1	Rationale	1
1.2	Theoretical Framework and Literature Review	6
1.2.1	The Afrikaner	6
1.2.2	Identity	9
1.2.3	Media and Language Debates	12
1.2.4	Music and Identity	14
1.3	Methodology	17
2.	Long-form Journalism Piece	20
2.1	Voortrekkers, Farmers and Fokofpolisiekar: Afrikaner Identity in the born-free generation	20
3.	Conclusion	42
4.	Bibliography	42

1. THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 RATIONALE

In a recent review of a handful of books about the Afrikaner, *Mail&Guardian* journalist Charles Leonard noted that readers may want to ask why they should bother with books about the Afrikaners.

> The Afrikaners as a nation (if such a monolith ever existed, which I doubt) is so passé, so pre-democracy, so irrelevant, even though the latest Amps figures say there are five million South Africans with Afrikaans as their home language (third after Zulu, eight million, and Xhosa, five-point-one million). Surely there are more important books dealing with the nation as a whole? (2013)

The same could probably be argued for a project on the Afrikaner. However, Leonard went on to say that, although he grew up in an Afrikaner household and quickly tired of "Afrikaner soul-searching, identity interrogation and navel-gazing" and is "bored beyond tears" by the debates in the Afrikaans press about the survival of the language and the nation, books about Afrikaners should be published and read because, as Jawaharlal Nehru said: "You don't change the course of history by turning the faces of portraits to the wall."

According to Benedict Anderson all nations and all forms of nationalism are based on imagined political communities (1991: 6). They are imagined because even the members of the smallest nation will never know, meet, or even hear of most of their fellow members. Despite this fact, because they are imagined as a community of comradeship and fraternity, many people have been willing to die for these imagined nations (1991: 7). The Afrikaner, as well as being an imagined community, is also a deliberately constructed one (Blaser & Van der Westhuizen, 2012: 381). While there is a shared language, as well as some shared history and cultural practices, the idea of the Afrikaner as of Western European origin, white, Christian and Calvinist was carefully constructed and reproduced, particularly in the period after the Boer War (Moodie, 1975: 2). Maintaining the "separateness" and "uniqueness" of the Afrikaner from the British and black South Africans was seen as a sacred duty (1975: 15). This project gave rise to separate development theory, which was the justification for apartheid (1975: 260). The apartheid state continued to promote Afrikaner ethnic nationalism, which was a dominant influence in shaping

Afrikaner identifications (2007: 34). It is important to note, however, that who counts as an Afrikaner and what it means to be an Afrikaner has been contested since the term was first documented in the early 18th century (Blaser & Van der Westhuizen, 2012: 381).

Almost two decades have passed since the apartheid regime came to an end when the African National Congress (ANC) won the first democratic election in 1994, after nearly 46 years of National Party (NP) rule in South Africa. The end of apartheid caused a profound dislocation in Afrikaner identifications. What has been said to have made the situation of this group particularly striking is the fact that they had to adapt to the loss of political power at the same time that they experienced a substantial rise in economic influence (Davies, 2009: 1). In addition to the profound changes the Afrikaner has gone through since 1994, the term ‘Afrikaner’ has also become almost synonymous with racism in the eyes of the world and will probably remain tainted due to the atrocities and human rights abuses committed by the apartheid regime in the name of the Afrikaner (Blaser, 2007: 120). The Afrikaners were the bad guys and had become the “skunks” of the world (De Vries, 2012: 7; Steyn, 2004: 150). Therefore, the dislocation and identity adjustment the Afrikaner has had to go through has often been compared to the situation of the Germans and even the Japanese after World War II (Blaser, 2007: 166; Van der Waal & Robins, 2011: 772; De Vries, 2012: 74). The “imagined” or “constructed” nature of the Afrikaans community, as well as the period of dislocation and identity adjustment makes the Afrikaner a very interesting case study with regard to identity and particularly group identity, and explains why so much research from fields including sociology, psychology, education, literature and cultural studies, anthropology and philosophy has focused on this subject.

As such, much has been written about how white Afrikaans communities are adapting to the sudden loss of power and influence, along with perceived discrimination through government policies such as affirmative action and black economic empowerment (BEE), as well as the perceived threat to their culture and language (De Vries, 2012: 341; Visser, 2007: 3; Van der Waal & Robins, 2011: 774). Some reactions have included internal migration to the all-white enclave Orania, “semigration” (where some move to high-walled security neighbourhoods where they ‘withdraw’ from the realities of South Africa) and emigration to countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Canada (Visser, 2007: 3). Another way of adapting to the change has been a revival of group-based politics that emphasises minority cultural rights (Davies, 2009: 4). Some Afrikaner cultural groups, the union Solidarity and the affiliated civil rights organisation AfriForum are

attempting to preserve a more formal minority grouping appealing for cultural protection through the 1996 Constitution, various United Nations conventions and a globalised liberalism (Davies, 2009: 4).

There are, however, also some who have embraced the new South Africa and believe that Afrikaners carry the responsibility for the apartheid past as a group (Davies, 2009: 91). The former vice-chancellor of the North-West University in Potchefstroom, Theuns Eloff, identifies four groups of white Afrikaans-speakers, taking into account their enthusiasm for the new South Africa and their appreciation of Afrikaans language and culture (De Vries, 2012: 10). The “active opposers” are those to whom Afrikaans language and culture is very important, and who actively oppose the new government. Extremists and those campaigning for an Afrikaner “volkstaat” (nationstate) fall into this category. The “passive opposers” are often from higher income groups. They send their children to English schools and believe South Africa is heading in the wrong direction, but they don’t actively engage with the South African reality. Younger generations also often fall into this group, and are most likely to consider emigration. This group is against affirmative action and BEE, and there is often a sentiment that the government should do more to help the poor, instead of wasting limited state resources on changing the names of cities, towns, streets and buildings (Jansen, 2009: 40). The third group are the “inclusive proponents” who are often out of touch with Afrikaner issues but identify strongly with the new South Africa and attempts at reconciliation. Lastly, the “active proponents” feel strongly about Afrikaner issues but remain very involved in the new South Africa, insisting on the rights of minority groups and actively challenging the ruling ANC (De Vries, 2012: 10).

In his recent book *Rigtingbedonnerd,* Dutch writer Fred de Vries, who has lived in South Africa for more than ten years, asks whether there is still a place for white people (and specifically Afrikaners) in South Africa. After speaking to many Afrikaners across different generations and across all four groups mentioned above, he concludes:

> Of course there is a place for the Afrikaner in South Africa. Unless something very dramatic happens, on the scale of 9/11 or the Rwandan genocide of 1994, something totally unexpected and unpredictable. Unless something like that happens, there is a place for Afrikaners in this country, even if it is only due to a lack of alternatives. Afrikaners are, after all, South African citizens and can’t just go somewhere else as a nation. (2012: 390)

Thus most Afrikaners will stay in South Africa, and the question becomes: how do they fit in and what is the role that they should fulfil in the new South Africa? How do they adapt and renegotiate their identity?

This is where the younger generation becomes of particular interest. While working as Dean of Education at the University of Pretoria between 2001 and 2007, Jonathan Jansen was surprised that students who had not lived through apartheid, came into the university with a "powerful knowledge of the past" (2009: 49), and that they held this knowledge "firmly, personally, and emotionally" (2009: 52). He came to the conclusion that the students inherited this knowledge from their parents.

> More than any other group, the Afrikaner child is a product of an intense set of closed circle interactions that establish and reinforce identity, memory, and knowledge of the past. This is still a culturally cohesive formation of people bound together closely through ties of history, language, culture, and struggle. The lines of transmission for knowledge therefore run much more linearly than in any other social grouping, such as English-speaking white South Africans or any one of the black communities in the country. (2009: 70)

Jansen found that, because of the transmission of knowledge, the identity of Afrikaner students had not changed as much as he expected it in the first decade after 1994.

After the fall of apartheid, South Africa went through a period of optimism fuelled by 'rainbow nation' sentiment. Much hope was placed on the children being born into this new democracy. It was hoped that they would grow up to be colourblind in a country of equal opportunity. The first group of the so-called "born-free" generation finished high school in 2012 and are preparing to start their independent lives and careers in South Africa. Those born in white Afrikaans-speaking households never knew the direct privilege of living under apartheid, but 'whiteness' still holds a great deal of privilege and advantage in South Africa. Although there is a growing black middle-class, and many have become rich through policies such as BEE, Davies notes that neither affirmative action nor BEE has significantly altered the overall patterns of income distribution in the country (2009: 93). While political power is no longer the privilege of white South Africans, economic privilege continues (Verwey & Quayle, 2012: 556). Afrikaner capital has seen a great deal of success and the middle class has become increasingly globalised after the scrapping of apartheid sanctions and due to the macro-economic policy of the new dispensation (Davies, 2009: 134, 70). Jansen agrees, saying

> Whites remain better qualified, on average, than blacks. White graduates find jobs more easily than black graduates. The private sector remains dominated by white economic power. Boardrooms remain overwhelmingly white, and decisions about employment and directorships still favour whites (and white males in particular). Whites have accumulated assets on the back of race that yield advantage to successive generations into the foreseeable future. (2009: 29)

Prominent Afrikaans writer Etienne van Heerden has remarked that he doesn't find the current generation of twenty- and thirty-year-olds interesting, because they are still riding the wave of white privilege. South Africa is still driven by "old momentums like shame, white capital and bureaucracy". He believes, however, that new momentums will become visible in the future (De Vries, 2012: 173). The born-free generation did grow up in a landscape significantly different from the generations before them. If the Afrikaner is worth studying to prevent the mistakes of the past, the generations to come are of particular importance to see whether the lessons from those mistakes have been passed on, or whether they just want to forget apartheid ever happened. With race and inequality never far from the top of the agenda in South Africa, the importance of this project is that it can offer insight into the mindsets of some of these young Afrikaans-speakers.

The aim is to find out how these so-called born-free Afrikaners relate to issues around Afrikaner identity. A long-form article is the ideal format to tell their stories, as it will allow more room for narrative, nuance and context without some of the restraints of academic writing.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2.1 The Afrikaner

As was briefly discussed in the previous section, who or what an Afrikaner - or the Afrikaner - is, is not a straightforward or unproblematic question. According to Giliomee, the term “Afrikaners” was first used for white South Africans early in the eighteenth century, but it had to compete with other terms such as Burgher, Christian, Dutchman and Boer. The term was only reserved for white Afrikaans-speakers in the mid-twentieth century (2003: xix). There is a “profound confusion” around what it means to be an Afrikaner in the twenty-first century after the end of Afrikaner nationalism (Blaser, 2007: 111). However, the term Afrikaner, what it means, and who it includes or excludes has been a matter of debate since it was first used (Blaser & Van der Westhuizen, 2012: 381).

Afrikaner nationalism has been described as the “Afrikaner civil religion” (Moodie, 1975: ix). This civil faith is grounded in an interpretation of the history of the group, called the “sacred history”, which sees the Afrikaner as a people elected by God and given a special destiny (1975: 3). This civil religion was actively cultivated by politicians, writers and organisations such as the Afrikaner Broederbond and the Ossewabrandwag (1975: x), and was reinforced through tales of heroes and martyrs in the Great Trek and Boer War, and rituals and symbols that portrayed the themes of the civil faith (1975: 18). The Battle of Blood River was particularly important within the sacred history, as it emphasised the position of the Afrikaner as a chosen people with a great destiny. According to Jansen, the inherited memories and identity of the Afrikaner is still largely built on this mythological knowledge of the past as the “proud restoration of a people under divine guidance who created South Africa” (2009: 46). This knowledge predates apartheid, and is still to a large extent defined by the Boer War and the concentration camps in which thousands of Afrikaner women and children died, which Jansen claims left an indelible mark on Afrikaner identity and remains central to their knowledge of the past (2009: 67).

From the outset, Afrikaner nationalism contained a strong element of Christianity, despite the origins of the Afrikaans language in the black and largely Muslim communities, (Wasserman, 2001: 37) and repressed its mixed origins (Wicomb, 2008: 138). In fact, before and during apartheid the Creole or mixed heritage of Afrikaans and the Afrikaner was repressed in favour of the myth of white, European homogeneity (Wicomb, 2008:

138). According to Giliomee a genealogical researcher has estimated that seven percent of Afrikaner families have a non-European progenitress (2003: 18). Davies also emphasises that a distinctive Afrikaner social identity was deliberately cultivated by the regime, state and other organisations through a programme of political and ideological engineering. This programme stirred up nationalist sentiments to fix conceptions of group interests, while acquiring material rewards for the group (Davies, 2009: 18). According to Blaser and Van der Westhuizen, it is important not to naturalise ethnic identity and nationalist ideology.

> The alleged ethnic coherence and racial homogeneity of Afrikanerness was discursively constructed from the social diversity found among Afrikaans-speakers and reproduced through careful policing of boundaries. Homogeneity was ideologically crafted and reproduced among white Afrikaans- speakers, who maintained far fewer ties with the European continent than other settlers in Africa. (Blaser & Van der Westhuizen, 2012: 381)

Blaser, however, cautions against giving too much weight to the state and "elite manipulation" in forming identity, and notes that people choose to associate with group identities for other reasons than material rewards. This includes the moral and emotional satisfaction that can accompany collective identity formation (2007: 34).

While many chose to be associated with this identity, it is important to note that not all who fell under the Afrikaner grouping did so willingly, or agreed with apartheid. A number of writers, including Andre´ P. Brink, Etienne Leroux, Breyten Breytenbach, Antjie Krog, Elsa Joubert and John Miles opposed apartheid and contributed to the creation of alternative Afrikaans identities separate from those endorsed by the hegemony (Wasserman, 2001: 38). In the 1980s the *Voëlvry* movement of alternative musicians, which included Koos Kombuis and Johannes Kerkorrel, also challenged the cultural hegemony of the Afrikaner establishment (Van der Waal & Robins 2011: 777). Other Afrikaner dissidents who played important roles include the Dutch Reformed theologian Beyers Naude (Jansen, 2009: 73), the opposition politician Frederick van Zyl Slabbert who led a group of Afrikaners to a conference with the ANC leadership in Dakar in 1987, and the journalist Max du Preez, who founded the anti-establishment newspaper *Vrye Weekblad* (Pienaar, 2012: 27).

When apartheid came to an end in the early nineties, due to a combination of pressure from the ANC and the struggle movement, international pressure and growing disunity and

a class-split within the ranks of the Afrikaner community, Afrikaner nationalism also all but disappeared (Blaser, 2007: 94). This followed the disbanding of the once powerful National Party (re-branded as the New National Party) in 2005, as well as the sharp decline in the Broederbond and Dutch Reformed Church (Gilliomee, 2003: 660), which were seen as the pillars of Afrikaner nationalism. As a result of this, as well as other long-term developments, Afrikaner identities seemed to 'lose their moorings'. Blaser describes Afrikaner identities as shifting, lacking purpose, and bereft of meaning (2007: 129-30). Visser agrees, saying that the identity of the Afrikaner remains, to a certain extent, in flux, with many people who choose to be associated with the term or are associated by either language or culture, trying to define what it means (2007: 15). Jansen describes this as a trauma that has not yet been studied and understood in all its hurt and complexity (2009: 47).

As noted earlier, statistics from Census 2011 show that Afrikaans is still the third most spoken home language in South Africa (Davis, 2012). Analysis of the data, however, reveals that only about 40% of those who speak Afrikaans at home, are white. While attempts are underway to be more inclusive and include black and brown Afrikaans speakers into a language community rather than an ethnic group, during apartheid these Afrikaans speakers were excluded from the discourse of Afrikaner nationalism on the basis of their "race" (Wicomb, 2008: 9; Wasserman, 2001: 37). Wicomb notes that, while Afrikaner identity formed on the basis of a common past and a common enemy in the British and became a well-defined form of nationalism, today it is no longer an "organised ethnicity", but rather a language community (2008: 9).

Davies notes that there are major discrepancies among Afrikaans speakers in South Africa today and no singular or widely accepted definition of 'Afrikanerness', except that of language affiliation. According to Davies it is, however, undeniable that a pervasive sense of "being Afrikaans" does still exist, with many white South Africans still identifying themselves as Afrikaners. This is evident in the growing market for Afrikaans music and the continuing popularity of Afrikaans arts festivals (2009: 120-121). Davies offers three definitions of the Afrikaner. Firstly, an ascriptive definition, which includes everyone who has Afrikaans as their mother tongue. Secondly, an ancillary definition, which includes 'all whites that boast Afrikaans as their mother tongue'. Thirdly, the self-identifying definition. This makes an Afrikaner someone who identifies himself / herself as belonging to a distinct group, defined in terms of either identification with cultural homogeneity converging on the

Afrikaans language or in terms of self-consciousness at being a political minority in South Africa (2009: 8).

1.2.2 Identity

The two most common views of identity are the primordial approach, which sees ethnicity as a basic component of human organisation, and the constructivist perspective, which emphasises the contextual nature of what they regard as a social construction (Wicomb, 2008: 22). In other words

> ...identity (especially group identity) does not have a single point or moment of origin but is always being constructed and is not given and fixed but rather is constantly (re)produced in and as performance. (2008: 23)

The constructivist approach is the more popular at the moment, as it takes into account that identities are contingent, in flux and subject to change, as is also evident in the evolving nature of Afrikaner identity (Blaser, 2007: 5). During apartheid however, the apartheid government primordialised identities to justify racial and ethnic separation (Blaser & Van der Westhuizen, 2012: 381).

Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 1) warn that the prevailing constructivist stance on identity and describing it with terms such as “multiple, unstable, in flux, contingent, fragmented, constructed and negotiated”, may be problematic. They claim that by “softening” the term to avoid essentialism and by using it to talk about both “strongly binding, vehemently felt groupness” and “more loosely structured, weakly constraining forms of affinity and affiliation” (2000: 21), it leaves us without the necessary terminology to discuss contemporary identity politics (2000: 1). They suggest using words such as identification, commonality and connectedness instead of identity to differentiate between the different usages, as these words lack the reifying and essentialist connotations of the term identity (2000: 14, 20). While taking note of this concern, most of the sources I quote make liberal use of the word identity, which makes it hard to exclude it from my project completely.

Blaser argues that, in late modernity, a combination of structural changes and evolving sensitivities have led to the break-up of identities. Identities are no longer defined by traditional markers such as class, race, gender, ethnicity and nationality (2007: 7). Five characteristics in particular have played important roles in the formation of contemporary

identities. These characteristics are individualisation, detraditionalisation, consumption, risk and globalisation. In this era, “unified and stable” identities are becoming fragmented and individuals are conceptualised as having several and even contradictory identities. The individual, at the centre of planning and conducting life, has to choose which groups or subcultures they want to identify with (2007: 43).

Blaser interviewed young Afrikaners (those who are currently in their late twenties and thirties) and came to the conclusion that they don’t have one dominant identity, but multiple identities

> ..speaking different languages and moving between different ethnicities, making personal and professional choices and so on, contribute to creating and re-creating identities. Contradictions appear. Looking to the future, one wants to reach out and shape a new identity with the Other, but there is also a desire to value tradition, culture and language and take pride in it... Many of the young Afrikaners interviewed see themselves as more liberal than previous generations. They understand that there are different ways of being Afrikaner and Afrikaans and they have a sense of opening up to people of other backgrounds...They have the “luxury of moral choice” and most people I interviewed reject anything that has to do with ethno-national politics. (2007:16-17)

He notes, however, that while the construction of identity is increasingly an individual task (a personal task and a personal responsibility), identities are still “sanctioned and validated” socially (2007: 52).

Jonathan Jansen agrees that all identities, including Afrikaner identities are subject to change and increasingly dispersed (2009: 250). However, he notes that

> ...political and cultural identities are not like an overcoat that can be slipped off as easily as weather changes; they are a much more complex and constrained process in which change exists alongside continuity, and the preparedness to change is not unconditional, divorced from self-interest, or without contradictions. (2009: 250)

He studied the transmission of knowledge from Afrikaner parents to their children by looking at research about the children of Holocaust survivors and perpetrators. Jansen acknowledges that it is problematic to compare apartheid to the holocaust, but believes there are important comparisons that can be drawn without “collapsing the two events into one account of human suffering and without claiming uniqueness for either event” (2009: 55). The fact that second-generation Holocaust children, despite not having lived through

the holocaust, still behave as if they were there, is described as the paradox of indirect knowledge. These kinds of traumatic events often overshadow and overwhelm the lives of the second generation. In fact, their relationship to these events are defined by their "postness" — the fact that they did not experience it (2009: 53).

Jansen found that white Afrikaner children display many of the same responses as the children of Nazi perpetrators (2009: 66). This includes issues of silence, denial, aggression, irritability, externalisation, shame and guilt (2009: 55). Importantly, however, he notes that there is a wide range of responses among young Afrikaners, as they are more fragmented in ideology, interests and politics than ever before (2009: 69).

According to Jansen knowledge is transmitted from one generation to the next through informal means including food, stories, songs, friends and speaking the native language, as well as formal means such as education, religion, politics, culture and charity. These means of transmission are "multiple, complex and mediated by numerous variables" (2009: 70). Jansen believes that the cohesion is stronger and the lines of transmission more direct within the Afrikaner community than many other South African communities. This is especially true of young Afrikaners who attend single-medium Afrikaans schools and Afrikaans churches and mostly socialise with Afrikaner peer groups and family. For them, university will probably be the point where their inherited knowledge is challenged or ruptured for the first time — as there are no exclusive white universities left in South Africa (2009: 141).

The inherited knowledge, however, is not of specific historical events, but rather thematic knowledge around "broad themes of conquest and humiliation, struggle and survival, suffering and resilience, poverty and recovery, black and white" (2009: 260). The second generation also inherited the experience of defeat and trauma at the end of apartheid. This knowledge not only encompasses these themes and emotions, but also gaps in the knowledge, or what is left out (2009: 46).

> Locked into these white spaces, students never learn an African language from other indigenous South African communities; they do not learn about the struggles of black people for self-determination; they fail to gain knowledge about international social movements for change such as civil rights movements in the USA, or anticolonial struggles in Latin America, or about the great African intellectuals and their literature. (2009: 109)

According to Jansen inherited or indirect knowledge can and should be challenged. He warns, however, that it can be an emotional and traumatic experience (2009: 46).

1.2.3 Media and language debates

Several high profile debates around Afrikaner identity have played out in the media in recent years. Most of the debates tend to take place within Afrikaans media. Steyn analysed letters to the Afrikaans Sunday newspaper *Rapport* in 2001, and found that many who consider themselves Afrikaners were involved in “intense”, “active”, and “aggressive” defence and production of identity (Verwey & Quayle, 2012: 557). Steyn found that

> ...deep-seated anxieties about identity and loss of self are discernible in the letters...Afrikaners are contending with a profound existential crisis, grappling with the question "Who are we?" Answering this question was the dominant discursive preoccupation of the letters to the editor of *Rapport* during 2001, and formed the subtext to almost all the topics that were discussed in the public forum, even those that apparently were quite unrelated. (2004: 153)

In the light of the endless soul-searching about the cultural and political existence of the Afrikaner and their relationship to the new South Africa, a professor in political science at the University of Stellenbosch, Amanda Gouws, has asked in a newspaper column whether there is any other population group in the world that is so “obsessed” with its identity as white Afrikaners (Visser, 2007: 8).

One of the most hotly debated issues is the use and survival of the Afrikaans language, as the survival of the language is seen as closely related to the survival of the Afrikaner as a group (Blaser, 2007: 116). This was illustrated again in 2013 when an Afrikaans Judge caused an outcry when she suggested that Afrikaans should not be used in courts anymore (Rademeyer, 2013). A survey among Afrikaners has found that the issue of language rights is the area where white Afrikaans speakers felt most threatened and ethnically marginalised, and that a sense of being discriminated against in terms of language and culture is a matter of near-consensus (Visser, 2007: 8). This is due to pressures to downgrade Afrikaans within the legal system, a dramatic decline in Afrikaans on television, on signage and on product labelling. The biggest outcry, however, has been caused by government pressure to convert Afrikaans schools and universities to parallel-

or dual-medium institutions to make education more accessible to non-Afrikaans speakers (2007: 8), with the fiercest debate erupting around language issues at the University of Stellenbosch (2007: 11). The defence of the language can in part be attributed to the emotional narrative of the Afrikaner's defeat at the hands of British forces and the continued hegemony of English institutions and English power after the Boer War (Jansen, 2009: 32). This narrative is used to explain why South Africa is still the only country that has built a monument to a language - the *Afrikaans Taalmonument* (Afrikaans Language Monument) in Paarl in the Western Cape (2009: 33). That Afrikaans is seen to be suffering at the expense of English, makes it particularly hard to handle.

One of the reactions to the threat against Afrikaans is to redefine it as an indigenous language, along with the other African languages. However, while this attempts to present a community of equals consisting of Afrikaans and African languages, some see it as an attempt to hide the fact that Afrikaans is a much better developed language (in literature and academia) than the other indigenous languages (Steyn, 2004: 159). As certain Afrikaner organisations, such as Solidarity and AfriForum, work to reposition Afrikaners as a minority group that needs protection against a threatening majority, it could further be argued that

> ..because of the moral ambiguity of the group's past, there is a desire to ground the legitimacy of the group's fight for survival as a minority in the new multicultural South African society, in a more 'neutral' aspect of their identity. (Wicomb, 2007: 168)

Steyn, also pessimistic, sees a strategic recalculation in how the Afrikaner wants to be positioned within the international media and global discourses:

> ..a complete about turn from being viewed as a band of abusive white supremacists hell-bent on defying the international human rights-respecting world, to a vulnerable, threatened community in need of the protection of accepted international safeguards to preserve their cultural / ethnic rights. (2004: 161)

Blaser, however, found that the young Afrikaners he interviewed feel ambivalent about mobilising for the Afrikaans language and shy away from or are simply against mobilising on ethnic grounds (2007: 16, 119). Many young Afrikaners are also choosing to study and work in English, because of its market value and the greater flexibility it offers for job opportunities in South Africa and abroad (Jansen, 2009: 247).

1.2.4 Music and identity

Music often plays a key role in the identifications of adolescents, as it gives young people something to identify with—often a subculture attached to a certain kind of music—at a time when identity is seen as increasingly fragmented (Klopper, 2009: 123). Annie Klopper sees popular music as one of the different resources that can be used in identity formation as a process of becoming, along with history, language and culture (2009: 195).

Certain musicians and bands in particular have started conversations pertaining to Afrikaner identity. As mentioned earlier, the *Voëlvry* movement of alternative musicians challenged the cultural hegemony of the Afrikaner establishment in the 1980s (Van der Waal & Robins 2011: 777). Musicians such as Bernoldus Niemand, Koos Kombuis and Johannes Kerkorrel voiced their political and social dissatisfaction through their music (Kahn, 2009: 8) and mockery of symbols and institutions such as the Dutch Reformed Church, the South African Defence Force and the NP, which were deemed sacred (Pienaar, 2012: 5). They were subsequently banned from performing on some university campuses, and were harassed by the police and security services (Kahn, 2009: 8). While some, such as Giliomee, ignore the importance of the movement, it is nostalgically viewed as having had "enormous importance", and it has been argued that the nostalgia and resultant mythologising of *Voëlvry* have helped "to manufacture an anti-apartheid past" for young Afrikaners grappling with post-apartheid issues of identity (Pienaar: 2012: 9).

Continuing in the tradition of the *Voëlvry* movement, the alternative rock band Fokofpolisiekar was formed in April 2003. While they are considered more mainstream than the *Voëlvry* musicians (as their songs are played on radio and their audience is not limited to a counterculture) it has been noted that they also sing about "disillusionment, apathy and social politics" (Kahn, 2009: 9). Their songs are not overtly political, but they do touch on themes such as race, language, identity and classification — from their suburban, middle-class Cape Town background (Kahn, 2009: 10). The themes of redemption and identity are particularly pertinent in their lyrics (Klopper, 2009: 124), and their name itself speaks of rebellion against authority (2009: 127). Their music and provocative behaviour fuelled debates in media and at arts festivals. This included an incident in 2005 when one of the band members wrote "*Fok God"* when he autographed a teenage fan's wallet. Their rejection of organised religion caused an outcry against them in conservative Afrikaner

circles, as religion has historically been strongly tied to Afrikaner culture and identity (Kahn, 2009: 10-11).

Another debate that played out in local and international media was around the song De la Rey by Bok van Blerk (the stage name of singer Louis Pepler), released in 2006. While Van Blerk and his co-songwriter maintain that they were just expressing pride in their Afrikaner history, the song became "entangled with the politics of right-wing Afrikaner nationalism" and was seen by some as a "call to arms" against the ANC government (Van der Waal & Robins, 2011: 763). Koos de la Rey was a general known for his bravery and intransigence during the Boer War (De Vries, 2012: 68). He represents a time when the Afrikaner fought shoulder to shoulder against a much larger British army (2012: 65). While the song calls for General De La Rey to lead the boer forces, it was interpreted by many as a call for a strong leader to guide the post-apartheid Afrikaner. The sentiment in the song reflected and absorbed the fears, anxieties, anger and confusion of many Afrikaners at the time it was released (Jansen, 2009: 48). The song was criticised by many, including the journalist Max du Preez who called it "Viagra for pimpled youths" (De Vries, 2012: 67). Others, notably the poet and writer Antjie Krog, viewed the song more positively. Krog believed that the song offered an opportunity for young Afrikaners to create a sense of pride in their history that could provide them with possibilities of identifying with the new South Africa (Van der Waal & Robins, 2011: 772). The heroic character of the Boer War general could allow the young Afrikaners to bypass the generation of their parents, who bore the shame of apartheid, and be proud of the generations before.

While the whole debate has been described as nothing more than a storm in a teacup, which left little trace on Afrikaner identity (Wicomb, 2008: 171), it did again highlight the important fact that most young Afrikaners don't want to be saddled with the guilt of apartheid, or the responsibility of righting the wrongs of the past. Van Blerk himself was quoted as saying:

> My generation of Afrikaners wants to be proud of who we are, and where we come from, and our language. We don't want to say sorry any more. This is a democratic South African and we have moved on. (Davies 2009: 119)

This sentiment has also been reflected in music by other artists of this generation, such as in the song "Nie Langer" (No Longer) by the band Klopjag, and "Proudly South African" by Die Melktert Kommissie (Van der Waal & Robins, 2011: 774). In his interviews with young

Afrikaners, Blaser also found the majority of them don’t see the need for redress and suggest that the apartheid past should be forgotten (2007: 20).

1.3. METHODOLOGY

The project was done in the qualitative tradition, through interviews with young Afrikaners. As such, the aim of the project was not to make objective, generalised findings on contemporary young Afrikaners but rather to explore the issues of Afrikaner identity through the views, opinions and attitudes of a small sample of interviewees (Maree, 2008: 56).

The participants in the interviews were selected through a combination of criterion sampling and snowball sampling (Maree, 2008: 79). I asked colleagues, friends and family members to refer me to young Afrikaners who might have given some thought to issues around their identity. I also used snowball sampling or chain referral sampling to ask participants I have already spoken to, to refer me to other potential participants that fit the criteria (Maree, 2008: 80).

The criterion was that they come from a white, Afrikaans-speaking home, or that they consider themselves Afrikaners despite not growing up in a white, Afrikaans-speaking home. This was meant to leave room to find participants who fall outside the traditional Afrikaner fold. While I could not find any coloured or black Afrikaans speakers who consider themselves Afrikaners, I do believe it is very possible that there are young South Africans who fit that description. Secondly, I focused on those who fall within the so-called born-free category, which includes anyone born in or after 1994. There are, however, different theories on who exactly the born-free generation is. Political theorist Robert Mattes considers the born-frees to be those who came of age politically after 1996, and possibly voted for the first time in the 1999 election (Mattes, 2011: 7). However, in South African and international media the term has overwhelmingly been applied to those who were born in and after 1994. One of the participants, Dalaine Krige, told me that they were constantly referred to as the born-free generation as part of the IEB matric curriculum. Therefore, I decided to use the term in this manner, taking note of the fact that there are different interpretations. I also chose this age group as I felt it allowed for al least some contrast with my experience. I was born in 1983, thus living ten years of my life during apartheid as opposed to the born-frees, who started their lives at the beginning of the new South Africa.

The participants were between 17- and 19-years old. I also tried to find participants from different backgrounds and from different parts of Gauteng, as well as Potchefstroom in North West, although this admittedly limited the responses I received. I would predict a much wider variety of responses had I interviewed young Afrikaners in the Western Cape or the Free State, for instance. In addition to the young Afrikaners, I also interviewed my own parents to help me get more insight into the apartheid-mindset and the knowledge that I may have inherited from the generation before me.

The data gathering was done through individual, semi-structured interviews, as it allowed me some freedom to probe and clarify the participants' answers, and to follow up when new lines of enquiry emerged during the interviews (Maree, 2008: 87). The interview started out with biographical questions to get an idea of the participant's background and personality. This included questions about their parents' jobs, the schools they attended and their hobbies and interests. It became more focused on issues pertaining to identity towards the end of the interview. I tried to do the interviews in environments where the interviewees spend a lot of time and that would give me further insight into their lives, such as their homes or their residences at university, but ultimately I left it up to them to choose a place where they felt comfortable to do the interview.

One of the main challenges was finding suitable participants. Part of the problem was that the born-free generation is still relatively young, with those born in 1994 turning 20 this year. This meant that many people of that age simply hadn't given much thought to issues around identity. Many of them had also grown up in quite sheltered, Afrikaans environments without much personal exposure to other cultures and ethnic groups. I think if they were to be interviewed in five or ten year's time, an interviewer might be able to get more complex and nuanced answers from the participants. I originally planned to do four to six interviews, but I ended up doing ten because I was worried that the participants did not represent enough diversity in their opinions and attitudes. I had to stop after ten interviews, however, because I had run out of time.

Once the interviews were completed, they were transcribed and translated. The interviews were then analysed to identify recurring themes and issues of interest, which became the focus of the long-form article. As long-form journalism is not defined only by the length of the article, but also by the quality of the writing and the depth of the reporting (Tenore, 2012), the article contains elements of narrative journalism such as scene-setting,

dialogue and establishing point of view. To allow for scene-setting and to help establish my point of view, I visited places I had known growing up to enable better comparison between my generation and the born-free generation. I also targeted some participants because I thought they would be able to give different or unique perspectives - such as members of the Voortrekkers and an aspiring farmer.

The benefits of presenting the project as a piece of long-form journalism should be that it makes the information contained in the article more engaging and accessible to readers, as it combines research with narrative (Clark, 2000). The article format should provide more flexibility, nuance and richer details to the opinions and attitudes of the young Afrikaners than an academic research report. The article does, however, contain some of the information from the theoretical and scholarly piece and was informed by the research contained in it.

2. LONG-FORM JOURNALISM PIECE

2.1 Voortrekkers, Farmers and Fokofpolisiekar: Afrikaner identity in the born-free generation

The Voortrekker monument looms large and square behind a circle of trees and shrubs on our left. We are on our way to Fort Schanskop, on an adjacent hill, for the Park Acoustics music festival. At the narrow entrance to the fort, a statue of the scout and Boer War hero Danie Theron crouches with his gun. According to the plaque Nelson Mandela himself unveiled the statue in 2002, with one of the few speeches he ever gave in Afrikaans.

A crowd of more than a thousand fill every inch of the 117-year old fort-turned-amphitheatre. Most people seem to be fighting for a bit of shade under the large acacia tree in the middle of the fort, or squeezing in under umbrellas as they wait for the headline act, Fokofpolisiekar. The girls are dressed in festival chic — short shorts, bared midriffs or floaty dresses with garlands in their hair. We make a game of spotting slogan T-shirts like *Fokof ek het genoeg vriende (*Fuck off I have enough friends), and *Jammer om van jou kak te hoor* (Sorry to hear about your shit). A guy wearing a red EFF-beret and an Oppikoppi T-shirt poses for a picture with two girls, grinning through his bushy beard and pulling down his shorts to display a tattoo on his backside. There's a long queue to buy beer and the smell of dagga drifts among brightly coloured flags and lanterns.

Six or seven people have climbed the tree and are perched on the branches for a better view. The master of ceremonies gets the crowd to chant '*fokof, fokof, fokof',* surrounded by doors marked, in Dutch, *Keuken*, *Ammunitie* and *Stal* (Kitchen, Ammunition and Stable).

I haven't seen Fokofpolisiekar live since my days as a student, and I'm surprised by how much they look and act like rock stars. Francois van Coke, the lead singer, spins his microphone and catches it expertly. The guitarist moves from one side of the stage to the other, flirting with the crowd, climbing onto speakers and jumping down. Suddenly, almost every person is on their feet, shouting the lyrics. Someone flings a black bra onto the stage. It was ripped off the back of a girl in a tank top sitting on the shoulders of a bulky guy near the stage. The band members toss the bra from one to the other, before throwing it back into the throng of fans.

Two young women stand on a low wall in front of us. Squeezing her eyes shut, one of them sings with religious fervour. “R*eguleer my, roetineer my, plaas my in ‘n boks en merk dit veilig*.” (Regulate me, routinise me, place me in a box and mark it ‘safe’.) The words speak of rebellion against the Afrikaner patriarchy and against God, of wanting to break free of the mould. “*Bibber en beef, die boere bedrieër, die wêreld gaan jou haat my seun. As jy die waarheid praat, gaan hulle jou wil doodmaak*.” (Shiver and shake, the boer-traitor, the world will hate you my son. If you speak the truth, they will want to kill you.)

The crowd looks mostly my age - fellow children of the 1980s who are now in their late twenties and early thirties. Born into apartheid, but too young to have actively taken part, or even to have understood much of what was going on. A young mother in tight shorts balances a little blonde girl on her hip as she sways to the music.

Fokofpolisiekar was a voice of my generation when they exploded onto the music scene ten years ago. They played on our campuses and at our festivals, and made headlines with their name and their drunken, provocative behaviour. They were labeled satanists and had petitions drawn up to get them banned from some towns after one of them wrote “*Fok God”* on the wallet of a teenage fan who asked for an autograph. In 2003 they were the first band I interviewed for my campus newspaper. I was so intimidated by their bad reputation that my editor had to formulate the questions for me. They challenged convention and sparked conversations about what it meant to be an “Afrikaner” - do we even want that label, and if we do, do we want to redefine what it means?

I search out the younger people in the crowd. This new generation, the so-called born-frees, look as if they could be at any music festival in the world — Glastonbury in England or Coachella in America. Yet they seem to know the decade-old music as well as the rest of us. So much hope has been placed on these young South Africans, born after the first democratic elections in 1994. That they would grow up in a rainbow nation, that they wouldn’t see colour or race, that they would be free to pursue their dreams without discrimination of any kind. In the sweltering Pretoria heat, with profanities blasting through the sound system, I wonder how they see themselves and their place in South Africa.

* * *

In March 1707, 16-year old Hendrik Biebouw was one of four young men caught by a magistrate being drunk and disorderly, swearing and acting like “crazy people” on the streets of Stellenbosch. When the magistrate reprimanded Biebouw and hit him with a cane, the young man shouted: “I won’t leave, I am an Afrikaner. Even if the magistrate beats me to death or throws me in jail, I won’t be quiet!”

The historian Hermann Giliomee writes that this was the first time on record that a European in South Africa used “Afrikaner” as a name for himself. At that time, the word was used only for slaves, free blacks or Khoi Khois. It wasn’t until the mid-twentieth century that the term Afrikaner became reserved only for white Afrikaans speakers. By this time, the term had become tied to the narrative that the historian T. Dunbar Moodie calls the Afrikaner civil religion. This was an interpretation of the history of the group, called the “sacred history”, which sees the Afrikaner as a people elected by God and given a special destiny at the southern tip of Africa. It was tied to myths and symbols such as the Great Trek and the Voortrekker Monument. It was fuelled by the suffering of the women and children in the concentration camps during the Boer War, and the poverty and continuing humiliation at the hands of the English after the war. Maintaining the “separateness” and “uniqueness” of the Afrikaner from British and black South Africans was seen as a sacred duty. This sentiment gave rise to separate development theory, which was the justification for apartheid.

After the end of apartheid, the Afrikaner had to deal with a sudden loss of power and privilege, as well as the stigma of discrimination and human rights abuses that went along with apartheid in the eyes of the world. They had to go from seeing themselves as God’s chosen people to a disgraced nation, compared to the ultimate evil — Nazi Germany. This transition caused what many have described as an identity crisis. In 2001, sociology professor Melissa Steyn analysed letters written to the Afrikaans newspaper *Rapport*. What she found was that identity, and the question “Who are we?” was the main preoccupation of letter writers, and formed the subtext even when letters were written about subjects that seemingly had nothing to do with identity.

I was born in 1983, living the first ten years of my life during the last decade of apartheid — a violent and uncertain time. My memories are mostly of happy childhood moments, though. Themed birthday parties, a school concert about bees, holidays in the Kruger Park, and the stories of Liewe Heksie and Heidi. There are, nonetheless, slivers of

memory that reveal what was happening in the country at the time. I remember friend's parents stockpiling tinned tuna and baked beans in anticipation of a coming bloodbath. I recently recalled that we were once on our way to the dentist when we heard (and felt) an explosion at a taxi-rank a few blocks away. ("Did a bomb explode in Germiston when I was a kid, or did I somehow make it up?" I had to check with my mother.) Years later, my brother realised that a bottle with a rag he had seen in a friend's garage was probably a petrol bomb. I find many people my age knew very little about apartheid beyond a general idea of what it was, as our parents hadn't really talked about it. My interest in the politics of the country came only after the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) had concluded. It led to disillusionment and anger at my fellow Afrikaners for not apologising and not admitting that the atrocities of the past needed some kind of redress.

I spent many years hating everything I associated with being an Afrikaner. I hated the entitlement and separateness. I cringed every time someone talked about "Our People" ("I love only working with *Our People*. You never have to worry about what food to serve at a function. No kosher or halal or vegan. You just serve meat."). I hated all the things that embodied the Afrikaner for me. Khaki shorts. A drunk Blue Bulls rugby fan, holding the skull of a bull and gyrating on his seat at Ellis Park, his beer belly flopping over his rugby shorts. The girls at a Bok van Blerk concert, wrapped in an old *vierkleur* flag singing *De la Rey, De la Rey, sal jy die Boere kom lei* (De la Rey, De la Rey, will you come and lead the Boers). Anyone standing next to a *braai* with a brandy and coke, who assumed I would laugh at their slightly racist joke just because I spoke Afrikaans. I wanted desperately to dissociate myself from all of it. This was, of course, impossible, and a deeply uncomfortable state of being. Because I have a surname that can't be pronounced in English. Because of the accent I speak with and the language I dream in. Because hating Afrikaners would mean (by association) hating my parents and my grandparents.

My feelings are by no means unique, but they also don't represent the majority of my peers. While I know many Afrikaners who became increasingly conservative and seemed to find refuge in Afrikaner culture and tradition during the uncertain times of the new South Africa, many of my friends went to university, started families and sent their children to Afrikaans schools without much thought to what it means to be an Afrikaner, or an Afrikaans-speaker in post-apartheid South Africa. Maybe, after twenty years of a multicultural South Africa, being an Afrikaner was not even an issue anymore. Maybe the born-free generation could show me a new, more comfortable way of being an Afrikaner.

* * *

I meet Francois, a 20-year old Theology student at the Auckland Park Theological Seminary in Johannesburg, at a coffee shop in his home suburb of Linden. Francois wears his blonde hair in a side-parted wave, with tortoiseshell glasses and a chain around his neck. We make small talk about music (he loves Fokofpolisiekar, and all kinds of 'hipster-type' music), so I'm surprised when he mentions that he is still involved with the Voortrekkers. The Voortrekkers is a cultural movement for young, Christian Afrikaners that has existed for more than 80 years. It's a movement I associate with khaki outfits and knot-tying.

"I still try to live by the ABCs, the main values of the Voortrekkers - *Afrikanerskap, Burgerskap* and *Christenskap*," he tells me. "When I hear the word Afrikaner, I know I am part of a community, and these days I see definite growth in that community - especially from when I was younger. I feel proud to be called an Afrikaner."

He lists the number of Afrikaans movies being released and the growth in the Afrikaans music industry as examples of this. "I also see the pride in many Afrikaners who won't let their language take a back seat any more, which is great. When they go to a shop or a bank they say: I want to be helped in Afrikaans. For me this shows that the language is growing."

To be an Afrikaner, he believes Afrikaans has to be your home language. Your mother tongue. "Everyone mixes their language these days, that can't be helped, but you have to know what being an Afrikaner is about - the language, the history and the traditions. You can't be a proud Afrikaner, but actually you are a *pommie,* who moves in English circles and doesn't *braai*."

I remind him that only 40 percent of South Africans who speak Afrikaans at home, are white. While there is a movement to include all Afrikaans-speakers in a language community, during apartheid black or coloured Afrikaans-speakers were excluded from being Afrikaners and the privilege it entailed. Does this mean that a black or coloured person who speaks Afrikaans as his mother tongue can't be an Afrikaner?

“They can, but there’s a thin line. Because they could speak Afrikaans, but still follow their own cultures. Like, I could learn to speak Zulu and dress like a Zulu, but it wouldn’t make me a Zulu unless I fully follow all their traditions.”

He finds it hard to define what these Afrikaner traditions are. “It’s probably stereotyping, but for me, the traditions are about going to church on a Sunday (he attends a charismatic church after becoming disillusioned with the Dutch Reformed church), family time on Sundays, speaking Afrikaans. Like, I pray in Afrikaans, I dream in Afrikaans, I fight in Afrikaans. You do everything in Afrikaans, like *sokkie* and *braai* and all those little things.”

Jan-Adriaan, a 19-year old from Germiston on Gauteng’s East Rand, shares Francois’ love for South African bands such as Fokofpolisiekar, aKing and Van Coke Kartel. He is also a guitar player, who plays in the band of the Dutch Reformed Church he attends, along with many of his friends who are also musicians. He tells me that the 2009 documentary about Fokofpolisiekar opened his eyes to many political issues in South Africa. “It didn’t really change my viewpoints or bother me, since I didn’t really live through any of that apartheid stuff, but it made me aware of things,” he tells me.

Yet, despite this he has never really given thought to what makes someone an Afrikaner, or what it means for him to be one. He is barefoot, with longish hair, Wolverine-sideburns and leather straps around his wrists. For someone who listens to rebellious music, he is also quite conservative in his views — and extremely polite.

“I don’t know, you’re an Afrikaner if you speak Afrikaans, I guess,” he attempts to explain. “And the values that you have and how you do things. Not having sex before marriage is one of the big values. Respecting older people no matter who or what they are. Always doing your best and working hard. What you eat - Afrikaners like *braai* food. And what you drink. Brandy and Coke is Afrikaans.” He thinks for a while. “It’s not necessarily how you dress, though.”

“Are all the Afrikaners you know like that?” I ask.

“Yes,” he answers. “They are.”

* * *

Seven years ago, Thomas Blaser interviewed young Afrikaners in their twenties and early thirties. He found that they did not have one dominant identity determined by the traditional categories of class, race, gender, ethnicity and nationality, but multiple and sometimes even contradictory identities. They were using different languages and moving between different ethnicities. He found that they saw themselves as more liberal than previous generations, and that most of them rejected anything that had to do with ethno-national politics. I expected the young Afrikaners who were born in the new South Africa to be more liberal and flexible in their cultural identifications. Clearly, some of them still identify strongly with the term Afrikaner, but contradictions appear in the fact that they also identifying with rebellious alternative or indie music subcultures. They see religion and church as important parts of their lives and their being Afrikaners, while counting as one of their favourites a band that sings: "*Kan iemand dalk 'n god bel, en vir hom sê ons het hom nie meer nodig nie." (*Could someone phone a god, and tell him that we don't need him anymore.) What also struck me, was that they don't seem conflicted about it.

The Rector and Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Free State, Jonathan Jansen, could offer an explanation for this. While working as Dean of Education at the University of Pretoria between 2001 and 2007, Jansen was surprised that students who had not lived through apartheid, came into the university with a "powerful knowledge of the past", and that they held this knowledge "firmly, personally, and emotionally". Although they never experienced apartheid, they acted as though they did. This is described as the paradox of indirect knowledge. He came to the conclusion that this knowledge was inherited from previous generations. Jansen studied the transmission of knowledge from Afrikaner parents to their children by looking at research about the children of Holocaust survivors and perpetrators. Jansen found that the second generation Afrikaner children display many of the same responses as the children of Nazi perpetrators. This includes issues of silence, denial, aggression, irritability, externalisation, shame and guilt.

The inherited or indirect knowledge isn't about specific facts or events during or before apartheid, but about broad themes of "conquest and humiliation, struggle and survival, suffering and resilience, poverty and recovery, black and white". It predates apartheid to the Boer War and beyond. This explains to some extent the attitudes of born-frees who still feel a strong connection to Afrikaner identifications and culture. Jansen found it was particularly true of those students who attended single-medium Afrikaans schools and

Afrikaans churches, and mostly socialised with their Afrikaans families and friends. While apartheid has been over for more than 20 years, many young Afrikaners still spend most of their time in Afrikaans environments without much direct contact with other South African groups and cultures. While it seems to be true of Francois and Jan-Adriaan, who grew up in diverse and multicultural cities, I wanted to find out if it was even more so in rural and traditionally less diverse cities and towns.

* * *

Nuette grew up Potchefstroom, where her parents are both lecturers at the North West University (NWU). She agrees that Potchefstroom is still very Afrikaans. It is, after all, the home of Aardklop, one of the most popular Afrikaans arts festivals. Most of the time, she tells me, you can still walk into any shop or restaurant and be served in Afrikaans.

She is in matric this year, and hoping to study language technology at the NWU next year, with the long-term goal of becoming a writer.

While she acknowledges that the connotations of the word Afrikaner might not be universally positive, she has no problem with being labelled an Afrikaner. “I’m proud of where I come from. I think being an Afrikaner could close doors for you, because of what it is associated with across the world, but I think people who have negative connotations actually associate it with the term *boer*.”

According to Nuette, the term *boer* includes your colour and your faith, while anyone who speaks Afrikaans can be an Afrikaner. “There might be discrimination against Afrikaners, but I think if you are proud of it, it doesn’t have to be an obstacle. In fact, I think it could open doors for you in a way, because I think many Afrikaners,” she pauses, “or *boers*, have this thing where they always want to stand together.”

Nuette tells me that for Afrikaans to survive, Afrikaners shouldn’t be embarassed to speak the language. “Many Afrikaners would rather speak English when they are in an environment where everyone speaks English. They don’t really want to stand on their rights to be educated in their own language or to speak Afrikaans when they go to the shops. I think we need to work on this. Also, in movies and music the language gets mixed

all the time. I think the new generation, our generation, don't attach enough value to Afrikaans."

Religion and language seem to remain intimately tied to the idea of the Afrikaner in the minds of the new generation. While the younger generation is increasingly diverse in the subcultures they become part of, their politics and their religion—with many deserting the Dutch Reformed Church in favour of charismatic churches—Afrikaans seems to be one thing that is almost universally agreed on. A survey in 1999 by the South African sociological analyst Professor Lawrence Schlemmer, showed that language was also the area where white Afrikaans speakers felt most threatened and marginalised. There is, however, also a sense among many Afrikaners that they are specifically targeted — not only their language, but their well-being (through affirmative action and black economic empowerment) and their lives (as the victims of crime).

To interview Quinton, I drive out to Carletonville in the far west of Gauteng, where he grew up and went to school. It's the town where his father is a bank manager and his mother a housewife, but he considers home to be the family farm in the Free State. "It's between Bothaville and Viljoenskroon — on the way to Nampo," he tells me, drawing a map on the table with his finger.

At the moment he is studying at the union Solidarity's college in Pretoria. "I'm doing a trade as a diesel mechanic, so that I can go back to the farm one day. That's where my heart has been all these years. If I've got a trade I can fix my own tractors and I've always had a passion for engines, especially truck engines."

Quinton, who is 19-years old, is very tall, with skin darkly tanned from hours spent outdoors. "Playing golf and horse-riding, mostly," he tells me. He wears rugby shorts and T-shirt, and his shaved head is covered with a khaki-coloured baseball cap which he takes off when he sits down to talk to me.

I ask him what makes someone an Afrikaner. "His faith," he answers. "His Christian faith. And I think probably the way he feels about the country as well. I think we all feel quite strongly and we're all trying to stop bad things from happening to the country. I think if Afrikaners are not involved, the country will basically go backwards."

“What precisely are you worried about?” I want to know.

“I think our country is actually in...I wouldn’t say things are bad, but it’s not going well either. We just need to be careful of Julius Malema. Not too long ago he said that if he got to rule South Africa, he would take back farms. And I think we have to stand together to stop that from happening.”

In the face of these challenges, Quinton says he feels that Afrikaners - and farmers - manage to stand together quite well. He also acknowledges the role that Solidarity and its affiliated civil rights organisation, AfriForum plays in advocating for Afrikaner minority rights. “I think there are people here and there who don’t want to stand with us, but that’s their own problem. I also know there are a lot of Afrikaners who don’t vote, but I think we have to encourage them to vote and be part of politics, because then everything will be better. You know, it’s the people who moan the most and say the country is being taken over who don’t vote, so actually the fault lies with them.”

Since he was born in 1994, I ask him what he knows about the apartheid years. “You know, that’s all stuff that was before my time. My parents did talk about it a bit. I mean, I can’t say apartheid was a good thing, but I wouldn’t say it was a bad thing either. It was ... in a way I would say it was bad because we couldn’t take part in the Olympic Games and that kind of thing, and other countries didn’t really want anything to do with South Africa. Especially motor companies didn’t want to supply cars to us because of apartheid. So it was kind of a bad thing.”

In the coffee shop in Linden, Francois tells me that he thought apartheid was actually a good idea, but just initiated incorrectly. “Cultural groups are stronger when they stand together, so it makes sense to separate them.”

Despite his belief in the value of apartheid, he tells me that being an Afrikaner has made me a bigger patriot for South Africa. “It has helped me to believe more in myself. Because I believe so strongly in my language, I started feeling more strongly about many other things. I would literally fight for my language, for my *Afrikanerskap*. If they told me tomorrow that we have to go and fight for our language, I would do it for Afrikaans, for our history, I would stand up for all of that.”

“What do you mean?” I ask. “Do you mean fight as in petitions and marches, or taking up weapons?”

“Well, if it gets to the point that I have to take up weapons, I would do it. I hope it never gets that bad, but I would do it.”

* * *

Jansen believes that received knowledge must be disrupted. For many young Afrikaners, this happens when they go to university, where their inherited knowledge is challenged by new knowledge for the first time. While I can’t pinpoint exactly when I started hating everything to do with the Afrikaner, it happened during my university years. It was a process shared and encouraged by my brother and sister. My younger brother was deeply influenced by reading Nelson Mandela’s *Long Walk to Freedom,* and started learning to speak African languages. My older sister was disillusioned by the ugly racism she saw among Afrikaners where she was studying in Pretoria. I started reading Antjie Krog and heard a lecture by the photographer Greg Marinovich of the *Bang Bang Club,* and somehow it all added up to us rejecting the label of “Afrikaner”.

This would not have happened if we had not been exposed to influences outside the insular world of the Afrikaner. Jansen believes that moving only in Afrikaans and Afrikaner environments breeds exclusivity and strangeness toward the outside world, and make it harder for racial attitudes to change in later years. The problem is not only with the knowledge young Afrikaners inherit, but also with what they don’t learn. “Locked into these white spaces, students never learn an African language from other indigenous South African communities; they do not learn about the struggles of black people for self-determination; they fail to gain knowledge about international social movements for change such as civil rights movements in the USA, or anti-colonial struggles in Latin America, or about the great African intellectuals and their literature,” writes Jansen.

He warns, however, that when the knowledge inherited from parents and grandparents is challenged by new knowledge, it can cause significant emotional turmoil, which may express itself in anger and rage instead of shame and empathy. Coming to grips with the realities of apartheid can be painful. Jansen describes it as discovering evil in what you

have lost. While there is a wide diversity of responses to apartheid among Afrikaners, denial and silence are among the most common, for this reason.

When young Afrikaners carry knowledge of a past without it being challenged, it has "profound consequences" on how they live, learn and see the world. After the interview with Francois, I was curious to get a closer look at how the Voortrekker movement shaped the thoughts and world-views of young Afrikaners.

* * *

"We've talked about your unconsciousness before. You really need to start noticing what's going on around you," Lizelle berates three girls, who are giggly and full of jokes, and the two boys sitting slightly to the side. Lizelle is officer of the team, called the *Miere* (Ants), which forms part of the Totius Voortrekker commando in Potchefstroom. Most of them have been in the team since they were in grade one at Laerskool Mooirivier. As they are in matric this year, they are preparing for the process of becoming *Presidentsverkenners* (President's Scouts) - the highest honour for Voortrekkers.

"It's really a very big deal," Lizelle's son De Wet - one of the team leaders - assures me. To qualify for this honour, the matrics first have to write a test, which includes questions and essays on Voortrekker and South African history, as well as current affairs, which is why they are being scolded at the moment.

Leonard, the other team officer, starts grilling them with questions from their handbook, *Verkennerslewe* (Scout Life). "When was the Voortrekkers founded? Who was the first leader? What does the Voortrekker weapon look like?" They seem to know their Voortrekker history quite well, taking turns to call out answers.

"1931. N.J van der Merwe."

"What was his title?"

"Doctor."

This is followed by arguments about the exact dates of the Great Trek and which anniversary for this event was celebrated in 2013, along with an anniversary for the first translation of the Bible into Afrikaans.

“Who was Danie Theron?”
“Just some guy,” answers one of the girls, giggling. “I’m kidding; he was an important scout or something.”

This week’s meeting is at the home of Stefanie, one of the team. We sit on flowered couches in the living room. A wooden cuckoo clock plays a tune on the hour, and there’s a framed print of the *Onse Vader* (The Lord’s Prayer) on the wall. We can hear the muffled cheering from an athletics meet at the North-West University sport grounds a few blocks away. The girls are still in exercise gear from athletics practice after school at the high school they attend - Potchefstroom Gimnasium.

“Which two political parties recently started a kind of marriage, which ended quickly?” asks Lizelle.

“I know this one!”, says Nuette, the female team leader. “It was the DA and...actually, I don’t know the other party.”

“Agang,” Lizelle helps her.

Leonard: “Who was the first state president of South Africa?” Silence. Giggling. “Come on, there are a lot of schools named after him...”

“Gymnasium?” Another bout of giggles.

The questions continue. “Who is the owner of Pick ‘n Pay? What famous Afrikaans singer comes from Potchefstroom? On which border was the border war fought? Who was SWAPO?” Of these questions, they know very little.

Those who do well in the test will be invited to a camp, where they will appear before a panel of Voortrekker bigwigs, which includes professors and CEOs of big companies, to answer all kinds of questions about themselves, the country and their beliefs.

“Will we be doing rope-work at this camp?”

“My dear, there’s always rope-work to do.”

The meeting ends, as it began, with Leonard reading scripture - Psalm 25 - and a prayer. Then it’s time to eat *bobotie*.

“I went on my first Voortrekker camp when I was about two months’ old,” De Wet explains after the meeting. He answers every question seriously, his face sometimes flushing slightly to match his short red-blonde hair. “My mom and dad have been involved since I was a baby. My dad is a commando leader, and also camp leader of the oldest camp in the history of the Voortrekkers. For me it’s pretty important to go on with Voortrekkers so that I can follow in his footsteps.”

He tells me that there are a lot of misconceptions about the movement. “People think it’s old *tannies* with bonnets and long dresses. If they were Voortrekkers, they would understand that it’s a lot of fun. Sure, there are a lot of lectures, but the lectures give you insight. They teach you to look at the world from a different angle. Then there are all the skills like leadership, teamwork, field survival, archery, 4x4-driving, rowing and water skiing — lots of things you wouldn’t learn anywhere else.”

Though his school, Hoër Volkskool Potchefstroom, is still Afrikaans, things are changing. “The year when I was in grade eight, there weren’t really that many non-whites in the school, and every year there has been more. It depends on personalities, but mostly they make their own groups and we make our own groups. We don’t really mix. There are also lots of fights. They are still a bit racist - the white kids - and they make vulgar comments because the black culture is completely different and they don’t always accept it. That makes it difficult for black kids to fit in.”

De Wet admits that he also struggles with racism. He tells me that black kids made fun of his red hair when he was a child, which caused lots of anger and aggression that he is still dealing with. “But I think things are changing, especially after the end of apartheid. I think that there is better communication between white and black people, and that black people

are more comfortable among us now, and umm, that we are starting to accept their culture as well."

Next year, he wants to study mechanical or electrical engineering at the North-West University, and is thankful for the opportunity to do it in Afrikaans. "My English isn't so...up to date. I can have a conversation, but I don't know all the English words. I think if I had to read a textbook in English, it would be difficult." I ask if he worries that this will be an obstacle for him in the workplace. His brow furrows. "Hopefully by the time I'm done studying, my English will be better. Especially since..well, it's starting to become a reality for me that I'll have to move abroad one day, because I think with all the politics in the country...the country is deteriorating further each day. And I don't think there are enough jobs here for white people."

* * *

To try and understand my own unwillingness to be called an Afrikaner and to understand the knowledge that I inherited, I sat down for a conversation with my parents. My father and mother were both proud Afrikaners, and though the transition from Afrikaans schools to multicultural and bilingual schools has been a challenge for them, in recent years they have opened their hearts and their home to white and black teenagers alike — offering a place to stay, driving lessons, help applying for bursaries or extra math classes.

They were both born in the early 1950s, just after the National Party came in power in 1948. "They didn't actually talk about apartheid then," says my father. "They called it a policy of separate development. From our background, growing up, we thought it was a logical and rational system for everyone to develop separately."

"It was how it was and how things were done," my mother adds. "It was only in my later years as a teenager and at university that I can remember sometimes getting very sad about the way black people were not informed, and the way they were humiliated by white people in certain situations. I remember sometimes it made me want to cry."

"Did you ever make a connection between how they were treated and the government and its policies?" I want to know.

“No, it was just the way things were. When I was studying at the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU), it was still being built. We saw that the black workers were sleeping on the building site, there were no provisions made for them. We laid a complaint with our house father and asked that something be done to help them. He reported back to us that they would be making better provision for the workers. But we still didn’t see the way they were treated as a result of apartheid, or as part of a policy that could be challenged.”

While it would be easy for me to say that they should have known, that they shouldn’t have been so naive as to believe everything they were told, I wanted to understand more of how their thoughts and opinions were shaped.

My mother’s grandfather was in a Boer War concentration camp with his mother as a child. “They still talked about it all the time, and we were very aware of the war and the evil English,” my mother tells me.

“As children they called us *Afrikaner vrot banana*, and we called them *rooinek peperbek.*”

My grandfather on my father’s side was involved with the Ossewabrandwag, an Afrikaner organisation that supported the Germans during World War II and was against British imperialism. He was also a member of the Broederbond, although my father only found out about it later.

“We weren’t even really aware of the Broederbond, they were very secretive and underground, and if you were a member no one was supposed to know. If I had to, I could probably have guessed that your grandfather was a member, but we didn’t know for certain until later.”

I’m one generation further removed, but the Boer War, and other Afrikaner historical events like the Great Trek and the Battle of Blood River were still a big part of my frame of reference growing up. I remember visiting the Vrouemonument in Bloemfontein and the Voortrekkermonument in Pretoria. On our way to visit our grandparents in Vereeniging, it was always a game to look out for the Boer War blockhouses that could be seen from the road. We were particularly interested in the scout Danie Theron, because his mother shares my maiden name, Krige, and could be traced on our the Krige family tree. When I was 12-years old, our family attended a Geloftefees near Memel in the Freestate. The day

of the Covenant and the Battle of Bloodriver was reenacted with horse parades, plays, debates and flag raising ceremonies.

With this background, my parents' biggest fear was not the ANC, but communism, and the *'rooi gevaar'* (red danger). My father explains: "We were constantly told there were communists who wanted to take over our country. Even in the days when I had serve in the army, that was held up as the reason we had to do it — that our country was threatened by forces from outside."

The attempted assassination and later murder of the prime minister, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, made a huge impression on my parents. Both of them can remember where they were when they heard the news. When we were children, my father still had a scrapbook about Verwoerd that he made as a child.

"It was a nightmare, we were really, really scared of the communists that were going to take over our country," says my mother.

My father was approached by the Ruiterwag, the Broederbond youth movement, in his early twenties. "I didn't initially realise the connection between the two organisations. We were told it was a confidential organisation that was about Afrikaner culture and played a tremendously important role in the protection of Afrikaans and Afrikaner values. Of course, you're immediately thrilled about the thought that you were sought out to be part of something like that," he explains.

At first, he was impressed by the organisation, but later became uncomfortable. "Some of the information passed on to us seemed to be trying to indoctrinate or brainwash us. I have to add, I wasn't objecting to the principles — I was very positive about Afrikaner culture and tradition. I was just uncomfortable with they way they were dictating to us from the top."

So how did they go from the Ruiterwag and voting for the Conservative Party (KP), to voting yes for ending apartheid in the 1992 referendum?

"I don't really know when or how the change came," my mother explains. "It was a very gradual process. By the time you were born, we had already changed a lot."

“When the KP started to associate and build connections with the rightwing front, including the AWB, we started asking ourselves: can I, as a Christian, associate with a party like that?” my father adds. “I think it was also just more information coming through. We started having to face certain realities. Sport isolation also played a big part, because they were touching something that was sacred to the Afrikaner. That’s when I realised there was resistance to us from the outside world.”

My mother believes the real awareness of the horrors of apartheid came not from the TRC —although they were both shocked by what they heard there—but from building relationships with the diverse staff at their school. “It happened when we started speaking to and becoming friends with Indian, coloured and black colleagues who were victims of apartheid. When they told us their stories of being beaten up because they dared to get on a white train, or of their brothers and sisters being detained and tortured for their resistance to apartheid, that’s when we realised for the first time how horrible it had been.”

According to my father, Afrikaners had a very rigidly structured, dogmatic view of religion and politics. “In the later years, we heard a lot of different viewpoints from you, our children, which influenced us. I don’t think you realise how much you as our children in the new generation changed our ways of thinking. I still see myself as an Afrikaner, and I’m proud of the fact that I’m an Afrikaner. I don’t think we should throw away our history because it’s part of who we are, but I’ve discovered a new role for myself as Afrikaner.”

“1994 ripped everything open and those who went along with it gained a greater freedom and openness in everything,” adds my mother. “But those who resisted are still as closed off as ever.”

* * *

Continuing on my journey to better understand myself and my inherited knowledge, I decide to visit the high school I attended from 1997 to 2001 in Elsburg on the East Rand of Gauteng. The school lies next to the N17 highway in the shadow of the Consol glass factory on the one side and flanked by a mine dump on the other. At one point, the mining company stopped watering its disused dumps, and on a windy day you would go back to your desk after break and find it covered in a thin layer of cyanide-rich mine dust. It has

always been a working class area, with its residents supplying the workforce to the factories and mines. Only a handful of matrics from the high school go on to tertiary education each year, but the school has a fiercely proud sporting tradition, often overachieving against bigger (and richer) schools. The school already had many coloured pupils from nearby Reiger Park while I attended, but it was still single-medium Afrikaans. After dealing with rapidly declining numbers, the school started phasing in English pupils a few years ago.

By 2013, when Wanda was head girl, the school had about 50 grade 12s who were still mostly Afrikaans, though it included many black and coloured pupils. The grade 11 group was roughly half English and half Afrikaans, while the grade 10 group was only a quarter Afrikaans.

While a teacher at the school tells me that the different cultures seem to integrate well, Wanda tells me that it does cause tension. “When we were on our leadership camp there was a Zulu girl with us, and she didn’t believe that you should pray together at the table before you eat. We all wanted to take hands and pray. It caused terrible ructions. I’ve learnt to keep my opinion to myself, especially with sensitive subjects like culture and religion. If I think it’s going to upset people, I just keep quiet.”

When I meet Wanda she is looking for work after finishing high school, and planning to start studying Business at Unisa as soon as she saves enough money to pay her own way. Although Afrikaans is her home language, Wanda feels very strongly about studying in English. “I’ve always liked English, even more than Afrikaans, and the business world is English so it will make things easier.”

I ask how comfortable she is in English.

“When I was younger I took karate lessons, and our sensei was English, so I learnt to speak it from childhood,” she explains. “And at home we had a rule where we only spoke English on Wednesdays, to help us learn to speak better and to stimulate us.”

She believes that the term Afrikaner includes all South Africans. Surprised, I ask if she thinks her generation is starting to see beyond race and colour.

“I think most of my friends are still racist, if I can put it that way. The majority of them just want black people to stay away from them. My parents are also still, you know, like the apartheid people. They don’t really like black people, but I was never like that. I feel that we are all the same, we are all people and we have the same blood.”

While Wanda’s parents made sure that she practised her English and was comfortable speaking it, Dalaine’s parents chose to raise her as bilingual and sent her to English schools.

“When I speak Afrikaans, people immediately say: ‘Ah, you’re English’. I mean, my nickname on my mother’s side of the family is *Soutie*. But when I was younger and I spoke English, people would say: ‘Oh, you’re actually Afrikaans’. And I was like...I don’t know what I am. What am I?” Dalaine flips her long brown ponytail over her shoulder. She is barefoot, in jeans and a T-shirt with the word GEEK printed on it, black-rimmed glasses perched on her nose. We’re sitting around a wooden table in her parent’s home in Florida, Johannesburg. She is taking a break from packing for her first year at the University of Stellenbosch, where she will soon start studying BA International Relations.

“My whole family is Afrikaans. Even though my mother talks to us in English, she is Afrikaans. And my parents would say that they are Afrikaners, but because I went to school in English and I’m going to study in English...but I think there’s still a big part of me that is Afrikaans. So I think maybe I’m not a full Afrikaner, maybe half an Afrikaner.”

She speaks Afrikaans comfortably, but with an accent - the reason for her nickname. “It always bothered me that I didn’t speak perfect Afrikaans. I spoke about it a lot with my father, and he said the point of a language is not to speak it perfectly, but to be able to communicate and express yourself. So I’ve let go of the idea that I have to be only Afrikaans or only English. I mix both languages, but that’s just how I speak. My jumbled brain.”

Dalaine tells me that she started thinking about politics at a young age, as her parents are both journalists. She is passionate about the problems facing the country, and especially women’s rights. “Growing up, at our dinner parties they didn’t talk about golf or whatever, they talked about politics and those types of things. I think I have a better idea of what goes on in the country than most of my friends, and it’s also something I’m interested in.”

Having just returned form a matric vacation in Europe, Dalaine tells me it has helped her gain a new perspective on South Africa. “I think in the beginning, we felt a little like...we were in this amazing place, and everything just worked. So if anyone asked, you would say South Africa is actually so stupid, you know, nothing works here. But after a while you become a bit of a patriot. Especially after Mandela died. We heard the news just after we arrived in Paris, and everyone asked me - what made him so special? When I started talking, I saw that our country is like a struggling little soldier. We don’t give up. So then I got a bit more appreciative. I don’t know how long it will last...but when I came back I was very proud to be South African.”

* * *

At Park Acoustics, I had marvelled at the strangeness of the scene in front of me. The trendiness of the crowd engaging in the signature behaviour of millennials - tweeting, taking selfies and hashtagging - in a fort built in 1897 on the orders of Paul Kruger. On stage, Francois van Coke growled: “*Daar’s niks nuut onder die son nie. En in die skaduwee, brand Suid-Afrika.*” (There’s nothing new under the sun. And in the shadows, South Africa burns.) I wondered what the founding fathers of the Voortrekker monument, this most holy place of Afrikanerdom, would think. Would they be shocked at the drunken, stoned rebellion echoing among relics from the Boer War? Would they be relieved that at least it’s happening in Afrikaans?

I had looked to the born-frees, hoping to find a new way of being an Afrikaner. Clearly, with some exceptions, the thoughts of those born-frees I interviewed are still very much inherited from the past, and offers little of value in the search for a new kind of Afrikaner.

Instead, I turn to my parents again. “If I can’t stop being an Afrikaner, but I don’t like most of what the Afrikaner has come to be associated with, where does that leave me?” I want to know.

My father thinks a bit, before quoting a *boer* president. “Paul Kruger said search in the past for all that is good and beautiful, make it your ideal and build on it your future,” he tells me. “We can do that. I do think we have a right to cherish certain things.”

But what is good and beautiful in our history? What can I take from the Afrikaner that hasn't been contaminated by apartheid and racism and a misplaced "chosen people" myth?

"The language, for one", he answers. "For me there is nothing more beautiful than Afrikaans. The language is something precious to me, in the form of poetry and stories and music. That's something we can cherish."

For my mother, it's the Afrikaner's connection to the land. "Maybe it's because of my Free State family that I believe this, but we are bound to our land, it is sacred to us, and we have the need to make things grow. Your land, even if it is a small piece of land in the city, is almost a sanctuary. That is part of my Afrikaner heritage."

"Does it bother you that three of your four children don't want to be called Afrikaners?" I ask them.

"They can look at themselves and see themselves any way they want to," my father answers. "Even when your brother wanted to vote ANC, we never discouraged him. But you are still Afrikaners, you are just Afrikaners in a very modern context. There might be a stigma to being an Afrikaner, but you can't cut yourself off from being what you are. You also can't put the Afrikaner in a box, because there has always been a diversity of Afrikaners."

I'm still not sure where this leaves me. "If I can't stop being an Afrikaner, how do I live a meaningful life in South Africa while carrying the burden of an apartheid past I barely experienced?"

"I think we need to stop saying sorry, we should live sorry," says my father. "We need to live in a different way and think in different ways. You'll never be comfortable until you accept the reality of cultural diversity, and within that you need to find a meaningful role for yourself and a way to make a difference. I am an Afrikaner, but I refuse to let them prescribe to me what kind of Afrikaner I should be."

3. CONCLUSION

This project aimed to answer the question: How does the so-called born-free generation of Afrikaners relate to their Afrikaner identity. The first section, or theoretical and scholarly piece, looked at the history of the Afrikaner and how the group is positioned in South Africa today. It showed that who counts as an Afrikaner and who doesn't has never been universally agreed upon and that the end of apartheid caused a profound dislocation in Afrikaner identifications — often described as an identity crisis. The importance attached to the language Afrikaans, and attempts to turn the Afrikaner from a racial grouping into a language community including Afrikaans-speakers of all cultures and colours, was also discussed. Despite these attempts, many white South Africans still identify themselves as Afrikaners and struggle to find a place for themselves and their language in the new South Africa. This can be explained by Jonathan Jansen's theory that knowledge of the past is inherited from past generations, and influence the way that young Afrikaners live in South Africa.

The second section, or long-form journalism piece, explored the attitudes and opinions of ten young Afrikaners. While I can't draw any generalised conclusions, I can say that the young Afrikaners I interviewed still identify strongly with the term Afrikaners. Against my expectations, many of them see being an Afrikaner as a very important aspect of their identity. They differed, however, on what makes someone an Afrikaner and what it means. Most of them agreed that having Afrikaans as your mother tongue was the main criterion for being an Afrikaner - and almost all of them saw Afrikaans as a valuable language worth protecting.

The christian faith - and specifically the calvinist values of the Dutch Reformed Church - was an important pillar of Afrikaner nationalism. It seems it is still seen as an important part of contemporary Afrikaner identities, as values, faith and church-going came up time and again in my interviews. A common phenomenon among young Afrikaners is moving away from the Dutch Reformed Church to more charismatic churces. This was also evident in some of the interviews. Some of the participants associated being an Afrikaner strongly with things such as *braai* and *sokkie.*

Among the young Afrikaners I interviewed, quite a few are still struggling with fitting in in multicultural environments, with a few professing that they are not completely fluent in

English and one even admitted that he struggled with racism. Clearly, clinging to the ideas of Afrikaner culture and tradition, as well as the language, can hamper the ability of a young South African to fit in and live a meaningful life in South Africa. However, all of the Afrikaners older than 18 that I spoke were planning to vote in the general election on 7 May, and noted that they saw it as something important. They did not, however, discuss which parties they voted for. This seems to show that they do see themselves as part of South Africa and feel it is important to take part in the country's democratic processes. It is also important to note that most of the participants would like to work or study abroad, but still see their futures in South Africa.

Jansen believes that inherited knowledge can, and should, be ruptured or challenged by new knowledge. It seemed in my interviews that there is a better chance of young Afrikaners confronting their past and issues such as responsibility and guilt, if they are exposed to multicultural environments. From the interview with my parents, it is also clear that real change of hearts and minds can take place through honest interaction and friendships among different cultural groups.

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