“Voorts seg ik!” — “Voetsek!”

During apartheid, Afrikaans was perceived as the language of the white Afrikaner oppressor. The 2015 and 2016 #AfrikaansMustFall student protestors connected Afrikaans to persistent white Afrikaner hegemony and whiteness. During the 1976 Soweto protests, posters read, “To hell with Afrikaans”. Slogans of the more recent
protests proclaimed, “1976?” and “Afrikaans: Go back to the sea!!!” The public perception in many quarters of Afrikaans is, therefore, one of oppression, discrimination and racism.

The 2015 and 2016 #AfrikaansMustFall protests are linked to the 1976 Soweto uprisings (Photo: Imraan Christian)

This article, however, highlights a different aspect of Afrikaans, namely, the fact that Afrikaans was historically utilised as a language of defiance by its speakers in the face of white hegemony. White and coloured Afrikaans speakers did not protest against Afrikaans; they opposed colonialism, Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid in Afrikaans.

As early as the Dutch East India Company era, slaves resisted Dutch colonialism, leaving cultural traces still celebrated today. In the 1870s, Afrikaner nationalists defied Dutch colonialism and British imperialism by fighting for Afrikaans as the cultured, “civilised” language of the white Afrikaner. During apartheid, both white and coloured Afrikaans speakers opposed apartheid – in Afrikaans.

This article traces historical resistance against white hegemonies by white and coloured Afrikaans speakers alike throughout colonialism, Afrikaner nationalism, apartheid and the post-apartheid era. The resistance of coloured Afrikaans speakers – key contributors to the development of Afrikaans – is especially foregrounded. The argument is framed against the background of the development of Afrikaans as an African language with creole roots. A theatre production that celebrates the creole roots of Afrikaans is Afrikaaps.

- See the preview of the 2010 Afrikaaps documentary, directed by Dylan Valley:
Afrikaaps: Kaaps, Africa, Afrikaans

In the *Afrikaaps* documentary, Dylan Valley underscores the general perception of Afrikaans “as a European language”, emphasising the disconnection of the language from its “creole birth”:

Afrikaans originated in the early 1600s in the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa. It was a creole language derived from Dutch, spoken by slaves of mixed origin, as well as the local Khoi population. By 1870 it was recognised as a separate language – Afrikaans.

In the move towards Afrikaner nationalism in the 1940s, Afrikaans became perceived as the language of the oppressor and a symbol of apartheid […] The language had become totally disconnected from its history.²

In this regard, the late Neville Alexander attributes the origins of Afrikaans to the Khoi and San indigenes and the imported Malay slaves:

If the Khoi, the San, and especially the slaves, weren’t forced to learn Dutch, then the Afrikaans language would not really have developed.³
Similarly, heritage activist Patric Mellet highlights the contribution of the slaves, crediting the authors of the first Afrikaans texts to Muslim scholars at the early Cape:

The literature first also came from the black community. If we go back to the early Muslim scholars in the Cape, the teachers, who taught at the madrassas. This is where Afrikaans, written with Arabic script, first emerged.⁴
A representation of a madrassa, an Islamic religious school (“The Afrikaans language is thought to have developed as a lingua franca for the slaves, as well as their masters, to be able to communicate effectively. Educated Muslims were in fact the first to write texts in Afrikaans.”) (Image source)

#AfrikaansMustFall: “Go back to the sea!!”

Fast-forward in time: In 2015 and 2016, the #AfrikaansMustFall nationwide campus protests (which formed part of the #RhodesMustFall protests) demanded that the language be “scrap[ped] […] as a language of tuition”. The aforementioned historical severing of the language from its creole roots is demonstrated by the continued, prevalent perception of the language as “European”. The following image of a student protester in 2016 holding up high a poster with the slogan “Afrikaans, Go Back To The Sea!!” evidences this view:
An #AfrikaansMustFall protestor at the University of Pretoria (image source)

The root of these protests is the view that Afrikaans still functions as a colonial symbol of white Afrikaner hegemony (and the white Afrikaner oppressor). Therefore, behind the call that Afrikaans must fall, is the demand that white Afrikaner hegemony/whiteness, of which standard/“academic” Afrikaans is a symbol, must fall. In summation: these protests called attention to the perceived continuation and preservation of the hegemony via the use of standard Afrikaans as a language of tuition. The broader “decolonisation” endeavour calls for, among other things, the removal of Afrikaans in this regard.

Indeed, Afrikaans has a violent and racist history of oppression during the eras of white Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid. Given the language’s connection to these historical periods, Afrikaans is, as previously mentioned, popularly identified as a “white” language. According to André P Brink (in Van den Heever), the apartheid ideology “colonised” the language. Similarly, Dylan Valley and Greer Valley assert: “Afrikaans, originally a language of the free slaves and the Khoi inhabitants of the Cape, became a tool used by the oppressor.” Afrikaans is thereby associated with racism, repression and violence. It was, after all, the medium through which the apartheid government (including police officers, ministers and civil servants) imposed “laws prohibiting contact between races in matters of housing, sexual relations, schooling and land ownership.”

“To hell with Afrikaans”

The #AfrikaansMustFall protests have unsurprisingly been compared with the 1976 protests against Afrikaans: both movements resisted the use of Afrikaans as a language of instruction (and the associated oppression enforced by white Afrikaner hegemony). Patric Mellet discusses the root of the 1976 protests:

The rebellion against Afrikaans in 1976 was against Afrikaans, the white oppressor’s language. Forced on people as a language, a medium of instruction in schools. You’re hearing commands, you’re hearing abusive language, and so on, and you’re supposed to learn in this. So it was a natural thing for young people to say: “To hell with Afrikaans.”
The 1976 uprisings against Afrikaans (Image source)

The 1976 Soweto protests against Afrikaans as a forced medium of instruction in black schools received international attention. The “coercive power” of the apartheid government enforcing Afrikaans upon its populace led to “the uprising and especially in the wake of the state’s violent response, a hardened suspicion of its speakers”. The infamous photograph of murdered 13-year-old Hector Pieterson is one of many that were distributed on the global stage and brought attention to the contempt that black people felt towards Afrikaans. In addition, photographs circulated of protest slogans which proclaimed, for example, “We do not want Afrikaans.”

Afrikaans: white/European/colonial or African?

The perception of Afrikaans as a white/European/colonial language contrasts with the view of the language as an African language. The former view is an outcome of the hegemony of Afrikaner nationalism: the “black history” of Afrikaans was denied via indoctrination “by Afrikaner Christian national education, propaganda and the media”.

Taking this socio-historical and -political denial into consideration, it is ironic that, currently, the majority of Afrikaans speakers in South Africa are not white. White Afrikaans speakers make up only 40% of all South African Afrikaans speakers. Coloured people, black Africans and South African Indians constitute the other 60% of Afrikaans speakers. Fifty percent of Afrikaans speakers are coloured people.

Many scholars have accepted and documented the crucial contribution of coloured people’s ancestors, especially the foreign slaves and indigenous Khoikhoi, to the historical development of Afrikaans (including the
Afrikaans variety Kaaps. Yet, colonists subjugated and discriminated against these population groups. Similarly, Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid oppressed their descendants, including coloured people.

Within the context of this oppression, Afrikaans has, according to Hein Willemse (1987), a “double identity”: the language is “at once the language of the conqueror and the language of the oppressed”. Afrikaans, therefore, occupies a somewhat awkward space in South Africa’s linguistic historiography. This article delves deeper into the much less emphasised history of Afrikaans as the language of the oppressed. Only in recent years has this history received much more popular attention in the media, with the publication of books such as KAAPs in fokus and Ons kom van vër – bydraes oor bruin Afrikaanssprekendes se rol in die ontwikkeling van Afrikaans.

In order to contextualise the utilisation of Afrikaans as a language of defiance against historical white hegemonies, a brief history of the language’s formation in Africa is provided.

Ena Jansen defines Afrikaans as a unique “African-Germanic” language: it did not develop on the European continent and it is predominantly spoken within African borders. Afrikaans can also be termed a [southern] African creole language, spoken in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. Furthermore, Afrikaans is the third most spoken language in South Africa. According to the 2011 census, distribution of the population by first language spoken includes, amongst eleven, the top four spoken languages: Zulu (22.7%), Xhosa (16%), Afrikaans (13.5%) and English (9.6%).

"The dominant language in the different regions of South Africa. The map does not indicate the number of language speakers, simply the language most commonly spoken. So, while Afrikaans dominates the Northern Cape, that province is sparsely populated, so the actual number of Afrikaans speakers is limited. Similarly, KwaZulu-Natal is densely populated, so there are a great many isiZulu speakers in the province." (Image source)

Scholarly literature accepts that three groups played a central role in the formation of the language: the European settlers, the indigenous Khoikhoi, and slaves from African and Asian countries. Eastern political
exiles also furthered language contact (between 1652 and 1767, political prisoners were exiled to the Cape from countries such as Indonesia, India and Sri Lanka). Afrikaans is thereby influenced by “Dutch; the seafarer variants of Malay, Portuguese and Indonesian; and the indigenous Kh[oi]khoi and San languages”. Valley and Valley affirm this point: “while Afrikaans’s Dutch heritage cannot be denied, it must be acknowledged that it was shaped and molded away from Dutch by the Khoi and Malay slaves.” Some of these influences are highlighted in the following section.

**banyak ---> baie; gogga; piesang**

In the Afrikaans documentary, Dylan Valley emphasises that an everyday Afrikaans word cited in the prescriptive standard Afrikaans dictionary, such as *baie* “many”, actually stems from Malay (therefore, not Dutch). Other vocabulary words that illustrate influences other than Dutch, include, for example, *piesang* “banana” (Malay-derived); *baadjie* “jacket” (Malay-derived); *sambreell* “umbrella” (Portuguese-derived); *mielie* “mealie” (Portuguese-derived); and *goggal* “bug” (Khoi-Khoi-derived). The expression *baie dankiel* “many thanks” is half-derived from Dutch (*hartelijk dank*) and Malay (*banyak*). The socio-historical context of these influences is explored in more depth in the next section.

**The Cape Colony: a creole community**

Afrikaans developed locally as a language of contact in a colonial milieu: the Cape was a “melting pot of languages”. In 1595, initial contact between Dutch traders and the indigenous Khoi-Khoi took place at the Cape: this contact was the beginning of the early development of the local language, Afrikaans. Fast-forward to 1652, the year the Dutch East India Company established a refreshment station at the Cape: it was in this creole community of the Cape Colony during the era of the Dutch East India Company (1652–1795) that Afrikaans was formed.

![Image source](https://www.itin.co.za/afrikaans-language-dissent/)

In colonial marketplace locales, the indigenous population generally had no choice but to attempt to communicate in the invading settlers’ language. The local population was forced “to quickly adapt to the newcomers’ Dutch East India Company officials] shrewd tactics when it came to negotiating and bartering”. In this regard, Valley and Valley state: “Afrikaans developed as a bridging language to ease communication between the indigenous people, imported slaves and their masters.”

Interpreters such as Krotoa, Autshomao [colonial name “Herrie die Strandloper”] and Doman thereby became vital negotiators. Patric Mellet argues that these interpreters were “in a sense … the first to mold this new
creole language, Afrikaans”. ⁴⁹ In 1658, the languages Malay and Portuguese were imported to the Cape via the incoming slaves; these languages were “the lingua francas of trade in the Indian Ocean world in which the Dutch East India Company operated”. ⁵⁰

In the Dutch East India Company era, the slaves’ spoken language played a significant role in the development of Afrikaans: recorded court case testimonies documented “some of the earliest examples of the restructuring of Dutch, which eventually resulted in the formation of Afrikaans”. ⁵¹ Consequently, Jansen affirms that “[t]his significant early shift from standard Dutch was first heard through the ‘voice of the slave’”. ⁵²

The Muslim community in the Cape Colony had increased exponentially by the end of the eighteenth century. ⁵³ The Cape Muslim community played a very significant role in the recording of Kaaps. ⁵⁴ Christo van Rensburg states that the first book in Afrikaans was written in Kaaps. ⁵⁵ Robert Shell asserts that “an imam, a slave descendant” was the author of the first Afrikaans book. ⁵⁶ Achmat Davids identifies this “first published Afrikaans work” as the religious book Gablomatiem (1856), “written in Cape Dutch but in Arabic rather than Roman script”. ⁵⁷ Copies of this religious text did not survive. ⁵⁸ Before this text’s publication date became known, it was thought that the first Afrikaans book was Zamenspraak tusschen Klaas Waarzegger en Jan Twyfelaar (LH Meurant, 1862) ⁵⁹ (Hermann Giliomee regards this book as the first secular Afrikaans book). ⁶⁰

Another text written in Arabic script is authored by Abu Bakr Effendi, a theologian born in Turkish Kurdistan. ⁶¹ He was dispatched to the Cape in 1862 in his capacity as a religious advisor (the British government requested his assistance as mediator regarding a disagreement between Cape Muslims). ⁶² Written in Cape Town around 1869, the text Uiteensetting van die godsdienst is a Cape Dutch translation of “Bayan al-Din” (“Exposition of the religion”). ⁶³ The Ottoman Empire’s Foreign Ministry authorised the complimentary distribution of this text among Cape Muslims. ⁶⁴ Jansen emphasises the historical value of this text for the development of Afrikaans: it adheres “to the norms of Cape Dutch”. ⁶⁵
At the time, Malay (an Islamic religious language) was the language of trade of the East; the Kaaps of that era was thereby greatly influenced by the imported slaves (as previously stated). The Muslim religion was taught in the newly established Muslim schools, wherein Malay was the medium of instruction. However, the community was not familiar with Malay; they continued to speak Afrikaans.

Consequently, Afrikaans had replaced Malay by 1815 as the medium of instruction in the religious schools: Afrikaans written in Arabic script became a religious language. When the Cape became a British colony in 1806, English became the official language. Even though English replaced Dutch as the only medium of instruction in schools as part of Lord Charles Somerset’s 1822 Anglicisation policy, the Muslim schools still utilised Afrikaans. Van Rensburg situates “Muslim Afrikaans” predominantly in the Bo-Kaap.
During the late nineteenth century, the creole language Afrikaans was appropriated by “patriotic male European colonists”: these slave owners “call[ed] Afrikaans their own”. The consequence of this appropriation is, as previously stated, the disregard of creole roots: “there is a side to the Afrikaans language, the creole birth and coloured connection that has been overlooked in our collective consciousness.”

Taking the mentioned appropriation into consideration, it is ironic that, according to the late Neville Alexander, early Afrikaans was ridiculed as *kombuistaal* [kitchen language] and *Hotnotstaal* [the pejorative label “Hottentot language”]. Valley and Valley similarly affirm: “this new language” was regarded as “‘bastard [D]utch’ and […] a ‘mongrel language’ reserved for communicating with the slaves and lower classes”. The next section discusses the stigmatisation of the local, multiracial Cape Dutch spoken language by the Dutch and English upper classes.

**Local, multiracial Cape Dutch**

The [early to mid-nineteenth century] local Cape Dutch dialect deviated from metropolitan/standard Dutch: at the time, “Afrikaans was still definitely seen as an uncivilised patois spoken mainly by non-whites.” Dutch was the language of the public sphere, utilised in the press, in schools and in churches. Varieties of Afrikaans were spoken by white people and “people of colour” in the sphere of the home and in informal contexts. Cape Dutch was “spoken by the peasants, the urban proletariat whatever their ethnic background and even the middle class of civil servants, traders and teachers”. As previously mentioned, Cape Dutch was ridiculed as,
for example, *Hotnotstaal* [Hotnot language, an extremely derogatory label] and *Kitchen-Dutch* by the Dutch and English upper classes of the Cape Colony.82

The multiracial language Afrikaans was considered an embarrassment: at the time, race- and class-based distinctions had become entrenched into society.83 It was not considered by the upper classes as a language that “could express learning, writing or upper middle class culture”.84 White, middle-class Cape Dutch speakers therefore set out “to disprove and counter such elite perceptions”.85

The “struggle to give Afrikaans its rightful place” is, among other things, attributed to nineteenth century political events such as the First Boer War.86 Furthermore, the emergence of Afrikaner nationalism during the 1870s was a response to the Anglicisation policy, enforced over decades by British governors87 in the church, in schools and in the civil service.88 Therefore, the fight for Afrikaans paralleled the rise of Afrikaner nationalism.89

On 14 August 1875, *Die Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* (GRA) [The Fellowship of True Afrikaners] was established.90 The GRA endeavoured “to convince Dutch and Afrikaans speaking white people that Afrikaans could play an important role in their national consciousness and to regard themselves as a special community called Afrikaner”.91 At the time, many Afrikaners regarded the language “as an incorrect form of Dutch”.92 Consequently, the group aimed “to get Afrikaans recognised as a language distinct from Dutch” and to develop a “high” variety of Afrikaans.93 In order to distribute their message, the GRA published a newspaper,94 first published on 15 January 1876.95 *Die Afrikanse Patriot* “was established to help convince the Afrikaners that Afrikaans is their own language”.96
According to Valley and Valley, the GRA initiated the “forced Europeanisation of Afrikaans”.97 For this society, Afrikaans was the language of the white Afrikaners.98 Coloured Afrikaans speakers were thereby excluded from the struggle for Afrikaans language rights.99 Valley and Valley affirm that these speakers are still being stigmatised: “it seems that the version of [A]frikaans spoken in the coloured community [Kaaps] is seen as a colloquial version of ‘pure’ [A]frikaans and is almost always represented as being comical and never taken seriously”.100 Another outcome of the GRA: the creole nature of Afrikaans was actively rejected;101 written Dutch was chosen as the foundation for the standardisation of Afrikaans.102
An early version of “baie”, namely “baiang”, on the first front page of Die Afrikaanse Patriot. Thanks to Imam Hashim Salie for pointing this out at the August 2017 Taalmaandvieringe of Die Afrikaanse Taalraad (ATR) and Die Afrikaanse Taalmuseum en -monument (ATM). (Image source)

As previously stated, language planners set out to separate “high” Afrikaans from “low” Afrikaans: the language was therefore promoted as “a formal written language with real cultural clout”.103 This image of “high” Afrikaans included viewing the language as one that was “as ‘civilized’ (read: white) as possible”.104 But, “a standardised form of Afrikaans … became a marker of ‘whiteness’; ‘Coloured Afrikaans’ was considered quaint and sub-standard”.105 Standard Afrikaans is, according to social opinion, the “prestige” Afrikaans variety; other varieties are considered inferior and lower in status.106

Hein Willemse underscores the consequences of the construction of Afrikaans as a white language by Afrikaner language nationalists such as the GRA.107

In denying the commonality of their fellow Afrikaans speakers who were descendants of slaves, indigenous people or simply poor, they were elevating the language to a narrow ethnic nationalist cause. Through a web of actions and policies that influenced education, cultural and economic policies well into the 20th century, Afrikaans was constructed as a “white language”, with a “white history” and “white faces”.108
However, Willemse highlights the agency of Afrikaans speakers; the language is also one of resistance:

While our recent sociopolitical history often casts Afrikaans as the language of racists, oppressors and unreconstructed nationalists, the language also bears the imprint of a fierce tradition of anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, of an all-embracing humanism and anti-apartheid activism.\textsuperscript{109}

Other authors similarly assert that the language does not solely represent suppression and racism. For example, Jansen affirms that “Afrikaans is not merely the language of white Afrikaner nationalism … Afrikaans predates and extends beyond apartheid”.\textsuperscript{110} Likewise, Danny Titus emphasises that “Afrikaans does not equate Afrikaner”.\textsuperscript{111} Cecyl Esau reminisces that many coloured people “fought just as hard [as the 16 June 1976 protestors] in the struggle against apartheid … in Afrikaans”.\textsuperscript{112}

However, authors such as Randall van den Heever and Franklin Sonn note the ambivalence experienced by coloured Afrikaans speakers. Van den Heever notes “the conflict between his Afrikaans mother-tongue and his vision of liberation from Afrikaner-dominance [which] unleashed an intense ambivalence in the mind of the oppressed Afrikaans-speaker”.\textsuperscript{113} Likewise, Sonn underscores on the back cover of the book \textit{Ons kom van vêr: bydraes oor bruin Afrikaanssprekendes se rol in die ontwikkeling van Afrikaans}, that coloured Afrikaans speakers simultaneously \textit{speak} the language and were \textit{oppressed} in the language; he notes “the ambivalence about the Afrikaans of our heart and the distasteful way in which we were oppressed and disregarded” in Afrikaans.\textsuperscript{114} Yet, he asserts that “Afrikaans is not only the language of apartheid; Afrikaans is also the language of the struggle and reconciliation”.\textsuperscript{115}

Previous sections discussed the socio-political and -cultural conditions wherein the standardised form of Afrikaans emerged. Ethnic nationalists defied Dutch and British colonial linguistic influence [albeit ironically using written Dutch as the basis of standard Afrikaans].

This article argues that Afrikaans historically functioned as a language of resistance much earlier than the era of Afrikaner ethnic nationalism. Slaves utilised early Afrikaans to express resistance against colonialism during, it is thought, the Dutch East India Company era through \textit{ghoemaliedjies} [ghoema songs]. A few years before
Die Patriot was published, coloured Afrikaans speakers resisted colonial linguistic influence in the Moravian mission station town of Genadendal (South Africa’s first mission station) via printed texts.

The following sections discuss the historical use of Afrikaans as a language of defiance against white hegemonies by slaves and coloured people throughout colonialism, Afrikaner nationalism, apartheid and the post-apartheid socio-cultural milieus.

Challenging colonialism

▪ Ghoemaliedjies [ghoema songs]

Ghoema songs, part of Cape Muslim slave culture, were the earliest forms of defiance against colonialism (and colonial linguistic influence). As previously discussed, slaves and Eastern political exiles were transported to the shores of the Cape in 1658, and between 1652 and 1767. Indonesian prisoners thereby brought their literary traditions, such as the pantun, to the Cape: the ghoemaliedjie resembles this form of song.¹¹⁶

Even though ghoemaliedjies are difficult to date¹¹⁷, they “include references that could, arguably, be used to claim that during the period of the Dutch East India Company rule slaves created adaptations of both ... the pantun, and the Dutch popular song, the mopje”.¹¹⁸

As already mentioned, ghoemaliedjies played a significant role in slave culture.¹¹⁹ They comprise a melange of Dutch and Indonesian folksongs.¹²⁰ They were historically sung in Malay-Portuguese, Malay-Dutch, Afrikaans and English.¹²¹ Many early Dutch folksongs “developed into Afrikaans (sometimes in a dialect which reveals their Dutch origins)”.¹²² A particular form of this song employs the form, rhythm and lyrics of traditional Dutch (and subsequently Afrikaans) folksongs.¹²³ Winberg emphasises the importance of these songs’ language use:

The adaptation of the colonists’ language by slaves was not an act of submission. They took the white man’s language, altered it, added new words and, very often, threw it back in parody ... Song, as Vernon February has pointed out, was one of the few means by which white society could be satirised (February 31). Adaptation of the oppressor’s language and culture is a feature of many slave societies.¹²⁴

Generally, ghoemaliedjies are overtly satirical: slaves utilised them to comment on the colonists.¹²⁵ The Dutch colonists’ songs were subtly modified by their servants for commentary on their masters.¹²⁶ The ghoemalied is predominantly influenced by a particular form of Dutch folk song, the pieknieklied [picnic song].¹²⁷ This form ridicules respected elderly figures within the conservative Dutch community: many ooms [uncles] and tannies [aunties], such as “oom [uncle] Jannie”, were parodied as so-called “picnic personae”.¹²⁸

The appropriated ghoemalied also ridicules the “sentimentalised boerenooi [farm girl]”.¹²⁹ Christine Winberg notes that “[t]he idealised farm girl is the heroine of a multitude of romantic folksongs”.¹³⁰ Adding to the derision expressed against the boerenooi, the slaves disparaged their white madams¹³¹/the boerevrou [boer woman].¹³²

Slaves sung ghoemaliedjies during their annual picnics (which slave owners were required to provide).¹³³ A ghoemaliedjie is thereby also called a “Malay picnic song” or a moppie.¹³⁴ Nowadays, ghoemaliedjies are still performed at the annual Malay Choir Competition.¹³⁵ Traditionally, these songs form an integral part of the Cape Minstrel Carnival.¹³⁶
Du Plessis (1935:113, 134) claims that the [apparent] Afrikaner folk songs, for example, “Siembamba” and “Suikerbossie”, emerged within the Muslim community: “[s]ongs which originated in the Dutch community were sung as parodies by Muslims and then re-emerged as Afrikaner folk songs”. For Winberg, the appropriation of Malay songs by Afrikaners “as expressions of a folk consciousness” is ironic: “[t]he satirical traditions of the ghoemaliedjie live on … in the most soulful utterances of Afrikanerdom”.

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Malay Choir (Young Men Sporting Club) (Photo: Menán van Heerden)

Members of the Santam District Six Entertainers at the Castle of Good Hope (Photo: Leon Lestrade)
The Genadendal printing press

Genadendal (initially called Baviaanskloof) is the oldest mission station in South Africa. It was established in 1738 by the missionary Georg Schmidt, whose "main task was to teach the Khoikhoi the Christian doctrine". In this Moravian mission town, Afrikaans is "the mother-tongue".

Genadendal Mission Station (c 1849) (Image source)

Titus underscores the importance of the Genadendal printing press in resistance against colonial linguistic influence: “[o]ther than the Fellowship for True Afrikaners in 1875, Genadendal Dutch had already in 1816 cut itself off from the High Dutch and is also printed on a Gutenberg-model-printing press.” Titus also notes the contribution of Genadendal to the Afrikaans language: “[i]t played a large role in the establishment of the spoken language to a written language … on the other hand because it had one of the first printing presses in the Cape where this language could be promoted and published in letter and book form.”

Genadendal texts discussed here include a monthly journal (De Bode van Genadendal, 1859) and a novella (Benigna van Groenekloof of Mamre, 1873), both published by the printing press.

De Bode van Genadendal was a monthly journal established in 1859 (since 1914, published as Die Huisvriend). It is, therefore, argued that Die Afrikaanse Patriot, published in 1876, was not the first Afrikaans newspaper: the latter viewpoint persists in “Afrikaner-centric … traditional language history textbooks”. The white Afrikaans speakers of the GRA were therefore not among the first Afrikaans speakers to further the establishment of Afrikaans in written form.

The first editors and writers for De Bode were white people; however, it “quickly became the mouthpiece of coloured Afrikaans talent”. The white (and successive coloured) editors invited members of the congregation
to contribute in the form of articles, stories and poems.149 Other submissions also included letters.150 These contributions, encompassing hundreds of pages, are deemed very significant Afrikaans literary pieces.151

The Genadendal printing press also published a novella about a coloured woman, titled Benigna van Groenekloof of Mame152 (published anonymously in 1873).153 Theo du Plessis argues that the book by CP Hoogenhout, published in the same year, was not the first Afrikaans novel.154 On the other hand, Kanningmeyer regards Hoogenhout’s book, titled Die geskiedenis van Josef, as the first “extensive [Afrikaans] work of prose”.155 Wium van Zyl points out that Benigna is predominantly written in Dutch, with some of the dialogue “more or less in Afrikaans”.156 However, Van Zyl acknowledges Benigna as a very interesting story to take note of in the study of the Afrikaans language.157

The novella Benigna endeavoured to address the needs of Christian coloureds.158 This novella also aimed to enable the people to tell their own real-life stories, as well as stories from their history, in their own language (much of the material originated from oral sources).159 In addition, Benigna addresses political ideology: it comments on problematic human relationships with regard to racial discrimination (Benigna, a coloured girl, is prohibited from attending school with her white friend; their friendship is thereby threatened).160

Letters published in De Bode are also considered important anti-colonial Afrikaans texts. Between 1899 and 1914, former students corresponded via letters.161 These letters were deliberately written in this era’s common spoken language: the writers voiced that if a text were written in one’s spoken language, one had a better understanding of it.162 As previously mentioned, in contrast to standard Dutch, Afrikaans was, at the time, distinguished as “plattaal” [flat language].163

Disregarding such a label, these letters claimed that readers wished to read something “in their language”:

It is indeed true, that a lot of people say that what the people speak here at the Cape is not a language.164 I do not agree with this. Even though the language does not have grammar, the people indeed express their thoughts with the language and indeed in words (De Bode 1904:68).165

Another letter questions the use of the then standard language (colonial Dutch) at school. The writer asks: how would school inspectors – those also “fight[ing] so hard for the Dutch language” – react if learners did not write in standard Dutch? (De Bode 1899:76)166

Resistance against white hegemony did not cease, given socio-political and -cultural circumstances. Between the years 1900 and 1930, Afrikaner nationalism became a more serious and purposeful national movement; it extended beyond the endeavours of the GRA.167 In addition, the South African War “was the spark needed to fight for Afrikaans”.168

Within the first three decades of the twentieth century, various Afrikaner language organisations, publications (such as newspapers) and publishing houses were founded.169 In 1918, Afrikaans was instituted as a university subject.170 In the same year, the Afrikaner Broederbond was launched, aiming to “[help] build the Afrikaner in cultural and economic terms”.171

By 1925, Afrikaans was an established medium of instruction (for Afrikaans speaking learners) in schools.172 In 1925, Afrikaans was – together with English – “fully recognised as a language of South Africa”.173
A comprehensive Afrikaans dictionary was published the following year. In the next section, texts that question Afrikaner nationalist hegemony – including, firstly, the satirical column *Straatpraatjes* and, secondly, protest poetry – are examined.

**Challenging Afrikaner nationalism**

- *Straatpraatjes*

The satirical column *Straatpraatjes* was published between 1909 and 1922 in the newspaper of the African Political Organisation (APO). The APO – established in 1902 in Cape Town – was “the first substantive [c]oloured political pressure group in the Cape Colony”. The first issue of the APO’s newspaper, titled *APO*, was published on 24 May 1909. The APO criticised “the white commercial press” of, among other things assuming “that South Africa belongs to the whites … by right of conquest”. The leader of the APO, Abdullah Abdurahman, is thought to be the writer of *Straatpraatjes* (written under the pseudonym Piet Uithalder).

*Straatpraatjes* is based on the white middle-class Afrikaans column, *Parlementse Praqtjes*; the latter was published in the newspaper *De Zuid-Afrikaan*, “the leading Dutch newspaper in the Cape”. For the APO, this column solely represented Afrikaner interests. The *Straatpraatjes* column thereby aimed “to express coloured interests in the language of the coloured community”. Herman Giliomee and Bernard Mbenga consider *Straatpraatjes* as “the earliest example that we know of where Afrikaans is used to articulate black resistance to white domination”. Satire was employed as a “weapon … against [Abdullah Abdurahman’s] Afrikaner nationalist opponents”.

For example, the column scorned segregation and white racism; it also “mocked the operations of Parliament”. The spoken language of Cape Town’s coloured working classes (also described as “the Afrikaans vernacular [of] the urban coloured community of the Western Cape”) was deliberately utilised. Addressing “readers in the unique language of his community” was a “novelty”. This use of language was intentionally contrasted with the form of Afrikaans used by white middle-class speakers in, for example, Parliament.

- The first black Afrikaans poet

Approximately two decades after the publication of *Straatpraatjes* ceased, SV Petersen published his first collection of poems. Petersen is regarded as the first black Afrikaans poet. His debut collection of poems, *Die enkeling*, was published in 1944. Willemse cites Petersen as “the first coloured writer to debut in Afrikaans”. His poetry openly challenges the social environment; his social position denied him access to “mainstream Afrikaans cultural life”.
Afrikaans and the liberation struggle – in Afrikaans

In 1948, the National Party came to power.\textsuperscript{194} Between 1948 and 1953, most apartheid laws were implemented.\textsuperscript{195} During the 1940s, “Afrikaans became perceived as the language of the oppressor and a symbol of apartheid.”\textsuperscript{196} Afrikaans gained more power: “[b]y the time that the nationalists came to political power in 1948, Afrikaans’ position was further bolstered and it gained a foothold in all sectors of society, including the civil service and the economy.”\textsuperscript{197}

However, it was during the era of the apartheid liberation struggle that people simultaneously resisted Afrikaans and resisted \textit{in} Afrikaans. Valley and Valley make this point:

[W]hile black students in Soweto were protesting against the use of Afrikaans as the language of instruction, Afrikaans-speaking coloured youth joined in the fight against the government, and used their Afrikaans to mobilise communities to fight against the injustices of the day. Members of the UDF, Ashley Kriel, Allan Boesak and Cheryl Carolus come to mind as some of the youth who were at the forefront of resistance politics in Cape Town in the 1970s and ’80s.\textsuperscript{198}

Willemse echoes this point, citing the “history of resistance” \textit{in} Afrikaans as an alternative history of Afrikaans:\textsuperscript{199}

[The decision to resist was] rooted in the uprisings in which Afrikaans was labelled “the language of the oppressor”. The slogan was rightly an emotive, visceral response to Afrikaner ethnic, nationalist hegemony
The next section examines the ways in which Afrikaans was utilised as a language of resistance during the apartheid liberation struggle by writers, academics, educators, student activists and artists. Anti-apartheid poetry collections, conferences, movements, protests, theatre and hip-hop resisted throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. An important component of resistance in Afrikaans against the hegemonic system included literature such as protest poetry and the activism of writers.

- **Protest poetry**
In 1961, Adam Small published one of his most famous poetry collections, *Kitaar my kruis*. It was protest poetry written in Kaaps, “launch[ing] a cutting attack on South African society ...” Jakes Gerwel also regards Hein Willemse as a political struggle poet. During the 1980s, writers and scholars also expressed anti-apartheid sentiments at conferences.

![Adam Small (Photo: Naomi Bruwer)](Image)

**1980s writers’ conferences**

The Victoria Falls conference (Zimbabwe, July 1989) was attended by predominantly [white and coloured] Afrikaans writers, such as Breyten Breytenbach, André P Brink, Antjie Krog, Vernie February, Etienne van Heerden, Hein Willemse, Julian Smith and Patrick Petersen.

![Vernie February (Image source)](Image)

At the time, Afrikaans writers began to resist “the cultural hegemony on which the ruling class built its political regime … apartheid and National Party authoritarianism” in the 1960s. This conference was an opportunity
for dialogue:

... as the ANC had been banned and demonised by the ideological state apparatus since the sixties these progressive voices were left without a means of discourse. For the writers of that decade and their literary descendants to meet writers in exile and ANC political workers became an opportunity for them to be more actively involved in a solution for South Africa – to realise that this country can have a future away from apartheid and violence.  

In one of the conference talks, Patrick Petersen spoke in Afrikaans about the politicisation of black Afrikaans poetry. He asserted that his “political involvement ... as word artist [is] unavoidable”. In this regard, he emphasised the importance of poetry in the struggle: “[p]oetry ... has to break the silence ... break through barriers ... go to the podium and give the black power sign”. He also affirmed that poetry resisting the struggle “offsets the policy of disguise and distortion of reality that is followed in the official culture ... The black writer is therefore called to evoke the liberation struggle with his own people”.

Patrick Petersen
(Image source)

Petersen underscored another role of black Afrikaans poetry, namely the “challeng[ing] of the traditional notions about what literature is and what should be made part of the canon”. Furthermore, he stressed several impediments to the development of black Afrikaans literature: structural problems within society, such as poverty, censorship, “colonialism, violence, humiliation and oppression and also the struggle against it”.  

Another conference took place in April 1985: a symposium for Black Afrikaans writers was held at the University of the Western Cape. According to the editors of the conference report, the conference aimed to highlight literary activity other than literature canonised by the Afrikaans establishment. Participants included academics and writers such as Jakes Gerwel, Julian Smith, Patrick Petersen, Peter Snyders and Hein Willemsen. Willemsen reminisces that, at the time, “young Black Consciousness inspired academics” such as himself “understood that a different story needed to be told”. He elaborates:

At the very least, one that tells of a more encompassing history, a history that explored the life and culture of those marginalised, ie the neglected histories, language, literature and culture of Black Afrikaans speakers.

A historical movement that focused on marginalised Afrikaans speakers in the sphere of education was the Alternative Afrikaans Movement.

- The Alternative Afrikaans Movement

During the 1980s, Cape Afrikaans teachers challenged the exclusive focus on and backing of standard Afrikaans / “white” Afrikaans in education. They emphasised, among other things, the struggles of Kaaps speaking learners facing standard Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. Educators expressed their grievances via their education union, the Kaaplandse Professionele Onderwysersunie (KPO).

During a February 1988 congress of the KPO, the notion of “alternative Afrikaans” in relation to the subject Afrikaans was a point of discussion. The predominant definition of alternative Afrikaans comprises the idea
that “the school subject Afrikaans has to be purified from racial judgements and … prejudices, and from its white favouring. The conversations … emphasise that Afrikaans belongs to all its speakers. It is not so that one subgroup can claim the language”.

Van den Heever stresses the importance of “alternative Afrikaans”: it “is of utmost importance in the democratic movement because the conflict between his Afrikaans mother-tongue and his vision of liberation from Afrikaner-dominance unleashed an intense ambivalence in the mind of the oppressed Afrikaans-speaker” (as previously mentioned).

In addition to teachers, community leaders, students and learners also confronted white Afrikaner hegemony in Afrikaans.

- **Student political mobilisation and activism**

As previously mentioned, coloured people contested apartheid oppression also in Afrikaans. Van den Heever underlines prominent Afrikaans community leaders, such as Allan Boesak, Jakes Gerwel and Franklin Sonn. During the liberation struggle, they fought oppression in various spheres: the church and education. Coloured learners in the Cape and students at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) also resisted apartheid in Afrikaans.
Willemse reminisces how the University of the Western Cape (UWC) of 1976 was central to student activism:

[UWC] became the hub of the student uprising in the Western Cape and we as students sang revolutionary songs in isiXhosa, English and in Afrikaans … We performed plays and poetry in Afrikaans and a young, eloquent firebrand named Allan Boesak whipped us all into rousing Black Consciousness fervour – in Afrikaans … This is an example of Afrikaans in resistance; it is also an example of a counternarrative unknown to those outside the sphere of Afrikaans speakers.228

MacMaster highlights the leading role of UWC in the 1976 Cape Peninsula revolt: colleges, schools and communities were inspired by the student protest.229 They “began revolting in solidarity with Soweto, in the fight against apartheid and in support of the liberation struggle”.230 MacMaster reminisces about a song from the Cape Flats: “Oubaas Vorster, Oubaas Vorster/ Slaap jy nog, slaap jy nog?/ Hoor hoe skrueu die kinders/ Hoor hoe skrueu die kinders:/ Equal rights, equal rights!” [Old man Vorster, Old man Vorster/ Are you still sleeping, are you still sleeping?/ Hear how the children shout/ Hear how the children shout:/ Equal rights, equal rights!]231
Basil Kivedo, a former MK soldier, asserts: “… I was arrested by the security police in Afrikaans, I was detained in Afrikaans, I was tortured in Afrikaans, but I fought back in Afrikaans.” Kivedo also underscores his involvement in student leader politics: he “targeted certain students as possible recruits for the liberation struggle” in, for example, Bonteheuwel, Hanover Park, Lavender Hill and Manenberg. He had “close ties with radical members of the Bonteheuwel Military Wing (BMW), including Ashley Kriel, Anton Fransch and Colleen Williams (Kivedo and the commander of the BMW initiated political education sessions with members). According to Kivedo, “[t]he medium of instruction [was] in all cases Afrikaans” (given that it was in Bonteheuwel).

Kivedo affirms that numerous student leaders, such as Cheryl Carolus, fought in Afrikaans. At the 33rd anniversary of the UDF, Cheryl Carolus asserted: “[w]e spoke everyone’s language at public meetings” (including Afrikaans, English and Xhosa when meeting in Bonteheuwel).
Community activism also comprised black community theatre and the hip-hop movement on the Cape Peninsula.

- **Black community theatre**

During apartheid, black community theatre thrived in the predominantly Afrikaans speaking northern suburbs of the Cape Peninsula (including, for example, Belhar, Elsiesrivier, Ravensmead, Bellville, Kuilsrivier and Kraaifontein). Categories such as social-political dramas were performed mainly in Kaaps (“the language of the [Cape] Flats”). These dramas include, for example, Melvin Whitebooil’s *Dit sallie blerrie dag wies*, Fransman highlights the significance of the socio-political dramas of the drama group Cape Flats Players (established in 1973 by Adam Small). They performed dramas such as *Kanna hy kó hystoe* (Adam Small, 1965) and *Joanie Galant-hulle* (also by Adam Small, 1978). These dramas “tackled the issues of their own communities”, such as racism and the Group Areas Act.
**Indigenised hip-hop**

Hip-hop in Cape Town emerged during the 1980s, mainly as a platform for articulating resistance to the apartheid regime. The group Prophets of da City was part of the “Old Skool [School]”, “a group of young MCs with a political conscience, coming mostly from coloured townships, and addressing current issues in the language of the street”.

Julian Smith (Photo: sun.ac.za)
Two decades before Die Antwoord, Prophets of Da City released South Africa’s first hip-hop album. According to Valley and Valley, the first recorded Afrikaans hip-hop song was “Dallah Flet” by Prophets of Da City (Image source).

During this era, hip-hop was banned on radio, thereby remaining underground. The establishment regarded hip-hop as “subversive” and repressed it. Haupt defines “indigenised”/localised hip-hop as the “use of local dialects and idiomatic expressions” that focuses on “very local concerns”. Battersby also discusses the use of the vernacular in hip-hop:

The standardisation of Afrikaans by whites played a decisive role in the discourse of power during apartheid, through its exclusion of the variants of Afrikaans spoken by black/coloured speakers. The use of the vernacular subverts the impacts of colonialism [and] creates a unifying force among the colonised and a site of intercultural conflict. Invariably in South African hip-hop the vernacular is used in such a manner as to challenge the logic presented by power structures.

Defiance against colonialism and Afrikaner nationalist hegemony did not end with apartheid. In the next section, a local and international protest theatre production, titled Afrikaaps, is discussed as post-apartheid dissent.

**Afrikaaps**
A contemporary theatre production that combines hip-hop with Kaaps is titled *Afrikaaps*.²⁵⁸ *Afrikaaps* is a protest theatre production that performed mainly in Cape Town and the Netherlands between 2010 and 2015. The 2010 documentary film with the same title, directed by Dylan Valley, chronicles the 2010 performances of the production.

*Afrikaaps* – directed by Catherine Henegan with Aryan Kaganof offering creative input – comprises eight hip-hop artists and social activists from the Cape Flats: Emile Jansen (Emile YX? Jansen); Jethro Louw; Janine van Rooy-Overmeyer (Blaq Pearl); Quintin Goliath (Jitsvinger); Moenier Adams (Monox); Charli van der Westhuizen (Bliksemstraal); Shane Cooper and Kyle Shepherd. In addition to clips from the *Afrikaaps* documentary and dialogues, the production uses hip-hop, soul, jazz, R&B, reggae and performance poetry / spoken word.²⁵⁷

The production advocates Afrikaans as an indigenous, creole language.²⁵⁸ *Afrikaaps* thereby affirms that the language was formed at the early, cosmopolitan Cape [also] by the ancestors of coloured people (namely, the indigenous Khoikhoi and Malay slaves). *Afrikaaps* thereby aims to refute the claim that Afrikaans is a colonial
language of the white Afrikaner oppressor. The white appropriation of Afrikaans during Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid is especially highlighted.

Furthermore, the production highlights issues surrounding marginalised and stigmatised Kaaps as a response and resistance to the racialised hegemony of standard/“pure” Afrikaans of the white Afrikaner oppressor. Indigenous (Khoi and San) and slave (Malay) cultural heritage, and Kaaps as a mother tongue, are celebrated. The origin of the Afrikaaps concept is an article written by Dylan Valley and Greer Valley in 2009. The term “Afrikaaps” was coined by Jitsvinger.259

Conclusion

This article aimed to demonstrate the various ways in which white and coloured Afrikaans speakers have resisted oppression throughout various eras in South African history: colonialism, Afrikaner nationalism, apartheid and the post-apartheid era. Since the era of colonialism, songs, newspapers, writers, academics, educators, students, theatre practitioners and hip-hop artists have all challenged repression – in Afrikaans.

- The original version of this article was produced for South African History Online on 20 September 2017 by Menán van Heerden, reworked for LitNet by Menán van Heerden with permission.
- Also read: Oor Afrikaans en sy veelbesproke voortbestaan: ’n mening

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### Kommentaar

**Johannes Comestor**  
*2017-10-12 at 17:55*

Ek het al baie oor Afrikaans gelees. Hierdie artikel is sekerlik by verre die eensydigste wat ek in hierdie konteks teengekom het. Dit val ook op dat die ouer gekies het om die artikel in die koloniale taal Engels te skryf eerder as in die wit onderdrukkers se Standaardafrikaans.
Excellent article that tells an often untold but very necessary side of the history of Afrikaans. Unfortunately it stops a few leaps short of a comprehensive portray that extends far beyond a typical simplistic black-white dichotomy of "THE STRUGGLE".

Although it claims otherwise, "this article aimed to demonstrate the various ways in which white and coloured Afrikaans speakers have resisted oppression", it clearly downplays the role of the "white tongue" in the language's formation phases (also during Apartheid) as a medium of resistance against - for the most part - an oppressive establishment. A colonial establishment that often strategic-divisionally partnered the "coloured tongue" in their imperialistic ventures, hence - in my view - the primary source of a relationship still today of misunderstanding and deep distrust.

However, the time is right, I naively believe, to start breaking through the current paralysing ideology-driven narrative towards new pathways that will uncover a perhaps politically incorrect for now, but not so binary truth: A (hermeneutic - if I may) understanding of the history where interaction between the two main Afrikaans groups extends far beyond a grossly simplified master-slave relationship. That of shared households (marriage not excluded) and shared geography in the narrowest sense of the word as the fertile habitat for Afrikaans. A story that will hopefully be addressed in the upcoming book Die storie van Afrikaans by Wannie Carstens (together F.H. Raidt) sadly as his apparent grand finale of a much acclaimed academic career.

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Almal moet nou begin ontspan: Die Afrikaanse taal gaan nie uitsterf nie,gaan nie gekaap word nie, gaan nie in ballingskap nie, hoef nie aewig verpolitisieer te word nie. Kom ons gun mekaar die voorreg om hierdie pragtige taal te ontwikkel op elke vlak van die samelewing. Afrikaans is die gekneusede engelkind van "n onbestendige sosio-politieke tydsgewrig, maar sy sal bly staan en uteindelik haar vlerke uitsprei en deur almal beny word.

---

Chris, die vervrouliking van Afrikaans is 'n voorbeeld van verpolitisering. Die aanslag teen Afrikaans kan volledig ingevolg kulturele marxisme verduidelik, selfs verklaar, word.

---

Beste Johannes
Die verwysing na Afrikaans as "sy" het 'n metaforiese inslag en wys semanties heen na die koestering van Afrikaans. My betoog kan gelees word as 'n pleidooi om Afrikaans as 'n kreatiewe taal te ontwikkel maar ook as 'n ironiese toespeling op Afrikaans as ideologies-gelade konstruksie. Dankie vir jou opmerking. Dit word opreg waarder.

---

Angus  
2017-10-25 at 16:14

Beste Johannes Comestor,

Sjoe, maar jy is darem kleinsierig! Wat jy as "vervrouliking van Afrikaans" beskou, (wat dit ook al mag wees), het absolut nie met die politiek te make nie. Dit is nie 'n aanslag op Afrikaans, soos jy beweer nie, maar slegs 'n grammatikale afwyking. Die linguís sal dit beskryf as 'n grammatikale fout, en onmiddellik sal jou nekhare rys, want jy weet ook nie wat hy daarmee bedoel nie. Hy bedoel nie daarmee dat iemand nie so mag skryf of praat nie, maar dat dit 'n afwyking is van die normale by die spreker.

Ek sien dat jy spog daarmee dat jy al baie oor Afrikaans gelees het, maar het jy al ooit Afrikaans as taal bestudeer?

Wat jy hier bo lees, is nog die naaste aan hoe Afrikaans werkelik sy ontstaan gehad het, as wat jy ooit in die verlede gelees het.

Groete,
Angus

---

Johannes Comestor  
2017-10-29 at 08:55

Chris Joubert het verdraagsaam op my opmerkingie gereageer. Angus bestempel my kommentaar egter as kleinsierig, dus liggeraak. Die vervrouliking van Afrikaans het glo niks met die politiek te make nie. Dit het sekerlik met feminismie te make en dit is een van die tentakels van kulturele marxisme, wat uit klassieke (dus politiek-ekonomiese) marxisme ontwikkel het. Klassieke marxisme wou lande, eintlik die hele wêreld, polities en ekonomies verander. Omdat daardie ideaal verydel is, word daar tans op kulturele marxisme gekonsentreer. Veral Westerse lande word kultureel gerysmier ten einde hulle kultureel bankrot en ryp vir oorgawe aan klassieke marxisme te maak.

Die artikel waaroor dit hier gaan, is 'n sprekende voorbeeld van kulturele marxisme, wat veral prominent in universitêre disiplines soos kulturele antropologie en sosioologie is. Wat daar geskryf is én wat weggelaat is, is primêr deur politieke voorwegings geïnspireer en nie deur taarloopwegings nie. Daarom word die foutiewe indruk gewek dat blankes (grootliks) afwesig in die geskiedenis van Afrikaans is. Kaaps, wat as mengtaal nie die toekoms van Afrikaans is of behoort te wees nie, word opgehemel. Dit terwyl Kaaps in werklikheid niks anders kan bewerkstellig nie as die ondergang van Afrikaans as 'n taal wat duidelik van Engels onderskeibaar is. Die oorlewing van Afrikaans in die vorm van 'n getransformeerde mengtaal is myns insiens ongewens.

Angus, om jou vraag te beantwoord: Ja, ek het Afrikaans as taal bestudeer. Ek het selfs Afrikaans-Nederlands III aan Unisa gelaag en sedertdien baie oor Afrikaans en taal en tale gelees en besin. Ek het bv die Wikipedia-artikel oor die Académie Française gelees. Hierdie akademie is sedert 1635 daarop ingestel om oor die belange van die Franse taal te waak. Volgens sy statuut “to render it pure, eloquent and capable of treating the arts and sciences.” Hierdie statuut word op so 'n manier vertolk dat hierdie akademie gekant is teen bv (1) die gebruik van (onnodige) Engelse woorde in Frans, (2) die vervrouliking van terminologie om bv feministe te behaag en (3) die bevordering van taalvariëteite omdat daar wyslik uitdruklik voorkeur aan Standaardfrans gegee word. Aan al drie die pasgenoemde ewels ly sommige van die prominentste Afrikaansinstansies in
erge mate, al gee hulle graag voor dat hulle Afrikaans bevorder. Almal wat Afrikaans werklik koester behoort ag te slaan op die voortreflike voorbeeld wat die Académie Française stel. Let wel, dit gaan hier nie om tradisionele feminisme wat hom vir gelyke regte, bv stemreg, beywer het nie, maar om die hedendaagse uiterstes wat in die naam van feminisme gepleeg word.

Vir baie blanke Suid-Afrikaners het dit sekerlik as 'n skok gekom toe die plaaslike blanke mans in 1994 feitlik oornag skurkstatus verwerf het terwyl hulle sedert 1652 as die bakermat en behoud van Europese beskawing in Suidelike Afrika gerek is. Hierdie transformasie is egter niks anders nie as 'n manifestasie van kulturele marxisme. Lees gerus die volgende insiggewende boek: Alasdair Elder, The red Trojan horse: A concise analysis of cultural marxism (Amazon: 2017, 148p, Kindle $3,41). As iemand daarna nog dink dat hedendaagse feminisme, die aanslag op Afrikaans en die bostande artikel niks met politiek te make het nie, kan ons verdere gesprek voer.

---

Angus

2017-10-30 at 15:38

Beste Johannes Comestor,

As jou spog met Afrikaans-Nederlands III (Unisa), moet jou darel bewys leer wat jy Afrikaans kan lees en verstaan. Nog nooit het ek beweer dat die vervrouliking van Afrikaans nie 'n politieke aanslag op Afrikaans is nie. Afrikaans het buitendien geen geslag nie; dus kan dit nie vervroulik of vermanlik of wat ook al nie. Dit egter daar gelaat.

Gaan lees weer mooi. Ek het gedink: "Wat jy as "ervervrouliking van Afrikaans" beskou, (wat dit ook al mag wees), het absoluut niks met die politiek te make nie." Jy, Johannes Comestor, het dit teen die woordjie "sy" in "sy sal bly staan", verwysende na Afrikaans. En dit het net so min met politiek te doen as die man in die maan. Dit is 'n taalkundige saak, soos ek aangewys het. Die linguist sal dit uitwyks as 'n afwyking in die taal van die spreker. Dit kan egter ook metafories wees, soos Chris Joubert aan jou verduidelik het. Lank gelede het jy oor dieselfde "ervervrouliking van Afrikaans" (soos jy dit noem) gekla, en ek het jou toe al daarop gewys dat Afrikaans in 'n allegorie as 'n "nooi, deur vele min geag" voorgestel kan word.

Ek stem saam met jou dat daar 'n politieke aanslag is op Afrikaans wat ons moet beveg, maar dit is nie in die invloed wat Engels op Afrikaans het nie. Dit is 'n taalkundige saak. Hoe Afrikaans sy onstaan gehad het, is ook 'n taalkundige saak, waarmee jy seker in jou eerste jaar op Unisa te doen gehad het. Heel waarskynlik het jy Hesseling en Bosman se teorieë bestudeer, en ook ander navorsing gedoen oor hierdie saak. Jy moes tog sekerlik op skool al geleer het van die Engelse invloed op die vorming van Afrikaans sedert die 18de eeu. Met jou kennis van taal, hoe dit ontstaan en ontwikkel, behoort jy mos al teen hierdie tyd te besef dat jy niks kan doen aan 'n taal se verloop en ontwikkeling nie. Hoe jy ook al korregeer en protesteer, die wonder van Afrikaans het nou amazing Afrikaans geword. (Soos ek jou ken, in jou agterkop dink jy nou dat ek dit goedkeur. Allermins!)

Groete,

Angus

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Johannes Comestor

2017-10-31 at 19:50

Angus, ek soek nie elke dag na iets om op LitNet te skryf nie. Dit is slegs in uitsonderlike gevalle dat ek deesdae hier skryf. Ek ag jou bewering verregaande dat ek oor Afrikaans-Nederlands III spog, terwyl ek dit duidelik gemaak het dat ek slegs jou vraag beantwoord. As ek wou spog, sou ek ander kwalifikasies gelys het. Die trant van jou skrywe maak dit duidelik dat ek nie 'n sinvolle gesprek met jou kan voer nie. Jy gee voor dat jy vooraf weet wat ek dink en hoe ek gaan reageer, gevolglik ag ek dit onnodig om jou in te lig oor wat jy reeds weet. Soek gerus ander gespreksgenote. Hopelik duld hulle jou meer geredelik as ek.
Angus

2017-11-01 at 19:02

Beste Johannes Comestor,
Ek soek nie gespreksgenote nie. Ek kan egter nie nalaat om jou daarop te wys as jy twak skryf net omdat jy nie behoorlik lees nie.
Groete,
Angus

Reageer

Jou e-posadres sal nie gepubliseer word nie. Kommentaar is onderhewig aan moderering.

Reageer

Jou naam*

Jou e-posadres*

PLAAS

☐ Stel my in kennis indien nuwe kommentaar bygevoeg word.