

Die Matie vra studente, buitestaanders en akademici om die rektor se boek te resenseer

Brink se bydrae: Puik of problematies?

STUDENTS



PRÉVOT VAN DER MERWE

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BRINK starts out with some smart rhetoric concerning his reason for writing in English. He purports that the domination of Afrikaans within the taaldebate has done it no favours and that this book being written in English broadens the scope and importance of the issue. It is interesting to note that the newly elected members of the university council do not share his liberal views.

I share Brink's love for the idea of the university and I think that the taal-apartheid Brink speaks about is a very real threat. An Afrikaans cocoon of a university would no doubt reduce our world class degrees to simply very nice toilet paper. One should support the T-option for the love of Afrikaans instead of opposing it because one fears the demise of the language.

Ultimately I feel Brink could have been a bit clearer about choosing sides in the book. A rector (of any university) is never able to please everyone – pretending this can be done is misguided.

PROF Chris Brink, rektor, visekanselier en taalstryder van formaat, het 'n boek teen die "taalstryders" geskryf. Hy kritiseer die "meu-Afrikaners" (die wat, volgens hom, vir 'n aparte herbevooringting van Afrikaners baklei onder die "dekmantel van Afrikaans") en verdedig sy siening van 'n multi-kulturalistiese, "vriendelike" US wat die rassamesstelling van die land moet weerspieël. Hy steun deurgaans op hierdie tweedeling.

Sy vriendelike US het so min as moontlik reëls. Hy sien dit nie as konstruksie vir sy veelrassigheid nie, maar as natuurlike uitvloeisel van 'n globale samelewing. As boek oor onderrigmedium skiet dit opvallend te kort in opvoedkundige beredenering. In 'n lys van argumente oor die taaldebate, bespreek hy nie eens die voordele van moedertaalonderrig nie.

As amper almal wat vir Afrikaans is, veragtelike motiewe het, is sy "vriendskappe" ongelukkig maar net in sy eie vriendekring.

OUTSIDERS



JEFF W. SANDERS

Visiting Oxford academic

PHILOSOPHY doesn't seem to help much with the crucial compromise between preserving variety and offering some kind of equality. Our times have judged the variety-preserving measures of apartheid too extreme; and the equality-promising socialist revolutions have largely imploded. For enlightenment we must turn to instances where tradeoffs have been sought, considered and found.

Brink's book is just such a document. It provides a clear, carefully written summary of the debate complete with explanation of the context, as well as giving Brink's own view. He rapidly identifies the real problem as being the identity and future of Afrikaners, and the two sides as being the variety-preserving side (promoting an isolationist/exclusionist principle) and the equality-seekers (taking a multiculturalist/inclusionist approach). No doubt the former see their own community threatened and the latter see their deeply-felt philosophy at stake.

At Oxford, as in so many places currently, there is an enthusiastic move to open access. In our case the casualty is the lifestyle of old: variety that is probably gone forever. The substantial gain is greater representation from the community: equality of opportunity. What does the younger generation of Afrikaners think about that and the proximity of the exclusionist arguments in the taaldebate to those that were instrumental in the architecture of apartheid?

Brink's book is gripping reading, no matter which side of the debate you take: brought alive by pertinent instances and maintaining coherence by logical exposition.



BREYTEN BREYTEN-BACH

ek het ongelyk nie in oopernie oor doktor Brink se boek nie want ek lesie strond nie ook nie oor hommie behalwe dat hy intellektueel (sorry) intelteel in selfevre fark is, my afferkaans is ook bieter as my ingils u kan hierie skreive geris vir 'om gie waner hy nie gesyp, is nie. Dis, my resensie



BRINK SE BOEK MAAK OPSLAE Prof Chris Brink tydens die bekendstelling van sy boek *No Lesser Place: The taaldebate at Stellenbosch*

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ANTON VAN NIEKERK

Voorsitter: Departement Filosofie

STELLENBOSCH se "taaldebate" handel nie oor die vraag of Afrikaans 'n toekoms as onderrig- en wetenskaptaal aan hierdie universiteit het nie. Die vraag in dispuut is: Hoe om dit te bewerkstellig?

Brink wys in sy boek dat 'n tweede, meer sinistere agenda in die geleedere van die "taalstryders" aan bod kom tydens debat oor hierdie vraag. Dit is die agenda wat, in naam van die beweerde passie om die oorlewing van Afrikaans, eintlik die herlewing van 'n soort neo-Afrikanemasionalisme in die oog het.

Die belangrikste insig wat Brink in hierdie boek aantoon is dat, indien die taalstryders die oorhand op

Stellenbosch kry, die universiteit self blootgestel is aan 'n veel ernstiger risiko as die risiko dat Afrikaans in die gedrang kan kom. Die taalstryders se agenda is direk in konflik met die transformasiedoelwitte van die Universiteit van Stellenbosch - as hul agenda slaag, sal daar geen Stellenbosch Universiteit oor wees nie.



HERMANN GILOME

Extraordinary Professor in History

BRINK'S book mixes scholarly analysis and crude polemics - his favourite trick is discrediting his opponents in terms of the old reformist-reactionary paradigm. For him there must be no rules, only language friendliness and language al-

liances. He fails to mention a single country comparable to South Africa where such a policy is working. He is a man with a mission: to get more blacks wanting to study through the medium of English (evidently a higher priority than developing SU as a primarily Afrikaans university, p.135). He does not provide a reply to the charge that this would lead to English steadily supplanting Afrikaans - the book is not written to persuade readers but to tell them that a demand for SU to remain primarily Afrikaans is inappropriate and perhaps even illegitimate.

He depicts opponents to this idea as "neo-Afrikaners" inspired by the idea of a "volkstaat of the mind", whatever that may mean, lumping together people as diverse as Van Zyl Slabbert and Dan Roodt. To paraphrase the famous statement of George Orwell: One has to belong to the intelligentsia to believe things like that: ordinary people have too much common sense.

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