

SAMEVATTING

Die onderwerp van die proefskrif is: Mites rondom Afrikaans.

Die probleemstelling raak veral die verskraling van Afrikaans se hoëfunksiestatus in Suid-Afrika na 1994 omdat hierdie verskraling 'n negatiewe impak het op sowel die ongeveer ses miljoen moedertaalsprekers van Afrikaans as op niemoedertaalsprekers vir wie die taal instrumentele waarde het. Die vraag is of miteskepping rondom Afrikaans gedeeltelik verantwoordelik is vir hierdie statusverlies.

Die term “mite” en die impak van mites word voorts bekyk. “Mite” word uiteindelik nie gesien as “'n storie sonder grond” (soos in die woordeboekdefinisie) nie, maar wel n.a.v. Jung, Campbell, Leroux, Malan en ander as 'n storie/narratief wat verband hou met **singewing aan die menslike bestaan**. In hierdie verband word veral gesteun op:

- die standpunt van die bekende twintigste-eeuse mitoloog, Joseph Campbell, wat beweer: “Myths are stories of our search through the ages for truth, for meaning, for significance (Campbell in Flowers 1988:5); en
- die uitspraak van Malan (1978:39) dat die mite “sedert die vroegste tye die mens se manier (is) om deur middel van 'n eenvoudige vertelling die sin, samehang en doel van die kosmos te verklaar.”

Miteskepping binne groepe (Anderson 1991: “verbeelde gemeenskappe”) word bekyk en daar word veral gepoog om die rol van nasionalisme en politieke miteskepping te verreken. In dié verband is die uitspraak van Leonard Thompson veral belangrik. Thompson (1985:3) wys op twee soorte mites, nl.:

- 1) “konserwatiewe mites” (bv. rondom die ontstaan van die groep); en
- 2) “radikale mites” (wat ten doel het om “die ander” se regime in diskrediet te bring).

In die diskoers oor mites rondom Afrikaans is die uitgangspunt dat die betrokke mite as positief of negatief beskou word in terme van die impak daarvan op die status en posisie van Afrikaans in Suid-Afrika.

Die twee “hoofmites” rondom Afrikaans word eksemplaries en anekdoties bespreek en die impak van die betrokke mites op Afrikaans word bekyk. Dié twee mites is naamlik:

- Afrikaans as mitiese bindmiddel in Afrikanernasionalisme in veral die eerste vyftig jaar van die twintigste eeu; en
- Afrikaans as metaforiese verdrukkerstaal in veral die tydperk van geïnstusionaliseerde apartheid.

Voorts word die neerslag van bogenoemde mites in verskeie Afrikaanse sisteme (onder meer die historiografie, die letterkunde en die skoolleerplanne) aan die hand van voorbeeldmateriaal bespreek. Die doel van dié bespreking is om aan dui hoe groot die impak van die betrokke mites was.

Ten slotte word die vraag gestel: “En nou, Afrikaans?” Die slotsom is dat Afrikaans se status in die sogenaamde hoëtaalfunksies wel toenemend onder druk is as gevolg van die hegemonie van Engels in die land. Daar moet wel nugter en beslis oor hierdie saak onderhandel word op grond van die toekenning van gelyke taalregte aan al elf ampstale in die jongste grondwet, maar die sprekers van Afrikaans kan ook meehelp vir die behoud van Afrikaans deur:

1. Saam te leef met die mites rondom Afrikaans en wel deur begrip vir en deernis met mekaar se mites te ontwikkel;
2. Afrikaans daagliks vir alle funksies te gebruik, veral aangesien Afrikaans sodanig ontwikkel is dat dit geskik is vir alle funksies; en
3. Self weer mee te werk aan miteskepping rondom Afrikaans, onder meer deur daarop te wys dat Afrikaans as taal van Afrika ’n groter aanspraak het op nasionaletaalstatus in Suid-Afrika as die internasionale taal, Engels.

Sleutelterme

Afrikaans

Afrikanernasionalisme

(Die) Afrikaners

apartheid

identiteit

ideologie

(Die) kollektiewe onderbewuste

kultuur

mite

miteskepping

narratiewe

nasionalisme

sosio-kulturele identiteit

stories

(Die) waarheid

(Die) WVK

SUMMARY

The topic of the thesis is: Myths around Afrikaans.

The problem statement mainly deals with the curtailment of the high function status of Afrikaans in South Africa since 1994 as this has a negative impact on the six million mother tongue speakers of Afrikaans as well as on non-mother tongue speakers for whom the language has an instrumental value. The question is raised as to whether myth making around Afrikaans can be held partly responsible for this loss in status.

The term “myth” and the impact of myths are looked into. “Myth” is not used in this thesis as a “story without ground” (as in the dictionary definition), but, according to the work of Jung, Campbell, Leroux, Malan and others, as a story/narrative that gives voice to man’s search for meaning and significance.

The main points of departure are:

- The viewpoint of the well-known twentieth-century mythologist, Joseph Campbell, who states: “Myths are stories of our search through the ages for truth, for meaning, for significance (Campbell in Flowers 1988:5); and
- The statement of Malan (1978:39) namely that myth has always been the way in which man has tried to explain the sense, significance and purpose of the cosmos by means of a simple narrative.

Myth making within groups (Anderson 1991: “imagined communities”) is viewed and the role of of political myth making explicitly stated. In this regard the statement of Leonard Thompson is relevant. Thompson (1985:3) points to two kinds of myths, namely:

- 1) “conservative myths” (for example about the origins of a group); and
- 2) “radical myths” (that aim to discredit the regime of “the other”).

In the discourse about myths around Afrikaans the point of departure is that the specific myth is regarded as positive or negative in terms of its impact on the status and position of Afrikaans in South Africa.

The two “main” myths around Afrikaans are discussed by exemplification and by means of anecdotes and the impact of the said myths on Afrikaans is evaluated.

The two myths are:

- Afrikaans as mythical binding force in Afrikaner nationalism in (mainly) the first fifty years of the twentieth century; and
- Afrikaans as metaphorical language of the oppressor, especially in the period of institutionalized apartheid.

The impact of the above myths within various Afrikaans systems (among others the historiography and literature of Afrikaans and the school syllabi) is furthermore exemplified with the purpose of indicating how great this impact has been.

Finally the question is asked: “And now, Afrikaans?” (with acknowledgement to the title of a publication by Hans du Plessis, 1992: *En nou, Afrikaans?*). The conclusion is that the status of Afrikaans in the so-called high language functions is daily under more pressure as a result of the hegemony of English in the country. There should be rational and firm negotiations about this unconstitutional curtailment of the rights of Afrikaans. The speakers of Afrikaans can, however, help to preserve the language by:

1. Living with the myths around Afrikaans in the sense that they develop and demonstrate understanding and empathy for the myths of other groups;
2. Using Afrikaans daily for all functions, especially seeing that Afrikaans is indeed suitably developed to meet any need; and
3. Working towards new myth making around Afrikaans, by – among other things – pointing to the fact that Afrikaans, as a language of

Africa, has a greater claim to *national* language status in South Africa than the *international* language, English.

Key words/phrases

Afrikaans

Afrikaner nationalism

(The) Afrikaners

apartheid

(The) collective subconscious

culture

identity

ideology

myth

myth making

narratives

nationalism

socio-cultural identity

stories

“truth”

(The) TRC