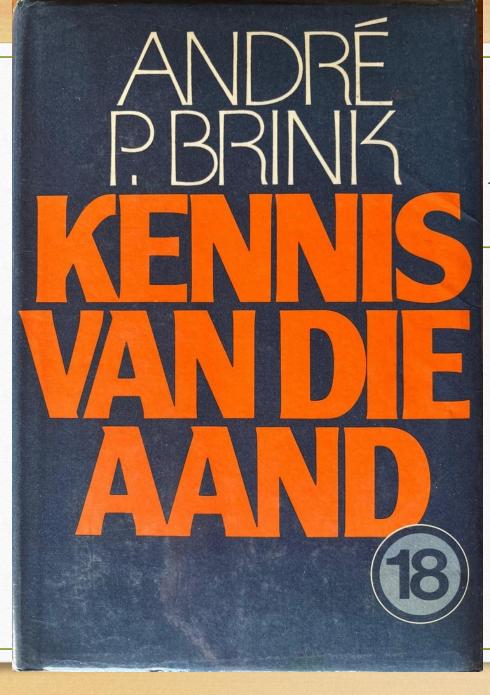
# Banned Books Exhibition

Merensky Library

September 2024



#### Kennis van die aand (1973)

#### **Publications Act 1963**

- Blasphemy,
- obscenity,
- harmful to public morals
- Sedition

Complaints – NGKerk-dominee's wife Cronjé – Immorality Act

Looking onto darkness (1975

## Why reflect on this particular banning?

- Provides insight in very specific ideas behind censorship:
- Ideas about morality / politics / apartheid / anti communism
- BUT also:
- ideas about culture: "High Culture" and White supremacy

#### Short history

- Originally now laws regulating publications of entertainment
- Relied on 1913 Customs Act
  - Prohibiting "undesirable material" (pornography) from being brought into the country
  - Anything "indecent, obscene or objectionable" words from British Customs laws
- In 1931 Censorship Act
  - Relied on BBFC (British Board of Film Censors self regulatory body) with "43 Taboo Topics"

### 1948 (Malan in power) -1956 (Cronjé Commission)

- 1948 NP under DF Malan in power (Dominee in NG Kerk)
- Already in 1940's outrage about pornography and publications with "bad influence" on the morals (Romances, Detectives, Adventures American genre fiction)
- 1954: Commission on Undesirable Publications (Cronjé Commission)
- Cronjé (from UP Sociology Dept) racist, white supremacist
  - Afrikaner as beacon of culture in Africa
  - Definition of Culture: narrow, humanist, High Culture, universal Truth, Beauty (Pop fiction as undermining this long hair, sex, pop music, undermining the morals of Afrikaners in big cities
  - Corrupting Christian morals and values
- This report led to resistance from Afrikaans Authors (Notably Van Wyk Louw)
  - Not possible to distinguish between art and pornography
  - Artists must be free creating a "Republic of letters" where ideas and form can be explored freely undeterred by political influence
- Compromise 1963 Publications Act.
  - Censors will be advised by literary Scholars taking things in account as probable readers.
  - Truce Afrikaans texts not banned regarded as "art" / not sedition or undermining religion etc.



#### Brink

- Brink not satisfied. About more than Afrikaans freedom of expression:
- Skryt Breyten Breytenbach
- Magersfontein o, Magersfontein! Etienne Leroux.
- Numerous court cases Kennis unbanned in 1982
   not for sale to under 18's
- Published in English
- Translated into German in DDR where books where many books were banned as well.

Breyten Breytenbach Skryt

Om'n sinkende skip blou teverf

Verse