



# Language and race problems in South Africa

*Adriaan J. Barnouw*

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On recommendation of its Visitors Grants Committee in South Africa, the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1931 requested Professor Adriaan J. Barnouw, who is serving as Queen Wilhelmina Professor of the History, Language and Literature of the Netherlands, at Columbia University, to visit South Africa for the purpose of making a comparative study of Afrikaans and of the Dutch language in South Africa. The account of his visit, and his resulting observations are found in the present volume. My purpose in visiting South Africa was to hear Afrikaans spoken on the spot, and to meet the scholars who are devoting themselves to the study of Afrikaans and its literature. This name for the language which in the nineteenth century was more commonly called Cape Dutch is in itself a challenge and a programme. It proclaims to the world that South Africa is a white man's country, and that the white man's language which is essentially South African is the Dutch speech of the Boers. It is a challenge, therefore, not only to the native population, whose anterior rights to the land are held to be superseded by the rights of the pioneers who reclaimed it for civilization, it is a challenge also to the English, who would claim for their language first place in South Africa. One must know the story of the movement for the recognition of Afrikaans to understand the faith and the loyalty that the language cult evokes.

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