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A literary relationship between South Africa and Germany: adapting marketing strategies to different cultures

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The literary relationship between South Africa and Germany has been a long and dynamic relationship where different content has been shared and important cultural exchange has occurred through the translation of key literary works. These works have not only been translated from English to German and vice versa, but translation has occurred from and into Afrikaans, isiXhosa and isiZulu. This research report will evaluate five key translated works that have gained either financial success or other forms of recognition, such as awards and wide distribution in both countries. The first two books are *Stadt des Goldes* by Norman Ohler, a German author, and *Portrait with Keys* by Ivan Vladislavić, a South African author. Both novels are set in Johannesburg; they explore the development and perceptions of the city; and have received positive reviews in both Germany and South Africa, as well as numerous awards. The other three books are Lutz van Dijk's *Themba*, Van Dijk's *Township Blues* and Dalene Matthee's *Fiela se Kind.* These books are aimed at younger markets; they have achieved extensive recognition in both countries; and have been prescribed in schools. The first two novels have been chosen specifically due to their literary significance – both Ohler and Vladislavić are highly praised authors in their respective literary communities – and due to both authors writing about the same South African city from different perspectives. The last three novels were chosen because they were written for youth markets. However, the authors still have a high standing within their own literary communities and are read by a larger audience. These novels therefore make it possible to make an extensive comparison as to how similar books are marketed in different ways to different cultures and languages.

The research report will discuss how publishers appeal to what a specific target market knows about another culture through altering and adapting the paratextual elements of books. Factors that influence which books are recognised or make it onto bestseller lists are not always measurable, and may include marketing strategies, timing, as well as context (cf. Baverstock 2014): the cultural, political and social changes that occur in both countries may strongly influence how readers purchase books. These factors could be explained by evaluating the marketing tools and strategies used by various publishers. The research report will focus specifically on alterations in the paratextual elements of books – covers, blurbs, forewords, titles, epigraphs, and other types of jacket copy such as shouts – to determine how these elements have been altered to appeal to different cultural needs and expectations.

When it comes to translating or altering paratexts, Carlotta von Maltzan (2014:91) identifies that once the 'information observed or translated is qualitative, it becomes difficult to determine what is right or what is wrong'. The paratexts will be observed subjectively as they involve societal and cultural information. This gives an indication of why 'certain fascinations with strange or foreign cultures arise either from out of the blue or often for good reason' (Von Maltzan 2014:92). For example, Norman Ohler's *Stadt des Goldes* – translated by Richard Bertelsmann as *Ponte City* – is a renowned German novel which became a part of the *New Africa Books* list in Cape Town. Lutz van Dijk's *Themba* and *Township Blues*, both originally written in German, were translated by Karin Chubb as *Crossing the Line* and *Stronger than the Storm* respectively, for a South African, English-speaking audience. The novels were published successfully in both countries and have even been called 'South African novels' (Von Maltzan 2014:93) as they are set during or after apartheid and deal with social and cultural issues in South Africa. However, they were not written by local authors. The alterations in titles, covers and blurbs depend on

culture, context and perspective. It is vital to consider that different authors write in different periods for different audiences and, moreover to look at how a South African author writing about South Africa would differ from a German writer writing about South Africa. The focus of the report is not on the content, but on how this content is marketed differently to these various audiences.

Description and Research Question

Firstly, the evaluation and comparison of the five books and their translations in the framework of paratextual analysis and secondly, the success gained either financially or through recognition will attempt to answer the research report's main question: why are paratexts altered to appeal to different markets in different countries and how has this been done in relation to the chosen books?

This research report will be looking at how paratext influences marketing and how knowledge of a certain culture or country is used to target new buyers. To a lesser extent, it will evaluate the success or selling power of the books on the German and South African markets. The research report will specifically focus on the alteration of paratexts within the broader context of marketing strategies. Other strategies would include social media marketing, direct marketing to potential customers and advertising (Baverstock 2014:124), but they will not form a part of this research report. The purpose of the report is to gain insight into how the paratextual elements have been altered to appeal to the different markets and how they may have influenced the popularity of certain books in both South Africa and Germany.

Five key translated texts have been chosen whose paratextual elements will be compared to their translations. Firstly, Ivan Vladislavić's *Portrait with Keys – Johannesburg & What-What* and Norman Ohler's *Stadt des Goldes* are both set in the city of Johannesburg and they address life in and the transformation of the city. Even though the authors write on the same topic, Vladislavić writes from a South African perspective, whereas Ohler writes from a German perspective. Furthermore, both novels were translated. The paratextual elements of the original and translated novels will be evaluated and compared to determine how a publisher in South Africa would market Johannesburg and how a German publisher would take a different approach.

The other three novels are Lutz van Dijk's *Themba,* Van Dijk's *Township Blues* and Dalene Matthee's *Fiela's Child*. These books are coming-of-age novels that address hard-hitting concerns for South African youth. The novels were written for a youth market, as well as an adult market, and have been prescribed in schools in both South Africa and Germany. The research report will compare how the paratexts of the different versions were altered to market to educators and young readers in the different countries.

Possible Outcomes and Assumptions

Firstly, paratextual elements have a great impact on how a book is sold in a different country and in a different language. These elements should be altered to appeal to different knowledge about a culture and a different cultural framework. For example, a book title will often not only be translated, but altered completely to appeal to a different market. Lutz van Dijk's original German version of *Township Blues* was altered for an English market and became *Stronger than the Storm* even though the original title was in English. Reviews and analyses will be used to determine why titles have been altered, but certain cultural concepts understood by a South

African audience will not be grasped by a German audience. The slang usage of 'what-what' (Vladislavić 2009) or the words *veld* and *nyaope* as used in Van Dijk's novels will need explanation to a German reader.

Secondly, certain books are chosen by publishers to be translated due to financial potential. Enticing literature is often translated due to its entertainment value and preference for certain types of books within certain cultures. For example, even though Matthee's work has been prescribed in school in South Africa, many German readers buy it as 'Urlaubslektüre' or 'vacation reading [which] brings the problems in South Africa closer [and yet] it is easy to read and understand' (Plohmann 2016). However, there are works that gain success in alternative ways: although Ivan Vladislavić is not a writer of popular literature, he writes on a topic that could potentially be educational to interested overseas audiences, namely the transformations and developments in Johannesburg in the post-apartheid era. 'Popular literature' is defined by John Colombo (2013) as 'writing which has shown wide and continued acceptance, measured by sales, frequent imitation, adaptation to other cultural forms and general commercial success. The word popular is meant as a synonym for successful, not as an antonym for serious'. Vladislavić is not associated with this type of success, but rather with rave reviews from literary critics and awards. For example, he was shortlisted for the 2016 Internationaler Literaturpreis – Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 'a German Literary award for international prose translated into German for the first time' (Platt 2016) and *Portrait with Keys* was described by its German publisher, A1 Verlag, as a 'Meisterwerk' or masterpiece (A1 Verlag 2016).

Thirdly, German books about South Africa have gained popularity due to a new perspective on cultural and social issues, such as drug trade and crime as seen in Norman Ohler's *Stadt des*

Goldes, as well as AIDS and rape culture as seen in Lutz van Dijk's *Township Blues*. These books have also interested German audiences because they provide insight into South African issues and, even more significantly, the violent sides of South African cities. Foreigners read articles online that follow this trend: 'Johannesburg has the highest rate for house robberies, hijackings and vehicle theft [in the country. People] are especially scared of allowing their children to play in the street, walk to school, relax in open spaces or use public transport' (Hosken 2016). This is quite a limited perspective as it demonstrates the fears and mentality of mostly white middle to upper class areas and communities, but these are the most influential in the media.

Lastly, mostly educated Germans and Germans interested in travel and global experiences have found South African books interesting due to the 'complexity of South African history and culture' (Brey 2016). This report will attempt to show that some books written by South Africans have reached more success in Germany than they have in South Africa because of this reason.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Methodology

This research report will make use of a mixed methods approach with a large focus on qualitative data. The two major components of the research are the physical appearances of the book products – paratextual elements – as well as the sales figures and reviews of these products. These components will be analysed to determine which books succeed in the other languages and

what the focus of the paratexts is in terms of social, cultural, political or entertainment value. Theories on paratext will then be incorporated to support why these books were translated and how they were influential in one or more of the abovementioned ways.

Firstly, this will be done through the evaluation, discussion and comparison of paratextual elements as defined by Gérard Genette in *Paratext: Thresholds of Interpretation*. These elements include book covers, book blurbs, prefaces, quotes, alterations in book titles, and what key focal points among these elements are in the marketing strategies of both countries' publishers. The use of images and descriptions will be crucial in determining how publishers feel the foreign culture will be best perceived by the intended reader. What they present to the reader is telling of how intercultural perception is formed.

Secondly, literary reviews, essays and critical articles will be analytically evaluated to determine which studies have been done in the field before. This could include reviews from different countries that have been compared before and existing theories that will lead to the uncovering of why certain works achieve success and popularity. The research report will analyse existing reviews on translated books to determine how these books have been received by different cultures and what types of recognition these books have received. Sources will include *Der Spiegel*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *The Guardian*, which are reputable and highly informed review sources. The chosen authors have gained immense popularity, as well as criticism from some of these prestigious publications and these publications in turn influence the readership's purchasing decisions.

Thirdly, communication with authors will be used to determine sales figures and how alteration in paratext has occurred for the selected five novels. A brief comparison of sales successes of South African books translated into German will be done to determine how well the books fared on the German market and how large the audience for South African novels is abroad. Furthermore, a comparison of sales successes of German books translated into English will be done to determine how well the selected German books have fared on the South African market. A statistical analysis will not be conducted on the figures, however, because to gain accurate sales figures specific to one country is very difficult. The quantitative data will form just a brief part of the report if it is available.

Lastly, both existing and self-conducted online interviews will be held with prominent South African author, Ivan Vladislavić, as well as Lutz van Dijk, who is a German author popular in both countries. These authors have achieved various degrees of success on various platforms. Analysis of the paratexts will provide insight into some of the reasons for their success. These interviews will focus on their backgrounds and attempt to determine from which perspectives they write. The interviews will also determine what their writing entails and who the markets are intended to be. Furthermore, they will show why the authors believe their novels have achieved the reviews and awards that they have; and how they have experienced the translation process and the process of developing paratexts for different markets. Lastly, the interviews will cover how they believe their literature has been perceived in both Germany and South Africa.

Therefore, research instruments include online questionnaires; interviews with the authors conducted by other sources, such as journalists and literary critics; literary reviews of original

and translated novels by both South African and German writers; paratextual elements, such as book covers, book blurbs, prefaces, introductions, titles, and subtitles on the German and English versions of the texts; sale figures if available; and existing scholarly articles. The discussion with authors surrounding marketing strategy is crucial to determine whether the authors agree with what paratexts say about their novels. The questionnaires will determine whether the intended messages are conveyed successfully or whether the market is presented with new ideas altogether; the reviews will determine whether paratexts convey core messages and content successfully; the sales figures and paratextual elements will provide concrete information for analysis and the scholarly articles will provide insight into the social, political and cultural influences with regards to paratextual strategy.

A detailed paratextual analysis of each novel and their translations will be done using the framework provided by Doctor Christopher Fotheringham in his *Paratextual Analysis of a French Edition of Ivan Vladislavić's Johannesburg Fiction*. He looks at the paratextual elements which Genette identifies, such as the cover design and image: who designed it and what the artist is known for focusing on; what its purpose is, what it evokes and what the links to the narrative would be; and to whom it appeals or should be appealing. Then he focuses on back cover blurbs and reviews found either on the cover or in the front- and back pages. The emphasis of the reviews and blurbs tell a reader what to look for and what will appeal to them. Furthermore, the analysis will evaluate who these elements resonate with and how they are crucial, as well as what is fore-grounded and left out; what is generalised and stereotyped; whether it is alien to the narrative or whether it supports it; whether foreign readers are offered more simplistic pictures of reality; and whether a new readership is offered completely different themes.

The analyses will demonstrate how differently the publishers approach the paratextual side of marketing these books to the different target markets. The cover images and blurbs are tailored to what German or South African readers know and expect. For German readers, the paratext must be a 'means of gaining access to information about South Africa' (Fotheringham: 2013). It is important to note whether the paratexts in fact go against the intention of the narrative. Paratext cannot be ignored when studying literary crossovers or literary relationships across borders.

Para-textual Theory and Marketing to Different Cultures

Paratexts are 'those liminal devices, conventions, both within and outside the book, that form part of the complex mediation between book, author, publisher, and reader: titles, forewords, epigraphs, and publishers' jacket copy are part of a book's private and public history' (Genette 1997:1). Thus, the central part of the report is a discussion of paratextual theories, paratextual alterations and how strongly they influence the perception of a book. It will assist in determining how perceptions of, as well as interest in foreign cultures determine the route a sales team would take with regards to certain books. Genette (1997:1) presents a global view of 'these liminal mediations and the logic of their relation to the reading public by studying each element as a literary function'. This is important regarding how a book is marketed to different audiences, because each element has a different function in the overall marketing strategy.

Elliot Ross (2014) writes in an article entitled *The Dangers of a Single Book Cover* that whenever a book by an African author about Africa is marketed overseas, it either gets the

‘acacia treatment’ or the ‘soulful-black-woman-with-colourful-smudges’ treatment. In other words, clichés or stereotypes are exploited to appeal to an imagination which is not yet educated about African culture or diversity. As for books from an Arabic origin, there is a clear ‘obsession with veils’ (Ross 2014) on book covers even though not all Arabic women wear the same veils and some do not wear veils at all. He highlights a clear issue regarding the marketing of a different culture and how paratexts can often reinforce stereotypes to market a book successfully.

Carlotta von Maltzan (2014:93) indicates that not only social, political and cultural environments, but also language differences influence the success of novels published in different languages and contexts. She writes that the language a novel is produced in transforms how the novel is understood and perceived. This can be proven by evaluating three German texts that have been translated into English and read by South African readers: Norman Ohler’s *Stadt des Goldes* (translated as *Ponte City*) and Lutz van Dijk’s *Themba* (2006, translated as *Crossing the Line*) and *Township Blues* (2000, translated as *Stronger than the Storm*). The problems which the characters experience are universal (violence, illness, political turmoil), but the way in which these experiences play out in different countries and cultures are completely different. Violence might be experienced by both German and South African people, but this does not mean the violence in South Africa will not shock a German reader. What stands out is that even though these are German authors, these novels have been perceived as ‘South African novels’ (Von Maltzan 2014:94). The reason is clear: not only the settings, but also the characters are embedded in South African culture. When examining the paratextual elements, we see that the titles of Lutz van Dijk’s novels were originally in English, but were still altered for South

African audiences. This is what the research report will explore and attempt to explain: it deals with what works best in the broader marketing plan.

This report will not only look at altered titles, but will focus on other paratextual elements of book marketing. According to Gérard Genette (1997:5), paratext could be described with a formula: 'paratext = peritext + epitext'. Thus, although a literary work is a textual product with a certain significance or entertainment value, it is not presented in an unadorned state. A book is accompanied by 'a certain number of verbal or other productions, such as the author's name, a title, a preface, illustrations' (Genette 1997:1). These materials surround a text and support it to '*present* it, in the usual sense of the verb but also in the strongest sense: to *make present*, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its reception and consumption' (Genette 1997:2). This is crucial when a book is translated and marketed to a different culture: the paratextual elements need to be altered and strategically designed to ensure its reception and consumption in a new country.

A book cannot be received as text only. It needs, according to Genette (1991:261) something which 'surrounds it and prolongs it, precisely to present it […] to make it present, to assure its presence in the world, its reception and consumption.' *Fiela se Kind* by Dalene Matthee would not be received or present in the world were it not for the striking covers associated with the novel: typically, a green, forest background with the faces of a coloured woman and white boy. First time readers of the novel are unlikely to buy the novel if it does not have a blurb explaining what the story is about and what its past reception has been. Thus, the paratexts determine how a book is presented to the intended reader or to the public. It acts as the packaging and additional

information which every product on the market needs (cf. Baverstock 2014). As with any other product on the market, it needs to be presented to a potential buyer in a way that will attract attention and fulfil a need or want, whether this is entertainment or education; aesthetic pleasure or intellectual gain. In Vladislavić' and Ohler's case, the goal is aesthetic pleasure and intellectual gain, whereas Matthee and Van Dijk appeal to entertainment and education.

The relationship between the text and the paratext should be a complementary one if the marketing plan is to succeed: if *Ponte City* by Norman Ohler, for example, is reduced to the text alone, without any exterior indications or clues – such as the title itself – the reader would not read *Ponte City* as *Ponte City*. It would not have the direct relation to one of the most controversial buildings in Johannesburg. *Stadt des Goldes* or *City of Gold* would not be interesting to a South African reader as it is too vague and cliché. *Ponte City* is intriguing due to the 'connotations of violence and drug trade' (Smith 2015), as well as the contrasting part it has played in the 'inner-city renaissance in recent years that has seen previous no-go areas turned into gourmet food markets, artists' studios and trendy apartments' (Smith 2015). To a South African reader, it would convey more information about the nature of the city than simply referring to it as 'the city of gold'.

It is important to note here who reads in South Africa and what they read. Basic Education statistics show that 'only 14% of South Africans read books, while only 5% of parents read to their children' (Petersen 2016). Petersen called this a major crisis in education and mentioned that this problem occurs in predominantly black and underprivileged communities where the book cultures are not developed and books are scarce. This is due to several socio-economic

reasons as these communities are underfunded and therefore no money exists to support the growth of a book culture. The focus needs to be on daily necessities. Furthermore, ‘we continue to have a problem of under-qualified teachers. [Books need] to read more exciting, and consist of aids such as picture story books [and] vocabulary cards’ (Petersen 2016). The result of this issue is that books and paratexts are predominantly designed to appeal to an upper- and middle-class readership. In this research report, Lutz van Dijk is the only true exception as he provides what the underrepresented communities need: relevant paratexts and study guides.

Furthermore, Genette (1991:262) explains how ‘the ways and means of the paratext are modified unceasingly according to periods, cultures, genres, authors, works, editions of the same work, with sometimes considerable differences of pressure.’ For example, *Fiela se Kind* was originally received in a completely different context and period to Lutz van Dijk’s *Themba*. The former was published in 1984 in South Africa before the advent of social media platforms such as Facebook, which was founded in 2004. The latter novel was published in 2006 in Germany: not only was it published in a different country, but in a different time. Van Dijk’s novels were able to make use of technology to increase their presence in the world, whereas Matthee’s novels had to rely on conventional marketing strategies, the author’s influence, and word-of-mouth. Therefore, paratexts need to adapt to time, place and audience. Matthee’s older editions relied on a consistent, recognizable font with the author’s name large on the cover, whereas Van Dijk’s name is the least important element on the cover, leaving more space for vibrant pictures and the title. It is a ‘recognized fact that a media dominated period multiplies around texts a type of discourse unknown in the classical world’ (Genette 1991:264).

Often paratexts depend on the author – authorial paratext – but increasingly it depends on the publisher – editorial paratext: 'unless signed by the author, a cover note usually belongs to the editorial paratext. The author and the publisher – legally as well – are the two entities responsible for the text and for the paratext' (Genette 1991:263). Some of this responsibility may also be delegated to a third person, such as a preface or foreword written by an outside party and accepted by the author. The preface forms part of the paratext as it surrounds the main text and reinforces the reasons for the book's presence in the world. Forewords are often only found in later editions of books, because they address the reputation of text and original author alike. The function of paratext therefore goes beyond its pragmatic characteristic and adds an 'illocutionary force' (Genette 1991:266). In other words, a paratextual element may either convey simple, practical information, such as the author's name and the publication date or it might convey 'an authorial and/or editorial intention or interpretation; this is the cardinal function of most prefaces' (Genette 1991:268). Intention or interpretation could also be found in certain covers and title pages. The 2009 English language, American cover for Ivan Vladislavić's *Portrait with Keys* shows a colourful, contemporary Johannesburg skyline – without the typical Hillbrow tower – and a quote from Geoff Dyer that describes the book as 'a love letter […] addressed to a city' (Vladislavić 2009). The cover of the German language edition depicts a more sombre township scene – the people are scarce and downcast; the building is dark and uninhabited – and no quotations. The 2006 South African cover depicts a crumbling building in the Johannesburg central business district. A South African reader would not assign the same reputation to Johannesburg that a German or an American reader would. A1 Verlag in Germany had to develop the cover design around what German readers would associate with Johannesburg: informal settlement scenes and poverty.

As Genette (1991:263) writes, 'the spatial, temporal, substantial, and pragmatic situation of a paratextual element is determined by a more or less free choice, applied to a general and constant grid of personal alternatives'. It depends on the goal and intention. Genette's formula, 'paratext = peritext + epitext' needs further explanation in this context. Peritext refers to what surrounds the main text, the 'peripheral features such as the cover, title page, table of contents, chapter titles, epigraphs, post-face, and illustrations' (Higonnet 1990:48). It is the first spatial category, because it exists around the text, but can also be inserted into the main text in the form of chapter titles, preceding quotes and notes. On the page before the contents list in Vladislavić's *Portrait with Keys*, the author decided to place a quote by Lionel Abrahams. It reads: 'Memory takes root only half in the folds of the brain: half's in the concrete streets we have lived along.' In Vladislavić's interpretation, this could mean that there exists both a subjective – in the brain – and an objective – concrete streets – representation of Johannesburg in the novel. Immediately, the peritext conveys a strong hint about what the book will offer: the reader should focus on 'memory' and 'concrete streets'. The quote clarifies that the novel will focus on the effects of a city, in this case Johannesburg. A preface is also peritextual, 'it is original, subsequent, or belated, authorial or allographic […] it can have several goals at once' (Genette 1991:266) and therefore an original preface would not have the same goals as the preface of a later edition. Again, the goals and intentions are adapted to an altered readership. What appeals to the one readership might not appeal to the other or the later readership, because context and time changes. For example, a South African reader who lives in Johannesburg in 2016 will be looking at completely different aspects of a book than a German reader in Berlin in 1998 would. This is

simply because their contexts and exposure to literature is completely different. A book that can adapt its paratext to these factors will have lasting success.

The formula clarifies that paratext is concerned with positioning, as well as effective communication. Therefore, peritext would not effectively function on its own. Epitext is the second special category that supports peritext: it is what functions around the text as a means of communication. 'Around the text again but at a more respectful distance are all the messages which are situated […] outside the book: generally, with the backing of the media [such as] interviews and conversations, or under the cover of private communication' (Genette 1991:267). The epitext of Norman Ohler's *Stadt des Goldes* would include media reviews and marketing campaigns, as well as personal interviews with the author about the novel. It would even extend to reader reviews on platforms such as Amazon.com, because these opinions, although not considered to be recognised, communicate information about the book that will influence a future reader's purchasing decision. One German reader wrote: 'faszinierend, spannend und spielt vor einem ungewöhnlichen Hintergrund' or 'fascinating, exciting and set against an unusual backdrop' (Amazon.com) whereas another wrote: 'Leider ein schlechtes Buch' or 'unfortunately a bad novel' (Amazon.com). Whether good or bad, reviews form a crucial part of a novel's perception. These reviews would not necessarily appeal to a serious or critical reader as they are written by people who read mainly for the entertainment value. Reviews by respected critics will be considered in the paratextual analysis section.

One could thus also consider accolades and recognition as epitext since these elements exist outside of the book and communicate an important message about the book. The definition of

recognition is, however, quite broad and will therefore be narrowed down to reputable critics, publications and awarding bodies.

Determining Recognition

Recognition is defined as 'appreciation or acclaim for an achievement, service, or ability; acknowledgement of the existence, validity, or legality of something' (Oxford ED). If paratexts are used to ensure a book's presence in the world, then recognition – as the acknowledgement of the existence or validity of something – should form a part of paratext. However, recognition does not surround the text. Awards or good reviews might be quoted on book covers and in the front pages, but recognition is essentially epitext which in turn 'denotes elements outside the bound volume – public or private elements such as interviews, reviews, correspondence, diaries' (Genette 1997:5). There are many channels that lead readers to certain books and one of these, for example, could be an interview with an author about the book, a review in a newspaper or magazine or even a recommendation from a friend. As Genette (1991:262) mentions, many theorists believe that epitext does not 'generally belong to paratext […] but the advantages are superior'.

The five chosen novels have gained different types of success ranging from top reviews and internationally acclaimed literary awards to inclusion in school curriculums. In each case, the paratexts have influenced how the novels have been read and perceived. In each case, the paratextual strategies have therefore been successful or unsuccessful. The decision to translate books is often made by publishers with potential financial gain in mind. Alison Baverstock (2014:3) writes in *How to Market Books* that 'the publishing industry is a business, and if it is to

survive it must either make a profit, or find funding somewhere else […] books compete for spending power against a whole range of products, not just other books'. Furthermore, she highlights how publishers and sales teams need to keep in mind how these books will be marketed, not canonized from the moment they decide to publish either an original book or a translation: 'this means the right creative strategy (style of copy, format, design, typography, and so on) that allows the message to speak clearly to the market' (Baverstock 2014:11). The research report evaluates the paratextual strategies tied to each chosen book and uses Baverstock's explanations of successful strategies to determine how well the translated novels were marketed to speak clearly to the market. Baverstock (2014:12) writes that paratexts function as a book's slogan and logo: it 'so appropriate that it is instantly memorable; the sales letter that makes a product sound so desirable the reader fills out the order form immediately'. Paratexts need to convey the correct messages to the correct market and that depends 'on the complete understanding of both designated market and product' (Baverstock 2014:13). Therefore, the German translation of an originally English-language novel will require a completely different paratextual strategy to be suited to a different market.

Translations of books are not often canonized and thus, paratextual marketing is the focus and not canonization or the translations themselves. As Peggy Kelly (2016) notes, 'scholarly study creates canons by making accurate texts available and by defining the terms by which they are studied'. Vladislavić's *Portrait with Keys* has perhaps not been canonized in Germany, but it has still achieved glowing reviews and several awards. In 2007, *Portrait with Keys* received the Sunday Times Alan Paton Award for Nonfiction, as well as the University of Johannesburg Prize. In 2009, the novel received the Warwick Prize for Writing, in 2015 Vladislavić received

the prestigious Yale University's Windam-Campbell prize and in 2016 Vladislavić appeared on the shortlist for the German award: Internationaler Literaturpreis – Haus der Kulturen der Welt. This prestigious award showcases authors from all over the globe whose works have been translated into German for the first time. The 2016 jury said that this year's shortlist was made up of texts whose 'authors and characters live unbound between language, cultures and systems. [The books] were translated into German by translators who render the language dynamic in a fascinating way and even discover it afresh' (Engelhardt 2016).

Canonization does not relate directly to success. In fact, 'canonization also distorts literature and introduces predictable biases in interpretation. Canons of literature may fossilize their subject and reduce its study to dry memorization for its own sake' (Kelly 2016). Lutz van Dijk's work, for example, has been prescribed and analysed in various schools across the globe, but is not necessarily a part of a canon and has achieved neither the financial success of Dalene Matthee's work, nor the recognition of Vladislavić's work. Rather, his novels have been selected for their social, political and cultural relevance, as well as his thought-provoking style of writing. Therefore, the research report will be considering reception and recognition in the evaluation of the paratexts surrounding the five chosen novels.

CHAPTER 3

Paratextual Analysis

This section explores how the city lies at the heart of marketing two different books and their translations. It will also explore how the city has been perceived differently and translated to adapt to a foreign market. The first novel is a Johannesburg novel by Norman Ohler, *Stadt des Goldes*, which was published in 2002 by Rowohlt Verlag and then translated by Richard Bertelsmann as *Ponte City* for the Cape Town publisher, David Philip, and made a part of the series, *New Africa Books*. The second is Ivan Vladislavić's *Portrait with Keys – Joburg & what-what* which was published in 2006 by Umuzi and translated in 2008 by Thomas Brückner for German audiences as *Johannesburg – Insel aus Zufall* or *Johannesburg – Island of Coincidence*. A comparison between the paratextual choices made for these novels will provide greater insight into how German publishers go to work to market the city versus how a South African publisher would perceive and market the city.

Regarding Ivan Vladislavić's work, interviews, as well his relationship with the city, are vital. Thus, Mike Marais and Carita Backström's interview will be of value as it has a focus on perceptions of Johannesburg and their influences on paratexts. Furthermore, Christopher Fotheringham's MA dissertation entitled *Translating the City: the conceptualisation and re-conceptualisation of Johannesburg*, as well as his paper *A Paratextual analysis of a French Edition of Ivan Vladislavić's Johannesburg Fiction* will be evaluated. The former will be used to look at the city as central to the paratext and the latter will be used to determine how paratextual analyses are carried out.

A number of interviews are also used to evaluate Norman Ohler's *Ponte City* and how the author, as well as the German publishers aimed to market the city through paratexts. A South African-German perspective on the novel will be evaluated using Peter Horn's review *Düsteres Johannesburg, Fiktion und Wirklichkeit in Norman Ohlers Roman 'Stadt des Goldes'*. This review considers why a novel about Johannesburg was published by a prominent German publisher and provides objective insight, stating that an outsider sees things that a local would overlook, but also pointing to clichés that are apparent in the author's descriptions of Africa. An investigation into paratextual references in the review will be done.

Marketing Fascination with the Unfamiliar: Norman Ohler in Johannesburg

When considering the book covers of the abovementioned Johannesburg-based novels, there seems to be a penchant for crime and violence. Andrea Brey, German author and expat living in Johannesburg, was warned numerous times before moving that Johannesburg was a city 'of crime, fear and intolerance' (Brey 2016). Internationally, people are made aware of the crime statistics, which include 1028 attempted murders in Johannesburg in the first ten months of 2016 and 9010 assaults with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm (CrimestatsSA). However, a redirection of this perception towards the distinctiveness of the city has come to the fore. In 2013, Simon Anholt from Anholt-GfK Roper observed that Johannesburg may be moving away from the perception that it is violent and dangerous: 'it now seems as if Johannesburg might be moving out of this reputational territory' and becoming a destination of choice for investment, commerce and tourism (for Joburg.org). Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe (2008:5) refer to

Johannesburg as ‘the premier African metropolis’ and describe it more precisely as ‘a mix of ruthlessness and kindness, cruelty and tenderness, indifference and generosity [with] faint signals, flashes of creativity in otherwise desperate manoeuvres’. This complex image of Johannesburg as cruel and kind; creative and desperate is exactly what the paratexts of Norman Ohler’s *Ponte City* tries to demonstrate: the front pages of the English-language version quote the opinions of various influential artists and political figures from various generations. Among them are Gandhi, who said in 1914 that he ‘grew to love Johannesburg […] even if it was only a mining town’; Agatha Christie, who in 1924 said ‘there is something about Johannesburg that is not at all healthy. Everybody lives on the edge of a volcano’. In 1956 Alan Paton was concerned about the fearful living, the ‘locks on the doors’ and the ‘foresight and caution’. Later, in 1984, Nadine Gordimer experienced apartheid Johannesburg or in other words, the ‘sounds of artillery fire and confused reports of heavy fighting’. William Kentridge wrote in 1989 that Johannesburg was the ‘second-best city, after Paris, whereas Robert von Lucius described Johannesburg as ‘a frontier town’ (in Ohler 2003).

These views are just as complex as the city itself and these quotes were placed in the peritext for a specific reason: to demonstrate the disparate perceptions of the city and to sell Johannesburg candidly to a reader who has a greater understanding of the city than a German reader. The English translation was published in 2003 by David Philip as an imprint of New Africa Books, which indicates that *Ponte City* was specifically translated for a South African audience. Norman Ohler described Johannesburg’s Ponte City with these words: ‘Ponte sums up all the hope, all the wrong ideas of modernism, all the decay, all the craziness of the city. It is a symbolic building, a sort of white whale, it is concrete fear, the tower of Babel, and yet it is strangely beautiful’

(Ohler in Cummings 2012). Ponte City in Hillbrow is Africa's tallest residential building and home to about 4000 people from all over Africa.

Other artists who have explored Ponte City include photographer Mikhael Subotzky, who focuses on the 'the residents in the lift…the cold steel behind them illuminating the differences in clothing and stance. The lifts […] become an awkward pod of public space, enclosed, forcing prejudices into close proximity' (Cummings 2012). Cummings (2012) points out decaying buildings are a fascination amongst artists and filmmakers who work in or about Africa, but then there is also what is called the 'European tradition of ruin lust'. This refers to the fondness for decay in our cultures. This could refer to a post-war environment – a phenomena which most European cities have seen and which has become a symbol of great wars and rich history – or it could refer to the African example: 'the decay of buildings that symbolized a promise of a better, independent future, that now sits squatted and corroded, a testament to the difficulties of post-colonial reality' (Cummings 2012). *Ponte City* as title of the English-language version automatically carries a striking meaning for a South African reader: the building 'has come to symbolise the rise and fall and rise again of South Africa's commercial capital' (Smith 2015). Whereas the 173-metre high building with the Vodacom banner was previously high-jacked by 'drug dealers, gangsters, pimps and prostitutes, [it is now part] of an inner-city renaissance' (Smith 2015). Immediately the title reminds the South African reader of the Johannesburg skyline.

The cover of *Ponte City* shows the towering inside of Ponte City from a low angle. It is meant to resemble a blurred photograph of the indoor facing windows. The circular shape of the building

is clear and the image fades as the floors get higher, ending in a bright light. The colours are shaded from dark to light olive green. The title in the top right-hand corner is in small caps and adds the only striking colour in the form of a pink-red dot for the 'i' in 'city', perhaps mimicking the colour which the Vodacom banner adds to the building's exterior. A white South African reader would not necessarily have been inside the building as it was mainly occupied by black South African residents and black immigrants from other African countries, but the reader would still be able to identify 'the tallest and grandest urban slum in the world, a gravity-defying dystopia that might have sprung from the imagination of a science fiction writer' (Smith 2015). The cover is indeed reminiscent of a dystopian scene. The link to the narrative is clear: the characters come to Ponte and to Johannesburg to seek wealth, but instead face 'a bitter struggle for survival […] the decaying building echoes their dreams and terrors' (Ohler 2003). A South African reader would identify with this struggle whether they have experienced it themselves or know community members who have.

The authors name is quite insignificantly placed in the bottom right corner in an off-white colour. The author is not the main selling point, but rather the title and what the building represents. A publisher would only choose to market the author's name if the author were well known and had an extended network within the target country (cf. Baverstock 2014:13). The cover designer, Pete Bosman, has a portfolio of minimalist, straight-forward design. He says that his focus is on 'literacy and educational projects [and] sustainability/renewable design' (Bosman 2011). He freelances for publishers and authors from all over South Africa and therefore knows the cultures and lifestyles of the country's people. Ponte City would not be alien to him, but a reminder of the city's history. Not every South African necessarily knows the inside of the building, but many

South Africans would know that Ponte City is a crucial part of the skyline and therefore acts as a symbol for Johannesburg.

The title is imperative in the discussion of Ohler's paratexts as the translation altered the title completely. The original title, *Stadt des Goldes*, directly translates as 'city of gold', a name Johannesburg is often associated with. The isiZulu name for the city is 'Egoli' or 'city of gold' due to Johannesburg's rich history of gold mining. Whereas a German reader would acquire more insight into the city through such a title, a South African reader might see it as a cliché. Therefore, the change needed to happen to entice readers. Ponte City is more a symbol of controversy and of Johannesburg's more recent history as a commercial, economic hub. The German title is, however, meant to be ambiguous: people come to find wealth and success in Johannesburg, but the city turns out to be everything but golden.

The blurb on the back cover of *Ponte City* highlights the role of the building as a symbol of Johannesburg's development: the development from 'architectural showpiece for luxurious living' to 'most dangerous apartment complex in the world'. It focuses on the novel as an 'urban adventure story' and a 'portrait of a transforming Johannesburg' rather than purely on the dramatic events that occur around the characters. The blurb is supported by the quotes in the front pages – all concerning experiences of Johannesburg. These paratexts present a broad range of views and therefore do not present South African readers with a simplistic or generalised view. This would not function as an effective marketing strategy as the targeted reader would be aware of the stereotypes. The method in which the chapters are designated is an interesting choice by the publisher: in the margin of a new chapter page, the numbers of all chapters along

with small bullet points are vertically printed in light grey ink with the specific chapter number in question printed in black. The first chapter is 54 whereas the last is 0. The book itself imitates the 54 floors of the building and acts as a lift which moves from the top to the ground floor, taking the reader through the complicated journey a resident would take. This paratextual choice provides for a more interactive read.

With regards to references to epitext, there are no reviews of the novel printed on the cover or in the front pages. This could be a deliberate decision made by the publisher to refrain from pulling focus to the reception either because it is unavailable or because the focus should remain on the topics of the novel. *Ponte City* or *Stadt des Goldes* is identified with limited and quite mixed reviews. Peter Horn (2003:52) writes that Ohler's weakness lies in his attempt to write a novel not only classified as fiction, especially for South African readers. It seems more like a report than a novel and therefore it reads quite one-dimensional. Horn goes further to describe the clear clichéd images which occur in *Ponte City*: that of the lost city and the lost tribe that exists in jungles or in the desert, sheltering old African secrets. Horn refers to Ohler's reality as simply 'eine Realität' or 'a reality' (Horn 2003:52); one which, despite creating a thrilling novel to read, has nothing to do with the history of South Africa after apartheid or with the lives of either black or white South Africans. Horn aims to say that the novel, especially the German version, is marketed in one way, but provides a different experience.

He focuses on what a South African reader would deduce from the paratexts of specifically *Stadt des Goldes*, but this original version carries these meanings to appeal to a German reader who might not know as much about South African cultures and therefore not be aware of the clichés.

Although the epitext of *Stadt des Goldes* also shows a mixed reaction to the novel and German reviewers also pick up on clichés, the German reviews are much more forgiving. Christoph Bartmann (2002) wrote in the prominent German newspaper, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, that the novel's journalistic style proves to be detrimental to the story, but he praises the 'Fake-Existensialismus' or 'fake existentialism' and the fact that Ohler does not shy away from clichés. Bartmann goes further to praise how the striking, sinister insinuations create a portrait of Johannesburg for the reader. This is quite a deviation from Horn's review. Detlef Kuhlbrodt (2002) writes in *Die Tagezeitung* that the novel's images and metaphors are filled with clichés and agrees with Horn when he refers to the 'moments of reality' that are not well thought through. However, Kuhlbrodt acknowledges the novel's entertainment value as a thriller and enjoyed reading it as a story rich in action and unexpected connections (Kuhlbrodt 2002). By comparing the epitext of Norman Ohler's novel, it becomes clear that there are significant differences and similarities: German readers tend to enjoy the novel more, whereas a South African reader is hindered by clichés and finds the reality represented by the writer less believable than a German reader would. However, this does not mean that the German reader is completely ignorant.

The peritext of *Stadt des Goldes* demonstrates a completely different approach to *Ponte City.* The cover image presents an inverted, aerial image of four black men walking on a tarred road. They are walking in different directions and the most prominent element is their long shadows toiling behind them. Only the shadows are upright and the men seem to be wearing formal work attire. The colours, apart from the black, are similar to *Ponte City*'s cover: olive green and white, but here the author's name and the title are the same size and equally important – Ohler is a

German author with a more well-known name in his own country and is therefore a greater marketing tool than in South Africa. The figures on the cover are drawn to look lost instead of focused or goal-driven. The title, 'city of gold' contrasts heavily with the image and therefore relays the message that Johannesburg is not all it seems. The cover does not appeal to one specific culture and steers clear of obvious stereotypes. It remains enigmatic and focuses on the human experience of toil and labour rather than a specifically cultural phenomenon. It is reminiscent of the French metropolitan flâneur figure, 'the stroller, the passionate wanderer [who] removes himself from the world while he stands astride its heart' (Stephen 2013). Today, the 'academic establishment [uses] the flâneur as a vehicle for the examination of the conditions of modernity – urban life, alienation, class tensions, and the like' (Stephen 2013). Sales figures are not available and it is therefore difficult to determine whether the German version achieved success on the German market, but the cover seems to be too furtive to convince a German reader of its intent, namely to tell a thrilling story set in the heart of one of South Africa's largest cities (cf. Von Maltzan 2014). It is in fact a global city, like New York, Paris, London and Berlin. Johannesburg becomes to these figures what Paris was to the flâneur.

Again, there are no reviews printed on the front or back cover and it is difficult to determine whether it was a conscious decision on the publisher's part or whether positive reviews were unavailable. The blurb is completely different to the English version. Whereas the *Ponte City* focuses on the building and the city, *Stadt des Goldes* remains focused on the plot. It tells the reader about the main character, Lucy, who gets involved with the drug dealing underworld Ponte City used to be known for. The focus lies on her 'nightmarish adventure' rather than the 'most dangerous skyscraper in the world' (Ohler 2002) which is only awarded a single reference.

This would have been a conscious decision as the German market's familiarity with Johannesburg and especially with the location is not as significant as a South African reader's familiarity. Here the local reader – the German reader in this case – is offered a different version of the novel's content. They are offered the synopsis instead of the deeper insight into which the story will delve.

Marketing to the Familiar and the Foreign: Ivan Vladislavić in Johannesburg

Ivan Vladislavić's work offers the opportunity to formulate an interesting comparison between how a German author, Norman Ohler, and a South African, Vladislavić, portray South Africa – specifically Johannesburg – and how differently the respective publishers choose to market these novels through altered paratexts. In an interview with Mary Corrigall and Felicitas Hoppe (2014), Vladislavić explores how German and South African literatures 'overlap and diverge from each other and how writers are ultimately shaped by geography [and] place'. Vladislavić also suggests that his writing is 'primarily stimulated by [his] desire to reconcile his identity or the loss thereof in the fast-changing turbulent city of Johannesburg'. Vladislavić writes from a South African perspective and, unlike Ohler, he writes having lived and worked in Johannesburg for an extensive period. Already the reader is offered a more direct experience of what it means to live in such a 'fast-changing turbulent city' unlike any other one would come across in Germany, perhaps apart from Berlin. Vladislavić's 'geography' is Johannesburg.

An example of his insight into the internal changes and socio-political circumstances can be found in an interview with Mike Marais and Carita Backström (2002:119). He says that 'the writer is never totally in control of his/her productions', but is again formed and led by their geography and experience. What Vladislavić attempts to do is 'take to extremes positions that [he] might hold in a milder way' and he uses an example of what he means when he refers to how 'people who experienced the orderliness and tidiness of formerly white Johannesburg overreact, now that the city has become more relaxed, when they encounter a bit of chaos, a little bit of dirt, a little bit of disorder'. Although this disorder is what Norman Ohler presents to his reader from the start, through the content, as well as through the paratext, Vladislavić can compare the situation with what it once was and he is able to analyse the reactions to what it has become. He realises that 'people act in a very extreme way [and that this] is not just petty: it gets in the way of the transformation of people's relations with one another' (Vladislavić in Marais & Backström 2002:120). Whereas Ohler would focus on specific characters, events and specific buildings, Vladislavić tends to look at Johannesburg as a diverse environment with intricate events and complicated social structures.

Vladislavić works as both a writer and editor and, from a certain perspective, he 'thinks [his books are] a war between those two aspects' (Vladislavić in Marais & Backström 2002:122). The fact that he is also an editor and works as closely as he does with his publishers gives him added influence when it comes to paratextual strategy. In Fred de Vries' *Lost in Translations: A Personal Reflection on Ivan Vladislavić as an Editor,* Vladislavić mentions that a big drawback for South African literature is 'writing for an international market […] explaining yourself to an international market is an incredible weakness in some South African writing' (Vladislavić in De Vries 2006:101). In other words, some South African writers tend to write for anyone willing to

read it whereas a novel for an international market should be adapted for a specifically interested international market. Alison Baverstock (2014:8) emphasises the same point: 'the audience to which your marketing material is sent matters more than any other single component […] unless information is sent to the right people, it stands no chance of achieving a successful outcome'. In Vladislavić's case, the information needs to be sent to the right culture and in the right language to achieve success.

Regarding paratextual information, 'this means the right creative strategy – style of copy, format, design, typography – that allows the message to speak clearly to the market' (Baverstock 2014:12). In a paratextual analysis of the French edition of Vladislavić's *The Exploded View*, Christopher Fotheringham (2013) mentions that the paratext is 'the reader's important first experience of any text, [it could be] either limiting or redirecting the gaze of the reader.' Regarding being limited or redirected, readers will often find that these creative strategies include the extensive use of clichés. A comparison between the covers of Vladislavić's *Portrait with Keys – Joburg and What-What* and the translation, *Johannesburg – Insel aus Zufall*, is an example of this. The original English edition showed a black and white image of a 1980's Johannesburg crumbling to the ground and the more popular 2009 edition published by American publisher, W.W. Norton & Co. entitled *Portrait with Keys: The City of Johannesburg Unlocked* showcases a much more colourful image of contemporary Johannesburg: the skyline as seen from the M1 highway towards Durban. This cover immediately turns Johannesburg into a vibrant city and the image is not altered to look crisp, but maintains the idea of a murky sweltering summer's day. The intention was of course that an American reader would recognise

what the cover perhaps attempts to provoke: a hot day in a city with traffic and a fast-paced lifestyle; an image of a tough existence, but not necessarily of suffering.

The German version is completely different. The publisher, A1 Verlag, chose a slightly more clichéd cover: a gloomy Orlando, Soweto, scene in blues, greens and dark browns with limited spots of colour. There are two glum-looking people, a business sign and a painting on a wall of what seems more like a European park than a park in Johannesburg. It is a collage of Johannesburg elements, but includes allusions to European influence. This is an example of what Fotheringham (2013) refers to in his analysis when he discusses Graham Huggan's argument in *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins*. Huggan says that 'third-world cultural products, whether traditional African crafts, oriental rugs and indeed novels, are subject to being aestheticized, trivialised, decontextualized, packaged as commodities for Western consumption' (Huggan 2002:58). It seems that Vladislavić's novel falls victim to this phenomenon to a certain extent and this becomes more obvious when comparing it to the English covers, which steer clear of township scenes and sombre moods.

Fred de Vries also alludes to these types of clichés when he writes that the foreign perception of South Africa is that 'crime, fraud and violence are rife; the innocence of white youth has been corrupted; and nature is beautiful. This all translated into narrow parameters for foreign literary (and commercial) success' (De Vries 2006:102). Of course, these ideas are often capitalised on to sell products related to South Africa. In an online interview with Vladislavić, he mentioned that he participated in events and interviews, but felt that the rest of the marketing strategies would be the publisher's responsibility as they knew their own market better. Regarding covers,

he gets involved ‘occasionally, but [he] treads carefully in this area too, as the publishers usually have a better sense of the preferences and trends. [He] does not always like the covers they produce – but then [he] is not the potential buyer’ (Vladislavić 2016). Although Alison Baverstock continually emphasises in *How to Market Books* that the author’s involvement in marketing is crucial, it becomes difficult for an author to have authority when the book is a translation and therefore must be tailored for a new market.

Even if this is done successfully and without limiting or redirecting a reader, Vladislavić (2016) mentions that often translations cannot be marketed as widely due to a lack of resources that a marketing department would have for main-stream trade: ‘even the established independents who have published me more recently cannot compete with the large corporate. For this reason, the marketing is often tied to festivals and readings’. These are usually state or literary agency sponsored events, such as LitProm ‘which work to promote literature from other parts of the world in translation’. Even though these institutions can acquire recognition for translated novels – Vladislavić’s publishers have always ‘been successful in generating press reviews, which are important in Germany’ (Vladislavić 2016) – they are not necessarily able to generate a large amount of sales. Therefore, no matter how successful the epitext represents the novel, this does not translate directly into sales.

Vladislavić’s *Portrait with Keys* and its German version are both identified with positive reviews. The cover and front pages of the 2009 American edition are riddled with positive epitext. Geoff Dryer’s quote on the front cover enhances the novel’s intention by referring to it as ‘a love letters […] addressed to a city’. On the back cover, a quote from well-known author,

Jan Morris', review is used: '[Vladislavić] leaves his readers consoled by the feeling that art and goodness alike can be impervious to squalor'. In this case, the peritext combines with epitext to be used as a marketing tool and both quotes communicate information about the narrative while placing it in a very positive light. Mark Gevisser from the *Sunday Independent* named it 'amongst the best South African literature in years' whereas Colin Murphy from *The Irish Times* wrote that a 'peculiar tension, between despair and delight, animates the city. In *Portrait with Keys*, Vladislavić unlocks it beautifully'. These reviews exist amongst a total of thirteen glowing reviews in the front pages: the publisher chose to capitalise on trusted outside sources to market the novel in the hope that the epitext would encourage a reader to whom this is important.

As Vladislavić mentioned, press reviews are in fact important in Germany, because the readership turns to these articles when they are making purchasing decisions. No reviews exist, however, on the cover of *Johannesburg – Insel aus Zufall*. This is perhaps due to a lack of reviews at the time of publication or due to the scope of the press: in other words, it might not have been necessary for the publisher to print the reviews on the novel itself as the reader would have accessed them already. Christoph Bartmann (2008) from *Süddeutsche Zeitung* marked the novel as a definite recommendation and that there should be no other method to write about a city. He singles out the 'Post-Apartheidsarchitektur' or post-apartheid architecture in the novel. He calls the novel 'organisch und zusammenhängend' or 'organic and coherent' and expresses his want to visit Johannesburg after reading the novel. Being featured in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in Germany is a great honour, especially for foreign writers. Angela Schader (2008) from *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* praises the novels and writes that Ivan Vladislavić's opinion of the South African community is 'geistreich, schonungslos und einfühlsam' or 'witty, unsparing and

empathetic'. Her review's focus is Vladislavić's compassion for the people of Johannesburg and their sheltered lives inside walls and security features. Also for *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Axel Timo Purr (2008) notices a 'portrait of South African Johannesburg after apartheid' and Johannesburg to him seems to him to be in drastic transition. Purr places great emphasis on how Vladislavić draws you personally into the city and does so 'ohne Klischees, Larmoyanz und Nostalgie' or 'without clichés, sentimentality and nostalgia'. Purr (2008) finally mentions that the novel made him feel overcome by a comforting, cathartic pain.

The underlying trend in the English reviews is a very clear focus on the city itself and the author's deep respect for the development of the city. However, the German focus lies more on the politics, the post-apartheid elements, as well the frightening amount of security the people of Johannesburg live with every day. German readers are drawn to the mysteries within the novel. They are drawn to what is shocking about South African society and they do not necessarily spot any clichés as they would not be able to recognise them from a South African perspective. This occurs even though the peritextual elements are designed to appeal to what a German reader would recognise.

Other crucial parts of the paratexts that demonstrate this, are the titles and back cover blurbs. Vladislavić is 'more concerned with the changes that are made to titles, for instance, in the interests of reaching a different reader' (Vladislavić). For example, the German edition of *Portrait with Keys* was renamed *Johannesburg – Insel aus Zufall*. 'Insel aus Zufall means 'island of coincidence' which immediately evokes a sense of isolation. However, the use of the word 'coincidence' indicates that although the city is like an island, there are occurrences within it that link it to others; there are mysteries that are to be unveiled. The new title is a similar, but adapted

interpretation of Johannesburg as a ‘portrait’, but with ‘keys’ to unlock its mysteries. According to Vladislavić (2016), the change occurred because the translator and publisher felt it was ‘important to establish in the main title that the book was about Johannesburg’. Furthermore, they ‘rejected the colloquial abbreviation *Joburg* and the South African slang term *what-what* because they would not communicate to a German reader’ (Vladislavić 2016). For the author, this change was significant as he not only aimed to write about Johannesburg and the English title communicates this effectively. The German version focuses specifically on the city and this was not the original intention. Again, as with Norman Ohler’s novel, the focus is not on the city in the English version and on the city in the German version. The main purpose of the alteration is to appeal to and make the subject matter more comprehensible and relatable to the target market. Vladislavić (2016) mentions that he ‘took their point about the readership and accepted the change of emphasis’. He knew the publishers would need to make paratextual changes as business decisions.

Often it is not possible to find an accurate translation. For example, Vladislavić’s translator Thomas Brückner could not find a suitable translation for the English title *Double Negative*, ‘where the English term refers simultaneously to a photographic process and a grammatical structure. It was impossible to convey both meanings in German. Rather than seeking a completely new title, he opted to keep the English [title]’ (Vladislavić 2016). The publishers decided it would work in the market. When asked about his experience with translators, he stated that most of his experiences were positive, because a few of the translators had been to South Africa and had learned about the culture and the literature: ‘the first-hand experience and knowledge can make a decisive difference’ (Vladislavić 2016). Furthermore, he relies on native

speakers who have read the English version first to get an accurate idea of how the novel has been translated and received. A well-rounded perspective is much more useful than a one-dimensional perspective.

The back-cover blurbs show how, unlike in Ohler's case, Vladislavić worked alongside and supportive of the translator, Thomas Brückner: the different publishers obtained similar messages from the narrative. The English blurb focuses on 'the day-to-day transformation of [the author's] embattled city' and especially on how security and fear increased in the years after apartheid. It portrays the novel as 'reportage' or as 'snapshots' of how the city functions and how the people function within it. The blurb on the back cover of the German version focuses on similar aspects: 'Ausgangspunkt seines Erzählens sind Erinnerungsorte, Zeitungsmeldungen und Veränderungen in der unmittelbaren Nachbarschaft, denen er auf seinen alltäglichen Streifzügen begegnet'. Translated it means: 'the starting point of his narrative is made up of memories, newspaper notices and changes in the immediate neighbourhoods which he encounters on his daily excursions' (Vladislavić 2009). The German blurb also focuses on the alarms installed into houses, the thieves, 'Straßenverkäufer' or street vendors and 'Sicherheitsbedienstete' or security services.

Vladislavić's novel has also received recognition in the form of awards. The front pages of the English version immediately advertise that the novel had won the *Sunday Times Alan Paton Non-Fiction Prize,* the University of Johannesburg Prize and that it was a long list finalist for the Warwick Prize in the UK (Vladislavić 2016). In both the English and German markets, the novel has received wide recognition. Although the sales figures are not widely available from

publishers, it seems that Vladislavić's novels have achieved more literary success than commercial.

Van Dijk, Matthee and the Portrayal of South African Youth

Lutz van Dijk and Dalene Matthee are German and South African authors respectively and they were chosen for this research report, because they both offer representations of what South African youth face, but from two completely different perspectives. These perspectives are ultimately reflected in the paratexts you find in both the original novels and in the translations. Vladislavić, the son of Croatian immigrants, writes from a white, male, middle-class perspective and both Van Dijk and Ohler write from German, male, middle class perspectives. Therefore, their views are not all-encompassing, but the alteration in paratexts show how even slight differences in perspective can alter the marketing campaign significantly. Vladislavić and Ohler try to gain more insight into Johannesburg's societies and cannot offer one single truth. Van Dijk and Matthee show a different interest in what happens on the margins of South African society: children from disadvantaged backgrounds who endure lives with AIDS, poverty and loss of identity. Although Matthee and Van Dijk are not in these positions themselves, they explore how these societies function. As the research will demonstrate, Van Dijk and Matthee try to empathise with the black or marginalised societies. All four perspectives are, however, of equal importance, especially for this research report, because they provide a wealth of information on how South Africa is marketed to the global community.

Lutz van Dijk is quite an interesting case due to his portrayal of South African culture even though he is a Dutch-German writer. He taught in Hamburg and later worked at the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, but two of his most popular novels are situated in South Africa and deal with the local youth's confrontation with sexual violence and AIDS. He is co-director of HOKISA in Cape Town, a charity which deals with children who live with HIV/AIDS and he is heavily involved in children's rights all over the world. In a personal interview, he mentioned that the highlight of his career so far was 'inspiring young people to write – and to experience the power of literature' (Van Dijk 2016). This provides insight into Van Dijk's aspiration to empower children and his goal is to tell their stories.

His first 'South Africa' novel, *Township Blues* (2000), deals with a 14-year-old girl who lives in a township in Cape Town. She is raped and infected with HIV. The novel deals with overcoming the physical and psychological effects of rape and the protagonist, despite the HIV, learns to continue her life in a positive manner (Von Maltzan 2014:97). Even though the original title is in English, the title of the English translation was altered completely: *Stronger than the Storm*. Therefore, it becomes necessary to not only look at the language, but also at the emphasis. In the South African title, the emphasis is placed on the overcoming of an HIV infection – which is equated to a storm – and this is a great deviation from the German title. HIV/AIDS is a much bigger issue for youth in South Africa than it is for youth in Germany. Therefore, it is no surprise that the South African English version, in contrast to the German version, has an explanation on the title page which reads: 'a novel for young adults about HIV and AIDS in South Africa' (Van Dijk 2000). The paratexts in the front pages act as guides to what the reader should look out for: it defines the purpose of the novel.

The German-language edition, *Township Blues*, places emphasis on the hardships that people are victim of in the informal settlements of South Africa. The concept of a township would be much more intriguing to a German reader, because it would not be a word they use in their everyday vocabulary. Although this is a hard-hitting reality for many South Africans, this concept might seem inflated to a South African middle-class reader, who is constantly bombarded with poverty and hardship in their own country (cf. Von Maltzan 2014). Middle- to upper-class readers form the largest part of the South African reading public and therefore most marketing campaigns 'should be designed for this market' (Baverstock 2014:97). The second word, *Blues*, could refer to two interlinked, but different concepts. It could refer to a musical genre characterised by the 'call-and-response pattern [which] incorporated spirituals, work songs, field hollers, shouts, chants, and rhymed simple narrative ballads' (BBC Bitesize) and therefore fit perfectly with the difficult township environment. It could also refer to a deep depression which would also suit the idea of poverty in these environments. It is this shift in meaning and alterations in the different publishers' strategies that exist at the core of what makes a novel successful or not when it crosses borders.

'The paratext of the published novel alone provides a wealth of information about the position the novel is seen to occupy in the receiving system by the literary institution of the target language' (Fotheringham:2013). Therefore, it becomes vital to consider the titles, covers, as well as the blurbs and reviews when it comes to determining how the novels are perceived in the receiving system. The 2003 paperback edition cover of *Township Blues* was designed for a German reader. It shows the backdrop of a typical South African informal settlement with

shacks, dirt roads and a puddle of water down the middle of the road. The images are in hues of blue and brown, with a single red shack to add colour. Underneath the title, which appears in black and red, there is a tiny rectangular picture of a young black girl. She has a blank, slightly grave look on her face. These images represent quite a typical portrayal of South Africa and the front pages prove this: they were sourced from stock photo archives, Getty images in Munich and Photonica in Hamburg. For a German reader, this would be a clear association with struggling Africa. For a South African reader, it would look like most other novels on the shelves and therefore not make a great impact. The 2000 hardcover edition cover makes more use of bright reds, but again, the reader sees a sombre African face and corrugated iron.

Stronger than the Storm, the English language version offers the reader a slightly different approach. The cover also shows the face of a young black woman, but this time she is smiling and seems hopeful. This relates to the title's message: a message of endurance. The backdrop steers clear of the township scene and rather makes use of a serene ocean image and a purple flower, typically a symbol of 'dignity, pride and success' (Teleflora). The contrast is significant and therefore the publishers chose completely different paratextual strategies to market these books to their specific markets. For example, a young South African reader would respond better to positive messages about their own country whereas a young German reader would need to see what they were not necessarily familiar with.

A similar trend is noticeable when the blurbs are brought to the foreground. The back cover for *Stronger than the Storm* focuses on the narrative and on the core message: it addresses the protagonist, Thinasonke's, childhood which gets disrupted by 'the AIDS epidemic [and] issues

such as sexual abuse and the secrecy surrounding AIDS' (Van Dijk 2000). The German blurb for *Township Blues,* however, focuses on how violence is the order of the day in Thinasonke's township existence. Rather than making a clear point about the stigmas associated with HIV/AIDS, the German edition emphasises the character's trauma and the fears associated with living in an informal settlement: 'Thina lebt in einem südafrikanischen Township, wo Gewalt allgegenwärtig ist' (Van Dijk 2000). This translates as: 'Thina lives in a South African township, where violence is an everyday occurrence'. Again, as seen with Vladislavić and Ohler's works, Van Dijk's paratexts are altered to appeal to the imaginations of different target readers. *Stronger than the Storm* had to be especially informative or educational due to it being prescribed as a school textbook in South Africa, whereas the German version was written to appeal to a young and interested reader.

Both editions do not make use of extensive reviews on the cover even though the novels were widely met with praise. The translation of *Township Blues* was not only prescribed in South schools, but it was also awarded the prestigious Gustav-Heinemann-Friedenspreis in 2001. This prize is awarded to authors who successfully promote peace, courage and tolerance amongst young readers. The Jury highlighted how unsentimental and exciting the book told the story of a suffering girl in Gugulethu. The book was further complimented for how it involved young readers in the protagonist's fear, shame and insecurity. Although it is set in South Africa, the German Jury pointed to a high degree of identification, especially for young girls and lauded how the novel transported crucial principles such as civil courage and solidarity. Finally, the Jury chose this book for its clear protest against the isolation of those infected with AIDS, and for its fight for tolerance, hope and justice (Jury of Gustav-Heinemann-Friedenspreis 2001).

Other successes include being nominated for the *Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis* or *German Youth Literature Prize* in 2002; winning the *Beste Sachbuch des Jahres* for the *Kinderbuchforum* in Germany in 2002, as well as the *Rosa-Courage-Preis, Osnabrück* in 2003 (Van Dijk 2016). Van Dijk also gave a good indication of how many books were sold: *Stronger than the Storm* was his 'best-selling book in South Africa […] with more than 350.000 copies sold'. This number is incredibly rare on the South African market and it could reach this number due to school orders, which is the largest publishing market in South Africa. Finally, a great highlight for Van Dijk was the fact that his second 'South Africa' novel, *Themba*, was made into an international film in 2010, therefore increasing its reach to audiences extensively. A film can of course be considered as epitext for a novel.

Lutz van Dijk tries 'to communicate [with] the publishers' when it comes to alterations and marketing strategies; he believes working with translators and publishers should be 'a good cooperation' (Van Dijk 2016) and that authors should learn from them. This close collaboration is clear when looking at *Themba*, or *Crossing the Line* as it was translated into English. *Themba* tells the story of an HIV-infection and again, the protagonist is a teenage girl who gets the infection through rape. The German title puts the protagonist at the centre of the novel's focus and Van Dijk elaborates on the significance of the name within the first few pages of the book: 'Themba – die Hoffnung. Weil ich niemals die Hoffnung verloren habe' (Van Dijk 2006) or 'Themba – the hope. Because I have never lost hope'. Hope is at the centre of the paratext and this connects with the narrative, which tells a story of how a boy, despite harrowing circumstances, such as losing his mother to AIDS, becomes a successful football player. The English title stands in contrast to this: *Crossing the Line* emphasizes the development of Themba

with regards to his HIV infection, his career and the process of reconciling these different lifestyles (Von Maltzan 2014:94). The line that is being crossed is the limitations of the illness and points to a definite defiance with regards to the effects of the illness, but it could also refer to lines crossed on the soccer field, a field which represents Themba's endurance. Von Maltzan (2014:94) explains that at the centre of both original and translated novels stands not the taboo-mentality, denial of or stigmatization of HIV/AIDS, but the possibility of living with and overcoming the limitations of it. Even though the core of the narrative is the same, the titles needed to change to attract different markets. To a South African market, *Themba* would be more familiar, whereas a German reader would acquire a new concept from it and learn a new foreign definition of hope.

German readers also need a clearer explanation of terms and concepts used throughout the novel that will bear no resemblance to their own language. Paratexts offer this information with glossaries. Various terms are left out of the English glossary, such as *apartheid, dagga, rand, shack, shebeen* and *township*. A South African reader would immediately recognise that, for example, a *shebeen* is a bar; a *township* is an informal settlement; and that *dagga* is the Afrikaans name for marijuana. These are not everyday terms for Germans. The reader will see a similar occurrence in *Township Blues*, where each chapter heading has an African name followed by the German explanation. Chapter 1 is called *Usana Lwasejele* or 'Knast Baby' which means 'prison baby' in English. These names guide the reader as to what comes next and what he or she should focus on. Other terms are kept in *Crossing the Line*'s glossary, such as *TRC, Madiba* and *Ugawulaya*. These terms refer to specific historical occurrences or they are written in languages that many South Africans will not understand. Also, the English version was prescribed in

schools and therefore had an additional function: to remain educational and informative about social and political occurrences. These editions were even accompanied by study guides on AIDS and the prevention thereof. This also forms a crucial part of the paratexts: these guides that accompany the book could convince educators to purchase the novel for their learners.

The covers have more similarities in this case, because the focus should clearly be on the main character and what he achieves. The German *Themba* has the face of a young black boy as the main feature. The boy is smiling brightly and the background shows a few boys who are playing soccer. One of them has just scored a goal and they are celebrating. The cover, coloured in deep brown, orange, yellow and ochre, demonstrates the central idea of the title: the idea of hope and happiness. The English-language version also shows a young black boy, but this time it is a profile shot of the face and torso. He is not smiling, but is looking out into the distance and seems focused and determined. The background shows rolling green hills, possibly in Kwazulu-Natal – where AIDS is a major pandemic – and a very basic goal post. The title is written in italics and the 'o' in 'crossing' is a soccer ball, referring to the success the protagonist achieves despite his circumstances. The idea of hope is not as prevalent on this cover, but rather persistence. The German cover would stand out very clearly on German shelves, but the South African cover was designed to focus on the title. Furthermore, the English cover is not as striking and would need to rely on other methods of selling, such as the school market where it is in fact most popular.

The German blurb places its emphasis on: '[der] Aufstieg eines armen Jungen […] dort wo im Jahr 2010 zum ersten Mal auf dem afrikanischen Kontinent eine Fussball-Weltmeisterschaft

stattfindet' (Van Dijk 2006) or in English: 'the rise of a poor boy […] where in 2010 the first ever football world cup on the African continent took place'. The focus is on what a German reader would immediately understand or relate to: a coming-of-age tale or 'Bildungs'-story, as well as the 2010 FIFA World Cup. It places the battle with AIDS second, but rather takes time to explain what 'Themba' means. The English blurb focuses much more closely on the narrative: Themba's dreams of becoming a professional footballer and how he goes about realising them. The English blurb leaves the reader with a lot more mystery: 'but Themba has a secret – should he tell the truth and risk everything he's ever dreamed of?' (Van Dijk 2007) The novel is made to seem enticing, whereas the German blurb provides more concrete information to explain a different culture to the reader.

Regarding epitexts, the film is clearly at the heart of what has made *Themba* internationally known. Most reviews found were film reviews which referred to the book. A review in *Der Spiegel* hailed Jen Lehmann's cameo performance in the film: 'ex-Nationaltorwart Lehmann soll in der Produktion einen Talent-Scout spielen, der den Jungen in den Elendsvierteln des afrikanischen Landes entdeckt und fördert' or 'ex-national goalkeeper Lehmann, plays a talent scout in the production who discovers the boy in the dilapidated neighbourhoods of the African country and helps him rise' (Der Spiegel). Lehmann is a successful football player in Germany and therefore became a part of the epitext for the novel due to his role in marketing the film. This review comes from a reputable newspaper, but makes use of striking and even problematic clichés. The book's intention was never to make Themba dependent on the German man, but to highlight Themba's tenacity. This review is a perfect example of how stereotypes are often misused to market a book or in this case the film.

An article by Malte Rohwer-Kahlmann for Deutsche Welle offers a more neutral and relevant account of Lutz van Dijk's intentions. In an article entitled *Fighting Stereotypes with Stories*, the online newspaper accounts how Van Dijk tells yearly stories about Africa to young European readers and he does this to 'give an idea of the diversity of Africa's different people, countries and its [amazing] nature – that's something I try to achieve during such a reading tour' (Rohwer-Kahlmann 2016). Van Dijk goes further and 'asks them questions, gives them a beginner's lesson in the Xhosa language and, most importantly, he tells them stories about young people he knows in South Africa' (Rohwer-Kahlmann 2016). Van Dijk has no control over the epitext of his novels and only a limited amount over the peritext. Therefore, his intentions could easily get misinterpreted along the way. In the case of *Der Spiegel*, the writer made use of two unnecessary clichés: the European man who must save the African boy and the idea of Africa falling apart by the seams. Van Dijk highlighted in his online interview that what he most appreciated was when young readers told him – no matter whether in South Africa or Germany – 'that even if the main characters might have been strangers to them in the beginning, they could highly identify with them and their lives at the end of the book' (Van Dijk 2016). He praises novels that have multiple functions: 'there is distinction for me between entertaining and educational. Good novels are always both' (Van Dijk 2016).

Most of the other reviews are written from an educator's point of view which demonstrates its power as an educational novel and demonstrates that great parts of the epitext have been in line with the author's ideas. *Books, Teens & Magazines*, a popular online directory of reading material for youth described the story as 'tough – poverty, AIDS and death haunt the pages', but

also highlighted that it 'is not a depressing book – it is a book full of hope and the younger people who read books like this and who come to understand how other young children live, the more this hope will spread' (Books, Teens & Magazines). This is much closer to what Van Dijk envisioned his book to mean, although he does not scoff at the publicity which the movie provides, because his message is spread further that way and it of course means increased financial gain for both author and publisher.

In a paper entitled *Translation Culture,* Willie Cloete and Marita Wenzel address 'problems posed by ideology and cultural identity in a source text that have to be accommodated in a target text' (Cloete & Wenzel 2007:2) and they point to a large focus on the representation of South Africa through paratexts. This is especially important in books that are bound to be read in schools by younger readers as it forms a great part of how they will eventually perceive the cultures and structures of the world. Karin Chubb (2007:57), an educational essayist and reviewer, looks at how 'high school learners' attitudes to reading [are transformed]' depending on what they see. She mentions that the way in which youth culture, ideologies and issues such as HIV are portrayed not only in novels, but also through paratexts, is crucial to development. Both Lutz van Dijk and Dalene Matthee explore this development and therefore, the paratexts of their novels follow suit.

Dalene Matthee's *Fiela's Child* was chosen due to its similarities and yet striking differences when compared to Van Dijk's *Themba* and his *Township Blues*. Matthee also examines the

experience of a child – in this case a white child adopted by coloured parents (Matthee 1988) – but she adds a new dimension to the story, namely liminality and the identity struggles that are associated with class and race in South Africa (Cloete & Wenzel 2007:5). Matthee looks at the cultural identity of a South African child from a different perspective and in a different time: Van Dijk focuses on HIV and the day-to-day struggle to survive whereas Matthee considers what influences a child to become who he or she is. As Cloete and Wenzel (2007:3) note, 'the translation of "cultural identity" in a novel such as [Matthee's] contributes towards the definition of a uniquely South African representation of time and space in the global context'. The research report will be comparing the paratextual elements of the German version, *Fielas Kind*, to the original Afrikaans version, and not to the English version. Matthee translated the Afrikaans version into English herself and was involved in the paratextual development process, whereas the translation and marketing of the German version was entirely in the hands of Bastei Lübbe Publishers in Germany. Therefore, the Afrikaans and German versions are particularly significant: the differences in paratexts will truly demonstrate how intercultural perspectives can differ.

The act of self-translation which Dalene Matthee undertook with her own novels – from Afrikaans to English – was 'so that she could capture the cultural inheritance of the forest ethos reflected in the source text' (Cloete & Wenzel 2007:4). *Fiela se Kind* is classified as one of Matthee's forest novels, which also include *Circles in a Forest, Dream Forest*, and *The Mulberry Forest*. Culturally, the forest theme is vital as it sustains entire communities in South Africa and this is a lifestyle which not many Germans would immediately grasp, especially in more northern parts of the country. Since Dalene Matthee originally wrote in Afrikaans, the gap

between the original version and the German version is even greater as the translator used the adapted English version to create the German version. As the novel was translated 'by the author herself into English, she could render cultural expressions as close to the source language as possible' (Cloete & Wenzel 2007:4), but this does not always mean a foreign translator can come as close. Matthee also decided to add some footnotes to the English translation to render it more accessible to English audiences and thus more accessible to international audiences – since the English version would of course be the source text to various other translations. Footnotes were also translated into German and this is a crucial element of the paratexts as it might convince a German reader who thinks the novel is too foreign to purchase and read the book. If it has explanations, it gains not only – as Van Dijk mentions – entertainment value, but educational value as well.

Gisela Stege was responsible for translating *Fiela's Child* into the German *Fielas Kind* and, as Cloete and Wenzel (2007:7) mentions, 'Stege lacks in-depth knowledge of both Afrikaner culture and the South African landscape'. She admits this in her correspondence with the translator K. Dierks (1993) when she says she has very little knowledge of Afrikaans and a 'little reading knowledge of Dutch'. This might prove problematic if the translator is not able to do the necessary research or get first-hand experience. This proves to be particularly difficult when he or she does not speak the original language. Translating or altering paratexts between cultures usually requires 'choosing between two basic translation strategies: domestication or foreignisation' (Cloete & Wenzel 2007:5). Domestication essentially means that the translator or publisher changes the text to be more recognizable and familiar and thus he or she brings the foreign culture closer to the reader in the target culture. On the other hand, foreignisation implies

the opposite as it means ‘retaining the foreign feeling of the original text and forcing the reader to acknowledge the cultural and linguistic differences’ (Cloete & Wenzel 2007:5). Foreignisation clearly occurs in the translations of Van Dijk’s work, because the Xhosa language and cultural differences are kept intact and are only partially explained. In Dalene Matthee’s case the reader notices a greater amount of domestication, because footnotes are intensified and more explanations are added.

The German cover is also an indication of domestication. Here, the reader will see an image of a young blonde boy looking up at a black woman. Only the woman’s arm is visible on the boy’s shoulders and only the back of his head is visible. The boy contrasts heavily with a darker haired boy on the Afrikaans cover. On the German cover the boy is wearing a formal white shirt rather than the plain T-shirt seen on the Afrikaans cover. The German cover represents a much more European version of how young boys dress and look therefore rendering the cover more domestic for the foreign reader. On the Afrikaans cover, the face of the black woman is visible and the centre of attention. It is in fact this character’s name in the title: Fiela. She is at the heart of the story, because she finds and cares for the young boy. The German cover clearly demonstrates her caring nature, but does not make her the focal point. The Afrikaans cover puts her in full colour and the boy is a sepia colour. A significant difference between the covers is the importance and design of the typography. On the Afrikaans cover, Dalene Matthee’s name is the focal point and it is written in capital letters at the top in the same style as her other books. To an Afrikaans reader, this is instantly recognisable and the reader would associate the novel with Matthee’s other successful work. The title is written at the bottom in a cursive, handwritten, Brush Script style. On the German cover, Matthee’s name is not as significant as the title of the

novel. The title is the focus and underneath it reads ‘Roman’ which means ‘novel’ in German. The author name and title will be unfamiliar to a German reader and therefore the paratext informs that it is a work of fiction. This is a form of domestication as it is common for German novels to have this subtitle to identify the genre.

Another vital paratextual element in the front pages of the Afrikaans version which was taken over in to the German version is a detailed map of ‘Knysna c.1870’ (Matthee 1985) with the names of the locations mentioned throughout the novel, such as ‘Knysnarivier’, ‘Die Koppe’ and ‘Steenbokeiland’. A specific part of the map is enlarged to show the main locations of the novel. The map serves to situate the reader and to give more information about the environment to someone who might not know what it looks like or where it is. This is especially useful to a foreign reader, who might never even have visited the country, not to mention be familiar with the specific islands, forests and hills. From a marketing perspective, the map is one of the first elements a reader would see when they open and examine a book (cf. Baverstock 2014). It immediately presents a reader with information that would help them understand the content better and could also serve as an enticing feature as it communicates to the reader that the novel is realist: set in a certain time and place.

Due to the 1995 German version being out of print, it is difficult to find the blurb, as well as reviews for this novel. Matthee’s popularity in Germany is clear, however, as most of her novels have been translated, including *Moerbeibos* as *Die Lilienwand* and *Kringe in die Bos* as *Unter dem Kalanderbaum*. The English and Afrikaans literary worlds are mostly very enthusiastic about *Fiela se Kind*. The back-cover quote on the Afrikaans version which also serves as peritext

is a quote by prestigious Afrikaans author, André P. Brink. He writes that the novel excellently proves how very few people can hold a candle up to Matthee when it comes to storytelling in its oldest and most lasting form (Brink in Matthee 1985). The rest of the back cover focuses on the mystery that surrounds the blue-eyed boy and how he came to live with and be raised by a local African family. The marketing strategy behind this would have been to raise the controversy of an interracial relationship between a black mother and a white boy: the novel was published at the height of the apartheid era when laws were in place to separate black and white. An African woman raising a white boy would have subverted all expectations.

Other praise on Matthee's website for the novel include a review by Grace Ingolby for *New Statesman*, which hails the novels as 'thought-provoking, upsetting, unforgettable and timeless'. Francis Levy from the *New York Times Book Review* writes: 'Fiela's Child is a parade that broadens and humanizes our understanding of the conflicts still affecting South Africa today', whereas Christopher Wordsworth called it a 'powerful creation of time and place with dark threads of destiny and oppression'. What stands out when you compare these reviews for the English version with Brink's review is that Brink focuses on Matthee's talent for storytelling whereas the English reviews all hint towards a political message within the story. The foreign reviews focus on what has come to be expected of South African literature and therefore, the epitext also becomes to a lesser extent an example of domestication.

Dalene Matthee's work has been commercially successful in South Africa, especially on the Afrikaans market. This is due to the popularity of her locally-based stores; her books being widely prescribed in schools, as well as *Fiela se Kind* being made into an award-winning

Afrikaans film and theatre production. Overseas, however, her work has seen more literary than commercial success: an example of top South African literature rather than 'Urlaubslektüre'.

CHAPTER 4

Conclusion

Through the detailed evaluation and comparison of the five novels by both German and South African writers in the framework of paratextual analysis, as well the discussion of the financial – in the case of Lutz van Dijk – and literary successes, this research report has demonstrated that paratexts are altered to appeal to different markets with different geographies and different languages and that this occurs due to a need to ensure a novel's presence in the world – to ensure it is seen on the shelves – and to entice readers with diverse backgrounds, frameworks and perceptions. The various factors which influence the recognition and sales of books are myriad, but what the research report has discovered is that what the paratexts have in common are four key elements: clear alterations in time and geography; use or dismissal of clichés and stereotypes; educational value; and either techniques which familiarise or defamiliarize the reader.

Each paratextual element has a different function in the overall marketing strategy of a book, but as Genette (1991:261) explained, they all serve 'to *make present*, to ensure the text's […] reception and consumption'. Without a cover, blurb, epitext and peritext, a book would only exist as text and would only be available to a select few people. Paratext ensures that a book is

made available to a public market and exists as the packaging of a book. It forms a part of the product's branding and marketing package. As Alison Baverstock (2014:9) clarifies, a book is like any other product on the market and therefore the marketing strategy should fulfil the same requirements: identify a need or a want and offer a solution.

The two major components of the research report have been the physical appearances of the book products, now identified as the peritext, as well as the sales figures and reviews of these products, identified as epitext. The analysis of these components has shown what determines how a novel is received and how focus shifts between social, cultural, political and entertainment value factors to appeal to different markets. A paratextual element either conveys simple, straightforward and practical information which does not relate to any of these factors, such as an author's name, although the name might often be connected to a certain style of writing, for example political or purely for entertainment. It might also convey a specific intention whether 'authorial and /or editorial' (Genette 1991:265) and this would include elements such as prefaces, which always carry the intent to praise or to acknowledge the text which follows and therefore act as marketing tools. The goals and intentions for paratexts are altered depending on each altering readership: each element is carefully considered and adapted according to a set function, but a wide range of personal alternatives. No two books, whether in the same or different languages, will have the same intention and focus in the paratexts.

Although factors that influence which books are recognised or make it onto bestseller lists are not always measurable, and may include marketing strategies, timing, as well as context in terms of the cultural, political and social changes that occur in both countries, paratexts have been proven to be one of the determining factors when it comes to the success or failure of a book,

whether financial or through recognition. The alterations in titles, covers and blurbs depend on culture, context and perspective and therefore need to adapt according to the times. What the research report found is that technology has increasingly become a tool which either acts as paratext or which aids in promoting paratext.

The first main conclusion the research report has reached, is that paratextual elements indeed have a great impact on how a book is sold in a different country and in a different language and that these elements must be altered to appeal to different knowledge about a culture and a different cultural framework. An example is Norman Ohler's *Stadt des Goldes* or *Ponte City*. The former title would entice a German reader; the latter would evoke a series of memories and perceptions about Johannesburg for a South African reader and would probably have no effect on a German reader. It was interesting to note how German readers would respond completely differently to what a South African reader might find cliché.

The second conclusion is that certain books are chosen by publishers to be translated due to financial potential. Enticing literature is often translated due to its entertainment value and preference for certain types of books within certain cultures and an example of this would be Dalene Matthee's *Fiela se Kind* or *Fielas Kind* in German. Not only does Matthee have an extensive following in South Africa, but when Matthee's book was translated and published in German, many people read it for entertainment – 'Urlaubslektüre'. The German paratexts for this novel were especially enlightening as it would be unexpected for a novel which is so immersed in South African culture to become a source of entertainment in a European country.

The third conclusion is that German books about South Africa have gained popularity due to a new perspective on cultural and social issues, such as drug trade and crime as seen in Norman

Ohler's *Stadt des Goldes*, as well as AIDS and rape culture as seen in Lutz van Dijk's *Township Blues*. As mentioned in chapter 2, these issues are global, but are not experienced in the same way or to the same extent. These books have interested German audiences, because they provide insight into South African issues and the violent sides of South African cities. They have done so not only through the text, but through the paratext as well: for example, *Stadt des Goldes* with its ambiguous cover, as well as *Township Blues* with its explanatory cover and blurb.

Lastly, as Andrea Brey, marketing manager and author from Munich pointed out: mostly educated Germans and Germans interested in travel and global experiences have found South African books interesting due to the 'complexity of South African history and culture' (Brey 2016). They predominantly look at what South African authors should offer in terms of educational fiction and non-fiction, because of the keen interest in the African country. However, they need the paratexts to bring them to the shelves and to the cashiers.

These paratexts function not only as the physical aspects, but function according to the formula which Genette suggested. The formula clarifies that paratext is concerned with positioning, as well as effective communication: a book's presence in the world is dependent on the peritext, as well as the epitext as Ivan Vladislavić alluded to when he wrote that press reviews are extremely important in Germany when it comes to marketing and selling a book effectively.

The epitext, and to a lesser extent the peritext, have demonstrated that the five chosen novels have gained various types of success and this ranges from excellent reviews, international literary awards, inclusion in school curriculums, and even transformations into films as seen with Lutz van Dijk's *Themba*. Van Dijk and Matthee's works have been widely prescribed as

textbooks in schools, whereas Vladislavić has been prescribed in universities across South Africa and Germany as part of both African Studies and world literature. The sales and recognition of these books were therefore automatically augmented. Vladislavić has been associated with more literary than commercial success, whereas Matthee and Van Dijk possess commercial success rather than pure literary success. Only in her home language, Afrikaans, does Matthee reach extensive literary success, whereas Ohler gains more literary success in his own country than in South Africa. This shows that the language and perception of the source text greatly influences how literary experts and enthusiasts receive a novel. The reason for this is increased identification.

As seen throughout the research report, the commonalities of what most greatly influences alterations in paratext include time and geography: 'the ways and means of the paratext are modified unceasingly according to periods, […] with sometimes considerable differences of pressure' (Genette 1991:262). These different pressures refer to what events and mindsets are most prevalent at the time: *Fiela se Kind* was originally published in the 1985 in Afrikaans and then in German in 1995. This ten-year difference is crucial as it was the split between apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa, as well as a divided and undivided Germany. Perceptions, politics and even cultures changed. Therefore, paratexts and marketing strategies changed as well, hence the alterations in book covers for *Fiela se Kind* as discussed in chapter 3.

Furthermore, Van Dijk was published from 2000 onward, which means he dealt with a world of growing social media influence and increased exposure to topics he writes about, such as HIV/AIDS. As Baverstock (2014:430) also mentions, the marketing strategies surrounding book

publishing previously relied on author influence, publisher's and author's connections, word-of-mouth, book fairs and physical, direct marketing approaches. Along with technology, paratexts adapt to time, place and audience.

Regarding geography, Vladislavić suggested that geography is what shapes an author and his or her work: he connected the development of his own identity to that of Johannesburg. A reader is offered the experiences of an author even though that is not the intention. Ohler's views of Johannesburg are much less informed than that of Vladislavić simply because Ohler has not been shaped by the city as Vladislavić has. Therefore, the paratexts and reception of their novels will be completely disparate.

As Vladislavić noted, some South African writers tend to write for anyone willing to read it whereas a novel for an international market should be adapted for a specifically interested international market. If this does not occur, the audience to which marketing material is sent will not understand or receive the information in an effective way. The right audience needs to receive the right paratext at the right time in the right location. If this is not done creatively, however, it has been proven that books become aestheticized and trivialised or, as Huggan (2002) mentions, 'packaged for Western consumption'. The geography for which a book is intended should be determined before marketing strategies are put in place and before paratexts are altered; otherwise misinformed ideas are perpetuated, such as South Africa's alleged penchant for violence. The research has found that German readers associate Africa with struggle and hardship and especially young South Africans are tired of hearing and seeing these messages. South African readers respond well towards positive messages about their country

whereas German readers respond to the ideas they have heard of but not necessarily know a lot about. Of course, these ideas are often capitalised on to sell products related to South Africa.

Time and geography does not only affect the nature of paratext, but also the emphasis thereof. Paratexts act as guides to what the reader should look out for: it defines the purpose of the novel. It is this shift in emphasis that creates a shift in meaning. Alterations in the meaning of a novel exist at the core of what makes a novel successful or not when it crosses borders. As Fotheringham mentioned, the paratext gives the reader the information as to where the novel is positioned within the literary framework of the target audience. The position a book occupies therefore determines the emphasis and finally, the marketing approach.

Willie Cloete and Marita Wenzel make it clear that shifts in meaning are often due to influence of 'ideology and cultural identity' (Cloete & Wenzel 2007:1). Ideology and identity are at the centre of perception and therefore need to be considered when deciding on paratextual marketing. This is especially important in books that are bound to be read in schools by younger readers as it forms a great part of how they will eventually perceive the cultures and structures of the world. Younger readers are especially susceptible to ideologies and alterations in identity and therefore, as Karin Chubb (2007:58) points out, the paratexts that are presented to young readers are crucial to development and should therefore be well thought-through. Not only titles, covers and blurbs are translated, but 'cultural identity' and ideology is also translated. Books contribute to the definition of cultures in specific time-periods throughout the world and therefore paratext should be effective and designed with the consequences in mind.

Therefore, clichés and stereotypes often come into play when it comes to altering and designing paratext. The research report has determined a great number of clichés and stereotypes that have been used to market the five novels - some clichés or stereotypes have been exploited to appeal to an imagination which is not yet educated about African culture or diversity. Paratexts often go as far as to reinforce stereotypes to market a book successfully. An example is the cover of the German *Fielas Kind*, where the coloured woman is represented as black and the background disregards the importance the forest theme.

Clichés and stereotypes often offer readers with a very simplistic version of either reality or the intention of the source text. This is done because the target reader would not necessarily recognise the stereotypes. However, the original target audience would. Peter Horn, who has both a German and a South African perspective on Ohler's *Stadt des Goldes*, can recognise these simplifications clearly: he notices how the paratexts deviate extensively from the actual reading experience. Ohler's novel is an example of how these stereotypes can often be detrimental, because the readership that enjoys it more is the readership who knows little about the country the story is based in.

This also leads to a series of misperceptions being perpetuated. The reviews surrounding the film version of *Themba* are an example. The reviews focus on the soccer player who plays the boy's mentor and he immediately becomes the stereotypical colonial European man who empowers the young African youth. This is also an example of how an author's intention can be completely misconstrued. Van Dijk wants his characters to be identifiable to both African and German

children and praises novels that can entertain and educate at the same time. This intention is often overlooked to market successfully to a specific market.

Van Dijk's outlook points to another crucial function of paratext which this research report has touched on, namely the educational value in paratext through explanations and additional information. Blurbs often assist in this function: on *Stronger than the Storm*, the blurb focuses on how the book deals with overcoming HIV/AIDS and this is assisted by a study-guide on the disease which renders the book entirely educational. The German blurb is once again not as educational as it is meant to be entertaining. It focuses rather on the stereotypical violence and crime in the townships. The title is, however, explained in the German version, as well as other unknown words and this offers the reader an opportunity to learn more about the other culture and about the way the culture perceives the rest of the world. Glossaries are paratexts, because they offer readers information that is crucial to understanding the book and therefore market the book as accessible. The same is true for the footnotes Matthee added to her English version of *Fiela se Kind* which were included in the German version as well. They increase both the entertainment and educational value. Van Dijk, however, makes a point to communicate with publishers on these matters, but as Vladislavić mentioned, the control is never up to the author alone and the publishers know the markets much better.

Paratexts in the form of footnotes, glossaries and visible translations, such as 'Themba – the hope' (Van Dijk 2006) not only offer educational value, but they assist in familiarisation, which could also be an effective marketing tool as it renders the book approachable. Most of editions and especially the covers discussed were tailored to what German or South African readers know

and expect: the paratext must be a ‘means of gaining access to information about [the source culture]’ (Fotheringham: 2013). Some paratexts tend to negate the complexity of the narrative meaning that paratext could in fact give the reader a misleading message. This is exactly the reason why paratext is important when discussing literary crossovers and literary relationships across borders: they reveal not only the various marketing strategies, but also the prejudices that exist globally.

As Vladislavić (2016) mentioned, he did participate in events, interviews and certain smaller decisions when it came to paratexts, but for the most part, he saw it as the publishers´ responsibility. Again, they know what the market will respond to. Vladislavić gets involved rarely with covers, because he explained that the publishers are more aware of trends and preferences and he is not the potential buyer. It holds true that author involvement can make or break a book’s success, as Alison Baverstock (2014:430) points out. This holds truer if the author is well-known in the country and read widely already. Norman Ohler would be able to use his connections much more successfully in Germany than South Africa. When it comes to translations, however, the target audience would rarely recognise the author.

Other than author recognition, reviews and press mentions are incredibly important epitextual elements when it comes to building a reputation for a book and for an author, but it has become clear that no matter how successful the epitext represents the novel, this does not always translate directly into sales, especially in South Africa. Vladislavić’s *Portrait with Keys* has thirteen perfect reviews printed in the front, but his sales remain in literary spheres and universities. Press reviews have a greater impact on the market in Germany, because the readership turns to

reputable sources to get recommendations. The reason for no reviews on the German version is unclear, but it's more likely to be that people would have already been led to the book through reviews, because the positive German reviews are quite numerous.

Epitext is a definite way of familiarising a reader with a text: it not only makes the reader aware of the text, but also tells them more about it in their own language. Focuses in reviews change: it is the city in the English reviews of Vladislavić's *Portrait with Keys*, but the politics in the German reviews. Again, the paratext is adapted to what the reader would be interested in. Paratext brings two contradictory functions together: it attempts to familiarise a potential reader with the text while at the same time offering the reader something he or she is yet to discover.

One of the main purposes of alterations is to appeal to and make the subject matter more comprehensible and relatable to the target market. Vladislavić (2016) mentions that he 'took [the publisher's] point about the readership and accepted the change of emphasis'. He knew the publishers would need to make paratextual changes as business decisions.

Familiarisation and defamiliarization relate to domestication and foreignisation as Cloete and Wenzel pointed out: familiarisation would be linked to domestication to a certain extent, although familiarisation will not be the complete alteration of information to render it relatable to a foreign reader. Defamiliarization is connected to foreignisation, but this is not done with purposeful intent, but rather kept closer to the original text. The first method allows readers to come closer, whereas the second method forces a reader to acknowledge the differences and learn as they read. Each method has its positive and negative outcomes: with familiarisation, a

text is rendered more relatable, but it also runs the risk of being completely misinterpreted and stereotyped. With defamiliarization the messages remain true to the original, but the reader might turn away from complicated concepts.

The research report has provided insight into the influence of and the strategy behind paratextual design when novels are translated and marketed across borders, but there are various elements that are yet to be clarified and studied further. Firstly, although the authors were helpful and open to interviews, the publishers were mostly inaccessible during the conducting of research. It is perhaps necessary to go straight to publishing offices and request interviews with the marketing managers themselves. German publishers could be accessed in a similar fashion, but this will entail travel and other expenses. Secondly, sales figures were not available for most books, except for Lutz van Dijk's novels as the author was aware of the figures. Proper qualitative research could be done by gaining access to databases, such as Nielsen's and by monitoring sales figures and reception over an extended period. Access is gained through publishers and they were largely inaccessible during this process. Another recommended strategy would be to interview various German and South African reviewers on why and how they review certain novels in specific ways. Lastly, it would be interesting to look at the various marketing campaigns through a post-colonial lens or a post-apartheid lens to determine how large the influence of politics and social change would be on paratextual strategy.

The first limitation of the study has in fact been the accurate gathering of sales figures from Germany and South Africa. This meant that it was not possible to support other forms of success, such as recognition, with real and concrete figures. It was also not possible to do a statistical

analysis of the sales figures. The second limitation of the study or an aspect of the research that would need more interviews to back up claims is the interpretation of paratextual elements. It is possible that a publisher's choices might be based on completely different grounds than what is discovered or assumed. Also, the paratextual differences between different language editions could be interpreted differently by different parties: publishers, reviewers and authors.

However, this study is a continuation of a multitude of studies that have attempted to uncover the myriad functions of paratexts in different countries and what is communicated through different languages. The paratext of a book is the first encounter a potential reader has with a book and therefore paratext needs to be the most important aspect of a publisher's marketing strategy. It immediately presents a reader with information that should be attractive, fulfil a need and that would help them understand the content better. Since the purpose of this research report was to analyse the paratexts and not the content, it has not yet been determined whether the translated books themselves are completely different to original books. However, if the paratexts are altered to such an extent as with, for example, Matthee's *Fiela se Kind*, the likelihood of the book itself being understood differently is just as great. The debates and issues this presents for transnational and world literature is what Emily Apter (2006:41) refers to as 'the legitimacy struggles of dialects, the subversion of standard language usage by historic avant-gardes, the erosion of distinct literary traditions in the era of digital literacy'. These issues already begin to arise throughout the research report.

Another question that arises from the research is the lack of black South African authors that are represented in translated texts. For example, Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to our Hillbrow* and Niq

Mhlongo's *Dog Eat Dog* are both insightful, entertaining novels about Johannesburg, but are not able to provide German readers with these authors' perspectives because they remain untranslated. Mhlongo's novel was translated into Spanish, however. Although the explanations for this issue could range from lack of financial potential to lack of understanding, John Keene (2016) argues that it 'is a longstanding and continuing problem – or, to put it another way, a challenge for translators to address' and that 'this work may be viewed as fringe literature […] which is to say, it is viewed as either having limited market potential – thereby marking out as commercially unviable, or depicts a social world that requires knowledge and information that a dominant readership […] are unlikely to possess'. Even though this research report focuses on a different element of publishing and marketing strategy, this needs to be the topic of further research, because Vladislavić and Matthee both depict social worlds that might be difficult to grasp for European readers.

As a final point, what has made this research report especially worthwhile is discovering what is emphasised and what is trivialised about South Africa. This essentially demonstrates how South Africa is marketed to the rest of the world and this allows us to discover what foreign markets think about when they consider South Africa. It was not unexpected to see that crime, AIDS and poverty are at the forefront, but to see that Johannesburg and its different representations, as well as the coming-of-age genre in a South African context were of interest in Germany was surprising, especially since the 'Bildungsroman' and big cities are incredibly widespread in Germany. As mentioned previously, the effect of technology on paratextual strategy was particularly noteworthy and should perhaps be explored more extensively. Furthermore, the research report discovered an important occurrence in paratextual design, especially in South

Africa, namely that paratexts are predominantly designed for white middle- and upper-class readers. This is because the largest readership comes from this demographic group and other markets are not being accessed. The only way to tap into the other markets is through education and exposure. Paratexts do have the capability to increase interest in these markets, but funding for books cannot in this case come solely from the readers.

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