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THE TRANSFER OF THE SOCIO-POLITICAL THEMES IN ELSA JOUBERT'S DIE SWERFJARE VAN POPPIE NONGENA AND ITS *ENGLISH TRANSLATION: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS*

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ABSTRACT

This research project involves a descriptive analysis of the transfer of the socio-political themes in Elsa Joubert's Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena and its English translation. Use will be made of the model put forward by José Lambert and Hendrik van Gorp for translation description, and the further aim is to test the applicability of descriptive translation studies to literary translations.

The project is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is a detailed examination of the Lambert/Van Gorp model. This model will be seen against the background of descriptive translation studies as put forward in the introduction.

The second chapter is the application of the model as detailed in Chapter One. The model will firstly be applied to the two books as a whole, and then the more specific levels of the model will be applied to extracts from both books. Certain hypotheses will be put forward, and the analysis should contribute to refuting or confirming them.

The applicability of the model will be discussed in conclusion, and the strengths and weaknesses of the model discussed as they were discovered in the analyses.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Translation in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Anne Donaldson

ANNE DONALDSON

31 day of May, 1989.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in this project:

DTS	Descriptive translation studies
TT	Target text
ST	Source text

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INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this project is to test the applicability of descriptive translation studies to an analysis of a literary translation by applying a descriptive model to the transfer of the socio-political themes in Elsa Joubert's Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena and its English translation. The application should highlight the problems in applying descriptive studies, and should also note its success or failure at any point.

It is necessary to define the two chief concepts expressed in the main aim, namely descriptive translation studies and literary translation. Descriptive translation studies are a recent development in the field of translation theory. They examine the product of the translation process rather than the process itself. The traditional approach to translation analysis has tended to focus on the process of translation, and value judgements (as to whether the translation is "good" or "bad") have been the outcome of this focus. The descriptive scholars have moved away from these value judgements, however. They describe the translation as it stands, and

compare it to the source text in terms of "adequacy" and "acceptability". In this context, the term "adequate translation" indicates a predominantly source text-oriented translation, and the term "acceptable translation" indicates a translation which has undergone changes in order to make it more readily acceptable to the target audience. The emphasis is thus placed on the relationships governing the production and reception of translations.

Since the traditional prescriptive theorists evaluated translations as "good" or "bad", their work is more suited to non-literary texts. While it may be possible to formulate a set of translational rules for non-literary texts such as technical texts, it is not possible to do so for the translation of literary texts, since this takes place under varying constraints. An important variant of this nature is the target audience, and the reception of the target text into the target culture. It is this situation which the descriptive translation scholars have sought to rectify. They aim "...to establish a new paradigm for the study of literary translation, on the basis of a comprehensive theory and ongoing practical research"

(Hermans, 1985: p. 10). Hermans also gives the following definition of a literary translation:

> a (literary) translation is that which is regarded as a (literary) translation by a certain cultural community at a certain time
>
> (Hermans, 1985: p.13).

An important concept in DTS is that of literature as a system - "a hierarchically structured set of elements" (Hermans, 1985: p.11). This notion of literature as "a 'polysystem', i.e. as a differentiated and dynamic 'conglomerate of systems' characterized by internal oppositions and continual shifts"(Hermans, 1985: p. 11) has its origins in structuralism. Itamar Even-Zohar has been the major proponent of this concept in translation theory, applying this view of literature to translations by determining their position in the polysystem, and he contends that translations may occupy both primary and secondary positions. Should a translation occupy a primary position, it forms an integral part of the polysystem, and this often means that there is no clear-cut distinction between translation and originals in that polysystem. He hypothesizes that such a situation could arise in one of three ways:

where a literature is still in the process o being established, where a literature is "'peripheral' or 'weak' or both", and where a crisis occurs in a literature" (Even-Zohar, 1970: pp. 120-121). Should a translation occupy a secondary position, however, it will have no influence on major writings, but rather becomes "a means to preserve traditional taste" (Even-Zohar, 1970: p.123). This distinction between primary and secondary positions does not necessarily mean that a translation will occupy either one or the other, but it will rather tend to one or the other.

This notion of the polysystem also plays an important part in Gideon Toury's norm-based approach. Toury posits that norms are the determining factors in the translation process, and he gives three main categories of norms: the initial norm, the preliminary norms and the operational norms. According to Toury, literary translation is subject to various constraints, ranging along a scale between two extremes: "objective, relatively absolute rules", and "fully subjective idiosyncrasies" (1980: p.51). Between these two extremes lie the intersubjective factors or "norms".

> Sociologists and social psychologists regard norms as the translation of general values or ideas shared by a certain community - as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate - into specific performance-instructions appropriate for and applicable to specific situations, providing they are not (yet) formulated as laws.
>
> (1980: p.51)

A further major factor in Toury's approach is the so-called "Hypothetical Construct" which may be defined as a frame of reference necessary to "examine the positive and/or negative links between T[ext] 1 and T2, and to examine them from the point of view of both T1 and T2" (Toury, 1980: p. 48).

While Even-Zohar and Toury were at the fore-front of the drive toward descriptive translation studies, a number of scholars have also developed models for analysis and new insights into the role of DTS. Van den Broeck has taken over Toury's notion of a *Hypothetical Construct*, calling his version the *Adequate Translation* (AT). According to him, "the Adequate Translation can be regarded as the optimum (or maximum) reconstruction of all the ST elements possessing textual functions" (Van den Broeck, 1985: p. 57). The Adequate Translation is hypothetical rather than an actual text. Van den Broeck has based

his model very much on Toury's. He describes his model as

> an optimum model, based on the assumption that the critic will keep in view both the original act of communication and that of metacommunication.
> (Van den Broeck, 1985: p. 55)

Since the main aim of the project is to test the applicability of descriptive translation studies to literary translations, the model devised by José Lambert and Hendrik van Gorp will be taken as an example of descriptive translation studies. It is, however, not the only available model based on descriptive translation studies but it has been chosen as it is the most appropriate for an application of this scope. The scope of the project does not allow for a multi-text analysis and description, and the Lambert/Van Gorp model enables the scholar to work on one set of texts only, in this case describing the transfer of the socio-political themes within the one work by Elsa Joubert. This should ideally lead to further study, for example on the situation of the text within the polysystem. That isolated texts should not be the aim of translation description, but that descriptive scholars should attempt to discover

the translator's norms and constraints, and their influence on the translational process as well as the ensuing product, forms an important part of descriptive translation studies.

The Lambert/van Gorp model is representative of the work of the descriptive scholars. The influence of Even-Zohar's polysystem hypothesis is present in the model, as is Toury's theory of norms. The Lambert/Van Gorp model does, however, omit the notion of the Hypothetical Construct.

The second part of the project contains the application of the Lambert/Van Gorp model to the source and target texts. Before any discussion of the socio-political themes which are to be examined, it is necessary to place Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena in context in literature, and to give some detail on the text itself.

The book deals with the life and tribulations of Poppie Nongena, a domestic worker in the Cape. The book traces her life from her childhood in Upington, through her ever-increasing struggles with pass office

officials, and finally to her experience of the 1976 *unrest*. The text was chosen because it deals with *significant* and topical issues. Although the pass laws have *been repealed*, the problems experienced by people like Poppie *have* not really diminished. It was also chosen because of the *attitude* of the target audience (assumed in this case to be British) towards South African works of this nature.

The work itself is interesting for a number of reasons. Although it is unequivocally stated that this is a true story, narrated to the author (Joubert), the narrative is not always strictly of an autobiographical nature (that is, predominantly first *person* narrator), but has a third person omniscient narrator at *times*. The work was also translated by Joubert herself, *and* it is possible that this fact may have affected the *translation* in *some* way.

Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena *forms* part of a growing literary cycle in South Africa - "betrokke literatuur", or, more conventionally, committed literature. This has been defined as follows:

> A committed or engagé writer (or artist) is one who, through his work, is *dedicated* to the advocacy

> of certain beliefs and programmes, especially those which are political and ideological and in aid of social reform.
>
> (Cuddon, 1985: p.42)

Other members of this cycle include André P. Brink, Doris Lessing and Nadine Gordimer.

The translation analysis will focus on the transfer of the socio-political themes from the Afrikaans source text to the English target text. The theme traced will be that of Poppie's suffering, at the hands of the whites, through the pass laws, and at the hands of her own people. The reason for this choice is the fact that her suffering - her "long journey" - is the pivotal point of the book, and this led to its translation.

The theme has been discussed by various critics in different ways. C.N. van der Merwe sees the central theme of Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena as the protagonist's struggle and increasing bitterness, and splits this into four interconnected themes:

1) Poppie se lyding deur die toedoen van die blankes
2) Ander aspekte van Poppie se lyding
3) Die lyding van Poppie se familie en kennisse e.g.v. die witman
4) Ander fasette van die groep swartmense se lyding.

(1980: pp. 76-77)

In his chapter on *Die Swerfjare van Popple Nongena* in Tweede Voorlopige Rapport, Professor André P. Brink sees the development in the theme as follows:

> Plesierigheid, haldadigheid, 'n diepe vreugde wat mens met aarde verbind - dit veral in die jeugjare. En dán die ontwortéling, die swerfjare, die verlatenheid. Wat uitloop op 'n makabere visioen van gevangenskap. Weer in die bitter jakkie se woorde: "Let die dak van die jail oor die lokasie kom, let die hele lokasie 'n jail word, cause why, we're born to die". (1980: p.142)

He summarizes the theme as a vision of human imprisonment, and a judgement, both intended to evoke a complex reaction from the reader, and to awaken him to the realities of the South African situation.

Professor J.J. Degenaar, too, stresses the effect of Die Swerfjare van Popple Nongena on the reader. He maintains that Elsa Joubert "het dit vir ons onmoontlik gemaak om in die toekoms verontskuldigend te beweer: 'Maar ons het nooit geweet dat dit die ware toedrag van sake is en dat ons wette werklik só gewelddadig op mense se lewe inwerk nie'" (1980: p.65). He views the book in terms of what he calls "strukturele geweld" [structural violence] and distinguishes the following structures as determining

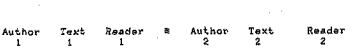
Poppie's life: political, economic, social, cultural, ethnic, bureaucratic, class and family. Since his approach to Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena was to determine to what measure he as a voter was responsible for the violence in each of these "structures", he focuses on the political structure, and Poppie's role in the political awareness of the whites (1980: pp.80-81).

CHAPTER ONE

THE LAMBERT/VAN GORP MODEL

Since the aim of this project is to test the applicability of descriptive translation studies, it is necessary to define in detail the model to be used. This chapter therefore contains a description of the model to be used in the analysis.

The model for translation description to be used is that described by José Lambert and Hendrik van Gorp (1985: pp.42-53). Their research is based on "a model containing the basic parameters of translational phenomena, as presented by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury in the context of the so-called polysystem hypothesis (Even-Zohar, 1970; Toury, 1980 in Lambert & Van Gorp, 1985: p.43). This model is set out as follows:



Explanation:
-Text 1: source text;
-Text 2: target text;
-Author 1 and Reader 1 belong to the system of the source text;
-Author 1 is to be situated among the authors of the source system;
-Text 1' and Reader 1' are to be situated within the source system;
-System 1 refers to the *system of* source text, source author and source reader (this system is not necessarily a strictly literary one, *since* literary systems cannot be isolated from social, religious or other systems);
-Author 2, Text 2, Reader 2 etc. are to be situated within the target system;
- :all elements of this communication model are complex and dynamic;
-The symbol ≈ *indicates* that the link between source and target communication cannot really be predicted; it stands for an *open* relation, the exact nature of which will depend on the priorities of the translator's behavior - which *in* turn has to be seen in function of the dominant norms of the target system.

(Lambert and Van Gorp, 1985: p.43)

The bottom line of the equation above represents the systemic context of the texts. Author 1' represents all other source system authors, either of the same genre or generally, depending on the nature of the investigation. Text 1' is all other source system texts, of the same genre or in general, and

Reader 1' represents all other *readers in* the source *system*. Similarly, Author 2' represents all other target *system* authors, which may include authors of translated *works*, *Text 2' represents* other target *system* texts, and *may* also *include translations*, and Reader 2' represents all target system readers.

The *relationship between* the top and bottom lines of the equation determines the *position* of the text (either Text 1 or Text 2) within its own literary *system*. This *may* be illustrated using the example of Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena, where Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena is *Text 1*, *Elsa Joubert* is Author 1 and Afrikaans readers form Reader 1. Author 1' *may then be* said to include authors like Brink and John Miles, both *committed* writers. Text 1' would include their books, and Reader 1' would *be* all South African readers. Joubert would also be Author 2, with Poppie *as* Text 2 and British academics (the projected target audience) *as Reader* 2. Text 2' would then include all committed works in English, Author 2' would include authors like George Bernard Shaw and Doris Lessing, both committed writers, and Reader 2' would be the greater *British reading* public.

Because every translation is a result of particular relations between and within the parameters of the above model, it is *necessary* to define which of these relations are the most important, and it is this definition that the Lambert/Van Gorp model seeks to clarify. Lambert and Van Gorp describe their model as

> a theoretical and hypothetical one: it shows which relations can play a part in the production and shaping of actual translations, and which ones may be observed in translation description. In other words, it represents a comprehensive set of questions (how has text 1 been translated into text 2, in relation to which other texts? ...) rather than a series of theses.
>
> (1985: p.45)

The Lambert/Van Gorp model, based on, and drawing from, the description of the basic parameters as contained in the diagram above, is as follows:

1. Preliminary data:
   - title and title page (e.g. presence or absence of genre indication, author's name, translator's name,...)
   - metatexts (on title page; in preface; in footnotes - in the text or separate?)
   - general strategy (partial or complete translation?)

2. Macro-level:

   - division of the text (in chapters, acts and scenes, stanzas...)

   - titles of chapters, presentation of acts and scenes, ...

   - relation between types of narrative, dialogue, description; between dialogue and monologue, solo voice and chorus, ...

   - internal narrative structure (episodic plot?, open ending?,...); dramatic intrigue (prologue, exposition, climax, conclusion, epilogue); poetic structure (e.g. contrast between quatrains and tercets in a sonnet)

   - authorial comment; stage directions; ...

3. Micro-level (i.e. shifts on phonic, graphic, micro-syntactic, lexico-semantic, stylistic, elocutionary and modal levels):

   - selection of words

   - dominant grammatical patterns and formal literary structures (metre, rhyme,...)

   - forms of speech reproduction (direct, indirect, free indirect speech)

   - narrative, perspective and point of view

   - modality (passive or active, expression of uncertainty, ambiguity,...)

   - language levels (sociolect; archaic/popular/dialect; jargon...)

4. Systemic context:

   - oppositions between micro- and macro-levels and between text and theory (norms, models,...)

   - intertextual relations (other translations and "creative" works)

- intersystemic relations (e.g. genre structures, stylistic codes ...)
(1985: pp.52-3)

The first step in the model is a survey of the preliminary data in the target and source texts. This includes the title and title page, the presence or absence of genre indication, author's name and translator's name in the target text. It also includes metatexts: on the title page, in the preface, in footnotes, whether they are contained in the text or are separate. At this stage it is possible to determine the translator's general strategy, in other words, whether he has opted for an adequate (or source system oriented) or an acceptable (or target system oriented) approach. The preliminary data offer a starting point for further analysis on the macro-structural and micro-structural levels, and it is already possible to form hypotheses about these further analyses. A translation which appears to be predominantly adequate or acceptable from the preliminary data, for example, usually follows the same course in the investigation of the macro- and micro-structural levels.

The basic question of whether the translation is

target-oriented (i.e. acceptable) or source-oriented (i.e. adequate) is examined in terms of dominant norms, and because a translation is the result of selection strategies from and within communication systems (viz. the basic model above), the translation-scholar's main task is to study the priorities determining those strategies (Lambert & Van Gorp, 1985: p.46), starting, in this model, with the so-called preliminary data.

The second stage in the mbert/Van Gorp model is the macro-level stage. This begins the actual textual analysis. Dealing with target and source texts in turn, it examines the division of the text into chapters, stanzas, acts and scenes, and examines the titles of chapters, or the presentation of acts and scenes. There is a comparison between the types of narrative employed in the texts, the dialogue and monologue, solo voice and chorus, for instance. The themes in the novel may be introduced at this level under the sub-heading of the internal narrative structure. The meta-texts are once again relevant for a comparison of authorial comments, themes and presentations.

The macro-level stage, combining textual and literary functions as it does, requires a certain order of investigation according to Lambert and Van Gorp. They suggest the scholar begin by looking at different text extracts and then analysing them again from the point of view of particular textual rules: whether, for instance, the translator translates words, sentences, paragraphs, metaphors, narrative sequences, and whether this translation tends to the adequate or acceptable pole. The consistency and hierarchical structure of the translational strategy can thus be observed, and hypotheses concerning this strategy formulated.

The conclusions reached in this second stage can be used to guide the analysis of other extracts, and by adopting such a flexible method, the scholar may gain insight into the translational strategy and accompanying text norms and translation norms (1985: p.49).

The third, or micro-level, stage of the model examines any shifts on phonic, graphic, micro-syntactic, lexico-semantic, stylistic, elocutionary and modal levels. There may be a detailed comparison

of the selection of *words*, the dominant grammatical patterns and formal literary *structures*, *such as* metre and rhythm in poetry, which will obviously not apply to *this project*. Forms of speech reproduction are compared, that is, *the use of* direct, indirect or free indirect speech. Narrative, *perspective and* point of view are described, as well as the choice between the *passive and* active voice, and expressions of ambiguity and uncertainty. *The tenses* and language levels used are also examined, with particular *attention* being paid to the use of jargon and dialect in the text, *in contrast* to the Standard language of the system of which the text *forms a part*.

The hypotheses concerning the adequacy or *acceptability* of the texts as formulated in the preliminary *data and macro* levels are tested against the findings of the micro-level. *It now becomes* necessary to assess the adequacy or acceptab*ility* of *the* text in terms of the findings of the micro-level, and to compare *this* to the findings of the previous two levels. A further hypothes*is is thus* postulated, and the fourth level, that of the systemic context, *is now* approached as a final sounding-board for the initial hypothe*ses*.

Under the heading of the systemic context, intersystemic relations and intertextual relations are examined. Intertextual relations cover the relations between the text and other translations and "creative" works, and intersystemic relations are those, for example, between genre structures and stylistic codes. Unfortunately, the scope of this project does not permit the inclusion of these relations. Oppositions between macro and micro levels are also examined in the systemic context, as are the theories on what the results of such an examination should be.

The emphasis on a systemic approach is one of the chief characteristics of DTS, and forms a vital part of the Lambert/ Van Gorp model. Lambert and Van Gorp maintain that "the very use of the concept of system implies that we [translation scholars] are aware of conflicts and parallelisms between systems and sub-systems" (1985: p.51).

I propose to use the Lambert/Van Gorp model as the basis for my analysis in Chapter Two. In view of the fact that it is the transfer of the socio-political

theme which is under investigation, the first (preliminary data) stage of the model, as well as the second (macro-level) and final (systemic context) stages, will be applied to the text as a whole. This was felt to be necessary, since the theme spans the entire text, and its transfer may be better examined in general at first, and then in the detailed micro-level stage.

CHAPTER TWO

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND TESTING OF THE THEORETICAL MODEL

This chapter contains the application of the Lambert/van Gorp model detailed in the previous chapter. As was stated in that chapter, the source and target texts will each be analysed as a whole on the preliminary data and macro levels. The macro and micro levels will then be examined with the aid of extracts from both texts, and the analysis will be concluded with the systemic context, which will again view each text as a whole. Hypotheses will be formulated and tested at each level, and these hypotheses will be collated and examined in conclusion.

The individual texts chosen for analysis were selected as being representative of each stage of Poppie's life. Parts of the first and last chapters of the book were chosen in order to place Poppie in context, and to see what she has finally become after tracing the theme of her suffering through the book.

At all times in the analyses, the term translated or target text refers to the English version Poppie

(1985), and the term source text *refers* to the Afrikaans *version* Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena (1986).

For the purposes of this project, the target system and audience will be *taken* to be British.

1. Analysis of the text as a whole

1.1 Preliminary data

No indication that it is a translation is given on the cover or title page of the translated text. The author's name is given, but no mention is made of the fact that she translated the book from Afrikaans into English.

The only indication that the novel has been translated is on the reverse side of the title page:

> First published in *Afrikaans* as
> Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena
> by Tafelberg Publishers in 1978
>
> First published in English as
> The Long Journey of Poppie Nongena
> by Jonathan Ball Publishers in

association with Hodder and Stoughton in 1980

(Joubert, 1985)

The Afrikaans version states on the back cover that the work has been translated into English, French, Spanish, German, Dutch and Italian (Joubert, 1986). The cover on the English version, however, rather ambiguously states that the work "drew a standing ovation from the Afrikaans literary world" (1986).

No genre indication appears in the source text. The note "Voorraf" describes it as a story ("verhaal"), and there is a statement that the text is a true story ("ware verhaal"). In the paragraph "To the reader", which appears in the translated text, the work is described as a "novel ... based on the actual life story of a black woman living in South Africa today".

A number of metatexts appear in both texts. In the translated text, the note "To the reader" gives Joubert's reasons for writing the book, and this is followed by a "Foreword by Alan Paton". This Foreword explains South Africa's political situation clearly and simply, mentioning inter alia the Homelands policy, migrant workers and the 1976 rebellion by the children. Such a Foreword would not be necessary for

a South African audience, and is an early indication that the work is aimed at a non-South African audience.

This indication is borne out by the note "Voorsf" in the source text. The author states

> Die boek probeer nie 'n geheelbeeld gee van die politieke en sosiale gebeure van die afgelope veertig jaar wat betref die plattelandse, *stedelike* en hervestigde swartmense nie

No attempt is made to elaborate on the events, as the (South African) Afrikaans readers would be fully aware of them.

A glossary is given after the English text (1985: p.3b7), which is primarily a glossary of Xhosa words. There are indeed some Afrikaans terms, and specifically South African expressions, such as "erf", but the majority of the terms are Xhosa. This is relevant to this analysis because no such glossary appears with the source text, although the majority of Afrikaans readers are also unlikely to be familiar with Xhosa.

The general strategy adopted by the translator

appears to be that of a complete translation. The translator wishes to convey Poppie's suffering to a wider audience, both in South Africa and abroad. Elements of the text have been altered to conform to this "acceptable" approach.

The fact that Joubert encountered a problem with the tenses is an excellent demonstration of the fact that she opted for a predominantly acceptable translation. She had attempted to retain the use of the Afrikaans past historic tense, which has no English equivalent, and, translated, would appear to be present tense in an English work, and quotes from a letter from her English publishers, urging her to reconsider: "'... hope I can woo you to what I'm sure is better for the English-speaking market'" (1982: p.97).

On the basis of the changes admitted to by Joubert, the lack of indication in the target text that it is in fact a translation, and the explicitation of Poppie's situation and South African laws in the target text, it is possible at this stage to hypothesize that the translation will prove to be a predominantly acceptable one, and this is important in

the transfer of the themes. If the themes are to be transferred as fully as possible and remain comprehensible to the target audience, it could be hypothesized that it might be necessary to alter some elements of the source text. Despite Paton's Foreword which explains the political situation in South Africa at the time of writing, a British audience would still not understand many of the ramifications of Poppie's predicament. It may thus be hypothesized that the themes, and the theme of Poppie's suffering at the hands of the whites in particular, will have had to be explained, and that their immediacy for the reader may well have been lost.

1.2 Macro level

The division of the target and source texts into sections and chapters is similar, although certain changes have been made. The target text divides the text into seven sections, each with its own heading. These sections are then divided into numbered chapters.

The source text has the same divisions, but the

section headings are different. While the source text tends to have long, descriptive headings, the target text headings are terse and to the point. The second section, for example, is entitled simply "Lambarts Bay" in the target text, whereas the source text lists it as "Poppie se jongmeisiejare en huwelik op Lambertsbaai". The titles are not entirely equivalent - section four is "Poppie's Pass" in the translated text, and "Poppie kry moeilikheid met die wet" in the source text. This has thematic significance insofar as the notion of problems or suffering as expressed by "moeilikheid" is understated in the terse "Poppie's Pass". Although the pass issue is the root of Poppie's problems with the law, it is by no means the only reason for the problems she experiences.

The division of the seven sections into chapters is almost the same in both texts, but chapter 46 (the last chapter of section five) has been split into two parts in the target text, part of it (up to "... then you take a road the other way." [p. 192]/ "... dan draai jy maar hou koers om." [p.143] combining with chapter 45, and the rest combining with chapter 46 (47 in the source text) to begin the section on the Ciskei. There appears to be no target system norm

necessitating this change, and it is particularly surprising in view of the fact that, since the translator was also the author of the source text, she would surely not have disagreed with the original divisions. A further difference is that while the target text simply numbers these chapters, they have individual titles in the source text. The result of this change is that the table of contents in the source text reads like a summary. This is significant in that, while it represents a shift, the shift is not obligatory - that is, it is not demanded by the target system.

The one hypothesis suggested in the first stage of the analysis (namely that the translator has striven for a predominantly acceptable translation) is not really affected by the findings in this second stage so far. A number of non-obligatory shifts have taken place, but they do not render the target text either more acceptable or more adequate. The translation is adequate insofar as it has retained the source text divisions, and it tends to the pole of acceptability in the changes made to the section titles. Long, descriptive titles are not a usual device in English, and the change may have been made to render the text

more acceptable.

The *second* hypothesis suggested in the first stage - that issues may have been explained for a British audience - is not confirmed by the findings of this stage. It is only the translation of the section heading "Poppie kry moeilikheid met die wet" by "Poppie's Pass" which may relate to this notion, and the shift is rather inexplicable. It does simplify and clarify the issue, however, which the translator may have felt was necessary.

2. Analysis of individual texts

2.1 Section I Chapter 1 (Appendix I)

(Pages 11 - 13 [TT]/ 3 - 4 [ST])

2.1.1 Macro level

This chapter serves to identify Poppie's family, and the conditions under which they lived. It is thematically important because of this identification, but there is little contact with whites here, other than that they fought in three wars.

The division of paragraphs has not been maintained in this text, e.g.

> We are Xhosa people from Gordonia, says Poppie. My mama used to tell us about our great-grandma Kappie, a rich old woman who grazed her goats on the koppies the other side of Carnavon. Her second name was Plaatjies and she had the high-bridged nose that runs in our family - our compie Pengi got it from her.
>
> 11 1-5 [TT]

> Ons is Gordonia-boorlinge, sê Poppie.
>
> My mama het ons vertel van onse grootouma Kappie, 'n ryk ou vrou wat met haar bokke geboer het in die rantjies anderkant Carnavon. Haar van was Plaatjies en sy het die hoë stamneus gehad wat onse compie Pengi van haar geërwe het.
>
> 11 1-5 [ST]

This indicates an adherence to a predominantly acceptable text. The short paragraphs of the source text, frequently consisting of only one sentence, e.g. ll 36-37 "Toe hulle groter word, het ouma Hannie met die kinders oor die rivier getrek na Upington om vir hulle skool en kerk te gee", *simply* become part of a longer paragraph in the target text - ll 39-41 in ll 33-41.

The narrative is primarily first person narrator, e.g. ll, 144 "But our ma's children were closest to her heart ...". There are also frequent direct quotations, e.g. ll 64-68 "Ja, he was a great talker, says ouma Hannie ...". The narrative structure is the *same as* the structure of the source text, and *is* thus primarily adequate. The *episodic* plot, too, is maintained, *thus* also tending to the adequate pole.

There is authorial comment in the translated text: explanations of expressions or terms. In line 9 of the target text, for example, there is mention of the "Great River, which they call the Orange River these days", whereas the source text simply says "die Grootrivier" (17). Another significant shift to the acceptable is in lines 25-26: "Great-grandma Kappie

only had one girl child, our *grandma Hannie*. We called *her* ouma Hannie". This explanation would be unnecessary for the source *audience*: "Grootouma Kappie het *net* een meisiekind gehad, onse ouma Hannie" (121). A further example is the *last* paragraph of the chapter: "But that was a different war, the war that was the first of the *two great* white people wars" (ll 79-81) rather than "Maar daai was 'n ander oorlog" (ll 75-76). These *shifts* are all optional, but obviously intended to render the text more acceptable *for* the target audience. *There* is also an omission: ll 33-35 of the source text are simply omitted *from* the target text:

> Daar het ouma Hannie die *kinders grootgemaak*.
> Hulle het leer koring *sny* by die Boesmans.
> *Die* Boesmans was die kortetjies met die kroesies,
> die Damaras was die swartes en die Basters *dié*
> wat amper lyk soos witmense, met lang hare

is replaced by:

> ...and they stayed on the lands at Louisvale where the Bushmen taught them to use a scythe.

This omission is surprising *and* certainly not obligatory. The hypothesis suggested in the preliminary data level - that is, that changes may occur for the benefit of the target audience - thus appears to be borne out here - explanations are given

to render the text *more* easily understood by the target audience.

This stage is predominantly acceptable as far as comments and *paragraphing* are concerned, but there is a definite tendency to the *adequate* in the translation of the narrative, and the structure of the narrative.

2.1.2 Micro level

The language levels in this text are of a fairly low register - that *is*, they do not reflect the standard ABA (Algemeen Beskaafde Afrikaans) or Standard English. The dialogue which emerges through the layout of the text is also discernible from the language *register*. The narrator, Poppie at this stage, is obviously not *entirely* at home in the English language, a fact borne out by the *very simple* sentence structure, e.g. "He was born in Beaufort West and his *clan name was* Mgweni and he died in the Big 'Flu of 1918" (11 28-29). *This is very* similar to the source text, which also has a simple sentence structure, and a low language register: "Hy is gebore op Beaufort-*Wes en* sy grootvan was Mgwevu en hy het

afgesterwe met die Groot Griep van 1918"(11 23-24). The target text represents a very adequate translation in this instance, not only because of the many expressions left in the Afrikaans, for example the titles are retained in the Afrikaans: ouma, oompie; but also because of the remarkable adherence to the tenses used in the source text: where the past historic tense is used in the source text, the present tense is used in the target text, and the past tense is used in the same way. The tenses in the two languages (English and Afrikaans) are not equivalent. English does not have a past historic as Afrikaans does, and any shift from this tense is an obligatory one, since its counterpart in English is simply the past tense.

The selection of words in this text is particularly interesting because so many Xhosa and Afrikaans words are retained in the target text, for example, "The *isibetho*, *ouma* Hannie told us, was the plague that the Lord sent us ..." (11 30-31). The words used in the target text are of a slightly higher register than those of the source text, however, e.g: "Where the Bushmen taught them to use a *scythe*" (138), where the source text gives "Hulle het leer koring sny

by die Boesmans" (1132-33). This register shift is not obligatory - a lower register in English would not have changed the narration. This aspect is definitely acceptable, in contrast to the rest of the *micro* level findings which are predominantly adequate.

The *hypothesis* that the texts would prove predominantly acceptable is not borne out in this text, since there are far more adequate features than anticipated. The hypothesis relating to the thematic *transfer* cannot really be tested on this text, as it simply serves to place Poppie in context in her family and South Africa, and this is done in a predominantly adequate way.

2.2 Section II Chapter 21 (*Appendix II*)

(Pages 86 - 90 [TT]/ 61 - 63 [ST])

2.2.1 Macro level

Paragraphing has not been maintained in *this* text, *nor* has the sentence structure, e.g. ll 1-9 of both target and *source* texts. In the target text, one concept becomes one paragraph, *and* the sequence of events is recorded virtually in point form, *something* which continues throughout the text, e.g.

> The house across the road was burned down. Poppie saw the coloured policeman help the white policeman carry the stuff from the house: an iron bedstead, a cupboard, a kitchen table *and a few* chairs, some broken down, a few pieces of crockery, tins and paraffin cases. The policeman had kicked the door *down*, it swung in on its broken hinges, when he struck the match
>
> (ll 32-38)

is two paragraphs and five sentences in the source text :

> Sy het die huis oorkant die straat so sien brand. Die bruin poelieste wat saam met die witman gekom het, het eers die goed uit die huis gedra. 'n Ysterkatel, sonder matras, 'n cupboard, 'n kombuistafel en 'n paar stoele, party met af pote, 'n paar stukkies skottelgoed, blikke en paraffienkassies.
>
> Die poelieste het toe die deur so 'n skop

binnetoe gegee dat dit aan sy *skarniere* hang. En die mêtjie getrek.

(ll 27-33)

The narrative structure of the source text is maintained in the target text. The narration is primarily first person, changing intermittently to direct quotations and third person narration. Poppie's narration switches to an omniscient narrator in some places, emphasizing the preliminary debate on the autobiographical/fictional nature of the book as a whole. This tends to the adequate pole in its adherence to the source text narrative structure. The retained episodic plot is also adequate in its translation.

These extracts introduce the theme for analysis. Poppie's family is forced to leave Lambert's Bay because of white laws. It is the white men who tell them to go (ll 2-3), and the notion of a pass is introduced in line 57. This theme is maintained in the target text, assisted by some authorial comments. The target text gives an explanation for the removal of the Xhosa from Lambert's Bay: "This part of the country is a coloured preference area. Too many black people are coming from the tribal lands to work in the

Western Cape" (ll 22-24), and there is also an explanation that the Rhodesians on the train are "black Rhodesians" (l 129) - an explanation which would not be required by the source audience, familiar with separate amenity restrictions.

The acceptability of the translation has been maintained on the macro level, and it may be hypothesized that this level will be acceptable for all of the texts to be analysed. The theme has been adequately transferred in this case - but there are explanations, which at this stage confirm the earlier hypothesis that explanations would be necessary to render the text more acceptable to the target audience.

2.2.2 Micro level

The language is of a fairly low register in both source and target texts, although the target text is once again of a slightly higher register than the source text: "When the law became so strict that they were burning down many houses at Lamberts Bay, we started to think about leaving, says Poppie" (ll 51-

53) / "Toe die wet nou sterk word dat die Xhosa-mense moet uitgeroei word uit die dorpe uit, sê Poppie, toe hulle nou baie gebrand het daar by Lambertsbaai, toe het ons ook maar begin dink aan weggaan" (ll 45-47).

The grammatical patterns of the target text tend to be acceptable, i.e. fairly standard English, but there are a few exceptions to this, e.g. "Where to is it that I must go now?" (ll 11-12) from "Waarnatoe moet ek dan nou gaan?" (l 11).

The word selection in this text is frequently unusual. "Baie ontevrede" (l 7) (very dissatisfied) is translated as "angry" (l 7). This choice exaggerates the feeling of the people. An important component of the theme of Poppie's long journey is the gradual intensification of the feelings of the people - discontent mounts to voiced discontent, to anger and at last to rebellion. To describe this feeling as anger at this stage is to detract from the themes, including that of Poppie's suffering.

Both the macro and micro level analyses serve to confirm the acceptability hypothesis, although there are some adequate shifts. There is very little

explanation and alteration confirming the hypothesis in this extract, although it is partly confirmed by the exaggeration of the people's discontent; yet despite that, the suffering and the role of the whites in that suffering come across very clearly in the target text.

2.3 Section III Chapter 23 (Appendix III)
(Pages 98 - 101 [TT] / 70 - 72 [ST])

2.3.1 Macro level

This text emphasizes the white exploitation of cheap black labour, represented by Poppie. This is carefully transferred into the target text, which is an almost literal translation of the source text as far as this theme is concerned. Poppie is once again seen as part of a large, unified family, working to help one another - part of the build-up to the end of the book, where families are divided against each other, and the suffering comes from both the whites and the blacks - yet always because of the whites.

Once again, the paragraphing has not been maintained, nor has the sentence structure. This is again an attempt to render the target text more acceptable.

The narrative stance is retained in this text. It is fairly unusual in this text, switching from third person to first person, yet always with a touch

of Poppie's *own dialogue* or thoughts: e.g. "It was strange to her to *go into* the rooms where the white people slept" *(ll 45-46)*/ "Dit was vir haar vreemd om in die kamers te gaan van *die witmense* wat slaap" (ll 50-51). There are also a number of *direct* quotations - "Draw the curtains, Rachel, the *madam said as she* put down the cups next to the bed" (ll 50-51)/ "Trek die gordyne, Rachel, sê die madam as sy *die koppies* koffie langs die beddens neergesit het ..." (ll 46-47), and quotation marks are not used in either text. The narrative structure is adequately transferred - the use of quotation marks would make it a more acceptable translation, for instance.

There is no authorial comment in this text. The text is straightforward - a simple narration of Poppie's daily work, and is self-explanatory. The text *is*, in fact, predominantly adequate, far more so *than either of* the texts analysed so far. It is *possible that this is due to* the third person narrator who *is necessarily less colloquial* than Poppie herself, and consequently *more easily* translated.

2.3.2 Micro level

Since the text is so straightforward, with few words requiring careful translation, word selection is very adequate. None of the words used in the source text are ambiguous, nor do they have hidden connotations, and the language used is consequently fairly ordinary. The register is fairly high when compared with the two previous texts, but only insofar as far fewer colloquialisms appear in the target text. The register is lower in the source text because the Afrikaans is non-Standard - e.g. "As die grootmense brekfis eet ..." (l 58) which is translated to a higher register as "While the adults had breakfast ..." (l 65).

This text is surprising in that it supports neither of the hypotheses formulated thus far - it is primarily adequate and contains a carefully adequate transfer of the theme. The following analyses will therefore be crucial to the testing of the hypotheses, and to the conclusions to be drawn after the systemic context has been discussed.

2.4 Section IV Chapter 34 (Appendix IV)
(Pages 140 - 143 [TT] / 103 - 105 [ST])

2.4.1 Macro level

The paragraphing *division has not been consistently maintained in this* text, although there are a *number of paragraphs* which have remained the *same. The result* of this paragraphing is that the target text has a far more staccato feel than in the previous texts, following the source text more closely than before. The first six paragraphs in each text are a good example of this. The division has been closely adhered to, and the thematic importance of the staccato style of the source text has been retained in the target text. Poppie's life has become disjointed, unbalanced, and this is reflected in the style of the passage. This adherence has not been maintained throughout the text, however; there are a number of places where paragraphs have been *joined together in* the target text, e.g. *ll 30-33[[TT] are one* paragraph, but the *same section in* the source text, ll *26-30, is in two paragraphs:*

> *You don't qualify* for the Cape, *said* Mr Strydom. It was again this thing about the Cape being a *place set* aside for the coloured people, the thing of getting the black people away to where they came

from.

(ll 30-33)

Jy kwalifiseer nie vir die Kaap nie, sê Mr. Strydom.

Dit was ook nie oor haar trou met tata-ko-Bonsile nie. Soos sy dit kon verstaan, was dit omdat hy kontrak gevat het. Maar hy môés kontrak vat, anders kon hy nie werk nie, dink Poppie. Of dis omdat hy siek geword het en nie die werk kon hou nie.

(ll 26-30)

This chapter has great thematic importance. Poppie is seen having problems with her pass, and she makes an important observation about the men in the pass office: "So is die gevoel onder die witmense. Die een kry vir jou jammer en wil jou help, maar hy kan nie" (ll 63-65). This is completely omitted in the target text, together with a section with Poppie explaining the fear of corruption in the pass office: "Mens moet verstaan hoe die wet nou was, daai jare, sê Poppie. Die mense was so agter die geld lat die een man dink, as hy jou pas nou reggemaak het, sal die ander man dink jy't hom omgekoop" (ll 61-63). This omission is important, since there appears to be no reason for it. It is in itself an explanation which may have been valid for a British audience, it exposes the sort of corruption prevalent in the pass office, yet shows that not all of the pass officials were that corrupt. The target text simply omits this, ending

that particular section with "Some people manage to fix everything, *she said*, they buy the passes with money. But when once your papers *are wrong*, it is very hard to get them right again" (ll 66-68).

The chapter is also thematically important since it shows Poppie beginning to crack under the pressure. She tells her mother: "It's working on my nerves, she *told mama*, I have the same pain in my stomach that tata-ka-Bonsile had. *Am I going* to get sick? What will become of my children [illegible] *kept on*" (ll 82-85). The pressure is t[illegible] an adequate way, *apart* from the omission as [illegible]ed above. The omission does not *lessen* the impact of the pressure on Poppie felt by the reader, it *might even intensify* it, but it means that some of Poppie's empathy with those *pass officials* who were honest is lost, and that is important, *since it detracts* from Poppie's character as it is shown developing through the book: her suffering forms her character, any lessening detracts *from* it.

This extract is also important in that it introduces Mrs. Retief, who is to have such an influence on Poppie's pass problems. She is the first

white to be shown in a truly sympathetic way in the text, and is also the first white to show any true appreciation of Poppie's real problems with her pass and the wages offered by white employers.

The narrative in this passage is all third person narration. This adheres strongly to the source text, rendering this primarily adequate. This third person narration serves to give an almost impartial description of Poppie's problems with her pass, and this makes her problems even more poignant. They are still traumatic, even seen through the eyes of a third person narrator. Direct quotations are used, e.g. lines 54-56, and many are quotes from Poppie, e.g. "I don't know how this thing comes about, Poppie said to mama" (ll 59-60).

There is very little authorial comment in either source or target text, but there is a section where the text as reflected in the source text has been changed to coincide with a comment earlier in the book. The change gives a different reason for her pass problems:

"It was again this thing about the Cape being a place set aside for the coloured people, the thing of

getting the black people away to where they came from" (11 30-34)

"Dit was ook nie oor haar troue met tata-ka-Bonaile nie. Soos sy dit kon verstaan, was dit omdat hy kontrak gevat het. Maar hy móés kontrak vat, anders kon hy nie werk nie, dink Poppie. Of dia omdat hy siek geword het en nie die werk kon hou nie" (11 27-30).

This *shift* is towards the acceptable, an attempt to make the *Homelands policy* more comprehensible to the target audience presumably, rather than confusing them with the contract problems. The shift is optional, and has no effect on the thematic transfer. It is, however, confirmation of the hypothesis that changes may be made to accommodate the target audience.

This stage is fairly adequate, yet there are also a number of *acceptable shifts*, thus leaving the text fairly evenly balanced between the adequate and acceptable at this stage. The thematic transfer has been affected not by additional comments as hypothesised earlier, but by an omission, detracting fro. Poppie's character, yet appearing to stress her problems, and her suffering, and stressing the role of the whites in that suffering. This has implications

for the thematic transfer, since it too bears out the changes made for the benefit of the target audience.

2.4.2 Micro level

The language levels in this text are of a fairly high register in the target text, again as a result of the third person narrator. Even the direct dialogue is of a higher register than previously, although this only applies to the target text. The language level used in the source text is lower than that of the target text, due mainly to the non-Standard Afrikaans used by the narrator as well as Poppie and her family: "Hulle het Mama se pas 'n stempel gegee wat sê dat sy elke ses maande en later elke jaar extension moet kry" (ll 21-22) is given in the target text as "They gave mama's pass a stamp for a six months' extension, and later for a year" (ll 24-25).

The selection of words in the text is linked to the language register. The words selected in the target text are thus of a higher register than those of the source text, although this makes no appreciable difference thematically. The text is fairly

straightforward, and the *words* tend to be simple, without hidden connotations. They have *therefore been translated by* English equivalents on a slightly higher register, largely because *it is* not possible to render an appropriate English non-Standard "dialect" as *has* been *done in the* source text. Although a number of non-Standard forms were *available* to the translator, none would have been appropriate since Poppie and her family are *South* African, and primarily Afrikaans-speaking, whereas the English *dialects tend* to be *associated* with a British district; for example the Cockneys are *associated* with London.

The target text is acceptable on this level, largely as a *result of* the register shifts. The text thus tends to be acceptable on a *combination of* the macro and micro levels, with the acceptability of the micro level *outweighing* the balance on the macro level. The "acceptable" hypothesis thus *appears* to be *borne* out in this passage, although there are again far more adequate *features* than anticipated on the basis of the preliminary data. The theme *is transferred* more acceptably than adequately in this instance, and this *is important*, since it is the first analysis to show this so strongly.

2.5 Section V Chapter 47/48 (Appendix V)

(Pages 201 - 203 [TT] / 181 - 183 [ST])

2.5.1 Macro level

Paragraphing has again been maintained fairly adequately *in the first* part of this passage. The paragraphing in *the second* part of the source text passage again emphasizes *the desolation* and fear in Poppie's situation, the staccato *rhythm echoing* her train of thought, e.g.

> Hulle kan doen wat hulle wil, maar ek is nog *nie afgedood nie*.
> Nou gaan ek vorentoe.
> Ek gaan *vorentoe met* wat ek oorgehou het, en dis my kinders.
> En die eerste wat *ek moet doen*, is dat my kinders moet skool kry.
> Toe kan sy slaap.
>
> (11 79-83)

This is not transferred to the target text, however. The lines quoted above simply form part of another paragraph:

> ... They can do what they will, but I am not dead yet. Now I go forward. *I go forward* with what I have kept, and that is my children. And the first thing I must do, is to see that *my children* get their schooling.
> Then she could sleep.
>
> (11 70-83)

This is very similar to the first two extracts

analysed (Appendices I and II). The staccato paragraphing is replaced by paragraphs each containing one event, or thought, and thus representing the sequence of events paragraph by paragraph, rather than representing the sequence of thoughts paragraph by paragraph. It is very much a shift to the acceptable pole, not to simplify the theme, nor to make it more understandable to a British audience, but rather to conform to generally accepted English writing.

This chapter continues Poppie's increasing alienation from her family and ordinary surroundings. She is removed from her mother and her brothers, and dumped in the hostile environment of Mdantsane in the Ciskei. It is extremely important thematically because it is the beginning of the end as far as Poppie's happiness and contentment are concerned. The theme is transferred through the careful transfer of the mood of the passage, but there is an omission which again detracts from the humanity and emphasizes the plight of the family.

The narrative structure of the extract is maintained, except that, in the source text, it changes to first person narrator in the paragraph

omitted from the target text. Apart from that, it is third person narration with direct speech from her son Bonsile (l 9), and direct quotations from Poppie's thoughts.

The acceptability of the text dominates in this passage on this level. The paragraphing has been altered to this end, and the omission of the paragraph also appears to have occurred for this reason. It is only the translation of the narrative structure of the text which is adequate at this stage.

2.5.2 Micro level

The language in the target text is of a fairly high register, again in contrast to the language of the source text which is of a fairly low register, due once again to the use of non-Standard Afrikaans, mixed in this instance with English and remnants of Dutch expressions: "... wou sê nie: Here segen hierdie kos?" (162). In the same way, word selection in this text has tended to raise the register in the target text, since much of the source text language is idiomatic, e.g. "Hy het 'n boksie mêtjes by hom" is translated by "He had matches with him" (ll 26-27).

The grammatical patterns of the target text tend to be acceptable, conforming to patterns of standard English, and this contributes to the raised register in the target text.

The higher register of the target text is fairly important thematically. It again loses some of Poppie's humanity. Part of Poppie's great suffering lies in the fact that Afrikaans is her language, and it is Afrikaans-speakers who are betraying her, like the men in the pass office. She is not the well-spoken narrator of the target text as much as she is the simple, suffering Afrikaans-speaking narrator of the source text. This shift is towards acceptability, and confirms the earlier hypothesis that the texts will tend to the acceptable, and that this acceptability will of necessity affect the transfer of the themes.

2.6 Section VI Chapter 82/83 (Appendix VI)
(Pages 353 - 355 [TT] / 275 ~ 276 [ST])

2.6.1 Macro level

This is the final stage in the book. Poppie is now hopeless and despairing, and her suffering has reached its peak in the suffering of her children.

This is the first passage to retain paragraphing almost entirely. The paragraphing in both the source text and the target text seems to echo Poppie's desperation which floods over her at intervals: after a long paragraph of memories, she suddenly changes

> Fezi... Fezi... Poppie took fright. Fezi, she asked, Mosie is Fezi in Herschel?
> (11 23-24)

This sudden change back to reality surprises the reader who has been lulled almost into a sense of peace by the preceding paragraph, and now shares Poppie's fear. This is a very adequate translation, adhering closely to the source text.

The theme of Poppie's suffering culminates in this passage - she is finally despondent and broken, and she starts to rebel against her lot, yet accepting it

at the same time: "And if my children had to be drawn into this thing, then that is what they were born to. And who can take from their path that to which they were born?".

2.6.2 Micro level

The language level in the target text is once again on a higher register than that of the source text. The overriding impression in both texts is one of fatalism, an acceptance, not happy but heavy, depressed by all that has gone before. The words are sombre and grave, Poppie acquires a dignity not often seen up to this point, and this dignity lies in the word selection as much as in the actual events.

This passage is acceptable on the micro-level, yet is predominantly adequate as a whole. This has the result that the theme is transferred adequately, without authorial comment in this passage, since the events, and Poppie's attitude speak for themselves.

In Summation

It now becomes possible to evaluate the hypotheses formulated in the first stage according to the data collected thus far, and formulate further hypotheses for the final stage of the general analysis.

The translated texts are predominantly acceptable, but there were a surprising number of adequate shifts. This could be attributed to the fact that the author of the source text was also the translator, but could also have been caused by the relevance of Poppie's educational standing to the narrative. The language could not be of too high a register, since it would then not have been credible.

The shifts to the adequate in the transfer of the theme are surprising, since it was hypothesized that explanations would have to be made of many things. The omission of certain sections is important in this, representing as it does a shift to an acceptable translation, but the overriding impression is of an adequate transfer of the themes. Poppie's suffering is explicit, rather than explained, and her actions, meticulously transferred, continue that impression.

One thing which has detracted from the events is the lack of *maintenance* of the source text paragraphing, which has thematic and textual importance.

Systemic Context

The next step in the *analysis* is the discussion of the *systemic context*. This is particularly important in this book, since it occupies a place in the movement of the committed literature.

Dis Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena falls within the scope of committed literature, since it focuses on *and* questions current *socio-political structures*. As *discussed in the Introduction*, the term has come to mean the way in which, through his work, an author views the problems in his community, and the problems unique to his time and country. The events in the book take place within a narrowly defined period of time - 1936 to 1978 - and in a specific place - South Africa - and are about a *specific problem* - the *apartheid policy as experienced* by the black people (*Roos*, 1987: pp.4-8). In this, Joubert falls into line with other authors of committed literature, such as André P. Brink, John Miles and Jaap Steyn. Dis Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena can thus be viewed against the background of a developed literary cycle.

An interesting issue about Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena is the question of its autobiographical character. The Foreword states that it is a true story, yet speaks of a "verhaal" [story] and it has won many literary prizes, and is therefore also viewed as a piece of literary prose. This realism is very much a feature of the committed writers, and places Joubert firmly among them (Hoon, 1987: pp.3-4).

The reception of this type of literature in Britain may best be gauged by the sales and reprinting figures for the works. Brink's books enjoy great popularity abroad, and Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena, following in the tradition established by him, has enjoyed similar success.

Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena has, due to its autobiographical nature, a very wide appeal. It would appeal not only to the political scientist and academic, but also to the average person in the street - it has human interest, and it also serves to give some insight into the South African situation as experienced by Poppie, who may be said to be representative of all black women living, working and worrying in South Africa today.

It is likely that the translated text was targeted at academics, rather than the man in the street in Britain. This would naturally have affected the translator's approach to the translation, as well as the shifts she felt called upon to make. The source audience, conversely, was far greater. Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena was serialised in magazines, adapted into a stage show, and generally marketed to the general Afrikaans-speaking community in South Africa.

The observations contained in the discussion of the systemic context have a distinct bearing on the transfer of the socio-political theme to the target text. If the translation was indeed aimed at academics in Britain, it may be assumed that they would have some knowledge of the situation in South Africa regarding the pass laws and forced removals, and it may thus be assumed that a more adequate transfer would be possible, since not as much explanation would be required. This is borne out by the findings on the macro and micro levels, in fact, and the hypothesis that the translated text would contain a lot of explanation is finally disproved on

the systemic level.

CONCLUSION

It now becomes necessary to see whether the aims of the project have been fulfilled. The chief aim was to test the applicability of DTS to literary translations, by applying the Lambert/Van Gorp model for translation description to an analysis of the transfer of the socio-political themes in Elsa Joubert's Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena and its English translation.

The model was applied in Chapter Two and certain hypotheses were tested. In a project of this size it is not possible to apply DTS as it should correctly be applied - that is, to a number of texts within a literary or cultural system. The Lambert/Van Gorp model therefore could not be applied in its entirety.

Although it was possible to trace the theme through both the source and target texts, the analysis of the transfer proved difficult. This was mainly due to restricted space - it would have been more successfully applied to each text as a whole.

The model used was, however, extremely useful on

all levels for the testing of the hypotheses formed from the preliminary data. It provided parameters for investigation, and provides for a variety of texts - poetical, narratives, biographical texts, etc.

The chief difficulty with the model and one which would apply to all DTS models is that it is difficult to accurately pinpoint a target systemic context. There are several reasons for this. Each culture and literary system receives translated works in a different way. There may also be bias towards or against their cultural origin. A South African work, as was dealt with in this project, is vulnerable to considerable bias. Part of the translator's task in that case is to try to break through that bias, and show that the work has something to contribute, either to the target literary system or to knowledge in general. This Joubert has done, judging by the sale of the translated text.

Another reason for the difficulty expressed above is that literary genres often differ from culture to culture. This was not a great problem in this case, since committed literature is an international concept. It is still evolving in South Africa, however, and is

not identical to its counterpart in Britain, for intance.

On the basis of the application of the Lambert/Van Gorp model, it may be said that *DTS may be applied* to literary translations, but that some parameters must be set up as guidelines for the discussion of the systemic context. Since this was established on a very small-scale application, the assertion should be tested on a larger scale in a broader context.

The other aim of the project was to trace the transfer of the socio-political themes through the texts. As was demonstrated in Chapter Two, this could be done - and the result was the assertion that the themes were transferred in an adequate (in the DTS sense) way, something which was unexpected on the basis of the preliminary data. The reasons for this have already been discussed in Chapter Two, and they hinged on the systemic context, which is further evidence of one of the weak points in descriptive translation studies.

It may finally be said that this project has achieved its main aims, albeit on a very small scale.

Further research would be valuable in testing these findings, and hence lead to further progress in the field of descriptive translation studies.

We are Xhosa people from Gordonia, says Poppie. My mama used to tell us about our great-grandma Kappie, a rich old woman who grazed her goats on the koppies the other side of Carnarvon. Her second name was Flaaijies and she had the high-bridged nose that runs in the family — our oompie Pengi got it from her.

She told our mama about the old days and about the big man, Dark Malgas, who was killed on the island in the Great River, which they call the Orange River these days. She told our mama about the rinderpest and the cattle and sheep that died and about the English war or the imfazwe yamabulu, the war of the Boers.

We saw the Boers coming on horseback, she said, and we fled into the koppies, herding the goats as we went. We left everything in the huts and stayed in the koppies till the white men had left. They didn't take our things. Everything was as we had left it, but they ate all the mealie porridge in the cooking pots.

And then Jantjie rode away with them as agterryer and was shot dead in the war.

Jantjie, take the horses and flee, the Boer shouted when he saw the English soldiers surrounding them, but by then, old woman — so he came and told our great-grandma Kappie — your child was dead.

Great-grandma Kappie only had one girl child, our grandma Hannie. We called her ouma Hannie. Hannie married George Williams, a shearer who worked on the sheep farms. He was born in Beaufort West and his clan name was Mgwevu and he died in the Big 'Flu of 1918. The faibetho, ouma Hannie told us, was the plague that the Lord

sent us, the people were sick for three days and then they died.

Hannie had eight children by him. They were born on the sheep farms where their pa was working at the time. When he died, they were staying at Koegas, outside Prieska. But ouma Hannie had a hard time rearing the children and they moved to Vaalkoppies and they stayed on the lands at Louisvale where the Bushmen taught them to use a scythe. When the children grew up, ouma Hannie moved across the river to Upington, to get them to church and to put them to school.

The children were oompie Kaffertjie and oompie Domani and grootma Martha and grootma Mieta and Lena who was our own ma, and then kleinma Hessie and oompie Sam and oompie Pengi, ouma Hannie's last born, her dry-teat child, her t'koutjie, as the Namas say. Grootma means a sister of your ma that's older than she is, and kleinma is her younger sister. Oompie is uncle.

Ouma Hannie's children weren't at school for very long. Oompie Kaffertjie moved back to Koegas and worked as a farmhand, and oompie Domani went away to war, the Big War of 1914, and never came back. And the other children looked for work from Lüderitz on the coast to Upington, Putsonderwater, Draghoender and Prieska along the railway line.

All my aunts were married by force; that was the way the parents used to do it in those days. My mama didn't want my pa. He came to Lüderitzbucht to work on the boats, and then he saw my ma who was visiting with grootma Mieta. He walked behind her and the wind was blowing hard and he didn't stop walking because he had fallen in love with her. So he went to Upington to ask ouma Hannie if he could marry my ma.

Ja, he was a great talker, says ouma Hannie, and he paid a lot of lobola money for your ma, and that's how it was that he married her. His name was Machine Matati and his clan name was Mbele. His forebears came from the Ciskei but he himself was born at Mafeking.

Ouma Hannie was very strict with her children. She

wasn't at rest till they were married with lobola money, as well as in church. Then she settled down in the location of Upington and took in the grandchildren that her children brought to her, and reared them as she had reared her own. But our ma's children were closest to her heart, because our pa didn't look after us well. He left us on a Saturday morning and went to the office in Upington and joined up for the war, the war of 1939. He was sent away as a lorry-driver to Egiputa in the north and never came back to us at all.

Just like your oompie Domani, said oums Hannie. But that was a different war, the war that was the first of the two great white people wars.



1 *Die voormense* van Poppie

Ons is Gordonia-boorlinge, sê Poppie.

My mama het ons vertel van *onse grootouma* Kappie, 'n ryk ou vrou wat met haar bokke geboer het in die rantjies anderkant Carnarvon. Haar van was Plaatjies en sy het die hoë stamneus gehad wat onse oompie Pengi van haar geërwe het.

Sy het vir Mama-goed vertel van die ou dae en van die groot man, *Donker Malgas*, wat gedood is op die eiland in die Grootrivier.

Sy't onse mama vertel van die runderpes en die beeste *en skape wat* vrek en van die Engelse Oorlog, of die Imfazwe yamabulu, die oorlog van die Boere.

Ons het die Boere sien kom op die perde, het sy gesê, en die rante in gevlug. Ons het die bokke voor ons uit gejaag. Ons het als in die strooise gelos en in die rante gebly *tot die witmense* weer weg was. Hulle het niks uit die strooise gevat nie, als was soos ons dit gelaat het, maar die pappotte het hulle leeg geëet.

En Jantjie het weggeloop na die Boere *toe en agterryer geword* en is doodgeskiet.

Jantjie, vlug met die perde, het die Boer geskreeu toe hy die Engelse om hulle sien, maar, so het hy vir grootouma Kappie gekom vertel, *toe* is jou kind al klaar gedood.

Grootouma *Kappie het net een* meisiekind gehad, onse ouma Hannie. Hannie het getrou met George Williams, 'n skaapskeerder wat op die veeplase gewerk het. Hy is gebore op Beaufort-Wes en sy grootvan was Mgwevu en hy het afgesterwe *met die Groot Griep* van 1918. Die isibetho, het ouma Hannie vir ons vertel, was die plaag wat die Here na ons gestuur het, want die mense was net drie dae siek en dan sterwe hulle.

Hannie het agt kinders by hom gehad. Hulle is op *die veeplase gebore* waar hulle pa gewerk het.

Toe hy sterwe, het hulle op Koegas gebly, buitekant Prieska. Maar ouma Hannie het te swaar gekry met die kinders toe trek hulle na Vaalkoppies en hulle bly by die lande by Louisvale se plek.

Daar het ouma *Hannie die kinders* grootgemaak. Hulle het leer koring sny by die Boesmans. Die Boesmans was die kortetjies met die kroesies, die Damaras was die swartes en die Basters dié wat amper lyk soos witmense, met lang hare.

Toe hulle groter word, het ouma Hannie met die kinders oor die rivier getrek na Upington om vir hulle skool en kerk te gee.

Dit was oompie Kaffertjie en oompie Domani en *grootma Martha en*

grootma Mieta en *Lena onse mama, en toe kleinma Hessie* en oompie Sam en oompie Pengi, Ouma se laasgeborene, haar droëpram, haar t'koutjie soos die Namas sê.

Grootma Martha en grootma Mieta was die *susters ouerder as onse* mama, en daarom het ons vir hulle grootma geroep, en Hessie was jongerder as onse mama en sy was onse kleinma.

Ouma Hannie se kinders het nie baie lank skoolgegaan nie. Oompie Kaffertjie het teruggetrek na Koegas en by 'n boer gaat werk, en oompie *Domani is weg na die groot oorlog* en het nooit teruggekom nie. Die ander kinders het maar so rondgewerk van Lüderitz af, al langs die spoor; Upington, Putsonderwater, Draghoender en Prieska.

Die *meisiekinders het uitgetrou en ná hulle troue gewerk soos* hulle kon.

My anties is by force getroud, soos die outydse mense met hulle kinders gemaak het. My mama wou nie my pa gehad het nie. Hy het op die see kom werk by Lüderitzbucht en toe sien hy my ma *wat by my* grootma Mieta daar gekom kuier het. Hy het al met die wind same agter my mama geloop en verlief geraak op haar.

Hy het na Upington gekom om ouma Hannie te vra om met haar te trou.

Hy was glad met sy bek en hy't groot lobola gebetaal, sê ouma Hannie, en hy's toe met julle mama getroud, maar dit was na hy eers dood is dat sy so gesê het.

Sy naam was *Masjien Matati en sy grootvan Mbele. Sy agtermense* het van die Ciskei gekom, maar hy self was op Mafakeng gebore.

Kleinma Hessie is ook by force getroud met kleinpa Ruben, en grootma Martha met grootpa Fanie van Staden. Net grootma *Mieta wat met die* visserman van Lüderitz getroud is, was lief vir haar man, toe trou hulle.

Ouma Hannie was 'n kwaai ou vrou. Sy was nie tevrede voor haar kinders met lobola én in die kerk getroud is nie. Sy het in die lokasie in Upington bly woon en die kleinkinders wat na haar toe gebring is, ingevat *en grootgemaak.*

Maar onse mama se kinders was haar die naaste aan die hart omdat ons tata nie goed vir ons gesôre het nie. Op 'n Saterdagoggend in Upington *het hy van sy vriende af weggeloop en vir die oorlog gaan teken.*

Hy is as lorriedrywer weggestuur na die Noorde toe en het nooit weer na ons teruggekom nie.

Nes julle oompie Domani, het ouma Hannie ge[illegible] *Maar daai was 'n* ander oorlog.



When Bonsile was one year old, we came to Cape Town.

Two white men walked through the location and told us we could go where we wished, but we Xhosa people had to see that we leave Lamberts Bay. The longer we stayed, the more we were caught and taken to the police station, even while sitting at table at night eating our supper.

The people were angry. I grew up here, said Mosie, I'm not leaving. I've got a good job at the garage and I'm studying with the Union College.

Lamberts Bay

Buti Mbatane had worked at Lamberts Bay for twelve years, and before this at Lüderitzbucht. Where to is it that I must go now? he asked.

Before her child's birth Poppie saw in a dream that the white paling round ouma's grave had broken down and weeds were growing over it. Hoedjie and Mosie helped her to make it neat again. Must we leave the grave for the weeds to grow? she asked. And my baby's grave?

The men may stay, the policemen said, but the women who lie around doing nothing, waiting for fish season to start work at the factories again, must go. Back to the places from where they came. Or look for work elsewhere. They said: This part of the country is a coloured preference area. Too many black people are coming from the tribal lands to work in the Western Cape.

When it was not fish season, says Poppie, the people locked their houses and went to Tulbagh or Paarl to pack fruit. When they came back to Lamberts Bay they were homeless because the municipality had burned down their houses. The houses were built of wooden boards and sheets of corrugated iron, lined with cardboard. It took only one match for the house to flare up and burn down.

The house across the road was burned down. Poppie saw the coloured policeman help the white policeman carry the stuff from the house: an iron bedstead, a cupboard, a kitchen table and a few chairs, some broken down, a few pieces of crockery, tins and paraffin cans. The policeman had kicked the door down, it swung in on its broken hinges, when he struck the match.

The children gathered in the street to watch.

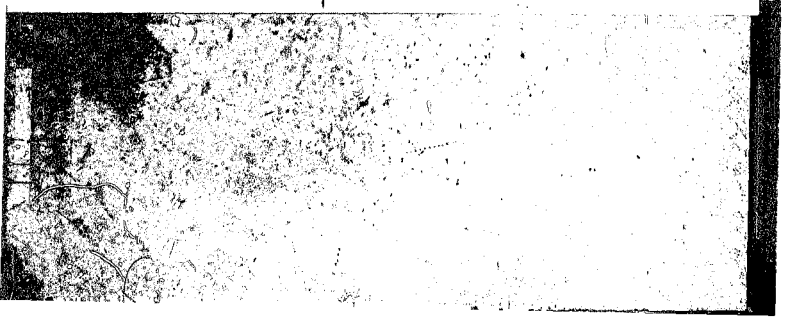
Before he drove off the white man asked the women who had joined the children in the street: Do you know the people who lived here?

Yes, we know them, they said.

Well, then you must carry away their stuff and keep it till they pitch up again. It can't be left standing in the street.

Poppie and the other women carried the stuff away.

When he came home from work, Into-ka-Bonsile dragged a few sheets of iron from the burned-out rubble. He dragged





It to his yard and built a lean-to as a shelter for the people's belongings.

When *the law became* so strict that they were burning down many houses at Lamberts Bay, we started to think about *leaving, says Poppie.*

One day a policeman, whom they called Adonis, came to my house *where I was hanging* washing on the line. He was new at Lamberts Bay, a coloured man, and he did not know me. *He asked: Where is your pass?*

I said: I don't have a pass. My mother has got some papers, ja, but *I never had no papers myself.*

Then he said: You must come with me to the police station.

I put my child on my back and went with him.

There were other women *waiting at the police station* who had been caught too. *Oompie Japie,* a policeman who had known me from my *childhood days, saw me and* asked: Now for what have you come here, *Poppie?*

I was upset, I said: They *catched me, oompie japie.*

Then he said: Ag no, child, you go home now.

I went home, but the other women *had to stay behind.* They were keen on catching the women. The men who were working, could stay.

Many people started leaving. Mama left in 1955. Some went to Cape Town on the lorries, others *went to* Tulbagh or Worcester, others went by train to Mossel Bay. My stepfather said: The Xhosa people are being *pushed out* of Lamberts Bay, it's better to go. First we were pushed out of the barracks, now we are being completely sent away.

A white man held a meeting in the location: A special town called Nyanga is being built for the Bantu people on *the flats near* Cape Town, he said, that's where you must go.

But the people were scared of going to Cape Town *because* of the stories they heard of the skollies. The school-teacher tried to give them courage: in Cape Town it's not *as rough as they* tell. The skollie, he's not going to grab you by the shirt and say: Now you, you've had it, and stick a *knife into you. There's no* such thing. It's you yourself who'll get trouble if you look for it.

But Plank did not mind going because he had worked *along the coast,* southwards to Hout Bay. Hoedjie left his job at the hotel and went along with mama.

I didn't want to leave, Mosie says. My boss at the garage said: Don't go, man, let your ma go, you stay behind, you *can send her money every* month.

But I said: No, where my ma goes, there it's my place too. I had many *friends,* too, white children. Jannie Koetsee worked in the butchery, I helped him after school, and Ferlands, *when he needed someone* to take his cow to graze and bring it back in the afternoons, I helped him out, and so we became *friendly. I was sorry* to leave Ferlands and Jannie Koetsee and Tredoux. My boss in the garage was just as sorry to *let me* go.

At first Poppie stayed on because tata-ka-Bonsile did not want to leave his *job at the factory.*

I can't let him stay alone here, Poppie said to Meisie. He's so fussy about his *food,* and *he's fussy about* clean clothes. Every day he brings his boiler suit for me to wash. You know the way I have to wash and iron his clothes. *I can't go away* and leave him just like that.

But she was homesick for her *mama and her brothers* and later on, when she was the only woman left in her street and all the houses around her *had been flattened,* she couldn't feel at rest. Early in 1956, a year after her brothers and her mama had left, she packed up to go.

At sunset one evening tata-ka-Bonsile walked with her to the bus stop. He carried her suitcase and *she carried the parcel* with the child's milk and food and a fried chicken and a loaf of bread she was taking to her ma.

I left my house just as it stood, and gave my things to coloured people to look after. I didn't find it hard to go, *because the* place wasn't the same any more. The way all the people had to leave, it made you feel they didn't want *you there any more,* there was no other way but to go away too. And I was glad to go to my mama and my brothers.

The train was very full, but the Lamberts Bay people who travelled with me in the bus to Cradwater, helped me with *the child and the* suitcase. We got into the third class

compartment. The child luckily was very restful and slept all the way. At De Hoek we liked to look out and watch all the black Rhodesians who got on the train. They had very loud voices and strange ways. I suckled the child after De Hoek and then he slept until we reached Cape Town.



21 Poppie en haar mense word weggestuur uit Lambertsbaai

Toe Bonsile een jaar oud is, toe kom ons Kaap toe. Toe sê hulle vir ons ons moet nou gaan waarnatoe ons wil, maar ons Xhosa-mense moet net weg uit Lambertsbaai uit. Twee blanke mans het deur die lokasie geloop en die mense gesê hulle moet weggaan, en hoe langer ons gebly het, hoe meerder word ons gevang, sommer in die aande as ons om onse tafels sit en eet, en poeliesstasie toe geneem.

Die mense was baie ontevrede.

Ek het hier grootgeraak, sê Mosie, ek gaan nie hier weg nie, ek werk by die garage en ek leer by die Union College.

Buti Mbatane het twaalf jaar in Lambertsbaai gewerk en voor dié tyd in Lüderitzbucht. Waarnatoe moet ek dan nou gaan? sê hy vir Mama.

Voor haar kind gebore is, het Poppie gedroom oor Ouma se graf, dat die wit paletjies plat lê, dat die onkruid daaroor groei, en Hoedjie en Mosie het saam met haar gaan sorg dat dit netjies is. Moet ons dit nou weer los, en my kindjie se graf? vra Poppie.

Die mans kan aanbly, het die poeliesse gesê, maar die vrouens wat leeglê, wat wag tot die vis nou weer meer is om in die fabriek te gaan werk, moet weggaan na waarvandaan hulle gekom het of by ander plekke gaan werk soek.

As die vis nie in seisoen is nie, sê Poppie, sluit die mense hulle se huise toe en gaan werk vrugte by Tulbagh of by die Pêrel en as hulle terugkom, dan het hulle nie meer huise nie, want die huise word brand gesteek deur die munisipaliteit.

Die huise is van houtpale en sink, maar die mure is uitgevoer met cardboard en bokse wat hulle oopsny en aan die binnekant vasspyker. Dit kos net 'n mêtjie dan brand dit.

Sy het die huis oorkant die straat so sien brand. Die bruin poeliesse wat saam met die witman gekom het, het eers die goed uit die huis gedra, 'n Ysterkate), sonder matras, 'n cupboard, 'n kombuistafel en 'n paar stoele, party met af pote, 'n paar stukkies skottelgoed, blikke en paraffienkassies.

Die poeliesse het toe die deur so 'n skop binnetoe gegee dat dit aan sy skarniere hang. En die mêtjie getrek.

Die kinders staan kyk na die goed wat uitgedra is en na die huis wat brand.

Voor die vantjie van die munisipaliteit wegry, vra die witman vir die vrouens wat in die straat nader gekom het: Ken julle die mense wat hier gewoon het?

Hulle sê: Ja, ons ken hulle.

Nou ja, dan moet julle maar hierdie goed vir hulle bêre tot hulle weer hier opdaag. Dit kan nie hier in die straat bly staan nie.

Poppie en die ander vrouens het die goed weggedra.

Toe hy uit die werk kom, het tata-ka-Bonsile 'n paar sinkplate uit die as gaan krap. Hy het dit na sy jaart gesleep en daarmee 'n skuiling vir die mense se goed agter hulle huis gebou.

Toe die wet nou sterk word dat die Xhosa-mense moet uitgeroei word uit die dorpe uit, sê Poppie, toe hulle nou baie gebrand het daar by Lambertsbaai, toe het ons ook maar begin dink aan weggaan.

Eenslag het daar 'n poeliesman gekom vir wie hulle sê Adonis. Hy was 'n nuwe poeliesman op Lambertsbaai, 'n bruinman, en hy het my nie geken nie. Hy kom sommer my vat in die dag toe ek by die wasgoedlyn staan en wasgoed hang. Hy sê: Waar's jou pas?

Ek sê: Ek het nie pas nie. My ma het papiere gekry, sulke geel papiere, maar dit was toe ek nog kind was, ek het self nooit papiere gekry nie. Toe sê hy: dan moet jy saam met my gaan poeliesstasie toe.

Ek sit my kind agter die rug en ek gaan saam met hom.

Toe ek by die poeliesstasie kom saam met al die ander vrouens wat gevang is, staan oompie Japie daar, 'n poeliesman wat my ken van kindsbeen af, toe vra hy: En wat soek jy hier, Poppie?

Ek sê vir hom: Ek is gevang.

Hy sê: Ag nee, gaan huis toe.

Ek het huis toe gegaan, maar die ander vrouens moes agterbly.

Partykeer eet mens supper, dan kom vang die waens jou.

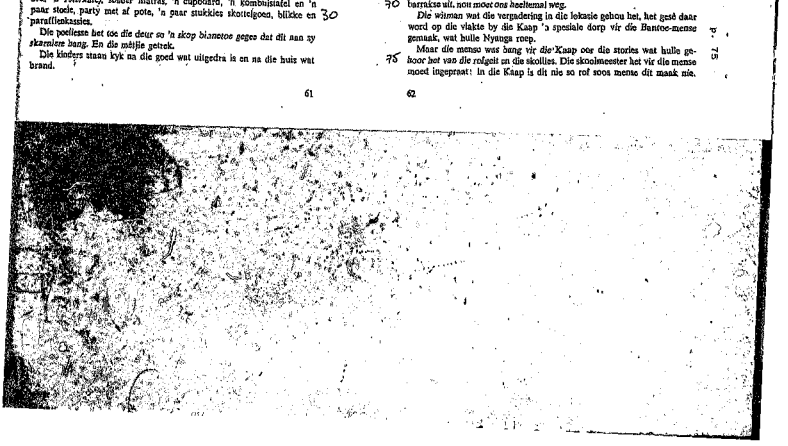
Hulle was veral agter die vrouens aan. Die mans wat werk, kon maar gebly het.

Baie mense het weggegaan. Mama het in 1955 weggegaan. Anders het met forries Kaap toe gegaan, anders Tulbagh toe, anders Worcester toe, anders met die trein Mosselbaai toe.

My stiefpa het gesê: Die Xhosa-mense word nou so uitgeroei hier uit Lambertsbaai uit, laat ons maar gaan. Eers het hulle ons uitgeskuif uit die barrakse uit, nou moet ons heeltemal weg.

Die witman wat die vergadering in die lokasie gehou het, het gesê daar word op die vlakte by die Kaap 'n spesiale dorp vir die Bantoe-mense gemaak, wat hulle Nyanga roep.

Maar die mense was bang vir die Kaap oor die stories wat hulle gehoor het van die rofgeit en die skollies. Die skoolmeester het vir die mense moed ingepraat: In die Kaap is dit nie so rof soos mense dit maak nie.





Die skollie in die Kaap, sê hy, gaat nie na jou toe kom en sê: Toe jy, Stevie Brek, vat so, en steek jou met die mes nie. Daar's nie so 'n ding nie. Dis jy self, dis oor hoe jy jouself gedraag.

Buti Plank was tevrede om te gaan, want hy het al met die skuide af gewerk Houtbaai toe. Hoedjie het sy werk by die hotel gelos en saam met Mama gegaan.

Dis die plek waar ek my volle verstand gekry het, vertel Mosie. Ek willie weggegaan het nie. My baas by die garage het gesê: Moenie weggaan nie, jong, laat jou ma gaan, dan kan jy bly, dan stuur jý vir haar geld, maar toe sê ek ek kan nie bly nie, ek moet langs my ma wees. Ek het baie vriende daar gehad, ook wit kinders. 'n Vriend van my, Jannie Koertse, het gewerk in die slaghuis, toe't ek hom agter skool gaan help slag, en Vêrlands, wat nodig gehad het dat iemand sy bees veld toe jaag en agter skool weer terugbring, ek het dit vir hom gedoen, en so het ons vriende geword. Vir Vêrlands en vir Jannie Koertse en vir Tredoux was ek spyt om agter te laat. En my baas in die garage was net so spyt oorlat ek weggaan.

Poppie het vir eers agtergebly want tata-ka-Bonsile wou nie sy werk by die fabriek aflos nie. Ek kan hom nie alleen laat bly nie, sê sy vir Meisie. Hy is so 'n preziese man oor sy kos, en hy's 'n skoon man. Elke dag bring hy sy boiler suits huis toe dat ek dit kan was. Jy weet hoe baie ek vir hom was en stryk. Ek kan mos nou nie net alles los en weggaan nie.

Maar sy het verlang na haar mama en haar broers, en later toe sy alleen in haar straat agterbly en die huise al rondom haar platgeslaan is, en sy weer 'n keer gevang en in die vantjie poeliesstasie toe geneem is, het sy nooit meer gerus gevoel nie.

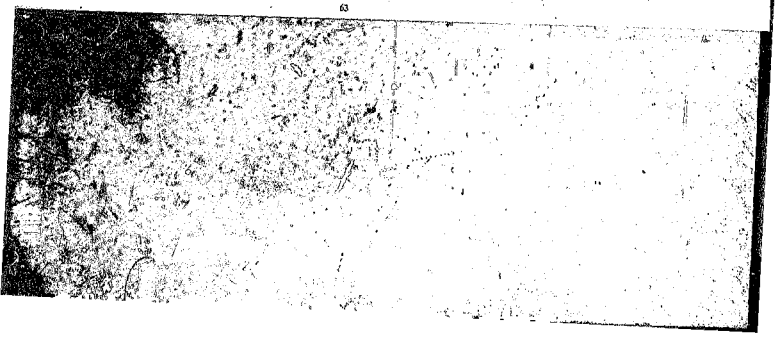
Vroeg in 1956, 'n jaar ná haar mama en broers, is sy ook daar weg.

Sy is met die bus na Graafwater en daarvandaan met die trein Kaap toe. Tata-ka-Bonsile het haar bus toe gevat, so teen sononder die aand. Net met die suitkys en 'n pakkie met die kind se kos en melk, en 'n gaar hoendertjie en 'n brood wat sy vir haar ma gebak het.

Ek het my huis net so gelos, en my goed by bruinmense laat staan.

Dit was nie vir my te swaar om weg te gaan nie, want soos dinge daar gestaan het, soos alle mense weggegaan het, die plek word later vir jou so sleg, jy voel so verlate, asof hulle jou nie daar wil hê nie, dan wil jy ook maar weggaan. En ek gaan mos na my ma en my broers toe.

Die trein was baie vol, maar Lambertsbaai se mense wat saam met my in die bus gery het, het my geheip met die kind en die suitkys. Ons het saam in die derdeklaswa geklim. Die kind was gelukkig soet en het baie geslaap. By De Hoek was dit lekker om uit te kyk, daar was baie Rhodesians wat opklim, wat so snaaks praat en so hard. Ek het toe weer die kind bors gegee, en hy't geslaap tot ons by die Kaap gekom het.



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Poppie thought. There is no other road for me, I must go find a job. There's no place for me to sleep here. Mama has no other small child now, she can look after my baby. Then tata-ka-Bonsile can stay with his sisi Violet and I'll take a sleep-in job.

We can't all stay with you, mama, said Poppie. And at auntie Violet's place we don't get on.

Mama agreed. The baby can stay with me, she said, but now what will I do the day that I go to char and the madam says I can't bring the child along?

Poppie didn't care. Then Katie must stay out of school and look after my baby. As I looked after mama's baby.

The auntie next door knew about a job and took Poppie along with her, first by bus and then by train and then by bus to Constantia. It was a sleep-in job at a plant-growing nursery. The woman didn't pay much, six pounds a month, but Poppie thought: We'll see how it goes, till tata-ka-Bonsile finds work. The work was hard. There were nine white people living in the house, the man and his wife and his wife's sister and her baby and five more children.

It was then the first time she and tata-ka-Bonsile and the child were living completely apart. It was the first time in her life that Poppie slept alone in a room. She was nineteen years old. The room was the end one in a barrack-like building occupied by the black garden labourers. At night she could hear them talking and laughing and fighting. On Saturday nights the noise went on the whole night long.

Stone was uneasy when he brought her back on Sunday evening after her afternoon off. Must I leave you here alone with all those men next door to you? It makes that the room isn't so quiet, she said. But they don't come and bother me.

At five o'clock the workers in the rooms next to hers rose. They went outside in the dark, emptied their bladders in the bushes, stuck their heads under the water taps. The smoke from the fires where they cooked their mealie

porridge started curling up. An old man was always the first one to break the kindling and poke at the ashes.

At six o'clock Poppie had to be in the kitchen. The work in the dark of early morning was the best time for her, with the garden workers gathered round their fire and dawn breaking. She boiled water on the Primus. Then she took coffee to the nine white people. Cups of coffee to the three grown-ups, mugs to the children, and a dash of coffee in the bottle of milk for the baby in the cot.

It was strange to her to go into the rooms where the white people slept. The woman, still as a corpse, on her side, the blankets pulled up high over her shoulders, the man on his back with his mouth open, his chest bare. It was as if everything was dead in the room when she went in.

Draw the curtains, Rachel, the madam said as she put down the cups next to the beds. She worked under her English name.

But the moments when she stood in the dark, not knowing if they were awake or asleep, were to her the strangest.

The work was heavy. The white woman stood behind her back and said: Come, come, come, haven't you finished yet? The woman's sister, who lived with them with her baby, unlocked the kitchen door in the mornings, because she woke up early and was in the habit of lying in the dark, smoking. Poppie could see the little red spot of the cigarette moving in the corner where her bed stood.

Clean the ashtray for me, she'd say. She had gone back to bed after unlocking the door, and the child had fallen asleep with its bottle of coffee.

While the adults had breakfast, the baby sat on its mother's lap, pushed forward on her knee so that the cigarette should not burn it. The child hit at the table with its arms and hands and splattered porridge to all sides.

Wipe up, Rachel, before we step in it.

She had to make the beds and clean the floors while the people ate, and put away the children's things lying around. The man left his pyjamas lying on the floor. She picked them up and folded them. It was just the pyjama trunks. Before she went to the nursery, the madam threw all the washing



in a pile in the passage. She looked through the washing that the children had left in the bathroom the night before and added it to the heap. The sister brought the pail full of nappies.

Poppie washed by hand in the cement washtub in the yard. She heated the water in pots on the stove and carried it outside.

The sister was very particular about the nappies. *I like* my nappies to be white, she said, snowy white.

I had to bleach the nappies, and sprinkle them with water every now and then, says Poppie. Every day there was a heap of washing, because there were school-going children in the house. I think there were five of them and there wasn't a washing-machine. The madam did the cooking herself, but I laid the table and prepared the vegetables. After lunch I washed the dishes and at about three o'clock I could leave the kitchen to have a rest. At four o'clock *I* started the ironing. While I ironed, the madam did the cooking. They ate dinner late at night, and at nine o'clock perhaps, I finished up in the kitchen.

I worked till I couldn't work any more.

I got sick at the work, but the madam said to me: You can't be sick here, you must go to Nyanga, *I'm too busy to look after a sick person.* But I was never flat on my back, I just felt the pain in the lower part of my body. Then she'd say: Work has never made anybody sick. *It hurt me very much* when she said that, because I was still young, but the work was just too much; she had so many sheets to wash, and every day school clothes and nappies.

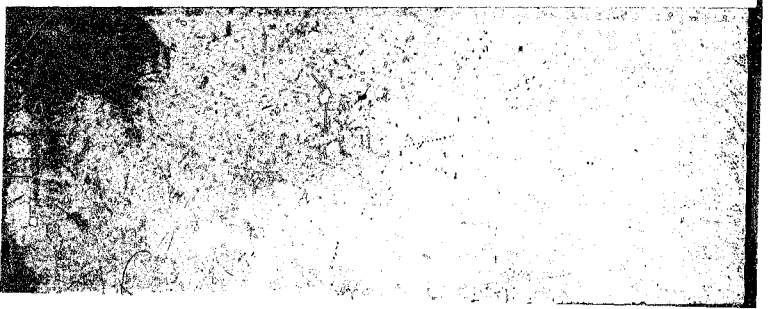
The children weren't naughty, they were just like other children. I was used to children because I come from a big family, but they didn't know how to do anything for themselves and they messed up the kitchen when they came home from school. I was fond of the little girl, Christie. In the afternoons when I was ironing she used to come and talk to me. Then she told me how many servants her mother had had, and how her father hit the maids if they didn't want to work; *I think it was a coloured servant, who drank a* lot, that he used to beat. But when I was there he must have

quietened down a lot, because I never saw him beat *anybody.*

Her mother never liked the children to gossip with me.

Sunday nights, after my time off, I had to come back. *After I had seen my* child and given my mother the stuff I brought her, then my husband and I had to come right back, we couldn't sit down to talk, the place was too far out. No *more than a half an hour,* then we had to leave again, perhaps when the child had fallen asleep or Katie had taken him out of the room to give me a chance to get away.

From Nyanga we took the Claremont bus, then the train to Wynberg, then the bus to Constantia.





23 Poppie besluit om te gaan werk en *Stone vat kontrak*

Poppie het gedink: *daar is nie ander pad vir my nie*, ek moet gaan werk. Daar's nie slaapplek vir my hier nie. My mama het nie nou 'n ander klein kind nie, sy kan na my bybie kyk. *Dan kan tata-ka-Bonsile* by sy sisi Violet bly en ek kry 'n sleep-in-werk.

Ons kan nie almal by Mama bly nie, sê Poppie. En *by die antie Violet* is daar te veel woorde, Mama.

Mama is tevrede. Die byoie kan by my bly, sê sy, maar as *ek nou die dag gaan* char en die miesies wil nie hê ek moet die kind saambring nie? Wat maak ek dan?

Poppie het nie omgegee nie. Dan moet Katie uit die skool uit bly en my bybie oppas, Mama. Soos ek Mama se bybie opgepas het.

Die antie *langsaan het geweet* van 'n werk en Poppie met haar saamgeneem met die bus en die trein en die bus na Constansie. Dit was 'n sleep-in-werk by 'n kwekery. *Die vrou het nie veel betaal nie*, ses pond in die maand, maar Poppie het gedink: ons sal kyk hoe dit gaan, tot tata-ka-Bonsile werk kry.

Die werk was swaar. Daar was nege mense in die huis, die man en die vrou en die vrou se suster en haar baba en nog vyf *kinders*.

Dit was toe die eerste keer dat hulle heeltemal uitmekaar gewoon het, sy en tata-ka-Bonsile en die kind. Dit was die eerste keer in haar lewe dat Poppie alleen in 'n kamer geslaap het.

Sy was negentien jaar oud. Die kamer was die laaste in 'n lang gebou met 'n hele paar kamers met buitedeure. Uit die kamer langsaan kon sy die gepraat en gelag en *baklei van die* tuinwerkers hoor, saans en snags en Saterdagaande die hele nag deur.

Stone was onrustig as hy *Sondagaand vir* haar ná haar afmiddag terugbring werk toe. Moet ek jou hier los met al daardie manne langsaan jou? Dit maak dat die kamer nie so stil is nie, *sê sy, hulle pla my nie*.

Maar die werk was swaar. Die vrou het agter haar rug gestaan en gesê: Toe, toe, toe, is jy nog nie klaar nie?

Vyfuur het die werkers in die kamers langs hare begin roer. Hulle het in die donkerte buitentoe geloop, in die struike water afgeslaan, by die kraan *hulle koppe onder die* water gesteek. Die vuurtjie waar hulle pap gekook het, het begin rokies trek. Daar was altyd die ou man wat eerste op die as *die houtjies kom gooi en die* vlammetjie aanblaas.

Sesuur moet Poppie in die kombuis wees. Die werk vroeg donkermôre was vir haar die beste tyd, *met die werkers in* die halfdonker en dié se gepraat en die vuurtjie se rook. Sy het koffiewater op die primus gekook. Dan moes sy vir die nege mense *koffie neem. Koppies koffie* vir die drie grootmense, en bekers vir die kinders, en die gooiseltjie koffie in die bottel vir die klein kind in die kot.

Dit was vir haar vreemd om in die kamers te gaan van die witmense wat slaap. Die vrou, dood soos 'n lyk, op haar sy, die komberse hoog oor *haar skouers opgetrek*, die man op sy rug met sy mond oop, sy bolyf kaal. Dit was asof alles dood is in die kamer as sy ingaan.

Trek die gordyne, *Rachel, sê die* madam as sy die koppies koffie langs die beddens neergesit het, want sy het onder haar Engelse naam gaan werk.

Maar die oomblikke as sy in die donker staan en nie weet of die mense wakker is of slaap nie, was vir haar die vreemdste.

Die vrou se suster met die baba wat by hulle ingewoon het, het die kombuis soggens oopgesluit, want sy was vroeg wakker en *het in haar kamer gelê en in* die donker gerook. Poppie kon die rooi vuurtjie van die sigaret sien roer in die hoek waar haar bed staan.

Gooi die asbak vir my uit, sê sy. Sy het weer gaan lê nadat sy die deur oopgesluit het, en die kind het weer met die bottel koffie aan die slaap geraak.

As die grootmense brekfis eet, sit die baba op die skoot van die ma, so half op haar knie dat die sigaret *nie die kind brand* nie. Die kind slaat met haar arms en hande op die tafel dat die pap na alle kante spat.

Vee bietjie op, Rachel, netnou trap ons daarin.

Sy moes die beddens opmaak en die vloere doen terwyl die mense eet, en die kinders se goed wat rondlê, wegpak. Die man het sy *slaapklere op die*

vloer laat lê. Sy het dit opgetel en opgevou. Dit was net die broek. Die vrou het voor sy tuin toe gaan die vuil wasgoed in die gang op 'n hoop gegooi. Sy het die wasgoed van die vorige dag, wat die kinders in die badkamer laat lê het, deurgesoek en in die gang gegooi. Die suster het die emmer met dooke gebring.

Poppie het by die sementwasbak in die agterplaas gewas. Sy het potte water op die stoof warm gemaak en buitentoe gedra.

Die suster was moeilik oor die dooke.

Ek hou van hulle wit, het sy gesê, mooi spierwit.

Ek moes die nappies bleik en water so nou en dan gaan spriskel op die nappies, sê Poppie. Daar was elke dag baie wasgoed, soos wanneer mens skoolkinders in die huis het, ek dink daar was vyf skoolkinders. Daar was nie 'n wasmasjien nie. Die madam het self gekook, maar ek het tafel gedek en groente reggemaak. Ná die ete was ek die skottelgoed en dan gaan ek nou so drie-uur uit die kombuis, ek rus 'n bietjie en dan kom ek terug om te stryk. Terwyl ek stryk, kook die madam. Die aand het hulle laat gaan en dan kom ek middelnag so nege-uur uit die kombuis uit.

Ek hê gewerk tot ek nie meer kon werk nie.

Ek het siek geword by die werk, toe sê die madam vir my ek kan nie daar siek lê nie, ek moet Nyanga toe gaan, sy's te besig om 'n siek mens aan te hou. Maar ek het nooit plat gelê nie, net die pyn gevoel in my onderlyf. Toe sê sy mens kan nie van werk siek word nie. Ek het baie seer gevoel daarvoor, want ek is mos jonk, maar die werk was te veel, sy't verskriklik lakens gehad én elke dag die skoolklere en die nappies.

Die kinders was nie stout nie, net kinders soos ek kinders geken het, ek was mos van 'n groot familie, maar hulle het nie geweet om iets vir hulleself te doen nie, en hulle het die kombuis vuil gemors as hulle uit die skool kom.

Ek was lief vir die meisiekindjie, Chrissie, wat smiddags as ek stryk by my kom staan en gesels het. Dan vertel sy my hoeveel bediendes haar ma al gehad het, en hoe haar pa die bediendes slaat as hulle nie wil werk nie, dit was glo 'n Kleurlingbediende wat so gedrink het wat by gesiant het. Maar toe ek daar gewerk het, moes hy af bedaar het, want ek het hom nooit sien slaat nie.

Haar ma het nooit gelyk dat die kinders met my gesels nie.

Soudagsaand nê my vrydyd moes ek terugkom. As ek my kind gesien het dan my ma die goed gegee het wat ek haar gebring het, dan draai ek en my man sommer dieselfde tyd weer om, ons kan nooit gesit het nie, die plek is te ver uit, Net 'n halfuurtjie, dan moet ons wegloop as die kind aan die slaap is of as Katie die kind vat dat ek kans kry om weg te loop. Van Nyanga vat ons die Claremont-bus, dan die trein na Wynberg, dan die bus na Constansie.



The winter after she had finished a year working for Mrs Scobie, it became too hard to leave the children early in the dark, cold and empty house, with only spread bread and cold tea. When the children got whooping cough she made up her mind to leave the job.

When she came to the office in Nyanga to change her pass, because her work extension had run out, Mr Strydom said: *As the law stands now,* I must give you a phumaphele. That's what they say in the location for: You must get the hell out, you must go away.

The law was strict that the wives of men who had not been in the Cape fifteen years or hadn't worked ten years for the same boss must be sent back to their homes.

But where to must we be sent back? said mama. They brought us to Cape Town from Lamberts Bay.

Mama had trouble with the pass too, but she used hard words when she went to speak at the office.

Do you want to send me to Kaffirland? I belong to this land with these people here. I was born here and grew up here. *My husband worked* in Lamberts Bay from forty-five. I have no knowledge of Kaffirland. For what must I go and live with *those raw people?* Must I go and eat red mealies in my old age?

They gave mama's pass a stamp for a six months' extension, and later for a year. But Poppie was not so lucky.

Her stepfather threw words at her: I told you you would have trouble when you married a man from the raw country. *But he was lying,* he had never gone against her in her marriage to tata-ka-Bonsile.

You don't qualify for the Cape, said Mr Strydom. It was again this thing about the Cape being a place set aside for *the coloured people, the* thing of getting the black people away to where they came from.

She tried to tell Mr Strydom about Lamberts Bay, about the house built of corrugated iron in Jakkalsvlei. The contract. *About the children.* Her husband in Westlake hospital.

We know your story, said Mr Strydom. It's here in your file. We know it as well as you do. You don't qualify for *the Cape, but because your* husband is sick, we'll give you two months' extension.

After two months she was back again. And then she got a month. And after a month, a week. After the week, when she *brought papers from* the welfare, they gave her two months. From Observatory to Nyanga. From Nyanga to *Observatory. A month,* then three months, then a week. She spent her days sitting at the pass office.

Why do you put this heavy load on my shoulders? she asked the white man.

He talked more gently. With the back of his hand he beat on her papers. I can't help you. It's the law. It is written here. *We are helping* you too much as it is.

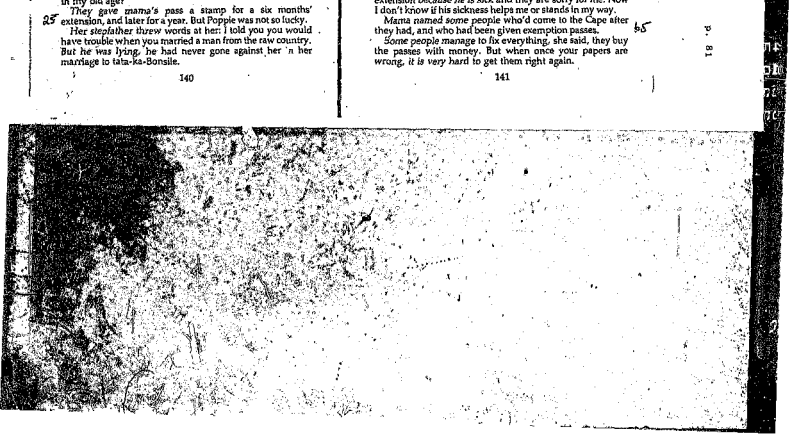
Then he raised his voice. Don't argue so much. Again he struck *the papers* with his hand. Here it's written. Here. Read so that you may know.

But in spite of that he gave her a paper with a week's extension. To take back to Observatory to have the extension stamped *in her pass.*

I don't know how this thing comes about, Poppie said to mama. *They don't give me* the permit because tata-ka-Bonsile is so sick and can't work. But then they give me the *extension because he is sick* and they are sorry for me. Now I don't know if his sickness helps me or stands in my way.

Mama named some people who'd come to the Cape after they had, and who had been given exemption passes.

Some people manage to fix everything, she said, they buy the passes with money. But when once your papers are wrong, *it is very hard* to get them right again.





Look, said Poppie, if the office in Nyanga has chased you away, even if the man in Observatory feels he wants to help you, he's scared to do so, in case *the office in* Nyanga thinks you've bribed him.

Poppie's trouble came through her husband, Mosie says, because they said: *This man is from* the homeland. If he's *from* the homeland he must go back there. But you can't force the man, because the white people need *him to work* for them, so the *wife must* go. It was the same thing at Lamberts Bay — the woman must leave.

Poppie kept on. Every month, *every two months*, depending on her *extension*, she went to Observatory, to Nyanga.

It's working on my nerves, *she told mama*, I have the *same pain in my* stomach that tata-ka-Bonsile had. Am I going to get sick? What will become of my children? But she kept on.

She was heavy again.

At the clinic the doctor who had sent her husband to Westfake, asked her: How's this? Your husband is in hospital and you're pregnant?

Poppie was shy to answer. Once *a month* he *gets* a weekend *off*, she said.

Then we'll call the baby Weekend, said the doctor.

He gave her a note to *Mrs Retief, the white* social worker *who had* helped her with the hospital papers and the gr. :t papers and who worked with the T.B. patients' families.

A fourth child? That's not so bad, Poppie. How old are *you now*?

Twenty-six, said Poppie.

Don't lose courage. Every baby comes from the Lord.

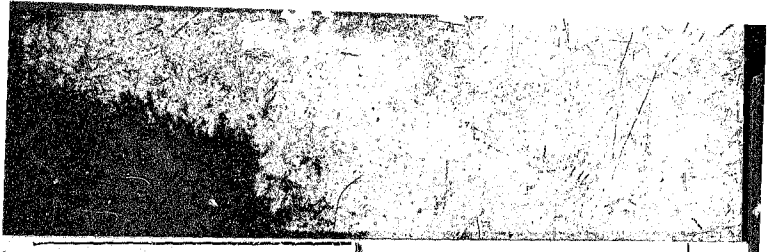
If you look at her, Poppie said to mama, you'd think Mrs Retief is a hard-tempered woman. She's *got such a long face* and *a big* body and her voice is hoarse like a man's. But she's a woman of faith. If the Lord sends another mouth He will also send a crust of bread *along*, she says.

Mrs Retief had helped her with the pass. Once when her extension had elapsed and Mr Strydom had said: This time I will not extend it *again*, *Poppie took the* bus to Bellville to

Mrs Retief's house. Mrs *Retief lay sick in* bed, but when *Poppie spoke to her*, she got up and phoned the office to give the extension. She got work for Poppie in *Bellville, but* the Poppie couldn't take *it, they wanted* to pay only three *pounds a month*.

My God, Mrs Retief said when she heard *this. God help* us. Don't lose courage, *Poppie*, we'll look for something *else*.





34 Poppie en die wet

Die winter nadat *sy* 'n jaar by Mrs. Scobie gewerk het, het dit vir Poppie te swaar geword om die kinders so vroegoggend in die donker en die koue by *die hulle te los, met die* gesmeerde brood en die koue tee. Toe die kinders kinkhoes kry, kon sy nie anders nie. sy moes die werk staan.

En toe sy by die kantoor *in Nyanga* kom om haar pas te change, want haar werk-extension is toe klaar, toe sê Mr. Strydom: Soos die wet sê, moet ek vir jou 'n plumapheis gee, *'Die soos hulle in die lokasie* roep *vir jy* moet sit, jy moet weg.

Die wet het streng geword dat die vrouens van mans *wat nie vyftien jaar in die Kaap is nie*, of nie tien jaar by dieselfde baas gewerk het nie, weggestuur word na hulle huise toe.

Maar waarnatoe *moet ons* gestuur word? sê Mama. Hulle het ons dan Kaap toe gebring van Lambertshasi af.

Mama het self moeilikheid met die *pas gekry, maar sy* het hard gaan praat in die kantoor.

Wil jy my Kafferland toe stuur? sê Mama vir *Mr. Strydom. Ek is* van hierdie land se mense. Ek is hier gebore en grootgeword. My man werk al van forty-five in Lambertshasi.

Ek *ken nie Kafferland* nie. Wat wil ek voor tussen die ron mense gaan bly? Moet ek op my oudag gaan rooi mielies eet?

Hulle het *Mama se pas 'n stempel gegee wat* sê dat sy elke ses maande en later elke jaar extension moet kry. Maar Poppie was nie so gelukkig nie.

Die stiefpa het haar voor die *kop gegooi: Ek het jou gesê jy* gaan jou vasloop met 'n man wat van die land af kom. Maar hy het getieg, hy het haar nooit teĝegaan in haar trou-met tata-ka-Bonsile nie.

Jy kwalifiseer nie vir die Kaap nie, sê Mr. Strydom.

Dit was ook nie oor haar trou met tata-ka-Bonsile nie. Soos sy dit kon verstaan, *was die oondat hy* kontrak gerat het. Maar hy móés kontrak vat, anders kon hy nie werk nie, dink Poppie. Of dis omdat hy siek geword het en nie die werk *kon hou nie.*

Sy probeer vir Mr. Strydom vertel. Van Lambertshasi. Van die sinkhuis in Jakkalsvlei. Van die kontrak. Van die *kinders. Van die man in* Westlake-hospitaal.

Ons ken jou storie, sê Mr. Strydom. Dis hier in jou *lêe. Ons ken die so goed soos jy.*

Jy kwalifiseer nie vir die Kaap nie, maar omdat jou man siek is, gee ons jou twee maande *extension.*

Ná twee maande wys sy weer terug. En toe kry sy 'n maand. En ná 'n maand kry sy 'n week. Na die week, toe *sy papiere bring* van die welfare, kry sy twee maande..

Van *Observatory na Nyanga*, van Nyanga na Observatory. Dan 'n maand, dan drie maande, dan 'n week. Sy sit das om by die poskantoor.

Hoekom sit julle hierdie swaar *drag op my skouers?* vra sy vir die witman.

Hy het sagter geprant. Hy het met *die agterkant van sy hand teen* die papiere geslaat. Ek kan jou nie help nie. Dit is die wet. Dit staan hier geskrywe. Ons help jou al klaar te veel.

Toe praat hy harder, Moenie so teenprant nie. Hy slaat weer die papiere. Hier staan dit. Hier. Lees dat jy kan sien.

Maar *hy het haar tog 'n papier gegee met* 'n week se tyd. Om weer na Observatory toe te gaan en 'n verlenging te vra.

Ek weet nie hoe dit so kom nie, sê *Poppie vir Mama.* Hulle *gee* my nie die permit nie omdat tata-ka-Bonsile so siek is en nie kan werk nie. Maar dan gee hulle my die extension omdat hy siek is en hulle *my jammer kry.*

Nou weet ek nie of sy siek my help of hinder nie.

Mama noem die name van mense wat ná hulle in die Kaap gekom het *en exemption-passe gekry* het.

Party mense kry alles zog, sê sy. Hulle koop die passe met geld. Maar as jou papiere eers een keer *verkeerd is, dan gaan dit swaar* om dit weer reg te kry.

Mens moet verstaan hoe die wet nou *was, daai jare, sê* Poppie. Die mense was so agter die geld dat die een man dink, as hy jou pas nou reggemaak het, sal die ander man dink jy't hom omgekoop. So *is die gevoel nou tussen die witmense.* Die een kry vir jou jammer en wil jou help, maar hy kan nie.

Kyk, sê *Poppie, as die kantoor in* Nyanga nou vir jou weggeja het, al wil die man in Observatory jou help, dan voel hy bang om jou te help, dan voel hy: die kantoor in Nyanga *sal dink jy't hom* omgekoop.

Poppie se moeilikheid was deur haar man, vertel Mosie, deurdat hulle gesê het hy is van die land. As hulle van die *land is, moet hulle land toe teruggaan.* Die man kan jy nie force nie, want hy moet vir die witmense werk, maar die vrou moet gaan. Dit was dieselfde storie in die Kaap as wat *dit is Lambertshasi* is, die vrou moet weg. Hulle het alloos vir Poppie uitstel gegee, maar as sy nou sekere points het oor sy en die redelik, dan soek hulle nou *iets anders om haar te force* om te gaan.

Poppie het maar aangehou. Sy't elke maand, elke twee maande, soos hulle non extension gee, gestap *Observatory toe, Nyanga toe.* Dit werk op my nerves, sê sy vir Mama, ek het dieselfde pyn op die maag as wat tata-ka-Bonsile gehad het. Gaan ek nou siek word? Wat sal van my *kinders word? Maar sy* het aangehou.

Sy was weer swanger.

By die *klinkek het die dokter wat haar* man Westlake toe gestuur het,

ir haar gewa: En hoe dan nou? Jou man is in die hospitaal en jy is met
ie lyf?
Poppie word verleë. Hy kry een keer in die maand week-end off, sê
y.
Dan noem ons maar die bebs Week-end, sê die dokter.
Hy het vir haar 'n briefie gegee na Mrs. Retief, die social worker wat
aar gehelp het met die hospitaalpapiere en die graat-papiere en gewerk
et met die t.b.-pasiënte se families.
'n Vierde kind? Die nie so erg nie, Poppie. Hoe oud is jy nou?
Ses-en-twintig, sê Poppie.
Nou ja, moenie mood verloor nie. Elke bybie kom van die Here.
As jy haar aankyk, vertel Poppie vir Mama, sou jy dink Mrs. Retief
is 'n kwaai vrou. Sy't so 'n lang gesig en 'n groot lyf en haar stem is he-
serig soos 'n man s'n. Maar sy's 'n gelowige vrou. As die Here 'n mondjie
stuur, sê sy, sal Hy ook die korsie brood saamstuur
Mrs. Retief het haar gehelp met die pas. Een toe haar extension
verstrekte was in Mr. Strydom sê: Nou verleng ek dit nie weer nie, het sy
Bellville toe gegaan met die bus, na Mrs. Retief se huis. Mrs. Retief het
siek in die bed gelê, maar toe Poppie met haar praat, het sy opgestaan
en kantoor toe gebel oni die verlenging te gee. Sy't vir Poppie werk gekry
in Bellville, maar Poppie kon dit nie vat nie, hulle wou maar net drie pond
in die maand betaal.
Hoerre, sê Mrs. Retief toe sy dit hoor, die Heerre help ons. Hou maar
moed, Poppie, ons soek vir jou iets anders.

Bring in the things, Poppie told Bonsile.

The children walked round the house, looking for the nearest outside tap in working order, jumped over the building rubble to the other empty houses, peered in at the windows, but when the sun slid lower and the shadows between the houses lengthened they became afraid.

Bonsile carried the stuff in. He put everything in the back room and Poppie did not go against him.

We must open to get a draught, he said.

Their voices were loud in the empty house.

A woman who lived near Poppie in the Cape and had been sent to Mdantsane before her, had written to tell her: Bring a Primus with your hand baggage. Poppie opened her boxes and put the Primus on the floor. She took the small saucepan she had bought with the fresh bread and milk, and boiled some water. She made tea on the floor. She crumbled bread and added it to the milk in Kindjie's bottle.

The children were tired and went to sleep on the blankets. It was too hot to cover them. The little one couldn't settle

down, sweat gathered on her forehead. Darkness fell fast. After the noisiness of the evenings in the location in the Cape, and after the noise of the train wheels under her head at night, it seemed to Poppie as though she had come to lie down in her grave here in this closed-up house.

Bonsile had carried his blankets into the next room. He had matches with him. She heard a match being struck, and saw the small glow against the roof before it died away. He was not wasting matches, just off and on he struck one, as if deep in thought. She was content that he had moved to the next room, without asking her first, just taking his blankets and going.

Long after he slept, Poppie still lay awake. Her mind told her: My children and I are lying here quite helpless. We can be murdered. Skollies may be roaming around, who will hear if we call out in this desolation? She had hidden her money between her breasts, would that stop thieves? How often had she not heard the skollies shouting about a woman they had mugged: Milk the cow, milk the fat teats of the cow. They knew the hiding place. They'd scream: Empty out the fat teats.

But these fears — even for her daughters who were ripe to be plucked — did not seem to take hold of her. As she lay there sweating in the close, half-completed house — they had shut the windows out of fear — she felt the emptiness of being completely alone, discarded. She felt some part of her had been lost.

She was tired, but sleep wouldn't come to her. She thought: I have been cast aside by my people. They allowed me to come here, alone. My husband and my mama and my brothers stood on the station platform and said goodbye and together they walked away from me. When the train left the station they walked away together. Now my heart has deadened towards them.

It felt as though her heart had also hardened towards the Lord. If the Lord wills, you will stay, if the Lord wills, you will go, the white man had said, but the Lord had not willed that this trouble should be taken from her.

Was this why she could not say, tonight before she lay



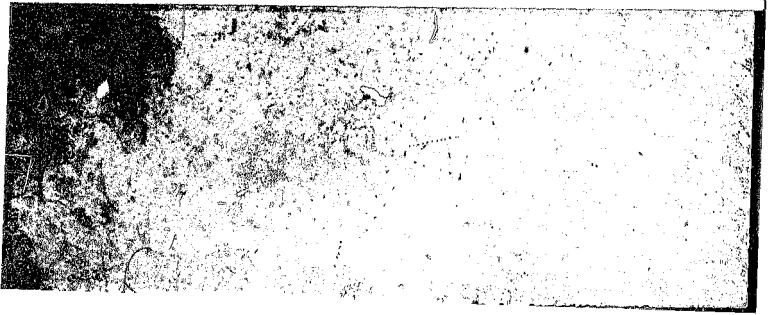
down with the children: Lord, watch over us in this strange place? Why she could not say *before they ate the bread* and drank the tea: Lord bless this food? And against Bonsile, her child, her heart had hardened *so that she wanted to say* to him: Go your own way, I don't care.

She heard someone groaning. *She thought it was some*one outside, groaning, like the night when buti Hoedlie had been stabbed and he stood outside groaning, *waiting for* her to open up. Who could be wandering between these empty houses? she thought. But before *fear took hold of her*, she realised that it was she herself who was groaning. It was her own body giving voice to her pain. *She tried to* still the sounds, but her body started shaking, like someone with fever. She drew a blanket around her and the shivering *subsided*.

And as her body calmed down, quiet came to her heart. *She thought*: I am here now. They tore up my papers in front of me. They took me from the house my husband *built for me. They took me* from my husband and my mama and my brothers. They can do what they will, but I am not dead yet. *Now I go forward*. I go forward with what I have kept, and that is my children. And the first thing I must do, is *to see that my children* get their schooling.

Then she could sleep.

When *daylight came she* got up, lit the Primus stove and cooked porridge for the children to eat before they went to the *new school*.





48 Mdantsane en die eensaamheid van Poppie

Bring die goed in, sê Poppie vir Bonsile.

Die kinders *het rondom die huis geloop*, gekyk waar die naaste buitekraan is wat werk, geloop oor die bourommel na die ander leë huise en by die vensters ingekyk, maar toe die son verder sak en die skaduwees tussen die huise lank trek, het hulle bang geword.

Bonsile dra die goed in. *Hy sit die goed in die agterkamer neer* en Poppie gaan hom nie teë nie.

Ons moet oopmaak om 'n deurtrek te kry, sê hy.

Hulle stemme klink hard in die leë huis.

'n Vrou wat naby Poppie in die Kaap gebly het en voor haar weggestuur is na Mdantsane het vir haar geskryf *om* 'n primus met haar treinbagasie saam te bring. Poppie het haar pakke oopgemaak en die *primus op die vloer gesit*. Sy haal die kastrolletjie uit wat sy saam met die vars brood gekoop het en kook water. Sy maak vir hulle daar op die vloer tee. Sy krummel die brood en sit dit in Kindjie se bottel dat sy kan drink.

Ons het bale brood gehad nog en koue vleis van die trein, ons moes van die kos weggooi, maar *die koue vleis was nog goed want my* ma het dit goed gaargemaak en die byble het melk gehad in die bottel. Ek het oral melk gekoop, dan maak ek brood fyn in die bottel. Toe die drywer stilgehou het, het ek saam met die vars melk en brood en margarine vir my

'n potjie gekoop om vir die kind kos te maak, en 'n teepotjie, maar toe *ek by die huis kom*, toe voel ek darem regtig sleg. dit was vir my te rou, net die leë huis en my kinders. Ek het die kooigoed by my gehad, maar ons meubels het eers later gekom.

Die kinders was moeg en *hulle het bo-op die komberse gelê en slaap*. Dit was te warm om iets oor hulle te gooi. Die kleintjie kon nie haar slaap kry nie, die sweet het op die voorkop gestaan. Dit was vinnig donker. Na die rumoerigheid van die aande in die lokasie in die Kaap, na die geraas van die treinwiele onder haar kop soos sy snags in die trein gelê het, was dit vir Poppie asof sy hier in die toe huis in 'n graf kom lê het.

Bonsile het in die kamer langsaan sy kombers gaan oopgooi. Hy het 'n *boksie mêtjies by hom. Af en toe hoor sy* die skraapgeluid van hoe by 'n mêtjie trek, en dan sien sy 'n liggie teen die dak gloei en weer doodgaan. Hy mors nie mêtjies nie, hy trek net af en toe een, asof hy dink. Dis vir haar goed dat hy in die kamer langsaan gaan lê het. Sonder om vir haar te sê, net sy komberse gevat en gegaan.

Toe hy al lank slaap, lê Poppie nog wakker. Haar verstand wil vir haar sê sy en die kinders lê hulpeloos hier vannag. Hulle kan uitgemoor word. Watter boosdoeners is hier aan die ronddwaal, wie sal hoor as hulle skree in hierdie verlatenheid? Selfs die wegsteek van haar geld tussen haar borste sal hulle nie keer van haar te besteel nie. Hoeveel keer het sy nie die skollies om 'n vrou sien staan wat hulle platgetrek het nie en gehoor hoe *hulle skreeu: Melk die koei*, melk die vet spene van die koei! Hulle ken dié wegsteekplek, hulle skreeu: Melk die spene leeg!

Maar die vroesgodagtes, selfs vir haar dogters wat al groot meisies is, kry nie vatplek op haar nie.

Soos sy hier in die benoude halfklaar huis lê en sweet – die vensters het hulle dig toegemaak uit vrees – is daar die vaalte van weggegooi te wees, van verlatenheid, van eensaamheid om haar. Dit maak haar gevoelte vir haar kinders dood, vir haar man, vir haar mama, vir haar broers.

Poppie is moeg, maar die slaap wil nie kom nie. Sy dink: ek is alleen. Hulle het my laat kom hiernatoe, alleen. My man en my mama en my *broers het op die stasie gestaan* en my gegroet en saam van my af weggeloop. Toe die trein uit die stasie ry, het hulle saam van my af weggeloop. Dit voel asof haar hart vir hulle doodgaan.

Dit voel asof haar hart vir die Here doodgegaan het. As die Here wil, sal jy bly, as die Here wil, *sal jy gaan, het die witman gesê, maar die* Here het nie gewil dat hierdie swaar van haar weggeneem word nie.

Is dit waarom sy nie vanaand kon sê voordat sy haar met haar kinders neergelê het nie: Here, behoede ons hier in die vreemde? Dat sy nie voor



hulle die brood geëet en die tee gedrink het, wou sê nie: Here segen hierdie kos?

En teen Bonsile, haar kind, het haar hart hard geword dat sy vir hom wil sê: Loop jou eie pad, my skeel dit nie.

Sy hoor die geluid van iemand wat kreun. Sy dink dis iemand wat buite staan en kreun, soos die nagte wat buti Hoedjie gesteek was en hy buite die buis staan en kreun. Wie is hier tussen die leë huise aan't dwaal? dink sy. Maar voor sy kan bang word, hoor sy dit is sy self wat kreun. Uit haar eie lyf kom die kreune.

Sy probeer die geluide in haar keel stilmaak, maar soos sy probeer, gaan haar lyf aan die bewe. Sy ruk soos iemand wat kouekoors het. Sy trek 'n kombers om haar, en die bewe bedaar.

En daarmee, dat haar lyf stil word, word dit ook stil in haar hart.

Sy dink! ek is nou hier. Hulle het my papiers voor my stukkend gesteur. Hulle het my uit die huis wat my man vir my gebou het, weggeneem. Hulle het my van my man en van my mama en van my broers af weggeneem.

Hulle kan doen wat hulle wil, maar ek is nog nie afgedood nie.

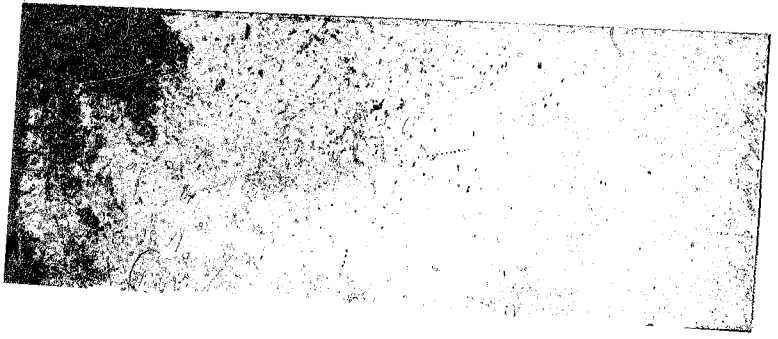
Nou gaan ek vorentoe.

Ek gaan vorentoe met wat ek oorgehou het, en die my kinders.

En die eerste wat ek moet doen, is dat my kinders moet skool kry.

Toe kan sy slaap.

Toe dit begin lig word, het sy opgestaan en die primusstofie aangesteek en begin pap maak vir die kinders om te eet voordat hulle na die nuwe skool moet gaan.





Bonsile. Nomvula, Thandi, Fezi, my little sheep, my lambs, my poor little lost sheep, whom I had to leave without a mama; has it finally caught up with you? What have I done wrong, where have I sinned? I who thought: You're free of it all, you have side-stepped the trouble; let the other mamas' children collect the troubles, let them burn the houses here in the city and throw stones and let them be shot and beaten up, you are free of it all. For you I have suffered hard times that you could live in peace and go to school, away from all this.

And now it has caught up with you. Now the time of troubles has come down upon us all, as Jakkie said to me: Let the roof of the gaol cover the whole of the location, let the whole of the location become a gaol, because, why, we are born to die.

Let them put you all in the cells: Bonsile, my child, Bonsile wi- . . he strong hands as salt as his father's as he strokes the young beard of the ripening menlies; Nomvula with the soft, full body, with a song in her throat as she sings in the school choirs praising the Lord; and Thandi who softly sings at the fire, softly singing while she follows the footpaths over the rolling green hills.

Fezi. . . Fezi. . . Poppie took fright. Fezi, she asked, Mosie, is Fezi in Herschel?

No, sisi, they did not talk about Fezi. Now why would he have left Mdantsane to go along? Haul

Maybe he went along. Poppie's voice was so low, fear had nearly taken away the sound.

We'll send a telegram tomorrow, we'll find out what has happened, Rhoda said.

Rhoda poured some medicine into a glass and gave it to Poppie.

She had never seen her sister-in-law like this. It was as if her face had melted, as if the cheeks and the corners of her mouth could not stop trembling and would lose their form. But there are not tears. A little spittle runs from the corner of her mouth.

Come, sisi, Rhoda said. She took Poppie by the shoulder, shook her gently. Come, sisi, you must have courage. Drink what I have poured in the glass.

Poppie swallowed. As she swallowed she felt her body reviving. She felt as if it belonged to her again. She slowly straightened up in the chair. Kindjie who was standing next to her uncle Mosie, together with Mosie's child, went to her mother.

Come, child, Poppie told Kindjie, come and sit here; and she put her arms around her.

How are things with our mama and with Baby? Poppie asked Mosie.

Rhoda tried to make light of it. Baby says they weren't hurt, but the police swore at them; they took a chair and were like making to throw the chair at them; but they did not hit them. You black bitch, they swore at Baby, and lots of other swear-words that I can't repeat. That was before they heard that Jakkie had already crossed the border. Then they let mama and Baby go.

. They will also let your children go, Mosie told Poppie. As soon as they see that the children know nothing about all of this.

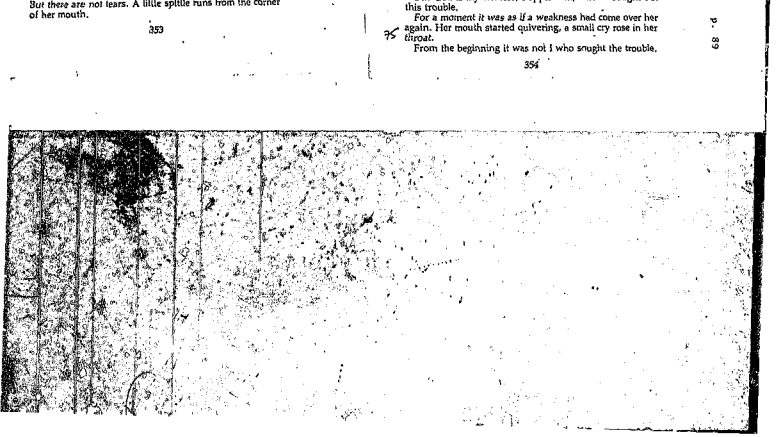
The children will have to look after themselves, Poppie answered. Her voice sounded like her own voice again. But the hardness of heart that had come into her, she knew, would be there for always. I have found my way through everything, she thought, but through this I can find no way. Because this has been taken out of my hands, it has been given over into the hands of the children. It is now my children who will carry on.

Peace will not come, she told Mosie. Even those that wish for peace will be dragged into the troubles. We will have to grow used to that. About that we can't do nothing.

But God is my witness, Poppie said, I never sought out this trouble.

For a moment it was as if a weakness had come over her again. Her mouth started quivering, a small cry rose in her throat.

From the beginning it was not I who sought the trouble,



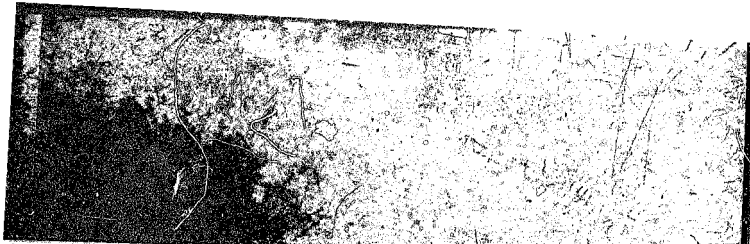
Lord, Lord, where, at what place, did I turn from your path?

She wiped her eyes, still dry, with her handkerchief, as if she wanted to wipe away the unclearness.

If the Lord wants you to go, you will go; if the Lord wants you to stay, you will stay, goes through her mind.

If the Lord wanted Jakkie to go, it had to be so, she thought.

And if my children had to be drawn into this thing, then that is what they were born to. And who can take from their path that to which they were born?



Bonsile, Nomvula, Thandi, Fezi, my skapies, my lammetjies, my verlore arme skapies, wat ek sonder 'n mama moes los, het dit julle ingehaal? Wat het ek gesondig? Ek wat gedink het: julle is daaruit, julle is uit die moeilikheid, lat die ander mamas se kinders maar swaar kry, lat hulle hier in die stede brand maak en klip gooi en geskiet en geslaan worde, julle is daaruit. Vir julle het ek swaar gekry sodat julle in vrede kon lewe en skoolgaan, weg uit die moeilikheid uit.

En nou het dit julle ook ingehaal. Nou het die dag van die moeilikheid oor ons almal toegesak, soos Jakkie gesê het, lat die dak van die jail oor die lokasie kom, lat die hele lokasie 'n jail word, cause why, we're born to die.

Lat julle almal in die selle kom, Bonsile, my kind met die sterk hande wat so sag soos sy tata s'n streel oor die baard van die mielie wat ryp word, Nomvula met die sagte vol lyf, met die sang wat uit haar keel kom soos sy in die skoolkore staan en die Here verheerlik, en Thandi, wat neurie oor die vuurtjie, wat oor die heuweis van die land loop en sing.

Fezi... Fezi... Poppie skrik, sy vra vir Mosie: Is Fezi ook in Herschel? Nee, Sisi, sê Mosie, hulle het niks gesê van Fezi nie, hoe sou hy nou saamgegaan het uit Mdantsane, hau.

Miskien het hy saamgegaan. Poppie se stem is skaars hoorbaar van vrees.

Ons sal môre 'n telegram stuur, ons sal hoor, sê Rhoda.

Rhoda gooi medisynedruppels in 'n glasie en maak vir Poppie drink.

So het sy haar skoonsuster nog nie gesien nie. Dis asof haar gesig begin smelt het, asof die wange en die mondhoeke aan die bewe gaan en begin wegsmelt. Daar kom nie trane uit haar oë nie, maar daar loop 'n bietjie kwyl uit haar mondhoeke.

Kom, Sisi, sê Rhoda. Sy vat aan die skouer van Poppie, sy skud haar aan die skouer: Kom, Sisi, jy moet nou sterk wees, drink hierdie goet wat ek vir jou ingeskink het.

Poppie sluk. Soos sy sluk, kom die liggaam wat inmekaargesak het, weer reg, trek sy haar liggaam op dat sy weer regop op haar stoel sit. Kindjie, wat by haar oompie Mosie gaan staan het, saam met Mosie se kind, kom nader na haar mama toe.

Kom sit by my, sê Poppie vir Kindjie, en sy sit haar arm om haar.

Gaan dit goed met ons Mama en met Baby? sê Poppie vir Mosie.

Rhoda probeer windweg praat. Hulle is nie seergemaak nie, maar hulle is van 'n kant af gevloek, sê Baby. Hulle het 'n stoel gevat en na hulle gemik daarmee, maar nie geslaat nie. Jou swart bitch, het hulle vir Baby gesê, en allerhande woorde wat ek nie eers kan oorsê nie. Dit was voorlat hulle gehoor het Jakkie is oor die grens. Toe't hulle vir Mama en Baby laat loop.

Hulle sal jou kinders ook laat loop, sê Mosie vir Poppie. Sodra hulle sien like die kinders het nie verstand van hierdie goete nie.

Die kinders sal moet sien lat hulle regkom, sê Poppie. Haar stem klink weer soos haar eie stem. Maar die hardheid wat in haar hart kom sit het, weet sy, is nou vir altyd daar. Oor alles het ek gekom, dink sy, maar nou het ek geleer, hieroor kan ek nie kom nie. Want dis nou uit my hande uit geneem, dis nou oorgegee in my kinders se hande. Dis nou my kinders wat voortgaan.

Vrede sal daar nie kom nie, sê sy vir Mosie. Selfs dié wat vrede wil hê, word ingesleep in die moeilikheid. Daaraan sal ons maar gewoond moet word. Daaraan kan ons niks doen nie.

Maar God is my getuie, sê Poppie, ek het die moeilikheid nie gesoek nie.

Vir 'n paar oomblikke is sy weer swak, begin haar mond te bewe, kom daar iets soos kermgeluide uit haar mond. Van die begin af was dit nie ek wat die moeilikheid gesoek het nie. Here, waar is dit dan lat ek uit jou pad gedraai het?

Sy vee haar oë, waaruit daar nog nie trane gekom het nie, met haar sakdoek af, asof sy die onduidelikheid daaruit wil vee.

As die Here wil lat jy gaan, sal jy gaan, as die Here wil lat jy bly, sal jy bly, dwaal dit deur haar kop.

As die Here gewil het dat Jakkie moet gaan, moes hy gaan, dink sy. En as my kinders in die ding gesleep moes worde, dan is dit waartoe hulle gebore is. En wie kan uit hulle pad neem dit waarvoor hulle gebore is?

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