

Robben Island Sad,
Robben Island.

17th September, 1944.

Dear Mrs Marquard,

Thank you very much indeed for your letter - cheerful and quietly courageous as usual. And thank you also for the books which you choose with the uncanny skill of a mind-reader. I have always wanted to read them but just never got round to doing so. Now my education is complete!

I don't think you need fear that you are overwhelming me with plays. I have an insatiable appetite for them. And I find the modern dramatists an interesting lot. Incidentally I really enjoyed O'Neill's "Ah! Wilderness." It could have been any home, anywhere. Truly, "There is only one man in all the world, and his name is All Men."

My wife was very happy to have met you and thoroughly enjoyed the brief moments she spent in your company. Thank you very much for

making her feel at home. I have not yet received a letter from her though she sent a telegram to inform me she had arrived safely. If all goes well, she should be down here again just before New Year's day. But she'll be accompanied by the children this time and will probably put up in the location. There is no room for children to play in a hotel: so she says at any rate.

Yes I was born and bred at Kroppheim. And what memories I have of the place: still covered with thick bush, ^{and} with the loveliest prickly pears imaginable. I saw the bush disappear and houses rise and streams run dry.

I know Keinet House very well and "Nerda" which we used to pass on our way to and from the rugby field near the Show Grounds. We used to fight daily running battles with the students who stayed there.

The "Murray" I know personally is "Bobbie" Murray of Broederstroom who, in the 1930s was a young man who dominated

the local Stock market. Our auctioneers then were the Pohl Brothers. My father was employed by Jack Dilbrooke & Co., the leading wool merchants in the town. And as he had passed 6th form, he was a registered voter!

There was also the shop of Kingwill and Murray, later known as "Kingroy". But I never knew either Mrs Kingwill or Mr Murray of Kingroy.

I spoke Afrikaans fluently as a child though never so well as either my mother or my eldest brother both of whom up to this day, can deliver an impromptu sermon in that language. My father, on the contrary, never learnt to speak Afrikaans but was recognized locally as an authority on Xhosa which he loved and spoke with a rare beauty.

So-called Xhosa, of course, is a species on its own, spoken in an area covering Nonisport, Hanover to the north and Aberdeen, Jansenville, Beaufort etc to the S. N. It bristles with "maars" and "dars" and "bops", "assebliefs" ~~to the extent~~ ^{even} # having "romanti" (jolie naam) and

"rondara" (goat dog) as forms of greeting in place of the traditional "whota" or the modern "molo" (more). You'll excuse my spelling. I never studied Afrikaans.

I have read Mr V. G. Davico's complaints about the "incorrect" forms of Xhosa used in the Magistrates' Courts. He makes the mistake many Europeans who know a Bantu language make. They not only think that the language they know is THE Bantu language but they are genuinely grieved to note that it can stoop to borrowing as all other languages do! The modern approach to language study, however, is not prescriptive but de-scriptive. And the forms he complains of are widely used. Those he prefers are just NOT used by children. Unfortunately the Magistrate's clerk or interpreter who corrected him chose to demonstrate his knowledge of comparative philology and succeeded very brilliantly in demonstrating his ignorance. Why won't the shoemaker stick to his last?

So should I. God bless you.

Yours sincerely,
R M Lubiano.

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