

**THE DIDASCALIES AS SIGN-SYSTEM IN THREE  
DRAMAS BY M.S. SERUDU**

by

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## CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b>	i
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	ii
<b>SUMMARY</b>	iv

### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: SEMIOTICS AND LITERATURE**

<b>1.0</b>	<b>AIM AND FOCUS OF STUDY</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<b>JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.2</b>	<b>SEMIOTICS AND LITERATURE</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.2.1</b>	<b>Towards an understanding of semiotic signs</b>	<b>9</b>
1.2.1.1	The semiotic sign	10
1.2.1.2	Signifiers, codes and signifieds	12
1.2.1.3	Concretisation of referents	13
1.2.1.4	Different semiotic signs	14
1.2.1.4.1	The iconic sign function	14
1.2.1.4.2	The indexical sign function	15
1.2.1.4.3	The symbolic sign function	16
<b>1.3</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE TEXT, DRAMATIC TEXT AND NARRATIVE TEXT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>1.3.1</b>	<b>Veltruský and the autonomy of the dramatic text</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>1.3.2</b>	<b>Elam and the distinction between performance text and dramatic text</b>	<b>18</b>

1.3.3	Segre and the nature of the dramatic text	21
1.3.3.1	Composition of the dramatic text versus the narrative text	21
1.3.3.2	Restrictions on time, space, characters and events	22
1.3.3.3	The narrator in a narrative text versus the didascalies in a dramatic text	23
1.3.3.4	Audience versus implied audience	24
1.3.4	Alter: Time, space and concretisation	24
1.4	DIDASCALIES AS SIGN-SYSTEM IN THE INTERPRETATION OF SERUDU'S DRAMATIC TEXTS	25
1.5	RÉSUMÉ	27

## CHAPTER 2: "NAGA GA DI ETELANE" AND THE ARGUMENT ABOUT OSTENSION

2.0	INTRODUCTION	29
2.0.1	Summary	29
2.0.2	Method of analysis	31
2.1	DIDASCALIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DRAMATIST	32
2.1.1	The dedication (Segopotšo)	32
2.1.2	The preface	34

2.2	DIDASCALIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE FICTIONAL WORLD OF DRAMA	35
2.2.1	The title and cover	35
2.2.2	The list of characters	36
2.2.3	The stage directions	37
2.2.3.1	Information concerning time and space	37
2.2.3.2	Information about characters and action	52
2.2.3.2.1	Mphaka	53
2.2.3.2.2	Hunadi	76
2.2.3.2.3	The voice	95
2.3	CONCLUSION	100

### CHAPTER 3: OSTENSIVE SIGNS IN "KELELAGOBEDI"

3.0	INTRODUCTION	104
3.0.1	Summary	104
3.0.2	Method of analysis	106
3.1	DIDASCALIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DRAMATIST	106
3.1.1	The Preface	106
3.2	DIDASCALIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE FICTIONAL WORLD OF DRAMA	107
3.2.1	The title and cover	107
3.2.2	The list of characters	108
3.2.3	The stage directions	109

3.2.3.1	Information concerning time and space	109
3.2.3.2	Information about characters and action	125
3.2.3.2.1	Lenkwe	126
3.2.3.2.2	Kelelagobedi and Mmaphuti	142
3.3	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	170 x

## **CHAPTER 4: "ŠAKA LA PELO GA LE TLALE": A MULTI-PURPOSE RADIO SCRIPT**

4.0	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	173
4.0.1	Summary of the play	173
4.0.2	Method of analysis	175
4.1	<b>DIDASCALIES EMANATING FROM INFORMATION PRECEDING THE TEXT</b>	176
4.1.1	The Preface	176
4.1.2	The title and cover	176
4.1.3	The list of characters	177
4.2	<b>DIDASCALIES EMANATING FROM THE TEXT</b>	177
4.2.1	<b>Directions preceding episodes</b>	177
4.2.1.1	Announcements concerning visual scenes, actions in progress and past or future events	179
4.2.1.2	Announcements concerning the visual scenes, actions in progress and emotions or inner feelings of characters	188

4.2.1.3	Announcements concerning visual-auditive- visual scenes and actions in progress	192
4.2.1.4	Narration concerning past events and current feelings of characters	197
<b>4.2.2</b>	<b>Interspersed directions</b>	<b>199</b>
4.2.2.1	Directions which suggest action	200
4.2.2.2	Directions which suggest action in an auditive and/or visual way	206
4.2.2.3	Directions which provide information concerning the attitude, mood and emotions of characters	210
4.2.2.4	Directions indicating silence	217
4.2.2.5	Multiple directions: A combination of directions which suggest action, new characters, the mood of characters, time and place of action and visual or auditive information	221
<b>4.2.3</b>	<b>Succeeding directions</b>	<b>226</b>
4.2.3.1	Succeeding directions which have no reference to the preceding directions of the next episode	226
4.2.3.2	Succeeding directions relating to the preceding directions of the next episode	228
4.2.3.3	Succeeding directions concluding the episode	232
4.2.3.4	Contrasting succeeding and preceding directions	233

4.3	CONCLUSION	234
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## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.0	RÉSUMÉ	236
-----	--------	-----

5.1	TEXT-INTERNAL FACTORS	236
-----	-----------------------	-----

5.1.1	Didascalies in the dedications, prefaces and lists of characters	237
-------	---	-----

5.1.2	Preceding stage directions	238
-------	----------------------------	-----

5.1.3	Directions interspersed with dialogue	239 —
-------	---------------------------------------	-------

5.1.4	The dichotomous nature of drama	242
-------	---------------------------------	-----

5.2	TEXT-EXTERNAL FACTORS: SOCIO-POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL FACTORS	246
-----	---	-----

5.3	SOLUTIONS	248
-----	-----------	-----

	BIBLIOGRAPHY	251
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**DECLARATION**

I declare that **THE DIDASCALIES AS SIGN-SYSTEM IN THREE DRAMAS BY M.S. SERUDU** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....*Andi Herwe*.....

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**SUMMARY**

The dynamic nature of drama is reflected in the inherent dichotomous composition of text and performance. The continuing controversy about the infrequent public performances of the almost 250 published texts in African languages and the literary approach towards Northern Sotho texts have prompted the present survey.

Two main reasons are identified for the existing textual centrality in the approach towards Northern Sotho dramas, namely text-external and text-internal factors. The latter forms the main focus of attention in this study. The role of the didascalies as semiotic sign-system - referring to all aspects of the dramatic text which contain instructions for a potential performance - are investigated. The scrutiny of the stage directions afforded an unequalled vantage point in revealing the ostensive or performance nature of the three dramas by M.S. Serudu.

In conclusion possible solutions for the future are offered against the background of the findings arrived at in the analysis.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: SEMIOTICS AND LITERATURE

#### 1.0 AIM AND FOCUS OF STUDY

The aim of this dissertation is to determine the status and position of three dramas of M.S. Serudu in terms of the built-in dichotomy of the genre which, in semiotic terms, derives from the relationship between text and performance. In order to fulfil this aim it was deemed necessary to address those parts of the dramatic text which allow direct access to its position towards performance, namely the **didascalies**.

This English version of the originally Greek concept "didásko" (I teach), refers to all those aspects of the dramatic text which contain instructions (Greek: "didaskalia") pertaining to how performance should take place. These start with the title and title page of the text, the possible preface by the playwright or other party, the list of characters and finally what is generally known as the sub-text or stage directions. These are of a wide variety from background information, through décor and different scene settings (space and time), to information about the characters - their states of mind, moods and emotions and the voice qualities and movements that may express their disposition. These stage directions appear before scenes, between the turns of the different characters as well as at the end of scenes.

## 1.1 JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY

In the discussion of the literature of African languages in Southern Africa, and especially in Northern Sotho, there is a continuing controversy about the infrequent public performances of the almost 250 published texts in the eight indigenous languages of South Africa. The paucity of public performance is such that one cannot lay claim to an established theatrical tradition.

Various explanations for this state of affairs are suggested and we may perhaps distinguish between text-external and text-internal factors. Among the first the most prominent reason seems to have been the policy of separate development. Not only has this policy (until the Eighties) prevented Africans from attending drama performances in the "white" theatres of the country, it has also prevented African language plays from being staged and denied their playwrights the opportunity to gain experience in that regard. Another reason is the "bookish" attitude of educational departments for Africans towards the teaching and study of drama. This affected the perception of drama in the African languages; the way Africans got to know drama was primarily through reading and consequently the production of reader-oriented texts was encouraged at the expense of their performance. This attitude penetrated so deeply that even in the case of radio drama - to which students have easy access on a daily basis - the perception persists among most students that a literary approach is sufficient and that reference to actual broadcasts is redundant. These circumstances have led Swanepoel (1987:67) to the following classification of African language dramas in terms of performability:

- \* dramas that could be staged without adaptation,
- \* dramas that would be stageable after slight adaptation and
- \* dramas intended for reading.

While the playwright has crucial text-external odds against her/him, as has been mentioned, another central problem arises: the text-internal factor. All forms of literary expression require a high degree of creative skill - popularly contained inter alia in the dictum of "the gift of the gab". However, playwriting as such requires the additional skill of writing for the purpose of what the semioticians call **ostension** or the art of displaying. For playwrights this implies a fictionalisation of real-life situations and the enactment of those situations by actors. The re-creation of real-life situations and their live enactment are reflected in the dialogue, but even more so in the what, where, how and when of the dramatic action - the **didascalies**.

The complicated constellation of text-external factors and their unfortunate effects have become fairly well known in the recent past. However, there is little evidence of in-depth research of the text-internal demeanour in this regard. In the light of this it was concluded that the time has come for a closer scrutiny of texts in order to determine what they themselves reveal about their status and position. This may contribute to clarify yet another allegation levelled at African language playwrights, namely that they are "unwilling to abide by the dictates of the genre". Only after several plays have been analysed with this view in mind, can greater clarity be achieved, and can the situation be reconstructed in order either to maintain the status quo or to re-plan

for the future development of the genre in the languages we are addressing.

A study of the didascalies is an exhaustive enterprise which consumes a great deal of space. It was decided, therefore, to limit this study to the output of one contemporary playwright in Northern Sotho, M.S. Serudu, and to his first three dramas. They are:

*Naga ga di etelane* (Home Sweet Home; 1977),

*Kelelagobedi* (The double-dealer; 1983) and

*Šaka la pelo ga le tlale* (The 'kraal' of the heart is not filled; 1989).

Serudu's fourth play, *A mo swina ngwanana' thakana!* (The young one taught him a lesson!), is dated 1991 but only became available in 1992 when this study was nearing completion. It was also felt that its inclusion would take the dissertation well beyond the normal scope.

What we will be looking for in this study of the didascalies in Serudu's selected plays, are the signs that will clarify the texts' demeanour towards their ostension - whether in the mind during the process of reading, and/or on the stage or other suitable venue, and/or "over the airwaves" in radio broadcasts after having been recorded in the broadcasting studio.



## 1.2 SEMIOTICS AND LITERATURE

In the latter part of this century the study of signs has become the domain of semiotics. Luxemburg et al. (1988:57) define semiotics as the systematic and scientific examination of the relationship and functioning of signs, sign systems and processes of meaning. The relationship which exists between signs and sign systems can, according to Strydom (1991:2), be called a functional one, since such a relationship always intends to express meaning. For this study the relevance of drama and theatre semiotics lies in the fact that it enables the researcher and creative reader to experience the reading of the chosen texts as a process of ostension since, as is stated by Serpieri (1984:2):

"The semiotic approach tends to bring to the fore these parameters, at once internal and external, for the construction and 'inbuilt' reception of the text. These parameters take on particular weight when one is dealing with the dramatic text..."

It is necessary to deal in some detail with the field of semiotics, particularly as regards its significance to the study of drama and more specifically the interpretation of the didascalies.

The concept semiotics is derived from the Greek word "semeion", meaning "sign". Semiotics, therefore, refers to the science of signs, which examines signs, sign systems and processes of meaning (Van Zoest, 1978:11).

The semiotic approach to literature takes into consideration many signifying systems of signs in a text. It examines signs with the sole purpose of discovering their potential communicative function, as Segre (1973:55) explains: "A sign is emitted with the precise intention of its meaning something, and the receiver decodes it on the premise that such an intention exists". From Segre's explanation it appears that an important relationship exists between the transmitter, the sign and the receiver. The link between the transmitter and receiver should, however, be based on the mutual acceptance of conventions. Signs can only function communicatively when the transmitter and the receiver share recognised conventions such as a common language.

Two questions arise involuntarily: (a) What advantages do the readers, audience and critics gain from the analysis of signs and sign systems? (b) Why is it important to know which sign systems are present in a dramatic text or performance, and how they influence each other?

Esslin (1987:16, 17) answers these questions thus:

"By approaching the dramatic media with some of the methods and tools that semiotics has made available... it seems to me that this is the most practical, down-to-earth approach to the act of communication that every dramatic performance is intended to establish: by analysing what signs and sign systems, in what interaction, are present and at least potentially operating upon the sensibilities of the recipients of the communication - the audience - we should arrive at the most concrete, factual basis for gaining a

clear conception of what actually takes place in an artistic event like a play or film, far less airy-fairy and abstract than analyses of the psychology of characters or philosophical implications".

These answers are, according to Culler (1974, referred to by Swanepoel (1986:51)), also valid for the dramatic text for, as Swanepoel puts it,

"Scientific reading of literary texts is, according to the literary semioticians, an act whereby the text is viewed as a system of signs, a system of functional units operative in the work."

Swanepoel (1986:51) continues by viewing semiotics as an umbrella term for various disciplines. According to him literary semiotics involves the exploration of language, "not only in its denotative and connotative functions, but also within the framework of the various literary genres, genres, which in a way, may be viewed as signs in their own right, or at least frameworks of signs."

For Aston & Savona (1991:3) semiotics has developed "new ways to investigate the text and it created a 'methodology' or 'language' with which the complexity of the theatrical sign-system can be tackled". From a semiotic perspective, the literary text can thus be seen as a dynamic object which unfolds gradually as the reader identifies, decodes and interprets the different signs and sign systems. Serpieri (1984:1) explains it as follows:

"The literary sign, in other words, brings together a complex of meanings at the crossroads between different routes of signification: textual and extratextual, linguistic and semiotic."

Semioticians are concerned with the whole communication process of literature and the semiotic approach tends to direct the reading of texts towards those signs that are dominant communicative factors in the text, and which, in their turn, help the reader in the construction and reception of the text.

\* Drama, on its part, functions on two levels, as a dramatic text in a reading situation and as a performance in a theatre. The influence of the theatre on the writing of dramas, therefore, gives rise to the unique properties of the dramatic text and it is in this respect that drama can be distinguished from the other genres.

Although most dramatists, when they write a play, have a possible performance in mind, this study will concentrate primarily on the dramatic (written) text: with a significant theatre performance tradition in Northern Sotho still to emerge, in-performance studies are quite difficult to conduct at this stage.

The decision by a dramatist to write a dramatic, rather than a narrative or poetic text, has, however, certain implications and creates some essentials, as Serpieri (1984:3) puts it:

"... with respect to its strictly linguistic aspects, the drama tells its stories in a quite different fashion from narrative and poetic genres. The drama "narrates" through the direct interplay of utterances: i.e. it is not the narration of facts from a particular perspective but the unfolding, rather, of a dynamic development of speech acts, the succession of which traces a story."

Another challenge ensues: what does the playwright do (perhaps unconsciously) when s/he realises that her/his plays are not likely to be performed? Does s/he compensate, and if so, how?

An answer can only be given after a thorough search for the signs in:

- a) the reading text,
- b) the performance text,
- c) the reading-performance text and
- d) the radio text.

### 1.2.1 Towards an understanding of semiotic signs

Alter (1990:20) explains that from a semiotic perspective it is not possible to refer to a dichotomy between a dramatic text and a physical performance. The reason for this lies in the fact that in both instances the manifestation of theatre can be seen as steps within the communication process as a whole where a story is presented by means of various signs.

The dramatic text does differ from the performance in as much as the dramatic text consists exclusively of textual signs, i.e. linguistic signs. These verbal signs are all symbols. The performance, on the other hand, includes visual and auditive signs such as facial expressions, costume, décor and vocal intonation. Most of the signs that are used in performance are iconic signs.

The difference between the two sign systems can, according to Fischer-Lichte (1987) be attributed to the fact that verbal descriptions (verbal signs) are more vague and abstract than their theatrical counterparts. Verbal descriptions may, therefore, evoke different impressions or ideas regarding the described object in different individuals. Theatrical signs, however, are concrete, and as Fischer-Lichte puts it: "they do not describe a certain gesture, smile or colour - but present it directly" (1987:209).

In spite of the disparity between the two sign systems they both function according to the same semiotic principles to transmit their message to the receiver. In order to understand the full theatrical circle of semiotic transformation it is essential to explain a few central concepts.

#### 1.2.1.1 The semiotic sign

"It is important to note at the outset that all cultural objects in the world of everyday life are signs" (Gossman, 1976:5).

This quotation corresponds with Shakespeare's well-known metaphor: "All the world's a stage". The signs on the stage do not merely refer to physical objects, but they are as Gossman (1976:5) puts it: "organised in a system that refers to another system of signs..." According to this statement both the world and the stage are seen as sign systems.

As regards drama three levels of sign need to be recognised. They are: signs in a literary text, signs in a text which is read as theatre and the signs in a physical performance or broadcast.

When a literary reading of a text is undertaken the words or linguistic signs refer to people, actions, emotions or places in a localised space within the story. When a text is read as a theatrical performance-to-be the words refer to a stage space on which actors move, act and speak.

During the physical performance the observable objects on the stage function as signs which refer to something else. In this way, for example, the actors are signs of the characters in the story; the words (dialogue) of the actors represent the dialogue spoken by the characters and the décor serves as a sign which refers to a narrative space off stage. Jindrich Honsl (1940), quoted by Bassnett-McGuire (1980:49), sums it up by saying:

"Everything that makes up reality on the stage - the playwright's text, the actor's acting, the stage lighting - all these things in every case stand for other things. In other words, dramatic performance is a set of signs."

In this study we shall concentrate on the signs in dramatic texts which are read as literary texts, and on the signs in texts which are read either as potential or future theatrical pieces or as compensatory pieces "theatre of the mind" - which implies that a text which is read could have the same impact on the reader as the real performance if s/he were able to imagine all the implicit and explicit signs, and to concretise these as an active participant.

#### 1.2.1.2 Signifiers, codes and signifieds

It is generally accepted that signs are intentional (i.e., they have the intention to refer to something else) and that they are produced and received on the basis of corresponding conventions. The concrete object, or state of affairs, to which a sign refers, is called the **referent**.

According to Alter (1990) a sign should also have a distinct material form which is called the **signifier**. Conventionally this distinctive signifier is associated with meaning by a certain code, thus producing the signified. Therefore a sign is no more than "a signifier associated with a coded signified" (1990:24). Alter's explanation forms the basis of the identification, decoding and concretisation of signs and sign functions in dramatic text as well as in theatre.

Within the dramatic communication process the dramatic text or performance cannot be seen as a single sign, but must be viewed as a network of semiotic signs which enables communication. An incorrect interpretation of a text or performance can be ascribed to the receiver's



lack of knowledge of those codes which would enable her/him to make the correct associations between signifiers and signifieds. Elam (1980:50) defines a code as "an ensemble of correlational rules governing the formation of sign-relationships". Readers must be mindful that they cannot use the text in any way they wish, but should adapt their code along the lines of the textual information.

#### 1.2.1.3 Concretisation of referents

According to Alter (1990:26) a referent is not a general class of states of affairs defined by the signified of a sign, but it is a concrete manifestation of that class, in a given time and in a given space. A referent can, according to him, be anything: "real or imaginary places, events, people, emotions or ideas".

It becomes evident that it is more difficult to concretise references which are communicated solely by verbal signs than those which appear physically and can be localised by the audience. Abstract concepts are communicated more efficiently by verbal signs whereas the theatre has problems putting them across effectively. This is because theatre is more concerned with the physical representation of fiction. In the theatre, therefore, the emphasis is on concrete personages, their actions and problems.

Concretisation, however, remains a psychological process and depends on the imagination of each individual receiver, the associations s/he makes and her/his background.

It can be assumed that the regular reader or theatre-goer will find it easier to interpret and concretise signs as a result of the reader's creative imagination and the theatre-goer's previous experience and knowledge of the values and functions of theatrical signs and certain conventions.

#### 1.2.1.4 Different semiotic signs

The American philosopher Charles Peirce's division of sign functions into iconic, indexical and symbolic at the turn of the century was a major breakthrough. From recent investigations by modern theorists of drama and theatre such as Elam, Alter and Savona it would seem that a too rigid division of signs could be problematic as a result of the complexity and overlapping of theatrical signs. It is important to examine the division closely so as to determine the signs with which this study will occupy itself.

##### 1.2.1.4.1 The iconic sign function

According to Alter (1990:27) an iconic sign is indicated when the material form of a sign (the signifier) corresponds with the material form of the reference. The degree of correspondence determines the degree of iconicity. Theatre, for example, is considered as one of the most iconic media because the signifiers (the actors), appear on the stage in the place of fictitious people. Thus they are experienced as living organisms representing other living organisms in an imaginary fictitious space. The iconic sign function emphasises the illusion that

reality is reflected on the stage; the appearance, behaviour and emotions of the actors are practically identical to the characters they represent.

Mouton (1988:44) says the researcher should also be able to trace the iconic function within the dramatic text. According to her it would be particularly demonstrable in the use of language (dialogue) of the characters, for instance in situations where the use of language could be regarded as typical of a certain group of people as can be seen in Fugard's *Boesman and Lena* (1969). It would seem, therefore, that words, although they are symbolic signs, may also be regarded, in a semiotic sense on stage or in a dramatic text, as being iconic signs.

#### 1.2.1.4.2 The indexical sign function

Aston and Savona (1991:5) define an indexical sign as "a sign which points to or is connected to its object, e.g. smoke as an index of fire". From this definition it would seem that the index bears reference to the particular object by means of a cause-and-effect relationship.

Mouton (1988:44) indicates that the theatrical sign can perform an iconic as well as an indexical function simultaneously. The costume of an actor, for instance, can be part of the visual appearance of the actor and an iconic sign function. The costume can also be indexical when it indicates a specific social position or occupation. With these examples we can think of the clothes and crown worn by a king, and the outfit and headgear of a diviner.

Mouton mentions that the indexical sign function can also be traced in the dramatic text. According to her the didascalies play an important part because information of a visual and auditive nature is already included in the text. In Serudu's *Šaka la pelo ga le tlaale*, auditive elements such as the barking and running of dogs as well as the calls and shouts of men indicate that a hunt is in progress.

#### 1.2.1.4.3 The symbolic sign function

For Aston and Savona (1991:6) a symbol is "a sign where the connection between sign and object is agreed by convention and there is no similarity between object and sign, e.g. the dove as a symbol of peace".

From the above definition it would seem that the use of signs and symbols actually refers to the most general form of communication, language. When linguistic signs are, therefore, structured into a communicative system such as language, they can be symbolically representative. Symbolic sign functions would be traced particularly in a dramatic text because it is constructed exclusively from linguistic signs.

The main aim in this study is to identify the signs and sign systems operative in Serudu's dramatic texts, especially his didascalies, in order to determine how, and in view of which type of performance, dramaticity is communicated and meaning generated for the reader and the implied audience.

After discussing these overriding tenets of the semiotic sign, we now have to deal with the relationship between the performance, dramatic and narrative text. We will attend to the views of Veltruský, Elam, Segre and Alter.

### 1.3 PERFORMANCE TEXT, DRAMATIC TEXT AND NARRATIVE TEXT

In any semiotic examination of drama and theatre it is essential, as a result of the dual nature of the subject, to distinguish between the two types of text with which the researcher is confronted, i.e. the theatrical or performance text and the written or dramatic text. In a performance text the textual material is largely created in the theatre, while in a dramatic text, material is created for the theatre on the printed pages of the script.

#### 1.3.1 Veltruský and the autonomy of the dramatic text

Veltruský (1976:95) also recognises the dual nature of drama, and considers "... the unending quarrel about the nature of drama, whether it is a literary genre or a theatrical piece is futile because the one does not exclude the other".

For Veltruský, the distinguishing characteristic of drama as a literary genre is given in the recording of the text in the form of dialogue as opposed to the monologue format of the narrative text. The semantic construction of a drama, because of this presentation, will rely upon

the plurality of contexts that unfold, relay and penetrate simultaneously on one another.

The central problem when viewing a drama as a literary work lies in the tension which exists between direct speeches and stage directions, i.e. the sign system of language versus the sign system of acting. Veltruský goes on to explain that stage directions disappear during a theatrical performance and the gaps which consequently arise are filled with non-linguistic signs such as visual and auditive signs. From Veltruský's argument it becomes clear that the entire semantic structure of the text is recast during a performance. The extent to which change occurs will depend, of course, on the number of stage directions present in a text, and the number of gaps which would appear in the transformation from text to performance. Veltruský (1977) insists that any literary work could be sufficiently understood by silent reading and that there is no reason for singling out drama. Furthermore, he points out that the literary structure of drama could never be totally separated from the theatrical components, because that which carries meaning in a performance also generates meaning during a reading of the drama.

Veltruský considers the dramatic text to be the definitive model for any performance, but he also sees it as an independent literary work.

### 1.3.2 Elam and the distinction between performed text and dramatic text

Elam (1980:2) endorses the distinction between the performance text and

the dramatic text by saying:

"'Theatre' is taken to refer ... to the complex of phenomena associated with the performer-audience transaction: that is, with the production and communication of meaning in the performance itself and with the systems underlying it.

By 'drama' ... is meant that mode of fiction designed for stage representation and constructed according to particular ('dramatic') conventions."

Throughout his investigation of theatre and drama, Elam maintains the distinction between the two kinds of text that should be observed. He uses two semiotic processes to describe the creation and communication of meaning in performance and dramatic texts. These two processes are firstly the process of signification, referring to the way in which meaning is generated by sign systems and codes; and secondly, the process of communication, i.e. the messages and texts which are generated by the sign systems and codes.

Elam regards the performing of dramatic texts as of great importance. In his opinion, the dramatic text is written to be performed. He argues that the interpretation and understanding of drama can only take place when both texts are taken into consideration: meaning and communication can only be generated during the performance itself, and not before the audience has decoded and interpreted all the signs.

Because it is the nature of drama to portray rather than to narrate, he considers ostension as the feature which distinguishes the dramatic text from the narrative text. Ostension eliminates the necessity for a narrator and enables the audience to see and hear all the objects presented on stage. In a way, ostension will therefore influence all aspects on stage, including the language usage of the characters, which can in turn be related to the text of the drama.

Elam's dramatological approach focuses on the linguistic system of a dramatic text, namely language. He considers the dramatic discourse in a text to be dynamic because the characters, the time and the place of utterance are not static but change continuously. He explains it as follows:

"The primary allegiance of language in the drama, over and above its larger 'referential' functions, is precisely to this course of events, the dynamic pragmatic context in which it is produced" (1980:138).

The pragmatic context within which the fictional dramatic world functions also gives rise to the use of deictic language, both on stage and in the dramatic text. Verbal deixis is indicated explicitly by speakers in their dialogue through personal and possessive pronouns (e.g. I, you, your, me, he, she, him, her, his, we, you) and the time and place of the action is indicated by deictic adverbs (e.g. here, now). Within the dramatic dialogue the audience/reader is not confronted with mere statements and descriptions as is the case in the narrative text, but, as Elam puts it,



"... the drama consists first and foremost precisely in this, an I addressing a you here and now" (1980:139).

Deixis can therefore be seen as a distinguishing characteristic of dramatic texts and a prerequisite for non-narrative discourse. According to Mouton (1988:19) the dialogue situation, which is so typical of the pragmatic context of a stage production, rests heavily on the use of deictic expressions. This interchange between characters during a performance initially becomes evident in the division of the dramatic text into individual turn-takings, i.e. dialogue. Performative discourse such as deictic use of language which, according to Elam (1980:139) "... allows language an active and dialogic function rather than a descriptive and choric role", can be coupled with that aspect of ostension which represents the distinguishing characteristic between the dramatic and the narrative text.

### 1.3.3 Segre and the nature of the dramatic text

Segre's view of the dramatic text (1981) corresponds with that of Serpieri's. A brief discussion of his statements concerning the nature of dramatic texts follows below. Four points are of interest in this regard.

#### 1.3.3.1 Composition of the dramatic text versus the narrative text

The most significant difference between dramatic and narrative texts, according to Segre, is to be found in their composition and presentation.

A dramatic text is recorded as a spoken text in the form of dialogue and is characterised by turn-taking conversations and stage directions, which means that it could be regarded as a direct presentation. By contrast, the narrative text uses a mediating character, the persona or the "I", writer or narrator to relate the actions pertaining to the characters in a third-person narration. Susan Bassnett-McGuire (1980:51) anticipates this view when she writes: "The theatre is based on a dialogue, on the dialectical relationship between I-you in the present, whereas the prose text is based on a removed he."

Although a narrative figure or figures and narrative discourses appear in the stage directions of the dramatic text, these directions remain subject to the dialogue and cannot be equated to the mediating narrator of a narrative text. A good example is the commentator in an epic drama. In the course of her/his narrative the actual dramatic action ceases, only to resume when the narrator/speaker recedes and the next scene is introduced.

In a comparison between a dramatic text and a narrative text, the dramatic text could justly be called incomplete since it is not filled as comprehensively with information. The narrative text would constantly supply the reader with information, whereas the dramatist leaves this problem to the director.

### 1.3.3.2 Restrictions on time, space, characters and events

A second important point which Segre discusses, is the way in which time

is treated. A drama is evidently destined to be performed in a physical space, therefore the performance time should also suit the listener or audience. A physical performance implies performance time, and the dramatist will constantly be aware of this. The restriction on time also has ramifications as far as the number of characters and events in the text are concerned. It is evident that the physical length of the text would be determined by the aspects mentioned above. The narrative text, on the other hand, has no limit with regard to time, generally has more characters and events, and is usually physically much more comprehensive than the dramatic text.

#### 1.3.3.3 The narrator in a narrative text versus the didascalies in a dramatic text

Segre's third point deals with the interpreter or mediating figure/figures acting as narrator in the narrative text, whereas, in principle, the dramatic text is objective and no narrator appears openly. The dramatic text, therefore, is known for the absence of a narrator.

The reader of a dramatic text need not, however, depend solely on the dialogue; s/he also has access to the didascalies (title, list of characters, prologue, stage directions, epilogue, etc.) which function as an implicit narrator or mediator.

#### 1.3.3.4 Audience versus implied audience

Lastly Segre discusses the presence of the audience within the theatrical communication process. The presence of the audience, according to him, reflects the essence of that which distinguishes theatre from the other genres. In this regard one can refer to the pioneering work done by Mouton (1988:203). According to her, the implied audience is to be found within the text itself and is a creation of the dramatist. She explains that the implied audience in the text is distinguished from the other fictional characters on account of the fact that it (like the audience in an actual performance) does not live in the fictional world of the characters, but observes them from the outside. Put differently: the implied audience lives in the mind of the playwright. The traditional division between the actors on stage and the spectators in the audience is, therefore, also implied in the dramatic text when reference is made to the implied audience (i.e. a group of spectators watching). In the narrative text there is no implied audience, because at no stage is a performance envisaged.

#### 1.3.4 Alter: Time, space and concretisation

According to Alter time in a dramatic text does not move in the same way as in a narrative text. He explains it as follows: "... instead of following a linear development, including flashbacks, it is fragmented in several segments, corresponding to acts, scenes, or tableaux, all progressing at the same pace but leaving gaps between them." (1990:162) It seems from his explanation that it would be more difficult for the

reader of a dramatic text to reconstruct linear time, than for the reader of a narrative text.

✓ Alter (1990:162) maintains that space also creates problems, because minimal references are made to specific spaces in dramatic texts. The visualisation of these spaces in dramatic texts will therefore depend to a much greater extent on the imagination of the individual reader than in the case of narrative texts.

For Alter the most significant difference between the narrative text and the dramatic text lies in the concretisation of characters. He argues that the characters in a dramatic text offer their own reasons for their actions and tell how they should be judged, unlike the authorial voice of the narrator in a narrative text, who decides what is true or false. In order to understand and judge, the readers of dramatic texts "... must substitute their own individual wisdom, contribute their own meaning to the fictional world" (1990:163).

#### 1.4 DIDASCALIES AS SIGN-SYSTEM IN THE INTERPRETATION OF SERUDU'S DRAMATIC TEXTS

In the analysis of Serudu's dramas, the emphasis will be on the didascalies as the most important sign system for the reader. Savona (1982:26) defines didascalies as: "... everything which comes to us directly from the playwright, everything which is neither dialogue nor soliloquy". The term didascalies therefore includes the title of the drama, the cover, the preface/epilogue, the dramatis personae, the

directions referring to acts, scenes and stage directions.

As a field of study, didascalies have been much neglected and have, until recently, been seen by critics as instructions provided solely for the benefit of the director, actor, announcer or sound producer in the performance or broadcast of the drama. In Northern Sotho most dramas are studied purely as literary texts. The study of the didascalies in Northern Sotho texts can be advantageous because, according to Teodorescu-Brînzeu (1981/82:m1) it is of major significance "in establishing the necessary link between the text and the performance, but also in the reception of the text as a literary work".

Teodorescu-Brînzeu points out that stage directions have a binary nature: as textual elements <sup>1</sup> within a text and as theatrical elements <sup>2</sup> which are realised in a performance/broadcast. As a textual element stage directions belong to the verbal (written) level of the dramatic text. They determine the performance level because they contain inherent visual and/or auditive codes which will function in a performance or broadcast.

The reader is able to distinguish the stage directions in the text easily because, unlike the dialogue, they are italicised and placed in brackets. According to Aston & Savona (1991:72) stage directions may appear in three positions in the text: they "variously precede, are interspersed with or succeed the dialogue". It would seem from their appearance in the text that in reality the stage directions form an integrated part of the structure of a dramatic text. Ingarden, quoted by Aston & Savona (1991:73) views stage directions and dialogue as complementary and

interdependent signifying systems. This interdependence, according to Aston & Savona, affords the reader the opportunity to read the performance acts from the text and to perform the dramatic work in her/his imagination.

The presence of stage directions emphasises the generic nature of drama and realises a possible performance in the imagination of the reader. Savona (1982:33) considers didascalies as a mediatory vehicle between textual fiction and scenic fiction. According to him the didascalies force the reader

"to imagine characters to whom actors give substance, to situate them on the stage, with a certain set, among objects which are themselves merely signs of real objects, since the linguistic signs of the didascalies disappear at the level of production where they are transposed either into iconic or voiced signs, or else indexes which emphasise or link together other signs" (1982:30).

## 1.5 RÉSUMÉ

As may be gathered from the previous discussion, there are various points of agreement between drama and theatre semioticians. They share the same point of departure, viz. the existence of a relationship between the dramatic text and the performance, and are agreed that this built-in dichotomy of the genre should not be ignored. Although some place considerable emphasis on the performance, they see the dramatic text as

an important beginning in the process of theatrical communication without underestimating the importance of the role of the text in this process. Furthermore theoreticians agree that the ostensive nature of drama is the most important characteristic which distinguishes dramatic texts from narrative ones, thereby influencing all other aspects of the dramatic text.

This approach provides an answer to the question of how to deal with the status of dramatic texts in the African languages in general, and in Northern Sotho in particular, the greater number of which still awaits performance.

The role of the didascalies as sign-system in the three selected plays by M.S. Serudu will be discussed as follows:

**Chapter 2** deals with *Naga ga di etelane* and the argument about ostension.

**Chapter 3** investigates the ostensive signs in *Kelelagobedi*.

**Chapter 4** deals with *Šaka la pelo ga le tšale* as a multi-purpose radio script.

**Chapter 5** will be devoted to an interpretation of the findings of chapters 2 to 4 in the light of the aims, focus, justification and background put forward in this introduction.



## CHAPTER 2

### "NAGA GA DI ETELANE" AND THE ARGUMENT ABOUT OSTENSION

#### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

*Naga ga di etelane* (1977) is Serudu's first drama. The play elicited considerable interest right from the beginning. There are two main reasons for this: first is the fact that its theme addresses the (South African) intellectual in self-imposed exile; the second concerns the work's possible autobiographical significance. From the frequent repetition of the title *Naga ga di etelane* (Home sweet home) by the main character, Mphaka, together with the author's statements in his preface, it becomes most likely that the dramatist and Mphaka are the same person and this confirms the autobiographical nature of the drama.

#### 2.0.1 Summary

Mphaka is a middle-aged academic who leaves his fatherland, Bonwatau, for political reasons. He settles in Takone where he teaches at a Community College. Soon after his arrival he starts experiencing internal conflict and a feeling of guilt over his decision to leave his land of birth. This conflict is strengthened by his mother who sends frequent letters urging him to come home before her death. The image of his mother keeps on returning to torment him in his dreams.

Mphaka's friend, Tokari, introduces him to the men of Takone: Rola, Kala and Mbari. These men are antagonistic towards Mphaka and humiliate him by making negative remarks about his fatherland. Mphaka refuses to be humiliated and is involved in a bitter confrontation with them. Hunadi, Mphaka's wife, warns him that he should be careful since the men might be spies.

Mphaka criticises the educational system in Takone. Tokari warns him to be careful since the conflict between East and West could have an effect on the country's attitude towards immigrants. Acting on this information Mphaka considers moving. He applies for a lectureship in History at a university in Mogadisho.

At a second meeting of Mphaka and the men of Takone they discuss the threatening revolution in the country. When Mphaka states his opinion a fierce battle of words ensues because the men of Takone thought that he was interfering in their country's internal affairs.

At home Hunadi experiences problems with their servant, Akitse. When Mphaka fires him, Akitse seeks revenge against the family. In the mean time Mphaka learns from the university in Mogadisho that his appointment has been confirmed. When he visits the inspector of Takone concerning recommendations he had made about the syllabus, he learns that they have been rejected, whereupon he decides to resign.

Misfortune follows Mphaka and his family to Mogadisho. Both their children are unhappy at school, Sebola's headmaster intimates his

dissatisfaction to Mphaka about his son's progress. Sebola blames his parents for the lack of stability in his life. This adds to Mphaka's internal conflict.

Mphaka gets no reply to his application for permanent residence in Mogadisho. Lebitsi, a friend of Mphaka's, informs him about the forthcoming election and the effect it would have on immigrants. It seems now as if his misfortune in Takone is about to repeat itself.

The election in Mogadisho is won by the rebels of Ntlhore. Soon they decide that all immigrants without residential permits should leave the country. This decision is taken primarily to get rid of Mphaka.

At the end of the year Mphaka receives a letter from the university thanking him for his work and informing him that his services are no longer required as his post will be filled by someone else. Mphaka and Hunadi discuss the matter. He decides that he has had enough and that there is no better place for him than Bonwatau - his land of birth.

## 2.0.2 Method of analysis

In this analysis the focus will be on the presence, characteristics and functions of the didascalies in *Naga ga di etelane*. By such an approach I aim to determine how the dramatist uses didascalies in his text and how, if at all, the didascalies reflect the potential performance of the text. The main advantage in following this approach lies in the possibility of classifying all the semiotic signs of this dramatic text

according to their potential representational function. Since the didascalies form the most important link between the text and a possible performance, the findings of this analysis could possibly present answers to questions concerning the Northern Sotho theatrical tradition. The analysis should further enable us to determine if this text was written exclusively as a performance text or if the dramatist actually had a reader in mind.

## 2.1 DIDASCALIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DRAMATIST

### 2.1.1 The dedication (Segopotšo)

In the first section of the dedication the dramatist explains that he dedicates the book to his wife, Eunice Serudu, for her unselfish love and her sacrifices while he was abroad.

(1) "... Hunadi o mošwana, yoo a ilego a ntumelela go tlogela legae la rena go yo hlodimela lephelo le metsinkelo ya ditšhaba di šele. A ikgafela go šala a gokareditše mafotwana a rena." (p. i)

"... Hunadi, the one of the light skin, the one who agreed that I should abandon our family to go and look at the lives and doings of various nations - she who took the best decision to remain behind and care for our little children."

This information is in keeping with the rest of the drama where Mphaka, the main character, is also abroad. A further interesting similarity is found in the fact that the name of praise used in the preface for his own wife, Hunadi, corresponds with that of the wife of the fictional character, Mphaka.

In the second part of the dedication the dramatist honours the memory of his late parents for their continuing financial support.

- (2) "... bao ba ilego ba itima tša bophelo go mpha lehumohumo thuto." (p. i)  
"Those who denied themselves their daily bread to give me the great wealth of knowledge."

The name of praise which the dramatist uses in the dedication - Raisibe - has a counterpart in the daughter of the fictional Mphaka. From this it would seem that the dramatist is presenting the reader with a double set of data: personal or actual information and fictional information. This state of affairs adds a strong autobiographical quality to the drama and it is therefore not far fetched to argue that the characters in this drama become iconic signs, based on their similarity to the material form of their reference, and encouraging the illusion that reality is incarnated in this text.

### 2.1.2 The preface

The information supplied in the preface to *Naga ga di etelane* gives the reader useful background on the dramatist's motivation for writing the play when he says:

(3) "Maikemišetšo ke go oketša dingwalwa tša rena tša Sesotho sa Leboa, kudu lekaleng le la dipapadi moo re nago le tlhalelo e kgolo kudu." (1977:iii)

"My reasons are to enrich the Northern Sotho literature, particularly in the genre of drama, in which we are so deficient."

In the preface he addresses the reader directly and warns her/him that the drama deviates from the standard requirements of drama, e.g.:

(4) "Babadi ba yona ba tla lemoga ka bjako gore e tepogile gannyane go dinyakego tše bohlokwa tša tiragatšo." (1977:iii)

"The readers of this drama will realise that it deviates a little bit from the requirements of stage drama."

The reader can also deduce the underlying theme as the dramatist concludes the preface with the following words:

- (5) "Dinaga ga di etelane, nka be di etelana di be di tlo segana." (1977:iii)  
 "Countries do not visit one another; if they did so, they would laugh at each other."

The dramatist uses this preface to act firstly as an "outside" narrator and, secondly, to inform the reader and director - (and cast) beforehand.

## 2.2 DIDASCALIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE FICTIONAL WORLD OF DRAMA

### 2.2.1 The title and cover

The first important signs confronting the reader are the cover of the book and the title of the drama. The title is valuable to the reader because the theme is already implied. "*Naga ga di etelane*" ("Home sweet home") points to a confession from the dramatist. In the preface he explains to the reader and confirms the difficulty a foreigner experiences in adapting to and being accepted in another country. He stresses the absence of full comprehension against the background of a personal experience in a foreign country. The title soon becomes a sign of self-reproach, regret and misfortune and serves as the theme of the drama. The cover consists of a red background with the title printed on it - reflecting no significant sign to the reader.

### 2.2.2 The list of characters

The playwright creates 14 characters by assigning specific names to them. The list of characters has an informative function in the sense that it is accompanied by specific information concerning the characters, for example:

- The family relations between Mphaka, his wife and the children.
- Information about the origin of characters where the dramatist refers to Mphaka as an immigrant from Bonwatau and to Mbari, Rola and Kala as men from Takone.
- Information concerning the vocations or positions of characters, for example Noko, a teacher from Mogadisho and Ntlhore, the Prime Minister of Mogadisho.

Apart from the above, the list gives no information regarding age, appearance or specific voice quality from which any characteristics could be deduced.

According to Savona (1982:26) the list of characters also has a certain structuring function in the text. The list of characters is hierarchically divided and arranged. The importance of Mphaka and Hunadi's positions and their relations of dominance within the text are confirmed by the number of turns each has to speak: Mphaka, 765 times and Hunadi, 487 times. These calculations serve as an important parameter in grading



the importance of the different characters and establishing the main focus in the drama.

An interesting observation which has been made is that in Act 1, Scene 2 the dramatist uses a voice which addresses Mphaka in the form of a dream. This voice, however, is not mentioned in the list of characters. In this instance auditive information could have been used effectively to create dramatic effect.

The list of characters is at the continual disposal of the reader who, unlike the audience, can page back to it every time s/he is confronted with a new character, to obtain details about that character. It becomes clear that prior to reading the text the reader can gain insight into the interpretation and understanding of the dramatic dialogue by the correct decoding of literary signs in the title, preface and list of characters.

### **2.2.3 The stage directions**

#### **2.2.3.1 Information concerning time and space**

It is standard practice to mention at the beginning of each act or scene the fictional location in which the characters act out their roles. The fictional space can simply be described, or the description can be in terms of a stage design, for example: instruction on lighting, décor and sound effects where the emphasis is on a potential performance of the text. Most of the stage directions in *Naga ga di etelane* specify the fictional space and time but do not refer specifically to stage

requisites. The only cases are indications of where the curtain is to be raised or lowered.

In the first stage directions the dramatist explains the fictional space in which the main character, Mphaka, appears. He also mentions a second fictional space, "moraleng" (kitchen) where Hunadi and Raisibe are doing housework. The fictional time in which the actions are performed is not specified and must be determined by the reader through her/his own interpretation, for example:

(6) *(Ge seširo se bulega Mphaka o bonala a dutše setulong ka phapošing ya gagwe ya go bala... O a balabala ebile lentšu la gagwe le kwala le ka moraleng, moo Hunadi le Raisibe ba lego gare ka medirwana ya lapa.) (p. 1)*

*(When the curtain is raised Mphaka is visible. He is sitting on a chair in his study. He speaks to himself, his voice can be heard even in the kitchen where Hunadi and Raisibe are doing housework.)*

Since the additional space does not become a part of the area of performance, and because this space is not suggested by auditive signs either, it would appear that this direction is meant for the reader only.

The stage directions are followed by a moving soliloquy by Mphaka. He makes confessions about the choices he made in the past and about the circumstances he and his family are experiencing in a foreign country. Mphaka's study - as fictional space - has significant emotional connotations from the opening scene throughout the drama. The dramatist uses this fictional space effectively to create a refuge of privacy and safety where Mphaka can get rid of all his frustrations and emotional struggles. Both his study and office become signs of confession and suffering - places having more significance for the reader than ordinary fictional spaces. More examples appear on pages 13 and 102 of the drama.

In Act 1, Scene 2 the dramatist provides information concerning time and space in the preceding directions. In this stage direction even time is conveyed auditively by means of "snoring" e.g.:

(7) *(Ke bošego Hunadi le Mphaka ba bonala ba le ka malaong go lla hlaka la nko...)* (p. 8)

*(It is night. Hunadi and Mphaka can be seen in bed, snoring...)*

At the beginning of this scene the reader/audience is well oriented concerning time and space. This condition does not remain static, however, since a rapid change of time and space takes place. Such a change can be easily followed by the reader since the events which take place during that specific time and in that fictional space are narrated to the reader only. A possible audience will be at a disadvantage, for

example:

- (8) *(Ba a robala gomme toro yela ga e tle gape go fihla go esa. Hunadi o tsoga e sa le ka pela a lokišetša go ya kerekeng. Mphaka o ile go tsoga a ya go dula leswikeng ka serapaneng sa bona sa matšoba a sa borwe.)*

(p. 9)

*(They sleep till morning and the dream does not appear again. Hunadi gets up very early to prepare for church. Mphaka rises and unobtrusively goes to sit on a stone in their flower garden.)*

- (9) Hunadi: *(O ya ka phapošing.) Monna yo yena o robetše bjo bobjang? (O bula lebati o lebelela marobalong eupša Mphaka ga a gona.) Ao, bjale o rile go tsoga a leba kae yena yo. Raisibe, Raisibe! (O tšwa ka phapošing.)* (p. 9-10)

*(She goes to the bedroom.) What sleep is the man sleeping? (She opens the door and looks at the bed, but Mphaka is not there.) Ah, where did he go after getting up? Raisibe, Raisibe! (She leaves the room.)*

- (10) Raisibe: Ga a ka phapošing ya go bala? (p. 10)  
Is he not in the study?
- (11) Hunadi: Sepela o yo mo hlola ka gona. (*Raisibe o ya ka gona o bile o bowa le lenao.*) (p. 10)  
See if you get him there. (*Raisibe goes there and comes back in a jiffy.*)
- (12) Hunadi: A re go tsoga a timelela bjalo ka phoka. (*O bula lebati la ka pele o bona Mphaka a dutše leswikeng a farile hlogo ka dikhuru.*) (*O fihlile go yena o a mo šišinya.*) (p. 10)  
How is it that he got up and disappeared like the dew? (*She opens the door and sees Mphaka where he is sitting on a stone with his head between his hands.*) (*She goes up to him and shakes him.*)
- (13) Mphaka: (*O ema ka go ikgoga le go ngaletša.*) A re ye ge! (*Hunadi le Mphaka ba šalane morago ba gomela ka ngwakong. Ba re go fihla ba dula fase.*) (p. 11-12)

*(He rises heavily and depressed.)* Come, let us go then! *(Hunadi and Mphaka follow each other and return to the house. When they get there, they sit down.)*

(14) Mphaka: Šala o balabala gona moo. (*O a mo tlogela.*) (p. 12)

Just you stay here and mumble. *(He leaves her.)*

(15) Hunadi: (*O tsena ka ofising ya gagwe.*) Mphaka, ke gona ge re ile kerekeng. (p. 13)

*(She goes into his study.)* Mphaka, we are going to church.

(16) Mphaka: (*Go kokota motho.*) Bjale ke mang yo mola ke re ke tla fodiša hlogo gannyane. (*O a tšwa o leba lebating go bula.*) (p. 13)

*(Someone knocks.)* Who can this be, now that I want to relax a little. *(He leaves in the direction of the door to open it.)*

From the preceding quotes it becomes clear that the activities take place in the course of 10 to 12 hours: from 10 pm. to 10 am.

Only in (8) does the dramatist refer to the passage of time. He uses no stage requisites such as lighting to indicate a change of time. The

dramatist uses the stage directions in (8) as a narrator to keep the reader informed. The audience at a potential performance would find it difficult to understand the passage of time since they are dependent on only the dialogue and the action in progress.

The following proxemic interchanges, i.e. changes pertaining to space, take place in the scene:

- \* Mphaka and Hunadi's bedroom (7)
- \* Hunadi in another room (8)
- \* Mphaka in the garden (9)
- \* Hunadi on her way to the bedroom (9)
- \* Hunadi in the bedroom (9)
- \* Hunadi in another room (9)
- \* Raisibe in another room (10)
- \* Raisibe in the study (10)
- \* Hunadi at the front door (12)
- \* Hunadi in the garden (12)
- \* Hunadi and Mphaka on their way home (13)
- \* Hunadi and Mphaka in the house (13)
- \* Hunadi stays behind in the room (14)
- \* Hunadi on her way to Mphaka's study (15)
- \* Hunadi on her way to the front door (16)

The proxemic markers in the stage directions do not include only one area of play (the bedroom) but many others as well. In the course of five pages the fictional space changes 15 times. The different fictional

spaces are known to the reader only through the stage directions. These circumstances are indicative of a strongly reader-oriented text, a fact that seems to be confirmed by the reference to Mphaka's dreaming in (8). The audience will be unaware of the fact that the dream did not recur and the significance of this will be lost to them.

The dramatist also uses a narrator to indicate a lapse in time of a number of weeks as well as the leaving of Mphaka and his family. Act 3, Scene 4 ends as follows:

(17) Mookamedi: Ke go akela mahlatse mo o yago. Mohlomongwe gona o tla hwetša sebaka sa go bjala peu ya gago ya be ya mela. Sepela gabotse. (p. 59)

I wish you prosperity there where you are going. Perhaps you will get a chance there to sow your seeds and watch them grow. Good luck.

(18) Mphaka: Ke lebogile. (p. 59)

Thank you.

(19) *(Mphaka o tšwa ka kantorong ya mookamedi a inamišitše hlogo mola mookamedi yena a mo lebelela ka go mo utswa a le setulong le go mo ntšha ka sefero a sa dire.) (p. 59-60)*



(Mphaka leaves the supervisor's office with his head bowed. The supervisor looks at him slyly from his chair without accompanying him to the door.)

Act 4, Scene 1 is introduced by the following directions:

(20) *(Dikolo di ile ge di tswalelwa Mphaka le ba lapa la gagwe ba napa ba hudugela letsheng la Mogadisho moo a bego a filwe mošomo wa bofahloši gona lekaleng la histori.)* (p. 61)

*(At the end of the school term, Mphaka and his family moved to Mogadisho where he accepted the post of lecturer in history.)*

After these stage directions the dialogue between Hunadi and Mphaka continues as follows:

(21) Hunadi: O ka re mo gona ke gae mogatšaka. (p. 61)  
This feels like a real home, my husband.

(22) Mphaka: O realo? (p. 61)  
Do you think so?

(23) Hunadi:

Ke bona go phala kua re bego re le gona.

Ba bjang kua o rutang gona? (p. 61)

It is much better than there where we were. How are the people there where you are lecturing?

The dialogue has shifted from Mookamedi and Mphaka in Takone to Hunadi and Mphaka in Mogadisho. Although the audience can conclude from the dialogue between Mphaka and Hunadi in (21) and (23) that they are now in another country, it is only the reader who, with the aid of stage directions, knows exactly how much time has passed and what happened in the mean time.

For a performance sufficient props would have to be built into the performance text to ensure that the audience is not confused. It should be kept in mind that, despite the fact that the dialogue between Hunadi and Mphaka occurs in their house, the scene cannot be identical to previous ones since they are now living in a new house in Mogadisho. Therefore it would seem that the stage directions of a performance text would have to be adapted.

Other interesting examples of time lapses can be found on pages 63 and 95. The dialogue between Hunadi and Mphaka in Act 4, Scene 1 ends as follows:

- (24) Hunadi: Re duletše dikgang e bile ke lebetše le gore o swanetše go ya mošomong. (p. 63)  
We are so involved in the conversation that I forgot you are supposed to go to work.
- (25) Mphaka: Go lokile le nna ke tla no ke phuthaphutha diaparo le go bona ge sefatanaga se lokile. (p. 63)  
It's all right. I shall pack up my clothes and see if the car is in a good condition.

The next complicated stage directions, involving four proxemic changes, follow the dialogue quoted above:

- (26) Mphaka: *(Mphaka o ile go ja a tsena sefatanageng sa gagwe a napa a leba Yunibesithing. O rile a sa le gare a ruta a biletšwa mogala wa go tšwa sekolong sa boSebola. E rile morago ga sekolo a napa a leba go hlogo ya sekolo yoo a bego a rata go boledišana le yena ka ga morwagwe Sebola.)* (p. 63)  
*(Mphaka got into his car and went straight to the university. While he was busy teaching he was called to the telephone for a call from Sebola's school. The*

*school principal wanted to talk to him about his son, Sebola.)*

The dialogue between Mphaka and Nkono, the school principal, follows immediately after the stage directions, i.e. the dialogue leaps from the lecture room to the school and only the reader knows through the abovementioned narration how much has happened in between, e.g.:

(27) **Noko:** Dula fase Morena Mphaka. (p. 63)  
Sit down, Mr Mphaka.

(28) **Mphaka:** Ke a leboga. (p. 63)  
Thank you.

This means that as a result of these stage directions the reader will be aware of the change in fictional space, but the audience will be at a disadvantage unless the producer interprets and presents the detail skillfully, such as by means of a narrator.

The following example is taken from Act 5, Scene 4. After the dialogue between Letsota and Ntlhore, a stage direction indicates their exit. The stage directions of the ensuing scene (Act 5, Scene 5) is of a narrative nature and gives no proxemic information. The reader is, however, informed of the passage of time. The question now arises: how will this information be passed on to the audience since the dramatist does not indicate props at all? The dialogue between Mphaka and Hunadi

starts immediately after the directions without the characters' having been spatially placed, e.g:

- (29) (Act 5, Scene 4)  
 (Ba a tšwa.) (p. 95)  
 (They exit.)
- (30) (Act 5, Scene 5)  
 (*E šetše e le lebaka bjale mmušo o mofsa wa Letsha la Mogadisho o swere marapo gomme ditaba di thomile go emela Mphaka le ba lapa ka maoto.*) (p. 95)  
 (*Some time has passed since the new regime has come to power in Mogadisho and things have begun to go wrong for Mphaka and his family.*)
- (31) Mphaka: (*O nyamile.*) Ruri madimabe ga a hlapše.  
 (p. 95)  
 (*He feels dejected.*) Really, the evil does not grow less.
- (32) Hunadi: Go hlomile bjang, tholo? (p. 95)  
 What is the state of affairs, tholo?

The narrative character of the stage directions cited above undermines the ostension of this scene. A producer will have to adapt the stage

directions to accommodate the expectations of an audience.

If the proxemic information in this text is traced, it is significant that 15 of the 23 scenes take place in Mphaka's house. The proxemic information fixes the attention on the family who find themselves alone in a foreign country and reflects the internal focus of the drama on Mphaka and his family. It becomes a sign of their loneliness and suffering in the different foreign countries.

Although proxemic markers in the stage directions include only physical areas of action such as rooms in Mphaka's house or his office at the university, Bonwatau is suggested in various places in the text as an imaginary locale, e.g.:

(33) Hunadi:

Se sengwe gape seo se ka bego se ferehla  
kgopolo tša gagwe ke go duma go boela  
Bonwatau le go yo bona metswalle ya gagwe.  
(p. 29)

Another aspect which might be influencing his thinking might be his desire to return to Bonwatau and to see his relatives.

(34) Mphaka:

Bonwatau re tla boela ge dilo di ka  
kaonafala. (p. 90)

To Bonwatau we shall return when things improve.

(35) Mphaka: Go fetela dileteng tše dingwe go ka se sa nthuša selo. Bokaone ke gomele Bonwatau. (p. 102)

It will not help me to go to other countries. It is better that I return to Bonwatau.

(36) Mphaka: Ke bone, naga ga di etelane. Ke feditše, ke ya gae Bonwatau! (p. 104)

I have seen, countries do not visit one another. I am going home to Bonwatau!

Mphaka and his family often recall their native land, **Bonwatau**, in their minds. The dramatist uses these flights of fantasy effectively to create a contrast between their current position in a foreign country and that to which they were accustomed in **Bonwatau**. The isolation and unfortunate circumstances of this family are emphasised by this imaginary space and matches the theme of the drama.

Time also plays a significant role; the period (in terms of days, months and years) in which the events take place can be determined only by cross-reference between stage directions and dialogue. It will be much easier for the reader because s/he can interrupt the reading process at any stage to page backwards and forwards and thereby control the information.

References to time appear on pages 4, 16, 55, 61, and 102 of the dramatic text. When all these cross-references are assimilated it is possible to calculate the period of time that Mphaka and his family spent abroad, viz. five years. Three years were spent in Demoke, one year in Takone and another year in Mogadisho. This interpretation is very important to the reader because it is only now that s/he will be able to realise the effect and emotional implications of this long separation from home on Mphaka.

Interpretations of this nature would unfortunately not be available for a theatre audience and this type of stage direction and cross-reference is more customary to the interpretation of prose fiction than to the interpretation of drama and theatre.

#### 2.2.3.2 Information about characters and action

Because of the range and variety of information conveyed to the reader by means of the didascalies, it is clear that the fictional characters of the drama are not introduced only by means of the traditional methods of characterisation, such as dialogue and conduct, but also by descriptions in the stage directions, for example facial expression, gestures, movements, actions, physical appearance, emotions or voice descriptions. Therefore, the reader can learn a great deal about the characters simply by considering the stage directions. Studying the didascalies in isolation, however, will result in a one-sided reading of the text.



In *Naga ga di etelane* the characters are not introduced to the reader in terms of physical appearance. Instead the stage directions concentrate on their emotional behaviour. It is, however, up to the reader and/or director to interpret the stage directions correctly in the given context.

In my analysis I shall concentrate on the characterisation of Mphaka, Hunadi and the Voice (Mphaka's mother) while looking at the interaction between the stage directions and the dialogue.

#### 2.2.3.2.1 Mphaka

From the outset Mphaka is portrayed as a character who suffers emotional agony. His opening soliloquy is charged with strong emotion. The accompanying stage directions on pages 1 and 2 of the text illustrate his emotional state, for example (separate numbering of lines done by me):

(37)

1. Mphaka:        (*O bolela a noši.*) Ke be ke lebanwe ke kgetho.  
                      (*Soliloquy.*) I have come to a choice.
  
2.                    Tsela di be di le phakgapedi!  
                      The way indicated two different routes!
  
3.                    Na ke be ke swanetše go hwa ke sa phela?  
                      Was I meant to die while I was still alive?

4. Ke bitlelwa ke ipona?  
Me buried while I look on?
5. Aowa! (*O šišinya hlogo.*) Le nna ke be ke nyaka  
No! (*He shakes his head.*) I also had a desire
6. Go swana le mantho a mangwe.  
To be like other people.
7. Ke tšhaba go šilaganywa le go fufatšwa kgopolo ke  
itebeletše  
I am afraid of being confused and blinded while I am  
looking on
8. Ke boifa go hupetšwa sehutamoya sa moya wa ka;  
I fear that my soul is being smothered;
9. Go hlalana le dikgopolo tša ka tše nanana,  
To be divorced from my tender feelings,
10. Tšeo go thwego ke meetlwa go bangwe.  
Which to others are thorns in the flesh.
11. Bana ba ka bona ke be ke tla ba lesa bjang  
How would I ever be able to leave my children

12. **Ba enwa meetse a tsebo sedibaneng se fatilwego ke bangwe?**  
To drink the water of knowledge which was dug out by others?
13. **Botho bja ka ka moka bo thennwe boka kgapa yeo peu ya yona**  
My whole being is degraded like a ram whose seed
14. **E sa hlwego e nyakwa!**  
Is no longer wanted!
15. **Ke kitelwe dijo ganong,**  
Food is pushed down my throat,
16. **Ke re ke betola ba re o a nyankga**  
When I am about to vomit they say I am boasting
17. **O itshema mothonyana moisa te!**  
You think you are somebody, fellow!
18. ***(O itia tafola ka letswele.)***  
*(He hits the table with his fist.)*
19. **Matlakane a ntswetše! Ka bontšhwa lehu ka mahlo**  
Matlakane has given birth to me! I nearly died

20.           **Ke sa bolaya motho!**  
While I have not murdered anyone!
21.           **Aowa, go kgetha gona ke be ke tlamegile.**  
No, to make that choice was compulsory for me.
22.           **Go kgetha tselapeding tše.**  
To decide between these two roads.
23.           **Go tšwa ka difate tša borare,**  
To leave the land of my fathers,
24.           **Go yo tsoma mafulo a matala dileteng tše dingwe.**  
To look for green pastures in other countries.
25.           **Go iphešoša moneneri, mosepedimajaditala**  
To change into a tramp, a vagabond
26.           **Go ena le gore ke binele sefogojane sa komašele.**  
Rather than to dance to the tune of others.
27.           ***(O ribega hlogo tafoleng.)***  
*(He puts his head on the table.)*
28.           **Go bohloko bjang go kgaolelwa lešika la meloko!**  
It is so painful to tear apart a family of  
generations!

29. **Go ahlogana le dithakangwaga tša gago ke polao**  
To be separated from your contemporaries is murder
30. **Go hwela ditšhabeng ke bogoboga;**  
To die in a foreign place is a disgrace;
31. **Eupša ke be ke lebanwe ke kgetho -**  
But I had to make a choice -
32. **Kgetho tselapeding tše ...**  
A choice between these two roads...
33. **Gore botho bjaka bo se tle bja thakgolwa**  
So that I do not lose my humanity
34. **Ke kgethile go tšwa ka difate - mohlomongwe go tšwela ruri,**  
My choice was to move to other countries - maybe forever,
35. **Go ya moo ke tlogo fiwa tlotlo,**  
To go where I could get recognition,
36. **Ka phela, ka phediša le ba ka...**  
To live and let my family live...

The use of a soliloquy in the opening scene is striking and effective. This type of self-representation contains a verbal sign of high status and can be of much value to the reader/audience. The dramatist uses the soliloquy to transfer concentrated information on the main character, Mphaka. The reader/audience is immediately drawn into the intimate openheartedness of Mphaka's search of his own soul. When the soliloquy is investigated in more detail, the following interesting conclusions may be drawn.

Typographically this section differs from the rest of the text in that it is printed in verse form, displaying a poetic nature of considerable beauty. The typographic composition of the soliloquy influences the reader to read it in a specific way - as a poem.

The soliloquy consists of 37 lines which could, according to the narrative content, be divided into 3 parts, each of which correlates with one aspect of the main character's suffering. Lines 1 to 20 represent the first part. It is informative and retrospective by nature and indicates Mphaka's past suffering. The second part is from lines 21 to 32 and refers to his introspective predicament. The last part starts at line 33 and introduces a shift in the soliloquy when Mphaka gives motives for his self-imposed exile.

The soliloquy is characterised by the use of poetic language, which, in turn, makes an appeal on the receptiveness of the reader. The choice (*kgetho*) that Mphaka had to make in the past is brought to the fore in this soliloquy by being presented as a statement in the first line. It

is repeated in lines 21, 22, 31, 32 and 34. The use of the compound nouns *phakgapedi* (line 2) and *tselapeding* (lines 22 and 32) is highly significant because of the semantic link between these nouns and the choice he had to make. The two roads to which the nouns refer, symbolise the choice Mphaka had to make as well as his internal struggle and suffering.

Sentences 2, 3, 4 and 5 acquire additional meaning through the use of exclamation and question marks. These punctuation marks - didascalies in their own right - emphasise Mphaka's frustration on the one hand and his uncertainty on the other, linking up with the ambiguity he is experiencing in his life. A degree of semantic incongruity exists between the words *die* (*hwa*) and *alive* (*phela*) in line 3. It has an ironic effect in this question and bears reference to the ambiguity mentioned previously.

In line 5 Mphaka reacts strongly against all his questions. The accompanying stage direction (*o šišinya hlogo*) confirms his rebelliousness. However, he tries to justify his attitude by giving reasons for his actions. His answers are characterised by the use of enjambment - reflecting the progressive unfolding of his conscience and the narrative, yet disjunctive nature of his line of thought.

The dramatist often makes use of figures of speech, like the simile in line 13. The verbal focus, is degraded, in this metaphorical construction, denotes Mphaka's whole being and the association with unwanted seed in line 14 fortifies this image. The use of the verbal

focus forcing (*kitelwe*) in line 15 creates an atmosphere of impending violence against Mphaka and is again confirmed by his aggressor's remarks in line 17.

References to his father's age group (*Matlakane*) in line 19, his fathers, i.e. ancestors in line 23 and his family in line 28 become more significant later in the play. His mother torments him in his dreams and becomes a sign of his conscience and responsibility towards his ancestors to return to the land of his birth.

From line 22 the reader's attention is directed towards the repetition of a specific syntactic structure. The repetition of the corresponding prefixes (the infinitive in lines 21-25, the copulative in lines 26-28 and the infinitive again in lines 29-30) binds this part into a compact unit and causes the reader to search for a possible link on the semantic level as well. The different choices Mphaka had to make are emphasised in the parallel structures introduced by the repetition of the sound sequence *go* in the abovementioned lines. The repetition brings to the fore his separation from everything he adores and emphasises Mphaka's state of mind and his continued internal suffering.

The phrase - maybe forever (*mohlomongwe go tšwela ruri*) (line 34) emphasised by the use of a dash, signals Mphaka's own uncertainty and becomes, in a wider context, a sign of his ongoing search for peace and prosperity. In this last section Mphaka supplies reasons for his decision. In the course of the soliloquy his initial hate and reproach



change into acceptance, linking up with the cyclic pattern which characterises the entire play.

Another interesting observation is that the intensity of the stage directions in lines 1, 5, 18 and 27 of the text increases according to Mphaka's emotional condition and support his soliloquy very well.

The poetic richness of this play is evident not only in the micro-structure of this soliloquy, but also influences the macro-structure of the text as a whole and demanding a great deal from the reader. However, in the following investigation we shall have to watch the play's poetic inclinations as regards their possible influence on ostension.

In this drama the dramatist makes frequent use of soliloquies to reveal Mphaka's innermost feelings to the reader/audience and to emphasise the feeling of emotional suffering. His bitterness, fears, self-reproach and indecision become clear as the story of his life unfolds through further soliloquies on pages 3, 7, 13, 67, 100, 102 of the text.

which his mother urges him to return to his country  
 significant role in this drama. The dramatist uses the  
 successfully to prepare the reader/audience  
 fer from fictional reality to psychological  
 isual as well as auditive signals, e.g:

(37)

*(Ke bošego Hunadi le Mphaka ba bonala ba le ka malaong go lla hlaka la nko. Mphaka o bonala a bilokana a bitšwa ke Lentšu la mosadi.) (p. 8)*

*(It is night. Hunadi and Mphaka are visible where they are in bed snoring. Mphaka is visible where he is tossing and turning and being called by the Voice of a woman.)*

The dream occurs a second time and the transition is once again marked by a stage direction, e.g.:

(38)

*(O a ikhurumolla mme o tima lebone, lentšu lela le kwala gape ge ba se no go robala.)*

*(p. 9)*

*(He opens himself and turns off the light. The voice is audible once again as soon as they are asleep.)*

The dream fulfils many functions. In the first place Mphaka's mother urges him on:

- (39) **Lentsšu:** Mphaka! Mphaka! Ke re ge o ka se ke wa tliša bana bao gae pele ke ikela boyabatho o ka se lokelwe ke selo. (p. 9)
- Mphaka! Mphaka! I say! If you do not bring those children home before I die, nothing will work well for you.

This ultimatum motivates the plot and creates tension. In all events Mphaka sees the dream as a central point. He tries to explain everything in terms of the dream, and frequently refers back to it, for example:

- (40) **Mphaka:** O a tseba mabakeng a go swana le le, ke fela ke gopola toro yela ya go lala e ntlhobaetša bošego ka moka. (p. 31)
- You know, in instances such as this one I often think back to that dream which troubled me throughout the night.

In the second place the dream has a characterising function. The dream becomes a sign with two meanings. On the negative side it represents Mphaka's conscience through self-reproach, rejection and treachery, while on the positive side the dream becomes a vision of peace, prosperity and harmony in his land of origin: a reflection of the theme of the drama.

Although his suffering, wisdom and understanding are reflected in his soliloquies, it becomes evident, from his impatience with his wife who

*Treachery*

insists on knowing what torments him, that he can no longer cope with the emotional stress, for example:

- (41) Hunadi:                   O hloma bjang na tholo? (p. 2)  
What is the problem tholo?
- (42) Mphaka:                   O ra ge ke reng? (*O mo lebeletše ka mahlong.*) (p. 2)  
Why do you ask? (*He looks her in the eye.*)
- (43) Hunadi:                   (*O mo tsepeletše ka mahlo.*) O reng wa bolela o nnoši? (p. 2)  
(*She looks him directly in the eye.*) Why is it that you are talking to yourself?
- (44) Mphaka:                   (*O inamiša hlogo.*) O nkwele ge ke reng mosadi tena? (p. 2)  
(*He lowers his head.*) What did you hear me say, woman?

The argument continues on p. 3:

- (45) Hunadi:                   Se re gwaele rena. E le mang yo a rego o segafi? (p. 3)  
Don't be rude to us. Who said you were mad?

(46) Mphaka: Matlakane a maso! Mosadi yo o reng! O sa tšo re ke be ke balabala, eupša o re ga ke segafi. O šupang ge o reallo? (p. 3)

Alas! What is this woman saying! You did say I was talking to myself, but now you say I am not mad. What are you referring to when you say that?

(47) Hunadi: (*O bolela ka boleta.*) Aowa, papa, ge go na le se se go tshwenyago pelong o ka napa wa šitwa ke go mpegela ke le mogatšago? (p. 3)

(She speaks harshly.) No, father, if there is something which is troubling your heart, how is it possible that you will not tell me, your own wife?

(48) Mphaka: (*O a mo fotlela.*) Gageno segafi se tseba ditaba? (p. 3)

(He snubs her.) Is there a mad one among your people who knows all?

Another example can be found in Act 1, Scene 2:

(49) Mphaka: A nke o ntlogele o boele ka gae. (p. 11)  
Leave me alone and go back into the house.

- (50) Hunadi: Ke go tlogele. Ga o bone ge nako ya go ya kerekeng e šetše e re šiya? (p. 11)  
Must I leave you? Can't you see we are going to be late for church?
- (51) Mphaka: Sepelang le ntlogele ke le bjalo. (p. 11)  
You go and leave me as I am.
- (52) Hunadi: (*O tlabegile e bile o befetšwe.*) O re sepelang! Naa wena ga o sa ya kerekeng? (p. 11)  
(*She is amazed and even angry.*) Are you saying we should go? Are you not coming to church with us?
- (53) Mphaka: Se mphate diganong. Ke re sepelang le ye kerekeng yeo ya lena.  
Do not tease me. I say, go to that church of yours.

Mphaka's tension is embodied in the stage direction and the accompanying dialogue. Hunadi's suspicion and questions place more pressure on him. In an attempt to protect himself he always distances himself from his family. Whereas initially he was to go to church with them, he now withdraws and in (53) refers deictically to "that" church of "yours". His actions can be seen as an index of his guilt towards his family; he feels responsible for the position in which they find themselves.



- (59) Mphaka:                    (*O mo laetša seeta sa gagwe sa nkwanakolobe.*) (p. 17)  
(*He shows him his sharpnose shoe.*)
- (60) Rola:                        (*O a emelela a katakata ka sa morago.*)  
(p. 18)  
(*He stands up and moves backwards.*)
- (61) Mphaka:                    (*O fela a mmatamela.*) (p. 18)  
(*He moves closer and closer to him.*)
- (62) Mphaka:                    (*O a mmatamela mola Rola yena a katakata a lebile monyako.*) (p. 18)  
(*He moves closer and closer while Rola retreats to the door.*)
- (63) Kala:                        (*O swara Rola ka letsogo.*) (p. 18)  
(*He grabs Rola by his arm.*)
- (64) Rola:                        (*O tšwele ka ngwakong o bolela a eme pele ga monyako.*) (p. 18)  
(*He has left the house and is talking while he stands at the entrance.*)

In the second example Kala and Rola vex Mphaka with questions concerning his country of birth. Mphaka's patience is tried to the extreme. His self-control and resoluteness crumble as he is humiliated by Kala:



(65) Mphaka:

*(O fedile pelo o mwa galase ya mafelelo ka lebelo.)* Ke bona gore go tšwa ka madi ga go botse. Ke be ke re re tla bolela senna eupša ge le bona nke ke tsenatsena ditaba tša naga ya gabolena ke tla le tlogela.

(p. 48)

*(His patience has worn out. He empties the last glass quickly.)* I see bloodshed is not good. I thought we would talk reasonably, but if you think I interfere with your land's affairs, I shall leave you.

(66) Kala:

Ga a sepele. Tša gabo di mo paletše o bona nke a ka tla a rarolla mathata a rena. Lekgoba tow! Tšwa! (p. 48)

Let him go. He could not solve their problems; now he thinks he will be able to solve ours. Dirty slave! Get out!

(67) Mphaka:

*(O befetšwe.)* Phoo! *(O tšwa mare.)* lešilo tow! O sa le kgole le tlabologo. *(O a tšwa.)* (p. 48)

*(He is angry.)* Poo! *(He spits.)* You fool! You are still far away from civilisation. *(He goes out.)*

In both confrontations Mphaka refuses to be humiliated. He defends his country of birth at all cost. His patriotism is confirmed in various instances in the text, for example:

(68) Mphaka: Gae ke gae. Le ge motho a ka garama le dilete, a lokologa moyeng, a fiwa mahumo le maemo dileteng di šele, moya wa gagwe o tla fela o mmošša gore mo ga se gageno. (p. 5)

Your home is your home. Even though one might bounce between countries, and find freedom, wealth and status in foreign countries, your soul will always tell you this is not your home.

Mphaka's actions are in contrast with the choice he made to leave his country of birth. This contrast explains the duality in his life: his yearning for his family in Bonwatau, and his inner conflict.

Mphaka's dedication to his students can be seen clearly in this dialogue with Tokari:

(69) Mphaka: O a tseba ke swanetše go ya sekolwaneng sa mantšibua lehono? (p. 23)

You know I must go to evening classes tonight.

(70) Tokari:

Ba tloga ba holofetša? (p. 23)

Are they keen?

(71) Mphaka:

Aowa, molato ga o gona re sa ntše re katana le bona le go ba tloša dithoko tša leswiswi. (p. 23)

No, there are no problems there, it is just a struggle to remove the blinkers from their eyes.

He also criticises the attitudes of the people of Takone regarding instruction, for example:

(72) Mphaka:

Se se mmakatšago ke gore batho ba geno mafelelong a kgwedi o ka re ba tloga ba tsenwa ke mafufunyane. Ga ba rate go kwa selo ka dithuto. (p. 24)

What surprises me most is that your people are confronted with hysteria at the end of the month. Then they want to know nothing about instruction.

Mphaka's determination and inner strength are confirmed in his conversation with Tokari:

(73) Mphaka:

Motho ge a ikgafetše go hwetša thuto, ga go seo se ka mo thibelago go e hwetša.

(p. 24)

If one is determined to get an education, there is nothing to stop one from getting it.

From the above examples it becomes clear that Mphaka places a high premium on education and that dedication and hard work are a priority to him. However, he realises the extent to which foreigners are discriminated against and refuses to be humiliated to that degree. Mphaka realises for the first time that he has erred in his judgement and considers leaving Takone:

(74) Mphaka:

Nna ke bona nke ge re ka tshelela thokong yela ya Letsha la Mogadisho re ka amogelwa. (p. 44)

I think if we can cross over in the direction of the Mogadisho lake we will be accepted.

After their arrival in Mogadisho Mphaka realises that his decision has had a traumatic result on his family. His underlying guilt is suggested in the dialogue with Hunadi. He fears that he will be reproached and rejected by his wife and children and he pleads for family unity.

(75) Mphaka:

... Fela seo o swanetšego go se lemoga ke gore ge o tshetše mellwane le lapa la gago le swanetše go ipopa ngatana... (p. 62)

... But the thing you should keep in mind is when you are abroad with your family you should stand together...

(76) Mphaka:

Seo le swanetšego go se ela hloko ke gore go se be yoo a fegago yo mongwe molato. (p. 62)

What you should remember is that not one of us should blame the others for our trouble.

When everything goes wrong for Mphaka and his family in Mogadisho, his unselfish nature shows on page 76 of the text as he explains to Hunadi why he has allowed himself to suffer all these years:

(77) Mphaka:

... ditlogolwana tša rena di tla tseba seo re se diretšego lefase la ka ntle. Ba tla kwa bohloko ge re sa direla bona bokamoso bjoo, eupša histori e tla ba anegela tša rena. Maina a rena a tla dula dipelong tša bona go ya go sa felego. (p. 76)

... our grandchildren will know the things that we have done abroad. They will be sad if we did not create a future for

them, but history will tell them about us. Our names will live in their hearts forever.

After all his migrations and disappointments, Mphaka finds answers to the internal struggle in his heart. His conversation with Lebitsi is self-revealing. He is prepared to repent and realises all he has lost. The dramatist uses parallelism as a specific stylistic device to show the retroversive insight to which the main character has come, e.g.:

(78) Mphaka:

Go tseba gore ga o gageno gomme o ka se dire boithatelo. Go tseba gore o amogetšwe ka se tee. Go tseba gore lešika la meloko le kgaotšwe. Go tseba gore o mokgopedi kae le kae mo o yago. Go tseba gore wena le ba gago le timeletšwe ke segagabolena. Go feta tše ka moka, Lebitsi, go se tsebe gore marapo a gago a tlo robotšwa kae ge o ile bohunamatolo. (p. 69)

To realise that you are not at your own home and that therefore you cannot enforce your own will. To realise that you are not very welcome. To realise that the family generation has been broken. To realise that everywhere you go you are a beggar. To realise that you and your family have lost your family traditions.

More than all that, Lebitsi, not to know  
where you will be buried the day you die.

This portion bears close reference to the soliloquy in the opening scene. The dramatist concretises Mphaka's self-realisation and suffering by putting the syntactic structure, **Go tseba**, in the foreground in the first five sentences of his dialogue. The multiple use of the parallel structure is semantically significant, functioning as a verbal sign of Mphaka's final turning point. It is used to name everything which Mphaka has lost and thus to portray the intensity of his feelings.

In the last sentence (sentence 6) a contrast is created by the prominent deviation from the syntactic structure of the preceding five sentences, with the use of the negative, "not to know". This sentence occupies the key position in the dialogue and becomes a sign of his spiritual destruction - he does not even know where he will be buried.

In Mphaka's closing dialogue the title is repeated once again as in the preface, indicating a confession to the reader by the playwright:

(79) Mphaka:

Therešo ke therešo, ke be nka se kgone go  
e uta. Ke bone, naga ga di etelane. Ke  
feditše, ke ya gae Bonwatau! (p. 104)

The truth is the truth. I would not be  
able to hide it. I have seen that  
countries do not visit one another. I am  
finished, I am going home to Bonwatau.

This confession also confirms the end of a cycle of voluntary banishment for the dramatist.

#### 2.2.3.2.2 Hunadi

After Mphaka's dream Hunadi realises that something is troubling her husband. Her concern comes to light clearly in the following soliloquy:

(80) Hunadi: *(O bolela a noši.)* Monna yo bjale e ka ba o hloma bjang? A re go tsoga a timelela bjalo ka phoka. Mme a ntswetše! Monna yo o hloma bjang! Mphaka! Mphaka! Ka basadi! Monna yo o tsenwe ke eng. (p. 10)

*(Soliloquy.)* What could be the matter with this man? He gets up and disappears like dew before the sun. Mother who bore me! What is wrong with this man! Mphaka! Mphaka! Goodness, what could have happened to the man.

Hunadi's utterance fulfils an expressive function in the sense that her character is reflected in her language. The use of questions and exclamations emphasises her concern and extreme frustration at her husband's condition. Once Hunadi discovers her husband's problem they have a heated conversation. By studying just the stage directions which accompany the dialogue, the intensity of this frustration and worry can be discovered, for example:



- (81) Hunadi: *(O fihlile go yena o a mo šišinya.)*  
(p. 10)  
*(She comes to him and shakes him.)*
- (82) Mphaka: *(O a phapharega.)* (p. 10)  
*(He gets up.)*
- (83) Mphaka: *(O mo lebelela ka mahlong.)* (p. 10)  
*(He looks her in the eye.)*
- (84) Hunadi: *(O maketše.)* (p. 10)  
*(She is surprised.)*
- (85) Hunadi: *(O mo tsepeletše ka mahlo.)* (p. 10)  
*(She looks him in the eye.)*
- (86) Hunadi: *(O tlabegile e bile o befetšwe.)* (p. 11)  
*(She is surprised, even angry.)*
- (87) Hunadi: *(O thoma go fela pelo.)* (p. 11)  
*(She becomes impatient.)*
- (88) Hunadi: *(O leka go mo rapela.)* (p. 11)  
*(She tries to plead with him.)*
- (89) Hunadi: *(O kwatama pele ga gagwe.)* (p. 11)  
*(She kneels before him.)*

- (90) Mphaka:                    (*O ema ka go ikgoga le go ngaletša.*)  
                                       (p. 11)  
                                       (*He stands up reluctantly.*)

Hunadi's frustration comes to the fore clearly as the intensity of the stage directions increases. Her emotional state reaches a climax in directions (87) and (88). Her frustration changes to desperation and is embodied in her physical action when she pleads with Mphaka on her knees. These stage directions are visual and contain many auditive undertones. For a stage production these directions are highly suitable since they augment the dialogue very well and allow the scene to be presented dramatically.

The tension between Mphaka and Hunadi increases. In Act 1, Scene 4 they are involved in an argument once again after Mphaka's refusal to accompany them to church and his late arrival at home:

- (91) Mphaka:                    Molato ke eng mogatšaka? (p. 20)  
                                       What is the matter, wife?
- (92) Hunadi:                    (*Ga a fetole.*) (p. 20)  
                                       (*She does not reply.*)
- (93) Mphaka:                    Mmago Raisibe ke re molato ke eng? (p. 20)  
                                       Mother of Raisibe, what is the matter, I  
                                       ask you?

- (94) **Hunadi:** *(O befetšwe ga a rate go mo lebelela ka mahlong.)* Ruri o na le mokgwa monna tena!  
(p. 20)  
*(She is angry and does not want to look him in the eye.)* Truly, there is something wrong with you!
- (95) **Mphaka:** *(O mo lebeletše.)* Se ntlabele lefeela hle.  
(p. 20)  
*(He looks at her.)* Please do not embarrass me.
- (96) **Hunadi:** O reng? Ke sona seo se go dirileng gore o se ke wa ya kerekeng. (p. 20)  
What do you say? Is it that thing which caused you not to go to church?
- (97) **Mphaka:** O bolela ka eng bjale? (p. 20)  
What are you talking about?
- (98) **Hunadi:** *(O dula ka marago bolaong o lebela thoko.)*  
O šitilwe ke eng go mpotša gore o nyaka go yo nwa lehono? (p. 20)  
*(She is sitting on the bed looking away.)*  
What has prevented you from telling me that you wanted to go drinking today?

(99) Mphaka:

O ra gore ke tagilwe ge o realo? (p. 20)  
Do you mean to say that I am drunk?

(100) Hunadi:

Ba hlwe ba realo ka moka. Motho a re a  
ipona a fihlile ka maribana a fela a re ba  
re ke tagilwe! (p. 20)

All of them always say so. One can see  
plainly that they are on the verge of the  
cliff and still say, they say I am drunk!

(101) Mphaka:

Ge o realo gona hle, ntshwarele mogatšaka.  
(p. 20)

If you say so then please forgive me, my  
dear wife.

(102) Hunadi:

Nko re motho ge a no thoma makatika re le  
mo gare ga naga re tla leba kae! (p. 20)

If someone begins with his tricks while we  
are sitting between here and nowhere,  
where shall we go!

(103) Mphaka:

Ke go kwele hle Hunadi wa ka, fo mpha  
tsebe gannyane. (p. 20)

I heard you, my Hunadi, just listen.

(104) Hunadi:

O gona mosadi yo a ka emelago tše o di dirago? O tsogile o kokobane leswikeng e sa le ka masa o ka re o kgaramanyane. O boile o tšwa go galampela digalagala tšeo tša lena. Ntumelele ke ipoelele Bonwatau le bana ba ba ka ge re go lapišitše.

(p. 20)

Is there a woman who would be satisfied with what you are doing? You got up and crouched down on a rock while it was still dark, as if you were a rock lizard. You came back from indulging in those strong liquors of yours. Allow me to return to Bonwatau with my children if we have tired you out.

The stage directions in (92), (94), (95) and (98) use both auditive and visual means to suggest the tense atmosphere which exists between Hunadi and Mphaka and support the dialogue very well. Hunadi makes strong demands on their relationship; in (96) she blames her husband for his silence and her disappointment is confirmed by the questions she asks him.

Mphaka realises that he has hurt Hunadi and tries all within his power to make peace with her in (101) and (103). Hunadi, however, remains dissatisfied with his actions. In (102) Hunadi indirectly blames him for the situation in which they are. Her dialogue in (104) is used

retroversively to refer to the events of the morning once again. This emphasises Hunadi's anguish about her husband's condition and her inability to discover what troubles him. The dramatist uses this dialogue subtly to expose the core of Hunadi's anger - her concern for her husband and her inability to determine the cause of his frustration. Hunadi tries to put her husband to the test when she says: "Allow me to return to Bonwatau with my children if we have tired you out."

In Act 2, Scene 2 Mphaka and Hunadi receive a letter from Sebola's headmaster in which he expresses his dissatisfaction with Sebola's progress at school. The following dialogue takes place between Mphaka and Hunadi:

(105) Mphaka:

Di ntletše dimpa! (p. 30)

I am at a loss!

(106) Hunadi:

Ge re re o sekolong yena o etše fela go  
bapala le go tsupulelana melomo le  
barutiši ba gagwe? (p. 30)

While we think he is at school he plays  
around and blows up his mouth at his  
teachers?

(107) Mphaka:

Ke bona gore ge a tseno mo mantšibua ke  
swanetše go mo swaraswara. (p. 30)

I think when he comes home this evening I  
should get hold of him.

(108) Hunadi:

Aowa papa, se thome ka go mo swaraswara.

Nyakišiša modu wa taba pele. (p. 31)

No, daddy, do not begin by getting hold of him, look for the root of the trouble first.

(109) Mphaka:

O ra basadi! O šetše o thomile go bea  
lepheko! (p. 31)

Women! You are putting up barriers  
already!

(110) Hunadi:

Ke kgopela fela gore o bonane le hlogo ya  
sekolo pele. E re ge o kwele mathomo le  
boteng bja taba ye e be gona o ka letšago  
moretlwa. (p. 31)

I ask merely that you should speak to the  
headmaster first. Only when you have  
determined the cause and the intensity of  
the matter should you allow the cane to  
speak.

(111) Mphaka:

O mphentše fao gona mogatšaka. Ke tla leka  
bjalo ka moswane. (p. 31)

You are right, my wife. I shall do so  
tomorrow.

The personalities of these two characters are revealed by this conversation. Mphaka quickly becomes emotional and aggressive (possibly because of the pressures which are already exerted upon him). He wants to punish Sebola immediately in (107). Hunadi is more discreet and tries to bring Mphaka to his senses in (108). She makes constructive proposals in (110) to try and solve the problem. Hunadi's strong role as mother and mediator between father and son is clear. The fact that in (111) Mphaka recognises that Hunadi was correct, confirms his trust in his wife's judgement.

After this conversation Mphaka makes the following remark:

(112) Mphaka:

O a tseba mabakeng a go swana le le, ke fela ke gopola toro yela ya go lala e ntlhobaetša bošego ka moka. (p. 31)

You know, in times like these I often think of that dream which kept me awake all night.

Mphaka is clearly the uncertain one. He always relates problems to himself and to the decision he made to take his family away from their land of birth. This becomes a constant sign of his uncertainty and suffering. Hunadi, on the other hand, tries to keep the family's morale high by her positive attitude and by creating unanimity between them.

In Act 3, Scene 1 Mphaka and Hunadi discuss their future in Takone:



(113) Mphaka:

Ke kgakanegong mogatšaka. Ke tloga ke inyatša e le ruri ge ke ile ka re re tšwe ka difate. (p. 41)

I am confused, my wife. I feel small because I said that we should leave our home/land.

(114) Hunadi:

*(O tlabegile o bile o nyakile go tšholla fofo.)* Mphaka! Wa be wa le tshwa le lebjalo? (p. 41)

*(She is dumbfounded and almost spills her tea.)* Mphaka! you spit it out like that?

(115) Mphaka:

Ke reng ge re ile re phephiša bana re ba lahletše ka mollong. (p. 41)

What should I say, for we thought we were trying to save the children but now we have thrown them into the fire.

(116) Hunadi:

Ijo, o sa ntšhošitše! Bjale o bona seo re ka se dirago e leng? (p. 41)

Goodness, you frighten me! And now, what do you think we can do?

(117) Mphaka:

Go široga. (p. 41)

Leave.

(118) Hunadi: Mmahwile! Naa re tla feletša kae go ba bonmatseleng? (p. 41)

Goodness, when will we stop being on the road?

(119) Mphaka: Ga ke bone go tla loka selo ge re ka dula mo. Re tla tšhelwa ke madi a kgofa.

(p. 41)

I cannot think that it would be good if we stay here. We shall be polluted by the blood of the tick.

The way in which Hunadi reacts on Mphaka's preceding statement in (113) exposes her astonishment and incredulity. The frequent exclamations and questions in (114), (116) and (118) become signs of her astonishment and disbelief. The stage direction in (114) is used effectively to reflect her condition of shock. Hunadi's question in (118) once again implies subtle blame against Mphaka.

Later in their conversation Hunadi warns Mphaka not to lose faith since he is still waiting for an answer from the inspector concerning proposals which he made for the syllabus. Mphaka remains dejected, because he has not had a reply. Hunadi answers him thus:

(120) Hunadi: Mokgopedi ga a fele pelo. Seo o ka se dirago ke go bonana le yena ka moswane wa kwa mafahla a gagwe. (p. 42)



- (123) Hunadi: Tshwarelo, tholo! Tšwela pele ke kwe.  
(p. 74)  
Forgive me, tholo! Go ahead, let me hear.

Mphaka explains to his wife how negative the people in Mogadisho are towards immigrants, and that they feel immigrants take jobs away from the local people. Hunadi reacts strongly:

- (124) Hunadi: Naa rena re dutše ka matsogo? A ke re šifa re ba dikišitše mešomo ya bona. Re fahlolla bana ba bona. Tebogo ya bona e kae? (p. 74)

Do we sit with our arms folded? Here we are helping with their work. We open the eyes of their children. Where is their gratitude?

- (125) Mphaka: Hmm...! Seo se ba hlobaetšago ke gore le tšeela bana ba bona mešomo. (p. 74)

Hmm...! What upsets them is that you are depriving their children of work.

- (126) Hunadi: (O selekegile.) Ke mešongwana ya selo mang! (p. 74)

(She is furious.) What little jobs are they talking of?

(127) Mphaka:

O sa le boeletša! Naga ke ya bona, wena o mokgopedi ge o le bjalo. Ikhomolele ge o nyaka go phedišana le bona ka khutšo.

(p. 74)

Do not repeat it! The country belongs to them. You are, as I see you, a beggar. Be quiet if you wish to live in peace with them.

(128) Hunadi:

Aowa, Mphaka, re ka topelwa ke bofšega. Le bona ba swanetše go leboga boikgafelo bja rena. Ke ba bakae bao ba nago le tsebo ya go lekana le ya gago seleteng se? (p. 74)  
No, Mphaka, can we be filled with fear. They should also be grateful for our dedication. How many of them in this region are as knowledgeable as you are?

From this conversation it becomes clear that a change has taken place in the two characters. In (121) Hunadi is still concerned about her husband's silence, but her emotions intensify. Mphaka, on the other hand, shows a greater measure of maturity and insight, following all his disappointments and humiliations. Now he becomes the one who puts matters in perspective for Hunadi.

After Mphaka's explanation Hunadi is very upset. Her questions in (124) suggest her uncertainty about their future. Her rebellion against and

blame of the people of Mogadisho is confirmed by the stage directions and exclamations in (126). Mphaka reprimands her strongly. He uses the same words which she has used against him to make her realise that she is no more than a beggar in a foreign land.

Hunadi's strong character comes to the fore in (128). She does not agree with Mphaka and is not prepared to be humiliated. Her loyalty to and high regard for her husband and his work are reflected in this dialogue.

After the election victory of Ntlhore's rebels in Mogadisho everything starts going wrong for the immigrants. In Act 5, Scene 5 Mphaka discusses his position at the university with Hunadi:

(129) Mphaka:                   Naga e mmeletše meetlwa ya monoko. (p. 96)  
To me this country has become overgrown  
with the thorny resin tree.

(130) Hunadi:                   O reng o ntheletša pelo ka tsela ye. Phula  
sekaku boladu botšwe. Ke ikanne go go  
rwadiša maima a, mogatšaka. (p. 96)  
Why do you make me feel sad in this way?  
Open the boil, let the pus come out. I  
have sworn an oath to help you carry your  
burden, my husband.

(131) Mphaka:

Ke maketše lehono ke tsebišwa gore go tloga išago go tla ba le poso e mpsha lekaleng la rena. (p. 96)

I was surprised to hear that as from next year there will be another post in our department.

(132) Hunadi:

Ga se gona gore re tšwele motse, tholo? (p. 96)

Does this not mean we must leave, tholo?

(133) Mphaka:

Ga go se sengwe. Motho ge a sa hlwe a go rata o go laetša ka ditiro tša gagwe. (p. 96)

That is just it. If a person no longer likes you, he shows it in his actions.

(134) Hunadi:

Ruri re paletšwe, mogatšaka. Ge re šetše re ekwa tša mo re yago bjale, re tla buša ra dirang?

Truly we have failed, my husband. At this age when we are nearing our end, what else can we do?

(135) Mphaka:

Sehlare sa muši ke go o tlogela. (p. 96)

The best way to avoid danger is to stay away from it.

- (136) Hunadi: Mphaka! O ra gore re yo fata segola se sefsa? (p. 96)  
Do you mean we must go and seek another place to live?
- (137) Mphaka: Ke ge re tla dira bjang? (p. 96)  
What else can we do?
- (138) Hunadi: (*O a homola o nyamile.*)  
(*She is quiet and dejected.*)
- (139) Hunadi: Ruri bophelo bja rena bo phalwa ke bja motho yoo a iketšego boyabatho... (p. 96)  
Honestly, someone who has already died has a better quality of life than we do...
- (140) Mphaka: O ra gore lehu le tla go tlišetša khutšo o robadišwe mabung a bangwe? (p. 96)  
Do you think that dying can bring you peace if you are buried in a foreign country?
- (141) Hunadi: Ke boledišwa ke tlalelo, tholo. Bana ba re tšamago re ba kgaosetša dithuto e tla ba ya ba batho? (p. 96)



It is the worry that makes me speak like this tholo. These children whose schooling we are constantly interrupting, will they ever become anything?

(142) Hunadi:

Bjale ka gore o rile dilo di a kaonafala kua Bonwatau, ga o bone bokaone e le go hlohlomiša re kwe gore ba ka re amogela?  
(p. 97)

Now that you have said that things are getting better in Bonwatau, do you not think that we should find out if they would accept us?

Hunadi's desire to talk things over and to solve problems is confirmed - as in the previous instances - by her actions. Her loyalty to Mphaka is also shown in this dialogue. Hunadi's verbal behaviour and the way in which she reacts to Mphaka's preceding dialogue is revealing of her character. Her disillusionment is emphasised in (139) when she compares their quality of life with that of a dead person. Mphaka reprimands her for her words, and her honesty comes to the fore when she recognises that it is the "worry" which drives her to such extremes.

Hunadi's concern for her children, their schooling and their view of life is emphasised by her question to Mphaka in (141). Although her verbal utterances are constantly characterised by questions and exclamations, she reacts to Mphaka's arguments and discusses their content - an

indication of a wise person who grasps realities and tries to find constructive solutions. This characteristic is confirmed when Mphaka agrees that they return to Bonwatau. Hunadi immediately considers the practical problems whereupon Mphaka consoles her:

(143) Hunadi:                   Bjale ka gore le ditshwanelo tša gona ga re sa na le tšona re tla tsena re le bomang? (p. 104)

Since we no longer have the necessary documents, how shall we get in?

(144) Mphaka:                   Ga ke re ba begile gore bao ba ratago go gomela Bonwatau ba ka dira? (p. 104)

Did they not say that those who want to return to Bonwatau can do so?

The penultimate stage direction in this drama is loaded with meaning for the sensitive reader:

(145) Mphaka:                   Agaa, bjale re a kwana. Ge e le gore re tla re ge re fihla Bonwatau ba re swara ga go molato. E tla ba gona go hwela dikano tša rena. (*Ba homola ba lebelelane.*)

(p. 104)

Well, then we agree. If we are arrested on returning to Bonwatau, there will be no problem. It will be a matter of dying for

our oaths. (*They remain silent and look at each other.*)

Mphaka and Hunadi's silence in (145) becomes a sign of their mutual understanding and loyalty. All their pain and suffering in foreign countries, and the way in which they supported each other in the five years abroad, make words unnecessary, and the sensitive reader will understand this.

#### 2.2.3.2.3 The voice

Early in the drama (Act 1, Scene 2) Mphaka's mother addresses him in a dream.

(146) *(Ke bošego Hunadi le Mphaka ba bonala ba le ka malaong go lla hlaka la nko. Mphaka o bonala a bilokana a bitšwa ke Lentšu la mosadi.)* (p. 8)  
*(It is night. Hunadi and Mphaka can be seen in bed snoring. Mphaka tosses and turns visibly while he is being called by the voice of a woman.)*

(147) **Lentšu:** **Mphaka! Mphaka! Se ithobatše hlwaya tsebe!**  
 (p. 8)

**Voice:** **Mphaka! Mphaka! Do not pretend to be asleep, listen!**

(148) Mphaka: *(O a lora o a bilokana o a goragora mola Hunadi yena a ile ka boroko.) Hmmm! (p. 8)*

*(He is dreaming. He tosses and turns while Hunadi is fast asleep.) Hmmm!*

(149) Lentšu: **Ke nna mmago. Ke re o napile o ntahlile naa? O ntebetše ge wena le mosadi wa gago le eja tše di theogelago? (p. 8)**

Voice: I am your mother. I say, have you thrown me away? Do you forget me when you and your wife live well?

(150) Mphaka: *(O sa ntše a bilokana.) O mang? (p. 8)*

*(He is still tossing and turning.) Who are you?*

(151) Lentšu: **Ke a go botša ge o ka se tliše bana bao gae ka ba bona pele ke ikela go bomakgolokhukhu o ka se lokelwe ke selo! (p. 8)**

Voice: I tell you if you do not bring your children home so that I can see them before I die, nothing will turn out well for you!

(152) Mphaka: *(O a goelela.) Ijoo! Hunadi! (O a robala.) (p. 9)*

*(He calls out.) Ijoo! Hunadi! (He sleeps.)*

(153) Lentšu: O tla yebela le lefase ka moka ba go tlaiša. O se lebale mantšu ao aka. (p. 9)

Voice: You will roam over the whole world and they will make a fool of you. Do not forget these words of mine.

(154) Mphaka: (*O a phaphama o gotetša lebone.*) Hmm, ka lahlega ruri. Hunadi, Hunadi! (*O a mo šišinya.*) (p. 9)  
(*He wakes up and turns on the light.*) Gosh, I am in a mess. Hunadi, Hunadi! (*He shakes her till she wakes.*)

Once Mphaka has told Hunadi of his dream she puts him at ease and they sleep again. The dream, however, occurs for a second time.

(155) Mphaka: (*O a ikhurumolla mme o tima lebone, lentšu lela le kwala gape ge ba se no go robala.*) (p. 9)  
(*He throws off the bedclothes and turns off the light. The voice is heard again as soon as they fall asleep.*)

(156) Lentšu: Mphaka! Mphaka! Ke re ge o ka se ke wa tliša bana bao gae pele ke ikela boyabatho o ka se lokelwe ke selo. (p. 9)

Voice: Mphaka! Mphaka! I tell you if you do not bring those children home before I die, nothing will go well for you.

- (157) Mphaka:                    (*O a hlobaela.*) (p. 9)  
                                       (*He cannot sleep.*)
- (158) Lentšú:                   Ditšhaba di tla bapala ka wena wa be wa diketo.  
                                       O kwele! (p. 9)  
     Voice:                        The nations will play with you and even  
                                       humiliate you. Did you hear me?
- (159) Mphaka:                   (*O a phaphama a tšhuma lebone.*) Banna, ke toro  
                                       mang yona ye. Hei, Hunadi! (p. 9)  
                                       (*He wakes up and turns on the light.*) Goodness,  
                                       what dream is this. Hey, Hunadi!

The transition from fiction to fantasy is clearly indicated by the stage directions in (146) and (155). The dream performs various functions in this text. Firstly it has a function of characterisation when Mphaka's mother is introduced. Secondly it adds to the development of the plot and lastly it reflects continually on the theme and even explains the theme to a certain extent.

According to Pfister (1991:222) the dream is used effectively in drama as an anti-realist event to "eliminate or weaken the restrictions imposed by the dramatic medium on the presentation of inner psychological processes." While the stage convention allows the voice to represent Mphaka's mother, we know that the dream is the product of the imagination of the one who dreams, namely Mphaka. In this case his mother is not a spiritual visitor extrinsic to the character but intrinsic to his own

mental state of mind and, in fact, not the voice of his mother at all. It is his own conscience speaking with his mother's voice. The dramatist certainly succeeds in this instance by using the voice to become Mphaka's conscience and to reflect his inner feelings throughout the drama.

All the turns in which the voice speaks are characterised by question marks or exclamation marks. The punctuation in this scene functions as didascalies and indicate meaning to the reader. The exclamation marks in (147) indicate the urgency with which Mphaka's mother calls him as well as her command that he should listen to what she has to say - a sign of her strong personality.

In (149) the dramatist uses an interesting technique. The voice introduces herself. In this way the dramatist ensures that the reader/audience is not confused as regards the identity of the voice. The questions of Mphaka's mother in (149) have undertones of accusation which in turn have certain implications for Mphaka's conscience and inner conflict.

In (151) his mother presents an ultimatum which, if it is not met, will lead to his own misfortune. This ultimatum serves as a kind of prediction which gives direction to the plot while creating tension. Mphaka's reaction in (152) becomes a sign of his uncertainty and anxiety.

The dream appears for a second time in (156) and Mphaka's mother repeats the ultimatum. The cyclic nature of the dream is symbolic of Mphaka's conscience and confirms his inner conflict. Whenever he is faced with

a crisis, for example on pp. 13, 14, 15, 21, 31 and 103, he refers to the dream. The influence which his mother has over him and the respect which he has for her is confirmed by his actions. It becomes clear, then, that his mother is a strong woman with much wisdom and insight and that there is a strong bond between Mphaka and his mother.

Stage directions play an important role in this scene since the voice can be brought to life by the use of auditive signs only. The dramatist uses stage directions effectively to create an additional dimension - the portrayal of Mphaka's physical and psychological destruction - which allows the reader to read the scene as an implied audience.

### **2.3 CONCLUSION**

From the preceding discussion it becomes clear that there exists tension concerning the ostensive nature of the text's didascalies in the sense that we are dealing with a set of conflicting semiotic signs.

When considering the discussion on time and space, the importance of these two elements for the theatricality of a dramatic text becomes evident. It seems, however, that the concern with regard to this text lies with the narrative and interpretive nature of the stage directions which refer to time and space, where these dimensions cannot be spatially presented or derived by an audience. These proxemic changes will therefore complicate the performability of the play. This problem in general is confirmed by Elam (1980:113) when he says:



"...the *dramatis personae* must be 'seen' (and 'heard') to establish, in the words of Alessandro Serpieri, 'relationships between each other or with the objects or space of the stage, *through deictic, ostensive, spatial* relations. From this derives the involving, engrossing force of the theatrical event... because the theatre is mimesis of the lived, not the detachment of the narrated'."

On the other hand, the discussion on the *dramatis personae* clearly shows that the stage directions, dialogue and soliloquies in this section of the play are all geared towards ostention, i.e. display on stage. Therefore, in terms of the above statement, the reader will be able to experience the largest part of this dramatic text as an implied audience.

However, the symbolic language usage, which is influenced by the psychological undertone of this drama, contains many signs that require constant decoding and interpretation and demand a great deal from the reader, for example the title of the drama: *Naga ga di etelane* (Home, sweet home) gives a striking sign. At this stage neither the reader nor the possible audience knows who spoke these words or why. However, in the preface available only to the reader, the dramatist himself explains what he means and confirms the autobiographical nature of the book.

Letters are used as informative signs and they appear in six critical moments throughout the dramatic text, namely:

- \* The letter of Mphaka's mother in Bonwatau, begging him to come home.
- \* The letter Mphaka sends to the inspector containing recommendations about the education system of Takone.
- \* The letter from the headmaster of Sebola.
- \* The letter from Mogadisho in which Mphaka is offered a job.
- \* Mphaka's letter of resignation.
- \* The letter from the university of Mogadisho terminating Mphaka's service.

To the creative reader each letter acquires referential as well as symbolic meaning as it becomes a sign of the psychological suffering of Mphaka and his family. The question is whether ostention would in fact contribute to the signification of this highly psychological text, and whether a reader's interaction would not increase the level of communication, also in the light of the problematics addressed by the theme. I want to answer this question by saying: since the reader has more control over the perception of the fictional world, it seems that a deeper aesthetic and intellectual analysis is possible for her/him than for a member of the audience.

Within the greater dramatic structure the repetition of events creates a slow tempo, which in turn corresponds to a cycle of life which has to be completed by everyone.

The drama has a socio-political bent which the dramatist manipulates in a subtle and sensitive manner. The crumbling of his family is

continuously linked to the wider cause of socio-political change taking place in Mphaka's land of birth. After 15 years the theme of this drama remains universal and the sensitive reader realises that, in Bonwatau, an era is drawing to a close and the playwright's vision of order and peace might well be realised.

## CHAPTER 3

## OSTENSIVE SIGNS IN "KELELAGOBEDI"

## 3.0 INTRODUCTION

*Kelelagobedi* (1983) is Serudu's second drama. With regard to theme and content it differs completely from *Naga ga di etelane*. The most interesting features are, in the first place, the continuous flow of information through dialogue and action; and in the second place, the excellent way in which the dramatist creates the parallel development of the two characters, Kelelagobedi and Mmaphuti.

## 3.0.1 Summary

Lenkwe, the king of Tlhapetsane is experiencing many problems in his kingdom. After a discussion with his secretary Thoka, he decides to appoint a spy to determine who is undermining his power. Kelelagobedi is approached and accepts the position at an agreed remuneration. His wife Mmaphuti, however, objects to his decision as she feels that it is immoral and her opposition causes friction between them. The identities of the subversive citizens are revealed to Kelelagobedi and, armed with a tape recorder, he starts his work.

In the village of Noko (one of the subversities) the men plan to undermine Lenkwe's rule. Kelelagobedi arrives at the meeting pretending

to be party to the conspiracy. After the meeting he gives the information to Lenkwe and is liberally rewarded.

After king Lenkwe has received the information he calls a meeting to address his subjects. Noko and his men all decide to attend the meeting and to confront Lenkwe about the poor way in which he rules. Once again Kelelagobedi informs Lenkwe of the plans. Lenkwe anticipates their actions and arranges to have Noko and Phatlane arrested.

At the meeting it becomes clear that everyone is dissatisfied with Lenkwe's actions. Lenkwe does not heed the attacks on him and leaves the meeting. He decides that the rest of the conspirators should also be captured and punished.

The people begin to wonder about Kelelagobedi's new wealth and at school Lesetša (his son), is also confronted with questions about their new furniture and clothes. Mmaphuti is most upset about all that is happening and tries to convince Kelelagobedi to quit his dangerous job. Kelelagobedi acknowledges that he has been doing dangerous work and decides to speak to Lenkwe.

Kelelagobedi asks Lenkwe to relieve him of further responsibilities upon which Lenkwe becomes furious and threatens to take back all the money he has paid to Kelelagobedi. Meanwhile the conspirators have discovered that something has gone wrong and decide to ambush Kelelagobedi along the road. On his way from Lenkwe's village Kelelagobedi is captured by two men who were sent by Tlaleng and Lesegafela and is nearly killed. The

proof of his treachery (tape recorder and money) is found on him. Kelelagobedi is left unconscious next to the road. Tlaleng and Lesegafela are captured by Lenkwe's men and are sent to Moruleng. The injured Kelelagobedi is taken to Lenkwe's village.

After Mmaphuti receives the news she arrives at the village to claim her husband. Lenkwe tries to fool her with clever words, but she refuses to leave the village without her husband and is mercilessly dragged outside.

Lenkwe hears that the tape recorder has been removed from Kelelagobedi's bag. He realises that Tlaleng and Lesegafela have ambushed Kelelagobedi and, aware of the implications, he instructs his secretary, Thoka, to call a general meeting.

### 3.0.2 Method of analysis

In this analysis I have used the same approach as in *Naga ga di etelane*, namely considering the presence, characteristics and functions of the didascalies in *Kelelagobedi* to reflect on the text's potential ostensibility.

## 3.1 DIDASCALIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DRAMATIST

### 3.1.1 The Preface

The preface of *Kelelagobedi* is much shorter than that of *Naga ga di etelane*. The drama is dedicated to deceased members of the dramatist's

family. The dramatist does not address the reader directly in the preface and it contains no information that could contribute to the reader's reading, interpretation or enjoyment of the drama. The preface, therefore, has no value for the creation of a fictional world in the imagination of the reader, or for an actual performance. There are, therefore, no didascalies associated with the dramatist.

### 3.2 DIDASCALIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE FICTIONAL WORLD OF DRAMA

#### 3.2.1 The title and cover

The title, *Kelelagobedi*, can be regarded as a sign within a sign, used with double significance. Kelelagobedi in the literal sense refers to a funnel with two sides. In a figurative sense it refers to a two-faced person or a double-dealer. The cover of the book serves as a visual sign to the reader because only the dark silhouette of a person's face is visible. It gives the impression that only one side of that person is known.

The sign acquires more significance for the reader when s/he realises, by reading the list of characters, that *Kelelagobedi* is also the name of one of the characters in the play.

The title definitely serves as a key with which the reader may unlock information which could be of value in the interpretation of the drama.

### 3.2.2 The list of characters

The dramatis personae consist of 15 named characters. These are characters to whom the dramatist has assigned specific names.

The list of characters has an informational function in the sense that the position of Thoka and Khulong as chief councillors in the principal village of Tlhapetsane are indicated to the reader. By means of this information the reader is placed in a position where s/he knows, even before reading the text, who the followers of king Lenkwe are.

The reader also learns from the list of characters who the wives of the men in Tlhapetsane are. This information allows an initial orientation of the reader towards the various dramatis personae and helps him to follow the fictional action more easily. This could prove more difficult for the audience as they have only the dialogue to rely on.

The list of characters gives no information on age, appearance or personality traits, except in the case of the main character. The name, Kelelagobedi, has meaning in itself and therefore conveys information concerning the character to the reader. Kelelagobedi (double-dealer) reflects the name of the main character and serves as a good example of a name which discloses the nature of a character.

The names on the list are arranged in hierarchical order. This is confirmed by a count of the turns of the two main characters. Kelelagobedi speaks 352 times while Lenkwe speaks 264 times. With a text



of this size it would be very difficult for the audience to keep track of each character's turns to speak. A reader will find this much easier since the names of the characters introduce each turn and therefore one simply has to count the names. This information helps the reader during the reading process to situate the drama in terms of space and to interpret certain actions and habits of the characters correctly.

### 3.2.3 The stage directions

#### 3.2.3.1 Information concerning time and space

We shall look at the most important instances of stage directions only, on account of their significance in terms of time and space. The opening stage directions in *Kelelagobedi* are short and, as far as space is concerned, supply only the locality where the dramatis personae find themselves. The reader is given no indication concerning time and s/he has to try and deduce this information for herself/himself, for example:

- (1) *(Lapeng la Lenkwe: Lenkwe o hlamula le mohlanka wa gagwe wa potego, Thoka. Ba bolelela fasana go laetša gore seo ba se bolelago ke thopa.) (p. 1)*

*(At the village of Lenkwe: Lenkwe is talking to his trustworthy official, Thoka. They are speaking softly to show that what they are discussing is secret.)*

Since the dramatist makes no mention of time in the first or second scenes, a director of a possible performance would have to determine the

starting time for herself/himself. This information is not all that important to the reader, since s/he is able to visualise any time, day or night. In a real performance this would be more difficult since the fictional space is presented to the audience visually and the director has to create it by means of lighting and décor.

A further important observation is that the dramatist makes no mention in his stage directions of the "raising" of the curtain. However, the word "seširo" (curtain) occurs at the end of each scene. As the dramatist builds more stage requisites (curtains, décor, lighting, sound effects) into his text, the more it becomes a sign of a potential performance. It will become clear that the didascalies in *Kelelagobedi*, however, serve as a sign from the dramatist that the text is aimed at being read rather than at an actual performance.

The fictional space in which events occur can provide important information for the reader/audience. When the spatial information in this drama is considered, one finds that the fictional events occur mainly in two areas, namely the village of Lenkwe, king of Tlhapetsane, and the village of Kelelagobedi, the double-dealer. The fictional space is moved to Lenkwe's village seven times in the course of the drama and to that of Kelelagobedi eight times. This information enables the reader to conclude that an important relationship exists between the two characters.

The secretive dialogue between Lenkwe and Thoka on page one contributes to the significance of both the stage directions and the abovementioned

findings. From the outset it makes the reader/audience aware of the possible future cooperation between Lenkwe and Kelelagobedi, for example:

(2) Lenkwe:                   Mpotše, mpotše, Thokentsho, na Kelelagobedi o dumetše go dira mošomo wo? (p. 1)

Answer me, answer me, Thokentsho, did Kelelagobedi agree to do the job?

(3) Lenkwe:                   *(Ka phišego.)* Na o tloga o holofela gore e ka ba mahlo le ditsebe tša ka? (p. 1)

*(With yearning.)* Are you sure he will be prepared to be my eyes and ears (i.e. to spy for me)?

(4) Lenkwe:                   *(Ka mafolofolo.)* Gabotsebotse! Ge fela a ka kgona go oba tholagadi yela ya gagwe molala, ke bona gore a ka re šomela senna. (p. 1)

*(Enthusiastically.)* Very good! If only he can manage to bend the neck of that wife of his to convince her, I think he will cooperate nicely.

The dialogue above prepares the reader/audience for the continuous interaction which will take place between the two characters and their fictional spaces (their villages). This information is valuable since it helps the reader/audience to orientate the action spatially.

There are several instances where the fictional space changes very quickly within one scene. The stage directions in Act 3, Scene 1 are a good example:

- (5) *(Tseleng: Kelelagobedi o tšama a bolela a nnoši morago ga go kgaogana le bagwera ba gagwe. Sebakeng sa gore a lebe gae o leba ga Lenkwe go mmegele seo a se kwelego.)* (p. 32)

*(At the side of the road: Kelelagobedi walks, talking to himself after he and his friends have parted. Instead of going home, he is going to Lenkwe to let him know what he has heard.)*

- (6) Kelelagobedi: E bile ke fihlile. *(Go bonala go robetšwe ka ge go se na le mabone.)* Go reng nke Lenkwe o šetše a išitše marapo go beng? Ke tla mo tsoša. (p. 32).

I have arrived. *(It appears that everyone is asleep as there are no lights.)* What, has Lenkwe gone to bed already? I shall wake him.

- (7) Lenkwe: *(O mo kwela borokwaneng.)* Mosadi, o ka re go kokota motho. (p. 32)

*(He wakes his wife.)* Wife, it seems someone is knocking at the door.

(8) Lenkwe: ...E re ke ye lebating ke mmotšiše go re ke mang. (*O tšwa phapošing ya gagwe o leba lebating la ka pele.*) Tsena! (p. 32)

... Let me go to the door and ask who it is. (*He leaves the room and moves in the direction of the front door.*) Come in!

(9) Kelelagobedi: (*O goga setulo o dula fase.*) (p. 32)  
(*He pulls up a chair and sits down.*)

A conversation takes place between Lenkwe and Kelelagobedi.

(10) Kelelagobedi: Gabotse, Mohlakwana. (*Kelelagobedi o a tšwa mme Lenkwe o boela phapošing ya go robala.*) (p. 34)  
Goodbye, Mohlakwana. (*Kelelagobedi exits and Lenkwe returns to his bedroom.*)

In the above example the fictional space alters six times within three pages, namely:

- \* Kelelagobedi on his way to Lenkwe's village (5).
- \* Lenkwe's village - outside (6).
- \* Lenkwe's bedroom (7).
- \* Front door of Lenkwe's house (8).
- \* Unspecified room in Lenkwe's house where he converses with Kelelagobedi (9).
- \* Lenkwe back in his bedroom (10).

If staging were intended, the front door space (8) could be created auditively outside the area where the action would take place, whereas Lenkwe's village (6) could be created by lighting. However, the dramatist never mentions these techniques. The other areas of play would all have to be created visually since they have to accommodate both acting and dialogue.

The rapid succession of scenes does not create much of a problem for the reader since the stage directions in conjunction with the dialogue make it possible for the reader to anticipate the successive fictional areas. From the stage direction in (5): (Instead of going home, he is going to Lenkwe to let him know what he has heard.) the reader knows that Kelelagobedi is on his way to Lenkwe's village. This information is inaccessible to the audience and they will have to wait until Kelelagobedi arrives at the village and the fictional space becomes a part of the stage to receive it. These stage directions definitely put the reader at an advantage since the reader is more able to visualise the fictional areas where the characters find themselves.

The rapid scene changes will create difficulties for the director of an actual performance, and certain adaptations might have to be made before the text could be performed. This type of stage direction is more suitable for television or possibly a workshop production.

In various instances in the text Serudu refers to simultaneous fictional areas. This implies that both areas need to be created at the same time, for example:

(11) Kelelagobedi: ... Ge o tsena mo gonabjale, ke ge re sa tšo di fetša. Ke be ke tloga ke swere ka mo go fišago. Tšhwenegatšana e korologile e sa rate go kwa selo. Fela ke ile ka be ka kgona go mo oba molala ra kwana.

*(Mmaphuti o theeditše a le ka phapošing ya borobalo.) (p. 7)*

... When you arrived a while ago we had just discussed the matter. I had rather a tough time of it. The woman was quarrelsome and would hear nothing of it. But I could twist her arm so that we could reach unanimity. *(Mmaphuti eavesdrops from the bedroom.)*

(12) Thoka: ... Monna o realo. Mosadi o swanetše go kwa ditaelo tša monna wa gagwe... (p. 7)

That's how a man acts. A woman must listen to her husband's commands...

While Kelelagobedi and Thoka are talking about Mmaphuti in another room, she eavesdrops on their conversation from the bedroom.

This example forces the reader to read the two fictional areas from the point of view of the implied viewer. The implied viewer must visualise the second fictional space for herself/himself since the dramatist has allowed for one fictional space only, the one where the two characters find themselves.

However, nowhere in the text (where he creates simultaneous action), does the dramatist use specific theatrical devices. The implied reader gets no assistance from the text to facilitate his/her reading experience. The reading experience of the reader could be restricted to such an extent that s/he might be unable to read the text as an implied viewer, but as an ordinary reader only.

The areas where the fictional events take place, and the description or information which the dramatist gives regarding those fictional areas usually perform a specific function within the drama. A close reading and interpretation of spatial descriptions can transfer a great deal of information to the reader.

The stage directions on p. 43 of the text, where Kelelagobedi's house and furniture are described, have an important informational function. Mention is made of all the new items he has purchased. In the dialogue, Kelelagobedi tells his wife that they were able to buy these things only because of the money he earns by working for Lenkwe:

(13)

*(Lapeng la Kelelagobedi: Go a phadima ka ge mogale a etšwa go reka difanišara tše mpsha gotee le ditapeiti. Tafoleng ya mpatlakana go na le digalase le mothamo wa beine...) (p. 43)*

*(At Kelelagobedi's village: Everything gleams because the brave one has returned with new furniture and carpets. On the coffee table are glasses and a wine jug...)*



The reader/audience's suspicion that Kelelagobedi plays a double role and receives bribes from Lenkwe is confirmed by the dialogues on pages 67 and 77:

(14) Napšadi: ... Disofa tše tšona le di rekile neng ka gore di sa dutše di nkgā bofsa? (p. 67)  
When did you buy these couches - they still smell new?

(15) Tlaleng: ... Kelelagobedi a itshwanela le rena bjalo o tšea kae tšhelete ya go reka thoto ye kaaka ka nako e tee? (p. 77)  
Kelelagobedi is just like one of us, where does he suddenly get the money to buy so many things at a time?

At this stage all Kelelagobedi's friends and neighbours start wondering and for the reader (who has more information) every new item in the house becomes a sign of bribery and treachery.

The dramatist also uses the fictional space of the road in two ways: as a vessel for the transmission of information, and as a means of creating tension. In this way we see that the roads along which Kelelagobedi travels from village to village to collect and relate information become greatly significant as spaces for the reader. Kelelagobedi is always engaged in a soliloquy when he finds himself in this fictional area. The dramatist uses the solitude of the foot path effectively as a sign of

confidentiality and privacy where Kelelagobedi informs the reader/ audience of his plans, for example:

(16) *(Tseleng: Kelelagobedi o tšama a ngunanguna a nnoši a lebile gae.)*

Kelelagobedi: ... Go se tsebe nna ke kotsi. Se se nkgahlilego le go feta ke go re ga go yo a ilego a nnaganela selo. Lenkwe bjale gona o tla nkholofela e le ruri. Ge re gahlana gape bekeng ye e tlogo, ke tla be ke swere sefu sela. Ke tla ba gaila ka sona. (p. 21)

*(On the road: Kelelagobedi walks along the road. He is talking to himself while he is on his way home.)*

... It is dangerous not to know me. What pleases me most is the fact that no one can suspect me. Now Lenkwe will have a great deal of confidence in me. When we meet again next week I shall have that trap. I will destroy all of them with it.

From Kelelagobedi's soliloquy it becomes clear that he has already chosen to act as a spy for Lenkwe. He is convinced that no one can suspect him and he looks forward to destroying Lenkwe's enemies.

The choice of fictional spaces and Kelelagobedi's soliloquy within these spaces are used most effectively by the dramatist. He uses Kelelagobedi simultaneously as character, actor and narrator who keeps the

reader/audience continuously informed.

In Act 3, Scene 1 Kelelagobedi again exposes his plans and modus operandi to the reader and the audience by way of a soliloquy:

(17) *(Tseleng: Kelelagobedi o tšama a bolela a nnoši morago ga go kgaogana le bagwera ba gagwe.)*

Kelelagobedi: Lehono gona ke tantše none. Baisanyana ba ke a bona ga ba ntsebe gabotse. Ba forwa ke ge ke ba tšhela phori mahlong ka go ba thuša go senya Lenkwe leina. Ka bjo bohlatse, (o šupa setšeamantšu) Lenkwe o swanetše go dio ntšhollela lekgwara. (p. 32)

*(Along the road: Kelelagobedi is speaking to himself after he and his friends have gone their separate ways.)*

Today I caught a blesbuck. It is clear that these chaps do not know me. I am deceiving them by apparently defaming Lenkwe's name. With this evidence (*he points to a tape recorder*), Lenkwe must just give me a lot of money.

In his soliloquies Kelelagobedi makes condemning statements about himself. He admits to being deceitful and in this way emphasises the title of the drama as well as the double role he plays as the main character. Kelelagobedi becomes a human sign for deceit, treachery and underhandedness.

Apart from the valuable information which Kelelagobedi supplies to the reader/audience "*along the road*", this theatrical space also serves to create tension.

The stage directions never mention the time at which Kelelagobedi finds himself "*along the road*". Through cross-referencing, however, the reader can determine that all his visits to Lenkwe take place at night, for example:

(18) Lenkwe: Mohlakwana! E reng kwena e lala e gagaba le mašego? (p. 32)

Mohlakwana! How is it that the crocodile sneaks around throughout the night?

(19) Kelelagobedi: ... Ge o mpona ke le bjale ke lala ke phatša mašego, ke gona ke sa tšwago go baisesa bale ba maganagobušwa. (pp. 32-33)

As you see me now, travelling by night, I am just returning from those chaps who do not wish to be governed by you.

From the dialogue between Lesetša and his mother it becomes even clearer that Kelelagobedi's nightly activities are a source of concern to his family, for example:

(20) **Lesetša:** Na tate o reng a sa hlwe a dula mo gae mantšibua? (p. 35)

Why does father no longer stay at home at night?

(21) **Mmaphuti:** O be o thomile go fafatla, Lesetša. O ra eng ge o re tatago ga a sa dula gae? (p. 35)

You have gone mad, Lesetša. What do you mean by saying your father no longer lives at home?

(22) **Lesetša:** Ke ra gore o be a dula mo gae ka mehla a itiša le rena, a bile a nthuša le mo dithutong tša ka, eupša bjale bošego bjo bongwe le bjo bongwe o a tšwa a sa re botše mo a yago. (p. 35)

I mean he used to stay at home and relax with us, he even helped me with my homework, but now he goes out night after night without even telling us where he is going.

The fears of the family as well as the reader/audience are confirmed. The same deserted space where Kelelagobedi used to reveal himself to the audience is now used successfully against him. Kelelagobedi is ambushed and faces his attackers alone, for example:

(23) **Monna III:** Bolelela fase monna o tla re kwa, mantšu a bošego a kwala kgole. Emela ka kua ga tsela gore re tle re mo tsenye gare. Go tla thoma nna ka mmitša ka leina. Ge ke realo wena o mo rwantšhe

lešitaphiri le ka molamo wo gore a be a tšholle  
phoka! (p. 94)

Man III: Speak softly, the man will hear us. Sound travels far at night. Stand on the other side of the road so that we can stop him. I will begin by calling him by his name. When I do so you must hit him with the bludgeon until he wets himself.

The dramatist uses no stage props to refer to the fictional time. The fictional time, however, matches the fictional events very well. The stage directions directly indicate eight times that the action takes place at night (pp. 9, 16, 23, 28, 35, 60, 83, 88). In nine instances the stage directions and the dialogue also show indirectly that the fictional action takes place in the evening.

When the direct and indirect references to fictional time are traced, it will become clear that approximately three quarters of the fictional action takes place in the dark. This information is most important to the reader because, unlike the audience, s/he cannot observe the action visually through lighting, but has to create it in the mind.

In this drama fictional time and action contribute significantly to creating an atmosphere of secrecy, uncertainty and danger that emphasises the underlying theme. The descriptions of fictional time and space are not provided in the stage directions in theatrical terms such as décor, lighting or auditory input.

Some of Serudu's stage directions are directed at the reader only, in the sense that he takes the reader back in time, for example:

- (24) Kelelagobedi:      *(O gakanegile o gopola se se bego se bolelwa ke Tlaleng le Lesegafela maloba pitšong ya bona; o bolela ka boleta.)* A nke o mpotše mogatšaka. O re ngwana o hlomile bjang? (p. 86)
- (He is confused and thinks about the conversation between Tlaleng and Lesegafela the other day at the meeting; he speaks in a friendly voice.)* Tell me, my wife. What do you say has happened to the child?

Only a reader will be able to follow these stage directions, because at no stage will an audience be able to determine Kelelagobedi's thoughts.

The fictional time and space of some of the dramatist's stage directions can easily be followed by the reader because of the time leaps that he uses.

The dialogue between Tlaleng and Lesegafela on page 93 ends as follows:

- (25) Tlaleng:            E re ke tle le phafana yela re itloše bodutu ka yona ge ba sa ile. (p. 93)
- Let me bring the calabash so that we can take away the loneliness while they are away.

- (26) Lesegafela:           Go lokile. (p. 93)  
All right.

The next stage directions involving three different actions in three different fictional spaces and at three different times, follow the dialogue cited above:

- (27)                           *(Banna ba babedi ba, ba ile ba sa rwa phafana ya bona ba welwa ke ba Moruleng gomme ba rwalelwa ka phagong ya morula. Kua tseleng mafadi ale a be a dutše a letile nonyana ya ona ka phišego.)*  
(p. 93)

*(These two men were still busy drinking when they were attacked by the people of Moruleng and taken to the hole of morula. There at the road the people were waiting for their bird with yearning.)*

The dialogue between the first man and the third man follows immediately after the stage directions above:

- (28) Monna I:               Na le na le nnete ya gore o tsene ka mola mošate? (p. 93)  
Man I:                       Are you sure he went into the king's kraal?



(29) Monna III: Ke tloga ke mmone ka a ka. (*O šupa mahlo a gagwe.*) (p. 93)

Man III: I have seen him with mine. (*He points to his eyes.*)

The dialogue leaps from Tlaleng's village to the side of the road where the men are awaiting Kelelagobedi. Only the reader knows through the narration above how much time has passed and what has happened in the mean time. An audience will be at a disadvantage unless the director uses stage requisites to present the detail.

It seems that the stage directions which refer to time and space often undermine the implied viewer as reader and are definitely aimed more at the ordinary reader. This confirms the reader-oriented nature of the text.

### 3.2.3.2 Information about characters and action

In the stage directions characters are never defined in terms of external physical attributes such as age, clothing or appearance. The dramatist gives preference to the actions and emotions of the characters and their relationships with one another.

The stage directions help the reader to learn more about the characteristics of the various personages and their mutual relationships. It remains essential, however, for the stage directions to be interpreted within the context of the accompanying dialogue.

The textual analysis which follows will concentrate on the characters Lenkwe, Kelelagobedi and Mmaphuti.

126-141

142-170

### 3.2.3.2.1 Lenkwe

From the stage directions and dialogue pertaining to Lenkwe four particular aspects of his character become apparent: (a) his domineering personality, (b) his slyness and suspicion, (c) his mercilessness and (d) his inflexibility.

From the initial visual and auditive directions on page 1 of the text the reader can already discover the nature of the relationship between Lenkwe (the King of Tlhapetsane) and Thoka (his secretary):

(30)

(Lapeng la Lenkwe: Lenkwe o hlamula le mohlanka wa gagwe wa potego, Thoka. Ba bolelela fasana go laetša gore seo ba se bolelago ke thopa.) (p. 1)  
*(At Lenkwe's village: Lenkwe is conversing with his trustworthy official, Thoka. They are whispering to indicate the secrecy of the content of their discussion.)*

In the opening scene an atmosphere of secrecy is created by the auditive information (whispering). The fact that Thoka is a reliable official can be indicated neither visually nor auditive. It is aimed solely at the

reader. Only from the dialogue can the audience deduce the relationship between these two characters.

The dialogue and visual descriptions which follow the stage directions contain the first indications of Lenkwe's character and also indicate the relationship between the two characters, for example:

(31) Thoka:                    (*O goragora madulong.*) Ge ke sa iphore nka re ke phethile. (p. 1)

(*He moves uncomfortably on his seat.*) I don't want to lie, but I think I have completed it.

(32) Lenkwe:                (*Sefahlogo se edile.*) Ke go tseba o le bjalo! Tlhahlahokeng, ngwana mekgoši ya mosegare!  
(p. 1)

(*His face lights up.*) That's how I've come to know you! The Active One, one who is praised all day long!

(33) Thoka:                    (*Ka boikokobetšo.*) Aowa, mong wa ka, ke be ke era ge ke phethile taelo ya gago. (p. 1)

(*Humbly.*) No, my lord, I mean I have executed your instruction.

(34) Lenkwe:                (*O kgathola mahlong.*) Mpotše, mpotše, Thokentsho, na Kelelagobedi o dumetše go dira mošomo wo? (p. 1)

(*He wears a serious look.*) Tell me, tell me, Thokentsho, has Kelelagobedi agreed to do the work?

(35) Thoka: Go bjalo, fela.... (p. 1)  
Yes, but...

(36) Lenkwe: (*O befetšwe.*) O reng o ikgata mohlala, "fela" ke ya eng? (p. 1)  
(*He is angry.*) Are you going back on your words? What is this "but"?

(37) Thoka: (*Ka letšhogwana.*) Go pala mosadi wa gagwe.  
(p.1)  
(*Fearfully.*) The problem is his wife.

(38) Lenkwe: (*O šišinya hlogo.*) O re go pala mosadi? (p. 1)  
(*He shakes his head.*) You say it's his wife who gives trouble?

Lenkwe's gestures and facial expressions reveal his happiness (32), impatience (34), anger (36), and then his disbelief (38). Thoka's actions, on the other hand, indicate signs of uncertainty (31), humility (33) and fear (37). A clear image of the two characters emerges from these contrasts. Lenkwe's actions directly reveal his impatience and temperamental disposition to the reader. Thoka represents the subordinate. Lenkwe's interruption of Thoka's speech in (35) can also be

seen as a sign of impatience or of his desire to dominate Thoka.

The relationship between Lenkwe and his wife (Mologadi), contains further revelations of his character. The information given in the stage directions indicates the respect which she has for her husband:

(39) Mologadi:                (*O arabela kgojana.*) Iše kgoši! (p. 2)  
                                      (*She answers from far away.*) Yes, your Majesty!

(40) Lenkwe:                 Ke neng mola ka bitšago? (p. 2)  
                                      How long have I been calling you?

(41) Mologadi:               (*O fihlile o kwatama pele ga Lenkwe.*) (p. 2)  
                                      (*She arrives and kneels before Lenkwe.*)

(42) Mologadi:               Mothokwa! (*O itia legoswi a khuname pele ga  
                                      Lenkwe.*) (p. 3)  
                                      Mothokwa. (*She claps her hands while kneeling  
                                      before Lenkwe.*)

Similar actions take place on p. 27. The dialogue on pp. 2, 3 and 27 agrees well with Mologadi's actions. She calls him "Your Majesty" (p. 2), **Mothokwa** (p. 27) and **Mothokwa wa Maseboko** (p. 27). These respectful and praising forms of address are further indications of her respect towards Lenkwe. Lenkwe's question, "How long have I been calling you?" is another indication of his impatience.

In Act 1, Scene 3 Kelelagobedi visits Lenkwe. They discuss and finalise Kelelagobedi's role as a spy. Kelelagobedi's behaviour towards Lenkwe reflects the fear and respect which he has for him:

(43) Kelelagobedi:        *(Ka boikokobetšo.)* Iše kgoši. (p. 11)

*(With respect.)* Yes, your majesty.

(44) Kelelagobedi:        *(Ka letšhogonyana.)* Ke tloga ke go kweletše gabotse, mong wa ka. (p. 11)

*(Somewhat timid.)* I have understood you well, my lord.

(45) Kelelagobedi:        *(Ka poifonyana.)* Nka leka, Mothokwa. (p. 11)

*(With fear.)* I shall try, Mothokwa.

The visit is also important because the identities of the enemies of Lenkwe's kingdom are made known to Kelelagobedi. The fact that Lenkwe has enemies implies that he is not a very good or popular king:

(46) Lenkwe:                Aowa, bona re ba tseba gabotse. Wa mathomo yoo re nyakago gore o mo game diganong ke Noko. Wa bobedi sehlopheng sona se ke Phatlana, ...

(p. 12)

No, we know them very well. The first one on whom we want you to obtain information is Noko.

The second one in this group is Phatlana...

Kelelagobedi also reveals his plans to Lenkwe and Thoka:

(47) Kelelagobedi: Kgopelo ya ka go Mothokwa ke gore a nthekele setšeamantšū seo e tlogo ba molaba wa ka. Ke sona seo ke tlogo tanya dinonyana tša ka ka sona. (p. 13)

My request to Mothokwa is that he should buy me a tape recorder which will be my trap. With this I shall catch the birds.

The dramatist uses subtle dialogue. The birds become symbolic of the enemy which has to be destroyed with the aid of a trap (tape recorder). The use of imagery enhances the thematic implication of the action and drama. The images of birds and a trap play an important role in the course of events and are already reflected in the title, *Kelelagobedi* - double dealer.

The way in which Lenkwe responds to the preceding speech shows the extent to which he is caught up in his own affairs. He is satisfied as long as everything runs according to his liking, for example:

(48) Lenkwe: (*O a myemyela o bile o phaphatha Kelelagobedi legetla.*) (p. 13)

(He smiles and pats Kelelagobedi on the shoulder.)

The slyness with which Lenkwe operates in order to achieve his goal comes to the fore during a meeting at the royal village. Kelelagobedi insists on Lenkwe's introducing the visitors to the meeting and explaining their presence.

(49) Kelelagobedi: ... Ka boikokobetšo hle, mong wa rena, re tsebiše baeng bao ba gago le gore ba tlile ka dife. Ge o re fetišitše fao, ke gona re tlogo kgona go tšwela pele ka ditaba tša motse wa rena. (p. 47)

... With respect please, my lord, explain to us who these visitors of yours are and why they are here. If you can do that we can continue with the problems of this village.

(50) Lenkwe: *(O itira tše nkego o befeletšwe Kelelagobedi.)*  
Baeng ba ke ba ka. Nka se le tsebiše bona, ebile nka se ba kgopele gore ba tloge mo. Ge e le gore ga go seo le ratago go se bolela le mpotšeng ka pela ke tswalele pitšo. (p. 47-48)

*(He pretends to be furious with Kelelagobedi.)*

These visitors are mine. I am not going to explain who they are. Neither am I going to ask them to leave. If it is true that you have nothing to discuss, then let me know now so that I can close the meeting.



The stage direction in (50) (*He pretends to be furious with Kelelagobedi*), which is a sign of the "confrontation" between Kelelagobedi and Lenkwe, is aimed predominantly at the reader. The audience will have to determine the true state of affairs from future events as well as from the situation in which the characters currently find themselves.

After the mock confrontation between Lenkwe and Kelelagobedi, Lenkwe and the men (enemy) are engaged in a bitter verbal exchange. The stage directions which accompany this dialogue are of particular importance. As the quarrel intensifies, so the intensity of the stage directions increases. The confrontation becomes physical when Thoka grabs Lesegafela from behind (60):

(51) Thoka: *(Ka bogajana.)* (p. 48)

*(Sharply.)*

(52) Lesegafela: *(Pele Tlaleng a ka fetola.)* (p. 48)

*(Before Tlaleng can reply.)*

(53) Thoka: *(O befetšwe.)* (p. 48)

*(He is furious.)*

(54) Tlaleng: *(O befetšwe.)* (p. 48)

*(He is furious.)*



The entire quarrel takes place in the space of one page. The tension which exists between the various characters is reflected in the short utterances and the frequency with which they interrupt each other. These aspects enrich the verbal utterances of the dialogue and make it much easier for the reader to read and visualise the scene as an implied audience. In spite of the furious quarrel Lenkwe remains stubborn and shows no understanding of the problems of his subordinates.

Serudu often employs soliloquies as vehicles to transmit information concerning past or future events and also to reveal the thoughts and feelings of characters. The use of soliloquies and their value to the reader/audience in this text must not be underestimated, for example:

(63) Lenkwe:

Lehono gona ke hweditše monnanna. Ke tla ba bintšha tselewane. Ke tla ba topa ka o tee ka o tee ka ba lahlela mphantong wa banna. Ke re ke tla ba ntšha pori ge ba sa ntsebe. Badimo bešo ke leboga kudukudu ka moo le nthometšego lenota le la moisa. (p. 15)

Today I found a real man. I shall let them suffer. I shall take them out one by one and bring them before the council of men (to court). If they do not know me, I shall remove their impudence for them. Ancestors of mine, I thank you very much for the tough chap you sent me.

Lenkwe informs the reader/audience of his plans. So engrossed is he in these plans that, for the reader/audience, this soliloquy becomes a sign of his selfish, egocentric existence. A similar soliloquy on p. 60 confirms Lenkwe's conviction that he is the sole ruler and that he will not allow anyone to push him aside:

(64) Lenkwe: Ke tla ba lentšha ge ba bona nke ba ka ralokela godimo ga hlogo ya ka. Ga ke mošemanyana wa dipudi. Ke a bona e sa le ba forwa ke bale ba rego ba tlošitše kgoši ya bona setulong. Ke Lenkwe la Mangana, mo go buša nna ga go poopedi. Nxa! Ka tla ka bilošwa ke bana ba balata! Ba tla ntseba! (p. 60)

I'll show them if they think they can play on my head. I am not a little goatherd. I see they are misled by those people who told them how they deposed their king. I am Lenkwe of Mangana. I rule here. There is no place for two bulls. What a shame that I should be troubled by the children of commoners! They will get to know me yet!

To the reader, who is unable to perceive the actions visually, this soliloquy has more value than the mere revelation of certain characteristics of Lenkwe. In spite of the to-and-fro movement of information and actions, meetings of his enemies and subtle pressures which are brought to bear on Lenkwe, this soliloquy assists the reader

in following the different intrigues. It comments continuously on the development of the plot.

Lenkwe's suspicion increases the moment he discovers that Kelelagobedi might want to quit and stop spying for him:

(65) Lenkwe:                   Go reng o ka re moisa yo o thomile go ba le  
  letšhogo? (p. 64)  
  Why does it seem as if this guy is getting  
  scared?

(66) Thoka:                    Le nna ke seo ke se lemogilego. (p. 64)  
  I've noticed it myself.

In the soliloquy which follows this dialogue, Lenkwe reveals his merciless nature to the audience:

(67) Lenkwe:                    (*Thoka o a tšwa.*) ... Moisa yo Kelelagobedi o ka  
  re o tla re apeiša potsa. O reng a dio tsenwa ke  
  sebjere go sa swerwe bathwana ba mathomo? ...  
  Kelelagobedi yena, a se ke a be a lewa ke  
  mahlale a re o a ntlhanogela. Nka mo thothobetša  
  ka tserentsepa, a lomelela meratha. (*O re a sa  
  bolela mosadi o a tsena.*) (p. 64)  
  (*Thoka exits.*) ... It seems that this guy,  
  Kelelagobedi, is letting us make a mess of it  
  (making us cook dry porridge.) Why does he seem

to be filled with fear when only the first chaps have been caught? This Kelelagobedi must not be overcome by treachery and leave me in the lurch. I can pierce him with a spear so that he bites the dust (forfeits food). (*While he speaks thus, his wife enters.*)

This soliloquy also gives the reader/audience an indication of the change taking place in the relationship between Lenkwe and Kelelagobedi. A possible confrontation between them is suggested, which creates a great deal of tension.

When Kelelagobedi approaches Lenkwe with a request to free him from his responsibilities as double-dealer, the confrontation indeed takes place:

(68) Lenkwe:                   (*O mo lebeletše ka mahlo a bogale.*) Na ke gona o lemogago lehono gore modiro wa mohuta wo o a bolaya? (p. 91)

(*He looks at him with fierce eyes.*) Do you realise only now that this work could mean your death?

(69) Kelelagobedi:           (*Ka letšhogo.*) Aowa, mong wa ka. Ke tloga ke o tšere ke tseba go re o na le kotsi ye kgolo. (p. 91)

(*With fear.*) No, my lord. I took it, knowing that it would involve much danger.

(70) Lenkwe: *(O thatafiša ditaba.)* Nna ke bona go re ge e le gore o rerešitše o rata go lesa modiro wo re mmiletše ba Moruleng ba tle ba mo tšee...

(p. 91)

*(He aggravates the situation.)* I think if he is telling the truth that he is leaving his job, we should inform the people of Moruleng so that they can come and get him.

(71) Kelelagobedi: *(O bile o rapela ka mahlo.)* Hle, beng ba ka, le se ke la ntlhokofatša! Kua lapeng la ka ke šetše ke orišwa wa mohwelere. Le reng le sa ntšhokelwe? (p. 91)

*(He pleads with his eyes.)* Please, my lord, do not let me die! I am suffering at home as it is. Why do you have no sympathy with me?

(72) Lenkwe: *(Ka bogale.)* Moisa tena o na le lenyatšo! O tseba gabotse gore ge o ka bona dikoma tša bangwe o a bolawa. Bjale o leka go re gapeletša gore re dire bjalo? (p. 91)

*(With fury.)* This fool has no respect! He knows full well that he will be killed if he knows other people's secrets. Now he wants to force us to do so.

(73) Kelelagobedi: *(Ka boikokobetšo bjo bogolo.)* Ke be ke sa nyatše hle, mong wa ka, ke be ke kgopela ka boikokobetšo. (p. 91)

*(With much respect.)* It is not that I do not respect you, please, my lord. I did ask with respect.

(74) Lenkwe: *(O galefile.)* Mpotše fa monna, Kelelagobedi, na o bona nke o tla kgona go mpušetša ditseka tšohle tše ke go filego tšona? (p. 91)

*(He is furious.)* Tell me, Kelelagobedi, do you think you would be able to return all the money which I have given you?

Only by reading the stage directions can the reader discover how Lenkwe's attitude towards Kelelagobedi changes the moment he hears that Kelelagobedi wishes to work for him no longer. Lenkwe hears no reason. He blackmails Kelelagobedi with money and even threatens him with death. His actions can be interpreted as a sign of corrupt government and thus explain the threatened uprising of his subjects.

Lenkwe's mercilessness reaches a climax at the end of the drama when Mmaphuti comes to claim her badly wounded husband. Mmaphuti is chased from the village:





## 3.2.3.2.2 Kelelagobedi and Mmaphuti

In considering the stage directions and related dialogue it becomes apparent that a constant pattern of opposition is woven between these two characters.

The reader/audience is first introduced to these two characters when they are having an argument:

(78) Kelelagobedi:      (*Mmaphuti o mo lebeletše ka mahlong a sentše sefahlogo.*) O reng o sa mphetole Napogadi?

(p. 4)

(*Mmaphuti looks him in the eye and grimaces.*)

Why do you not answer me, Napogadi?

(79) Mmaphuti:        (*Ka bogajana.*) E bago se o se nyakago ke eng, monna tena? (p. 4)

(*Venomously.*) What is it you want, man?

(80) Kelelagobedi:    Se be lešilo. BoLenkwe ba tla re patolla ra ba batho le rena, bjalo ka ba bangwe. (p. 4)

Do not be a fool. Lenkwe and company will elevate us to a level where we will be recognised, like the rest!

(81) Mmaphuti:        (*O selekegile.*) Bjo re bo phelago o bo sola ka eng? (p. 4)

(*Furiously.*) On what grounds do you reject our present life style?

(82) Kelelagobedi: (*Ka go selekega.*) Tšhelete ke morena, ka yona o ka thopa pušo ya lefase. (p. 4)

(*Angrily.*) Money is the boss, with it you can conquer the kingdom of the universe.

(83) Mmaphuti: (*Ka go ngaletša.*) Wa phela o phiphila gare ga mašego o emišitše ditsebe o ka re o mmutla o fowa mošito wa dimpša? Afa go ka ba bose go ba menomašweu? (p. 4)

(*With dissatisfaction.*) Now you are going to live at night and sneak around with your ears standing erect like those of a rabbit, fearing the sound of dogs. And, tell me, will it be enjoyable to be a two-face?

(84) Kelelagobedi: (*O selekegile.*) O ra basadi! (p. 4)

(*Furiously.*) Women!

(85) Mmaphuti: Se re basadi... Ka moso ge o tantšwe ke melaba ya dira o tla be o ntebeletše ka mahlong o re ke go thuše. (p. 5)

Don't say 'women'. If you get caught in a snare tomorrow, you will be looking to me and begging for my assistance.

The physical and psychological interaction of these characters is important both to the reader and the audience. Their actions, which are reflected in the stage directions, serve as an index for the psychological condition in which they find themselves.

In the accompanying dialogue Mmaphuti's turn to speak ends with a question every time. This is a sign of her uncertainty. She insists on an explanation from Kelelagobedi. Serudu's play on words in (83) and (85) is strong, yet subtle. Mmaphuti's question, "Will it be enjoyable to be a two-face?", indicates the extent to which she despises her husband's future decision. The synonym for Kelelagobedi, "menomašweu", reflects the title and the main character, while it increases the thematic implications of this character's choice. Mmaphuti's warning in (85): "If you get caught in a snare tomorrow, you will be looking to me and begging for my assistance", gives us an indication of Mmaphuti's insight into the problem. Her warning suggests danger. Serudu uses the metaphor, "snare", successfully to anticipate a tragic ending and in doing so, to create suspense. The personalities of both characters are laid bare by this quarrel. Kelelagobedi is status conscious, money-mad and selfish. Mmaphuti, on the other hand, is concerned about her children and rejects her husband's decision to spy for Lenkwe.

Thoka interrupts the fight and Mmaphuti disappears into the bedroom from where she eavesdrops on their conversation. After Thoka's departure the quarrel is resumed in the following scene:

- (86) Thoka: *(Thoka o re go sobelela, Mmaphuti o tsena a šutša a hwibiditše mahlo.)* (p. 8)  
*(When Thoka departs, Mmaphuti appears fuming and with red eyes.)*
- (87) Mmaphuti: Mokadikadi towe! O moloi! O goboša peu yešo! O se ke wa re ke be ke sa go kwe ge o pheleya Thoka ka leleme. (p. 8)  
 Curses, you sly person! You are a murderer! You slander our name. Don't think I did not hear when you lied to Thoka.
- (88) Kelelagobedi: *(O tlaletšwe.)* Mmaphuti! (p. 8)  
*(He is confused.)* Mmaphuti!
- (89) Mmaphuti: *(O sa befetšwe o šoro.)* ... Mphe seo e lego sa ka ke ikele gagešo. Nna ga ke nyake go tšhelwa ke madi a kgofa. (p. 8)  
*(She is very angry.)* ... Give me that which is mine so that I may return to my parents. I do not wish to be polluted by the blood of a tick.
- (90) Kelelagobedi: *(O thoma go tenega.)* O tšere kae molao wa go utswa ka tsebe ge ke bolela le banna ba gešo? (p. 8)  
*(He is getting sick and tired.)* Where did you learn to eavesdrop while I speak to my fellow men?

- (91) Mmaphuti:           *(O sa ngangaletše.)* Ga o bone gore se o se dirago le Lenkwe ke boloi? (p. 8)  
*(She is still disagreeing.)* Can you not see that what you and Lenkwe are doing is unholy?
- (92) Mmaphuti:           *(O thoma go lla.)*... Bana ba ka ruri ba hlokile mahlatse. Ba tla duma bana ba bangwe ba na le botatabo! (p. 9)  
*(She begins to cry.)* ... My children really have no joy. They will envy the other children who still have their fathers.
- (93) Kelelagobedi:       *(O eme ka maoto.)* ... Nka se ke be ka tlogela lešoto le lekaaka ke re ke boifišwa ke sellwana seo sa gago: ... Ka mo lapeng la ka go tla phethwa ya ka thato. (p. 9)  
*(He stands up.)* ... I shall not give up this great opportunity which has crossed my path and say that I am frightened off by this crying of yours. In this house of mine, my wishes will be law.
- (94) Mmaphuti:           *(O sa khwinisa.)* Lehono ke go hlapile diatla, mpheane tow e o ratago go iša bana ba batho bohunamatolo. O sehlogo bjang monna tena? Alomma! Kotlo e go lebane. (p. 9)

(*She is still sobbing.*) Today I have washed my hands in innocence, you tell-tale who wants to see other people's children killed. What a cruel man you are? Punishment awaits you.

- (95) Kelelagobedi: (*O selekegile.*) Homola o a ntlhodia! (p. 9)  
 (*He is upset.*) Shut up. You are irritating me!

Simply from reading the stage directions the reader can determine the intensity of the quarrel. The stage directions in (88) and (90) are highly reader-oriented and they will have to be adjusted for an actual performance to provide more detailed visual or auditive descriptions. Kelelagobedi's impatience and irritation with his wife come to the fore clearly in the stage directions in (88), (90), (93) and (95). The tension between the two characters reaches a climax when Mmaphuti bursts into tears in (92). The stage directions are signs of her emotional condition. Because the reader can rely only on the stage directions to obtain visual and/or auditive information, they fulfil an important function for the reader reading the text as an implied audience.

The heated argument between husband and wife is typified by short, vivid individual utterances and strong dialogue full of action. As Pfister explains, it is dialogue "... in which each speech contains an element of action designed to change the situation" (1991:141).

The difference between Kelelagobedi and Mmaphuti also comes to the fore in the way in which they respond on one another's preceding speeches and

their reaction within the conversation as a whole. Kelelagobedi ignores all Mmaphuti's warnings. He changes the dialogue constantly to suit himself. In (93) the reader can discover through the stage directions that he is threatening to leave the room and in (95) he silences her directly. Mmaphuti is more discreet. She reacts explicitly on Kelelagobedi's arguments without changing the dialogue. Although she is unable to handle the tension under pressure from Kelelagobedi and bursts into tears, her feelings for justice come to the fore strongly.

The metaphor used by Mmaphuti in (89) is repeated three times in the course of the drama. It plays an important role in the development of her character. In (89) she equates Kelelagobedi with a tick and refuses to become involved in his activities (to be polluted with the blood of a tick). Mmaphuti's words of warning to Kelelagobedi in (94) correspond with her previous warning in (85). Not only do these repeated warnings create tension and anticipation, but they can also be seen as a premonition.

In Act 3, Scene 4 Kelelagobedi is arranging the new furniture which he has purchased with his bribe money. He and Mmaphuti are engrossed in a conversation:

(96) Kelelagobedi:     *(O itielā hlogong.)* O a tseba mogatšaka, o nyakile go nntšha dijo ka ganong? (p. 43)  
   *(He drinks.)* You know, wife, you wanted to take our food out of our mouths?



- (97) **Mmaphuti:** O reng o rata go tsoša ditshela Mohlakwana? Na monna ga a eletsane le mosadi wa gagwe? (p. 43)  
How is it that you love calling up old arguments, Mohlakwana? Is a man not allowed to share ideas with his wife then?
- (98) **Kelelagobedi:** Moo o rerešitše, eupša o ile wa nyaka go mphetša maatla. Lehono masesethe a re be re tla a bona kae? (*O bolela a pholophotha sofa.*) (p. 43)  
Yes, you have a point there, but you almost discouraged me. How would we have seen all this luxury today? (*He talks while he touches the sofa.*)
- (99) **Mmaphuti:** Go a bona gona re be re ka se a bone. Gape nna seo se bego se tloga se ntshwenya ke gore modiro wo o kotsi kudu. (p. 43)  
We would not have got them. But what worried me was that this work is very dangerous.

Unlike the previous dialogue, the individual utterances are considerably longer now and the conversation forms a more comprehensive unit. The structural features of this dialogue reflect the change which has taken place between Kelelagobedi and Mmaphuti. It would seem that the tension between them has subsided temporarily.

Mmaphuti is still unable to accept that her husband is prepared to do the dangerous work. She tries to reprimand him one last time:

(100) Mmaphuti:                   *(O mo lebeletše ka mahlong.)* Ruri, Mohlakwana, ke gore o tloga o ikanne gore o tla ba yona Kelelagobedi ka nnete?

(p. 44)

*(She looks him in the eye.)* Really, Mohlakwana, so then you have decided to become a real double-dealer?

Mmaphuti's actions support her verbal expression. She looks him straight in the eye and tries to clear up this matter for good. The fact that now she calls her husband, Kelelagobedi, a true "Kelelagobedi" (double-dealer) is highly significant. This confirmation by Mmaphuti echoes the dialogue in (83) "Tell me, will it be enjoyable to be a two-face"? In (83) the dialogue refers to a future decision. In this dialogue he has already taken the decision and she refers to him as a double-dealer. The repeated use of this metaphor always indicates a change in the position of the particular character. It creates metaphorical indicators along which the reader/director/audience is able to interpret the development of the plot.

Mmaphuti decides that she is no longer able to do anything about the matter. Her attitude of mere acceptance is confirmed by the following dialogue and stage directions:

- (101) Mmaphuti:                    (*Ka ngaletšo.*) Phetha thato ya gago  
Mohlakwana. Renaena, dišuwana, re tla fo  
tšhelwa ke madi a kgofa... (p. 45)  
(*Dejected.*) Do as you like, Mohlakwana. We  
orphans, we shall be polluted with the  
blood of the tick.

Mmaphuti's words in (101) contrast with those of (89) where she refuses to be polluted. Here she accepts it meekly. The metaphor has an integrating function in the sense that characters and situations are bound together and the reader/director/audience can follow the development of actions and characters more easily. These stage directions support Mmaphuti's verbal expression very well. For readers who read the dramatic text in their own time it is much easier to turn back and compare metaphorical information. An audience has to process all information immediately and finds itself in a less favourable position.

After the conversation between Mmaphuti and Kelelagobedi she leaves the room. Kelelagobedi closes the scene with an enlightening soliloquy:

- (102) Kelelagobedi:               (*Mmaphuti o tšwa a nyamile.*)  
Na Noko le Phatlana ba ka se be le pelaelo  
ka ga ka? Na ge ba tlo gogola ba bangwe go  
šala nna, go ka se itaetše gore ke nna ke  
ba bešago? Lenkwe o mphahlile ka tšhelete.  
Afa yona e phala bophelo bja ka le bja  
lapa la ka? (*O a tširoga.*) Na ke bolela

eng? Ke swanetše go hwela dikanong tša ka.  
 Monna o bolawa ke seo a sa se llege. Ke  
 feditše, ke tla ba wetša ka lengope.

(p. 45)

*(Mmaphuti leaves the room dejected.)* Will Noko and Phatlana not suspect me? If they come and remove the rest I alone will remain. Will that not create the impression that I have betrayed them? Lenkwe has blinded me with money. Is that better than my life and my family? *(He moves up.)* What am I saying? I must die for what I have vowed to do. A man dies for that which he believes in. I have finished. I shall let them fall into the donga.

In this soliloquy Kelelagobedi searches his soul by asking himself four questions. Serudu does not use this soliloquy only as a technique to allow the audience to become a part of Kelelagobedi's silent thoughts. Through all the questions he also reveals his confusion and conscience. At the end of the soliloquy he answers his own questions with a condemning reply: "A man dies for that which he believes in. I have finished, I shall let them fall into the donga."

Kelelagobedi informs the audience of his choice by the intimate immediacy of the soliloquy. Because he makes the "wrong" moral choice, he creates

antagonism towards himself and Mmaphuti gets the sympathy of the reader/audience.

In Act 5, Scene 5 Mmaphuti tells Kelelagobedi that Napšadi (one of the wives of the enemy) was there. Mmaphuti is most upset after the visit and is once again involved in a quarrel with Kelelagobedi:

(103) Mmaphuti:           Bagwera ba gago ba be ba le mo ba tlile go go nyaka. (p. 69)

Your friends were here. They came looking for you.

(104) Kelelagobedi:       *(O tlelwa ke letšhogo o a homola gannyane.)* Ke bomang bona bao o bolelago ka bona? (p. 69)

*(He is filled with fear and remains silent for a moment.)* Who are you talking about?

(105) Mmaphuti:           Ke bomang? Kgane o na le bagwera ba bakae mono Tlhapetsane? (p. 69)

Who am I talking about? How many friends have you got here in Tlhapetsane?

(106) Kelelagobedi:       Se mphotlele ke a botšiša. (p. 64)

Don't yell at me, I am just asking.

(107) Mmaphuti:           Napšadi o be a le fa. (p. 69)

Napšadi was here.

(108) Kelelagobedi: Go na le seo a go boditšego, ga o nyake go se phula. Ge e le gore o be a nyaka nna, gona o tla boa gape. (p. 69)

There is something which she told you that you don't want to tell me. If she came looking for me, she will come again.

(109) Mmaphuti: Tšeo ke tša gago le yena. Goba o a boa goba ga a boe, nna ga ke di tsene. Ke be ke rata go go lemoša fela gore lehono gona ba go nyapotše. O tla felelwa ke mahlale a a gago. (p. 69-70)

Those are your affairs. Regardless of whether she returns or not, I don't care. I just wanted to warn you that they caught you out today. These activities of yours will be brought to an end now.

(110) Kelelagobedi: (*O thomile go selekega le ge ka pelong a tserwe ke letšhogo.*) Mmaphuti a nke o tlogele go nthoga. Ka gore ga o nyake go mpotša seo Napšadi a go boditšego, a re lebale taba ye. (p. 70)

(*He is getting irritated despite the fear deep in his heart.*) Mmaphuti, stop insulting me. Let us forget the whole thing since you don't want to tell me what Napšadi told you anyway.

(111) Mmaphuti: O monna, motho wešo, o tla bona ka go fetša. Nna ke be ke re ke a go sebotša gore o se tle wa wela mereong. Ge e le fao o bona nke o tla di kgona, tšwela pele ka yona tsela yeo o e swerego. (p. 70)

You are a man, my poor fellow, you will see for yourself. I thought I would be able to convince you so that you do not get into trouble. If you think you can handle it, go ahead in the way you are doing already.

The stage directions in (104) and (110) are vague and directed at the reader only. They will be very difficult to reproduce on stage since they have to be transformed into non-verbal signs such as gestures, movements and facial expressions. The nature of such stage directions will put the reader in a better position to comprehend Kelelagobedi's fear and questions. The audience, on the other hand, will have to wait to obtain this information later by means of a dialogue, soliloquy or visual information.

The dramatist uses irony and sarcasm to expose Kelelagobedi's unpopularity. Mmaphuti's reference to his friends who were there and about how many friends he still has in the village is ironic. As a double-dealer he has no more friends in Tlhapetsane, only enemies.

Kelelagobedi realises his own situation when he asks Mmaphuti: "Wife, if you reject me now, who do you think will support me?" (p. 70).

This scene ends with yet another soliloquy by Kelelagobedi:

(112) Kelelagobedi: *(O sa tla, mme o a ema o leba phapošing. Kelelagobedi o tlaletšwe ga a tsebe go re a ka mo thibela bjang.)* Le ge ke ile ka gana keletšo ya gagwe, bjale gona ke a bona gore mosadi yo o be a bolela nnete. ...Na taba ye ya ka ge e ka tla ya utologa ke tla dira bjang? Monna o bolawa ke seo a se llogo. (p. 71)

*(She is still crying, she gets up and goes to her room. Kelelagobedi is confused. He does not know how to stop her.)*

Even though I refused to listen to her warnings, I now realise that this woman spoke the truth. ... What shall I do if this work of mine comes to the surface? A man dies as a result of his wishes which he believes in.

These stage directions complement the soliloquy well. Mmaphuti's desperation is embodied in her physical action when she begins to cry. The stage directions which refer to Kelelagobedi are aimed primarily at the reader and refer to his emotional inability to calm Mmaphuti.

Directly after the stage directions the dramatist uses the soliloquy as a narrative device between the author and the reader/audience. He reveals Kelelagobedi's inner thoughts and reflects on his previous mistakes. For the first time in the course of the drama (p. 71) Kelelagobedi admits to



himself (and the reader/audience) that he has erred.

Structurally this exit soliloquy also creates a contrast. In the following scene (Act 5 Scene 1), Kelelagobedi is discussing Lenkwe's actions with the "enemy". The two worlds in which Kelelagobedi lives are clearly contrasted by the sequencing of these two scenes. The reader/audience comes to know Kelelagobedi's disposition from this soliloquy. This situation creates tension. The question arises involuntarily: How long will Kelelagobedi still be able to keep up this double role?

In Act 5, Scene 3 Lesetša confronts his mother, Mmaphuti. He wants to know what is going on:

(113) Lesetša:                   Ke taba ye boima kudu, mma. E a nkimela. (*O thoma go khwinisa.*) (p. 80)

It is a very difficult matter, mother. The problem is too large for me. (*He sobs.*)

(114) Mmaphuti:                (*Mahlo a tlala megokgo.*) Hle, Lesetša, se nkgaole pelo. Ntshebele ngwanaka, ke a go rapela. (p. 80)

(*Her eyes fill with tears.*) Please, Lesetša, don't tear my heart. Tell me, child, I beg you.

- (115) Lesetša:           *(O phumola megokgo.)* Mma, na ke nnete gore tate ke yena a dirilego gore tate Noko le tate Phatlana ba rakwe mo motseng wo? (p. 80)  
*(He dries his tears.)* Mother, is it true that father was the reason why uncle Noko and Phatlana were chased from the village?
- (116) Mmaphuti:       *(Ka letšhogo.)* O di kwa kae tšeo, ngwana tena? (p. 81)  
*(Shocked.)* Where do you hear this, child?
- (117) Lesetša:           Taba ye e bolelwa gohle mo. (p. 81)  
 Everyone is talking about it.
- (118) Mmaphuti:       *(O itiwa ke letswalo.)* Maaka fela! Ba reng ba phara monna wa ka ka maaka a matalatala bjalo?... (p. 81)  
*(She feels guilty.)* They're all lies. Why do they accuse my husband with such falseness and lies?
- (119) Lesetša:           Ba re ba makatšwa ke ge ke apara dilo tše botse sekolong etšwe tate e le moditšana bjalo ka botatabo. Gape ba re difanišara tša tate o di rekile ka tšhelete ye a e fiwago ke kgoši Lenkwe. (p. 81)

They say it surprises them that I wear such nice clothes to school while father is just as poor as all their fathers. They also say that father bought all the furniture with the money he receives from king Lenkwe.

(120) Mmaphuti: Ba tla mpona gabotse baradianyana bao. Ge ba nnyaka diganong ba ntebantšhe ba se ke ba mpolaela ngwana... (p. 81)

I shall teach those sly ones a lesson. If they have a problem, they must clear it out with me, they must not kill my child...

(121) Lesetša: (*O mo tse na ganong.*) Mma, taba ye e šetše e tsebja le ke barutiši kua sekolong. (p. 81)

(*He interrupts her.*) Mother, even the teachers at school know this story.

(122) Mmaphuti: (*O itira tše nkego ga a tšhoga.*) Ba boditšwe ke mang bona?

(*She acts unsurprised.*) Who told them?

Lesetša's emotional condition is confirmed by the stage directions in (113). Mmaphuti's reaction to her son's suffering is also disclosed by the stage directions in (114). Mmaphuti's inner emotions are revealed to the reader effectively by the stage directions in (116), (118) and (122). The audience, however, can rely on the dialogue only and will not always

be aware of her fear, feelings of guilt and attempts to protect her child.

The stage directions in (118) and (122) contrast with the accompanying dialogue. Mmaphuti's role as a mother is clearly exposed by this contrast. Although she knows that all the accusations of which Lesetša was speaking are true, she still tries to protect her child through her actions.

After Mmaphuti's conversation with Lesetša she reveals her feelings to the reader/audience in a soliloquy:

(123) Mmaphuti:            O ra Kelelagobedi! Ke mmoditše ge a thoma modiro  
    wo go re o nyaka go goboša bana ba ka. Lehono  
    šedi, o nyapogile. O tla mpona ge a fihla mo. Ge  
    a sa o tlogele nna le bana ba ka re tla boela  
    gagešo. O tla šala le ntlo ye ya gagwe. Nna ke  
    tšwa gagešo ke itlhokela, ga ke tlo tšhelwa ka  
    madi a kgofa ka baka la monna wa sengangele yo  
    a sa nyakego go theeletša dikeletšo tša mosadi  
    wa gagwe. Ke ikana ka mma mosadi yo moswana, ge  
    Kelelagobedi a sa tlogele modironyana wo wa  
    gagwe wa ditšhila, lenyalo la rena le ka upše la  
    senyega. Popotela e tla šala e butšwa leretheng  
    la mohwelere e nnoši. (p. 82)

You mean Kelelagobedi! I told him when he began with this job that he would hurt our children.

He will have to deal with me when he arrives here. If he does not leave this job, I shall return to the home of my parents with my children. He can stay here in this house of his. I come from the home of my parents, without riches. I will not have myself polluted by the blood of a tick as the result of a stubborn man who will not listen to the advice/warnings of his wife. I swear, if Kelelagobedi does not leave this dirty work of his, our marriage is over. Stubbornness can stay behind and roast in the coals of the red bush.

Mmaphuti's soliloquy is a sign of her worry and desperation as a wife and mother. The suffering of her child is the last straw and leads to a turning point in her life. The metaphor which she often uses (I will not be polluted by the blood of a tick) acquires new meaning in this soliloquy. Mmaphuti takes up the struggle against Kelelagobedi with renewed vigour. From his soliloquies, however, the reader/audience knows how much pressure there is on Kelelagobedi and is aware of the dilemma in which he finds himself. The possibility that Kelelagobedi would not be able to agree to her demands aggravates the situation and creates tension.

The tension between Kelelagobedi and Mmaphuti is emphasised by the continued use of soliloquies. Their psychological conditions are constantly revealed to the reader/audience. The characters use these

intimate conversations to position themselves in the conflict.

In Act 5, Scene 4 Mmaphuti confronts Kelelagobedi with all the information which she has received from Lesetša. Kelelagobedi reacts with confusion and anger to all her accusations: (*He looks at his wife with surprise - p 83*); (*He starts, but does not show it - p 84*); (*He is still confused - p 84*); (*With fear - p 84*); (*He is confused - P 85*); (*He is angry - p 85*); (*He is furious - p 86*).

At the end of the quarrel the stage directions reveal Kelelagobedi's uncertainty and fear: (*He is troubled by his conscience - p 86*); (*He is very worried - p 87*); (*Kelelagobedi is arrogant and does not answer his wife - p 87*). These stage directions give a psychological indication of Kelelagobedi's emotional regression and are definitely directed more towards a reader.

In the subsequent dialogue he admits to his wife, for the first time, that he has erred:

(124) Kelelagobedi:        (*O šaretšwe.*) Ke tlaletšwe, mogatšaka. Ke bjalo ka ngwedi ge o apogetšwe ke maru. Ga ke tsebe gore nka dira eng. (p. 87)

(*He is confused.*) It is over, my wife. I am like the moon which is uncovered by clouds. I do not know what to do.

(125) Kelelagobedi: ... Ke swana le motho yo a lego ka gare ga noka ye e tletšego. Go boela morago go a pala; go ya pele le gona ke kotsi. Ke tla itebanya bjang le Lenkwe a ntshepile ka tsela ye? (p. 87)

... I am like someone who finds himself in a flooded river. To move back is impossible, to go forward is dangerous. How shall I put my case to Lenkwe after he has trusted me so?

(126) Mmaphuti: Na go lefa motho gore a go direle mošomo wa ditšhila go laetša gore motho yoo o a go tshepa? Aowa, mogatšaka, o fahlilwe. Tšhelete ga e fete bophelo bja bana ba ka. (p. 87)

To pay someone to do his dirty work - do you consider that trust? No, my husband, you were betrayed. Money is not worth more than the lives of my children.

(127) Kelelagobedi: Hle, mogatšaka, ntogiše maano. Ke tlalelong. Ke ngwedi wo o apogetšwego ke maru. Ke direng ge go le bjalo?

Please, my wife, help me to make plans. I am in trouble. I am the moon which is uncovered by clouds. What must I do under these circumstances?

The stage directions work in conjunction with the dialogue to reveal to the reader the realisations to which Kelelagobedi has come. In his conversation with Mmaphuti he admits that Lenkwe manipulates him and that he has completely lost control over the situation in which he finds himself. His merciless action changes as the circle closes in around him. The way in which Kelelagobedi begs for his wife's assistance is not only degrading, it even draws sympathy from the reader/audience.

In Act 5, Scene 6 Tlaleng and Lesegafela make plans to ambush and attack Kelelagobedi. Their dialogue prepares the reader/audience for the gruesome attack:

(128) Tlaleng:                   ... Le mo robe dikgopo tše le mo ragake le  
dipshio tše gore a se hlwe a kgona go dira selo  
morago ga fa. (p. 93)

Break his ribs and kick him in the kidneys so  
that after this, he will not be capable of  
anything.

(129) Lesegafela:           Ditlhokwa di le lalele! (p. 93)

The Gods be with you!

The whole attack scene can be followed by simply reading the stage directions.



(130) Monna III: *(O a tšwelela o khupeditše sefahlogo ka khuse.)*  
(p. 95)

Man III: *(He appears - his face covered with a mask.)*

(131) Kelelagobedi: *(O tšhogile la go hwa.)*  
*(Monna I o a khukhuna go tšwa ka morago ga Kelelagobedi, mme o mo ratha ka molamo lešitaphiri o bile o mo tšhela fase.)* (p. 95)  
*(He is frightened to death.)*

*(Man I stalks up and appears behind Kelelagobedi. He strikes him against the back of the head with a bludgeon and throws him to the ground.)*

(132) Kelelagobedi: *(O wetše fase o bile o hemela godimo.)* (p. 95)  
*(He has fallen to the ground and breathes heavily.)*

(133) Kelelagobedi: *(O hemela godimo.)* (p. 95)  
*(He is breathing heavily.)*

(134) Monna I: *(O mo rutha dikgopo tše ka molamo.)* (p. 95)

Man I: *(He strikes his ribs with the bludgeon.)*

(135) Monna III: *(O mo kgitla ka letšwele sefahlogo se.)* (p. 95)

Man III: *(He strikes him in the face with his fist.)*

- (136) Monna I:                    (*O mo raga hlogo ye ka seeta.*) (p. 95)  
 Man I:                               (*He kicks his head with his shoe.*)
- (137) Kelelagobedi:            (*O feletšwe ke maatla.*) (p. 96)  
                                       (*He is exhausted.*)
- (138) Monna III:                (*O mo itia dikgopo tše ka lepara.*) (p. 96)  
 Man III:                           (*He strikes him in the ribs with a stick.*)
- (139) Monna III:                (*O mo tula dikgopo tše ka molamo.*) (p. 96)  
 Man III:                           (*He batters his ribs with a stick.*)  
                                       (*O mo tshwela ka mare; Kelelagobedi o a idibala.*) (p. 96)  
                                       (*He spits on him; Kelelagobedi faints.*)
- (140) Monna I:                    (*O mo raga hlogo gape ka seeta.*) (p. 96)  
 Man I:                               (*He again kicks his head with his shoe.*)
- (141) Monna I:                    (*O a mo setšha o ntšha mahlare a matala le a mahwibidu, o bile o hwetša le setšeamantšu ka potleng ya paki.*) (p. 96)  
 Man I:                               (*He searches him and takes out green and red notes. He also finds a tape recorder in his pocket.*)

The action-filled stage directions in this scene enrich the dialogue and help the reader/director with the visual representation of the actions

and to experience this section as an implied audience. The action reaches a climax when Kelelagobedi faints. It is only the reader, however, who will know that Kelelagobedi has fainted, and has not died. It is on p. 98 only that the reader is informed by Nadinadi that Kelelagobedi is still alive: "... he is still alive. Let us quickly carry him to the royal village". Until this information becomes known, the audience, unlike the reader, will be in suspense. Another argument: In a performance text it is unlikely that the course of the attack would have been set out in such minute detail. It forms a small scene in itself.

The physical attack on Kelelagobedi is used as a sign of humiliation and as a demonstration that double-dealers are not tolerated in society and that they should be punished.

After the attack on Kelelagobedi, Mmaphuti goes to the village to claim her husband:

(142) Mmaphuti:

*(Ka pefelo a dutše a khwinisa.)*

Moloi towé, mphe monna wa ka! (p. 100)

*(She is sobbing furiously.)* You witch, give back my husband!

(143) Lenkwe:

*(O itira tše nkego ga a tsebe selo.)*

Fodiša matswalo mma. O re monna wa gago o hlomile bjang? (p. 101)

*(He pretends to know nothing.)* Calm down, mother, tell me first, what did you say the matter was with your husband?

(144) Mmaphuti: *(O gaketše.)* Ke botšiša wena, mphenyašilo tena! Ke re le dirileng ka monna wa ka? Mpontšheng yena!

*(She is furious.)* I want to know from you, bully! What have you done with my husband? Show him to me!

(145) Lenkwe: *(O leka go mo rapeletša.)* Hle, re a go kgopela, a nke o tlogele mabefi, re boledišane gabotse? Monna wa gago o be a re direla, re a tseba. Re fe tsebe le rena re ntšhe maikutlo a rena. Re tla leka ka moo re kgonago go go šaparolla ge e le gore a ka se sa kgona go go šomela. (p. 101)

*(He tries to plead with her.)* Please, we ask nicely, leave the anger that we can speak properly. Your husband worked for us. We know. Listen, so that we can put our case too. We shall try and help where we can to assist you if he cannot work any more.

(146) Mmaphuti:           *(O galefile le go feta.)* O re la dirang? Le tshephile tšona dithorwana tšeo tša lena go homotša batho ka tšona? Ga ke nyake go kwa selo ka tšhaparollwana yeo ya lena. ...Le mmolaile baloi tenang! Le hloka dihlong bjang!

(p. 101-102)

*(She is beside herself with anger.)* What do you say you will do? Do you trust that those little drops (of money) of yours will keep the people satisfied? I will hear nothing of your assistance. You killed him, you witches! You have no shame!

Right up to the end of the drama Mmaphuti remains consistent in her words and actions. Her loyalty towards Kelelagobedi comes to the fore strongly. When Lenkwe offers her money she refuses to accept it - a sign of her pride and honesty which are obvious throughout the drama. Mmaphuti acts fearlessly and eventually has to be dragged physically from Lenkwe's village:

(147) Lenkwe:           *(O fela pelo.)* Emelela o tšwe ka mo ga ka!

*(His patience wears out.)* Stand up and leave my place!

(148) Mmaphuti:           Ka mo ga ke tšwe! (p. 102)

I will not leave this place!

- (149) Lenkwe:                    (*O befetšwe.*) Thoka, mo kukele ka kua ntle o a re hlodia. (p. 102)  
                                       (*He is furious.*) Thoka, carry her outside. She irritates us.
- (150) Thoka:                     (*O mo swara ka letsogo.*) Emelela re tloge mosadi. (p. 102)  
                                       (*He takes her by the arm.*) Stand up so that we can go, woman.
- (151) Mmaphuti:                **Ntlogele, mpša towel Ke re ntlogele!**  
                                       Leave me alone, you dog! I say let me go!
- (152) Thoka:                     (*O mo gogela ntle.*) A re ye, Mmaphuti. (p. 102)  
                                       (*He drags her outside.*) Come, Mmaphuti.
- (153) Mmaphuti:                (*A le monyako.*) Mpho! (*O tshwa mare.*) (p. 102)  
                                       (*Standing in the door.*) Sis! (*She spits.*)

### 3.3 CONCLUSION

The stage directions support the dialogue very well and make it possible for the reader/director to visualise Mmaphuti's actions. Mmaphuti is characterised by her actions (as set out in the stage directions) and dialogue as a person who cherishes high moral values.

From studying the stage directions and the dialogue it is possible to draw up a table of comparison between Kelelagobedi and Mmaphuti, regarding their behaviour, emotions, temperament and relationship.

KelelagobediMmaphuti

Status-conscious

Satisfied with lifestyle

Money-hungry

Money not an end in itself

Impatient

Patient - warns frequently

Pursues own goals

Concern for family

Stubborn

Discreet

Dishonest

High moral values

Merciless

Desperate and candid

Confused, uncertain

Consistent, supportive

Humiliated

Loyal

Physically and emotionally  
broken

Proud and brave

From considering the stage directions of this text it has become clear that the directions (regarding time and space) seldom refer to performance aspects. In some cases, for example, the dramatist gives no indication of time in his stage directions. He even takes the reader back in time through Kelelagobedi's thoughts. The fictional space moves sixteen times in the course of the drama. The frequency with which the fictional time and space change drives the story forward and gives to this text a much higher tempo than that of *Naga ga di etelane*.

The stage directions which refer to the *dramatis personae* and their actions are more supportive. Although they focus primarily on the emotions and actions of the characters, they also allow the reader to conclude the relationships between characters.



**CHAPTER 4****"ŠAKA LA PELO GA LE TLALE": A MULTI-PURPOSE RADIO SCRIPT****4.0 INTRODUCTION**

Šaka la pelo ga le tlale (1989) is Serudu's third drama in a period of twelve years. He explains in the preface that this drama is quite different from the others because it is a radio drama based on "a free adaptation of the theme of Romeo and Juliet" (1989:v). According to the dramatist the theme of true love thwarted, which Shakespeare used many years ago, is still relevant today.

**4.0.1 Summary of the play**

The old quarrel between the Koribana family and the Matuba family flares up again in Koribana's field when the young men of the two families are involved in a fight for possession of a hare killed by the dogs.

After this fight, Matsobane, the son of Mr Koribana, attends a feast at Matuba's kraal and, ignorant of her identity, falls in love with Mmakoma, the daughter of Matuba, his father's great enemy. Mmakoma, unaware of his identity, returns his love.

Mmakoma's mother tries to take firm action against a possible relationship between the two because Mmakoma is already betrothed to the

Mabele family. Matsobane and Mmakoma both realise the danger of their forbidden relationship, but decide that nothing will change their feelings.

During a secret visit to Mmakoma the young men of Matuba's kraal decide to capture Matsobane because they cannot allow him to ruin the marriage between Mmakoma and Thapudi, the son of Mabele. The fight between them reaches a climax when Matsobane kills Maesela. The court finds Matsobane guilty of murder and announces the sentence by which he is banished from the region.

The festive day on which the Mabele family delivers the dowry has dawned. While all the guests are filled with jubilation, Mmakoma walks to the river to wait for Matsobane. After a long wait she confesses her true love for Matsobane and promises to wait for him forever. Mmakoma decides to take her own life and jumps into the river. All the guests rush to the river when the news reaches them. Matsobane appears on the scene and wants to kill Thapudi. The two men become involved in a serious fight and, locked in combat, fall into the water together before anyone can stop them.

The drama ends on a tragic note when three young lovers from three different families die, inevitably, as victims of circumstances beyond their control.

#### 4.0.2 Method of analysis

In the following analysis I use the term "episode" to refer to "scene", in order to abide by the prescriptions laid down by the dramatist in his preface, namely that this drama should be seen as a radio drama.

The most important way to establish the identity of the radio drama as sub-genre, is by scrutinising the directions in the text. The dialogue as such is unable to reveal this identity since, as is the case in the stage drama, it gives information about the fictional world and content only.

In this text, however, the multi-dimensional nature of the directions compelled me to classify and reconstruct them in an attempt to discover to whom they are directed; what they convey; and when and how they are intended to be carried out. The classification is based on the position of the directions in the text, namely:

- \* Directions preceding episodes,
- \* directions interspersed with dialogue and
- \* directions succeeding episodes.

It was only after an intense scrutiny of the directions that the generic nature of this text could be determined.

#### 4.1 DIDASCALIES EMANATING FROM INFORMATION PRECEDING THE TEXT

##### 4.1.1 The Preface

The playwright addresses the reader directly in the preface and requests that this drama should be read and analysed as a radio drama. Once that has been done, it may be compared with a stage drama.

In addition he expresses his hope that the reader will enjoy the play when reading it and that it will be an enrichment of the genre of Northern Sotho drama. Finally the dramatist requests the reader not to forget to point out his errors. The dramatist thus uses this preface to enter into a direct dialogue with the reader. He warns the reader, gives her/him some advice regarding the approach to the drama and also requests comment. It would seem, therefore, that the dramatist had a reader in mind when he wrote this play for radio.

##### 4.1.2 The title and cover

Personal communication with the dramatist revealed that the cover had been designed by the author. It represents a red heart as a sign of love, against a dark background which symbolises sorrow or death. The theme of the book can already be deduced from the title, *Šaka la pelo ga le tla le* which means "the 'kraal' of the heart is not filled". Both the cover and the title support the theme of the drama very well and supply the reader with useful information regarding the ensuing reading process.

#### 4.1.3 The list of characters

Three extended families are represented. Each inhabitant of each of the three villages is named - adding up to 25 characters in total. The clear distinction between the different extended families/villagers, helps the reader to situate the characters spatially. This division is created deliberately and from the outset suggests to the reader that division and friction exist between the groups. None of the characters is assigned a specific voice quality from which specific characteristics could be deduced.

#### 4.2 DIDASCALIES EMANATING FROM THE TEXT

The drama comprises 144 printed pages, arranged in 5 acts and 35 scenes. The division in acts and scenes is not typical of a radio drama and really belongs to the stage drama. The scenes are, however, short and episodic, comprising a broadcast time of approximately five to ten minutes each. Based on the length of the text it should be classified as a serial.

##### 4.2.1 Directions preceding episodes

I had difficulty in obtaining clarity concerning the method of presentation of the directions which lead every episode. It would seem that, in the directions, the dramatist uses two methods to convey information to the reader/listener, viz. announcements and narrations.

For the analysis of the preceding directions it was essential to make the following distinctions:

- \* announcements concerning visual scenes, actions in progress and past or future events,
- \* announcements concerning visual scenes, actions in progress and inner feelings of characters,
- \* announcements concerning visual-auditive-visual scenes and actions in progress and
- \* narrations concerning past events and current feelings of characters.

The use of announcements or narration has advantages in the auditive medium because it can create atmosphere, sketch the milieu or narrate visual actions which might not always be possible in the dramatic script.

According to Peigh (1979:87) narration is borrowed from the tradition of story telling and is the most flexible and useful of all the techniques available to the radio writer. Peigh goes on to explain that a radio drama can be dramatised in its entirety without the use of any narration or it can take place as an "exercise in storytelling, with some of the episodes presented in dramatic form" (1979:101).

According to Odendaal (1967:6) the radio dramatist has the advantage that s/he is able to use language to fulfil the role of director, costume and make-up.

It appears that there are theorists who are against the use of a narrator. Evans, quoted by Moeketsi (1991:28), views the presence of such a mediator as an "almost infallible symptom of failure on the part of the dramatist" which confirms the inability of the dramatist to transmit events/action effectively through dialogue. Lee (1973:82) regards the use of narration as a way of bridging the "lack of technical facilities". Apart from all advantages and disadvantages the dramatist should be consistent in the use of narration. According to Peigh (1979:101) the balance of narrative and dramatic sequences is a principal structural feature which should enjoy continuous attention.

#### 4.2.1.1 Announcements concerning visual scenes, actions in progress and past or future events

The dramatist often uses announcements to pass on visual information to the reader/listener, concerning scenes and the actions which are in progress. Many of the actions which are indicated by the announcements in this drama cannot be given in the straight dramatic text, because of their visual nature.

The first example is from the opening scene (episode 1) on page 1:

#### Tšhemong ya Koribana

- (1) *(Go tšena Koribana, Mohumagadi Koribana, Madimetša le Mathibela. Koribana le Mohumagadi ba bonala ba hlagola ka tšhemong. Ba gare ba swere mehlamu.)* (p. 1)

## In Koribana's field

*(Koribana, Mrs Koribana, Madimetša and Mathibela enter. They are seen weeding the land. They are engaged in conversation.)*

The opening scene in a radio drama plays a most important role since it contains the actual exposition. It provides the locale where the action takes place, introduces the characters and starts the action. The problem which the radio dramatist has to solve in the opening scene, according to Peigh (1979:91) is: "how long an audience will continue to listen to descriptions and background information." Peigh's answer is: "Not very long".

Serudu's opening descriptions are short, informative and functional, consisting of only three lines. Before the italicised directions start, the dramatist constantly provides the locality of the action, for example: "In Koribana's field"; thereafter the characters are introduced to the listener/reader by name. The action in which Koribana and his wife are engaged is revealed by means of a visual description - "they are seen to be weeding". The final sentence - "they are engaged in conversation" - is highly functional. It implies that when the dialogue begins, the characters are already in the middle of a conversation and the reader/listener is drawn into this conversation immediately. This is an effective dramatic technique by which the attention of the reader/listener is caught immediately without wasting too much time.



The preceding announcement in Act 1, Scene 3 (episode 3) reads as follows:

**Tšhemong ya Matuba**

- (2) *(Matuba le mogatšagwe ba bonala ba lebeletše Lesetša le Maesela ba etla ba kitima ba ba lebile, dihempe di kgeigile di tletše madi.)* (p. 9)

In Matuba's field

*(Matuba and his wife are visible while they are looking at Lesetša and Maesela, who are running towards them, their shirts torn and bloody.)*

This direction clearly implies the presence of an announcer. The new locale of action, "Matuba's field", as well as the four new characters, are introduced to the reader/listener by name. The rest of the direction is highly visual. The action in progress as well as the physical appearance of the characters is related visually to the reader/listener by the use of the verb stem, *-bonala* "visible".

In Act 2, Scene 3 (episode 10) the playwright uses the following directions:

## Lapeng la Matuba

- (3) *(Matuba o tseña a goga maoto. O šikere selepe le legong. Thokwana go bonala mohumagadi a le hleng le sebešo.)* (p. 32)

In Matuba's village

*(Matuba enters, dragging his feet. He carries an axe and a piece of wood on his shoulder. At one side, his wife is seen at the fire place.)*

Once more the whole description is directed at the visual scene and action in progress. Mrs Matuba's visibility is confirmed again by the word *go bonala*. The auditive nature of the radio drama necessitates the introduction of an announcer in these instances. The narrator acts as a mediator between the listener and the dramatist to convey visual information to the "blind listener".

The dialogue which follows on this description is functional as it comments on the visual nature of the description and forms a bond between the dialogue and the direction:

- (4) Mdi Matuba: (*o maketše*): Tholo! Le reng le kgosoka ka tsela ye? Na ke gona ge botšofadi bo le kakatletše ka tše pedi? (p. 32)

Mrs Matuba: (*with surprise*): Tholo! How is it that you walk so depressed? Is it old age which has made you so inflexible?

In Act 3, Scene 7 (episode 21) the following direction is given:

**Lapeng la Matuba**

- (5) *(Ke manthapama, Maesela le Lesetša ba swere mehlamo ka ga Matsobane. Ba senka mekgwa ya go mo hlokofatša.)* (p. 87)

In Matuba's village

*(It is in the afternoon, Maesela and Lesetša are engaged in a conversation about Matsobane. They are making plans to discipline him.)*

Although the reader/listener is orientated concerning the time and locality of the action, the description is not all that visual, but rather more informative. The reader/listener is informed about Maesela and Lesetša's future plans to injure Matsobane. The dramatist uses this technique effectively to keep the reader/listener informed of the action at all times. The preceding directions prepare the reader/listener for a possible attack on Matsobane and create tension. The dramatist can also use this technique to ensure that the listener remains interested and in so doing to force her/him, in a subtle way, to listen to the next episode.

In Act 4, Scene 3 (episode 24) the visual scene shifts to the main village. The following directions are given:

## Kgorong ya mošate

- (6) *(Go bonala, kgoši, banna le basadi, le Mathibela a tlemilwe ka mebja a le pele ga banna.)* (p. 99)

At the king's village

*(The king, men and women can be seen as well as Mathibela who is tied up with straps and appears before the men.)*

There is a clear relationship between these directions and those with which the previous scene (Act 4, Scene 2 (episode 23)) is concluded; for example:

- (7) *(BoMatuba ba tsena ba goga Mathibela, ba rwala Maesela ba boela ka gae.)* (p. 98)

*(Matuba and company enter dragging Mathibela. They carry Maesela and are on their way home.)*

After a fight between the young men of Matuba's village and those of Koribana, one man of each village dies. The other men of Koribana's village flee, but Mathibela is captured. Episode (23) ends where Matuba and company drag Mathibela home. In the directions in (6) the visual scene has moved to the entrance of the chief's village. The directions orientate the reader/listener as regards the place of action. The directions also serve as a source of information in the sense that the visual scene and the action in progress are transmitted to the

reader/listener. The fact that Mathibela appears before the men in bonds will not be confusing to the listener as the concluding directions in the preceding scene prepare her/him for this fact. In this instance the final directions in Act 4, Scene 2 (episode 23) and the opening directions in Act 4, Scene 3 (episode 24) serve as a link within the drama to join the two scenes and to provide continuity.

The preceding directions in Act 4, Scene 7 (episode 28) are the following:

#### Tseleng

- (8) *(Go bonala Matsobane a hlehla ka tsela, a lebile thokong ya ga Matuba. Ke bošego.)* (p. 117)

#### Along the road

*(Matsobane is visible where he runs along the road. He is running in the direction of Matuba's place. It is dark.)*

These directions orientate the reader/listener as regards place (*along the road*) and time (*it is dark*). It also has an elucidating function in the sense that it gives a visual indication (*he is visible*) to the reader/listener. The directions suggest that Matsobane is on his way to Matuba's village to see his beloved. This suggestion creates much tension as a result of the hatred between the two families.

The ensuing monologue by Matsobane ties up very clearly with the above-mentioned directions and confirms the suggestion:

- (9) **Matsobane:** (*tse leng o bolela a nnoši.*): Bjale ke batametše ... Go moratiwa gona ke swanetše go fihla! (p. 117)  
 (*He is talking to himself on the way.*): Now I am close. I must get to my beloved!

Act 5, Scene 5 (episode 33) is introduced by the following opening directions:

**Lapeng la Matuba**

- (10) (*Go bonala basadi ba feafea go lokišetšwa tša lenyalo la Mmakoma. Meladi le Napšadi ba duletše thokwana ba a hlamula.*)  
 (p. 135)

**In Matuba's village**

*(Women can be seen as they are busily preparing for Mmakoma's wedding. Meladi and Napšadi are sitting to one side talking.)*

The directions are informative: they supply visual information to the reader/listener about the scene at Matuba's village and about the action in progress. The dramatist also creates two simultaneous fictional spaces: the women at work and the two talking girls. By means of the directions the dramatist orientates the reader/listener to create the

scene visually in her/his imagination. The announcement that the women are making preparations for Mmakoma's wedding creates tension since the reader/listener already knows in this episode (33) that she is not in favour of the pre-arranged marriage to Thapudi, as she loves only Matsobane.

The reference to Meladi and Napšadi's conversation in the abovementioned directions is highly functional. As soon as the dialogue begins, the reader/listener becomes party to the conversation, for example:

- (11) **Meladi:**        (*o a hwena hwena*): Na afa o di kwele? (p. 135)  
                           (*she whispers*): Have you heard?
- Napšadi:**        (*o a mmatame la*): Ke dife? (p. 135)  
                           (*she moves closer to her*): What?
- Meladi:**        Tša morwa' Koribana? (p. 135)  
                           The thing about Koribana's son?

The dramatist deliberately introduces them by name in direction (8) so that the listener is not confused. Their gossip is all the more functional because it confirms the tension which exists about the wedding.

From these examples it would seem that all the announcements have an orientational function regarding time and space, and/or an informative function about visual scenes and actions in progress. This information is valuable since it helps the reader/listener to orientate the action spatially and to creating visual scenes in her/his imagination.

- 4.2.1.2 Announcements concerning the visual scenes, actions in progress and emotions or inner feelings of characters

The following directions lead Act 4, Scene 1 (episode 15):

**Lapeng la Koribana**

- (12) *(Go bonala Koribana le Mohumagadi ba dutše mollong. Ba bolela ka morwa wa bona e lego Matsobane. Ba bonala ba tshwenyegile kudu.)* (p. 63)

In Koribana's village

*(Koribana and his wife are visible where they are sitting at the fire. They are talking about their son, Matsobane. They are visibly upset.)*

The direction is highly visual and informative. The presence of Koribana and his wife is announced in a visual manner. The dramatist also introduces the person they are discussing to the reader by name (Matsobane). The playwright even uses a visual direction to suggest the emotions of the characters.

The dialogue between Koribana and his wife confirms the abovementioned suggestion:



(13) **Koribana:** Ke kwa gore mohlang wola wa dinaka boMatsobane ba bonwe gona kua ga Matuba. (p. 63)

I hear that on the day of the dancing Matsobane and company were observed at Matuba's place.

**Mdi Koribana:** E le gore o hlokang mo ga gabo? (p. 63)

What does he lack here at his home?

**Koribana:** Ga ke kgolwe ruri gore o sa tšea gabotse. Bona o gatakela mereo ya boMatuba, o ja dijo tša bona, o ikgohlakgohla le morwedi wa bona. A ka loka? Ke a gana moo! (p. 63)

I really do not think he is right in his head any more. Look, he falls into the traps of Matuba, he eats their food and he troubles himself with their daughter. Is that right? I don't agree.

In radio drama the possibilities for a dramatist to expose the inner thoughts and feelings of characters to the listener are more restricted. The playwright bridges this problem, however, by a successful combination of visually informative announcements with relevant dialogue.

In Act 3, Scene 3 (episode 17) the following directions are given:

## Lapeng la Koribana

- (14) *(Koribana le mosadi ba dutše mathuding a ngwako. Difahlogo tša bona di bonala di tletše manyami.)* (p. 71)

In the village of Koribana

*(Koribana and his wife are sitting in the shade of their house. Their faces are visibly marked with disappointment.)*

This direction orientates the reader/listener regarding the place of the action and provides information about the visual scene. As in the previous example the emotions of Koribana and his wife are indicated by means of a visual image.

An important discovery here is that the previous scene (episode 16) also took place in Koribana's village. The visual scene, therefore, has remained unchanged. The dramatist finds it necessary, nevertheless, to remind the reader of this at the beginning of the following episode in order to avoid confusion.

The preceding dialogue between Koribana and his wife in (episode 16) and the dialogue which follows on the direction in (episode 17) line up well and explain the disappointment which is mentioned, for example:

(15) **Mdi Koribana:** Ke kwele gore yena ngwanenyana yoo wa ga Matuba o šetše a kgopetšwe ke ba ga Mabele. Ba ka se thabele ge Matsobane a mo senyetša tšeo. (p. 69)  
I heard that that daughter of Matuba has already been asked by the people of Mabele. They will not allow Matsobane to spoil her prospective marriage.

**Koribana:** Moo o a rereša ga go motswadi yo a ka thabelago taba ya mohuta woo! (p. 69-70)  
Yes, you speak the truth. There are no parents who would be elated by such a turn of events.

After the opening directions of (episode 17) marked as number (14) the dialogue between Koribana and his wife continues as follows:

(16) **Koribana:** O a tseba ke letše ke eleletša taba ya Matsobane bošego ka moka. E ntletše dimpa tsii! (p. 71)  
You know, I have been thinking about Matsobane's situation all night. It baffles me.

**Mdi Koribana:** Ke tloga ke go boditše gore a ka se sa loka le gatee. (p. 71)  
I told you that he will never be all right again.

**Koribana:** Eya! Maano a ntswetše, mošemane yo o re dubiša  
thankga! (p. 71)

Gosh! Maano has borne me, this boy is giving us  
a headache!

The playwright's directions integrate very well with the dialogue and supply just enough information to keep the reader/listener informed and to avoid any confusion.

#### 4.2.1.3 Announcements concerning visual-auditive-visual scenes and actions in progress

Since the reader relies on sound only, it is essential that the dramatist takes this situation into consideration during the writing of a radio drama. All auditive signs which are broadcast to the reader should therefore be expertly designed by the director in order to create the correct atmosphere.

Lee (1973:77, 78) explains that the sounds and voices in a radio play are not just a collection of noises, but a contrived and artificial pattern which is carefully planned ahead. According to him the greatest problem confronting the radio dramatist is to find words and sentences which fall or play well on the ear. In the radio drama the word is therefore put to optimum use as conveyor of meaning as well as action. A good radio dramatist should, according to Moeketsi (1991:29), be "an accurate word artist" who can understand and apply the exact meaning of words and their dramatic value.

In Act 1, Scene 2 (episode 2) the playwright uses visual as well as auditive directions, for example:

E sa le tšhemong ya Koribana

(17) *(Madimetša le Mathibela ba sa robetše, ebile ba a ona. Go kwala modumo wa dimpša tše pedi tše di gobago di kitima, morago go kwala mošito wa batho ba ba kitimago ba goelela.)*  
(p. 4)

It is still in Koribana's field

*(Madimetša and Mathibela are still asleep - they are even snoring. Two dogs can be heard barking and running. Then the footfall of people who are running and shouting can be heard.)*

The first part of the direction orientates the reader/listener as regards the place of the action. The dramatist ensures that he does not confuse the listener and emphasises the place of the action by using the word *still*. The next part of the direction supplies visual information concerning the action in progress: *Madimetša and Mathibela are still sleeping*. The rest of the direction suggests action and movement in progress by using the word *go kwala (be heard)*.

This direction is followed immediately by the dialogue below:

(18) **Maesela:** Sa! Sa... a...! O sware Tilo! Mmutla sa, Phatane, saa... saa! (p. 4)

Sa! Sa ... a ...! Catch him Tilo! Catch the rabbit, Phatane, saa ... saa!

**Lesetša:** O kae, monna? (p. 4)

Where is it, man?

**Maesela:** Šole o tsene ka tšhemong ya Koribana, Tilo e o hlomere. (p. 4)

There it is, it went into Koribana's field. Tilo is hot on its heels.

**Letsetša:** A re namele legora, ga go na le motho ka mo tšhemong. (p. 4)

Let us get onto the hedge, there is not a soul in sight.

**Mathibela:** Madimetša, tsoga. (p. 4)

Madimetša, wake up.

**Madimetša:** Hmm! (p. 4)

Hmm!

Initially the listener would not know who is talking since Maesela and Lesetša are not introduced by name. By the ensuing dialogue of the two characters concerned, as well as Maesela's reference to Koribana's field, the listener is quickly saved from possible confusion.

The four boys start fighting about the rabbit. Nowhere during the fight is the identity of Madimetša and Lesetša revealed to the listener. The playwright uses this technique effectively to create tension. It is only when Koribana and his wife interrupt the fight that the reader/listener is informed of the identities of the boys:

(19) **Mathibela:** Ditsheretshere tše tša ga Matuba di no re latelela, ga re tsebe gore di nyakang fa. (p. 7)  
This stupid lot of Matuba's are just following us, we do not know what they want here.

**Koribana:** (*o maketše*): O re ke ba ga mang? (p. 7)  
(*he is surprised*): What do you say, whose are they?

**Mathibela:** Ke ba ga Matuba, mong wa ka. (p. 7)  
They are from Matuba, my lord.

At the beginning of Act 3, Scene 2 (episode 16) the dramatist also uses visual and auditive directions:

## Lapeng la Koribana

- (20) *(Ke bošego. Koribana o bonala a dutše mollong. Kua ntle go kwala motho a bula mpshiko a bile a o tswalela. Go tšwelela Matsobane.)* (p. 67)

## In Koribana's village

*(It is dark. Koribana is visible where he is sitting at the fire. Outside someone can be heard opening the gate and closing it again. Matsobane appears.)*

The first part of the directions orientates the reader in terms of time and space. The second part contains information concerning the visual scene where Koribana is sitting at the fire. On this follows an auditive direction which informs the listener that someone is entering at Koribana's gate. Directly after this auditive information the dramatist announces the identity of the visitor.

The directions are highly informative and lead the reader/listener well in her/his interpretation and visualisation of the actions. The playwright uses the darkness and the sound at the gate effectively to create an atmosphere of mystery and suspense. The tension is broken, however, when the dramatist immediately reveals the identity of the new arrival. To my mind this information is unnecessary since the dialogue solves the problem for the reader when it reveals the identity of the newcomer:



(21) Koribana: Na o motho goba moloi? (p. 67)

Are you a man or a witch?

Matsobane: (*o tšhogile*): Ke nna, Tate. (p. 67)

(*he is frightened*): It is me, Father.

Koribana: Sengayamaswiswi se ke wena? (p. 67)

Vagabond/rover of the night, is it you?

The dramatist's auditive directions integrate very well with the visual directions to create a sequence of connected actions.

#### 4.2.1.4 Narration concerning past events and current feelings of characters

As soon as the dramatist refers to events long past, or if he wishes to indicate shifts of time, he uses an announcer who acts as a kind of narrator, for example Act 1, Scene 7 (episode 27):

#### Lapeng la Matuba

(22) (*Go šetše go fetile sebaka se setelele mola Matuba a lwago le Koribana, fela lehloyo la bona ga se be la hwa. Morwedi wa bona, Mmakoma, o ba swarišitše bothata.*) (p. 28)

## In Matuba's village

*(A long time has passed since Matuba had a fight with Koribana, but the hatred between them has not died yet. Their daughter Mmakoma causes them many problems.)*

A noticeable characteristic of these narrations is that, in contrast with the previous three categories, they contain no auditive or visual elements. In my opinion this direction remains a mere narration in order to inform the listener about the age-old feud between the two families.

In Act 2, Scene 4 (episode 11) a similar example can be found:

## Lapeng la Matuba

(23) *(Go fetile matšatši a mmalwa mola Matsobane a bonago Mmakoma. Pelo ya gagwe ga e mo fe khutšo. Bošego bjo bongwe o ngwegela Mathibela le Madimetša ba le maitišong.)* (p. 44)

## In Matuba's village

*(Many days have passed since Matsobane last saw Mmakoma. His heart gives him no peace. One evening he escapes from Mathibela and Madimetša while they are talking at the fire.)*

Once again the narrator gives no visual or auditive information regarding the scene or action in progress. What he gives here is in preparation of

Matsobane's action. Thus the narrator plays an important role in the sense that he narrates a time shift and relates the inner feelings of the character to the listener - something which would be difficult to dramatise in any other way.

From the preceding discussion it becomes clear that the playwright is consistent throughout the drama in his use of announcements and/or narrations. He also uses the announcements and narrations most effectively to keep the listener continuously informed and to help her/him in creating a visual performance.

#### **4.2.2 Interspersed directions**

By interspersed directions is meant only those directions which appear within the body of the text, i.e. between the turns of the different speakers. There are 643 interspersed directions in the text. In the analysis of these directions the emphasis is placed on the interrelationship which exists between the dialogue (verbal signs) and the directions (non-verbal signs), as well as the function which the directions fulfil within this radio text. The directions are classified and discussed according to the way in which information is suggested as well as the type of information given. Although it is not customary to give long quotes, it was sometimes necessary to quote extensive sections of scenes so that the directions can be interpreted and understood in context.

## 4.2.2.1 Directions which suggest action

The directions used most frequently are those which suggest action. In Act 1, Scene 2 (episode 2) a fight takes place between the sons of Koribana's village and those of Matuba's village. The following directions accompany the dialogue:

(24) **Madimetša:**            (*o emiša selepe*): Motho a ka go bona ka selepe se! (p. 6)

(*he lifts the axe*): One could fix you with this axe!

(25) **Lesetša:**                (*o leka go phema*): Anke o leke! Ke mohlang o tla bona mapenana a dinoga. (p. 6)

(*he tries to duck*): Just you try! It is the day you see miracles.

(26) **Madimetša:**            O ra nna mošaa? (p. 6)

Are you referring to me, villain?

(27) **Lesetša:**                Kgane o be o re ke ra mang? Bea selepe seo fase o tšee moretlwa šo ke go bontšhe mohlolo. (p. 6)

Who do you think I am referring to? Put that axe down and take this stick, I want to show you a miracle.

(28) Madimetša: *(o bea selepe fase o topa moretlwa):* O wetše masobelong a motšoko, ngwana'moloi tena. Tšea o kwe! Tšea o kwe! *(O a mo itia le yena o a ikotlela. Go kwala medumo ya dithupa le mehemelo ge ba otlana.)* (p. 6)

*(he puts the axe down and picks up a stick):* You have fallen into the depths of trouble you mischief-maker, child of a murderer. Take this and feel! Take this and feel! *(he hits him and is hit himself. The sound of sticks and heavy breathing is heard while they hit one another.)*

(29) Mathibela: *(o tsepeletše Maesela ka mahlong):* Na le wena o nyaka go leka mahlatse, moisa tena? Topa wa gago ke go "nyokolenyokole". (p. 6)

*(he looks Maesela in the eye):* Do you want to try your luck too, miscreant? Pick up yours so that I can beat you up.

(30) Maesela: *(o mo phara ka moretlwa a sa bolela):* O lemetše o se Mogatša' Malenakana eye? (p. 6)

*(he hits him with the stick while he is still talking):* You are used to do these things and yet you are not Malenakana's husband?

(31) Mathibela: (*o a ikotlela*): Tšea! Tšea o kwe, morwa wa modiidi towel! E re poo! gape ke go lomiše nose ya semane. (p. 6)

(*he hits back*): Take this, take this and feel, son of a simple-minded poor man. Try again and I will fix you up.

(32) Maesela: (*o mo itia sentsokela*): Ke re o tšhetše letšolobolo ka mabu lehono. Ke ya go tsena nna morwa' Hlaregadi rengwe. Hmm... hmm... hmm...! (p. 6)

(*he beats him mercilessly*): I say you have thrown sand at the serpent today. I go inside, son of Hlaregadi rengwe. Hmm... hmm... hmm...!

(33) Mathibela: Ijoo nna joo! Motho o a mpolaya! (p. 6)  
Ouch, Ouch! Someone is murdering me!

(34) Maesela: (*o sa mo itia*): Ke tla go ruta go tswalela molomo, mokadikadi tena! (*Koribana le Mohumagadi ba tsošwa ke selo sa Mathibela. Ba kitimela moo bašemane ba lwago. Ba topa megoma moo ba bego ba hlagola.*) (p. 6)

(*he still beats him*): I will teach you not to open your mouth, you sly miscreant! (*Koribana and Mohumagadi are wakened by the crying of Mathibela. They run to where the boys are*

*fighting. They pick up the hoes where they were working.)*

(35) Mdi Koribana: RragoMatsobane, tsoga o mpontšhe se ke se bonago. (p. 6)

Father of Matsobane, wake up and explain to me that which I see.

(36) Koribana: (*o a phafoga*): Ke eng? (p. 6)

(*he awakens*): What is it?

(37) Mdi Koribana: Nkore ke bomang ba ba ntšhanago madi mo tšhemong ya ka! (p. 6-7)

Who can it be hitting one another in my field?

(38) Koribana: Ba kae? (*O a ba bona.*): Mangana a ntswetše! Lehono gona ngwana' mošemane o tla kgaogelwa ke lekgeswana. (p. 7)

Where are they? (*He sees them.*): Mangana has borne me! Today the boy's loin skin will be torn off him.

(39) Mdi Koribana: A re tšee megoma re yo thuša. (p. 7)

Let us take the hoes and go and help.

The dialogue in the above passages is rich in auditive as well as visual signs. To the producer, listener and reader some of the passages would

have been sufficient without the use of directions. In example (24) the action is already implied in the dialogue of the main text. The use of the direction in the sub-text seems to be intended for the reader or producer since the listener would find it redundant.

The actions which are suggested by Lesetša's dialogue in example (27) are carried out by Madimetša in the succeeding direction (28). This is followed immediately by the dialogue with Madimetša saying: "take this and feel, take this and feel". This dialogue is, in turn, followed by the direction: (*The sound of their canes and heavy breathing is audible while they hit one another.*) Lesetša's dialogue in (27) and the auditive information at the end of (28) supply sufficient information to allow the listener to follow the action. Once again, the direction in (28) seems to undermine the dialogue.

Example (29) shifts the focus from Madimetša and Lesetša to Mathibela and Maesela. The listener is never informed that it is Mathibela who is speaking and can rely only on auditive information such as vocal quality. The direction in (29) is functional in the sense that it introduces a new character, Maesela, to the listener and in this way helps her/him to situate the character. This presents no problem to a reader as the names of the characters are indicated at their turns to speak.

According to Pfister (1991:46) non-verbal information should always complement verbal information in such a way that it forms a "concrete continuum of illusion". Mathibela's words in (31) evoke an aggressive



action from Maesela, e.g. (*he beats him mercilessly*) (32). Mathibela's reaction in (33) is one of pain and suffering. In spite of Mathibela's cries, Maesela does not cease his actions; (*he still beats him*) (34). In the ensuing dialogue he explains why he beats Mathibela so mercilessly: "I will teach you not to open your mouth, you sly miscreant!" Maesela's actions are clearly in reaction to Mathibela's hurtful words in (31). In the abovementioned examples the directions and dialogue complement one another well to reflect a logical sequence of action and illusion.

Following directly upon Maesela's dialogue in (34), the dramatist shifts the focus to Koribana and his wife with the following directions: (*Koribana and Mohumagadi are wakened by the crying of Mathibela. They run to where the boys are fighting. They pick up the hoes where they were working.*)

Even before Mrs Koribana speaks, the dramatist has already informed the reader of the ensuing events. The directions are of value in the sense that Koribana and his wife are introduced to the reader as early as (34), so that the listener will know immediately who is talking. To my mind the dialogue in (35) to (39) suggests enough action and do not need augmentation by the directions in (34). These directions are more suited to the reader to orientate herself/himself in visualising the action.

According to Pfister (1991: 209 - 211) the dramatist is not forced to use one method of presentation of the story only, but may "choose to present certain sections of the play both scenically and narratively". He regards the function of this type of multiple presentation as a way of

creating emphasis and suspense by stimulating and guiding the audience's/listener's or reader's anticipation. It seems that the functionality of the direction cited above should rather be evaluated in terms of the suspense which it might create.

The directions which suggest action are often highly visual and cannot be converted into auditive signs during broadcast, e.g.:

- (40)                                    (*O sa inamišitše hlogo.*) (p. 23)  
   (*Her head is still lowered.*)  
   (*O a mo kgwatha.*) (p. 37)  
   (*He touches her.*)  
   (*O šošobantšha sefahlogo.*) (p. 38)  
   (*She pulls her face.*)

Since these directions cannot be converted into auditive signs they have a narrative function in the text. This kind of direction would have to be provided by a narrator or an announcer during an actual broadcast. Announcements, narrations and sound effects remain subordinate to the spoken word and should therefore be restricted so that they do not disturb the listener.

#### 4.2.2.2       Directions which suggest action in an auditive and/or visual way

In Act 1, Scene 1 (episode 1) the playwright uses the following directions:

- (41)                    *(E sa le ka tšhemong ya Koribana. Madimetša le Mathibela ba bonala ba rema mehlare ya go aga legora, go lla selepe.)* (p. 2)  
*(It is still in Koribana's field. Madimetša and Mathibela are visible where they are chopping down branches to build a fence, an axe echoes.)*

Later in the episode we find the following directions:

- (42)                    *(Go kwala go wa ga mohlare.)* (p. 2)  
*(Branches can be heard falling.)*
- (43)                    *(Go kwala modumo wa go goga lešaša.)* (p. 2)  
*(The sound of branches being dragged can be heard.)*

Although visual directions are meant primarily for the stage, the direction in (41) could help the reader/listener to place Madimetša and Mathibela in time and space and to visualise them in their imagination. The auditive information can be of particular value to the listener in identifying the sounds suggested in the ensuing directions (42) and (43).

In Act 1, Scene 3 the playwright again uses auditive directions such as:

- (44) Matuba:                    ... Rwalang dithoka tšeo, bitšang dimpša... *(Go kwala mešito ya maoto le go hemela ga dimpša ge ba lebile kua tšhemong ya Koribana.)* (p. 10-11)  
 ... You, carry those knobkieries, call the

dogs... (*The footfall of the people and breathing of the dogs can be heard while they are on their way to Koribana's field.*)

- (45) Matuba: Ke a tsena mo ka swele!... (*Go kwala medumo ya dimpša ge di goba.*) (p. 11)
- I am going in here by force!... (*The sound of barking dogs can be heard.*)

Matuba's instruction that they should call the dogs prepares the listener for the auditive information which is suggested in (44) and (45). The playwright uses these sound effects to suggest action and to create an atmosphere of danger. The dialogue and directions complement each other very well.

In Act 4, Scene 7 (episode 28) Matsobane pays a secret visit to Mmakoma. During a conversation between the two lovers the following auditive directions are given:

- (46) Mmakoma: Ga ke tsebe, eupša go ka no ba bjalo. Ba tla tsoga ba mpotša ka moswane mogongwe. (*Go kwala tswiri e bega masa.*) (p. 118)
- I do not know, but it is possible. They might tell me tomorrow morning. (*The rock bunting can be heard announcing daybreak.*)

(47) Matsobane: Moratiwa, na ke tswiri ye e llogo? Gape e bega gore go sele. (p. 118)

Beloved, is it the rock bunting who is calling?  
He announces that morning has broken.

(48) Mmakoma: E a lora, o se ke wa e iša hlogong. E sa le bošego. (p. 118)

It dreams. Do not take it seriously. It is still dark.

(49) Matsobane: (*o kwa tswiri gape*): Bjale gona le nna ke e kwele gabotse. Ke yona tswiri. (p. 119)

(*he hears the rock bunting again*): Now I have also heard it quite clearly. It is the rock bunting.

The unwelcome daybreak comes too soon. Matsobane is surprised to hear the sound of the rock bunting announcing the new day. Mmakoma tries to persuade him that it is still dark, but the first rays of day certainly point out that it is time for them to part.

The playwright uses these auditive directions most successfully to indicate the passage of time (from midnight to daybreak) and to deliver ironic commentary on their dialogue. The call of the rock bunting becomes a sign of farewell and separation and thus has a dramatic function. In spite of Mmakoma and Matsobane's intense love for each other, this call becomes a warning that love is not meant for them.

Although sound effects can be highly productive they should not be over-used. They should be used only if they have dramatic function at a particular moment, if they can be identified and interpreted by the listener or when accompanied by explanatory dialogue. All of the playwright's auditive directions (implying sound effects) meet the abovementioned criteria and integrate well with the dialogue.

#### 4.2.2.3 Directions which provide information concerning the attitude, mood and emotions of characters

The dramatist often uses directions in instances where the emotions of characters are at issue and where it would be difficult to dramatise their feelings. Such directions act implicitly as narrator/announcer to augment the dialogue or to explain it to the reader/listener.

In Act 5, Scene 1 (episode 29) a conversation takes place between Mmakoma, her mother and later her father. Only those parts which have reference to the emotions of the characters are quoted here, namely:

(50) Mdi Matuba: Mahlo a gago a reng a hwibitše? (p. 120)  
Why are your eyes so red?

(51) Mmakoma: (*o tšhogile*): Aowa, Mma. Ke letše ke sa robala gabotse. Mala a ka a letše a loma o šoro.  
(p. 120).

(*she is frightened*): No, mother, I did not sleep well. I had much pain in my stomach.

(52) Mdi Matuba: (*o mo kwela bohloko*): Afaeya! Joo ngwanaka! O be o reng o sa tlo re kokotela? Tatago nka be a ile a go direla mešunkwane, ya bolaya bohloko. O ikwa bjang bjale, ngwanaka? (p. 120)

(*she feels sorry for her*): Really! Oh, my child! Why did you not come and wake us? Your father could have prepared some medicine to subdue the pain. How are you feeling now, my child?

(53) Mmakoma: Ke kaone kudu. (p. 120)  
I am much better.

(54) Mdi Matuba: Hleng o ka re o a lla, ngwanaka, molato ke eng?  
(p. 120)  
Why does it look as if you are crying, my child, what is the matter?

(55) Mmakoma: Hii... iii...! Ga se ... se... lo... m... mma...  
hii... i... i! (p. 120)  
Hii... hii... it is ... nothing ... mother  
hii... i...i!

(56) Mdi Matuba: (*o nyamile*): Homola hle, ngwanaka! (p. 120)  
(*she is sad*): Please be quiet my child!

After Mmakoma's mother has consoled her child she changes the subject. She informs her of her planned pre-arranged marriage to Thapudi. Mmakoma refuses to believe that she has to marry Thapudi:

(57) **Mmakoma:** Ga ke nyake ge a nnyala. Nka eupša ka nyalwa ke Matsobane go na le gore ke nyalwe ke Thapudi.  
(p. 121)

I do not want him to marry me. I would rather be married to Matsobane than to Thapudi.

(58) **Mdi Matuba:** Tatago šowe o etla, o tla mmotša ditšiebadimo tšeo tša gago. (p. 121)

Here is your father. You should tell him of this nonsense of yours.

(59) **Matuba:** Le reng nke le a fotlelana? Molato ke eng?  
(p. 121)

Why does it look as if you are insulting each other? What is the problem?

(60) **Mdi Matuba:** Motho šo o ntlabela lefeela. Mmotšiše o kwe gore molato ke eng. (p. 121)

Here she is, upsetting me for no reason. Ask her yourself and hear what the trouble is.



- (61) **Matuba:** Na le šetše le mo sobetše taba tšela tša maabane? (p. 121)  
Have you initiated her into yesterday's matters?
- (62) **Mdi Matuba:** O re yena tšeo ga a di tsene. (p. 121)  
She says she is not interested in those things.
- (63) **Matuba:** O reng? A sehloa sa mosetsana? Na ke ona mantšu a gago ao Mmakoma? (p. 121-122)  
What does she say? You despicable girl. Are those your words, Mmakoma?
- (64) **Mmakoma:** (*ka mereba*): Ke ona, Tate. (p. 122)  
(*with cheek*): Those are they, father.
- (65) **Matuba:** (*o tšewa ke sempelwane*): O a gafa ke a bona! O na le lebaka? (p. 122)  
(*his heart fills with anger*): You seem to be mad. What is your reason?
- (66) **Mmakoma:** Tate lesogana leo le bolelago ka lona ga ke le rate. (p. 122)  
Father, I do not love that young man you speak of.

- (67) **Matuba:** O a hlola ngwanenyana tena! O moikgogomoši! O gana seo nna le mmago re go direlago sona?... O nyaka go ntshenya pelo. (p. 122)  
 You cause evil, you insipid little child. You are arrogant. Do you despise that which your mother and I are doing for you?... You want to break my heart.
- (68) **Mdi Matuba:** (*o tšhogile*): O kwele, Tholo, mo tlogele o tla retolla pelo. (p. 122)  
 (*she is shocked*): She heard you, Tholo, leave her, she will change her mind.
- (69) **Matuba:** (*o sa fufuletšwe*): Ge nka mo swara ka diatla tše tša ka, o tla tseba mo a thomilego... (p. 122)  
 (*he is still upset*): If I can take her with these hands of mine she will know where she comes from...
- (70) **Mdi Matuba:** (*o a mo rapeletša*): Marumo fase, Tholo. O go kwele hle, mo tlogele. (p. 122)  
 (*she begs him*): Lay down the weapons, Tholo. She has heard you. Please, leave her alone.

In direction 51 the narrator/announcer announces Mmakoma's shock when she realises her mother has noticed that she had cried. She tries to defend herself by saying that she had slept badly as a result of a stomach ache.

I find a discrepancy between the direction which indicates her state of mind and the dialogue, that is, between the information which is transmitted verbally and non-verbally. The playwright uses this discrepancy very functionally to suggest an underlying tone of stubbornness in Mmakoma's mind. For a reader who has more time at her/his disposal for the reading process, it will be much easier to understand this discrepancy than for a listener who relies solely on auditive signs and has only the time of the actual broadcast at her/his disposal.

The directions in (52) and (56) complement the dialogue very well. Mrs Matuba's love and concern for her daughter comes strongly to the fore. After consoling her daughter she changes the subject and informs her of her impending wedding. Following the announcement the emotional atmosphere between mother and daughter changes drastically. Mrs Matuba's disappointment is very clear from her dialogue in (58).

Matuba appears and increases the tension with his questions: "Why does it look as if you are insulting each other? What is the problem?" Mmakoma decides, however, that she will not be intimidated or told what to do. Her underlying rebellion in (51) is realised by her attitude in direction (64). The reader/listener now realises that her sadness refers to an emotional rather than a physical state. Although direction (64) cannot be realised auditive, it can be of value to the director/actor in a possible production in that it can indicate the way in which an actor's (Mmakoma's) tone of voice should be adjusted to portray the quality of arrogance.

Matuba's anger is reflected in direction (65). His ensuing dialogue in (65) and (67) is highly dramatic and matches his state of mind. The presence of a narrator/announcer would, in my opinion, be unnecessary in an actual broadcast since the dialogue and vocal quality of the actors would imply sufficient emotion. However, as a note to the actor reading from the script, or to the reader, the directions will be indispensable. Matuba's anger shocks his wife and she realises in (68) that she should protect her daughter. The same concern she shows in (52) and (56) comes to the fore again when, in direction (70), she begs her husband to leave Mmakoma in peace.

Act 5, Scene 2 (episode 30) presents another example of directions aimed at the emotions and attitudes of the characters, for example:

- (71)                    *(o maketše)* (p. 124)  
                               *(she is surprised)*
- (72)                    *(o tshwenyegile)* (p. 124)  
                               *(she is worried)*
- (73)                    *(o nyamile)* (p. 126)  
                               *(she is disappointed)*
- (74)                    *(ka pelobohloko)* (p. 126)  
                               *(with sadness)*

(75)                    (*o gakanegile*) (p. 127)

(*she is confused*)

(76)                    (*o thabile*) (p. 128)

(*she is overjoyed*)

According to Peigh (1979:92) "introspective insights" into characters should be avoided and the dramatist should bear in mind that dialogue remains the most important medium by which s/he is able to communicate with the listener. The dramatist can use a narrator to relate emotions or actions which are difficult to dramatise. The use of a narrator should, however, be restricted as it could retard the action, break the unity of the plot or even have a disturbing effect on the listener. However, when the text is viewed as an actor's script to be used in studio recording, these directions are most relevant.

#### 4.2.2.4. Directions indicating silence

According to Kaplan, quoted by Moeketsi (1991:33), silence can be regarded as "the most dramatic sound effect of all". Because silence transmits "no" auditive sign to the listener, it sharpens the imaginative stimuli of the listener and it becomes a highly effective communicative device in the radio drama. The dramatist often uses directions to announce periods of silence, (the alphabetical numbering in (78) is my own) for example:

In Act 2, Scene 1 (episode 8) the following direction appears:

(77) Mdi Matuba: Ao, Tholo, o reng bjale nke o kgathola mahlong? Na mosadi ga a swanela go hlaletša monna wa gagwe? (p. 32)

Oh, Tholo, how is it that you pull your face like that? May a wife not caress her husband?

(78) Matuba: (a) (*o homola sebakanyana*): O tla be wa mpolediša kudu, a re di tlogele tšeo tša go hlaletšana. (b) (*setunyana*) Na afa o ile wa šogašoga taba yela le Mmakoma? (p. 32)

(a) (*he remains silent for a while*): You will make me say too much. Let us leave all this coaxing. (b) (*short silence*) Have you discussed that matter with Mmakoma?

The silence in 78(a) implies that Matuba does not wish to display his emotions immediately. He tries to evade his wife's question by accusing her of forcing him to talk too much. The silence in 78(b) is used effectively to change the subject. Immediately after this silence, Matuba puts a question to his wife which has no bearing on their previous conversation. The dramatist often uses periods of silence to create a change of direction in the dialogue. Another example of this technique is seen in the conversation between Matsobane and Mmakoma in Act 4, Scene 7 (episode 28):

- (79) Matsobane: Nnete, moratiwa. Nna mono lefaseng ke šetše ke itshepetše wena fela. Ke phelela wena. Ge ke nyaka go go bona, manaba le ge a ka nkemela ka ditšhoša tseleng ke tla a lebantšha. (*Setunyana*). Mmakoma, ako mpotše hle Rato, Thapudi o be a tlile neng mono ga geno? (p. 118)  
 Truly, my beloved, here on earth I have betrothed myself to you alone. I live for you only. Should I wish to see you and my enemies ambush me along the road with deterrents I shall face them. (*A brief silence*). Mmakoma, tell me, Love, when was Thapudi here?

After Matsobane's declaration of love the dramatist interrupts the dialogue with a silence after which Matsobane changes the subject and enquires about Thapudi's visit. The playwright uses silence in a subtle manner here to create contrast and tension. Matsobane's love for Mmakoma is contrasted with his jealousy regarding Thapudi. In his next speech his anguish over Thapudi's visit is confirmed:

- (80) Matsobane: (*o tshwenyegile*): Na e ka ba ba be ba tletše tša lenyalo la lena? (p. 118)  
 (*he is worried*): Would it be that they came about your marriage arrangements?

Further examples can be found on pp. 102, 121 and 137.

In Act 3, Scene 2 (episode 16) the following conversation takes place between Koribana and his son, Matsobane:

(81) Koribana: A ke re o a tseba gore nna le Matuba re ile ra  
Iwa kua mašemong? (p. 68)

You know, of course, that Matuba and I had a  
fight there in the field?

(82) Matsobane: Ee. (p. 68)

Yes.

(83) Koribana: Ge o tseba, o reng o sa ntše o phegeletše go ya  
ka lapeng la gagwe? (p. 69)

If you know, why do you still insist on going to  
his village?

(84) Matsobane: (*Ga a fetole, o fo re tuu!*) (p. 69)

(*He does not answer. He remains silent.*)

(85) Koribana: Ge ba ka go bolaya? (*Matsobane o fela a homotše,*  
*a inamišitše hlogo*). Monna, Matsobane, o thomile  
neng go ba semuma? (p. 69)

If they kill you? (*Matsobane remains silent with  
his head bowed*). Man, Matsobane, since when  
have you been dumbstruck?



The silence in (84) becomes a sign of Matsobane's fear and guilt feelings. From the preceding conversation between him and his father we know that Matuba's village is out of bounds to Koribana and his relatives. Matsobane disobeys this restriction and realises that he dare not answer his father's question. In (85) his father questions him further, upon which Matsobane still remains silent. Koribana's reaction in (85) reflects his frustration at his son's silence. The playwright uses silence here as an effective technique to create tension and to emphasise the unenviable position in which Matsobane finds himself.

4.2.2.5 Multiple directions: A combination of directions which suggest action, new characters, the mood of characters, time and place of action and visual or auditive information

These directions are usually much longer and provide a great deal of information to the reader and all other parties at any given moment. The abovementioned directions appear much less frequently than the previous three categories.

In Act 2, Scene 2 (episode 9) the following directions are given (the alphabetical numbering is my own):

(86)                                    ((a) *Koša e thongwa ke mophalodi.* (b) *Methepa le basadi ba a hlakela.* (c) *Mekgolokwane e a galagala.* (d) *Lethabo le aparetše batho ka moka.* (e) *Kua thokwana go bona!a Matsobane le*

**Mathibela. (f) Ba lebeletše Thapudi le Mmakoma ba boledišana.)** (p. 36)

(a) *The song is started by a chorus leader. (b) The virgins (big girls) and women begin. (c) Shouts of jubilation are called out. (d) All are filled with joy. (e) To the one side Matsobane and Mathibela are seen. (f) They are looking at Thapudi and Mmakoma where they are talking to each other.)*

These directions can be reconstructed on the strength of the information by which they are suggested and the way in which information is presented, to determine how much information the reader, listener, actor, producer or sound engineer receives.

Directions 86(a), (b) and (c) indicate actions with auditive under-tones. Direction 86(d) indicates the state of mind of the characters. In 86(e) Matsobane and Mathibela are represented visually. In 86(f) their actions are suggested and Thapudi and Mmakoma are introduced as new characters together with their activities.

Although these directions contain much information, most have already been given in the preceding directions at the beginning of the episode. The reader/listener already knows that there is a feast at Matuba's village and that Matsobane and Thapudi are also present.

Directly after the multiple direction the dialogue between Matsobane and

Mathibela begins. Matsobane is trying to discover the identity of the pretty girl who is talking to the stranger. After this dialogue the focus moves to the conversation between Mmakoma and Thapudi. Thapudi declares his love to Mmakoma and she reacts negatively.

To my mind the most important function of direction (86) is to orientate the reader with respect to Matsobane and Mathibela's presence. The rest of the directions are redundant because all actions have already been implied in the preceding and succeeding dialogue. For the listener it will therefore be possible to follow the action by merely listening to the dialogue. I do agree that the information in 86(a), (b), and (c) helps to create an atmosphere of festivity. In a broadcast this atmosphere can be created through sound effects and a narrator is unnecessary. In a multiple direction like this, it stands to reason that, depending on the medium of presentation there will be a division as to the implementation of the action, events or content. Thus (a) *the song* (b) *the joining of the virgins*, and (c) *the shouts of jubilation as well as* (d), fit the radio broadcast; (e) and (f) pertain to a visual grouping on stage, or could be useful for the reader to visualise the scene. However, when spoken by a narrator with the preceding auditive signs in the background the listener is brought into the picture as well. It would seem that the voice of the narrator does, in fact, lurk behind some of these directions.

In Act 4, Scene 5 (episode 33) the following directions are given (the alphabetical numbering in (85) is my own):

- (87) **Napšadi:** Meladi, o ka se mphegeletše nokeng? Ga ke na le a go thoma ka kua gae. (p. 136)  
 Meladi, will you not accompany me to the river?  
 There is not a drop of water at home.
- (88) **Meladi:** Go lokile. Le nna ke tla tšea moetana. ((a) *Basadi bale ba ya go Mdi Matuba ba a mo laela.* (b) *Ka kua ngwakwaneng wa Mmakoma go bonala Mmakoma le Raisibe.* (c) *Go bonala ba swere taba ye thata.* (d) *Ba bolela ka sehebehebe.*) (p. 136)  
 That is good. I shall also take a claypot. ((a) *Those women go to Mrs Matuba and greet her.* (b) *In Mmakoma's hut Mmakoma and Raisibe can be seen.* (c) *It can be seen that they are dealing with a difficult matter.* (d) *They are whispering.*)
- (89) **Mmakoma:** Raisibe, lehono ke nyaka go robala ka pela. Mogopolo wa ka o lapile. Ke kwa le hlogo ye ya ka e nkimela. (p. 136)  
 Raisibe, today I want to go to bed early. My mind is tired. I feel my head has become too heavy for me.

From the preceding directions the reader/listener knows that the women are at Matuba's village and that they are busy with preparations for Mmakoma's wedding. The reference to "those women" in 88(a) is not

confusing since the women's preceding dialogue has already revealed their identity. The dialogue between Napšadi and Meladi in the main text contains enough implied action to ensure a reasonable comprehension of events. To my mind the direction which suggests their action in 88(a) is directed at a stage production and/or at a reader. It is used functionally only to announce their exit and to change the focus.

After the departure of the women the focus changes through visual directions 88(b) and (c) to Mmakoma and Raisibe. The directions orientate the listener spatially and introduce the characters to the listener. For the listener, who is solely dependent on the vocal qualities of the characters, these directions have a valuable function. The reader will experience no problem with orientation and these directions serve merely as information which help her/him to visualise the actions. The reference to vocal quality in direction 88(d) can be used effectively in a broadcast to suggest an atmosphere of secrecy.

The most important principles lie in the fact that the radio dramatist should realise that the whole process of semiosis, in other words, the transfer of messages, is created in an auditory fashion. The process of semiosis, therefore, does not take place visually at all. As a result of the ultimate role which the dialogue plays in a radio drama the dramatist will have to use simple, comprehensible and functional dialogue and allow her/his characters to speak more often. Unlike the listener, the reader is able to re-read a text. The listener, on the other hand, should identify and decode all signs instantly in order to comprehend the message.

### 4.2.3 Succeeding directions

The term "succeeding directions" refers to those directions which appear at the end of every scene/episode. In only six of the 35 episodes does the dramatist not use succeeding directions, namely episodes 10, 19, 26, 27, 28 and 35. The succeeding directions will be discussed with reference to the type of information they suggest and the way in which they tie in with the dialogue and the preceding directions of the next episode.

#### 4.2.3.1 Succeeding directions which have no reference to the preceding directions of the next episode

In most instances these kinds of direction are used to indicate exits implicitly or explicitly. The following direction appears at the end of Act 1, Scene 2 (episode 2):

(90) (Ba a tloga, ba boela gae.) (p. 8)  
 Seširo.  
*(They leave and return home.)*  
 Curtain.

This direction is used to indicate the exit of Koribana and his wife and to close the scene/episode. The following scene/episode occurs in a new locality (Matuba's field). The two scenes are not related.

The following directions serve as further examples of succeeding directions which have no reference to the preceding directions of the following episode:

(91) *(Ba tšwa bobedi ba leba ngwakong wa go robala.)*

(p. 70)

**Seširo.**

*(They both exit, going to their bedroom.)*

Curtain.

(92) *(Ba a tšwa.)* (p. 90)

**Seširo.**

*(They exit.)*

Curtain.

(93) *(Ba a tšwa ba abagana mediro.)* (p. 93)

**Seširo,**

*(They leave and divide the work.)*

Curtain.

(94) *(Ba a tšwa, mongwe le mongwe o leba modirong wa gagwe.)* (p. 131)

**Seširo.**

*(They exit, each to his own place of work.)*

Curtain.

4.2.3.2 Succeeding directions relating to the preceding directions of the next episode

There are seven instances in which the succeeding directions of one episode are linked to the preceding directions of the next episode. The first example can be found between the directions of the first two episodes:

- (95) *(Ba a patlama.)* (p. 3)  
 Seširo.  
*(They lie down.)*  
 Curtain.

The end of episode 1 is immediately followed by:

**TEMANA YA BOBEDI/SCENE 2**

E sa le tšhemong ya Koribana  
 It is still in Koribana's field

- (96) *(Madimetša le Mathibela ba sa robotše, ebile ba a ona.)* (p. 4)  
*(Madimetša and Mathibela are still asleep, they are even snoring.)*

These two scenes are related in that the locus of the action as well as the activity itself remains unchanged. The information that Madimetša



and Mathibela are *still* asleep and even snoring are deictic signs of the time that has elapsed between the two scenes.

The following directions appear between episodes 3 and 4:

(97)                    (*Ba Matuba, ba tšwa ba tšhaba, ba gogagoga Matuba yoo a tšewago ke matladima.*) (p. 12)

Seširo.

(*Matuba's people exit and flee, they drag Matuba along who is dizzy.*)

Curtain.

#### TEMANA YA BONE/SCENE 4

Lapeng la Matuba

In Matuba's village

(98)                    (*Matuba le Mohumagadi le Lesetša, ba dutše lapeng. Matuba o inamišitše hlogo, sefahlogo se rurugile diaparo di tletše madi.*) (p. 13)

(*Matuba, Mrs Matuba and Lesetša are sitting in the village. Matuba's head is bowed, his face is swollen and his clothes are covered in blood.*)

Although the locality has changed from one episode to the next, the character on whom the focus is placed, is the same. The change in scene is used in this instance to suggest the time it took Matuba and his companions to flee. At the end of episode 3 they find themselves in a

new locality (Matuba's village), and the attack on Matuba is continued in that the reader/listener is informed fully by the directions in (98) of the extent to which Matuba was injured by his attackers.

Episodes 9 and 10 are linked as follows:

(99) *(Matsobane o tlogela bo Mathibela o leba moo Mmakoma a lego gona.)* (p. 39)

*(Matsobane leaves Mathibela and his friends and moves in the direction where Mmakoma is.)*

Seširo/Curtain

### TEMANA YA BORARO/SCENE 3

Ga Matuba

In Matuba's village

(100) *(Matsobane bjale o fihla go Mmakoma, mahlo a le phatleng.)* (p. 140)

*(Matsobane arrives at Mmakoma's. His feelings are clearly visible.)*

In this case the place has changed, but not the character nor his actions. In direction (99) Matsobane's intentional action is suggested, the action is completed in (100). The break between the two episodes was probably created deliberately by the dramatist to create tension and to suggest the time it took Matsobane to reach Mmakoma. The use of these techniques contributes to the creation of dramatic effect.

Episodes 15 and 16 are linked by the following directions:

(101) *(Mohumagadi Koribana o a tšwa. Koribana o šala mollong.)* (p. 66)

**Seširo.**

*(Mrs Koribana exits. Koribana remains alone at the fire.)*

Curtain.

**TEMANA YA BOBEDI/SCENE 2**

**Lapeng la Koribana**

In the village of Koribana

(102) *(Ke bošego. Koribana o bonala a dutše mollong. Kua ntle go kwala motho a bula mpshiko a bile a o tswalela. Go tšwelela Matsobane.)* (p. 67)

*(It is dark. Koribana can be seen where he is sitting at the fire. Outside someone can be heard opening the gate and even closing it again. Matsobane appears.)*

Direction (101), episode 15 indicates Mrs Koribana's exit and implies that Koribana now remains alone at the fire. In direction (102) of episode 16 the locality has remained the same and Koribana is still alone at the fire. The change of scene is used in this instance to indicate a lapse in time and to create an atmosphere of uncertainty and impatience. The succeeding and preceding directions are directly linked

and integrate well with the dialogue between Koribana and his wife when they ask themselves where Matsobane is.

From the above four examples it would seem that when linking takes place between succeeding and preceding directions, at least one of the variables (time, space, character, action) remains unchanged. The playwright uses this linking to achieve continuity and to increase the dramatic tempo.

#### 4.2.3.3 Succeeding directions concluding the episode

In all the directions which refer to passive action, "sleep" is the implied action, for example:

Act 1, Scene 4 (episode 4)

(103) *(Mdi Matuba o tima mollo, gomme ba a robala.)*

(p. 17)

*(Mrs Matuba extinguishes the fire and they sleep.)*

**Seširo/Curtain.**

Act 1, Scene 6 (episode 6)

(104) *(Ba a robala. Go kwala meono fela.)* (p. 27)

*(They sleep. Only the snoring can be heard.)*

**Seširo/Curtain.**

The playwright uses these succeeding directions successfully to indicate shifts between scenes (episodes). The passive action is used as a sign

to indicate the end of a scene (episode) and at the same time to prepare the listener for the beginning of a new scene (episode). To the listener, who has to visualise everything in her/his mind, this passive action provides an opportunity to re-evaluate and re-interpret actions.

#### 4.2.3.4 Contrasting succeeding and preceding directions

Episode 33 is concluded with a long soliloquy by Mmakoma. She blames her parents for the pre-arranged marriage with Thapudi and swears to remain faithful to Matsobane:

(105) "... Matsobane, ge re sa gahlane ka Sontaga ka Nkumpi, o tla šala o nyala lebitla! Ge e le Thapudi yena, o tla be a ya lebitleng a se be a nkatla le gatee. Matsobane, Matsobane... Matso...b...a...ne. O nkemele! Ke...e tla... go.... we.... na." (p. 138)

"... Matsobane, if we do not meet at Nkumpi on Sunday you will remain behind and wed a grave! As far as Thapudi is concerned, he will go to his grave without having kissed me once. Matsobane, Matsobane, ... Matso..ba..ne, wait for me! I am ... on ... my ... way ... to ... you."

(106) (*O swarwa ke boroko.*) (p. 138)

Seširo.

(*She falls asleep.*)

Curtain.

During Mmakoma's soliloquy the listener becomes a partner to her intimate thoughts and suggestions of suicide. When she eventually falls asleep, the listener realises that she does not intend marrying Thapudi. This succeeding direction in episode 33 creates anticipation with the listener. Episode 34 is introduced by the following preceding direction:

**Lapeng la Matuba**

At Matuba's village

(107) *(Ke letšatši la go ntšha magadi. Go tletše batho, le ba go bina dinaka ba tlile.)* (p. 139)

*(This is the day on which the dowry is delivered. The whole place is full of people. The dancers have also arrived.)*

The contrast between the two sets of directions is so great that it almost comes as a shock to the listener when s/he realises that the day of Mmakoma's wedding with Thapudi has arrived. The playwright uses this contrast very successfully to create tension and to hold the attention of the listener.

#### 4.3 CONCLUSION

The playwright's note in his preface, that this play was intended for the radio, served as a starting point of my analysis of the didascalies. While on the one hand being faithful to the requirements of a radio script, the play contains various notes with multiple possible

intentions. They may in fact apply to all major parties in the production of a radio or stage text, and could also apply to the reader, producer, actors, sound engineer and listeners. Preceding directions are largely of use to listeners and readers, but their significance to all the parties mentioned cannot be denied. The interspersed directions, likewise, serve a number of different interests, significantly also those of the actors and readers. Succeeding directions on their part largely serve to round up preceding events or to bridge actions between two episodes.

An interesting observation which has been made is that the dramatist ends every scene/episode with the exit "Curtain". In the last scene the end is even announced with an exclamation mark: "Curtain!" The use of the word "Curtain" might indicate that the dramatist had a possible stage performance in mind, but then the use of the exclamation mark may be more applicable to the reader and is used here as a sign to indicate the end of the drama.

This multiplicity of intents - for radio listeners, live audiences as well as readers - and the various parties on and behind the production scene reflect a number of confusing features influencing the African language playwright. In this respect Serudu's plays are highly communicative. The conclusion that follows below, addresses trends and possible causative circumstances in this regard.

**CHAPTER 5****CONCLUSION****5.0 RÉSUMÉ**

Our study of the didascalies in the three plays of M.S. Serudu has emphasised the unique relationship between the dramatic text and its potential performance or ostensibility. The stage directions provided an unequalled vantage point. Their scrutiny in fact highlighted a number of irrefutable problems pertaining to this dual relationship. The first problem emanates from the text and refers to text-internal factors such as the dichotomous nature of the genre and the role of the didascalies in displaying the ostensive nature of drama. The second problem is of a more general nature and deals with text-external factors like socio-political and educational circumstances. Both problems influence playwriting and the experiencing of drama in the African literatures in general and in Northern Sotho in particular.

In this conclusion I shall reflect on my findings about Serudu's texts and then also on possible reasons and solutions.

**5.1 TEXT-INTERNAL FACTORS**

From the analysis it became clear that the didascalies in the three texts are not always consistent in promoting the dual existence of drama as



literary work and as "blue-print" for production, but often undermine it in favour of the reader.

#### 5.1.1 Didascalies in the dedications, prefaces and lists of characters

The two sets of information (personal and factual) supplied in the dedication to *Naga ga di etelane* add to the autobiographical nature of this drama and increase the fictionalisation of a real-life situation and its enactment by actors, increasing also the ostension of the play in the mind of the reader. The dedications in the other two plays, however, do not set such a personal tone because there are no preliminary explanations of the same kind.

The prefaces of *Naga ga di etelane* and *Šaka la pelo ga le tlale* are more directed towards a reader. In both cases the dramatist enters into direct dialogue with the reader by giving advice and explaining themes and titles. This information is to the advantage of the reader and creates the impression that the dramatist more likely had a reader in mind than a performance.

Lists of characters always have an informational function. All this information is related to the characters in the dramatic text, and thus to the actors of a potential performance. As Aston & Savona (1991:125) explain:

"The primary theatrical function of the actor is the representation of character."

Serudu's lists of characters, however, do not give information regarding age, appearance or voice quality. Although this may hamper the reader in creating her/his own mental ostension, there is no hard and fast rule concerning information of this nature.

#### 5.1.2 Preceding stage directions

In this dissertation the concern lies with the narrative and interpretive nature of the stage directions which refer to time and space.

In some cases the stage directions do not refer to time at all and a director will have to determine her/his own starting time. This "directional vacuum" can influence the ostension of the text. On the other hand it leaves the director free to transform the text according to her/his own interpretation.

In other cases the dramatist uses the stage directions as a narrator to indicate lapses in time, or to take the reader back in time through the thoughts of characters, for example in *Kelelagobedi*. These narrative stage directions are at the disposal of the reader only and emphasise the reader-oriented nature of the texts.

The fictional space in *Naga ga di etelane* and *Kelelagobedi* changes very often and sometimes very quickly. In *Kelelagobedi*, for example, the

fictional space moves sixteen times in the course of the drama, accelerating the tempo. In most of the cases, however, proxemic markers within the stage directions are directed only at the reader and not at a possible audience. The directions seldom offer detailed information or descriptions for the setting of the play. This emphasises the opinion of Aston & Savona (1991:125): "The craft of the dramatist ...to take cognisance, for example, of the stage environment which the characters inhabit, and of their physical interaction within that space."

It seems as if the dramatist did not encode the preceding stage directions in these two plays in terms of a possible stage picture per se, but again rather for the attention of the reader. In contrast with the abovementioned two plays, the preceding directions in *Šaka la pelo ga le tlaale* serve various purposes and are largely of use to listeners, readers, producers, actors and sound engineers.

Alter (1990:165) explains that: "When the dramatic text is turned into a staged text, the most radical transformation concerns stage directions." The theatricality of a dramatic text therefore largely depends on the use and relevance of its stage directions. In other words, the stage directions reflect the nature of the text and its potential suitability to be transformed into a staged performance.

### 5.1.3 Directions interspersed with dialogue

The dramatist uses fewer stage directions in *Naga ga di etelane* than in *Kelelagobedi*. The directions in *Naga ga di etelane* concentrate more on

the psychological behaviour and emotions of the characters, such as uncertainty, frustration, internal conflict and desperation. Although the directions augment the dialogue very well, it is still up to the reader/director to interpret them correctly. The high psychological nature of verbal and non-verbal signs in the text draws, according to Alter (1990:180), a high potential of transformability because the signs can be easily manipulated, opening up vast areas to the reader/director to generate her/his own meanings.

The stage directions in *Kelelagobedi* concentrate equally on the emotions and actions of the characters. The verbal utterances which accompany these stage directions are often of a very high actional quality and reflect the ostensive demands of such scenes. However, some of the stage directions in *Kelelagobedi* are vague, of a narrative nature and more directed at the reader. It will be difficult to reproduce these directions on stage since they have to be transformed into non-verbal signs.

The interspersed directions in *Šaka la pelo ga le tlale* are very communicative, serving a number of different interests, from those of the reader to the various parties behind and on the production scene. The succeeding directions in this text largely serve to conclude or to bridge actions between two episodes. However, the use of the term *seširo* (curtain) at the end of each episode, may be confusing and may indicate that the dramatist had a possible stage performance in mind.

*Naga ga di etelane* is a well-composed text. All the signs which are encoded by the dramatist combine and integrate well to form a tightly structured play. The coherent nature of the text makes the decoding and structuring activity of the reader/director much easier and helps her/him to visualise the plot mentally.

Frequent changes of fictional time and space and constant movement in *Kelelagobedi* cause this text to be more loosely structured and more difficult for the reader/director to visualise.

Symbolic, poetic and punctuated language usage in *Naga ga di etelane* demands constant decoding and interpretation from the reader/director. It increases the literary quality of the dramatic text, but may perhaps delay spectators' full understanding during live performance.

The language usage in *Kelelagobedi* and *Šaka la pelo ga le tlale* conforms perhaps more to the requirements put down by Alter when he states:

"A precise vocabulary, a logical syntax, and explanations of equivocal terms or notions may not enhance the literary quality of a dramatic text, but they ensure that its references will have a better chance to reach the future spectators..." (1990:193).

According to Alter (1990:180) all texts can in theory be transformed into a performance but some texts seem to encourage transformation more by certain features of their verbal signs. The abovementioned findings and

statement thus do not seem to be in conflict with the classification of Swanepoel (1987:67) concerning the performability of dramas in African languages (referred to in chapter 1).

In order to understand and explain the origin of the aforementioned problematic issues, we now have to turn our attention to the dichotomous nature of the genre.

#### 5.1.4 The dichotomous nature of drama

The unique relationship between the drama text and its performance has been recognised by drama theorists for many years and is confirmed by the potential ostensibility towards which the drama text is aimed. Performance, in fact, distinguishes drama from other literary genres and underlines the specific nature of drama. Esslin (1987:24) considers the dramatic text to be the "blue-print" for mimetic action. He maintains that, in the fullest sense of the word, the text itself is not drama yet. According to him a dramatic text, unperformed, is literature and may be read as a story. This is the area where the fields of narrative fiction, epic poetry and drama overlap. The element which distinguishes drama from these types of fiction is precisely that of "performance" enactment.

Kennedy (1973:3) also acknowledges this relationship by saying:

"I believe that African theatre must be seen, heard and given witness to. It can't really be treated solely from the word or from a literary point of view."

It is clear that the relationship referred to above can only be successfully realised when its second component, i.e. performance, can also be achieved. However, this dual relationship proves to be problematic because in the teaching of dramatic theory, performance and performance theory are avoided. As indicated in chapter 1, a serious study of drama in the African languages mainly amounts to a literary analysis of dramatic texts.

However, we should not believe that this situation is unique to South Africa. Mouton (1988:5) indicates that Americans such as Fuegi (1974) and Beckerman (1967) also deplore this situation. In his article *Dramatic theory and stage practice* Beckerman explains why the interaction between drama and theatre is ignored continuously:

"Usually when we refer to drama, we mean the written script, and when we refer to theatre, we mean the production of that script. This assumption is deeply ingrained in our thought. It pervades our entire system of education and criticism. Our teaching of drama in schools and universities is predicated upon this division. One studies dramatic literature, and one studies theatre and though there is a growing recognition of the interaction between the two, departmental organisation, personal prejudice and incorrect theory all conspire to reinforce the chasm between the enduring and thereby superior drama and the dazzling but transitory theatre." (1967:29)

Alter (1981) explains the division between dramatic text and performance, together with the independent studying of it, along the lines of a historical development. According to him the duality between text and performance is to be found in all the performing arts such as ballet, mime and music. The other performing arts theoretically also have two faces, but like the moon, they show only the one and hide the other. Theatre, however, is unique, differing from the others as a result of the autonomy achieved by the text. Drama texts are read and studied independently of performances, but this is not normally the case with music scores or choreographical notes.

More people probably read drama texts than see performances of those texts; in schools and universities, for example, texts are studied quite independently of any performance. The autonomy which the dramatic text has acquired stems, according to Alter

"... from a semiotic process which occurs in theatre only, the fact that verbal signs in the text are repeated as verbal signs in the performance and that they retain their linguistic code although their materiality changes from graphic to sounded signifiers." (1981:114).

Another argument which is often used to explain the schism between dramatic text and performance is that aspects pertaining to the performance, such as décor, costumes, lighting, etc., do not figure in the study of dramatic theory, but form a part of theatric studies.



Mouton (1988:17) expresses strong opinions on the negation of the relationship between the dramatic text and performance. She writes that although the relationship between dramatic text and performance creates numerous problems for the theorist, one way of solving them lies in simply not studying the relationship. Nevertheless such an alternative is clearly unacceptable. As certain semioticians indicate, it is precisely the specific nature of this relationship which underpins the dramatic genre and therefore it should be central to any study of dramatic theory.

Although I agree in principle with the views of the abovementioned theorists on the dual study of drama, such an approach is not yet fully possible in Northern Sotho. The problem is more far-reaching than the mere unilateral studying of the dramatic text. We are also dealing with the problem that the theatrical component in the relationship has received varying attention and has therefore not yet emerged to satisfaction. This chain of events has put a definite emphasis on the importance, nature and function of the dramatic text in the Northern Sotho literature.

In this regard I have attempted to point out the important role of the didascalies (in a dramatic text) in facilitating this dual relationship, and the implications and/or relevance of the didascalies to theatricality and production. To quote Savona:

"... how the didascalies aim at a fuller understanding of the dialectic between the text and the relationship among play-

wright, director, actor, reader and spectator." (1982:26)

## 5.2 TEXT-EXTERNAL FACTORS: SOCIO-POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

As far as the production and scope of playwriting in South Africa is concerned, dramas in African languages constitute a body of literature which, according to Swanepoel (1987:66), should certainly be recognised. Up to and including 1985, approximately 225 texts had been published in the various indigenous languages of South Africa. Swanepoel attributes the large number of texts which have in general still not been performed to the fact that the writing of drama texts as such is more likely to be the result of cross-cultural stimuli and importation than a direct continuation of tradition. He continues his argument by saying:

"While accepting the textual component of the dichotomy, and being faithful to dialogue as the primary medium of discourse, the theatrical component seems to have received varying attention." (1987:66)

There are various external reasons for this textual centrality, for example:

- \* The languages are area-bound and the potential theatre-going audiences are too small.
- \* A major part of the population is not theatre-educated because of the policy of separate development and inadequate education in the

fields of drama and theatre. Serudu explains it in the following terms: "Drama does not exist amongst us in an organised form. We never had the facilities, and it was never encouraged. Traditionally we did not have theatre where you sit and watch." (personal communication, 1990)

- \* Financially the majority of blacks cannot afford the high prices one pays for this kind of entertainment.
- \* Fears which existed because of the political restrictions placed on sensitive issues.
- \* Some black teachers have promoted English plays in schools above the indigenous counterparts (personal communication, D.M. Kgoe, 1990). Ntuli refers to it as "... a tendency among some observers to ridicule the people who associate themselves with vernacular literatures whether as writers or as critics." (1983:6)
- \* The "bookish" attitude of educational departments towards the teaching and study of drama.
- \* A shortage of trained black directors.

This state of affairs forces authors rather to write for schools or academic institutions where they are assured of an income from the sale of books.

The following questions by Alter could possibly contribute to a better understanding of the status quo concerning the worldwide problem regarding the performance tradition in this genre:

"No doubt playwrights principally want 'to write for the theatre', that is, to have their texts performed; but how many of them, tempted by success and financial rewards, also want them to be published and benefit from prestige and sales? To what extent, perhaps unconsciously, does this new perspective affect the structure, language, and story of a dramatic text? Has it contributed to the evident evolution of theatre writing in the nineteenth century?" (1990:160)

### 5.3 SOLUTIONS

It became evident from this dissertation that the concern regarding the nature of the texts does not lie with the dialogue, but with the didascalies, and more specifically in the use of the stage directions.

The serious Northern Sotho playwright has an important role to play, especially in recognising the dichotomous nature of this genre. Throughout the writing process the dramatist should be assisted to heed the relationship between the text and a possible performance or broadcast.

The fact that the novel, according to Aston & Savona (1991) appears to be the dominant literary form of our time, also influences the way in

which dramatic texts are read. They say the following: "... it is hardly surprising that the play-text is often read as a novel *manqué*" (1991:72). The unproductive consequences of the "play-as-novel" approach can be overcome through play-reading during which the use of voice, intonation, tempo, gesture and movement can convert a printed literary text to an exciting live performance. Thus the literary reading of the dramatic text, according to the semiotic approach, can provide the imaginative and creative reader with endless possibilities of encoding and decoding the verbal signs to present a tacit or private form of performance.

Serious attempts have to be made to experiment with dramatic texts or to explore the possibilities of using new approaches in addressing the problem. Workshop theatre offers an experimental and practical opportunity to playwrights, actors and directors to exploit their own creativity. The immediacy of actual experience can be particularly useful for the playwright to change or adapt her/his text to increase performability.

There is an urgent need in African languages for further research and study in the field of drama and theatre. This is underlined by Aston & Savona:

"...there is a demonstrable need for further work on both actual and potential links between the two 'texts'. ... More work in this field would serve both to underline the benefits

of a semiotic methodology for theatre studies and to increase our understanding of theatre as a signifying system." (1991:179).

The best place to start addressing this peripheral situation is at our teaching institutions. Binary study of drama should be encouraged in schools and at colleges and universities through play-reading, workshop theatre and theatrical studies to widen our scope of understanding the nature of this genre.

The more scholars and creative artists continue to research and develop dramas in Northern Sotho or other African languages, the sooner they will find their rightful place in the mainstream of South African drama and theatre. Serudu's thematic renewal, his exploration of the didascalies in order to assist his reader, and the freshness of the dialogue augur well for the future.

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