

A critical analysis of the screen adaptation of Saule's *Unyana womntu*.

by

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DECLARATION

I, Thembisa Mbatsha, declare that the work contained in this dissertation is entirely my own, with the exception of such quotations or references which have been attributed to their authors or sources.

Thembisa Mbatsha

DATED AT FORT HARE UNIVERSITY THIS 10TH day of December 2012



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ABSTRACT

This research will concentrate on various aspects of the screen adaptation of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989). This study comprises of six chapters. In Chapter 1 of this study, the research aims and objectives are formulated. The research methods that are to be followed will involve a thorough reading of the written text, as well as a comprehensive repetitive viewing of all the episodes of the screen version. In the final part of Chapter 1, background information is provided on the personal life of the author as well as on his contributions to the African literary tradition. Background information on the production of the screen version is also provided.

In the Chapter 2, the theoretical aspects of the phenomenon of literary adaptation are discussed. This discussion provides a framework for the analysis of the adaptation of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) in the remaining chapters of this study. The aim of this chapter is to identify and discuss the most important principles which come into play when the written text is adapted into a screen production.

Since the screen production belongs to the genre of the performing arts, this chapter is introduced with a discussion on the performing arts and on the drama, in particular. The section will be concluded with a discussion on the different sub-types of the drama which can be found, including the screen production. The main emphasis is on an analysis of the basic features and principles of the drama in screen format. Since the screen play *Unyana Womntu* (1998) is based upon a novel by the same title, the literary features of the novel are to be discussed here as well. The specific features of the Xhosa novel will also receive attention.

In Chapter 3, the adaptation of the background of the novel “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) into the screen production is critically evaluated. Aspects such as the adaptation of the macro-features as well as the micro-features of the background are identified and critically analysed

Chapter 4 deals with the adaptation of the character element. This discussion takes place within a particular theoretical framework which defines the essential elements of characterization within the novel and within the drama respectively. It also deals with the manner in which each of these elements is subjected to the process of adaptation.

The aim of Chapter 5 is to analyse the adaptation of the plot of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) from a written text into a screen production. This analysis is based upon a well-constructed theoretical framework that addresses the various aspects of the plot, as found within narrative texts.

Chapter 6 contains a general conclusion which will finally present the observations and findings drawn from the entire study.



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ISICATSHULWA

Olu bhalo lusekelezwe kutshintsho lwencwadi “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) ukuya kumabonakude. Olu bhalo lohlulwe lwazizahluko ezintandathu.

Kwisahluko soku-1 iinjongo zolu bhalo ziyadandalaziswa. Iindlela zophando eziza kusetyenziswa ziza kuba lufundo ngokuphinda-phindwa kwencwadi, kwakunye nokubukelwa kaninzi kweziqendu kumabonakude. Ukuqukumbela esi sahluko imvelaphi yombhali ibekwa elubala negalelo lakhe kufundo loncwadi lwesiXhosa. Imvelaphi ngofundo lomboniso bhanya-bhanya nayo iza kufumaneka.

Kwisahluko sesi-2 ulwazi ngombandela wotshintsho nokhuphelo lwencwadi ukuya kwibhanyaskopu luyaxoxwa. Le ngxoxo izala ulwakheko ngophengululo lolu tshintsho lwencwadi “*Unyana womntu*” kwizahluko ezilandelayo. Injongo kwesi sahluko kukufumana kwaye kuxoxwe imigaqo ebalulekileyo ethi ivele xa kusenzeka olu tshintsho.

Njengoko umboniso bhanya-bhanya lolunye uhlobo lwenkcubeko yezakhono, esi sahluko saziswa ngengxoxo kwinkcubeko yezakhono zedrama. Esi sahluko siza kuqukunjelwa ngengxoxo kumasebe edrama afumanekayo kubandakanyeka nemiboniso bhaya-bhanya. Olona gxininiso kukudandalazisa ezona mpawu nemigaqo yedrama kumabonakude. Njengoko umboniso kumabonakude “*Unyana womntu*” (1989) usekelezwe kwinoveli, iimpawu zoncwadi kwinoveli ziza kuxoxwa apha nazo. Ezona mpawu zenoveli yesiXhosa nazo ziza kuqatshelwa.

Kwisahluko sesi-3 utshintsho lwencwadi ukuya kumabonakude ngokwemontlalo kwincwadi “*Unyana womntu*” luza kuxoxwa. Imibandela efana notshintshelo kumabonakude kweempawu ezincinci kunye nezinkulu zemontlalo ziyavezwa kwaye zixovulwe

Kwisahluko sesi-4 utshintsho ngokwesimo somntu luyajongwa. Le ngxoxo yenzeka ngeembono ezithile ezichaza okubalulekileyo kwisimo somntu kwincwadi nakwidrama. Ikwajonge nendlela umba ngamnye obandakanyeka ngayo kolu tshinsho.

Iinjongo zesahluko sesi-5 kukudandalazisa olu tshintsho kwisakhiwo sebali kwinoveli “*Unyana womntu*”. Olu dandalaziso lusekelwe kulwakheko lwethiyori olujonge imibandela ngemibandela kwisakhiwo sebali esifumaneka kuluncwadi.

Isahluko sesi-6 luqukumbelo ngokubanzi oluza nokuqaphelekileyo kunye neziphumo zolu bhalo.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	I
ABSTRACT	II
ISICATSHULWA	IV
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	VI
CONTENTS	VII

CHAPTER 1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Research aims and objectives	2
1.3	Research methods	2
1.4	Significance of the study	3
1.5	Design of the dissertation	4
1.6	Background information	6
1.6.1	The author	6
1.6.2	The screen background of “ <i>Unyana womntu</i> ”	8
1.7	Conclusion	8



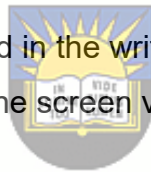
CHAPTER 2 FROM TEXT TO SCREEN: THEORY OF ADAPTATION

2.1	Introduction	10
2.2	The Drama	11
2.2.1	The origins of Western drama	11
2.2.2	Origins and features of African drama	14
2.2.3	The origins and features of Xhosa drama	16
2.2.4	Types of drama	18
2.3	The Novel	22
2.3.1	General features	22
2.3.2	The Xhosa novel	26
2.4	The theory of adaptation	27
2.4.1	Introduction	27
2.4.2	Definition of the concept	28
2.4.3	Historical background	29

2.4.4	The adaptation of the novel into film	30
2.4.5	Reasons for the adaptation of novels	31
2.4.6	The adaptation of novels versus plays and short stories	33
2.4.7	The principles of adaptation of a novel into a film script	34
2.4.8	The adaptation of Xhosa texts	42
2.5	Conclusion	43

CHAPTER 3 ADAPTATION OF THE BACKGROUND

3.1	Introduction	47
3.2	Theoretical framework	48
3.2.1	The role of the background in the novel	48
3.2.2	The role of the setting in the drama	50
3.3	The depiction of the setting/background in “ <i>Unyana womntu</i> ” (Saule: 1989) “ <i>Unyana womntu</i> ”(1998)	51
3.3.1	The depiction of the background in the written text	51
3.3.2	The depiction of the setting in the screen version	57
3.4	Adaptation of the background	61
3.5	Conclusion	65



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CHAPTER 4 ADAPTATION OF CHARACTER

4.1	Introduction	69
4.2	Adaptation of the roles of the respective characters	69
4.2.1	Theoretical framework	69
4.2.2	The list of characters versus the cast	70
4.3	Methods of characterization	75
4.3.1	Introduction	75
4.3.2	Action	76
4.3.3	Dialogue	82
4.3.4	Thoughts	86
4.4	Conclusion	94

CHAPTER 5	ADAPTATION OF THE PLOT	
5.1	Introduction	97
5.2	Theoretical framework	97
5.3	Adaptation of the plot of <i>“Unyana womntu”</i> (Saule: 1989)	102
5.3.1	The external structure	102
5.3.2	The internal structure	106
5.4	Conclusion	122
CHAPTER 6	CONCLUSION	127
BIBLIOGRAPHY		138
DICTIONARIES		143
ELECTRONIC REFERENCES		144
LITERARY TEXTS AND CORRESPONDING SCREEN ADAPTATIONS		145



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This dissertation focuses upon the relationship between the written text and the screenplay, with particular reference to the Xhosa book “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989).

In this chapter it will be illustrated how a large number of written dramas, novels and short stories have been adapted for broadcasting on film or television screens all over the world. This is due to the popularity of the TV and film media and to the growing support the industry has enjoyed over the past few decades. Several box offices hits such as “Bourne Identity” and “Once upon Four Robbers” are based upon adaptations of written literary texts. Various strategies of adaptation were experimented with during this period and eventually a relevant, comprehensive theoretical framework was developed. This is referred to today as the theory of adaptation. The student of this theory of adaptation concerns himself/herself with the basic issues pertaining to the art of adaptation. Recognition is given to various principles and guidelines which are generally adhered to during the process of adaptation.

In Xhosa literature during the second half of the twentieth century, a growing number of written texts have also been adapted for screen broadcasting. These texts include, “Ityala lamawele” (Mqhayi, 1914/1996), “Ingqumbo yeminyanya” (Jordan, 1940/1991) and “KwaZidenge” (Peteni, 1986 AbaKwazidenge, 1996). The literature review suggests that none of these adaptations have thus far been subjected to scientific study and analysis. In order to bring about growth, development and progress in this important field, it has now become imperative for some of these adaptations to be subjected to scientific inquiry.

The aim of this introductory chapter is to explain the research aims and objectives of this study. The research methods as well as the organization of the study will also be discussed. In the latter part of the study, background information will be provided on the author, as well as on the filming of the screen version of this novel.

1.2 Research aims and objectives

This research will concentrate primarily on the screen adaptation of the novel “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989). The main aim is to come forward with principles and guidelines for adapting Xhosa novels into screenplays. A secondary aim is to attract more producers into adapting Xhosa books. This will include a study of the literary aspects of the drama and the novel including characterization, plot and the background..

This research will be based upon a study of the theory of the novel and its principles, as well as the theory of adaptation of a written text into a screen production. This will include a complete analysis of the adaptation of characters by comparing their role in the novel “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) to that in the screen version. Adaptation of the background will also form part of the scope of this study. The plot structure in novels is of great importance and will also be considered in this study.

1.3 Research Methods

The study was introduced by a comprehensive reading of the written text. The reading of the written text helped in acquainting the researcher with all the modalities associated with it, such as the relationships which might exist between the characters, or the fears and hatred they might have. This was followed by a comprehensive, repetitive viewing of all aspects of screen version of “*Unyana womntu*” either in DVD or Video format. This meant that the South African Broadcasting Corporation archives had to be visited in Auckland Park in Johannesburg in order to obtain the Videos and DVDs to facilitate the research.

The use of libraries was of great significance to this research. The interlibrary loan system was of particular value as there are a limited number of books which deal with this subject in the University of Fort Hare libraries in Alice, Bhisho and East London. The National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre's wide collection of literary texts on the Alice campus, as well as its research documents related to the field of study of this project, were also be of value. Internet resources were used extensively in this research. These provided information on literature and on filmographic research information. Telephone interviews and electronic correspondence with central role players in the broadcasting sector were also necessary in achieving the desired goal. In the final instance interviews, were held with relevant role players, including the author of the written text, the publishing company and the producer of the screen version. Selected actors were also interviewed on their understanding of the book and how it enabled them to convey its message to the viewers. A number of viewers will also be interviewed randomly to obtain their views and impressions regarding the screen adaptation of the text "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989).



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1.4 Significance of the study

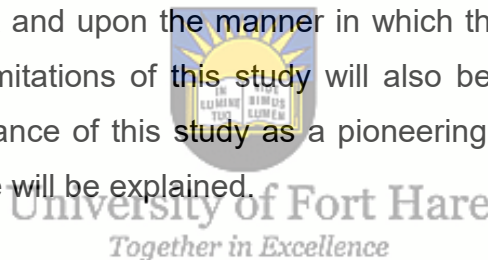
It is expected that this study will be of great significance to the development and growth of the film industry in Southern Africa and across the African continent. It is envisaged that the study will bring about a better understanding of the screen adaptation of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989). It will also bring about an understanding of the challenges facing those artists who wish to convert Xhosa literary texts into screen plays. This study will awaken the interest of those who are considering the adaptation of Xhosa books into screen plays. It will also encourage producers to consider the adaptation of more Xhosa literary texts into the screen format.

The researcher's goal is to assist by providing clear guidelines to future producers or filmmakers concerning the principles of screen adaptation, to avoid the perceived mistakes made in the adaptations of Xhosa written texts in the past and thereby

contribute towards the Xhosa literary tradition in general. It is envisaged that the successful completion of this study will encourage more prospective authors to come forward and to write drama texts which could be considered for adaptation into TV or film productions. This development could elevate the South African film and TV industry into one of the leading industries in Africa.

1.5 Design of the dissertation

This study consists of six chapters. The main aim of the study will be formulated and presented in Chapter 1. It will be mentioned that this study deals with an investigation into the adaptation of the novel "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) into a successful screenplay. This play was broadcast by the SABC in 1998. The methodology employed in this study will be explained in this chapter. This will be based upon a thorough analysis of the written text and upon the manner in which the text has been converted into a screen text. The limitations of this study will also be presented as part of this section, whilst the significance of this study as a pioneering work on adaptation within the field of Xhosa literature will be explained.



The latter part of this chapter provides background information on various aspects of the field of study. This includes information on the author (his personal background as well as his literary contribution). Background information will also be provided on the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998), including the details on the producer, the actors, the film company and the locality of the production.

The main aim of Chapter 2 is to analyse the universal features of the novel in addition to the specific features of the African novel and the Xhosa novel, in particular. Attention will be given to the different subtypes of the novel which can be found. The main emphasis will be on the analysis of the basic features and principles of the novel. The aim of this chapter is also to analyse the universal features of the drama as well as the specific features of the African drama and the Xhosa drama in particular. Attention will

be given to the different subtypes of the drama which can be found. The main emphasis will be on the analysis of the basic features and principles of the drama.

The main part of this chapter will consist of a discussion on the theory of adaptation. The most important principles which come into play when the written text is adapted into a screen production will be identified and discussed. The different schools of thought on this phenomenon will be examined (e.g. The McFarlane versus the Lothe School.)

Since the novel is one of the oldest and most established literary genres, its features and characteristics have already been identified and described by various scholars over the years. In Chapter 3 one of these features namely the adaptation of the background when converting a novel into a screen play will be critically analysed. The challenges which arise when the background is not adapted effectively will also be considered. This will be followed by a critical analysis of the depiction of the background in the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998) versus the written version.

Chapter 4 will be introduced with a brief review of the main characters found in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) versus those found in the screen version. This includes the following types of characters:

- The protagonist versus the antagonist.
- The flat character versus the rounded character.

The main principles which are involved in the process of adaptation of the character will be taken into consideration. These principles will also be applied to "*Unyana womntu*" in order to determine whether or not the depiction of character in the screen version has been carried out successfully.

In Chapter 5, the role of the plot in the literary work will be discussed. This aspect will receive thorough attention. The plot structure applies to all forms of narrative prose, including the novel and the drama. It can be divided into phases which are:

- i. Exposition
- ii. Complication
- iii. Climax
- iv. Denouement

The manner in which the plot structure of the written version of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule 1989) has been adapted in the production of the screen version will be critically analysed.

This study will be concluded in Chapter 6 with a summary of the main findings of this investigation into the adaptation of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) from the written version into the screen version. These findings will be evaluated (in accordance with generally accepted norms of adaptation) in a critical manner in order to determine the degree of success of this adaptation. Guidelines will be formulated for the adaptation of Xhosa literary texts into screen productions in the future.



1.6 Background information

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1.6.1 The author

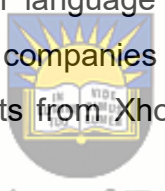
Ncedile Saule is one of the most prolific Xhosa writers. He was born in Fort Beaufort and is from the Bhayi, Mvulane clan. His mother is from Mbathani, Xesibe clan. He is married to Vuyokazi Liwa (uMaRhadebe), a daughter to Mr Liwa and Nomtsha (MaTshangisa). They have two children, Phaphama and Zizwe. He completed his primary and secondary education at Lawson School under the guidance of Mr Zantsi. He furthered his studies and obtained a Bachelor of Arts and an Honours degree at the University of Fort Hare. Prof Z.S. Qangule was his one of his lecturers and was also his mentor. (e-mail interview with Saule, 15 August 2010)

Saule completed his Master's studies at the University of South Africa where he also was appointed as a senior lecturer in African Languages. He has also completed a

Doctorate in this field of study and has many academic publications and conference papers to his credit. (*ibid*)

Saule is the author of several books and radio plays. Some of his plays were published by Bard in “Amaciko” (1988). This includes plays such as “Lindithuba” and “Ndixolele”. In 1989, Bard also published the book “*Unyana womntu*” by Saule. Other publications by Saule include “Nkcenkce mlanjana” (Radio drama, 1995) and “Idinga” (1994). In 1998, he collaborated with Waterfront Production Company as a script writer and language adviser for the TV1 series “*Unyana womntu*.” He has also adapted other books for TV or for the cinema. They are “Umlimandlela”, “Ukhozi olumaphiko” and “Vuleka mhlaba”. He also adapted the following texts into radio plays: “Indlalifa”, “Idinga” and “Umthetho kamthetho” (*ibid*)

Saule is involved in the rendering of language advisory and language development services to government departments, companies and community forums. He translates and edits literary and non-literary texts from Xhosa to English and Afrikaans. He is a recipient of the following awards:

- 
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- i. Centre for Culture and Literature Literary Award, University of Fort Hare, 1986: (for the Radio drama: “ULindithuba”)
 - ii. SABC Radio Xhosa Drama Award: Best Radio Drama in 1988.
 - iii. S.A Script Writers Association Literary Award: Best Radio Drama Scripts
 - (a) “ULindithuba “ (1986)
 - (b) “Akwaba” (1987)
 - (c) “Xa ingakhalanga iyayekwa” “ (1988)
 - iv. Nasionale Pers African Literature Award (1977): Best Novel in Nguni languages: “Ukhozi olumaphiko”
 - v. M-net Book Prize (1997): Best Novel in Nguni languages - “Ukhozi olumaphiko”
 - vi. Kagiso-FNB Literary Award (1998): Best Literary work in Nguni languages: “Indlalifa”(*ibid*)

1.6.2 The screen background of “*Unyana womntu*”

The screen version of the novel “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule , 1989) was filmed in Cape Town and produced by Grundy Pearson Television Company in 1998, nearly 10 years after the publication of the written text and well into the period of existence of the “new” South Africa, which commenced in April 1994. The author of the book was also invited to become part of the production of the TV series (Herman Binge 1998).

The production crew was composed of many people, but for practical reasons only a few of them will be mentioned here. The directors of the screen version were Herman Binge and Terrence Ngxongwa who also played the leading role in the screen version of “*Unyana womntu*” (1998). The production manager was Johan Terblanche and the producer was Lindsay Reid-Ross. The commissioning editor for SABC1 was Clara Nzima. The leading roles were played by Terrence Ngxongwa, who plays the role of the main character, Bantu Zatu; Jackie Luthuli played Dora Bantu’s wife; Vuyisile Bojana acted the part of the prosecutor who orders that Bantu be released; Timmy Kwebulana played the advocate and Itumeleng Wahlerene, the lawyer. Ntombesizwe Tena played the role of Noziqhamo, whilst Zuko Vanyaza acted as Noziqhamo’s brother. The role of Bantu’s uncle was played by Chris April. (Waterfront Production Company, 1998: Cast)

1.7 Conclusion

In this chapter the research aims and objectives of this study were formulated. It was stated that this research will concentrate on the screen adaptation of the various aspects of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989). It was indicated that the research methods to be followed would consist out of a thorough reading of the written text as well as a comprehensive repetitive viewing of all the episodes of the screen version. Finally the research methods to be used would include visits to the SABC archives in Johannesburg, visits to National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre in Alice, as well as interviews with some of the key role players in the production of the TV series.

In the final part of this chapter, background information was provided on the personal life of the author as well as on his contributions to the African literary tradition. Background information on the production of the screen version was also provided.

In the ensuing chapter, the theoretical aspects of the phenomenon of literary adaptation will be discussed. This discussion will provide a framework for an analysis of the adaptation of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) in the remaining chapters of this study.



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CHAPTER 2

FROM TEXT TO SCREEN: THE THEORY OF ADAPTATION

2.1 Introduction

The concept of adaptation concerns itself primarily with the process of transformation of the written text into the screen performance. The main part of this chapter will consequently consist of a discussion on the theory of adaptation. The most important principles which come into play when the written text is adapted into a screen production, will be identified and discussed. The different schools of thought, such as the McFarlane School versus the Lothe School, will be explored.

As stated above, the concept of adaptation concerns itself primarily with the process of transformation of the written text into the screen performance. Since the screen production belongs to the genre of the performing arts, this chapter will be introduced with a discussion on the performing arts and on the drama, in particular. The universal features of the drama will be identified and its origins within various environments will be outlined, including its western origin as well as its African origin. This will be followed by a discussion of the specific features of the African drama and the Xhosa drama in particular. This section will be concluded with a discussion on the different sub-types of the drama which can be found, including the screen production. The main emphasis will be on an analysis of the basic features and principles of the drama in screen format.

This discussion on the drama will be followed by a discussion on the literary features of the novel. Since the screen play "*Unyana womntu*" (1998) is based upon a novel by the same title, the literary features of the novel need to be discussed here as well. The origins of the novel, both within the western context, as well as in the African context, will be outlined here. The specific features of the Xhosa novel will also receive attention. The various Xhosa texts that have up to now been transformed into screen productions will be dealt with briefly. The features of the screen text and more specifically the

process of transformation from the written format to the screen format will thereafter be discussed.

2.2 The Drama

2.2.1 The origins of Western drama

Western drama originated in Greece many centuries ago. Over the years, three sub-genres emerged. They are tragedy, comedy and satire. Tragedies presented the more serious themes. The Greek drama developed out of religious rites performed to honour gods or to mark the coming of spring (Kirsznier & Mandell, 2007:1277). These dramas were often accompanied by music, dance, and verse, whilst making use of architectural and technical innovations. Interestingly, male actors were used to perform female roles (Kirsznier & Mandell, 2007:1278). The Roman Empire was introduced to the Greek drama tradition as they (the Romans) expanded into Greek territories. This gave rise to the birth of the Roman drama tradition.



As stated above, the history of the western drama begins in Greek civilisation, where tragedies as well as comedies were staged during festivals. During the medieval centuries a new form of drama originated in Europe that was based on biblical events. The history of the bible was dramatized in order to communicate a particular moral principle. The drama continued to develop during the renaissance period in Europe, up to the nineteenth century when it became dominated by the depiction of realism rather than romanticism (Cloete, 1992: 82).

Many centuries later, the Elizabethan theatre in England was still influenced by the Greek and Roman drama tradition. This form of theatre was based upon religious pageants performed at medieval festivals where Old and New Testament stories were re-enacted (Kirsznier & Mandell, 2007:1279). Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Middleton and Ben Johnson were prominent playwrights during this period. (Kirsznier & Mandell, 2007:1280).

In the seventeenth and eighteenth century theatre, European dramas were performed in rooms beautifully decorated, with many lit candles, so that plays could be performed at night as well. For the first time, women were allowed to perform female roles. (Kirsznner & Mandell, 2007:1283). Elementary sound effects machines were introduced.

The term 'Drama' is derived from the Greek word *dran*, meaning "to do" or "to act. In film, a story of human conflict told through a series of related events (Blacker, 1986:4).

"Drama is not life, but an imitation of life; an imitation not of men as such, but of action and life, of happiness and misery, not as states of being but as forms of activity. Men are good, bad, happy, or sad in the things they do, or as in Hamlet's case, are unable to do." (Blacker, 1986:34)

Since the drama is one of the oldest and most established literary genres, its features and characteristics have already been identified and described by various scholars over the years. Kirsznner & Mandell (2007:1277), for instance, define the drama as:

"The distinctive appearance of a script, with its stage directions, character parts, and divisions into acts and scenes, identifies drama as a unique form of literature. A play is written to be performed in front of an audience by actors who take on the roles of the characters and who present the story through dialogue and action."

Unlike novels and short stories, plays usually do not have narrators to tell the audience what a character is thinking; instead, the audience only knows the character on the basis of what he/she reveals about himself/herself during the course of the performance. Roots (1979:33) therefore states:

"Drama (and this obviously now includes film and TV drama)...is the representation of the will of man in conflict. It is one of us thrown living upon the stage, there to struggle against his fellow mortals, against himself, if need be; against history and social law, against the ambitious, the self-interests; against the prejudice, the folly, the malevolence of those who surround him".

The essential feature of the drama is found in the fact that events takes place in front of a live audience. Although the drama text may refer to events which took place in the past, the events are still presented in the present tense. The events are presented visually and this leads to certain limitations, the first being the limitations of time. It is the requirement that the events depicted by the play take no longer than the actual duration of the play, or, at most, a single day (Kirsznar & Mandell, 2007:1288). This means that the author must concentrate on only a few selected incidents. Secondly, the drama cannot take place within too many environments and these must also be selected carefully.

The dramatic mode has certain advantages, but also certain disadvantages. The advantage is that the writer can present things more vividly and intensely than through other literary forms. On the other hand, the drama is also subject to the limitations already referred to above. These are mainly linked to the fact that the drama is meant to be performed on stage. Costello and Tucker (1989:8), for example, put it as follows;



“Dramatic pieces are meant to be performed, to be seen and heard. What happens on the page is profoundly different from what occurs on the stage or the screen, and these two media, print and performance, engage us in opposite ways.”

Although the drama is subject to limitations, it means that dramas, whilst interesting to read, only reveal their true value once they are enacted on the stage.

The drama consists of the basic elements of character, structure, style and theme. Theme may, however, be regarded as the most important element of this genre. Tyala (1993:104), for instance, describes the role of theme in the drama as follows;

“Umxholo ngumbandela ongundoqo ajongene nawo umbhali womdlalo nathi ahambise udaba lwakhe ngawo, ngebali lakhe nesakhiwo salo”

“Theme is an important issue the writer is faced with to tell the message about the story and its structure.” (translation)

Tyala (1993:104) also quotes Pretorius and Swart as follows;

“Theme rather, is that statement, explicit or implicit, which a work makes about its subject, and just as a play can encompass more than one subject, so is it possible- especially in a complex work - for a play to have more than one theme.”

It is clear, therefore, that theme represents one of the most important elements of the drama. This matter will receive further attention in the paragraphs below.

2.2.2 Origins and features of the African drama

African drama originated from traditional plays, music and dance that were performed in Africa, and drama was performed in the form of folktales around the fire. An old woman would tell stories to children doing gestures and singing songs. In African tradition, therefore, drama was performed in *intsoni* (folktales). Having considered the folktale, one notices that it contains song, dance, mime, dialogue, spectacle, characters, action, plot and role-playing, which are all dramatic devices (Sirayi, 1993:46).

Generally, the European missionaries were reluctant to recognize the existence of the traditional drama in Africa. There are claims that, although African stories are dramatic, they do not constitute drama, in so much that traditional drama was therefore largely replaced by western drama in the colonisation process Sirayi (1993:10) writes:

“For decades foreign missionaries, teachers and administrative officers argued that there was no African traditional drama as Europeans understood drama: there was merely dancing, singing, story-telling and drumming, all of which were of dramatic nature. These claims have been contested by a number of scholars of drama, particularly African scholars. As a result of such objections certain African societies such as Nigeria, Kenya, and Ghana, were recognized as having traditional drama.”

Africans had their rituals which they regarded as their drama just like the Greeks had theirs. The fact that African drama was not recognized by Europeans does not mean that there were no rituals and rites that were performed.

Sirayi (1993:18) quotes Dlomo by saying;

“Dlomo writes about traditional African drama as what he calls ‘African tribal drama’. Tribal drama was accompanied by dancing and by song. The dances were rhythmic and expressive; the songs emotional and devotional. This was drama in its simple not classical or literary form. In African tribal drama the actor was an “author”, “producer” and “performer” at one and the same time. Drama is a social art. Drama is the reconstruction, recreation and reproduction of the great experiences of people.”

Sirayi (ibid) continues by saying;

“....African drama is a combination of narratives, tales, songs, dances, poetry, rituals and so on, which are performed before a gathering.”

The above extract dismisses the idea that there was no drama in Africa before the arrival of the missionaries. It shows that drama was there, but what the missionaries did was to introduce theirs. It is therefore believed that African drama is to be associated primarily with African culture, rather than with concepts in the European context. It is also time for Africans to stand together and revive their forms of drama which were there before the missionaries came to Africa and westernized the already existing traditional drama.

During the second half of the previous century the standard of the African drama was improved and excellent dramatists made their contributions including, Achebe, Soyinka and Ngugi. After most countries gained independence, factors arose that were influential to writers. These factors included oppression, colonialism, racial conflict and segregation and these produced the themes most used by African writers. Jeyifo (2002:9), for instance, writes:

“The wide-ranging legacy of the encounter of Africa with Europe in the modern period as the object of imperialist ambition and colonial domination remains a central dimension of modern African drama and theatre.”

2.2.3 The origins and features of Xhosa drama

The Xhosa drama originates from the Nguni literary tradition. Jafta (1965:5) gives the background of the Nguni drama:

“Oral Nguni can be traced back to verse and song... Such songs were mainly social and sung accompanied by different dances...The Greek drama compares favourably with Nguni drama...Izibongo constitute Nguni drama, songs in times of war, traditional ceremonies’ songs.”

Mkonto (1984:5) remarks on the origins of Xhosa drama:

“Today the indigenous African Oral forms are referred to as the traditional literature, the unwritten lore of the nation. This unwritten lore is an ocean which academicians draw and will still draw literary gems for a long time to come.”



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Xhosa drama has its own unique features that are not always recognized by European scholars. That is why the missionaries said there was no African drama. Sirayi (1993:15) describes Xhosa drama as follows: “Xhosa drama in particular does not have all the features of drama as demanded by a strictly European definition of drama.”

Jafta (1978:3) sees drama as imitation. Drama is then described as a repetition of incidents done or things said by someone else. She continues by saying;

“Drama is an art that involves imitation...Man imitates by using colour doing or saying something so that imitation involves both the concrete and abstract...object is imitated by means of colour of figures.”

According to Jafta (1978: 12), the main forms of Xhosa drama that are found are ritual drama, songs, dance dramas and *izibongo* (traditional praise poems) and *intsomi* (folktales) performances.

Modern Xhosa drama started to evolve at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1925, Sinxo's second publication was printed with the title "Imfene ka Debeza". Sinxo's little book marked the intrusion of western-type formal playwriting in Xhosa literature. During the years that followed, other young Xhosa writers also introduced new genres and new themes and their activity reached its apex just before World War 2 (Gerard, 1971:67).

Ngcelwane (1993:116) identifies three different themes that are found within the modern Xhosa drama tradition. The first of these is the historical drama. She says the following;

"Kwimidlalo yezembali yesiXhosa siphawula ukuba kukho unxulumano phakathi kwenyaniso nomqwebo njengoko sizakubona kwezi ncwadi zemidlalo zimbini zilandelayo. Eyokuqala ithi "Umkhonto kaTshiwo" ibhalwe ngu M.A.P Ngani, eyesibini ithi "uNgondongwana" ibhalwe ngu P.M Ntloko".

University of Fort Hare

"In Xhosa historical plays similarities between fact and fiction are noted and that is to be revealed in the following two drama books. The first one is "Umkhonto kaTshiwo" by M.A.P Ngani, and the second one is "uNgondongwana" by P.M Ntloko.

The second theme which is distinguished is the love theme. The following dramas belong to this theme: "*uDike noCikizwa*" (Mmango, 1958), "*Buzani kuBawo*" (Tamsanqa, 1958) and "*uNcumisa noNqabayakhe*" (Mtywaku, 1972).

The last theme which has been distinguished here is the social theme. The following dramas belong to this category: "*Inene nasi isibhozo*" (Mntingane, 1965), "*Amathunzi obomi*" (Jolobe, 1957) and "*Imfene kaDebeza*" (Sinxo, 1925).

2.2.4 Types of drama

During the course of the twentieth century, a number of drama types, or sub-genres have developed. Saule (1988:3) provides the following insight in this regard:

“Imidlalo iziintlobo ngeentlobo. Kukho eyokulinganiswa eqongeni, eyemiboniso bhanyabhanya, ekamabonakude neyeradio. Eyona iqheleke kakhulu yile yeqonga kuba kwasekusekekeni kobomi, neqonga lasekeka ngokunjalo”

“There are different types of drama. They are theatre, film, TV and radio drama. The most common is theatre as it was created with the creation of the universe.

Saule (1988:7) also says:

“Imidlalo yonke iyafana, yahluke ngeemfuno zelo jelo ubhalela lona. Kumdlalo weqonga kufuneka waneze ezeqonga iimfuno, umabonakude ezakhe, kanti neradio ngokunjalo”

“Plays are similar. The difference is in the required standards of that type of drama. In theatre one is expected to fulfil its requirements, also in TV and in radio drama.”

The earliest types of drama that are found are the tragedy and the comedy Kennedy (1991:97) describes a tragedy as:

“a play that portrays a conflict between human beings and some superior, overwhelming forms. It ends sorrowfully and disastrously and this outcome seems inevitable.”

Jacobus (1989:16) reflects that comedy developed among the ancient Greeks. It is usually thought to be funny, but it could also be interpreted as a tragedy. The audience laughs, but they also know that the play is at heart very serious. Comedies often poke fun at individuals who think of themselves as very important. The comedy can also offer

commentary on the condition of modern society. Brooks, Purser and Warren (1975:544) describe the relationship between the tragedy and the comedy in the following words.

“....so much for the kinship of tragedy and comedy. They both spring from some fundamental incongruity - some shocking discrepancy between what we think should be and what has actually come to pass. And they become tragic or comic in proportion as we sympathize with the protagonist (the dominant character) or fail to sympathize - in proportion as the consequences are serious or trivial. It is not, then, the bare situation that makes a play tragic or comic - it is largely the interpretation and treatment of the situation by the dramatist himself. To put matters a little differently, the difference between tragedy and comedy depends on what is stipulated as being at stake.”

During the second half of the twentieth century, additional forms of the drama have developed. The first of these to be discussed here is the radio drama. The framework which must be provided by the dramatist is of major importance here. In this type of drama the listener is completely dependent upon the auditive factor as well as upon the linguistic expression. Everything depends upon the sounds that are used as well as the effectiveness of the vocabulary of the text. The radio drama therefore is a very demanding medium and the listener needs to concentrate intensely in order to understand all aspects of the radio play (Botha, Cloete, Malan, 1985:223).

Sandi (1993:106) quotes Bolton who provides the following definition of the radio drama:

“Radio provides a type of drama very different from the stage play. Scenery is non-existent and actions can be implied only by comments or sound effects.”

Sandi (1993:106) says that the radio drama has two important features that distinguish it from the stage drama. She says:

“Ngenxa yokuba umdlalo woomathotholo ungaboni, ulungiselelo lwamazwi kunye nezandi zizinto ezibalulekileyo ukulola ingqikelelo yomphulaphuli.”

“Since radio drama is not seen but heard, speech and sound are important to create the imagination.”

The Xhosa author, Ncedile Saule, is one of the most well-known writers of the Xhosa radio drama. Sandi (1993:107) acknowledges his work as follows;

“Liyancomeka igalelo likaSaule kwimidlalo yoonomathotholo esanqongophele kunene. Abalinganiswa bakhe bambalwa. Baqalela kwabathathu ukuya kwisihlanu. Kulula kubaphulaphuli ukwahlula amazwi abo. Zonke iimpawu zomdlalo oqhelekileyo ziyabonakala nakule midlalo yakhe yosasazo.”

“Saule is commended for his contribution in the scarce radio drama stories. Characters are few from three to five. It is easy for the listeners to differentiate between their voices. All drama features are there in his drama plays.”

In his radio drama, “*Liduduma lidlule*”, Saule uses sounds that imitate the noises that are made by birds and wild animals. This provides the listener with an accurate image of the conditions in the forest. Saule’s second radio drama “*Ulindithuba*” is equally successful. This radio drama was broadcast for the first time in 1986 and was the winner of a competition organized by the University of Fort Hare in the same year. (Saule, 1988:1).

Saule (1988:27) suggests that radio dramas can be classified into various sub-categories. They may primarily be distinguished according to the principle of broadcasting time. There are short plays which only take five minutes to broadcast. Although this play is very short, it still contains all the features of any type of play. The next type of radio drama has a broadcasting time of 15 minutes. There are also radio dramas which have a broadcasting time of 30 minutes. Saule also identifies the serial radio drama, which can be broadcast over a period of weeks or even months depending on the number of episodes involved. The lengths of each episode could vary between 15 minutes to 105 minutes.

Saule (1988:3) highlights that, in a radio drama, the actions and characters of this genre cannot be seen, they can only be heard. That is why it is so difficult to write a radio drama. The author of radio drama must be able to create a very good image of the events and the characters by making use of the technique of invisible mental imagery.

Theatre and film are both regarded as dramatic arts, since both of them share the use of spoken language in the form of dialogue between the characters. In addition to this, they also make use of action in order to depict the characters on the stage. The main difference between the theatre drama and film is situated in the fact that the stage drama takes place in confined quarters. Costello and Tucker (1989:20) state that it is freedom of movement that distinguishes film from other art forms. For this reason, they feel that the word “cinema” is more appropriate, since it is derived from the Greek word “kinema” which means “motion”. The term “motion” refers not only to the movements of the actors on the stage, but it also refers to the movement of the camera itself which can move up or down, or it can circle the actor.



The TV drama is equal to the radio drama in the sense that it is a technical medium where technology can be used to assist with the depiction of characters and with the depiction of certain visual effects. TV dramas can be presented in the form of a serial which is a continuous and liniary narrative consisting out of several episodes. The so-called soap operas also form part of this genre. The single drama is a show which is only televised once. Normally this is a serious genre where there is a depth of depiction of characterization. Finally the mini-series concentrates on a particular theme and may consist out of 3-13 episodes (Hambigde, 1992:533).

Each of these categories makes use of its own unique method or methods of presentation with regard to the audience, target groups and production costs. The producer is free to make use of video recordings which are mainly made in a studio whilst film recordings are used to record outdoor scenes. The TV drama is a visual medium where preference is given to close up shots concentrating only on the face or even the eyes of the character. Dialogue is used to create a particular atmosphere. Side

effects are used to provide a complete picture of a particular scene, for example the depiction of a station scene where the sound of an approaching train is used to provide a complete picture of a particular situation (Hambigde, 1992:533).

2.3 The Novel

2.3.1 General features

As indicated above, the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) exists in the form of a novel. It is therefore necessary that the theoretical features of the novel be discussed here as a framework for the discussion of the adaptation of the text later on in this study. This discussion will deal with matters such as the origin of this genre and the essential features of the genre.

Whereas the drama tradition is estimated to be as old as humanity itself, the birth of the novel is seen to be a much more recent development. Kennedy (1991:213) says:



"Unlike other literary forms - drama, lyric, ballad, and epic - the novel is a relative newcomer. Originally, the drama in ancient Greece came alive only when actors performed it; the epic or heroic poem (from the classic Iliad through the Old English Beowulf), only when a bard sang or chanted it. But the English novel came to maturity in literate times, in the eighteenth century."

As pointed out by Kennedy, in European literary history the first novels were only produced in the 18th century, which was often referred to as the Age of Enlightenment. According to Heese and Lawton (No date: 103) this age

"...was remarkable for its great advances in scientific thought and invention. With these developments in science and philosophy many superstitions had been cleared away and the use of prose became an increasingly important tool in man's manipulation and control of his environment. It was natural that this art form, which emerged in response to man's need to orientate himself to his surroundings, should have prose as its medium. And so the novel developed as an art form. The fact that there was a demand for this type of literature from a well-educated and moneyed middle class made the distribution of the novel an economically viable proposition."

Kennedy (1991:213) also confirms that the novel originates from this period:

“Among the forms of imaginative literature...the novella has been the favorite of both writers and readers for more than 200 years.”

The unique nature of the novel has been identified and described by various critics. Kennedy (1991:213) for instance, defines a novel as:

“A book-length story in prose, whose author tries to create the sense that while we read, we experience the actual life”.

Kennedy regards a novel as a story to be communicated silently (rather than by oral narration) at whatever moment and whatever tempo, in accordance with the desires of the reader.

According to Heese and Lawton (No date: 104) the term *novel* is often loosely applied to cover any piece of narrative fiction, whether it be an adventure, a western or science fiction. The novel must however, be more than just a simple story:

“The true novelist has something of import to say, something which reaches beyond the field of entertainment.”

According to Scannell (1987:17), the novel is:

“a factious prose narrative of considerable length, in which characters and actions, representatives of real life, are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity.”

It is therefore that the concise Oxford Dictionary also defines the novel as follows:

“The novel is a fictitious prose narrative of book length portraying characters and actions credibly representative of real life in continuous plot”

Since the novel is regarded as a long prose form, it generally comprises a greater variety of content. Its organizational structure is also more complex. The novel therefore is more than just a simple action story, the main aim of which is to amuse and to entertain. The novelist's intention is more complex. He/she wishes to communicate an important vision of life. The subject of novels is human relationships. In order to depict these relationships effectively, he /she must give his/her vision form by making use of various narrative elements and techniques that this particular genre has to offer. Kennedy (1991:2) suggests:

“Reading literary fiction is no merely passive activity, but one that demands both attention and insight-lending participation. In return, it offers rewards. In some works of literary fiction...we see more deeply into the minds and hearts of the characters than we see into those of our family, our close friends, our lovers - or even ourselves.”

Various types of novels have developed over the years. These include the historical novel, the short novel and the picaresque novel. The novel is closely related to other literary genres. The novel is related to the romance on the basis of the fact that they are both longer forms of written prose. The content of the novel, however, is much more realistic than that found in the romance. This sense of actuality that sets the novel apart from the romance is also found in short stories of good quality. The short story is regarded to have the same features as the novel, albeit in shorter and in more compact format. Mtumane (1995:8) points out that the novel usually differs from the other genres in terms of length. The novel usually is the longest genre, although it is not always possible to define the exact length of novel texts.

There is also a close relationship between the novel and the TV drama, as will be shown later on in the study; the TV drama having emerged out of the novel. Over the years, fierce competition has developed between the novel and the TV drama, with many readers of the novel now converting to the viewing of TV dramas. Kennedy (1991:217) points out:

“The death of the novel is continually being predicted. The competition of the TV drama is too much for it.”

As indicated above, the elements of the novel resemble those of the short story, since both of these are forms of prose fiction. Novelists make use of character portrayal in order to give their vision form. According to Heese and Lawton (No date:105) they place these *characters* in *settings* (background) and involve them in incidents (*actions*) which reveal their personalities. He collects a wealth of facts and organizes these into a *plot*. In addition, the role of the narrator, as well as the style and language of the presentation, is also of importance to the success of the novel. Finally the main theme/themes of the novel should come to light through an examination of the plot, the characters, the setting, the events as well as the language of presentation.

The theme of the novel is defined by Brooks, Purser and Warren (1975:15) as:

“...the governing idea implicit in the situation of conflict that becomes, in the end, the local idea - that is what we take to be the ‘meaning of the whole’”.


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Satyo (1981:98) also provides the following definition of this concept:

“Lo mcamango usentloko (central idea) olithungela lonke ibali, uye kuthungela abalinganiswa ngokuthi izinto abazenzayo okanye ezibahlelayo (ngenxa yokuba ubomi babo bungekho ezandleni zabo) zonke ezi zinto zisebenzele ukuphuhlisa lo mcamango uphambili lijikeleze kuwo ibali.”

“The central idea revolves around the story, and also in characters in what they do and what they experience to reveal the plot in the story.”

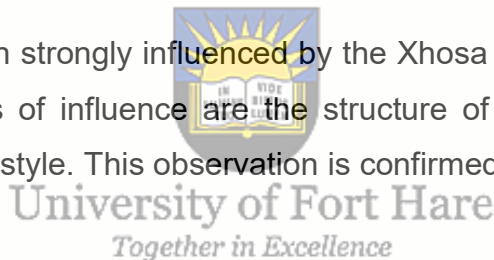
Theme, therefore, should be regarded as the most important, central element of the novel. All the other elements are designed to contribute towards the effective definition of the theme.

2.3.2 The Xhosa novel

In Xhosa literature, the first novels appeared from 1909 onwards. The novels "*Ityala lamawele*" (Mqhayi, 1914), as well as, "*UNomsa*" (Sinxo, 1922) were some of the first classical novels to be published in this language. Mrubata (1993:19-21) identifies the following themes that have been dealt with over the past 100 years:

- i. Novels with political themes: An example of this is Siyongwana's "*Ubulumko bezinja*"
- ii. Novels with themes on worship: The examples are Ndawo's "*Uhambo lomhambi*" which is a translation of Bunyan's "*Pilgrims progress*".
- iii. Social theme: An example is A. Mtingane's "*Inene nasi isibhozo*".
- iv. Educational theme: The example of this is G.B Sinxo's "*Umzali wolahleko*".

The Xhosa novel has been strongly influenced by the Xhosa oral tradition. According to Satyo (1977:4), the areas of influence are the structure of the plot, characterization, theme, diction and literary style. This observation is confirmed by Gerard (1971:156):



"The increasing encroachments of modern civilization have prompted quite a few contemporary Sotho writers to cast nostalgic glances at the more idyllic or picturesque facets of tribal life. Their purpose is partly antiquarian - to preserve the memory of fast vanishing customs and institutions - and partly educational - to instil into the minds of younger readers, brought up according to the newfangled ways, proper respect for the past and for the identity of their nation."

According to Mtumane (1995:26), the African novel can be regarded as a hybrid of African oral tradition and European literary forms. The Xhosa novel, therefore, may only be fully understood by critics who have a proper understanding of both of these traditions:

"For any critic to analyse an African novel successfully, it is imperative to understand the value of these traditional narrations as they may have an influence on the modern African novel."

The novel "*Unyana womntu*" by (Saule, 1989) belongs to the more recent category of novels within the Xhosa literary tradition. It is widely regarded to be one of the best novels to be written in this language. This book was written towards the end of the apartheid era, when the many restrictions that applied to black authors were about to be relaxed. In this novel, the main character, Bantu Zatu is married to Dora and they have marital problems. Dora becomes an alcoholic. She leaves Bantu and goes to stay in another place. They have a son, Ndodiphela who Bantu sends to stay with his uncle in a nearby village. Bantu arranges to meet with Dora in order to discuss their marital problems. Dora is killed under mysterious circumstances after Bantu's visit. Bantu is arrested, charged and found guilty of murdering his wife. He is sentenced to death by hanging. A close friend of his by the name of Noziqhamo saves him by proving his innocence with the help of a lawyer, Ngalo and a technician from a TV station. Bantu is later released and set free to go home

In this novel, Saule addresses an important and highly contested issue amongst South African citizens, namely that of capital punishment. The objections raised by those who are opposed to this form of punishment, namely that innocent people might be sent to the gallows, are clearly outlined in this novel. The fact that the system of capital punishment was abolished by the authorities soon after the advent of the new South Africa in 1994 clearly shows Saule's far-sightedness in his approach towards this sensitive matter.

2.4 The theory of adaptation

2.4.1 Introduction

The aim of this section is to provide perspectives on the theoretical principles upon which the phenomenon of adaptation is based. This includes a definition and concise description of the art of adaptation. This will be followed by a brief overview of the history of adaptation in the film world. Finally, the theoretical principles of adaptation will

be outlined with a view to the meaningful analysis of the particular Xhosa text under discussion.

The origin of the art of film-making dates back to the 1890s. It can therefore be stated with certainty that the film is a relatively young genre, perhaps the youngest of all the art forms. Harrington (1977: ix) says: "While other art forms have taken centuries to develop, the span of a single life time has witnessed the birth and maturity of film." The rapid growth rate of the art of film-making may be ascribed in particular, to the contributions or influences of other art forms, including the performing arts, fine arts and literary art.

Harrington (1977: ix) says that, of all these contributors, literature has had the most important role in the development of cinema. Balasz (1977:12) also says:

"A backward glance over the films of the past 10 to 15 years quickly reveals that one of the dominant features of their evolution is the increasingly significant extent to which they have gone for their material to the heritage of literature and the stage."

The study of the interrelationships, as well as the intersection between these two forms of art, has developed rapidly over the past number of years. In the paragraphs below, the role of literature and of the novel in particular, in the growth and development of cinematic art, will be discussed.

2.4.2 Definition of the concept

Adaptation is the transfer of a written text into a screen production preferably without deviating from the original theme, as that may lead to the creation of another production. It is the transposition of a written text into film with a view, not to evaluating one in relation to the other, but to establishing the kind of relation a film might bear to the text that it is based on. McFarlane (1996:21) defines the concept:

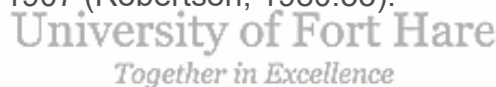
"Adaptation is the appropriation of a meaning from a prior text".

As will be illustrated below, adaptations can originate from various types of texts, including the drama, the novel or the short story.

2.4.3 Historical background

The history of adaptation is as old as the film industry itself. The first European film scripted for the screen was “*Les Miserables*” produced by Pathe’ from the novel by Victor Hugo. “*The life of Moses*” was produced by Vitagraph in 1909. This screen production was based upon the bible text, as found in the book of Exodus. The well-known American novel “*Oliver Twist*” was also adapted and produced by Vitagraph in 1912. There even was a cry that “*Dracula*” was never portrayed on screen as effectively as he was described in the book by the same title (Robertson, 1980:53)

Other film producers also turned to literature for their plots. In 1902, Zola’s “*L’Assommoir*” was made by Ferdinand Zecca of Pathe into 5 minutes of screen time. “*Robbery under Arms*” by Rolf Boldrewood was the first novel to be adapted at sufficient length for adequate presentation of the story and was brought on the screen by McMahon in Melbourne in 1907 (Robertson, 1980:53).



During the 20th century, strong growth took place in the number of adaptations, the most famous of which is the films recently based on the “Harry Potter” series of books. Some of these adaptations are based on documentary texts, whilst others are based on fictional texts. A well-known example of a documentary text is the film “*The Great Escape*” which is based upon a real-life incident which took place in Germany during the 2nd World war. Miller (1980:209) states:

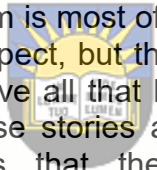
“It has been estimated that for most years the proportion of American films based on novels is around 30 percent. Approximately 80 percent of the best-selling novels for each year are made into films. Some sixteen of the top twenty money-making films as of 1977 were adaptations. More than three-fourths of the American Academy awards “best picture” awards have gone to adaptations, with about three-fourths of these based on novel or short stories. Some two-thirds of the New York Film Critics’ Awards for best motion picture have been for adaptation.”

From the discussion above, it is clear that most film scripts have been adapted from written format to screen version. These texts were, however, initially meant for reading. This study therefore deals with the transformation of written texts into screen productions. The researcher wishes to look at the relationship between the written text and the corresponding screen play.

2.4.4 The adaptation of the novel into film

There seems to be a perception that the majority of the screen productions that have been adapted from literary works have been adapted from dramas or stage plays. Balazs (1977:12) for instance, is of the opinion that films "... have gone for their material to the heritage of literature and the stage." (my emphasis: T Mbatsha). Beja (1979:54), however, clearly states that:

"The "literary" art, with which film is most often associated, by far, is not the drama, as one might at first expect, but the novel; and the reason for this near universal tendency is above all that both are forms of telling stories, and their modes of telling those stories are comparably open. So basic indeed are these similarities that they overshadow many of the differences."


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It is clear, therefore, that narrative literature (and the novel in particular) and film shares the basic element of the story, although these two mediums do not narrate the story in exactly the same manner. Where the novel uses words to tell the story, the film makes use of images or picture frames to perform the same function. Nevertheless, it is clear that film and the novel share the same basic narrative methods.

Since the narrative is the dominant artistic feature of cinematographic art, narrative literature (and the novel in particular) would have had the greatest influence over the development of the film genre since its inception in the 1890s. Bluestone (1977:138) puts it as follows:

"The moment the film went from the animation of stills to telling a story, it was inevitable that fiction would become the ore to be minted by story

departments. Before Griffith's first year as a director was over, he had adapted, among others, Jack London's *Just Meat (For Love of Gold)*, Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, and Charles Reade's *The Cloister and the Hearth*."

The intimate relationship that has developed between the novel and the film genre over the years is furthermore described by Bluestone (1977:138):

"On the face of it, a close relationship has existed from the beginning. The reciprocity is clear from almost any point of view: the number of films based on novels; the search for filmic equivalents of literature; the effect of adaptations on reading; box-office receipts for filmed novels; merit awards by and for the Hollywood community."

Over the years, most adaptations in the world of film have come from novels. According to Harrington (1977:5), more than 65% of films that have been produced have their sources in novels.

The adaptation of novels into screen texts soon became a popular strategy for film makers to follow. When cinema realized itself as a form of entertainment 90 years ago, an idea of ransacking the novel even developed. Filmmakers like Frederick Raphael preferred buying the rights of an expensive book rather than developing an original subject (McFarlane, 1996:7).

2.4.5 Reasons for the adaptation of novels

In some instances, the adaptation of novels into film is carried out with serious artistic intentions. This means that in such cases, the writer uses, for a second time, but in another art form, the material he/she has used in the first art form. In this manner, a successful novel can be adapted, firstly into a play and thereafter into a film. In most instances, however, adaptations are undertaken purely for financial reasons: very few novelists can resist the financial gains involved. Balazs (1977:11), for instance, says:

"We know that nowadays, especially when it is a question of adapting novels or plays for the films, this is mostly done for financial reasons. A

successful novel can be adapted first as a play and then as a film, and thus make money for its author several times over.”

It is evident therefore, that the motives behind the adaptation of a novel are not always artistic in nature; they are mostly financial. Beja (1979:87) confirms this observation:

“Often it is clear, a book is written not for its own sake, or even necessarily with its becoming a best-seller as the primary goal, but rather with the intention that it be sold to movies. Increasingly, in those cases where there was no book to begin with, publishers and film makers (who may be under the same huge corporate conglomerate) will commission a writer to come up with one. That happened with The Sting and Rocky, for example.”

A great number of American crime novels are clearly written with a view to Hollywood adaptation. This is due to the fact that the decision whether or not a particular novel should be considered for adaptation is not always based upon the principle of artistic merit but on financial grounds:



“No doubt the film companies pay enormous funds for famous novels; whether they happen to be fine novels is irrelevant. It is the fame, after all, that is important, for the motive behind such purchases is not artistic but commercial. It is the producer who usually “buys” the novel, and, once bought, it ceases to be a novel and becomes a property. It may well be that those films based on novels with reputations, notorious or otherwise, do in fact make money.” (Linden, 1977:163).

Eventually a need arose to regulate the process of adaptation and to establish a watchdog organization. This took place after the production of a one-reel version of the novel “*Ben Hur*” by a film company without the knowledge or consent of the author of the original text. This company was sued and it defended itself by saying neither the publisher nor the author suffered any damage and the film was a good advertisement for the book. Judgment was nonetheless made against the company and it was ordered to pay a settling fee amounting to \$25 000 (Robertson, 1980:53). In France, the payment of film rights was organized and regulated after the establishment of *Societe’ Cinematographique des Auteurs et Gens de Lettres* in 1908 to act as a performing

rights society for companies who based all their films on works of literature. This was initiated by the adaptation of "*Ben-Hur*" (Robertson, 1980:53) as stated above.

2.4.6 The adaptation of novels versus plays and short stories

As stated above, it is evident that the method of presentation of the contents in the film genre is more closely related to that of the novel than to that of the drama. Films that have been adapted from novels are generally more successful than films that were adapted from plays or from dramatic works of art. Fulton (1977:151) describes this phenomenon as follows:

"It is relevant to observe that the method of the motion pictures is more like that of the novel than of the play. The way a novel tells a story- primarily by description and narration- is comparable to the way a film does-primarily by pictures- whereas the dramatic method is primarily dialogue. It is true of course that a more literal adaptation can be made of a play than of a novel. A film resembles a play in manner of presentation; that is, it can be seen and heard. A play might therefore be so recorded by camera and microphone as to be almost identical to the play produced on the stage. The more faithfully a film "follows the play", the more like a play it becomes- and the less cinematic. A novel, on the other hand, is faithfully adapted to the screen by a translation of the novelistic terms into cinematic ones and thus by being different."

Novels adapt to the screen more easily than plays. That is why Harrington (1977:5) says: "...most of the memorable adaptations come from novels rather than from plays?" Beja (1979:84) supports this viewpoint:

"Undoubtedly, some works "translate" more readily or persuasively than others. There is a general agreement that novels are more successfully adaptable than plays usually are, since the play will seem deceptively close in form to the film and may, therefore, be slavishly reproduced; filmmakers adapting a novel, however, will not be able to yield to such a temptation and will be forced at least to try to be creative and imaginative. And they will do so in a form that, as we saw in the previous chapter, in many ways is fundamentally closer to the novel than to drama."

The short story also lends itself well to cinematic adaptation. Alfred Hitchcock, as quoted by Beja (1979:59) says: “the nearest art form to the motion picture is ...the short story. It is the only form where you ask the audience to sit down and read it in one sitting.” The main advantage of the short story is that it:

“.....may be adapted with only slight change in scope, if any at all. Given the usual short story, that is, one dependent largely on narration, an adapter has for the most part only to translate epic terms into cinematic ones. It is not surprising that short stories were popular sources of early films. Many a short story was ready-made for representation in one or two reels.” (Harrington 1977:116).

On the other hand, the producer of a film that is based upon a novel of 200 to 300 pages in length is not in a position to fit all this information into a film lasting 2 to 3 hours. In some instances, large chunks of information will have to be eliminated during the adaptation process. In order to address this constraint effectively, Beja (1979:84) proposes that novels be adapted into TV series rather than full-length films:

“Perhaps the most obvious demands are those dictated by length: when a three-hundred-page novel is made into two or three-hour movie, a great deal will have to be sure, which may last from eight to ten or even twelve hours. Yet in one respect the quality of the experience in watching a serial television version of a novel will undeniably be closer to reading most novels than a feature film can be: for it will be something we come back to periodically, rather than something we complete in a single sitting.”

2.4.7 The principles of adaptation of a novel into a film script

There are specific principles and methods that guide the adaptation of a written text into screen. The role of the director is of great importance since he/she selects, organizes and directs the screen version of the original text. Procedures and guidelines were therefore set to distinguish the transfer. These procedures will be discussed in the paragraphs below.

“A film has different requirements and possibilities than a written text, be it a novel, a short story, or a play. For instance, a play which is fairly static on

stage can be opened up and taken to many different locations. Characters as well as episodes can be changed. The script writer rarely uses a novelist's original dialogue, even if that novelist is Hemingway: Lines that sound fine on a page of a novel often seem dull and flat when played on screen," (Blacker, 1986:89).

In this regard, McFarlane (1996:7) says;

"Adapting literary works to film is without a doubt a creative undertaking, but the task requires a kind of selective interpretation along with the ability to recreate and sustain the established mood."

He continues by saying,

"Every best-selling novel has to be turned into a film, the assumption being that the book itself whets an appetite for the true fulfilment - the verbal shadow turned into light, the word made flesh."

The main idea behind adaptation is to dramatize or put into action before the audience what has been said in writing, with a view to entertain. It is also the fastest method of making movies other than going back to writing a script for a movie. As will be illustrated below, some critics believe that some aspects of the background of the written text, such as the name of the streets, the name of the town, etc may be changed, but the basic circumstances of the character, can never be changed as it will affect the plot of the story.

The extent, to which the original text may be adapted into a film, will differ from text to text and from filmmaker to filmmaker. There may be time limitations in movies that will make it impossible for the adaptation of the whole book. Miller (1980: 213) for instance, believes that:

"A novel will usually have to be condensed in many ways, with some subplots and events and perhaps some characters eliminated."

There even are cases where large portions of the book may have to be adapted.

Miller (1980:210) is of the opinion that in adaptation:

“What is important is that the writers doing the adaptation retain the key elements from the original and catch its flavour – the “personality” or feeling-tone of the original.”

Some scholars do, however; have opposing views in this regard. One of them is Lothe who has a different opinion about faithfulness to the author. Lothe does not believe in the concept of faithfulness. He believes in creating his own imaginations, by making changes to characters, events and characterization. He believes in the principle of “artistic fidelity”: “A key question here concerns ‘artistic fidelity’”, not the adaptation’s fidelity to the original text.” (Lothe, 2000:85). Blacker (1986:89) also says, “The adapter owes nothing to the original but the spirit, the theme, and the premise.”

One of the most fundamental issues currently under debate in the field of film criticism and theory, concerns the identification of the principles that govern the adaptation of literary texts into film. The various questions related to the principles that should be adopted, could be formulated as follows:



“How should a filmmaker go about the process of adapting a work of written literature? Are there guiding principles that we can discover or devise? What relationship should a film have to the original source? Should it be “faithful”? Can it be? To what? Which should be uppermost in a filmmaker’s mind: The integrity of the original work or the integrity of the film to be based on that work? Is there a necessary conflict? What types of changes are permissible?” (Beja, 1979:80-81)

The relationship between a film and the novel it has been adapted from, and in particular, the basis upon which a novel should be adapted, has become a matter of intense debate. Basically, this debate may be crystallized into the following two viewpoints:

“There are probably two basic approaches to the whole question of adaptation. The first approach asks that the integrity of the original work - the novel, say - be preserved, and therefore that it should not be tampered

with and should in fact be uppermost in the adapter's mind. The second approach feels it proper and in fact necessary to adapt the original work freely, in order to create - in the different medium that is now being employed - a new, different work of art with its own integrity." (Beja, 1979:82).

The proponents of the first approach referred to above, do not seek to interpret the contents of the source text or to place their own personal stamp on the adaptation. It is their intention to be as faithful to the original text as they can. In the making of the film, they aim to be completely and utterly true to the source text. In extreme cases, this could even mean that the original text is repeated word for word and line for line.

The second school of thought is based upon the premise that, whilst the producer of a film script wishes to remain faithful to the spirit of the original work, he/she also wishes to achieve that goal by making alterations to the source text. In some circles, it is even believed that it is mandatory for these alterations to be made. Beja (1979:81) suggests:



"Yet we begin with a categorical statement: some changes will be inevitable. Even the most well-intended, literal-minded, indeed slavish adapter will have to adapt (change) a book, or a short story, and perhaps even a plot; certainly in regard to a novel, the possibility of altering nothing can be dismissed."

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Amongst other leading scholars in the field of adaptation studies, there also seems to be no doubt that adaptation of the source text is an unavoidable reality. To them, the excellence of a film does not depend on its degree of similarity to the novel from which it has been adapted:

"Neither Bazin, Truffaut, nor any other serious defender of the practice of adaptation will deny that some changes are necessary from one medium to the other; the controversies arise in regard to what we make of that fact, and where we go from it. What types of changes are proper or not, desirable or not?" (Beja, 1979:83)

Whilst there is general unanimity amongst these scholars that a certain degree of adaptation is not only acceptable, but also unavoidable, there seems to be general

disagreement with regard to the extent to which adaptation should take place. Beja (1979:81) describes this as follows:

“Disagreement comes only when we discuss the nature and degree of such alteration as will take place, for some modes of alteration will seem ‘faithful’ to a given book, and others will seem a ‘betrayal’”.

In spite of disagreements such as these, it still remains clear that it is not possible for a film, when adapted from a novel, simply to “follow book”; literal likeness is not possible. Certain changes are bound to occur. For instance, Bluestone (1977:152) points out that a comparison of a film with a novel from which it has been adapted usually reveals that, in the film, certain characters and scenes have been omitted. He comes to the conclusion that these deletions are due less to the cinematic method of storytelling, than to the convention of the trade that determines that the length of a film should not be more than 90 minutes. The length of a film is determined by the length of time an audience may be expected to sit still in a theatre. The adaptation of a novel into a film is determined by this basic consideration.



In addition to these practical considerations, there are also other, more fundamental principles that regulate the process of adaptation. Cognizance needs to be taken of the fact that the novel and the film belong to two different art forms. The novel is a literary art form, whilst the film is a cinematographic art form that belongs to the performing arts. Each of these art forms is based upon a unique set of artistic conventions:

“The end products of novel and film represent different aesthetic genera, as different from each other as ballet is from architecture.” (Bluestone, 1977:139)

Accordingly, Bluestone (1977:139) comes to the conclusion that:

“What is common to all these assumptions is the awareness that mutations are probable the moment one goes from a given set of fluid, but relatively homogenous, conventions to another; that changes are inevitable the moment one abandons the linguistic for the visual medium.”

In most instances, however, the adaptation of a novel into a film is dictated, not by practical considerations (such as those referred to above), but by artistic principles. In such instances, the film script writer uses the existing work of art (the novel) merely as raw material in order to create a “new” script. In this instance, the script writer pays no attention to the form already given to the material. One of the respected early scholars of cinema, Béla Balazs is of the opinion that:

“...even though an adaptation takes the subject of another work, the adaptation achieves both content and a form different from the original. Just as a number of creative artists can realize different works of art from the same event in reality, so another art work can provide the raw material for adapters to create new forms and contents. The artist can form and reform the raw material of life, and apparently of art, to infinite new variations. (Harrington, 1977:10)

Hence, in Balazs’ view, the filmmaker has little responsibility to a source, but instead shows respect through faithfulness to the nature of the art form. According to this influential film theorist, it is possible to create a film adaptation of a written work of art that becomes in itself an admirable artistic achievement. Linden (1977: 169) is of the view that if the film is to be an adaptation of a novel, then the film director has a more difficult task before him than if the film script is an original: “He must learn to walk a fine line between excess reverence for the authors’ workand disregard” He comes to the conclusion that:

“A successful film adaptation of a novel should not be the book. Nor should it be a substitute for the book. If it is truly successful, it should be a work of art in its own right, which excites the reader to go experience that world in another medium: the novel...”

André Bazin says that:

“The resulting film is then not a betrayal and not a copy, not an illustration and not a departure. It is a work of art that relates to the book from which it derives yet is also independent, an artistic achievement that is in some

mysterious way the “same” as the book but also something other: perhaps something less but perhaps something more as well” (Bazin, as quoted by Beja, 1979: 88)

Robert Penn Warren, as quoted by Harrington (1977:115) similarly comes to the conclusion that:

“It seems to me that when a movie is made from a novel the novel is merely raw material, the movie is a new creation and the novelist can properly attract neither praise nor fame for it.”

On the other hand, there are also scholars who are in favour of a more limited approach towards the adaptation of a novel into a film. Stanley Kaufmann for instance (as quoted by Harrington (1977:3) claimed:

“Obviously, adaptation must occur in an almost biological sense. The book must be anatomized and reassembled so as to produce the same effect in a different medium; to the degree that this second life is achieved, the adaptation is successful.”

Whilst Warren calls for a film that is a “mere creation” of the novel, Kaufmann argues for “the same effect in a different medium.” It is evident that much research still needs to be done on the phenomenon of the adaptation of a novel into a film. Harrington (1977:4) puts it as follows:

“Much work remains to be done on the problem of adaptations. Each director or screenwriter seriously attempting to adapt a work from one medium to another faces a set of critical and interpretative problems, and critical procedures are needed to illuminate this process.”

That is why scholars such as Eidsrik, as quoted by Harrington (1977:5), called for a reappraisal of the relationship between literary and cinematic works.

In general, however, the aspects of the novel that could be adapted for inclusion into the film text are the following: character, setting, plot and theme. As indicated above, the

change in theme can also lead to the creation of another story. These aspects will be discussed in greater depth in the chapters that follow. However, the most important aspect of all is theme. Sirayi (1989:281) for instance, emphasizes the important role of theme in the written text. He says;

“The total effect of the major elements of a novel, i.e. ...setting, plot, character and point of view determine theme, which every novel embodies. Theme is the controlling or dominant element which underlies the said elements.”

Theme plays an equally important role in the screen production. Miller (1980: 142), for instance, says:

“A theme is an idea presented in the film; it is an idea about life and its meaning, about the human condition. It is the underlying truth signified by the film – universal, enduring, significant, expressive and, eloquent. A theme is the writer’s thesis or “message.”

Benshoff &Griffin (2004:30) give a brief history about the origin of the theme in filmmaking:



“The musical was a staple of Hollywood filmmaking, but it grew generally unpopular after 1960’s. The public rarely accepts the genre’s convention of characters spontaneously breaking into song and dance, and our cynical age sees their usual, simple thematic messages of love and harmony as outmoded.”

The theme is the most important aspect to be adapted. Most scholars believe that the theme should not be lost in any adaptation. It makes it easier for the producer if the theme is adapted because the theme constitutes the story. It is the main idea or the story itself. Most scholars believe in not changing the theme when one is adapting as that tends to avoid the creation of another story. Therefore, this researcher believes that there are limitations as far as the theme of the original text may be adapted.

2.4.8 The adaptation of Xhosa texts

As mentioned in Chapter 1, a number of Xhosa literary texts have already been adapted into screen productions (mainly in the form of TV plays). This includes the well-known novel "*Ityala lamawele*" by S.E.K Mqhayi, as well as Jordan's "*Ingqumbo yeminyanya*", Peteni's novel "*KwaZidenge*" has also been transformed into a screen production. "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) (which is being studied here) is one of the youngest of this list of literary works that were adapted for the screen. It is interesting to note that amongst the classical Xhosa literary texts, mainly novels have been adapted so far and there are fewer Xhosa dramas that have been adapted into screen productions. This tendency certainly is interesting since a drama text is generally less challenging to adapt than a novel.

It has however recently become known that the well-known Xhosa drama "*Buzani kuBawo*" (Tamsanqa) will soon be filmed in various locations in the Eastern Cape. The contribution that this project will make towards the film genre in Xhosa is yet to be determined since the filming of this book has not commenced yet. (Dispatch online:....., 6 July 2012)

Mkonto (1984:9) commented on the adaptation of "*Ityala lamawele*":

"A good observation of the theme and plot of this novelette and an expert adaptation of play writing can produce a classic drama. On the other hand, one must admit that imitation and plagiarism do not necessarily stimulate interest among readers. Therefore a reproduction of "*Ityala lamawele*" as a drama can also cause boredom because of the impact already established by the novelette on its readers."

It is important to note that changes to the original text are often caused by the fact that societies are different and that cultures are not the same. Adaptation within a cross-cultural environment may create significant challenges in the adaptation of a book into a screen production. One example is the book by Peteni "*KwaZidenge*" that was written in

a village setting near Stutterheim. However, when adapted into a screen production, the setting becomes Cape Town. This matter will receive further attention in Chapter 3 of this study. Equally, the adaptation of Olu Osofisan's "*Once Upon Four Robbers*" failed because of the respective societies (Nigeria vs United Kingdom) and the respective periods (1970 vs. 1990):

"the society and the historical period made the adaptation impossible. The 1970's Nigeria represents an environment totally different from the European audiences and the stage relationship different for both societies."

(Martin Benham, Gibbs & Osofisan, 2001:48)

Finally, another text that was written by a Xhosa author and subsequently adapted into a film is Magona's novel "Mother to Mother". This work which is based upon an account of the killing of Amy Biehl was adapted into a film by a company called Type A films, which is a subsidiary to Universal studios in Los Angeles, USA (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sindiwe-Magona>) accessed on 16 May 2012.

Although this novel is written in English and not in Xhosa, the author of this work is also a recognised Xhosa writer, having produced works such as "*Kubantwana babantwana bam*" (1995) as well as the well-known play "*Vukani*" (2007). It may therefore be concluded with certainty that the values portrayed in this novel are representative of the Xhosa value system rather than that of the English value system.

2.5 Conclusion

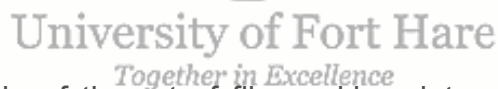
The concept of adaptation concerns itself primarily with the process of transformation of the written text into a screen performance. The aim of this chapter, therefore, was to identify and discuss the most important principles which come into play when the written text is adapted into a screen production.

Since the screen production belongs to the genre of the performing arts, this chapter was introduced with a discussion on the performing arts and on the drama, in particular. The universal features of the drama were identified and its origins within various

environments were outlined, including its western origin as well as its African origin. The section was concluded with a discussion on the different sub-types of the drama which can be found, including the screen production. The main emphasis was on an analysis of the basic features and principles of the drama in screen format.

The discussion on the drama was followed by a discussion on the literary features of the novel. Since the screen play "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1998) is based upon a novel by the same title, the literary features of the novel had to be discussed here as well. The origins of the novel, both within the western context as well as in the African context, were outlined. The specific features of the Xhosa novel also received attention.

The main aim of this chapter was to provide perspectives on the theoretical principles upon which the phenomenon of adaptation is based. This included a definition and concise description of the art of adaptation, followed by a brief overview of the history of adaptation in the film world. Finally, the theoretical principles of adaptation were outlined, with a view to the meaningful analysis of the particular Xhosa text under discussion.



It was found that the origin of the art of film-making dates back to the 1890s. It can therefore be stated with certainty that film is a relatively young genre, perhaps the youngest of all the art forms. The rapid growth rate of the art of film-making may be ascribed in particular, to the contributions or influences of other art forms, including the performing arts, fine arts and literary art. Consequently, strong growth in the number of adaptations took place during the 20th century, the most famous of which is the series of films recently based on the "Harry Potter" set of books. Some of these adaptations are based on documentary texts, whilst others are based on fictional texts.

There seems to be a perception that the majority of the screen productions that have been adapted from literary works have been adapted from dramas or stage plays. It was, however, found that the literary genre with which film is most often associated, is not the drama, as one might expect, but the novel. The reason for this near universal

tendency is that both are forms of telling stories, and their modes of telling those stories correspond largely. Although these two mediums do not narrate the story in exactly the same manner, narrative literature (and the novel in particular) and film shares the basic element of the story, the only difference being that where the novel uses words to tell the story, the film makes use of images or picture frames to perform the same function. Nevertheless, it is clear that film and the novel share the same basic narrative methods.

The reasons for the adaptation of so many novels were also investigated in this chapter. It was found that, in some instances, the adaptation of novels into film is conducted with serious artistic intentions. This means that in such cases, the writer uses, for a second time but in another art form, the material he/she has used in the first art form. In most instances, however, adaptations are undertaken purely for financial reasons, with very few novelists being able to resist the financial gains involved.

The question regarding the relationship that a film should have to the original source and the faithfulness of the adaptation process was addressed in this chapter. It was found that, over the years, the relationship between a film and the novel it has been adapted from, and in particular, the basis upon which a novel should be adapted, has become a matter of intense debate.

Whilst it is clear that adaptation has been widely practiced over the years, it is also clear that there are divergent views on the practice of adaptation. Basically, the debate may be crystallized into the following two viewpoints: The first approach asks that the integrity of the original work be preserved. The second approach feels it proper and, in fact, necessary to adapt the original work freely, in order to create a new, different work of art with its own integrity. Whilst there is general unanimity amongst scholars that a certain degree of adaptation is not only acceptable, but also unavoidable, there seems to be general disagreement with regard to the extent to which adaptation should take place. It is evident that much research still needs to be carried out on the phenomenon of the adaptation of a novel into a film and some scholars are therefore rightfully calling for a reappraisal of the relationship between literary and cinematic works.

In this chapter it was found that a number of Xhosa literary texts have already been adapted into screen productions (mainly in the form of TV plays). The various Xhosa texts that have been transformed into screen productions were dealt with briefly. It is interesting to note that it is mainly classical novels that have been adapted so far and that there are fewer classical Xhosa dramas that have been adapted into screen productions. This tendency certainly is worth exploring, since a drama text is generally less challenging to adapt than a novel.

Saule's novel "*Unyana womntu*" (1989) (which is being studied here) is one of the youngest of this list of literary works that were adapted for the screen. In the chapters that follow, various aspects of the adaptation process, including matters such as setting and characterization will be studied and evaluated as intensively as possible. The manner in which "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) has been adapted into a screen production will therefore be investigated and the extent to which the producer has remained faithful to the original text, or has deviated from it, will be critically evaluated.



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CHAPTER 3

ADAPTATION OF THE BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, adaptation of the background when converting a drama into a screenplay will be critically examined. The challenges which arise when the background is not adapted effectively will also be considered. This will be followed by a critical analysis of the depiction of the setting in the screen version of “*Unyana womntu*” (1998) versus the background in the written version.

For the purpose of this investigation, the discussion will be subdivided into two separate categories, namely: the macro-features of the background/setting versus the micro-features of the background/setting. The term “macro-features” refers to general type of details like municipal services, references to streets and roads, description of buildings etc. “Micro-features” are references to minute details such as pieces of paper, insects such as butterflies, flowers and sea shells.

In the book “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) there are features of a town i.e. Cacadu and also the features of a village i.e. phesheya kweNceba-Langeni’s farm. There are “macro-features” and “micro-features” of the background. This assists in the creation of an atmosphere in the drama of the screen version of “*Unyana womntu*” (1998). These features will also be critically looked at. An audit of the macro-features and the micro-features will be carried out. An example of the micro feature in the screen version is when the director could make use of the zoom-in technique to draw attention to a particular spot or item in the background.

3.2 Theoretical framework

3.2.1 The role of the background in the novel

Botha (1986:228) states:

“Every story consists out of three basic elements namely; character, time and background. The interaction between these elements gives rise to the birth and development of the story and therefore there is always a narrow relationship between these elements.”

All the events in the story take place within a particular space. In some instances, the space is clearly defined, but in other instances, it is referred to only superficially. The characters and the events cannot be separated from the space in which they exist. The successful depiction of the story content is therefore determined to a large extent by the successful creation of the background.



Smuts, as quoted by Botha (1986:230), points out that there are basically two categories of narrative space, namely a natural environment as well as an urban environment. The rural environment contains scenes that refer to nature, animal life and agriculture. The urban scene contains scenes that consist out of shops, motor vehicles and electric lighting. Weather conditions often form an integral part of the background of the story. In some instances these descriptions are only decorative, but in other cases it forms an integral part of the story. Forster (1980:180) puts it as follows:

“Very few writers of fiction... have exhibited a mastery of the weather, - a mastery based at once upon a detailed and accurate observation of natural phenomena and philosophic sense of the relation between these phenomena and the concerns of human being.”

The description of weather conditions can be used to form a parallel or a contrast with the circumstances in which the character finds himself. That is why Forster says:

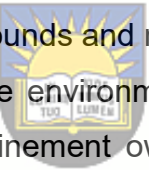
“The weather may be planned in pre-established harmony with the mood of the characters.”

Forster also observes

“On the other hand the weather may stand in emotional contrast with the characters.”

This means that the relationship that exists between a character and his/her own environment provides the reader with a better understanding of or insight into the mood of the characters. The manner in which the character experiences his/her environment provides us with important clues with regard to his personality. According to Botha (1986:233), the following levels of observation may be identified:

- 1) Visual: The manner in which the character observes colours, shapes and sizes.
- 2) Auditive: The manner in which sounds and noises are interpreted.
- 3) Sense: The manner in which the environment is experienced e.g. the character may experience feelings of confinement owing to the presence of walls around him/her.


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It is clear that background may influence the conduct of a character. That is why Macauley and Lenning (1964:133) note:

“...the setting affects the people in a story as much as they affect one another.”

In the story there is always a close relationship between character and background and the manner in which the character experiences his/her environment provides the reader with important information with regard to his/her personality. It is a duty of the author to depict the relationship between the characters and his/her background as accurately as possible.

3.2.2 The role of the setting in the drama

The main difference between the background as depicted in prose and the setting as found in the drama is defined as follows by Costello and Tucker (1989:23).

“Many details of a short story are left to the reader’s imagination whereas the setting of the stage production is laid out before the audience.”

According to Jacobus (1989:21), the setting of a play includes the following:

“First, it refers to the time and place in which the action occurs. Secondly, it refers to the scenery, the physical elements that appear on stage to vivify the author’s stage directions. In Lady Gregory’s play, we have a dock with barrels to suggest locale, and darkness to suggest the night. These are very important details that influence the emotional reaction of the audience.”

Some plays make use of elaborate settings, whilst others could only make use of simplified settings. In some plays, there are several stage sets, whilst other plays might only consist of a single set. In this case it is expected from the viewers to apply their own imagination in order to create the appropriate space in which the play is situated (Cloete, 1992:457).

In the play, each character exists and acts within a particular setting. It is through the interaction between the character and his/her environment that the viewer obtains information with regard to the character and with regard to his/her relationship with other characters.

The most important functions of the background are the following;

- i. Atmosphere - The background feature contributes towards the creation of a particular atmosphere in the story.
- ii. The plot - The background feature plays a particular role in the development of the story.

- iii. Characterisation - The background feature helps to identify or reveal a particular personal feature of the character.

3.3 The depiction of the setting/background in “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule: 1989) “*Unyana womntu*” (1998)

3.3.1 The depiction of the background in the written text

All the characteristics of the background mentioned above are going to be applied in the written text “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989)

3.3.1.1 Macro features

As stated above (see paragraph 3.1) the term macro features refers to background details such as Municipal services, references to streets and roads, description of buildings, etc. In the paragraphs that follow, scenes will be categorised and an example of each category and what the category tells us about the character will be provided.



In the novel “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989), there is a description of an urban, downtown setting with references to the movement of traffic, and details about streets and roads (p.8). The reader is informed that Bantu had attended a meeting with his estranged wife. The meeting ends in a quarrel between the two and Bantu leaves the house in a disturbed state of mind. His mind is in a quandary:

“Lathi lakufika ixesha lakhe, wee chu ngeenyawo ukusuka eofisini yakhe, wehla izitalato eqondele phantsi, ekwezinzulu iingcinga. Kangangendlela ewayexakaniseke ngayo umphefumlo wakhe, wayengathi akaboni nangamehlo, engeva naxa ezinye izithuthi zazide zimkhalimela ngophondo kuba esaphula omnye wemithetho yendlela, wokulinda de kudlule izithuthi kuqala phambi kokuba abahamba ngeenyawo banduluke ukuwela umgaqo.” (p.8)

When it was time Bantu walked down the street from his office looking down and absent minded, in deep thoughts. As he was hurt he could not even hear or see the oncoming cars in so much that other cars had to hoot as he was breaking traffic rules that of waiting for the cars to pass before crossing the streets.

The above passage tells us that Bantu, the main character is from an urban background and is crossing the street absent-mindedly as he is disturbed emotionally. There are even cars going up and down the streets. This is an urban background. Bantu appears to be familiar with it, but the problem is his state of mind. In this scene there is a close interaction between the character and the environment he finds himself in. The aim of this interaction is to reveal the character's disturbed state of mind. This was caused by the argument between him and his wife, who is an alcoholic, when Bantu asked for her to go back to their home so as to save their marriage or otherwise give permission for divorce proceedings to commence.

Another aspect of the background as depicted in "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule , 1989) refers to the depiction of the domestic situation/background, including the description of a house as well as the furniture. For the reader it is significant to learn how the character responds the situation, or what it tells about the character.

The reader is provided with a description of the house where Dora stays (p9). The house is situated in an urban environment. We are told that the chairs in the bedroom are broken and next to one of them are broken glasses. This shows the type or character of the person staying in the house. This is telling us that Dora is an alcoholic.

"Izitlwana ezitofotofo zasegumbini lokulala zazijikeke izinge, ecaleni kwesinye sazo kukho ingceba zeglasi. Ecaleni komandlalo isihlangu esasilele ngecala sasifunana nowaso ukuba ukweliphi na icala. Kude kufutshane nesigcinimpahla kwakulele unomtidili, ingubo yokuvuka ithiwe jwi phezu kwesinye isitulo esasingxongxe kalusizi. " (p.10)

The comfortable bedroom chairs were broken and next to one of them were broken glasses. Next to the bed one shoe was lying there without the other. Not far from the wardrobe there was underwear lying on the floor and a night dress hanging on one upside down chair carelessly.

Dora was always drowning herself in alcohol. She did not have time to clean the house or put everything in order. If anything has fallen it is never picked up. It is left there broken, e.g. the broken glasses.

There is also the depiction of a recreational environment namely the “Inqaba” playground which is situated in the town of Cacadu. The name “Inqaba” signifies the act of recreation¹. That indicates that indeed this is an urban area. It is where people go to take part in or to watch sport. Bantu, the main character is one of those people who often watch sport. There was a cricket match that he went to watch on the day when his wife was murdered.

On p.32 there is mention of the “sea” which is also a macro feature of the background in the novel. The sea is depicted as a symbol of happiness where there is freshness that rejuvenates the body and soul:

“Imini le yayishushu njengazo zonke iimini zehlobo, kodwa umoya osuka kulwandle lwempuma wawuhlwabisa, uvuselela umzimba odakumbileyo. Abantu babesebenza imisebenzi yabo yemini ngokwesiqhelo. Kwakungekho ubonakalisa xhala. Nakule ntokazi le mini yayifana nje nazo zonke ezinye, iziingcinga ezisengcondweni ezazenze umahluko. “(p.32)

This was the hottest summer day but the breeze from the sea rejuvenated and refreshed the tired body. People were performing their daily jobs. Nobody was panicking. Even this girl's day was as normal as the other days. It's only the thought that made the difference.

The place where Noziqhamo, Bantu's friend, worked is not far away from the sea. These features also show the reader that this character is from a particular background since she is familiar with it.

In the novel there is reference to an office environment, which strengthens the urban background of the novel. On p.14 there is a description of Bantu's office and it is clear that he is familiar with the environment. This is where he works every day. The way he

¹ Most of the physical landmarks mentioned in “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) have imaginary, non-documentary names. This includes localities such as “Cacadu”, “iNqaba” and also “kwaNjaziyaluma”, as well as rivers such as “Nceba”. The overall description of the background, however, (including the geographical features, vegetation, etc.) suggests that the events described in the novel take place in the Eastern Cape

conducts himself within this environment shows that he is a respected and a learned person. He is a successful businessman who has his own accounting company with a number of employees.

Another background category found in "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule , 1989) is the judicial environment. This includes the police station environment, the jail environment, the court scene as well as the gallows. These environments will be analysed separately in the paragraphs below.

After the murder of Dora, Bantu is arrested and taken to the police station. On p. 27 a description of the police station reception area is provided. In this room there is a long counter dividing the room. There is a telephone. There is also another small room where Bantu is taken to write a statement.

The court environment also belongs in this category (pp.39-49 & pp.59-65). The court was so full that there were people next to the windows. There is no clear description of the court in the novel. It is only said it was in a room on the upper levels. There was a judge, the prosecutor, the lawyers, the accused, the witnesses and the public.

Another background scene which belongs to this category is the jail environment. Bantu is found guilty of murdering his wife and sent to prison to serve his sentence. On pp. 28-29 a description of a jail environment is found. We are told of the sound of a prison door opening and also of darkness. Darkness symbolises fear and hopelessness. It is used successfully here to describe Bantu's feelings and emotions during his incarceration.

There is also the gallows scene on p.121 in which Bantu was to be executed. He was taken to a room that was empty, with only a tall slender chair in it. Bantu was taken there by two big men who put him on that chair. There was also a phone next to the door. There are no decorations. It is a cold, harsh area.

The final background category to be discussed here is the depiction of natural phenomena. On p.9 we are told that Bantu is on his way to where his wife is staying in a house in town. It is mentioned that the streets are aligned with ornamental trees which show that this is an upmarket urban environment.

On p.111 there is a depiction of a rural background including the area around the Nceba River, a description of a forest as well as the presence of the sheep that are grazing in the fields and the barking noise of a pack of hunting dogs. This is Langeni's farm. Langeni is a good friend of Bantu. When Bantu escapes from jail, he flees to Langeni's farm and is later apprehended there and taken back to prison. The rural environment that is depicted here is juxtaposed with the busy urban area where Bantu normally lives. It symbolises serenity and peace. The fact that Bantu is apprehended under these circumstances by the police (owing to an unfortunate combination of events), comes as an unexpected surprise to the reader.



3.3.1.2 Micro features

As stated above (see paragraph 3.1), the term micro-features refers to background details such as references to pieces of paper, a cloud appearing, flowers and sea shells. By paying particular attention to these phenomena, the author succeeds in creating a particular atmosphere in the novel. In the paragraphs below, scenes will be categorised and an example of each category and what the category tells us about the character will be provided.

As stated above, micro features include references to background phenomena such as butterflies, flowers and bees: During the early phases of the story, Bantu goes to Dora's house for an appointment with her. Her house is described as follows:

"lityatyambo apha ngaphambili zazidlisela ngeentloko ezingqukuva ezimthubi, ezinye zixube mhlophe nabomvu. Kuzo iinyosi zazisele ziwuqalile umsebenzi wazo wokuhlangula. lintakana ezifana neengcungcu zazingcuchalaza zizifikisela ngaloo milomo yazo mide kwincindi

ebuncwane bungayiwayo. Amabhabhathane amibala ngemibala ayephaphazela eggibe yonke indawo engade ahlale phantsi.” (p.9)

A beautiful display of yellow mixed with white and red flowers was in front of the house. In these flowers bees were fully engaged in their business of honey making. Birds were feasting joyously the delicious honey with their long beak. Colourful butterflies flew around aimlessly apparently enjoying themselves.

This scene described above is Dora’s place where Bantu went for an appointment with Dora. The above quotation is the description of Dora’s house. The outer appearance of the house is described as being beautiful with flowers, trees, birds and butterflies. It is this beauty of nature that Bantu is comparing with their marriage wishing it is as beautiful as nature. These features create a calm and refreshing atmosphere to Bantu who is in a bad state, frustrated by their marital problems. Their presence also discloses what time of the year it is:

These are also other micro-level features that are used effectively by the author to create a particular atmosphere in the story. On p.17, for instance, there is a reference to misty conditions:



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“Intsasa enenkungu erhubayo idiza ukuyola nokuphola kwemini elandelayo kanti ngamanye amaxesha imvula efefezayo ekuhambeni kwemini.”

A very misty morning is indicative of a bright and a cool coming day sometimes predicting very light showers as the day progresses.

This micro-feature of the background is used to create a specific atmosphere. When Bantu woke up on that particular day, the weather was misty and he thought that he had overslept, and could not tell what time of the day it was. This clearly reflects his confused state of mind. After the hard day (the previous day), Bantu went to bed and slept peacefully. He even dreamt about his wife Dora. When waking up, he thought it was late and prepared to go to work.

3.3.1.3 Conclusion

In the discussion above, two main background categories were identified, namely: the micro-features and the macro-features. Macro level features such as streets, trees, houses, and offices were identified. At the micro level interesting phenomena such as mist, butterflies, and bees could be observed by the reader.

It is clear that these background features play an important role in the story. Their function is to reveal Bantu's confused state of mind as well as to emphasize Dora's addiction to alcohol. In other instances, the function of these background features is to create the required atmosphere in the story or novel. It may be concluded therefore that the author successfully depicts the background in "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989)

3.3.2 The depiction of the setting in the screen version

3.3.2.1 Macro features



In the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998) there are mainly two categories of settings at the macro level, namely: the rural as well as the urban setting. In the paragraph below, the rural setting will be discussed, followed by a discussion of the urban setting.

The main references to the rural setting can be found in Episodes 2,6 , 12 and 13 where the unidentified village where Bantu's uncle stays is depicted. This is where Bantu takes his son Ndodiphela for a better upbringing. His wife failed to take care of their son even forgetting to fetch him from school. There is a gravel road, a bridge, a forest, trees, houses built with zinc. There is one shop and the way the wife of the uncle is dressed shows that she is from a rural setting. There is even no electricity and paraffin lamps are used. This is a true depiction of a rural area, a typical Xhosa situation as found in the Western Cape today. It is a communal informal settlement where subsistence farming is being practiced. There are grazing fields without fences. The houses are built and designed in a haphazard manner with clay walls and zinc roofs.

The rural setting in “*Unyana womntu*” (1998) can also be found in the form of a farm environment. In Episode 13 the viewer is introduced to Langeni’s farm. This is where Noziqhamo is seen dropping Bantu to seek refuge. Later police visit the farm to buy a sheep. Bantu is busted trying to run away. Police dogs and a helicopter are seen searching for him. There is a gate, railroads, big trees, forest, flowers, water tanks, a dog, gravel road and a farmhouse. This is also a typical rural area but it is situated in a commercial farming environment.

The urban setting represents the main environmental category in this screenplay. Most of the events take place within an urban setting. Although the name of this urban setting is not clearly mentioned in the screen play, it may be assumed that the events take place in Cape Town. This is evidenced by the scenes where Table Mountain appears in the background. In the university scene, images of University of Cape Town are shown. Some of the motor cars which are shown bear a CA number plate which is the registration number for Cape Town. There are various subtypes of the urban setting which can be identified in the play. The most important of these are discussed below.



The office environment can be found in Episodes 1 and 6 where the offices of Bantu and his lawyer, respectively, are depicted. Bantu’s office is situated in the city centre, in a big building with many floors. It is where Bantu works. There is an escalator to carry people up and down the building. The furniture is of a high standard with tidy tables, chairs, windows with blinds and a parking area with cars. There are office staff, neatly dressed and presentable. The lawyer’s office is also in a big city environment. It has office furniture and shelves with books.

A hospital environment is depicted in Episodes 1 and 8 where Dora works as a nurse. It has big buildings, parking area, streets, nurses and change rooms. Dora is at work, busy helping the sick. She is pushing a stretcher carrying a sick person. After a hard day she is shown chatting to her friend, Thandi in the change room (Episode 1). This

setting also appears in Episode 8, when Zandi (one of Dora's colleagues) is giving evidence in court.

An educational environment is shown in Episodes 1 and 12. It is a school where Bantu goes to fetch his son after the mother forgot to do it. There is a school building, robots, tarred streets and cars showing that it is in an urban area. Dora forgets to fetch the child from school and Ndodiphela decides to go on his own. After hearing from Nomhle that the child was not back from school, Bantu decides to go and fetch the child; unfortunately for him, the child had already left. The principal did not know where he was.

Finally, the last urban environment to be singled out here is a university where Noziqhamo works as a lecturer (Episode 4). It is situated at the foot of a mountain. There is mist over the mountain, which is one of the micro level features. There are streets, cars, trees and different types of buildings. In Episode 1 Noziqhamo is seen in her office talking on the phone with Bantu after that they go out for lunch. The office has an office desk computer and chair. There are also shelves with books. It is also here that Noziqhamo meets the professor and Ngalo, who was to be Bantu's lawyer. Ngalo agreed to take the case and asked for the money and Noziqhamo gave him some.

Another environment which is depicted in the screen version is the domestic situation (Episodes 1, 3, 5, 6, 9 and 12). This is where the home of Bantu, Noziqhamo, Dora and her neighbor are depicted. They are all situated in upmarket settings. There are electric gates, garages, green lawns with plants and flowers and expensive furniture. In Dora's house there are paved floors, a double bed with pedestals, robes, cigarette butts in an ashtray, empty beer bottles and dirty glasses. The room is stuffy and untidy. There is also a shopping mall in Episode 3 where Dora goes to buy designer clothes.

There is a depiction of a recreational environment in Episode 3. It is a cricket field, equipped with a bar. Bantu claims that he watched cricket at the time when his wife was being murdered. The field is up to standard. It has all the requirements of a field in a big

city, like a well-designed entrance and exit, parking area, flags of participating countries, alcohol and food selling points, telephone booths, etc. The bar is where the lawyers meet for drinks.

The judicial environment comprises of a police station, the prison and the court. They are found in Episodes 4 to 12. Bantu is arrested and charged with the murder of Dora. He is taken to the police station to give a statement. The police station has a counter with bars. There are chairs for people who are to be attended to. There is also a public phone and an office phone. Bantu is asked to leave his belongings there and to fill in some forms.

Bantu is locked up in jail, pending the court trial in Episode 5. He is in an awaiting trial cell with a big burglar door. There is also a cement bed, and one window. Bantu is locked alone in that cell and is not in prisoner's uniform but wearing his clothes. He goes for bail application but was denied on the basis of non-cooperation and resisting arrest.



In Episode 7 Bantu appears in court for the hearing of his case and the judgment. The court environment also belongs to this background. It is a modern court in a big city with long desks and benches. There are also microphones in each desk. There are wooden panelled walls, and also an underground entrance from the cells for prisoners. There is a judge, a prosecutor, lawyers, the accused and the public.

These environments all play a crucial role in the development of the plot of the screen version. They have all been depicted realistically and vividly. They certainly reflect the basic features of the judicial environment.

Finally, the screen version also contains a clear depiction of the television studio environment in Episodes 8 and 13. This is where Noziqhamo goes to retrieve copies of tapes for the match Bantu had watched. The studio depiction is realistic because all the basic studio equipment is there, like shelves with tapes and recording equipment.

3.4 Adaptation of the background

In this section the differences between the depictions of the background in the written version of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) versus the setting in the screen version will be identified and discussed. The degree to which the background (as found in the written version) has been changed in the production of the screen version, will be determined and the effect that this might have had on the adaptation of the original version will be evaluated.

Some of the environments that are described in the written version of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) are also depicted in the screen version. This includes the sports field environment, Dora’s home environment, Bantu’s office environment and the judicial environment, including the police station, jail and court scenes. In most instances, these scenes are depicted in a more detailed manner in the screen version than in the original text. The court scene, for instance, is more detailed in the screen setting than in the novel, because desks, seats and microphones are shown (Episode 7), whereas they are not mentioned in the novel. This makes it more convenient for the viewer to develop a clear understanding of the chain of events and to identify the particular sequence of cause and effect, as embodied within the plot of the story.

This phenomenon is common to most screen productions and it is caused by the fact that there is a fundamental difference between the narrative mode of a written text (e.g. a novel) and a screen production. In a written text, it is impossible to describe every background detail; this would make the written text too long and unwieldy. Furthermore, the author needs to bring the narration to a standstill in order to provide a description of the relevant background. In the screen production on the other hand, the camera may continue to record and televise the details of the setting, whilst the characters are enacting the events simultaneously on the screen. It is clear, however, that most of the key background scenes have been integrated into and depicted satisfactorily in the screen version. In this respect the adaptation of the background of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) has been conducted successfully.

There are background scenes which are described in the written version, but are not depicted in the screen version. In the written text, for instance, there is mention of the sea background (p.32) that does not appear in the screen version. The sea is where Noziqhamo goes to enjoy herself. She walks along the sea to relieve stress and to collect shells. The sea itself creates a calm and refreshing atmosphere. The fact that other micro background features (see 3.3.1.2 above) do not appear in the screen text, either means that these aspects of the story are also lost for the viewer who did not have the opportunity to read the book. The viewer will not know the character of Noziqhamo as portrayed in the book. He/she is deprived by a process of negative adaptation that has been followed in the production of the screen version.

The gallows scene, which forms an important part of the judicial environment, is also not depicted in the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998). In the written version, Bantu's case is heard in the Supreme Court and he is sentenced to death by hanging (p.65). In the screen version, on the other hand, the judge states that the penalty of capital punishment no longer applies. Bantu receives a life sentence instead (Episode 11). The fact that the background features of the gallows scene are not depicted in the screen production, has far reaching consequences for the story overall. As stated above (see paragraph 3.2), the exposure of a character to certain background features helps to identify or reveal particular personal features of that character. The depiction of Bantu's personality owing to his exposure to the gallows environment is severely compromised by the producer's decision to remove this scene from the screen production. In this respect, the adaptation process certainly has not been successful.

Some of the scenes that are depicted in the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998) are not found in the original version. In the screen version there are additional scenes such as the hospital environment where Dora works (Episode 1). In the novel not much is mentioned about the hospital. It is only said that Dora was a nurse, but later became a social worker. The screen version, however, goes deeper by showing Dora at work in the hospital. Dora works hard and she saves many lives. Her prolonged exposure to

stressful and traumatic situations may have contributed to her drinking problem. The inclusion of this environment in the screen version therefore has a beneficial effect on the characterization process.

There are also other background scenes that are depicted in the screen version, but not in the written version. This includes the environment where Bantu's uncle stays, the school environment where Bantu's son, Ndodiphela, attends school, the University campus where Noziqhamo works and the TV studio scene. All of these scenes have been designed in an elaborate manner in order to provide the viewer with maximum insight into the plot, characterization and atmosphere of the story. The school environment provides the viewer with insight into Dora's personality, with specific reference to her tendency to forget to fetch her child from school. The TV studio plays a key role in the development of the plot of the story, since this is where the video recordings are discovered that will prove Bantu's innocence on a charge of murdering his wife.



It is evident that the background of the written text has been adapted considerably in the design and production of the screen version of *"Unyana womntu"* (1998). In most instances these changes have proved to be highly functional, since they enhance the overall quality of the production.

In section 3.3.2.1 above it was pointed out that most of the events in the screen version take place within an urban setting. It is clear that the original story has been migrated from a small town environment in the Eastern Cape, to a large cosmopolitan environment in the Western Cape. Although the name of this urban setting is not clearly mentioned in the screen play, it may be assumed that the events take place in Cape Town. This is evidenced by scenes where Table Mountain appears in the background.

In the university scene images of the University of Cape Town are shown. Some of the motor cars which are shown bear a Cape Town number plate. The overall background of the story has therefore been migrated from the Eastern Cape (as depicted in the

written version) to the Western Cape (as depicted in the screen version). It may therefore be concluded that there has been a considerable degree of geographical adaptation of the original text. These changes do not, however, have a significant effect upon the general character, identity and theme of the story. This is due to the fact that *“Unyana womntu”* (Saule , 1989) does not have a traditional theme and the events that are narrated here, do not relate solely to Xhosa traditional affairs. The theme of this novel (namely marital problems) is largely of a universal, international nature. These types of problems are experienced by many married couples, right across the world. The migration of the epic environment from the Eastern Cape to the Western Cape, therefore, does not have a significant effect upon the essential theme of the story. This does have a limited impact on the events and the characters but it certainly has no impact on the theme of the story. The theme remains the same; it does not change.

Although they are depicted as members of the Xhosa community, Bantu and Dora are depicted as modern people and not as tribalists. The manner in which they deal with their marital problems serves as a reflection of their modern, non-traditional nature. In Chapter 4 of this study it will be shown how they deal with their problems in a private and confidential manner. They do involve their close friends, but they do not consult members of their extended families, neither do they involve other members of the community, as would be the case in traditional Xhosa society.

Whilst the migration of the production to the Western Cape therefore does not have a significant impact upon the overall nature of the story, it does compromise the atmosphere of the story to a considerable extent. The fact that the events are no longer set against the background of an authentic Eastern Cape environment, deprives the screen production of much of its unique social character and cultural authenticity. In the written version, for instance, Langeni’s farm is depicted as a typical Eastern Cape farm with the geographical features and vegetation which is unique to the region. In the screen version, however, it is a farm that is situated in a typical Western Cape area with no indigenous, sub-tropical forests and other unique geographical features of the Eastern Cape

3.5 Conclusion

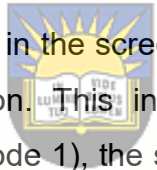
The aim of this chapter was to make a critical evaluation of the adaptation of the background of the novel "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) into the screen production. This evaluation was based upon a theoretical framework relating to the role of the background in the novel, as well as the role of the setting in the drama. It was found that background/setting plays a vital role in the novel/drama, since it regulates the atmosphere of the story, whilst it also contributes towards the development of the plot, as well as to the depiction of character.

A study of the macro-features of the background in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) showed that the story is situated in an Eastern Cape Xhosa-speaking environment. Although most of the place names that are used are fictional, the descriptions of the geography as well as the vegetation point to the existence of a typical Eastern Cape landscape. Some of the background scenes that are depicted in the written version include a street scene in the fictional town of Cacadu, a beach environment, a rural community where Bantu's uncle lives, as well as a commercial farming community where Langeni, Bantu's friend lives. The micro-features of the background that are depicted in the written version include references to insects and sea shells. The depiction of these micro features confirm the author's intense power of observation pertaining to his ability to identify and record matters of minute detail and to integrate these into his story.

It was found that some of the environments that are described in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) are also depicted in the screen version. This includes the sports field environment, Dora's home environment and Bantu's office environment. In most instances, these scenes are depicted in a more detailed manner in the screen version than in the original text. This is due to the fact that it is more feasible to depict the setting in a screen text than it is to describe the background in the novel. In this

respect the adaptation of the written text into the screen version may be regarded as being successful.

Several background scenes are described in the written version, but are not depicted in the screen version. The most important of these is the gallows scene, which forms an important part of the judicial environment in the written text. The fact that the background features of the gallows scene are not depicted in the screen production, has far reaching consequences for the story overall. The depiction of some important aspects of Bantu's personality, as found in the original text, is not revealed in the screen version, owing to the producer's decision to remove this particular scene from the screen production. The omission of scenes such as these from the screen version has compromised the adaptation process. In this respect, the adaptation process certainly has not been successful.



Some of the scenes that are depicted in the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998) are not found in the original version. This includes scenes such as the hospital environment where Dora works (Episode 1), the school environment where Bantu's son Ndodiphela attends school, the University campus where Noziqhamo works and the TV studio scene. All of these scenes have been designed in an elaborate manner in order to provide the viewer with maximum insight into the plot, characterization and atmosphere of the story. It is evident that the background of the written text has been adapted considerably in the design and production of the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998). In most instances, these changes have proved to be highly functional, since they enhance the overall quality of the production.

Although there has been a significant degree of geographical adaptation of the original text, the migration of the story from a small town environment to a large cosmopolitan environment in the Western Cape does not have a significant effect upon the general character, identity and theme of the story. This is due to the fact that the theme of this novel (namely marital problems) is largely of a universal nature. These problems are experienced by many married couples, right across the world. It was however found that

the fact that the events are no longer set against the background of an authentic Eastern Cape environment, deprives the screen production of much of its unique social character and cultural authenticity. Whilst the migration of the production to the Western Cape therefore does not have a significant impact upon the overall nature of the story, it does compromise the atmosphere of the story to a considerable extent.

The shifting of the background from Cacadu to Cape Town may be attributed to the fact that the film company is based in Cape Town and the actors are also from there. The reason for the shift is also assumed to be financial. It certainly is more feasible and economical for the production to be shot on location, than to travel over long distances to perform this function. If this assumption is accurate, then this decision was based upon practical, rather than aesthetic considerations. This means that the decision to set the events within a Western Cape environment was not primarily aimed at meeting the needs of the background element, as set out in paragraph 3.2 above. This includes .the creation of a unique atmosphere, the development of a more intriguing plot structure and more effective depiction of the main characters. The decision to set the events within that particular environment was rather motivated by commercial considerations.



The same procedure was followed with regard to the production of the screen version of Peteni's novel "*KwaZidenge*" (1986) /*AbaKwazidenge*, 1996). Whilst the original text was situated against the background of a rural area in the Sutterheim district of the Eastern Cape, the screen version was set against the background of a typical township community in a Western Cape environment. It seems as if there is a tendency to provide wider recognition to the Western Cape environment than to an Eastern Cape environment in the adaptation and production of screen plays that are based upon Xhosa novels.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the adaptation of the background of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule 1989) into a screen production with the same title, has generally been successful. Some of the background scenes have certainly been depicted more vividly, which has contributed to the effective development of the plot and the creation of a

fitting atmosphere for the story. On the other hand, the adaptation process also shows certain weaknesses, such as the omission of the gallows scene with its unique environmental features. The omission of key background scenes such as these from the screen version has certainly compromised the adaptation process. In this respect, the adaptation process has not met the expectations.



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CHAPTER 4

ADAPTATION OF CHARACTER

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the adaptation of the character element in the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989). The various methods that were used by the screen director with regard to the adaptation of this element and the success with which it was achieved, will receive attention here. The discussion of the character element in this chapter will take place within a particular theoretical framework which defines the essential elements of characterisation within the novel and within the drama respectively. The various analyses that will be made during the course of this chapter will be firmly based upon these theoretical principles.

Various aspects regarding the adaptation of the character element in the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998) will be discussed during the course of this chapter. This includes amongst others the list of characters found in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) versus the cast of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998). The various methods of characterisation that were used in the written text versus those used in the screen version will also be taken into consideration. The aim of this investigation is essentially to establish the degree of success of the adaptation process and to determine whether the essential thematic nature of the story has been retained in the screen version.

4.2 Adaptation of the roles of the respective characters

4.2.1 Theoretical framework

The success of any story/screen production is measured in terms of the manner in which the character element is presented by the author/director. The reader/viewer wishes to gain more knowledge about the human species to which he/she belongs and

he/she wants to find explanations for the manner in which people often behave. Stories therefore are primarily about human beings. That is why Brooks and Warren (1971:1) state the following about narrative prose: “It is a story, a made-up story about characters.” (my emphasis: T.Mbatsha).

Literature therefore is written by, over, and for people, and that is why character may be viewed as the central element of the story. No story can exist without characters (Botha 1986:115). Brooks, Purser and Warren (1975 : 9) reinforce this:

“But as we have suggested earlier, fiction appeals to us because it is concerned with human beings, alive and fully fleshed. It must have to begin with, the sense of the physical presence of persons, in a specific place and at a specific time.”

A character is an imagined person who inhabits a story. Usually we recognise, in the main characters of the story, human features that are familiar to us.

Amongst the main characters of the story it is possible to distinguish between the protagonist, the antagonist and the tritagonist. The experiences of the protagonist occupy the central position in the story. The antagonist is placed in opposition to the protagonist and is responsible for the tension in the story. The tritagonist is positioned between these two character types and could assist either of them (Cloete, 1992:8). The reader/viewer is offered the opportunity to accompany the characters throughout the course of the story/screen play and to experience the various incidents with them. This enables the reader/viewer to develop an understanding of the various characters.

4.2.2 The list of characters versus the cast

The aim of the investigation below is to establish the extent to which the adaptation of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) from a written text into a screen production has impacted on the cast of the story. The number of characters that appear in the two versions of “*Unyana womntu*” as well as the adaptation of their respective roles and functions will receive particular attention in the paragraphs that follow.

The section below will be introduced with a brief review of the main characters found in the written version of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) versus those found in the screen version. The main principles which are involved in the process of adaptation of characters will be taken into consideration. These principles will be applied on “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) in order to determine whether or not the adaptation of characters in the screen version has been done successfully.

The majority of the characters that appear in the written text are also found in the screen version. This includes leading characters such as Bantu, Dora, the lawyer Ngalo, and Noziqhamo. The specific roles played by these characters will be discussed in the paragraphs below.

Bantu in the written text of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) is depicted as the main character. He is married to Dora, but they separated because of Dora’s behaviour that changed as she became an alcoholic. Bantu works for an accounting firm as a Director. His business is doing well. He is a learned person with a Master’s degree in Accounting. He is respected by his colleagues, clients as well as the community. He is dedicated to his work. He is a loving, caring husband and father to his only son, Ndodiphela, whom he decides to send to his uncle, as the mother failed to take care of him. Bantu is trying his best to make his marriage work, but Dora does not respond well to his attempts. He makes his last attempt by visiting Dora where she is staying and asks her to change her ways and come back to their home, failing which their marriage will be dissolved. He is later accused of murdering his wife and sent to prison. He is saved from execution by his friend who investigates the case and comes forward with evidence that Bantu was at the cricket field when his wife was murdered.

Nothing much has changed for Bantu in the screenplay. He is a calm and collected man. He is respectable and intelligent, but not happy. He decides to take his son, Ndodiphela, to his uncle, as the mother was forgetting to pick the child up from school and was spending most of her free time in the bar. Bantu later decides to look for a

place for his wife and then requests her to stay in another house. He gives her everything she requires. Bantu realises that the wife misuses the money and he asks his colleague to terminate her rights as a shareholder. Bantu quarrels with his wife when taking her to her new place of residence. Bantu, after discovering the misuse of funds by his wife, is heard saying to his colleague that he will kill his wife. He says that out of anger, but does not literally mean it. Bantu is persuasive as he makes an appointment to see his wife so that their marital issues can be resolved. They only quarrelled and fought. The wife grabs a knife and Bantu cuts himself trying to defend himself. Bantu is later accused of murdering his wife and is saved by Noziqhamo (his friend) from jail.

Dora is Bantu's wife, and she is 25 years of age. Dora was a nurse, but later became a social worker. Dora is a tall and a dark beauty. She is from a middle class family. Her parents were at the same school with Bantu's parents. She is a mother to Bantu's son Ndodiphela. In the written text it is said Dora left Bantu and went to stay in another house. She is an alcoholic. She rejects Bantu's pleas of going back to their house. She also does not support the idea of resolving their marital issues, or of dissolving their marriage. She is infuriated by Bantu's idea of ending the marriage and verbally abuses him. She keeps the house untidy with empty alcohol bottles and cigarette butts lying all over the place. She is murdered in her house and Bantu is accused of killing her.

In the screen play, Dora is depicted as being not a happy person. She is a hard worker, working as a nurse in a hospital. She is an alcoholic, going to a bar most of the time and even forgetting to pick her child up from school. She is also not neat. She misuses a credit card and the cheque account which she requested from Bantu. Bantu decides to take her to stay in another house and that is when problems become worse. She is frustrated by Bantu's taking their son to the uncle. She calls her friend to share the frustration. She becomes disloyal to the marriage by going out with men. Bantu finds her with another man in a bar and in a shopping mall. She fights with Bantu and grabs a knife with the intention of stabbing him. She is later found dead in her house.

Basically, Dora's character is the same as in the written version. Not much adaptation has taken place with regard to personality, although more information is provided about her in the screen version. In the written text, for instance, the reader is only informed that Dora was a nurse. There is nothing about Dora at work i.e. her behaviour and the relationships she had. Dora's vices are also depicted more prominently and in a more extreme manner in the screen version.

Noziqhamo is a lecturer at university. She is Bantu's friend and confidant. She is unmarried. She is a beauty and an intellectual. She trusts Bantu very much. She did not believe the news that Bantu is imprisoned for murdering his wife. She is a true friend to Bantu because she offered to help when Bantu is in dire straits. She visits Bantu in prison and goes to look for a lawyer, Jolela, as Ngalo is abroad. She is a hard worker. She has a strong character and dedicates herself to whatever she is doing. She is a fighter, as she goes up and down looking for the photos from the newspaper that proves that Bantu was at the cricket field when his wife was murdered. Noziqhamo finds the photos and takes them to the judge who orders a stay of execution and that Bantu be released.



Noziqhamo in the screen version plays the same role as in the written text. She cares very much for Bantu's problems. She quickly goes to jail after hearing the news of Bantu's imprisonment. She asks a colleague at the law department to look for a lawyer for Bantu, as she believes in Bantu's innocence. Jolela is appointed by Noziqhamo to be Bantu's lawyer. Noziqhamo works with Jolela to save Bantu from imprisonment. Noziqhamo goes to the extent of visiting Bantu's uncle, where Ndodiphela is. She also harbours Bantu when he escaped from prison. She interviews Dora's neighbours in order to get information that will prove Bantu's innocence. She also goes to the television archives in order to get videos that will prove that Bantu was at the cricket field at the time of his wife's murder.

Although the majority of the characters that appear in the written text are also found in the screen version, there are also a few characters that appear in the written version,

but not in the screen version and vice versa. One of the characters that appear in the written text but not in the screen text is Major Ncilashe, who is the head of the investigating police unit.

Nothing much is said about him. He has no major role in the book. It is only said that he headed the unit and was an idol to the police because of the way he looked, the way he dressed and how he behaved or handled himself. He showed respect and was also respected. He was also friendly and liked to give advice and teachings to young people about the role of the police and what is expected from policemen by the public (p. 26). He has no influence upon the development of the plot and that could be the reason why he has no role in the screen text.

The director of the screen version also decided to introduce a limited number of new characters. These characters do not appear in the written text. These include Thandi, who is Dora's colleague at work. Thandi and Dora spend much time together and even go to the bar for drinks. The screen director has decided to include the background of Dora's work career in the screen and in doing so, he had to introduce more characters and that is how Thandi came into being.

The inclusion of Thandi in the screen version reveals more about Dora's character. The vulnerability in Dora is exposed. Dora is seen crying and confiding in Thandi, stating that Bantu took the child to his uncle. They are both shown working hard, trying to save lives at work (Episode 2). The screen version has therefore been adapted successfully to make provision for Thandi, who plays the role of a tritagonist in the screen play who inadvertently encourages Dora to expose her inner fears and weaknesses to the viewers.

Another character that is introduced in the screen version is Lizo Ngesi. Lizo Ngesi is Bantu's colleague, who is also not depicted in the written text. He testifies in Bantu's murder case. The inclusion of Lizo in the screen version also has another effect. The

effect of his inclusion in the story is that it gives more sense and credibility to the events that led to Bantu and Dora's problems (Episode 7).

He is Bantu's colleague. Dora comes to Bantu's workplace and they quarrel. Bantu was angry and told Lizo that he would kill the wife. He later asked Lizo to agree with him that they remove Dora as a shareholder (Episode 2). Thembi, Bantu's secretary, also has no role in the written text, but in the screen version she testifies in court as a state witness.

The inclusion of these "new" characters in the screen version has certain advantages for the depiction of character. The interactions between Bantu and Lizo and between Bantu and Thembi are mainly in the form of dialogue that expose Bantu's inner feelings, motives and concerns. The viewers are able to form a better understanding of Bantu's personality through the interactions between these characters. The same applies to the interactions between Dora and Thandi.

4. 3. Methods of characterisation

4.3.1 Introduction



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The success of the story is determined by the effectiveness with which characters are depicted. It is the aim of the artist to depict his/her characters as comprehensively as possible by means of their outer physical features as well as by their inner personal features. Botha (1986:101) mentions that the specific method to be used in the depiction of a character will largely be determined by the nature and personality of that specific character.

The author has more than one method of characterisation at his/her disposal. This includes depiction of the actions of a character, reporting the dialogue of a character as well as reporting the thoughts of the character. Jacobus (1989:21), for instance, states:

"We come to know them through their own words, through their interaction with other characters, through their expression of feelings, and through their presence on stage expressed in movement and gesture".

Each of these methods will now be discussed in the paragraphs below. The aim of the analysis that follows is to establish the extent to which the adaptation process has impacted on the depiction of character. The extent, to which the three modes of character portrayal have been utilized in the screen version versus the written text, will be studied on a comparative basis in the sections that follow.

4.3.2 Action

4.3.2.1 Theoretical framework

Physical action is one of the main methods of character portrayal. In the drama this includes everything the character does on stage, such as movements, gestures and even facial expressions. The physical action supports the dialogue of the characters and it can suggest subtle nuances which are difficult to express in words. Therefore Brooks, Purser and Warren (1975:9) indicate:



“The reader wants to see the character in action, for action is the flowering of character. It is, indeed, the best way of knowing character; pretty is as pretty does, the old saying goes.”

Brooks, Purser and Warren (1975:10) therefore come to the conclusion that: “Character is action and action is character.”

The depiction of the actions of a character often goes hand in hand with the depiction of conflict situations of considerable intensity. In these situations characters are forced to make choices and it is these choices and the way in which they are made that are of primary interest to the reader.

Heese and Lawton (No date: 88) state that the aspect of human experience with which drama is concerned, is conflict. This may vary from conflict within an individual as well as conflict between an individual and his/her environment. During his/her struggle with the forces outlined here, the character reveals his/her personality, which provides the

reader with an opportunity to study his/her personality. That is why Brooks and Warren (1971:168) stress:

“...fiction never deals with character in isolation, for what a man is determines what he does, and it is primarily through what he does that we who observe him know what he is.”

The intimate relationship between character and action is described as follows by Henry James, as quoted by Sholes and Kellog (1979:160): “What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character”.

Brooks and Warren (1971:168) also refer to the “inextricable interweaving of action and character.”

4.3.2.2 Adaptation of the action

It has already been established that the screenplay “*Unyana womntu*” (1998) is based upon an adaptation of the novel “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989). Various aspects of the written text have been adapted to produce the screen version. In the paragraphs below, one of these aspects, namely the adaptation of the action, will specifically be investigated. The purpose of this investigation will be to establish the extent to which the actions of the characters have been subjected to adaptation. This includes finding out whether any of the actions, as originally included in the written text, have been omitted in the screen version. It will also be established whether any new actions have been introduced in the screen version and also whether any of the actions, as found in the written version, have been retained in the screen version, but in a changed, amended or adapted format.

For practical reasons, it will not be possible to analyse all the actions of the characters in this study. Therefore only a limited number of incidents which could be regarded as key episodes will be analysed in the paragraphs below. The purpose of this analysis will be to establish the extent to which the adaptation of the text contributes towards a better

understanding of characters involved and therefore, to determine the extent to which it enhances the depiction of the character. Finally, it will also be determined whether this adaptation process contributes towards a fuller understanding of the theme of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989).

One of the main episodes that play a leading role in the written version as well as in the screen version is the clash between Bantu and Dora during the early stages of the story (see pp. 10-11 and Episode 3 respectively). In this scene, Bantu goes to Dora’s house in an attempt to find a peaceful solution to their marital problems. An intense argument develops between them when Bantu suggests that the marriage be dissolved. In the written text this scene ends where Bantu exits from the house and walks down the street in a state of dizziness. However, in the screen version, this verbal argument develops into a physical confrontation between the two, as will be illustrated below.

In Episode 3 of the screen text Bantu drives to Dora’s place. They quarrel after Bantu asked for a divorce and the quarrel soon escalates into a fight. Bantu’s hand is cut by a knife and Dora bleeds from her nose. That results in Bantu’s shirt getting bloodstains. Bantu’s actions do not have a significant effect on the depiction of his character; he remains the same. Whilst this adaptation of the original scene in the screen version does not have a significant effect on the depiction of Bantu’s character, it does have an important effect on the development of the plot of the story, since it provides important evidence that will eventually lead to the imprisonment of Bantu (see Chapter 5).

The adaptation of the original scene does, however, have important consequences for the depiction of Dora’s personality. In the written text Dora quarrelled with Bantu, but there was no physical interaction. Bantu left Dora’s place unharmed, except for the verbal abuse from Dora. In the screen version, however, Dora’s behaviour is rather different. She becomes aggressive by grabbing the knife and by threatening Bantu (Episode 3). Her actions expose her as a person who can become extremely violent.

In the written text, no reference is made to Dora's conduct at work and to her habit of going to the bar with friends. In the screen version, Dora is depicted at work, whilst going about her daily tasks. After work she goes to the bar with a friend, Thandi whom she confides in when worried about Bantu's taking the child away from her. In the screen version, therefore, Dora is depicted as a person who likes to socialize and who prefers the good things in life (Episode 3).

Also in the screen version it is shown how Dora forgets to fetch her child from school and how Ndodiphela is forced to go home on his own, until his father comes to his rescue. No mention is made of these events in the written version. The depiction of Dora's actions in the screen version tells the viewers more about Dora's character, i.e. it portrays Dora as someone who is highly irresponsible. She does not care for the safety of her only child, but alcohol is the most important thing in her life; it is a priority. The adaptation of Dora's role in the screen version is therefore highly functional, since it contributes towards more effective depiction of her negative personal features.

Another instance of adaptation is found in the scene where Bantu escapes from jail (pp.79-89 and episode 12 respectively). A fire broke out in the prison and the convicts escaped, with Bantu being one of them. At first Bantu was not aware of what was happening, but understood after one of the convicts encouraged him to run as fast as he could. He went into hiding at Noziqhamo's place, where the police came more than once to look for him, but they were not successful in finding him. In the written version, it is explained how Bantu later moved to Langeni's farm, where he was re-apprehended and taken back to prison by the police who came to buy sheep and spotted him unexpectedly.

In the screen version, this scene is depicted rather differently. Police came to Langeni's farm to buy sheep. When the police were leaving the farm, Bantu was spotted. After realising that he ran away. They notified the office using radiophones and helicopters and police dogs were brought in numbers to look for him. Bantu was found and taken away. Through the adaptation of the script, certain aspects about Bantu's personality

have been changed. As we have said earlier that Bantu is an honourable and respected person. The fact that he escaped from jail, and later being chased by police and dogs, contradicts the earlier depiction of his personality.

Bantu is displayed as a harmless person, respectable and respectful in both texts. Bantu is also portrayed as a gentleman even how he dresses shows that he is a businessman. He is loyal, honest and sophisticated.

However, in the screen text, Bantu does show certain negative forms of behaviour, as shown above. This may be ascribed to pressure of being accused falsely of the murder of his wife, Dora, who was found dead and Bantu is said to be the last person seen with her. He loved his wife and wanted to reconcile with her, but Dora did not cooperate; instead she verbally abused him.

Bantu's conduct during the execution scene (pp.120-124) provides the reader with important information regarding his character. Bantu was in a bad state of mind when he was escorted to the gallows because he felt it was unfair for him to be executed for a crime he did not commit. He was not responding well in everything he was asked to do. Even the man that was to lead him to the gallows offered to cover his face so that he does not see anything that could disturb him on the way. Bantu just shook his head and rejected the offer.

When about to exit his cell, he looked back for the last time knowing well that he was by no chance going back. He also declined another offer of being assisted to walk even when he felt weak. He pretended to be strong but missed a step and slipped. He felt dizzy, especially when he was entering the execution room.

“Wafika wema uBantu, wasuka waphathwa yincilikithi” (p.121)

Bantu stopped and he felt dizzy.

He was not responding well. He was quiet all the way, but his facial expressions showed that he was experiencing severe stress. He resisted when he was being led to the chair in the execution room and had to be fastened forcefully to the chair.

At that moment, Bantu's anxiety was disturbed by the ringing of a phone. The conversation that followed led to his freedom. His alibi was confirmed. Noziqhamo managed to save him.

In the corresponding screen text (Episode 13), there is no execution scene. This is due firstly to the fact that Bantu received a sentence of life imprisonment, rather than a death sentence, as in the original version. Bantu was saved from being sent back to jail by the discovery of the tapes after the police re-apprehended him from Langeni's place. He was about to be taken in as a prisoner again, when he was released. Whereas the book describes every detail from Bantu being called to be executed and the reverend praying for him as well as the journey from his cell to where he was to be executed, none of this is mentioned in the screen version.

In more than one respect, the removal of the execution scene has a profound effect on the success of the screen production. The effect of this phenomenon on the plot of the production will be discussed in Chapter 5. The reasons for the removal of this scene will also be discussed in that chapter. From the viewpoint of characterization, however, the absence of this scene in the screen version has a most profound, negative effect on the depiction of the characters. As mentioned above, the depiction of the actions of a character often goes hand in hand with the depiction of conflict situations of considerable intensity. In these situations characters are forced to make choices and it is these choices and the way in which they are made that are of primary interest to the reader. The execution scene is without doubt the situation of highest intensity in "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989). In this scene, Bantu's deepest fears and anxieties are revealed and the reader is given an intimate picture of his inner being through the way that he conducts himself under the prevailing circumstances.

The omission of this scene from the screen version deprives the viewer of a valuable opportunity of gaining insight into Bantu's personality during a most stressful and traumatic period during which his life is physically being put on the line. From the viewpoint of the viewer, the series comes to an end with Bantu being, to a large extent, a stranger and an unknown quantity to him/her. This is due to the fact that the screen version has been adapted to such an extent that his actions during the crucial execution scene, as found in the written text, are not observable.

4.3.3. Dialogue

4.3.3.1 Theoretical framework

Dialogue can be regarded as one of the most important methods of characterisation that is available to the artist. Not only is it one of the oldest methods of characterisation, but it is also one of the techniques which is most frequently used in the story. Brooks and Warren (1971:170-171) put it as follows:



“One of the most important modes for character revelation is of course the way in which characters talk. The laconic soldier, the querulous charwoman, the shy convent-school girl, the garrulous barkeep, the pedantic professor-all have their own vocabularies and their ways of putting words together. The artist in order to be convincing must have his characters speak “in character”, and his normal way of presenting the unusual character is to give the flavour of his peculiar dialect and idiom.”

The character reveals some of the most fundamental aspects of his/her personality through his/her words. With respect to the drama, Jacobus (1989; 22) says the following:

“Plays depend for their unfolding on dialogue. The DIALOGUE is the speeches that the characters use to advance the action. Since there is no description or commentary on the action, as there is in most novels, the dialogue must tell the whole story. Fine playwrights have developed ways of revealing character, advancing action, and introducing themes by a highly efficient use of dialogue. Ordinarily dialogue is spoken by one character to another, who then responds.”

Dialogue therefore offers the reader a valuable opportunity to learn more about the personality of a character. The character reveals himself/ herself not only through what he/she says, but also through the manner in which he/she expresses himself/herself. The discussion between the various characters brings the conflicts between them to the surface and provide for a fuller picture of the plot of the story (Botha, 1986:119).

The dialogue, as found in the drama, is somewhat different from that found in daily life. In daily life, conversations are often incoherent, owing to the fact that the characters could switch from one topic to another, with the result that the discussion does not have a definite outcome. In the drama, however, the situation is much different. Details that are insignificant are deleted from the dialogue so that each word is of maximum significance with regard to the depiction of character (Cloete, 1992:81). The successful reporting of dialogue therefore demands a high level of artistic expertise. Not only must the dialogue be interesting and stimulating, but it must also provide as much insight as possible into the minds of the characters involved. Successful dialogue is based upon the principle of economy and it is the duty of the artist to ensure that the largest amount of information is conveyed within the shortest possible period of time. Dialogue, if successfully developed, together with other methods such as action and thoughts may be regarded as one of the most powerful methods of characterisation within the modern novel, as well as within the screen production.

4.3.3.2 Adaptation of the dialogue

The aim of the investigation that follows is to compare the dialogue, as found in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) with the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998). The aim of the investigation is to establish the extent to which the dialogue, as found in these two genres, has been adapted and to evaluate the effect of this adaptation process on the depiction of character. Owing to practical considerations, it will not be possible to discuss all the conversations between the various characters here. For this reason, only a few of the most important conversations will be singled out for discussion.

In the written version, Bantu was visited by two police officers in his office a day after the murder of his wife (p.19). The officers asked him when last he saw his wife. Bantu told them that they were no longer seeing each other as they are no longer staying together. He did not mention that he had had a meeting with her the previous day. This is because he was not aware of the fact that he was talking to police officers and he feared that they were only members of the public who wished to enquire about his whereabouts. He only mentioned that after he was told that the wife was murdered. The officers held him accountable for the murder, claiming that he had lied to them:

“Mnumzana ndikufumana ungenanyani, kwaye mandilikhuphe litsole elokuba urhaneleka kakhulu ekubulaleni umfazi wakho. Usisigwinta.” (p.23)

“Sir, I have discovered that you are a liar, and I must make it clear to you that you are deeply suspected in the murder of your wife. You are a killer. ‘

In the screen version, however, Bantu left the house where his wife was staying (see Episode 3). He phoned his secretary, informing her that he was not coming back to the office but later decided to go to the office where the police officers were already waiting for him. They asked if he had seen the wife that day and he told them that they no longer see each other. After he was told that the wife was murdered he told them that he last saw the wife in the morning. They decided that he was not telling the truth and took him to prison and charged him with the murder of his wife.

The two sets of dialogues are very much the same and there is very little adaptation that has taken place. This is an indication of the fact that this is a very important scene as well as a key episode in the story. This scene will play an important role in the court hearing which is due to take place, as Bantu is a murder suspect.

An evaluation of Bantu’s personality, as revealed during his conversation with the police officers, creates the impression that Bantu did not tell the truth to the police officers and consequently, that he is a liar, whereas the actual reason for this is that he did not want to reveal his domestic affairs to anyone (he was unaware of the fact that the visitors were police officers). He is therefore a private and confidential person and it was his

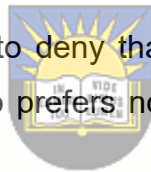
intention to remain loyal to his estranged wife by withholding himself from divulging any intimate details about her to whom he regarded as members of the public.

Bantu's dialogue during the execution scene (pp.120-124) provides the reader with important information clues to his character. Bantu was in a severely bad state of mind when he was escorted to the gallows because he felt it was unfair for him to be executed for a crime he did not commit. He was, however, not responding well to everything he was asked to do. He was not responding well for instance, to questions asked perhaps indicating depression. He was asked if he was still denying that he killed his wife. He responded by saying;

"Nawe utsho " (p.121)

It is what you are saying.

Bantu is not prepared to confirm or to deny that he has killed his wife. These words confirm that he is private person who prefers not to discuss his personal matters with others.



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Bantu was also asked if he knows he is going to die and he responded by saying;

"Ewe,"bangayibulala inyama yakhe wona umoya wakhe abasokuze bawenze nto.(p.121)

"Yes," they can kill the body but not the soul.

These words confirm that Bantu is a religious person who believes in an afterlife. He believes in the indestructability of the human spirit.

Bantu was quiet all the way but when he was about to be hanged, he said;

"Bawo uyandazi wena..." (p.122)

"God you know me..."

It is clear that Bantu is a religious person. He addresses God in his moment of intense anguish. This address is, however, interrupted by a phone that rings and this brings an end to this expression of his religious feelings. At that moment, the execution process was disturbed by the ringing of a phone that led to his freedom. His alibi was confirmed. Noziqhamo managed to save him.

As stated in the paragraphs above, the execution scene does not form part of the screen version. This means that, owing to this negative adaptation process, Bantu's dialogue is not revealed to the viewer. His basic features and qualities, namely that he is a deeply religious person and that he is prepared to go to any lengths to protect his wife's dignity, are not revealed to the viewer in the screen version

4.3.4 Thoughts

4.3.4.1 Introduction



In this section, the role of thoughts in the depiction of character will be discussed. The aim of this discussion is to show how the personal features of the character can be revealed through his/her thought processes. The aim of this section is also to show how the thought processes of the characters have been amended during the adaptation process of the text from a novel into a screen production.

It is evident that there are fundamental differences in the portrayal of the thought processes of a character between a novel and a drama. Each of these genres makes use of a specific set of principles regarding the depiction of the thoughts of its characters. In the paragraphs below these two sets of principles will be discussed. The main aim of this discussion will be to illustrate how these principles have been used to adapt the thoughts of the characters from depiction thereof within the novel (as the original text) into depiction thereof into a drama (as the final text).

4.3.4.2 Theoretical framework

In the preceding sections the depiction of character by means of action, as well as dialogue, was discussed. It is clear, however, that the all-inclusive depiction of a character's personality is not possible through action and dialogue only.

Kannemeyer (1976:58), for instance, states that these two methods, in spite of many advantages, can only depict a character to a limited extent. The inner being of a character cannot be revealed effectively through the use of these methods only and there is a serious need for an additional method according to which the inner feelings and hidden motives of a character can be revealed. This can only be achieved through the revelation of a character's thoughts. Forster (1980:56) explains:

"In daily life we never understand each other; neither complete clairvoyance nor complete confessional exists. We know each other approximately..."



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Kennedy (1991:48) puts it as follows:

"In other stories, we enter a character's mind and come to know him through his own thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. By the time we finish reading Katherine Mansfield's "Miss Brill" (in Chapter Two), we are well acquainted with the central character and find her amply three-dimensional."

The only means by which the observer can form a proper understanding of the true nature of the character is when he/she is able to construct an accurate correlation between that which is said by the character, that which is done by the character and that which is thought by the character. The observer needs to know not only how the character conducts himself/ herself, but also why he conducts himself/herself in this manner. That is why Brooks, Purser and Warren (1975:9) say that: "The reader of fiction wants to know the why of an action just as much as the what."

Within the novel, it is possible for the thoughts of the character to be depicted comprehensively. This is due to the fact that the omniscient narrator has full access to the inner life of his character and is able to report his findings to the reader. Kennedy (1991:18) puts it as follows:

“In the tale of “Godfather Death”, we have a narrator who does not participate in the events he recounts. He is not a character in the story but is someone not even named, who stands at some distance from the action recording what the main characters say and do, recording also, at times, what they think, feel, or desire. He seems to have unlimited knowledge: he even knows the mind of Death, who because he wanted revenge let the doctor’s candle go out.”

Forster (1980:57) clarifies:

“...people in a novel can be understood completely by the reader, if the novelist wishes, their inner as well as their outer life can be exposed.”

The value of the novel therefore is situated in the fact that there are no limitations as far as the revelations of the inner life of the character is concerned, depending on the skilfulness of the author in the achievement of his goal:

“We cannot understand each other, except in a rough and ready way; we cannot reveal ourselves, even when we want to... perfect knowledge is an illusion. But in the novel we can know people perfectly, and... we can find here a compensation for their dimness in life.” (Forster, 1980:69)

Kennedy (1991: 20) also comments as follows on the different categories of omniscient narrators that may be found in the novel.

“Viewing the characters, perhaps seeing into the minds of one or more of them, such a narrator refers to them as “he,” “she” or “they.” When **all-knowing** (or **omniscient**), the narrator sees into the minds of all (or some) characters, moving when necessary from one to another. This is the point of view in “Godfather Death”, whose narrator knows the feeling and motives of the father, of the doctor, and even of Death himself.”

Therefore, every point of view has its limitations. The author needs to be aware of this and he/she needs to select his point of view accordingly.

Various methods may be used to depict the thoughts of a character. The thoughts of the character may be reported by means of a summary of its contents, or it can be reported as a direct quotation of his/ her thought processes. The advantage of this latter method lies therein that it provides better insight into the thought processes of the character, without any interference on the part of the narrator.

The stream of consciousness technique has been used by novelists since the 19th century in the novels such as Sterne's "Tristram Shandy" as well as in "Ulysses" (Joyce). Kennedy (1991: 23) puts it as follows:



"Stream-of-consciousness writing usually occurs in relatively short passages, but in Ulysses Joyce employs it extensively. Similar in method an interior monologue is an extended presentation of a character's thoughts, not in the seemingly helter-skelter order of a stream of consciousness, but in an arrangement as if the character were speaking out loud to himself, for us to overhear. A famous interior monologue comes at the end of Ulysses when Joyce gives us the rambling memories and reflections of earth-mother Molly Bloom."

Contrary to the potential for extensive depiction of thoughts in the novel, the dramatist is unable to depict the thoughts of his characters in such a comprehensive manner. A dramatist has less opportunity to depict the thoughts of the characters.

As pointed out above during the discussion on dialogue, a critic such as Jacobus (1989: 22) points out that dialogue is one of the most important methods for the revelation of character in the drama. By dialogue, Jacobus understands a situation where one character speaks to another, who then responds. However, dialogue can also be presented in the form of a soliloquy. Jacobus (1989:22) puts it as follows:

“Ordinarily dialogue is spoken by one character to another, who then responds. But sometimes, as in Shakespeare’s Hamlet a character will deliver a SOLILOQUY, in which he or she will speak alone on stage, as if speaking to him or herself. Ordinarily, such speeches take on special importance because they are thought to be especially true. Characters, when they speak to each other, may well wish to deceive, but when they speak to themselves, they have no reason to say anything but the truth.”

Jacobus emphasizes the fact that when a person speaks to the other, he/she may be dishonest. On the other hand when one speaks to himself/herself he/she cannot lie and therefore the true personal features of this character are revealed.

From the discussion above, it is clear that the successful depiction of thoughts is much more challenging in the drama than in the novel. The adaptation of the thought processes of the character from a novel into a drama will therefore be a demanding task that will test the creative skills of the adaptor to the maximum. In the paragraphs below, the adaptation of the thought processes of some of the characters, as found in “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) from the written text, into the screen production of “*Unyana womntu*” will be analysed and will be critically evaluated.

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In the written version of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989), the thought processes of the leading character (Bantu) are revealed extensively on more than one occasion. During the early phases of the story for instance, Bantu is depicted in a stage of deep self-reflection and introspection (see pp.11-13). After leaving Bandlakazi’s (Dora) place, Bantu was still not pleased with Dora’s attitude. On the way back he was trying to think what or where could the problem between them be coming from, as they were of the same age and were from a similar background or upbringing and were both educated. He decided on taking their only son to his uncle for a better upbringing.

It is interesting to note that the format of his thoughts undergoes a change. In some instances the indirect speech form is used. In other instances the direct speech is used and finally his thoughts are also presented in the form of a verse. The format of

presentation therefore varies. In some instances, his thoughts are as follows in the direct speech:

“Akukho nto angayifumaniyo eyifuna. Ixhala lam ngoku linye , kuya kuthiwa ngabantu singabazali abanjani? Kuya kuthiwa imfundo yethu isenzele ntoni? Uyaz’ukuba nonyana wethu uNdodiphela ndaqonda mandimbalekise ngelithi uya kufunda kumalume ngenxa yesi simo sikanina, ndisenzela ukuba angakhuli enomfanekiso ombi ngathi”.(p.12)

“I have done everything she wanted me to do. My fear is what type of parents will people think we are? What has education done for us? You know as a result of the mother’s behavior I even took our son Ndodiphela to my uncle so that he be brought up properly.”

During most part of the above quote Bantu’s thoughts are in direct speech as if he is speaking to Dora. He is totally confused as he does not know what he could do to get Dora back to her senses as he did all he could do even the customs. On the same page the author also uses indirect speech to reveal Bantu’s thought and showing his state of confusion:

In other instances, Bantu’s thoughts are presented in indirect speech form:

“ Yayithatha ibeka njalo ingqondo yalo mfo kungekho aphuma nalo. Naxa ilanga lalimfulathele ngolu hlobo, akazange azilahlele phantsi, wahlala enethemba lokuba ngenye imini koza kulunge.” (p.12)

“This man was in deep thoughts and could not reach any decision. Even though things were not going well, he did not give up he hoped that one day things will go well.”

Finally, Bantu’s thoughts are presented as follows in verse form:

*“Umphefumlo wakho ndizamile ukuwonwabisa,
Umzimba wakho ndizamile ukuwuhlasimlisa,
Ingqondo yakho ndizamile ukuyihlaziya,
Amehlo akho ndizamile ukuwanelisa,
lindlebe zakho ndizingxolele,
lingcinga zakho ndizamile ukuzikhanyisela
Ilizwi ndilifunele ungqameko. “ (p.13)*

I have satisfied your soul
I have satisfied your body needs

I have relieved you from stress
I have showed you everything
I have told you everything
I have cleared your thoughts
I have no more to say.

Bantu's dedication to his marriage by attempting to save it is clearly revealed in his thoughts. This correlates with his inner motives as expressed by means of the dialogue between himself and the police officers, whereby Bantu's dedication to Dora and to his marriage is also indicated (see paragraph above). He also plans of getting another house for Dora to stay. The idea of allowing Dora to stay alone, however, only worsened the situation:

"Mna ndiyenzile eyam indima
I have done everything
Umphefumlo wakho ndizamile ukuwonelisa,
I have satisfied your soul
Umzimba wakho ndizamile ukuwuhlasimlisa,
I have satisfied your bodily needs
Inggondo yakho ndizamile ukuyihlaziya,
I have relieved you from stress
Yintoni na enye engaba iyafuneka?" (p.13)
What else have I to do?



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In the screen version, the content of Bantu's thoughts is generally the same as in the corresponding scene in the written text. In the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" Bantu's above thoughts are all presented in a monologue form, since it is not possible to present thoughts by means of the indirect speech. In the written text (p.13), whilst on his way from Dora's place, Bantu is in deep thought, but in direct speech, as if speaking to Dora in her absence. These are the same thoughts he has in the screen version on his way to the cricket field (Episode 3). They are in the same format, i.e. direct format. He is appreciating nature and wishes his marriage could be as beautiful as that nature (Episode 2). They are also presented in monologue form in Episode 2 of the screen version when he is on his way to his uncle's place to make arrangements for his son's accommodation.

The use of direct speech could easily be transferred from the written text into the script of the screen production in the form of a monologue which is spoken by the main character. As pointed out above, the monologue or soliloquy or stream of consciousness technique is most suitable for application within the drama.

Through the depiction of these thoughts Bantus' personality is revealed effectively. He is portrayed as an honest man, caring sensitive loyal and private. He desperately wants his marriage to go back and be the way it was before. That is shown from the attempts he made to win his wife's heart back.

There are instances where the thoughts of the main character are found in the written text, but do not appear in the screen version. In the written text (p.12), for instance, Bantu thinks of the reasons that made him take his son Ndodiphela to his uncle's place.

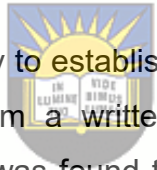
"Uyaz' ukuba nonyana wethu uNdodiphela ndaqonda mandimbalekise ngelithi uya kufunda kumalume ngenxa yesi simo sikanina, ndisenzela ukuba angakhuli enomfanekiso ombi ngathi!" (p.12)

You know that I had decided to take our son Ndodiphela to my uncle to study there because of his mother's behaviour, so that he does not grow with a bad image about us.

In the screen version, however, these thoughts are not revealed. Bantu is simply shown taking the child to his uncle and later visiting him. It is clear that, with regard to the depiction of the character's thoughts, there has been negative adaptation of the written version into the screen production. Since Bantu's thoughts have not been depicted as comprehensively in the screen version as in the written text, the observer does not obtain such an intimate view of his inner personality as does the reader of the written text. To a large extent therefore, an effective depiction of Bantu's personality in the screen version is rendered superficially.

4.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to investigate the adaptation of the character element in the screen version of “*Unyana womntu*” (1998). The various methods that were used by the screen director with regard to the adaptation of this element and the success with which it was achieved, received attention here. The discussion of the character element took place within a particular theoretical framework which defined the essential elements of characterisation within the novel and within the drama respectively. The various analyses that were made during the course of the chapter were firmly based upon these theoretical principles. The aim of this investigation was essentially to establish the degree of success of the adaptation process and to determine whether the essential thematic nature of the story has been retained in the screen version.



The aim of the investigation was firstly to establish the extent to which the adaptation of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) from a written text into a screen production has impacted on the cast of the story. It was found that the majority of the characters that appear in the written text are also found in the screen version. These include leading characters such as Bantu, Dora, the lawyer Ngalo, and Noziqhamo. Nothing much has changed for Bantu in the screenplay. He is a calm and collected man. He is respectable and intelligent but not happy owing to his marital problems. Dora’s role also remains the same in the screen version, but her many vices and weaknesses are accentuated in the screen version. In this respect, the adaptation of the screen version to clearly illustrate Dora’s bad behaviour has been a success and it contributes towards the depiction of character in the screen version.

Although the majority of the characters that appear in the written text are also found in the screen version, there are also a few characters that appear in the written version but not in the screen version and vice versa. One of the characters that appear in the written text, but not in the screen text is Major Ncilashe who is the head of the investigating police unit. Nothing much is, however, said about him. He has no major

role in the book and he has no influence upon the development of the plot. That could be the reason why he has no role in the screen text and the adaptation process may therefore be seen as a success with regard to the omission of this character.

The director of the screen version has decided to introduce a limited number of new characters. These include Thandi (Dora's friend). The inclusion of Thandi in the screen version reveals more about Dora's character. The vulnerability in Dora is exposed owing to her presence in the story. Another character that is introduced in the screen version is Lizo Ngesi. The interactions between Bantu and Lizo are mainly in the form of dialogue that expose Bantu's inner feelings, motives and concerns. The adaptation of the text through the introduction of these new characters in the screen version has proved to be an asset to the production as a whole.

In both versions of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989/1998) various methods are used to depict the respective characters. These include action, dialogue and thoughts. In the screen version, Dora's actions are adapted quite significantly to expose all her negative personal features. It is shown, for instance, that she is an aggressive person who can become extremely violent. In this respect, there has been successful adaptation of the original text. The adaptation of Dora's role in the screen version is therefore highly functional, since it contributes towards effective depiction of her negative personal features including her liquor abuse as well as the neglect of her child.

The execution scene (as found in the written version) is without doubt the situation of highest intensity in "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989). In this scene, Bantu's deepest fears and anxieties are revealed effectively through his actions. The screen version has, however, been adapted to such an extent that his actions during the crucial execution scene, as found in the written text, are not observable and this deprives the viewer of a valuable opportunity of gaining insight into Bantu's personality during a most stressful and traumatic period in his life. The adaptation of this scene must therefore be regarded as most unsuccessful.

Bantu's personal features are also revealed by means of dialogue. His conversation with the two police officers shows that he is a private person who wishes not to disclose his personal circumstances to strangers. He also shows respect for his wife, in spite of her negative conduct and prefers not to discuss her with outsiders when she is not present. The fact that this dialogue appears in both versions of the story, confirms its role as a key episode in the plot of the story and in this regard the adaptation process has been successful. The words that are spoken by Bantu during the execution process (as found in the written version) are, however, not found in the screen version. In this regard, the adaptation process has been unsuccessful, since this strategy deprives the viewer of a valuable opportunity whereby he/she may obtain insight into Bantu's personality.

In the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) the thought processes of the leading character (Bantu) are revealed extensively on more than one occasion. The author makes use of methods such as direct and indirect speech, monologue and even verse to uncover his thoughts to the reader. Unfortunately Bantu's thoughts have not been depicted as comprehensively in the screen version as in the written text and consequently the observer does not obtain such an intimate view of his inner personality as does the reader of the written text. It is clear that, with regard to the depiction of the character's thoughts, there has been negative adaptation of the written version into the screen production.

This study has shown that there has been considerable adaptation of the character element, as found in the written text of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989). In some instances, the adaptation process has contributed towards the successful depiction of the perspective characters. The omission of the execution scene has, however, had a negative impact on the overall depiction of character in the screen version.

CHAPTER 5

ADAPTATION OF THE PLOT

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the adaptation of the plot of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) from a written text into a screen production. This analysis will be based upon a well-constructed theoretical framework that will address the various aspects of the plot, as found within narrative texts. Aspects such as the structuring of the events, conflict and tension as well as the selection and ordering of the events will be discussed.

This analysis of the adaptation of the plot structure of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) will comprise two main components. The adaptation of the external structure of the novel into a screen production will firstly be investigated. This will be followed by a critical analysis of the adaptation process, with specific reference to the internal structure of the respective texts. The various phases of the narrative text, such as the exposition, climax and denouement will form part of the discussion.

5.2 Theoretical framework

The plot of the story or of a drama may be described as the structure of the action. Abrams, as quoted by Nguna (1997:63), for instance, writes:

"The plot in a dramatic or narrative work is the structure of its actions, as these are rendered and ordered toward achieving particular emotional and artistic effects."

Plot, therefore, is the structuring or arrangement of the events in a particular, meaningful manner. It is the way in which the constituting parts come together to form a

complete unit. Yelland *et al* as quoted by Nguna (1997:65), state that plot "...gives unity, form and purpose to a story."

The function of the plot is to give action a form that will help the reader to understand the relationship between the different elements of the story. Brooks and Warren (1971:34) refer to this: "Plot is the meaningful manipulation of action." The author collects a wealth of detail and organizes all of this into a plot, the intention being to give causal relevance to all of these details. Kennedy (1991:105) therefore states that plot "...is a narrative of events, the emphasis being on causality."

The events and persons therefore do exist in the world around us, but they only become meaningful once they have been shaped by a human mind. Consequently, a narrative is a mere sequence of events in time, but an action is "a sequence of events bearing a significant and developing relation to one another." (Brooks, Purser & Warren, 1975:5-6)"

The action may be described as the "raw material" which is waiting to be manipulated into a plot (or structured action). The plot is the final shaping of the action.

In most stories of substance, there is a direct relationship between plot and the theme of the story. Dietrich and Sundell, as quoted by Nguna (1997:66), define this aspect of the plot as: "...the arrangement of events and actions in a story to convey a theme." Nguna (1997:66) also states that:

"While one enjoys the pleasure of literature through a well-designed plot, its usefulness and meaningfulness should never be neglected. These two should be developed on an equal basis throughout the story. Therefore in portraying a particular theme in a work of art, the writer should not neglect the plot itself (and vice versa)."

Conflict forms an integral part of the plot of the story. It permeates all aspects of the story from beginning to end. The conflict develops from an initial point in the exposition phase and intensifies progressively until it culminates in the climax of the story. Nguna

(1997:68) states that it is unavoidable that all plots will involve conflict. With regard to the short story for instance, Boland as quoted by Nguna (1997:68) is also of the opinion that:

“...there must be a conflict, otherwise there is no story. Any short piece of writing that has no conflict is not a short story, whatever else it might be.”

Conflict is always associated with opposition, struggle and contrast. It therefore involves two opposing forces. Nguna (1997:68) states that:

“The conflict may be between two individuals, or between an individual and society or within the individual himself. Conflict can either be of an inner nature or of an outer nature and it is usually characterized by a clash of interests.”

Kennedy (1991 6) describes the various forms of conflict that may be found in fiction as follows:



“Drama in fiction occurs in any clash of wills, desires, or powers - whether it be a conflict of character against character, character against society, character against some natural force, or, as in “Godfather Death”, character against some supernatural entity.”

Heese and Lawton (n.d.:88) describe the various forms of conflict that may be found in the drama them as follows:

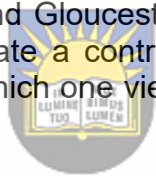
The aspect of human experience with which drama is primarily concerned is conflict. Conflict within an individual, between individuals, between man, circumstance, fate and environment. Because drama is based on conflict, it involves its characters in choices, choices which must be made, for life demands change and action.’

Conflict is the source of the action and therefore it is found in all narrative genres, including the novel, short story and the drama. In all of these genres, the respective plots are based upon conflict between the respective characters. The plot makes use of

suspense to develop the pattern of rising action. The sequence of the individual scenes is determined by the continuous maintenance of the line of suspense.

The sub-plot is a second story which is also complete in its own right. It frequently runs alongside the main plot and assists the reader in understanding the main plot. Plays or narratives may therefore have only one plot each, or they may even have a main plot and several sub-plots that are related to the main plot. If a story or play only has a single plot, the entire narrative or play focuses intensely on the interaction between the two opposing parties. However, when the author introduces a sub-plot:

“It is not an irrelevant addition but one of the ways in which the dramatist emphasizes the universal nature of his theme. The sub-plot may illustrate a different facet of a problem encountered in the main action of the play. The sub-plot may echo the action of the main plot, commenting on the issues involved in an implicit manner. This is the case in *King Lear*, where the suffering undergone by Lear and Gloucester develops along parallel lines. At times the sub-plot may create a contrast to the main plot in order to readjust the perspective with which one views the main action. (Heese and Lawton, no date.88).



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The writer's process of structuring and of arrangement of the events in a particular manner involves two main procedures, namely selection and ordering. As for selection, it is practically not possible for the author to reproduce all the events that are found in the real world. Therefore, he/she has no choice but to select those details that are of importance for the development of the plot of the story (Brooks, Purser and Warren, 1975:7). Only that which is of essential value may be included; everything else should be discarded. Each scene or event should contribute towards the development of the action and towards the progression of the story. In a good drama, there is nothing superfluous; every element contributes towards the expression of the central idea.

Selection plays a most important role in the story. That is why Philips (1974:37) says:

“Details, episodes and incidents that have no bearing on the movement of the story in hand, no matter how much we may cherish them, or how

beautiful and effective they may be in themselves, ruthlessly must be thrown aside.”

Having selected his facts, the author is now faced with the task of arranging them in a particular order. In some cases the facts may be presented in strict chronological order, whilst in other cases this order may not be adhered to (Nguna, 1997: 97). Concerning the question of ordering (as referred to above), it should be taken into consideration that it is often necessary to violate or to distort the strict logical and chronological sequence of the events, as found in the real world. Brooks and Warren (1971:35) point out that no author can present simultaneously in his narrative two incidents which occur simultaneously. In such an incidence, the author has no choice but to violate the strict chronological sequence of the events. Brooks, Purser and Warren (1975:7) also point out that:

“We find as early as Homer the practice of beginning the plot in medias res - that is “in the middle of things”. This means, of course, that the action, in its chronological order, has begun at a point earlier than the first event given in the actual piece of narrative.”

The author may therefore heighten the impact of his narrative by changing the time sequence of the events in the story. Different arrangements of the same narrative material are therefore possible, as Kennedy (1991:7) puts it:

“A writer might decide to tell all of the events in chronological order, beginning with the earliest; or he might open his story with the last event, then tell what led up to it. Sometimes a writer chooses to skip rapidly over the exposition and begin in medias res (Latin, “in midst of things”), first presenting some exciting or significant moment, and then filling in what happened earlier. This method is by no means a modern invention: Homer begins the *Odyssey* with his hero mysteriously late in returning from war and his son searching for him; John Milton’s “*Paradise Lost*” opens with Satan already defeated in his revolt against the Lord. A device useful to writers for filling in what happened earlier is the flashback (or retrospect), a scene relived in a character’s memory.”

It is clear therefore, that in some narratives the action may start at the beginning and move through the narrative chronologically, before coming to an end. In other narratives, the author may use a flashback technique, whereby the reader is gradually provided with all the facts (including past events) as the story progresses.

5.3 Adaptation of the plot of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule , 1989)

5.3.1 The external structure

The aim of this section is to analyse the external structure of the written text of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) and to compare it with the external structure of the screen version of “*Unyana womntu*” (1998). Attention will be given to any discrepancies that exist between these two forms and the extent to which the external structure of the original text has been adapted in the writing of the screen text, will be determined.

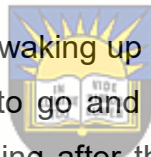
Traditionally, longer prose texts have always consisted of chapters, whilst individual chapters could have been subdivided through the use of a set of asterisks. On the other hand, the text of the drama has mostly been subdivided into acts and scenes. This approach applies in particular to the Shakespearean drama. In most cases the acts were more or less equal in length, whilst the length of the scenes could vary in length from a few lines each to as much as a few pages (Grove and Botha, 1983:132).

In some cases the subdivision of the material into acts corresponds with the subdivision of the internal structure of the drama into the various structural components, such as the exposition, complication, etc. This means that each act may represent a specific phase of the story and therefore each act is expected to make a contribution to the development of the drama. In the case of the screen play, these acts are referred to as episodes.

The written text of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) consists of 14 chapters. The author has not made use of a system of asterisks to subdivide the chapters. The screen

version of “*Unyana womntu*” (1998) on the other hand, consists of 13 episodes. These episodes have not been subdivided into scenes. This means that, in principle, the external structure of the written text corresponds quite closely with that of the screen version of “*Unyana womntu*” (1998). It may therefore be expected that there has been little adaptation of the external structure of the original text at the macro-level. This assumption will now be tested by analysing the various chapters of the original text in greater detail and by comparing them with the corresponding episodes of the screen text. Owing to practical considerations, however, it will not be possible to analyse all the chapters of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989) here. Only a limited number of chapters will therefore be selected and analysed here. A comparative analysis of three written chapters versus three episodes will now be made. For this purpose the shortest chapter (Chapter 2) and the longest chapter (Chapter 12) will be analysed. A chapter of medium length, namely Chapter 3, will also be analysed.

On p.14 Chapter 2 begins with Bantu waking up the following day after the meeting with Dora. He is not happy and decides to go and watch the cricket match. This chapter ends with Bantu waking up the morning after the cricket match thinking he is late for work after dreaming about Dora.



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The corresponding unit in the screen version is Episode 2. This episode begins with Bantu on his way to his uncle's place where he wants Ndodiphela (his son) to stay. It ends with Bantu in the office, thinking about the separation with Dora that made the situation worse.

As stated above, Chapter 2 is the shortest chapter in the book consisting of four pages. The screen version is 60 minutes in duration. This means that the written text has been adapted considerably and that a number of additional events have been included which do not appear in the written text. For instance, in the screen text, mention is made of Dora's life at work and her weaknesses including alcohol abuse and neglect of her child etc. These particulars do not appear in the written text.

Chapter 3 of the novel starts with Bantu waking up the day from after his appointment with his wife, thinking he is late for work, but is not. He goes to work to find police officers waiting for him. They ask him questions about his wife's whereabouts and when last he saw her. Bantu tells them that it was a long time since they last saw each other. But when the police tell him that his wife was found murdered, Bantu is surprised and tells them that he was with her the previous day. That led to his arrest, the police claiming that he did not tell the truth. They take him to prison and charge him with murdering his wife. This chapter ends with Noziqhamo thinking about Bantu's arrest and not believing that he killed his wife.

Episode 3 of the screen version starts with Bantu on his way to work. On arriving at work, he phones Dora (his wife) to make an appointment. The appointment is set for 10 o'clock. At 10 o'clock Bantu goes to Dora's place. Issues are not resolved; but they only quarrel and that erupted to a fight. Bantu leaves with his shirt stained with blood from a knife cut as he was defending himself when Dora was to stab him. From there Bantu goes to watch a cricket match but he cannot concentrate. He later decides to go to his office after having phoned his secretary and telling her that he is going home and will not be returning to office. On arriving at the office, he finds two police officers waiting for him. They ask when last he saw his wife and he tells them that it's been a long time since they last saw each other. They tell him that his wife was murdered. They see bloodstains on his shirt and decide to arrest him for not telling the truth. He is taken to prison and charged for murdering his wife.

As much as Chapter 3 consists of only 8 pages in the novel whilst the duration of the screen version of Episode 3 is 60 minutes, the theme of the story remains largely the same in these two units. It has not changed significantly, although there are some variations in content.

As in the case of episode two, additional particulars are included in this episode. This means that the original text has been adapted considerably in the production of a screen version of 60 minutes in duration.

Chapter 9 from the novel deals with the effects of the sentencing of Bantu and the news is the talk of Cacadu. Noziqhamo is thinking about this sentence and is unable to sleep. She goes out of the house to listen to sounds of nature, such as the frogs, as her house is near the river. She comes back in the early hours of the morning and manages to go back to sleep. Bantu is in his cell, thinking about his pending the execution sentence. This chapter ends with Ntozintle and Noziqhamo leaving the newspaper offices and vowing not to give up until they meet the television journalist.

In the screen version Episode 9 starts in court. Bantu is in court where his case is being heard. A first witness is called to the stand and is asked questions by the prosecutor and Ngalo, the advocate. It is Qondile Keswa, the milk delivery man. This episode ends with Jolela and Noziqhamo going back to court, as they failed to get any witness who saw what really happened. The court session ends.

It is clear that there has been extensive adaptation of the court scene. In the screen version, a number of additional facts are mentioned that do not appear in the novel. This includes the introduction of additional witnesses such as Lizo Ngesi and Thandi who are not mentioned in the original text. The significance of this will be discussed in the paragraphs below.

It has already been indicated above, that the external structures of the original text of *“Unyana womntu”* (Saule, 1989) and that of the screen text seem to correspond, since the respective texts consist of a fairly equal number of units, namely 14 chapters versus 13 episodes. However, from this ensuing analysis, it is clear that a considerable degree of adaptation has taken place and that the external structure of the screen version differs considerably from that of the original text.

This can be attributed to the fact that there are considerable variations in the lengths of the chapters that are found in the written version of *“Unyana womntu”* (Saule, 1989). Some chapters are as short as 4 pages (e.g. Chapter 2) whilst others are as long as 12

pages (e.g. Chapter 9). On the other hand, the individual units in the screen text have been cast into episodes of one hour in duration. These episodes therefore, are identical in length. This is due to programming requirements, as stipulated by the South African Broadcasting Corporation.

5.3.2 The internal structure

5.3.3.1 Introduction

In the study of the plot of the literary work, one of the most important aspects that need to be considered is the internal structure of the plot. This aspect will receive thorough attention in this section. The internal plot structure is inherent in all narrative forms, including the novel and the drama (Nguna, 1997: 70) and it can be divided into a set of clearly defined phases. These phases are:

- i. Exposition
- ii. Complication
- iii. Climax
- iv. Denouement



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Nguna (1997: 69) says that the beginning is an element that presumes further action, the middle presumes both previous and succeeding action, and the end requires the preceding events but no succeeding action. The unity of the plot is therefore the result of necessary relationship and order among the events.

Each of these phases will now be discussed individually. Firstly, the theoretical features of the phase will be presented; thereafter the specific features of the phase, as found in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) as well as in the screen version, will be discussed. The manner in which the contents of each phase have been amended during the process of adaptation of the text from a written form of existence into a screen play, will receive particular attention in the paragraphs below.

5.3.3.2 Exposition

Dietrich and Sundell as quoted by Nguna (1997:70) state that stories begin in a state of equilibrium. This initial stability is disturbed by some events that create conflict. That is why Hills, as quoted by Nguna, (1997:71) says;

“The beginning will suggest the basic line of the conflict....what all trouble is going to be about.”

It is clear therefore that every story must have a beginning, but to the reader the first impression is generally the most important one. The exposition phase therefore is of great importance to the story and it deserves to be dealt with most carefully by the author. In this phase, the author provides the reader with the necessary background information that will enable him to understand the story as it unfolds.

The author should therefore explain what happened before the story began and how the characters arrive at the present situation. Kennedy (1991:6-7) mentions that this phase sets the scene; it introduces the main characters and provides the background information that is required for a proper understanding of the events to follow. The reader is also introduced to the most important characters and it presents an unstable situation from which the story must move towards a moment of stability. In this phase, the reader is also informed about the time and place where the events will occur.

As pointed out by Kennedy, the most important characters, as well as the scene of the action are introduced during the first phase of the narrative version of “*Unyana womntu*” (Saule, 1989). Bantu is introduced to the reader as the main character in this story. Dora is his wife and the mother of his child. The story takes place in Cacadu, an unknown, fictional and imaginary town, presumably in the Eastern Cape. It is in the morning when Bantu phones his wife for an appointment. The appointment is set for 10 o’clock on that day.

Bantu is described as an honourable and successful man (pp. 7-8). He is an intelligent and respectable gentleman. He is 30 years of age. He is an accountant for a diamond company. He later opened his own company. He holds a Master's degree in Accounting. He recently separated from his wife, Dora who is a nurse. Dora left Bantu and is staying alone, as she was misbehaving and could not take care of herself. Before 10 o'clock Bantu goes to Dora's place.

In Episodes 1 and 2 of the screenplay, Bantu is introduced to the viewer whilst in his office as an accountant in Cape Town. He is depicted as a dignified and respectful middle-aged man. Dora, his wife, is a nurse at a hospital in Cape Town. Bantu is phoned by the maid, Nomhle, requesting that he should come and release her, as Dora is not yet back from work. Dora is depicted whilst leaving the hospital with a friend. She goes to the bar for drinks and goes home late. The following day Nomhle phones again to inform Bantu that his son (Ndodiphela) is not back from school yet. Bantu goes to fetch the child from school. He sees him on the way home. He then goes to the hospital to look for his wife but is unable to find her. He finds her in a bar sitting with an unknown man. He asks where the child is, only to realize that Dora forgot to fetch the child from school. Bantu takes Dora home and requests her to pack her things. Bantu decides to take Ndodiphela to his uncle. Dora agrees to move to another house, on condition that Bantu gives her a credit card and cheque book. He should not come to the house unannounced. Bantu agrees to these terms, but later realizes that he made a mistake, as Dora is misusing the money. In Episode 3 Bantu phones Dora to make an appointment to resolve their marital problems.

In the screen version more details are provided concerning the situation in which the main characters find themselves at the beginning of the story. The viewers are told much more about Dora's conduct, including liquor abuse, marital unfaithfulness as well as irresponsible actions and neglect of her child. It is these circumstances that forced Bantu to separate from her and to find alternative accommodation for her. The screen version, therefore, commences much earlier in the chronology of the story and provides

the viewers with better insight into the predicament that the main characters find themselves in.

It is evident that in this phase there has been considerable adaptation of the events, as found in the written text. It is clear, however, that this adaptation is to the advantage of the story, since it provides the viewer with better insight into the circumstances that exist at the beginning of the story that led to the separation between Bantu and Dora. This approach provides the viewer with a solid base from which the remaining episodes can be understood more effectively, which is in accordance with the requirements of this phase of the narrative genre.

5.3.3.3 Complication

The middle section of the story begins with the introduction of the conflict. The protagonist and the antagonist are presented to the reader in a conflict situation. During this phase more than one crisis may be encountered which can also be described as a moment of high tension, but this tension is resolved temporarily(Kennedy, 1991:6&7). As the events unfold, the situation becomes more and more complex and the intensity of the clashes increases.

Brooks, Purser and Warren (1975: 6) state that this phase implies uncertainty and mounting intensity as the conflict rises. The characters struggle to maintain control over the situation but since fate is against them, they are unsuccessful in their attempts to terminate the conflict and they are unsuccessful in their attempts to prevent the events from building up to the climax.

In the written text of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989), Bantu met with his wife Dora at her home, as arranged (p.10). They could not come to an agreement and a divorce is inevitable. Bantu leaves the house and since he is emotionally very upset, he decides to go and watch the cricket match at the sports field. The following day, Bantu receives a visit from two strange men at his place of work. The men enquire about Dora, and Bantu

states that he hasn't seen her for a long time. The men inform him that Dora has been murdered. Bantu is shocked to hear this and he exclaims:

"Mnumzana Mngombeni, yonke le nto ndigqiba kuyithetha ayinjalo, eyona nyaniso yeyokuba umfazi wam bendithethe naye izolo kusasa ukususela kwintsimbi yeshumi ukuya malunga neyeshumi elinanye. Siye saxambulisana kakhulu kangangento yokuba ndimke singevananga kwinto yokuba siwuqhawule umtshato okanye abuyele emzini wakhe, kwam ukutsho oko. Le uyithethayo iyandothusa kakhulu." (p.21)

"Mr Mngombeni what I have just told you is not true. The truth is that I spoke to my wife only yesterday morning between 10 and 11 o'clock. We quarrelled very much in so much that I left without us reaching an agreement of whether she comes back home meaning my place or we dissolve the marriage. What you have just said is shocking to me."

The men inform Bantu that they are policemen and that they will now arrest him as a suspect in the murder. The decision to arrest him is based primarily on the fact that he has provided them with contradicting evidence. Bantu is locked up in a prison cell where he meets an old school friend, Langeni, who is also in jail (p.30). Bantu is visited by a good lady friend by the name of Nozizama, who assists him in finding a good lawyer to represent him in court (p.33). Bantu's case is heard in court and he is found guilty of murder (p.65). Bantu maintains that he is innocent and informs the court that he was attending a cricket match during the time of the murder. Bantu is nevertheless sentenced to death by hanging. The court session in the written text had only four witnesses. They are Qondile Keswa, Xeliwe Nkungu, the police and the doctor. Qondile gave a detailed testimony telling what he saw at Dora's house on the day of the murder. He went there to collect an empty milk bottle as he was a milk delivery man. When he knocked there was no response. He went back to tell his boss and the boss ordered him to go again. That is when he saw Dora lying dead on the floor, not properly covered.

"...uNkosikazi Zatu wayelele elutywantsi izambatho zingamgqumanga kakuhle etyhilekile." (p.42)

....Mrs Zatu was lying dead on the floor not properly covered.

In the written text (pp.59-65), only Ngalo and Saqhwithi took the stand. The last person to take part in the proceedings was the judge who gave the sentence of execution:

“...ngalo ndlela inkundla ikufumana unetyala lokubulala inkosikazi yakho ngendlela ekhohlakeleyo. Ngesi sizathu ke uyakujinga entanjeni ude ufe ngosuku oluya kuthi lumiselwe oko. Yanga inkosi ingawamkela umphefumlo wakho.” (p.65)

“...in that sense the court finds you guilty of brutally murdering your wife. For that reason you will be hanged until you die on a specified date. May the Lord receive your soul?”

In the screen text, the verdict changes, Bantu is given a sentence of life imprisonment. There are only two court sittings, as found on the written text on pp.39-48 and pp.59-65 (i.e. in two chapters), whereas in the screen version, the court sittings start from Episode 6 and continue up to Episode 10. After the death sentence was passed down, Bantu was transferred to another prison where the sentence would be executed. However, Bantu manages to escape from jail and goes into hiding, firstly at Noziqhamo's place (p.90) and thereafter on the farm of Langeni, his schoolmate, who shared a prison cell with him earlier (p.108). Unfortunately Bantu is identified by two police officers who are on a visit to the farm; he is arrested and taken back to prison (p.112).

The preparations for the execution of the sentence are put in place and Bantu is escorted to the death chamber to be hanged (p.114). In the meantime, Noziqhamo, Ntozintle, her brother and Ngalo the lawyer, are working frantically to secure the vital evidence that will prove that Bantu was at the cricket field during the time of the murder and therefore he is innocent.

In the screen version (Episode 3), the discussion between Dora and Bantu at Dora's home develops into a quarrel initially and thereafter it develops into a physical confrontation, during which Dora attempts to stab Bantu with a knife. In the process, Bantu is stabbed in the arm and his shirt becomes stained with blood.

Later in the day, Bantu receives a visit from two police officers from his place of work after informing him that Dora has been murdered, but Bantu denies any knowledge about this. They request Bantu to remove his jacket but he refuses, whereafter the jacket is removed by force and the bloodstains on his shirt are revealed. Based on this evidence, Bantu is arrested and taken to jail (Episode 3).

In Episode 4, Noziqhamo visits Bantu in jail but was not allowed to see him. Noziqhamo goes to inform Bantu's uncle on the farm about Bantu's arrest. She again visits Bantu and promises to look for a lawyer for him. In Episode 5 Bantu is locked in an awaiting trial cell. The case goes to court for a bail application which is denied. Jolela decides to take the case to an advocate, Ngalo. In Episode 6, Noziqhamo approaches her brother Ntozintle to assist her in proving Bantu's innocence. Bantu shares a cell with an old school friend, Langeni. In Episode 7 the court proceedings continue and witnesses are called on the stand to give evidence and Saghwithi is the court prosecutor.

In the screen text Qondile's testimony is amusing. He is saying things that are not asked including the fact that he did not go to work because of the court hearings. Nothing changed in the way Xeliwe Nkungu gave her testimony. In the screen version more witnesses take the stand. They are Lizo Ngesi Bantu's colleague and Thembi, Bantu's secretary and even Nomhle the maid gave a testimony. Noziqhamo also took the stand, talking about Bantu and trying to reveal the good personality he has in order to prove that Bantu was incapable of killing his wife.

In Episode 8 Ngalo asks Noziqhamo and Jolela to go and look for more evidence from Dora's neighbourhood. Whilst Noziqhamo and Jolela in Episode 9 are looking for evidence, one of Dora's neighbours identifies Jolela as one of the people who used to visit Dora, but he denies it, and was no more interested in looking for evidence. Langeni is released from prison in Episode 10 and the court proceedings continue during which the doctor releases his findings on the post-mortem. In Episode 11 Noziqhamo is asked to take the stand and give her evidence. Bantu is found guilty of murdering his wife and is given a life imprisonment sentence.

In Episode 12, when Bantu had escaped to Noziqhamo's place and later to Langeni's farm, Noziqhamo works frantically to find proof for the fact that Bantu did have a valid alibi. She is assisted by Bantu's legal representatives, Jolela (attorney) and Ngalo (advocate). However, during this process Jolela acts in a suspicious manner. Firstly, he is reluctant to go to the TV studio in order to examine the footage of the recordings that were made of the cricket match and the spectators. Secondly, his actions in the TV studio also create suspicion. When the vital video recording is found that will prove Bantu's innocence, Jolela bribes the TV studio technician with the request that the recording be destroyed. This is prevented by Noziqhamo who demands to view the recording whereby she discovers the evidence that will prove that Bantu was a spectator at the cricket match during the time that Dora was murdered. (Episode 13).

Having escaped from jail, Bantu goes into hiding on the farm of his friend, Langeni. Whilst Bantu is in hiding, he is recognized by two policemen who are on a visit to the farm. Bantu runs away and police tracker dogs are called in to assist with the search. Owing to the densely forested area, a helicopter is called in to assist with the search. Bantu is found, arrested, and taken to the police station by helicopter (episode 13).

From the discussion above, it is clear that there are several important differences between the complication phase, as found in the written version and in the screen version. It is clear that there has been comprehensive adaptation of the narrative material. In general it can be stated that the adaptation is favourable, since it has made the plot more interesting and suspenseful from the perspective of the viewer.

This observation is based upon the following considerations: Firstly, the scene where Bantu meets with Dora is presented in a more dramatic manner in the screen version than in the written text. In the screen version, viewers see heightened emotion in the form of an intense verbal argument between these two which even awakens the curiosity of the neighbours. This scene is dramatized even more by the depiction of a physical confrontation between these two, which leads to the knife attack on Bantu and

the staining of his shirt with blood. None of these events are depicted so intensely and dramatically in the written text.

Secondly, Episode 3, the scene where Bantu is arrested, is presented in a more dramatic and vivid manner in the screen version. In the written version, Bantu's arrest is based purely on his verbal testimony. However, in the screen version, Bantu's arrest is linked to his verbal testimony as well as to the physical evidence of a blood-stained shirt. Bantu's reluctance to co-operate with the police officers and the physical confrontation that ensues, further contributes towards the heightening of the dramatic effects of the scene.

Thirdly, Jolela's role as an antagonist who is trying to undermine Bantu is not revealed in the written text. The inclusion of this character in the screen version means that the two opposing forces, namely on the one hand, Bantu and Noziqhamo as the protagonists and Jolela as the antagonist, are positioned against one another in a much more direct manner, which makes for more pleasurable viewing of the screen version. Unfortunately, Jolela's motives for attempting to sabotage Noziqhamo's investigations are never clearly revealed, neither is there any indication of his possible involvement in Dora's murder.

Finally, the incident which leads to Bantu's arrest on the farm of Langeni is presented with a limited degree of intensity and dramatization in the written text. Bantu is simply recognized by the police officers, arrested and placed into the police vehicle (p.111). This incident has, however, been presented in a much more spectacular fashion in the screen version. This is due firstly, to the fact that Bantu resists arrest and disappears into the surrounding forest. Secondly, tracker dogs are called in to assist in the search and thirdly, a helicopter is finally used to locate the escapee and to transport him back to the police station. It is evident that this version of the particular incident makes for much better viewing, since it is based upon an intense degree of dramatization and imprisonment. It is this kind of presentation which attracts viewers and which ensures that they remain glued to the screen.

In conclusion, it can be mentioned that the complication phase of the story has been amended significantly as part of the adaptation of the written text into the screen version. This relates in particular to the events that took place during the meeting between Bantu and Dora. From the viewpoint of the police officers, the fact that Bantu had some bloodstains on his shirt served as damning evidence of the fact that he had murdered Dora. This strategy to add more facts to the story during the adaptation process corresponds with that as found in the exposition phase, where additional facts were also integrated into the story.

A further strategy that was identified during the adaptation process is that of increased dramatization and intensification of the events as part of the complication phase. This applies in particular to the scene where Bantu was re-arrested as well as the scene in the TV studio. It is clear therefore that there has been considerable adaptation of the complication phase and that the strategies that were used have generally contributed towards the creation of a story which is more interesting and pleasurable to watch. Furthermore, the requirements of the complication phase, namely that, as the events unfold, the situation becomes more and more complex and the intensity of the clashes increases, are met more successfully in the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998).

5.3.3.4 Climax

Shipley, as quoted by Nguna, (1997:79) defines the climax as; "...the decisive moment in the dramatic conflict." This phase therefore represents the turning point in the story and it involves the final clash between the opposing characters in the story, during which one of the opposing parties usually becomes eliminated.

Brooks and Warren (1971:36) put it as follows:

"The complication moves towards a moment, an event, when something has to happen, when something has to crack...This moment is the point of highest tension, the moment when the story turns towards its solution."

The climax therefore, is the highest point towards which the action rises and its function is to settle the core-conflict between the opposing parties. It represents the final outcome of the conflict. The climax is the moment of greatest tension during which the outcome of the events will be decided.

As stated above, Bantu was re-arrested and taken back to jail. After an unspecified period he was taken to the gallows. This process is described in the finest detail by the narrator. On p.119 of the written text it is stated that, a day before the execution, Bantu was visited by one of the senior officials of the prison, where he was informed that the following day would be his last day on earth. On the same day he received a visit by a church minister who assures him that he believes in Bantu's innocence and that God will save him. On the day of the execution his hair was cut off by one of the officials, his suit brought to him to wear and he was also released from the chains. Prisoners were asked to go outside to watch Bantu going to the gallows. A man came into his cell and chained Bantu again. Bantu was instructed to follow the man to the gallows and he exited from his cell.



Whilst crossing the square, everybody was watching him including senior officials of the prison. At some stage, Bantu lost his strength and was assisted by the man who was leading him to the gallows. He was led to a room to have his fingerprints taken and also questioned if he still believed he was innocent. He also signed papers and continued to follow the man to another dimly lit room. A priest prayed and asked God to receive Bantu's soul. Two other men took him into another room. In that room there was the executioner and a chair. The two men seated him to the chair, blindfolded him and also chained him. A button was pressed and the chair became shaky (p.122).²

Whilst these preparations were being made for the execution to commence, the phone rang. It was answered by the executioner. Bantu was unable to hear what is being said

² On p65 Bantu is sentenced to death by hanging however on p122 the scene is described as being killed by electrocution. In this scene Bantu is tied to a chair which begins to shake, This serves as an indication of the fact that he was going to be electrocuted by means of the electric chair method. There seems to be a contradiction here with regard to the way in which the death sentence was going to be executed.

over the phone, but suddenly, when the conversation ended, the executioner approached Bantu and began to untie him and to remove the cover from his eyes. Bantu was thereafter allowed to go free (p.125).

As stated above, Noziqhamo and others initiated their own investigation in order to prove that Bantu did have a valid alibi and that he was innocent of the murder on his wife (Dora). Eventually they managed to locate the reporter who wrote the report on the cricket match. He agreed to assist them in finding the crucial evidence that would prove Bantu's innocence. With the help of this reporter, they looked through all the newspaper files until finally they discovered a photograph which showed Bantu whilst seated on the pavilion amongst the spectators (p.123).

The reporter could not believe that all along he had kept evidence that could have led to the release of Bantu. They all left the reporter's house. Inside the car Noziqhamo could not hold her tears. They then went to Ngalo's place (the lawyer). He joined them, accompanied by Jolela, his assistant. They went to the judge's chambers and waited for him. They managed to convince the judge of Bantu's innocence whereupon the judge immediately issued an order for a stay of execution (p.125).

In the screen version, as stated above, Bantu is rearrested on the farm of Langeni and escorted back to the police station where preparations are made for Bantu to be locked up in a cell. At this moment the state prosecutor arrives on the scene. He issues an order that Bantu be released unconditionally and with immediate effect, as new information has been received proving that he is innocent. Bantu is then handed over to Noziqhamo and his legal representatives (Episode 13).

From what has been said above, it is clear that there is a vast difference between the events as presented in the written version versus those as presented in the screen text. In the written version, it is shown how Bantu is escorted to the gallows for him to be hanged. These events do not feature at all in the screen version. In the written version, the procedure leading up to the "hanging" of Bantu is described in the finest details (see

above). This strategy has the desired effect upon the reader, who becomes anxious and moves into a state of deep suspense. The reader becomes intimately involved, to the extent that he or she observes intensely each step of the way to the gallows. The reader is also emotionally upset about the fact that an innocent person is about to be executed and he/she utters a sigh of relief when the phone rings and when a stay of execution is ordered.

A further source of anxiety and suspense is related to the juxtapositioning of the events leading up to the execution with the investigation which is being undertaken by Noziqhamo and others. The reader is anxious to know whether this investigation will be completed in time or not and whether Bantu's life will be spared. Accordingly, the events in the written version are truly escalated to a climax which grips the attention of the reader in a most intense manner.

In the screen version, these events, as discussed above, are not found. The gallows scene does not form part of the screen version at all. Similarly, the investigation by Noziqhamo and others is not presented in such a detailed manner. In the screen version, Bantu is simply released from captivity on the basis of what is said by the prosecutor. In the screen version therefore, the events have been presented in a much less dramatic manner and therefore this phase of the story may be described as an anti-climax. It is clear that these events do not have the desired effect upon the viewer. He/she does not experience any feeling of tension and suspense and there is not a proper sense of involvement with the characters and their fate in the story.

Based upon the above, it is evident that the adaptation of this particular phase of the story (namely the climax) from a written text into a screen production was not successful. This is due to the fact that the most important part of the story has not been adapted properly. The result is that the screen version does not have such a strong impact on the viewer as it has on the reader in the case of the written text.

It appears as if the producer decided to bring the story to an abrupt end by cutting out the important gallows episode. This decision may be attributed to financial reasons and a decision by the producer to cut the cost of the production. Another reason for the elimination of this scene could be situated in the aversion of the average modern viewer to the execution of people by hanging. Possibly the producers anticipated the possibility that the viewers would associate this set of events with the previous apartheid regime, where execution by hanging was at the order of the day. It could therefore be that this practice has become so stigmatised in the new South Africa that it has been removed deliberately from the screen version owing to the events that took place during the pre-1994 period. However, be as it may, it is clear that the climax phase of the screen version is not as intense and dramatic as that of the original version. In this respect therefore, the adaptation of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule: 1989) has not been successful.

5.3.3.5 Denouement

The term denouement is of French origin and means "unravelling". In this phase the reasons are given for the various actions that have taken place in the novel. It is here that the reader begins to understand why things turned out as they did. However, in some stories this phase does not appear and it is left to the reader to decide for himself/herself why things happened as they did in the story. This phase therefore represents a pattern of falling action as the story's conclusion is reached and the characters understand their circumstances and themselves better than before.

Brooks, Purser and Warren (1975:6) say that; "The denouement is the end of the plot, literally, as we have said, the "unknotting" of the tangle of the complications." Brooks and Warren (1971:36) express that the author uses this phase to explain what has happened after the climax and he gives us the outcome of the conflict, the solution of problems and the basis of new stability. The ending therefore normalises and stabilises the situation. It provides us with the basis for the new stability.

In the original text, Bantu was allowed to leave the room where he was to be hanged. He went back to where he came from, i.e. he retraced his steps by following the route

that led to the room where he was to be executed. He was now unchained and nobody accompanied him. He heard voices, as he was not certain whether the route he was using was the right one. He then entered the room where the noise was coming from, where a junior official told him that he was a free man and he offered to take him home, but Bantu declined the offer. He went to the main entrance, where he was welcomed by reporters, Noziqhamo and others. Noziqhamo threw herself into Bantu's arms and they embraced for a long time. They decided to get into the car and left the people behind whilst still discussing what nearly happened, namely the hanging of an innocent man (p.126).

Bantu is reunited with the person he loves (Noziqhamo) (p.125). The author does not leave matters hanging in the air. He gives the reader a clear picture of circumstances after the climax has taken place. The emotion and atmosphere of this event is captured most accurately by the author.



The manner in which Bantu is released from custody, reminds very strongly of the release of Nelson Mandela from the Victor Verster Prison in Paarl in February 1990. The features that are common between the release of Bantu and the release of Mandela are found in the fact that Mandela was also reunited with his female partner (Winnie Mandela) on this occasion. The gathering of large crowds, the presence of journalists, the flashing of cameras as well as the fact that Mandela was driven off in a car, also relates very strongly with Bantu's experiences as described above. It is interesting to note however, that the book "*Unyana womntu*" was published in 1989, which is prior to the release of Mandela from prison in 1990. The contents of this particular scene of "*Unyana womntu*" therefore, are largely prophetic, since it could be seen as a prediction of what was due to take place shortly afterwards in 1990.

In the screen version, as mentioned above, Bantu is informed in the police station that he has been found innocent and that he is free to depart. Bantu is reunited with Noziqhamo and together they exit from the police station. The state prosecutor addresses them in the following words;

“Bantu, uzuyigcine intombi yomntu, nyana womntu” (Episode 13)

“Bantu, please take care of the girl of a man, son of man”.

These words that are uttered by the state prosecutor show a clear relationship with the title of the screen version which is *“Unyana womntu”* (Son of man). It now becomes clear to the viewer why this production has been given this title. In the case of the written version, the title of the novel is not reflected in the text. There are no references to the term *“Unyana womntu”* in the story. It is not clear why the story has been named in this manner. It is clear therefore, that the adaptation process has been a success in the sense that the title is reflected more clearly in the screen version.

It is clear that in the screen version, this ending phase is not as emotional because the events are presented factually without any of the hype that is normally associated with such an event. In this scene, the viewer is simply informed that stability has been restored and that Bantu has been liberated and reunited with a friend, which is in accordance with the requirements of the denouement, but on the other hand, this scene is also disappointing because it ends on an anti-climax whereby Bantu's release simply becomes a formality without any emotion or excitement attached to it. It is clear therefore, that the adaptation of this scene from the written text into the screen version is largely unsuccessful since the emotion that is found in the written text is not reflected here.

The depiction of the denouement in such a simplified and unsatisfactory manner in the screen version may be attributed to financial reasons. If the director of the series were to depict everything that appears in the written text, it means that he would have to hire a large crowd and also make use of expensive camera equipment with flashes and other accessories. They would also have to hire a preacher and also involve various minor characters (such as the spectators, the prisoners and others) who did not play an important role in the screen version. It is unfortunate, however, that owing to financial constraints, the screen version should end on such a disappointing note and it is clear

that the adaptation of the denouement, as found in the original version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989), has not been undertaken successfully.

5.3.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to analyse the adaptation of the plot of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) from a written text into a screen production. This analysis was based upon a well-constructed theoretical framework that addressed the various aspects of the plot, as found within narrative texts.

It was found that it is the function of the plot to give the action a form that will help the reader to understand the relationship between the different elements of the story. Plot therefore is the structuring or arrangement of the events in a particular, meaningful manner. It is the way in which the constituting parts come together to form a complete unit. Conflict forms an integral part of the plot of the story. It permeates all aspects of the story from beginning to end. Selection of the relevant facts plays a most important role in the story and, having selected his/her facts, the author is then faced with the task of arranging them in a particular order. In some cases the facts may be presented in strict chronological order, whilst in other cases this order may not be adhered to.

This analysis of the adaptation of the plot structure of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) consisted of two main components. The adaptation of the external structure of the novel into a screen production was firstly investigated. The aim of this section was to analyse the external structure of the written text of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) and to compare it with the external structure of the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998). Attention was given to any discrepancies that exist between these two forms of "*Unyana womntu*" and the extent to which the external structure of the original text has been adapted in the writing of the screen text, was determined.

Owing to practical considerations, it was not possible to analyse all the chapters of the original text in detail and to compare them with the corresponding episodes of the screen text. Only a limited number of chapters were therefore selected and analysed in

this chapter. From this ensuing analysis, it became clear that a considerable degree of adaptation has taken place and that the external structure of the screen version differs considerably from that of the original text.

This can be attributed to the fact that there are considerable variations in the lengths of the chapters that are found in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989). Some chapters are as short as 4 pages (e.g. Chapter 2) whilst others are as long as 12 pages (e.g. Chapter 9). On the other hand, the individual units in the screen text have been cast into episodes of one hour in duration. These episodes therefore, are identical in length. This is due to programming requirements, as stipulated by the South African Broadcasting Corporation. The original text therefore had to be adapted quite extensively to make provision for these requirements.

The discussion of the external structure was followed by a critical analysis of the adaptation process, with specific reference to the internal structure of the respective texts. The various phases of the narrative text, such as the exposition, climax and denouement formed part of the discussion.



It was found that, in the screen version, more details are provided concerning the situation in which the main characters find themselves at the beginning of the story. The viewers are told much more about Dora's conduct, including liquor abuse, marital unfaithfulness as well as irresponsible actions and neglect of her child. It is these circumstances that forced Bantu to separate from her and to find alternative accommodation for her. The screen version therefore, commences much earlier in the chronology of the story and provides the viewers with better insight into the predicament that the main characters find themselves in.

It is evident that in this phase there has been considerable adaptation of the events, as found in the written text. It is clear, however, that this adaptation is to the advantage of the story, since it provides the viewer with better insight into the circumstances that exist at the beginning of the story that led to the separation between Bantu and Dora. This

approach provides the viewer with a solid base from which the remaining episodes can be understood more effectively, which is in accordance with the requirements of the exposition phase of the narrative genre.

The complication phase of the story has been amended significantly as part of the adaptation of the written text into the screen version. This relates in particular to the events that took place during the meeting between Bantu and Dora. This includes, for example, the fact that Bantu had some bloodstains on his shirt that served as damning evidence for the police officers of the fact that he had murdered Dora. This strategy to add more facts to the story during the adaptation process corresponds with that as found in the exposition phase, where additional facts were also integrated into the story.

A further strategy that was identified during the adaptation process is that of increased dramatisation and intensification of the events as part of the complication phase, including, for instance, the scene where Bantu was re-arrested, as well as the scene in the TV studio. It is clear therefore that there has been considerable adaptation of the complication phase and that the strategies that were used have generally contributed towards the creation of a story which is more interesting and pleasurable to view. Furthermore, the requirements of the complication phase, namely that, as the events unfold, the situation becomes more and more complex and the intensity of the clashes increases, were met more successfully in the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998).

In this chapter, it was argued that the climax is the highest point towards which the action rises and its function is to settle the core-conflict between the opposing parties. It represents the final outcome of the conflict. The climax is the moment of greatest tension during which the outcome of the events will be decided. It was found that there is a vast difference between the events as presented in the written version versus those as presented in the screen text. In the written version, for instance, it is shown how Bantu is escorted to the gallows for him to be hanged. This strategy has the desired effect upon the reader, who becomes anxious, moves into a state of deep suspense

and becomes intimately involved, to the extent that he or she observes intensely each step of the way to the gallows.

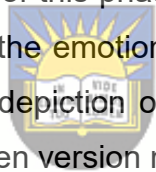
A further source of anxiety and suspense is related to the juxtapositioning of the events in the gallows with the investigation which is being undertaken by Noziqhamo and others. The reader is anxious to know whether this investigation will be completed in time or not and whether Bantu's life will be spared. Accordingly, the events in the written version are truly escalated to a climax which grips the attention of the reader in a most intense manner.

In the screen version, these events as discussed above are not found. The events have been presented in a much less dramatic manner and therefore this phase of the screen production may be described as an anti-climax. It is clear that this depiction of the events do not have the desired effect upon the viewer. He/she does not experience any feeling of tension and suspense and there is not a proper sense of involvement with the characters and their fate in the story and therefore the adaptation of this particular phase of the story (namely the climax) from a written text into a screen production was not successful. This is due to the fact that the most important part of the story has not been adapted properly. The result is that the screen version does not have such a strong impact on the viewer as it has in the case of the written text.

The elimination of the important gallows scene may be attributed to financial reasons and a decision by the producer to cut the costs of the production. This scene could however, also have been eliminated owing to socio-political reasons. The producers may have anticipated the possibility that the viewers would associate this set of events with the previous apartheid regime, where execution by hanging was at the order of the day. However, be as it may, it is clear that the climax phase of the screen version is not as intense and dramatic as that of the original version. In this respect therefore, the adaptation of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) has not been successful.

In this study, it was found that the author uses the denouement phase to explain what has happened after the climax and to give us the outcome of the conflict, the solution of problems and the basis of new stability. The ending therefore normalizes and stabilizes the situation. In the written text it is shown how, during the days and weeks that follow Bantu's release, he is welcomed back into the community and reunited with the person he loves (Noziqhamo). The author does not leave matters hanging in the air. He gives the reader a clear picture of circumstances after the climax has taken place. The emotion and atmosphere of this event is captured most accurately by the author.

In the screen version, this ending phase is not as emotional because the events are presented factually without any of the hype that is normally associated with such an event. This scene is disappointing because it ends on an anti-climax whereby Bantu's release simply becomes a formality without any emotion or excitement attached to it. It is clear therefore, that the adaptation of this phase from the written text into the screen version is largely unsuccessful since the emotion that is found in the written text is not reflected here. It was found that the depiction of the denouement in such a simplified and unsatisfactory manner in the screen version may be attributed to financial reasons.



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CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In Chapter 1 of this study, the research aims and objectives were formulated. It was stated that this research will concentrate on the screen adaptation of the various aspects of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989). It was indicated that the research methods that were to be followed would consist out of a thorough reading of the written text as well as a comprehensive repetitive viewing of all the episodes of the screen version. The research methods that were followed included visits to the South African Broadcasting Corporation archives in Johannesburg, visits to National Heritage and Cultural Studies centre in Alice as well as interviews with some of the key role players in the production of the TV series

In the final part of Chapter 1, background information was provided on the personal life of the author as well as on his contributions to the African literary tradition. Background information on the production of the screen version was also provided.

In the ensuing chapter, the theoretical aspects of the phenomenon of literary adaptation were discussed. This discussion provided a framework for the analysis of the adaptation of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) in the remaining chapters of this study. The aim of this chapter was to identify and discuss the most important principles which come into play when the written text is adapted into a screen production.

Since the screen production belongs to the genre of the performing arts, this chapter was introduced with a discussion on the performing arts and on the drama, in particular. The section was concluded with a discussion on the different sub-types of the drama which can be found, including the screen production. The main emphasis was on an analysis of the basic features and principles of the drama in screen format. The discussion on the drama was followed by a discussion on the literary features of the novel. Since the screen play "*Unyana womntu*" (1998) is based upon a novel by the

same title, the literary features of the novel had to be discussed here as well. The specific features of the Xhosa novel also received attention.

The main aim of Chapter 2 was to provide perspectives on the theoretical principles upon which the phenomenon of adaptation is based. The theoretical principles of adaptation were outlined, with a view to the meaningful analysis of the particular Xhosa text under discussion. It was found that the rapid growth rate of the art of film-making may be ascribed in particular, to the contributions or influences of other art forms, including the performing arts, fine arts and literary art. Some of these adaptations are based on documentary texts, whilst others are based on fictional texts.

There seems to be a perception that the majority of the screen productions that have been adapted from literary works have been adapted from dramas or stage plays. It was, however, found that the literary genre with which film is most often associated, is not the drama, as one might expect, but the novel. Although these two mediums do not narrate the story in exactly the same manner, narrative literature (and the novel in particular) and film shares the basic element of the story, the only difference being that where the novel uses words to tell the story, the film makes use of images or picture frames to perform the same function.

The reasons for the adaptation of so many novels were also investigated in this chapter. It was found that, in some instances, the adaptation of novels into film is done with serious artistic intentions. In most instances however, adaptations are undertaken purely for financial reasons, with very few novelists being able to resist the financial gains involved.

The question regarding the relationship that a film should have to the original source and the faithfulness of the adaptation process was addressed in Chapter 2. It is clear that there are divergent views on the practice of adaptation. Basically, the debate may be crystallised into the following two viewpoints: The first approach asks that the integrity of the original work be preserved. The second approach feels it proper and, in

fact necessary, to adapt the original work freely, in order to create a new, different work of art with its own integrity. Whilst there is general unanimity amongst scholars that a certain degree of adaptation is not only acceptable, but also unavoidable, there seems to be general disagreement with regard to the extent to which adaptation should take place. It is evident that much research still needs to be done on the phenomenon of the adaptation of a novel into a film.

A number of Xhosa literary texts have already been adapted into screen productions (mainly in the form of TV plays). Amongst the classical texts, it is interesting to note that it is mainly novels that have been adapted so far and that there are fewer Xhosa dramas that have been adapted into screen productions. "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) is one of the youngest of this list of literary works that were adapted for the screen

In Chapter 3 the adaptation of the background of the novel "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) into the screen production was critically evaluated. This evaluation was based upon a theoretical framework relating to the role of the background in the novel, as well as the role of the setting in the drama. The macro and micro features of the background of the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) were identified, such as a beach environment and a rural farming community in the Eastern Cape. The depiction of these "micro features" confirms the author's intense power of observation pertaining to his ability to identify and record matters of minute detail and to integrate these into his story.

It was found that some of the environments that are described in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) are also depicted in the screen version. These include the sports field environment, Dora's home environment and Bantu's office environment. In most instances, these scenes are depicted in a more detailed manner in the screen version than in the original text. This is due to the fact that it is more convenient to depict the setting in a screen text than it is to describe the background in the novel. In

this respect the adaptation of the written text into the screen version may be regarded as being successful.

Several background scenes are described in the written version, but not depicted in the screen version, including the important gallows scene. The omission of scenes such as these from the screen version has certainly compromised the adaptation process. In this respect, the adaptation process certainly has not been successful.

Some of the scenes that are depicted in the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998) are not found in the original version. These include scenes such as the hospital environment and the school environment. The background of the written text has been adapted considerably in the design and production of the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" (1998). In most instances, these changes have proved to be highly functional, since they enhance the overall quality of the production.

In "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989), there is a change in the background. It is noted that the background in the novel is an imagery town in the Eastern Cape and surrounding rural places. When adapted the setting in the screen version is in the big city of Cape Town and the neighbouring farms to replace the rural places in the novel

It was found that the story has been migrated from a small town environment to a large cosmopolitan environment in the Western Cape. This does not have a significant effect upon the theme of the story since it is largely of a universal nature. In this study it was argued that this story is centred around the theme of marital relations and the tension that may arise between husband and wife. This is a universal phenomenon and therefore the changing of the background does not have a serious impact on the depiction of the theme. The migration of the story does, however, have a significant effect upon the atmosphere of the story since the geographical environment is no longer in the Eastern Cape. It is assumed that the migration of the story to the Western Cape is due to practical reasons, since the film company is based there. The decision to film the events in Cape Town could also be due to financial considerations.

It seems as if there is a tendency to migrate the screening of written texts from the Eastern Cape to the Western Cape, since Peteni's "*KwaZidenge*" was also dealt with in this manner. It should however be kept in mind that the filming of Jordan's novel "*Ingqumbo yeminyanya*" took place in its original environment, namely the Eastern Cape (some scenes were filmed on the campus of the University of Fort Hare in Alice, Eastern Cape). Similarly, the filming of Mqhayi's "*Ityala lamawele*" took place in its original environment in the Eastern Cape (most of the scenes were filmed in the Double Drift game reserve between Alice and Peddie in the Eastern Cape). It is clear therefore that it is possible to shoot films in the Eastern Cape and film companies should be discouraged from migrating their productions from one province to another. The filming of the Xhosa novel "*Buzani kuBawo*" which is currently in progress is also being done on location. The shooting of the film is being done in local areas such as the Nkonkobe, Amhlathi, Ngqushwa and Mbhashe municipal areas. The film director wishes to prove that a film industry is possible in the Eastern Cape. There is no need to shoot films such as these in other areas.



There is no doubt that projects of this nature are costly and that they have severe financial implications for the filming company. However from a cultural viewpoint the screen adaptations of literary texts are a matter of great importance. Various avenues should be investigated in order to locate funding for these projects. For instance local government authorities could be approached with a request for the funding of these projects. In addition private companies that operate in the Eastern Cape such as grocery chain stores could also be encouraged to come forward and to provide funding for these projects.

Apart from these weaknesses, it can be concluded that the background of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) as found in the written version has been adapted successfully in the screen version.

It is important to note that changes to the original text are often caused by the fact that societies are different and that cultures are not the same. Adaptation within a cross-cultural environment may create significant challenges in the adaptation of a book into a screen production. Equally the adaptation of Olu Osofisan's "*Once Upon Four Robbers*" failed because of the respective societies (Nigeria vs United Kingdom) and the respective periods (1970 vs 1990): "the society and the historical period made the adaptation impossible. The 1970's Nigeria represents an environment totally different from the European audiences and the stage relationship different for both societies." (Martin *et al*, 2001:48).

As far as the language medium is concerned, the screen version of "*Unyana womntu*" is acted out in the Xhosa language. This is due to the fact that the original novel is written in Xhosa. The use of English subtitles in the screen version would however have been a significant advantage. This would have made it possible for the film to be broadcasted both nationally and internationally. This would mean that the film would not only reach South African viewers, but that it would also reach viewers in other African countries as well as in European countries.



In conclusion, it may be stated that the adaptation of the background of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) into a screen production with the same title, has generally been successful. Some of the background scenes have certainly been depicted more vividly, which has contributed to the effective development of the plot and the creation of a fitting atmosphere for the story. On the other hand, the adaptation process also shows certain weaknesses, such as the omission of the gallows scene with its unique environmental features. The omission of key background scenes such as these from the screen version has certainly compromised the adaptation process. In this respect, the adaptation process has not met the expectations

Chapter 4 dealt with the adaptation of the character element. This discussion took place within a particular theoretical framework which defined the essential elements of characterization within the novel and within the drama respectively.

As far as the adaptation of the cast of the story is concerned, it was found that the majority of the characters that appear in the written text are also found in the screen version, including characters such as Bantu, Dora, and Noziqhamo. A character such as Major Ncilashe who appears in the written text has been removed from the screen version, whilst new characters have been introduced into the screen version. These include Lizo Ngesi and Thembi. These new characters play a functional role in the screen version and their introduction may therefore be seen as a success.

The actions, dialogue and thoughts of the various characters have all been adapted to a greater or lesser degree during the transformation process. In the screen version Dora's actions are depicted more vividly, such as her drinking habits, as well as neglect of her parental duties. These negative actions are not depicted as vividly in the written text and therefore Dora's negative personal features are revealed more effectively in the screen version. In this respect the adaptation process is successful.

The removal of the gallows scene from the screen version does, however, have a negative effect upon the depiction of character. Bantu's actions during the traumatic experience as found in the written text are not revealed in the screen version. His actions in the execution room, his conversation (or lack thereof) with the executioner, as well as with the police escort, as well as his thoughts during the critical phase are not revealed. This study has shown that there has been considerable adaptation of the character element, as found in the written text of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989). In some instances, the adaptation process has contributed towards the successful depiction of the respective characters. The omission of the execution scene has, however, had a negative impact on the overall depiction of character in the screen version.

The aim of Chapter 5 was to analyse the adaptation of the plot of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) from a written text into a screen production. This analysis was based

upon a well-constructed theoretical framework that addressed the various aspects of the plot, as found within narrative texts.

It was found that it is the function of the plot to give the action a form that will help the reader to understand the relationship between the different elements of the story. Plot therefore is the structuring or arrangement of the events in a particular, meaningful manner. It is the way in which the constituting parts come together to form a complete unit. Conflict forms an integral part of the plot of the story. It permeates all aspects of the story from beginning to end. Selection of the relevant facts plays a most important role in the story and, having selected his/her facts, the author is then faced with the task of arranging them in a particular order. In some cases the facts may be presented in strict chronological order, whilst in other cases this order may not be adhered to.

This analysis of the adaptation of the plot structure of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989) consisted of two main components, namely the adaptation of the external structure as well as the adaptation of the internal structure of the novel into a screen production.

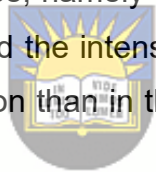
From the ensuing analysis, it became clear that a significant degree of adaptation has taken place and that the external structure of the screen version differs considerably from that of the original text. There are several variations in the lengths of the chapters that are found in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989). On the other hand, the individual units in the screen text have been cast into episodes of one hour in duration which means that they are identical in length. This is due to programming requirements, as stipulated by the South African Broadcasting Corporation. The various chapters of the written text therefore had to be restructured significantly to meet these requirements.

The discussion on the adaptation of the internal structure of the respective texts dealt with the phases of the exposition, climax and denouement. During the exposition phase of the screen version, extensive information is provided on the main characters and

their circumstances, which means that this phase of the story has been adapted successfully.

The fight between Bantu and Dora is presented more dramatically, more vividly and in greater depth on the screen than in the novel (Episode 3). In the written text it is only presented as a verbal confrontation (p.11). The court scene is also more detailed in the screen setting than in the novel as there are only two court sittings in the written text whilst in the screen version it starts from episode 6 and continues up to episode 11.

In the complication phase, however, a further strategy was identified during the adaptation process which is that of increased dramatization and intensification of the events. The strategies that were used have generally contributed towards the creation of a story which is more interesting and pleasurable to view. Furthermore, the requirements of the complication phase, namely that, as the events unfold, the situation becomes more and more complex and the intensity of the clashes increases, were met more successfully in the screen version than in the written version of "*Unyana womntu*" (Saule, 1989).



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As far as the climax is concerned, it was found that there is a vast difference between the events as presented in the written version versus those as presented in the screen text. This pertains in particular to the removal of the execution scene from the screen text. This strategy causes the story to lose its effect on the reader and the production becomes less dramatic and gripping in the process. In the screen version the events are not effectively escalated to a climax, owing to the release of Bantu before the sentence could take effect. This is due to the fact that the most important part of the story has not been adapted properly. The result is that the screen version does not have such a strong impact on the viewer as it has in the case of the written text.

It is not exactly clear why this important scene was omitted from the screen version, but it was found that this could be due to two possible reasons: firstly, financial constraints or, secondly, the need for socio-political correctness. It is a well-known fact that the film

company is based in Cape Town and therefore it was more economical for the company to shoot the film in that region. This important scene could also have been omitted because of a need for socio-political correctness. It is clear that the director of the series has applied a form of self-censorship by avoiding a matter that could be of a sensitive and controversial nature. This is certainly not a healthy approach since it means that in the future other matters that are politically sensitive such as corruption, or poor service delivery could also be avoided in the interest of political correctness. It is the duty of the artist to lay any form of social misconduct. It is not his/her duty to turn a blind eye to such malpractices. In this regard, the producer has certainly achieved his duty.

In the written text denouement is depicted as an emotional affair where Bantu is released from jail in the presence of his friend Noziqhamo as well as a large public gathering. The denouement in the screen version, on the other hand, is an anti-climax since Bantu is released from jail without any ceremony.

It is clear that some of the phases of the internal structure have been adapted successfully in the screen version, but there are also serious weaknesses with regard to adaptation of other phases. These weaknesses prevent the theme from being depicted successfully in the screen version.

It is also clear, however, that there are certain aspects of the adaptation process that show serious weaknesses. The most important of these is the depiction of the theme of the story. When the written text is analysed intensively it becomes clear that the author wishes to communicate a strong message to his reading public. This message deals with the issue of the death penalty, as practiced in South Africa up to 1990. The author wishes to emphasise the fact that there is always a possibility that an innocent person may be sentenced to death. Once the sentence has been commuted, it is impossible for the situation to be reversed even if new evidence could come to light proving the accused innocent.

In the screen text the execution scene has been removed and the accused has been awarded a life sentence instead. The removal of this scene means that Saule's important message, as intended in the original text, becomes lost in the process of transformation. This means that the adaptation process has deprived the original text of a large part of its original meaning and therefore the adaptation process should be regarded as being unsuccessful. It is recommended that when adaptations are made, one should not deviate from the theme as that leads to the creation of another story.



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