The (Re)Working of Dramatic Language in Janet Suzman's *The Free State*[1]

Marisa Keuris

Summary

In her play *The Free State: A South African Response to Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard"* Janet Suzman took Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* and transposed it into post-1994 South African idiom. A process of "acculturation" was thus used by Suzman, and she chose to change every element of the foreign/source text, *The Cherry Orchard,* when writing *The Free State*: setting, characters and language.

In this article I focus on how Suzman "reworked" the original dramatic dialogue of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* in her play *The Free State* by highlighting two issues: firstly, the use of dramatic utterances in the play and secondly, the discourse context(s) of the play. The discussion is placed within the context of work done by recent studies on dramatic language (for example by D. Birch, D. Burton, Vimala Herman, and others), which also incorporates studies in the field of discourse analysis.

Opsomming

Janet Suzman het in haar drama *The Free State: A South African Response to Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard"* Chekhov se *The Cherry Orchard* geneem en dit oorgeplaas in 'n post-1994 Suid-Afrikaanse idioom. 'n Proses van "akkulturasie" is deur Suzman gevolg en sy het gekies om elke aspek van die vreemde/bronteks, *The Cherry Orchard*, te verander na *The Free State*: plasing, karakters en taalgebruik.

In hierdie artikel fokus ek op hoe Suzman die oorspronklike dramatiese dialoog van Chekhov se *The Cherry Orchard* "herwerk" het deur twee aspekte uit te lig, naamlik, eerstens die gebruik van dramatiese uitinge in die drama, en tweedens, die diskoers konteks(te) van die drama. Die bespreking is geplaas binne die konteks van werk wat gedoen is in resente studies oor dramatiese taalgebruik (byvoorbeeld deur D. Birch, D. Burton, Vimala Herman, en andere), wat ook die veld van diskoersanalise omvat.

1. The full title of the play is: *The Free State: A South African Response to Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard"*. The shortened version, *The Free State,* will, however, be used throughout the article when referring to the play.

Introduction

Janet Suzman entitles her reworking of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* a "response" to his play. It is an interesting choice of words and one which immediately evokes the dialogic situation. Suzman, however, does not only place her play "in dialogue" with Chekhov's play, but also conveys with this word the fact that her play is not going to be a faithful rendition (or simply a "translation") of the original work. She defines her response to Chekhov's play as "South African" and thus immediately indicates to the reader/spectator that her play, *The Free State: A South African Response to Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard",* will be situated in a new context – indicating also that the play itself will be a complete rewriting in a South African idiom of the original play.

In an earlier article, titled "Found in Translation: Chekhov Revisited by Reza de Wet and Janet Suzman",[2] I focused specifically on the aspect of "translation" in Reza de Wet's *Three Sisters Two* and Janet Suzman's *The Free State* and discussed in Suzman's case, the process of acculturation[3] used by her regarding aspects of character, setting and language. Although I

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2. In my earlier article I discussed how Reza de Wet (*Drie susters twee/Three Sisters Two)* and Janet Suzman *(The Free State)* both created two new South African plays inspired by Chekhov's *Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard,* and focused in the discussion mainly on Aaltonen's contribution, trans-lation" within drama studies. Aaltonen uses the term "drama translation" in its widest possible sense and includes all types of dramatic and theatrical reworkings under this term. Translations can thus vary between the more "academic" or faithful translation of the source text and a "free" translation where the source text is partially or wholly adapted/changed in the new text.

3. The process of acculturation is defined by Aaltonen as

> a process which is employed to tone down the foreign by appropriating the unfamiliar "reality", and making the integration possible by blurring the borderline between the familiar and the unfamiliar,

and the process

> may also involve naturalization, in which the foreign becomes replaced by recognizable signs of the Self.
>
> Aaltonen 2000: 50

The process of acculturation (where every element of the source text, *The Cherry Orchard*, was changed in *The Free State*) was discussed in some detail in my earlier article (particularly the transformation of the characters and setting from Russian to South African).

discussed some aspects of dramatic language in that article, I mentioned then that this aspect should receive more attention and could be explored to a larger extent. This paper is an attempt to do this and will thus focus on Suzman's use of dramatic language in the play and, in particular, on how she approached and handled the (re)working of dramatic language from the source text, Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, to the newly created *The Free State: A South African Response to Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard"*.

Recent studies in dramatic language have been influenced substantially by the work done in discourse analysis, for example, David Birch's *The Language of Drama* (1991), and in particular, Vimalla Herman's *Dramatic Discourse: Dialogue as Interaction in Plays* (1995). Studies within discourse analysis with a more sociolinguistic slant, for example, Per Linell's *Approaching Dialogue: Talk, Interaction and Contexts in Dialogical Perspectives* (1998) also have great relevance for the study of dramatic language and dialogue.

Although much can be said about dramatic language in general and about Janet Suzman's use of it specifically in *The Free State,* I will discuss in this article only two main issues: firstly, the use of dramatic utterances in the play, and secondly, the discourse context(s) of the play.

1 Dramatic Utterances

1.1 The Use of a "South African" Idiom

Janet Suzman's play is, as mentioned in the introduction, not a mere translation of Chekhov's play, but is rather a reworking of the source text into a new play – one transposed into a South African idiom.[4] This

4. If one wants to commence one's study of dramatic language in the play by simply making an utterance-for-utterance comparison of Suzman's *The Free State* with an English (of course) translation of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, one is immediately confronted with the problem of which translation to use. Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* has been translated numerous times into English. About 40 English translations have been made (faithful renditions, as well as freer adaptations) and more are probably still being made. Janet Suzman mentions on the title page that she made use of a "translation by Tania Alexander", but refrains from giving a full reference to this translation. A search for this translation yielded only one printed version, namely the one by Pam Gems (see References). Suzman mentions the name of Michael Frayn in the Introduction and how he discusses in the introduction to his version of the play (see: References) the possibility that Varya "could well be the result of the dead husband's philanderings, hence her ready absorption

"transformation", however, does not simply entail a rewriting of all the dramatic utterances into South African English utterances. "South African idiom" is a more complex phenomenon and one understood by Janet Suzman as being part of and reflecting both the language and the socio-cultural diversity of South African society. She describes the South African situation as follows in the Introduction:

> [W]hereas in Russia the common language between the two estates is Russian, in South Africa there is no such binding unity, not in origin, nor history, nor culture. South Africa is polyglot and most South Africans will move from one language to another without noticing, even in a single phrase.
>
> (Suzman 2000: xxii)

The language diversity of South African society can be seen as the main feature of the dramatic utterances in this play and is implemented to such an extent that Suzman had to include a substantial glossary (approximately 10 pages) at the end of the play to explain all the Afrikaans, Sotho, Xhosa, Zulu (even German and French) words, phrases and slang used by the characters. It is, of course, rather difficult to reflect the South African society's diversity through the use of different indigenous languages in an English play. Suzman also readily admits the difficulty of such an enterprise and the fact that she sometimes had to compromise on this issue:

> I gave up on the question of language, because of course in reality Leko and Pitso would converse in Sotho. I partly solved it with the other black characters by having the "valet", Nyatso, arrogantly declare that he refuses to speak anything but English now, thus forcing Kele and Khokoloho to speak English as well.
>
> (Suzman 2000: xxxiv)

A problem such as this immediately foregrounds at least two aspects, namely (1) how the process of acculturation was accomplished in this play; and (2) how successful or not the issue of authenticity was handled in the characters' utterances. When comparing the various dramatic utterances in Suzman's play with Frayn's English version of *The Cherry Orchard*, it quickly becomes apparent that Suzman took great care to change all the characters' utterances in the source text to a new "South African idiom" –

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as a member of the family" (p. xxx) – an idea that Suzman takes over when she makes her character (Maria) the love child of Johan Rademeyer (Lulu's deceased husband). Since Michael Frayn's "version" is quite well known, I decided to use both of these translations when discussing and comparing Janet Suzman's *The Free State* with an English translation of *The Cherry Orchard*.

an enormous task and one that she herself describes as one that entailed "hundreds of details that needed reinterpretation" (p. xxxxviii).

Although many more can be given, the following few examples will have to suffice to illustrate the process of acculturation:

> In *The Cherry Orchard* characters drink "coffee" (1978: 5), while in *The Free State* "rooibos" (2000: 7); Gayev in *The Cherry Orchard* says about their journey: "The train was two hours late. How can that be? What kind of standards do these people have?" (1978: 4) versus Leo in *The Free State*: "The inland flights were grounded, y'know, by those idiots at Jo'burg. And for why? 'Ice on the wings' they said, and not a blowtorch in sight! Back to the Third world, hey Luly-pops? With a bump!" (2000: 6). Ranyevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard* says on arriving at the house: "Oh, but I love my country, God knows I do, I love it tenderly. I couldn't look out of the carriage window – I did nothing but weep." (1978: 9), versus Lulu in *The Free State*: "God knows, I love my country, love it! When I peered out of the plane at Africa, dappled like a huge old leopard, the tears kept coming, so not a thing could I see" (2000: 13).

The process of acculturation used in the above utterances and in every other utterance made by the characters in *The Free State* is closely linked to the aspect of authenticity, i.e. the question of how credible or not Suzman's use of the South African idiom is. Superficially, it seems as if these characters mix the various indigenous languages, make use of slang or colloquial language and therefore seem to speak in an authentic South African idiom. The following passage illustrates this "mixture":

> Stranger: Dankie, baas, dankie. Nice evening, my baas. (*He looks at LEKO and PITSO.)* Le etsang mo le malaani? (*What are you doing here with the laanies?)* Witboeties! (*He eyes MARIA.)* And who's this fancy little hotnot cherrie, hey *(Moves towards her.)* Give some change to a hungry man, kleinmiesies.
>
> (Suzman 2000: 43)

The only jarring notes in the play, however, are the mistakes[5] in the printed Afrikaans used in the text – mistakes that are very noticeable to any Afrikaans reader of the text. When placing these obvious errors against the backdrop of Suzman's rather negative comments regarding Afrikaners in

5. List of mistakes:
Karlotta (Act Two: "doring-boom"/doringboom, "Neewat"/ Nee, wat, (p. 28); Khoko: "meelies"/mielies; Karlotta: "jakals"/jakkals, "hoepel been"/hoepel-been (p. 29); Leo: "seë"/see (p. 42); Stanger: "mevrouw"/mevrou (p. 43); Lulu: "lekkerlewe"/lekker lewe (p. 66); Karlotta: "skatterbol"/skattebol (p. 67)

the Introduction, and the fact that Karlotta does not really convince as an "Afrikaans" character or as an Afrikaner, it will probably not be surprising that many Afrikaans readers will question the authenticity of these utterances.

1.2 Utterances-in-Context

Elam defines the context-of-utterance as follows: "It can be represented as speaker, listener, time of utterance now, location of utterance here and utterance. It is constant in that dramatic discourse is always tied to speaker, listener and its immediate spatio-temporal coordinates, but it is at the same time dynamic to the extent that the participants and the time and location of utterance indicated undergo continual change" (1980: 138).

Janet Suzman's reworking of *The Cherry Orchard* not only includes a transposing of *The Cherry Orchard's* characters' utterances from the original Russian via an English translation to a new South African idiom in *The Free State,* but, of necessity also entails the transposing of everything else as found in the context-of-utterance – the speakers, the listeners (see character list below), the time ("September 1994, six months after the first democratic elections"; 2000: xliv and the space ("the Clocolan area of the Free state"; 2000: xliv). In other words, the "context" of each utterance in *The Free State* has been changed. Suzman, in fact, spends most of the time in her long Introduction of 19 pages to discuss and explain how she transposed the characters, time and space of the source text into her new play. A summary is given below to illustrate the transposition that took place regarding the characters:

THE CHERRY ORCHARD	***THE FREE STATE***
Ranyevskaya	Lucy Rademeyer
Anya, her daughter; aged 17	Anna, Lucy's daughter, eighteen
Varya, her adopted daughter; aged 24	Maria, Lucy's late husband's child, adopted by her
Gayev, Ranyevskaya's brother	Leo Guyver
Lopakhin, a businessman	Leko, an entrepreneur; fifties
Trofimov, a student	Pitso, a radical student; late twenties
Simeonov-Pishchik, a landowner	B.S. Pickett (Pik), a neighbouring farmer; sixties

Charlotta Ivanovna, the governess	Karlotta, the Afrikaans secretary; sixties to seventies
Yepikhodov, the estate clerk	Khokoloho, trainee manager of the estate; late twenties
Dunyasha, the chambermaid	Dikeledi (Kele), the housemaid; seventeen
Firs, the footman; an old man of 87	Putswa, the ancient butler; eighties
Yasha, the young footman	Nyatso, Lucy's "valet"; twenties
A passer-by	The stranger
The stationmaster	

Suzman's transposition of the characters in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* to South African characters in *The Free State* is evident from the fact that she changed their race (Putswa, Nyatso, Dikeledi, Khokoloho, Leko, Pitso are all black South Africans, while Maria is a so-called Coloured girl), but she also made other changes to fit in with the political intentions she had for them in this play. For example, she changed the age of two of the characters to conform with her ideas on the roles that these characters should play in *The Free State* namely Leo Guyver ("He is fifty-one in Chekhov, though seems older; I add ten years to adjust his lifespan to South African events, but he seems younger .... He is basically harmless and out of his time – the epitome of someone born to a position he can no longer even try to justify: the white man in Africa"; pp. xxxiii – xxxiv), and Anna ("Anna, Chekhov has her a year younger and only on the brink of life. But she needs to be politically aware in this modern version and filled with the excitement of a new young South Africa – a first-time voter. She represents ... the perfect amalgam for the new democracy, the blood of both white races coursing in her veins, and eager to sit at the feet of her black lover and imbibe his ideas"; p. xxx). It is not only these two characters who are explicitly rewritten and changed to fit in with Suzman's particular political vision for this play – each character is seen through a political lens and fulfils such a role in the play (see her discussion of each character in the Introduction, as well as my discussion of the characters in the 2004 *JLS/TLW* article).

One scene is given below to illustrate the transposition of one context-of-utterance from *The Cherry Orchard* to the corresponding one in *The Free State.* It is the scene where Lopakhin/Leko informs Ranyevskaya/Lulu that he has bought the farm (Frayn's translation (1978) of *The Cherry Orchard* was used in the extract).

THE CHERRY ORCHARD **pp. 51-52**	***THE FREE STATE*** **pp. 59-60**
LOPAKHIN: I bought it. *RANYEVSKAYA is utterly cast down; if she were not standing beside the armchair and the table she would fall. VARYA takes the keys off her belt, throws them on the floor in the middle of the room, and goes out.* I bought it! One moment ... wait ... if you would, ladies and gentlemen ... My head's going round and round, I can't speak ... *(Laughs.)* ... I bid the mortage plus ninety, and there it stayed. So now the cherry orchard is mine! *(He gives a shout of laughter.)* Great God in heaven – the cherry orchard is mine! Tell me I'm drunk – I'm out of my mind – tell me it's all an illusion ... *(Stamps his feet up and down.)* Don't laugh at me! If my father and grandfather could rise from their graves and see it all happening – if they could see me, their Yermolay, their beaten, half-literate Yermolay, who ran barefoot in winter – if they could see this same Yermolay buying the estate ... The most beautiful thing in the entire world! I have bought the estate where my father and grandfather were slaves, where they weren't allowed even into the kitchens, I'm asleep – this is all just inside my head – a figment of the imagination ... *(Picks up the keys, smiling tenderly.)* She threw down the keys – she wants to	**LEKO**: I bought it. *LULU stunned. MARIA takes a bunch of keys from a pocket, walks towards LEKO and drops them on the floor at his feet.* *Exit MARIA. Enter KARLOTTA, KHOKOLOHO, NYATSO and KELE, variously to listen.* **LEKO:** I bought it! Just a sec, ladies and gentlemen – don't know if I can put my words together .... I go a million over his last bid of 900,000 and it's mine! He can't go any more, see? The smile is wiped! Bang on a million and the cherry orchard is mine, all mine! *He laughs – he holds his arm wide, embracing the air round LULU.* **LEKO:** The house is mine, the land is mine – could it be that you are mine? I am not drunk, I'm not sleep-walking, I'm not out of my mind ... ***(He lifts and stamps his feet in African dance mode, jubilant.)*** **My ancestors will see what I have done; they will rise from their graves and see how their son – little Masopha with the snotty nose, who could hardly add two and two, who ran kaalvoet in winter, who was always hungry – that same little Masopha now owns this land,**

demonstrate she's no longer mistress here. *(Jingles the keys.)* Well, it makes no odds. *The sound of the band tuning up.* Hey, you in the band! Play away. I want to hear you! Everyone come and watch Yermolay Lopakhin set about the cherry orchard with his axe! Watch the trees come done! Weekend houses, we'll build week-end houses, and our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren will see a new life here … Music! Let's have some music! *The music plays. RANYEVSKAYA has sunk down on to a chair and is weeping bitterly.*	**the finest thing in the whole wide world!** *(He runs down the steps and takes a fistful of earth from the flower beds – returns holding it high.)* **Eh, now my people can rest, the land is back where it has to be.** Did it happen? Do I dream it? No, look, she dropped these at my feet because she knows who runs the show. *(He picks up the keys.)* Well, so it is. **Hey bashimane,** let's hear some music! Now, my friends, you'll see how Masopha Lebaka takes his axe and chops down those trees, how that orchard falls down one by one! pah-papah! *He mimes the axe. A cry from LULU: ANNA stands behind her mother glaring at LEKO.* **LEKO:** We'll build the weekend **pondoks** and we'll build a fine new **township**, and our children and their children will live a whole new life here! Hey, there – music! **Mpapaleng! Bapalang mino** *(i.e. play music)!* *Music. KHOKOLOHO, KELE and NYATSO leave for the garden. LULU is crying bitterly. LEKO kneels beside her.*

In the above example it is clear from the passages in bold in *The Free State* how Suzman transformed Leko's utterances to convey how an African speaker would speak under these circumstances (in his happiness reverting to his mother tongue), and to demonstrate with the insertion of certain phrases (e.g. "Eh, now my people can rest, the land is back where it has to be"; p. 59) how these utterances are placed in a certain socio-political context (especially the whole issue of land restitution in South Africa).

The above scene was chosen because it is the obvious dramatic climax of the play. Frayn (in Chekov 1978: xvi) describes Lophakin's announcement that it was he who bought the estate "as the only one dramatic event ...

thrown up by the plot – its crisis". We (readers/spectators) have, however, been prepared for this scene from early on in the play. Leko tried on earlier occasions to advise Lulu on or warn her about what would happen if she did not act to prevent the sale of the orchard/farm (*The Free State*, Act One, pp. 15-16; Act Two, p. 33), but both Lulu and her brother Leo are incapable of making any decision on this matter, and simply ignore the problem. They either do not answer Leko when he wants to discuss his plan of action or simply deny that his plan can work. Even in the above scene Ranyevskaya and Varya/Lulu and Maria are incapable of talking to Lophakin/Leko and simply demonstrate through their actions how unhappy they are (crying/throwing down the keys) about the outcome of the sale – actions that Lophakin/Leko ironically interprets in such a manner as to suit his view on the matter.

Balukhaty (in Jackson 1967: 140) also states that "the basic everyday "event"– the sale of the estate – is predetermined from the start of the play and ... is the motive force which organizes the characters and the plot structure of the play, that is, the background against which the characters unfold". Balukhaty then proceeds to simply group the characters in *The Cherry Orchard* into two opposing factions (Ranevskaya and Gayev on the one hand and Lophakin, Trofimov and Anya on the other hand), while the sale of the estate is seen as the "common ground" between them. The polarisation of the main characters into two groups is not only discussed by him in terms of a "thematic (ideological) contrast" (p. 140), but (of more interest within the framework of this article) also in terms of the various tonal qualities of the different characters' speeches. In his discussion of this aspect Balukhaty demonstrates how the different speeches are defined by various lyrical and expressive tonal qualities. He also mentions in this regard how the extensive use of pauses in these speeches "conditions the lyrical character of the dialogue" (p. 142). (Even in the above extract of *The Cherry Orchard* one can find an example of how pauses are used by Lophakin as an integral part of his speech.)

Although the intention of this article is not to focus on an analysis of dramatic language as found in *The Cherry Orchard*, it is necessary to mention that the various speeches in *The Cherry Orchard* and *The Free State* do differ substantially in tone. Chekhov's plays are well known for the fact that his characters' speeches are often full of ironies and puns – and made up of utterances ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous (often in one speech turn). Janet Suzman's "response" to Chekhov's play in *The Free State* is so overwhelmingly political – she wants to convey an optimistic and positive "message" with her play at all cost – that we find that the ironies, tonal contrasts and other lyrical qualities of the utterances of the source text, have disappeared to a large extent in Suzman's play. The focus on creating a

"South African idiom" in the dialogue, as well as her determined belief in the so-called political message of her play, did not leave much room for utterances and speeches that could play with tonal qualities and ironic subtexts.

Herman (1995: 30) points out in her discussion of the context-of-utterance that dramatic situations highlight and heighten the various co-ordinates in the various contexts-of-utterances, because of the "multi-mediality" of drama (namely as seen in the use of visual or auditory codes in theatre). According to her, the notion of a "deictic centre" for speech makes immediate or present within the now of performed (or read) utterances the contexts of utterances which are presupposed by speech: "There is thus a 'double deixis' which permits the 'audience as audience' to be both 'inside' and 'outside' the contexts of utterance entailed by the speech events of the play" (1995: 30). We (as readers/audience) thus follow in the above extract both the "inside" context of the given speech event (i.e. the co-text of this conversation, in that various incidents/speeches in the play have led up to this specific speech event) and experience an "outside" context of the speech event (e.g. as readers of the text or as an audience of a particular production of this play). As will be indicated in the discussion that follows on the discourse context of this play, the latter context is always shifting and changing.

2 Discourse Context/Context(s) of Discourse

According to Linell (1998: 127), "what we say is not said only in and through words but largely between, behind and beyond words". Discourse is usually not only embedded in one "context", but rather in "a matrix of different kinds of contexts (or dimensions of context)" (p. 128). In the following short discussion I will highlight only some of the various kinds of contexts evoked by Suzman's play.

It is clear from the Introduction that Suzman's interest in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*[6] was mainly because of the parallels that could be drawn between Chekhov's Russian society and the South African situation. It is true that Chekhov's play is situated just before the Bolshevik revolution and thus before Russian society changed irrevocably. *The Cherry Orchard* was

6. The aspect of intertextuality is, of course, implied throughout in this discussion and one is reminded here of Sara Mills's remark that "intertextuality is one aspect of textual construction which brings about ambivalence within a text; if a statement from one text is integrated into another, it creates some sort of disjunction" (1997: 155).

first produced in 1904, when Russia was still ruled by Tsar Nicholas II. The revolution only took place in 1917 when the Tsar was ousted from absolute power. In 1918 a second Bolshevik revolution led to the establishment of a soviet, communist government, and to the death of the Tsar and of the rest of the Russian royal family. It is clear, however, in *The Cherry Orchard* that a fundamental shift had already occurred in that society and that the orchard's changing hands from Ranyevskaya to Lophakin is a mainly symbolic action. Suzman's version does not focus on the changes that must still take place in South African society, but rather focuses on the changes that had already taken place that she wants to "celebrate" through her play:

> With the hindsight of the new millennium we can look back and see that the miracle did, in fact, happen. The new order did take over from the old. The fruitless cherry orchard has been chopped down. The old men who couldn't move with the times have been left behind and forgotten. But the Rainbow forever shimmers on the nation's horizon as a distinct possibility. The Free State is both a query and a hope.
>
> (Suzman 2000: xxi)

It is clear from the above and from the first statement in her Introduction that Suzman wrote this play in 1996 as a celebration of the change that had taken place in South Africa: "This play is intended to celebrate the year 1994 when South Africa held its first democratic elections and optimism rode high". She also dedicates the play to Nelson Ronihlahla Mandela. Suzman's play is thus different from Chekhov's – not only because it is a new "South African" version of *The Cherry Orchard* – but because it has a specific political intention that is different to that of the original text. Suzman does not only state that she wants to celebrate the new South Africa with this play – she also ensures with the changes and insertions that she made in the text that this intention is brought to life in *The Free State.* It is namely not only in the various transpositions of the dramatic utterances (changing the characters' utterances to a South African idiom) and in the transformations of the various dramatic characters themselves (namely describing in the Introduction the various "political intention(s)" to be fulfilled by each character) that we see this aspect illustrated, it is rather in those passages that have been inserted into this new text that this process is most clearly illustrated.

A few short insertions occur in some of the passages (for example in Leko's speech above, where he says, "Eh, now my people can rest, the land is back where it has to be"), but I would rather like to highlight the two longer passages that Suzman inserted in her play as found on pages 37-42 and pages 63-65.

In the first example, in the source text (*The Cherry Orchard*, pp. 26-33) there is a conversation between a group of characters (Ranyevskaya, Gayev, Lophakin, Firs) about the past and their experiences of it. When Trofimov, Anya and Varya join the group, the topic changes and the conversation is dominated by Trofimov and Lophakin, with Trofimov speaking at length about the value of hard work, the relationship between the intelligentsia and their servants and the problem of poverty. Lophakin responds by saying that there are too few good people to make a difference in life. In Suzman's play this "conversation" was not only changed on the utterance level, but was also changed more substantially with the insertion of a longer passage. Although the participant framework is still made up of Leko, Lulu, Leo, Putswa, Anna, Pitso, and Maria, the main contributors to this conversation are Pitso, Leko, Leo and Lulu (the source text had only two characters conversing, namely Lophakin and Trofimov). This conversation is dominated by the characters' political statements and viewpoints to which the other characters react with opposing viewpoints, such as racism as linked to the actions of white people, problems of inequality such as poverty, black education, crime, etc. The passage in Chekov's play fits in with the wider context of Russia's socio-political problems as experienced during the production period of *The Cherry Orchard,* while Suzman's inserted longer passage addresses many of the socio-political issues of the South African situation during the democratic election period. The difference, however, is that Suzman's passage is characterised by a mainly positive tone regarding the changes that took place:

> PITSO: Just don't say the word "miracle".
> ANNA: It bloody well is! No civil war? That's a miracle. So there!
> (Suzman 2000: 40)

At the end of this conversation Leo ironically sings the Afrikaans version of the national anthem ("Die Stem") to the ridicule of the other participants.

In the second example, a passage is inserted which does not correspond to any passage in *The Cherry Orchard*. In this short conversation between Leko and Pitso (*The Free State;* pp. 64-65) Leko reveals to Pitso the reason why his hand is disfigured (a result of his political activist past). The gesture which accompanies the conversation is immediately accepted by Pitso as a sign of African solidarity ("they shake, African style"; p. 64). Suzman discusses this insertion in her Introduction, defending it as necessary within the political context of the play ("In defining the seemingly opposing views taken by Pitso and Leko, it was vital that Leko should also have a history of activity in the Struggle, although his life during those years is more shrouded than Pitso's .... So now Leko briefly reveals an intriguing history

of incarceration and torture, reluctantly showing Pitso a damaged hand"; p. xxxii).

It is therefore clear that Suzman "manipulated" various aspects in *The Free State* (the transformation of the characters, the insertion of individual utterances and even longer passages) to fit in with her stated intention with the play. David Birch states in the foreword to his book, *The Language of Drama*, that he strongly supports the idea of a "theory of drama praxis which calls for action in the form of change, both in terms of classroom and production practices involving drama, and in the larger institutional (ideological) practices of society" (1991: 2). Suzman's praxis in *The Free State* is, ironically, not *for change* to still take place in society, but rather to celebrate *the change* that had already taken place in South Africa in 1994.

Contexts, however, are always shifting and although one could have concluded with Suzman's positive vision of the new South Africa, the reader/spectator of the play always finds her-/himself in a changing context. Six years after the publication of the play one may wonder if Suzman's idealistic vision of the new South Africa, composed of a so-called Rainbow Nation, has not been dimmed somewhat by the realities of a society where HIV/AIDS, poverty and crime often constitute the main topics of conversation.

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