

Chapter 5

Synthesis

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This synthesis focuses on the research findings and conclusions of the study.

The study has concentrated on an encounter between an African view of psalm-like texts and the biblical psalms. I have chosen to explore this subject of psalm-like songs in African (*Pedi*) culture for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was because the experience of God/divine is not only confined to the biblical record, but is also indelibly embedded in the African (*Pedi*) religion and culture. Secondly, I embark on an attempt to provide a religious basis for an African (*Pedi*) view of divine experience, and thirdly, the study is an attempt to make a contribution to the development of African theology in general and to a *Pedi* understanding of divine experience in particular. By means of the use of indigenous knowledge systems (*Pedi* culture), the wealth of African religious culture and experience is simultaneously portrayed.

5.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

For many years, scholarly research has concentrated mainly on the Psalms, as documented in the Bible, and their parallels in the ancient Near East (Hallo and Younger 1997:538). Scholarly works have centered on the nature, function, use, structure and the origin of these psalms. So far, however, it appears that biblical scholars or scholars of religion have given little attention to the psalm-like texts in African

culture(s) (Adamo 2001:2-3). It might be that they are unaware of their existence and ignorant of their purpose and function. Yet, there are and have been many psalm-like songs in African culture(s) (Mbiti 1975; Idamoyibo 2005; Wanyama 2005). This study has produced evidence of this.

There is a need for an in-depth research on the nature, forms, uses, roles and contexts of psalm-like texts in African cultures, and a comparison between these and the Old Testament Psalms. Such an investigation in the *Pedi* tradition has hitherto been attempted.

5.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Since the Book of Psalms in the Old Testament has not been subjected to a comparative analysis with *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs, the prime objectives of the study were to:

- provide a descriptive assessment of the types of Old Testament psalms and their religious function(s);
- provide a descriptive assessment of different types of *Pedi* psalm-like songs and their religious function(s);
- compare these two literary traditions with regard to similarities and differences in their nature, content and function(s);
- contribute to the development of the African cultural heritage, especially the *Pedi* culture, by documenting and translating indigenous texts into English for future reference; and to
- document the oral heritage of *Pedi* psalm-like texts to preserve it for coming generations and further study.

However, it was not only the aim to document the oral heritage of *Pedi* psalm-like texts but to analyze them and determine the religious function(s) of their literary *genre*.

5.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is primarily a **literature study** based on primary oral traditions and secondary literature. In order to situate the study theoretically and generate the conceptual framework, secondary data was consulted and assessed. Secondary evidence included written sources like books, journals and other articles, MA and PhD theses, etc.

Due to the oral character and scope of the African context the literature aspect is complemented by a wider text sourced through interviews, observation and recording. Thus recordings on audiocassettes and videotapes captured group performances on *Pedi* psalm-like songs (see CD in the addendum). In this document the information on the psalm-like texts was translated into English. Collected *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs were classified and assessed according to their function(s). This was done by counterchecking, comparing, contrasting and corroborating the collected information of the various sources with the outlined theoretical framework, research questions, hypothesis and objectives.

This study has adopted a comparative approach based on Fiagbezi's ethno-musicological theoretical framework (see figure 1.1 on page 16). Equally this research draws from inculturation hermeneutics' emphasis and reappraisal of indigenous cultural systems (Adamo

2001:45; Ukpong 2002:18)⁶⁶. While inculturation is nuanced variously in different parts of the Third World, Fabella (2003:105) is of the opinion that it addresses the following concerns: first, culture is seen as comprehensive, taking into account the tension between the influences of modernity and Westernization on the peoples' culture as well as the traditional ways of life; second, as a dialogical process, inculturation takes into account the anti-life components in both the local culture and the biblical accounts (e.g. its patriarchal orientation), which must be critiqued and transformed. In this sense, Fabella (2003:105) insists that inculturation is liberative. Third, in our age inculturation is mainly the responsibility of the local community and religious communities/leaders, not of expatriate missionaries or of local experts alone. Fourth, inculturation is an ongoing process since culture is dynamic and continually evolves. Fifth, inculturation cannot be so local that religious faith is no longer recognizable by others within the communion of churches in general. Sixth, it is believed that divine intervention or involvement has an essential role in the work of inculturation⁶⁷.

Since this study is conducted in Biblical and Religious Studies, I have elected to commence with the descriptive analysis of biblical psalms, then followed by *Pedi* psalm-like texts. This approach does not necessarily mean that *Pedi* culture in general and *Pedi* psalm-like texts in particular, are less important or inferior to the study of the biblical tradition. But rather this approach enables the researcher to move

⁶⁶ Inculturation hermeneutics takes its cue from the methodology of Third World theology (Torres and Fabella 1987:269-271).

⁶⁷ Fabella (2003:105) continues to say that in Africa emphasis is given to cultural values such as relationship with ancestors, rites of passage, and traditional healing services. According to him Africans focus on the Africanization of Christianity rather than on the Christianization of Africa, while recognizing that not all aspects of African culture are in consonance with the Christian gospel.

from a well researched study field to a study field with a shorter research history-in many ways from the known to the unknown, from experienced to the less experienced research field.

5.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The current study may be considered as a pioneer investigation because preliminary research has revealed that there is no investigation that has employed a comparison between biblical psalms and *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs. The clearest differences and similarities between the biblical psalms and *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs relate to religious experience. A comparison of biblical psalms and *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs yielded the following significant similarities and differences.

5.5.1 Praise

5.5.1.1 Similarities

- Results from the present study suggest that the presence of praise in both biblical and *Pedi* traditions is realized. Praise highlights positive and hilarious situations in life. *Pedi* people and ancient Israelites alike materialize praise in song, meditation, ululations and dance. For example Old Testament recounts the practice through Meriam's performance in the song of victory at the Sea of Reeds (Exod 15). Equally recounting historical phenomena is a form of retaining traditions orally.
- It appears that in both biblical and *Pedi* traditions Songs of Praise are employed for religious purposes. Variations are noted in the area of functionality. Whereas the psalmists proclaim the

greatness of God, *Pedi* people on the other hand generally acknowledge the good work of distinguished members of the community. Although the presence of God is not pronounced in *Pedi* praise songs ultimately it is evident that *Pedi* people draw their abilities from their ancestors and deity. For that reason *Pedi* people praise their ancestors for achievements such as provision for rain (e.g. *Mogale wa marumo*).

5.5.1.2 Differences

- However, there are marked distinctions between the two traditions. While biblical psalms recollect God's acts in history *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs celebrate occurrences in life, responses from God and ancestors or people of worth in society. This matter reaches its limit when individuals sometimes sing their own praises (Kekana 2005:63).
- Results show that in the Psalms there is an acknowledgement of God's magnificence and the greatness of his works and deeds, whereas in the *Pedi* psalm-like texts (e.g *Mogale wa marumo*), the *Pedi* people acknowledge the good work or service of those members of the community noteworthy for their accomplishments. In any case distinguished personalities draw their abilities from the deity. Therefore, God and ancestors are praised indirectly through the valorous acts of these distinguished individuals.
- In praise, the worshipping individual or community offers adoration to the deity. In singing Hymns of Praise, (e.g Pss 8, 29, 47, 93, 95-100, 104, 113-115, 117, 135-136, 146-150), the congregation feels itself in the glorious and holy presence of

God. They extol what God is and does for the community. The *Pedi* sing praise songs to acknowledge the good work or service of those members of the community noteworthy of their accomplishments: for example, *matona* (headmen), *dikgoshi* (chiefs), *ditlogolo* (descendants) and other political figures. Then they praise and please the ancestors after every achievement, for example, after a good harvest, a patient's full recovery, etc.

- Whereas the psalmists praise God for magnificence and greatness of his historical works and deeds. *Pedi* worshippers focus on concrete ancestral interventions in their lives.

5.5.2 Thanksgiving

5.5.2.1 Similarities

- In both biblical psalms and *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs the divisions of individual and communal thanksgiving are found. However, Old Testament psalms emphasize the individuals' response to God's acts in the presence of their religious community (e.g. Pss 22; 40; 41 and 118). *Pedi* songs on the other hand pronounce communal aspects (e.g. *Kgoparara*). Responsorial devices are detectable in selected psalms as well as in *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs. Among *Pedi* people, particularly, during communal rites singing is often done in a responsorial manner between the leader and the participants.
- Thanksgiving songs serve the purpose of acknowledging God's response to petition in the presence of the religious community. There is a double speech direction, namely to God and to the community. Thus God's saving work is made known privately and congregationally.

5.5.2.2 Differences

- A comparison of Thanksgiving Songs in both Old Testament psalms and *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs yielded a significant difference: Old Testament worshippers acknowledge God's redeeming work while the *Pedi* people show appreciation and confidence in ancestors, as mediators to the Supreme Being/God.
- A marked distinction between biblical psalms and *Pedi* thanksgiving is noted. Whereas psalmists direct all their thanksgiving to God. *Pedi* people on the contrary address their ancestors. *Pedi* communal thanksgiving occasions such harvest celebrations are accompanied by rituals and feasting.

5.5.3 Lamenting

5.5.3.1 Similarities

- The similarity between Old Testament laments and *Pedi* lament songs is intriguing. Both traditions contain elements of complaint. Old Testament laments are directed towards God about whatever personal or communal crisis occasions their prayer. *Pedi* laments however are directed towards ancestors about misfortunes as well as towards enemies, and sometimes towards the lamenter himself (see for example *Pedi* funeral song *Madi a manaba*: blood of the adversaries/enemies). Old Testament and *Pedi* laments alike are characterized by honesty, pain, vindictiveness, despair and helplessness.
- Both the psalmists and *Pedi* people utilize laments for reorientation from situations of despair.

- Through lament ancient Israelites as well as *Pedi* people approach the deity in pursuit of redress. Laments reach a climax as victims complain against God in the psalms or towards ancestors among the *Pedi*. Nevertheless, just as the psalmists have trust in the ability of God to intervene so do the *Pedi* in their ancestors, who mediate deliverance and upliftment of distress with God/Supreme Being.
- Suffering is universal to people of different societies and historical periods. Since suffering is universal the use of laments under dire situations occurs in both traditions.

5.5.3.2 Differences

- It appears that a ritual expert may have exercised therapeutical functions in Israel during catastrophes. However this functionary is unattested to among *Pedi* people.
- Other differences arise from the prevalence of witchcraft in *Pedi* society. This practice is either suppressed or non-existent in Israel. The Israelite faith got rid of magical practices and rituals.
- Besides complaining to God *Pedi* people unlike psalmists may direct their laments towards ancestors and other people.
- On the other hand the presence of ancestors and witches in *Pedi* religious experience marks a clear distinction from biblical psalms.

5.5.4 Royal celebration

5.5.4.1 Similarities

- Both Royal Psalms and *Pedi* inauguration songs have elements of praise and petition (e.g. pleading for security, peace, justice and solidarity). *Pedi* royal inauguration songs have elements of praise and testimony (e.g. they are characterized by joy, self-confidence and imagination).
- In both traditions celebrating an aspect of life of the king or his responsibilities is a central theme. Occasions that elicit royal songs include weddings and pre-battle rituals in Israel while royal funerals are distinct among the *Pedi*.
- Both Royal Psalms and *Pedi* Royal Songs are employed at the inauguration and other important activities in the life of the royals.

5.5.4.2 Differences

- Royal Psalms in the Old Testament celebrated occasions in the earthly king's life like inauguration, weddings, coronations, preparation for battle, ritual enactments, and so forth. However, performance of royal inauguration songs in the *Pedi* tradition has served to reinforce knowledge about the community, its owners, and protocol for its usage.
- The Yahweh-is-king Psalms serve *inter alia* as praise of God's being and historical acts. He is portrayed as the ideal king after the failure of the earthly monarch (Pss 90-100). These psalms emphasize Yahweh's creative acts, judicial works, saving deeds and his greatness.

- Old Testament Royal Psalms address issues about the community's understanding of security, peace, justice, solidarity. The earthly king's rule should bring prosperity to the nation. This is the opposite to what the *Pedi* people are doing. When the *Pedi* people e.g. sing royal inauguration songs, they are making a statement about who the *Pedi* are as a people. They thus establish the otherness of the historical figures who achieved great accomplishments in their lifetime and are hence commonly accepted as poets. Consequently, through these songs *Pedi* people reaffirm their own cultural identity.
- Old Testament Royal Psalms probably grew out of contexts from the pre-exilic era. These psalms emphasize the relationship between king and God as they depict that the authority to rule derives from Yahweh. The central motif is the praise of Yahweh. To the contrary *Pedi* royalty is hereditary. Hence instead of emphasizing the divine *Pedi* people celebrate legendary heroes rehearsing their historical achievements, invoking and communicating tribal religious-culture. Since African music serves the purpose of translating experience of life and of the spiritual world into sound inevitably during coronation festivals, the conspicuous attendance of ancestors and deity are summoned. *Pedi* enthronement rituals are joyous occasions typified by the content elation, self-confidence and imagination in inauguration songs.
- A class of Yahweh-is-king Psalms addressed to God does not obtain in *Pedi* religious experience. While some Royal Psalms have strong emphasis on celebrative themes in the king's life *Pedi* songs focus on reinforcement of tribal tradition. Motifs such as security, peace, justice, solidarity and prosperous reign are

found in *Pedi* inauguration songs. On the contrary *Pedi* songs affirm communal aspects by celebrating and recounting legendary ethnic hero histories.

- Besides celebrating the king Royal Psalms convey praise to Yahweh (e.g. Pss 2; 110). This function is not evident in the examined *Pedi* inauguration songs.

5.5.5 Zion and the need for liberation, trust and peace

5.5.5.1 Similarities

- A common liberation thread runs through the Songs of Zion and *Pedi* liberation songs. Affected by exile the psalmists yearned for their return to Jerusalem. Zion is idealized as a place of safety and refuge in the Old Testament (Smith 1984:15; Kraus 1988:58). *Pedi* people, like many South Africans, longed and are still longing for an exploitation free country during and after the Apartheid era. Moreover, they desire better living conditions.
- By comparing Zion Songs and *Pedi* liberation songs results have shown that both Zion and liberation songs begin with a) despair and plea for a hearing; b) crisis situation(s); and c) petition and anticipation. Both are arousing and unlocking exhilaration in the reader's or performer's life. These songs reflect life with its depths and heights.
- In both traditions land is idealized as a sanctuary and place of freedom. The psalmists portray an image of mount Zion as God's dwelling place and consequently a place of refuge. *Pedi* and

South African liberation songs convey a futuristic land⁶⁸ of freedom and well being.

- Liberation songs are common to many people of the world. Oppressive regimes breed resistance. *Pedi* people like the ancient Israelites utilized songs for orientation during periods of distress like occupation and political exploitation. The psalmists praise Zion, a figurative representation of trust, peace and deliverance. At the centre of these songs is the indwelling presence of Yahweh. For that reason Zion cannot be moved. Her citizens are safe and secure. *Pedi* people raise their voices for mobilization and solidarity against tribal and national sufferings. In spite of the resemblances there is a variation regarding the role of God as protector and ally.
- The history of Israel is coloured by suffering and prosperity. The former is accentuated by the exile. Equally *Pedi* people and other Africans have been subjected to untold suffering. From such situations music and song have assisted in rallying people and reorienting despondent communities.

5.5.5.2 Differences

- Israelite Songs of Zion are primarily temple praise. Although in a dialectical style peace and war are mentioned, these songs mythologically represent the abode of Yahweh. Thus God extinguishes the adversaries flaming arrows from this refuge. On the other hand *Pedi* songs of liberation are a recollection of past

⁶⁸ Besides political connotation of apartheid songs a section of *Pedi* adherents of the Zion Christian Church like their fellow congregants hold a belief in symbolic religious significance of Mount Moria in Polokwane, South Africa. It appears that this sanctuary provides an earthly representation of a futuristic land of safety and hope in the presence of God.

oppression and subsequent emancipation. *Pedi* songs disseminate thematically concepts of nationhood, security and well being. A key difference is the remoteness of the deity in *Pedi* songs unlike Israel's Songs of Zion.

5.5.6 Promoting wise behaviour

5.5.6.1 Similarities

- Well being or a happy life is a central theme of wisdom songs in the Psalms and *Pedi* society. This is achieved through a didactic approach common in both traditions. Further similarities are drawn from the role of religious experience in originating wisdom in both societies. In Israel this matter is supported by belief that the fear of the Lord is foundational to wisdom. Likewise reverencing ancestors, religious functionaries and tribal traditions guarantees acceptable behaviour in the community.
- In each cultural group wisdom songs promote the correct behaviour. Psalms exhort morals through condemnation of indecency and appraising abstinence. *Pedi* girl initiation rites include songs which inculcate tribal values through advice to observe good behavioral value systems. Exemplarily girls are taught to sit properly and carry themselves with dignity public.
- Both Psalms and *Pedi* Wisdom Songs promote hard work and maximization of time. Laziness is thus eschewed.
- Cultural and religious education is conducted in homes, and cult in both Israel and *Pedi* societies.

5.5.6.2 Differences

- Wisdom psalms are however, distinguished from *Pedi* wisdom songs by the recurring motif of the fear of God. While wisdom may have been taught at the royal court, 'schools', and later the synagogue at a communal level in ancient Israel among *Pedi* people the initiation school for girls and boys is the main institution for inculcating wisdom in society.
- *Pedi* wisdom songs bear advice which seeks to promote cultural heritage, inspire respect, and deter crime and divorce.
- Another objective of *Pedi* songs is to train initiates in courage and endurance. Although both wisdom psalms and *Pedi* songs build courage and endurance, this function is particularly reserved for the training of initiates in *Pedi* society.

5.5.7 Expressing trust

5.5.7.1 Similarities

- Belief in the deity pervades both ancient Israel and *Pedi* society. Thus during calamities, danger and challenges individuals and communities place their trust in God. In this way redress is sought and anticipated. The exemplar *Salane* may be sung to address sickness, misfortunes, danger, defeat, barrenness and feuds. Similarly, Psalms of Trust (Pss 23; 27 and 62) portray calls for refuge and protection from one's enemies.

5.5.7.2 Differences

- At the core of Psalms of Trust is the desire to arouse a deep quest for God in the victim. *Pedi* Trust Songs on the other hand set the mood for the activities of diviners by conjuring the services of ancestral spirits. A diviner then falls into trance and is therefore able to communicate with spirits on the client's behalf.
- Wisdom psalms witness to the petitioners' trust in Yahweh whereas *Pedi* songs primarily evoke confidence in the acts of their ancestors.
- Psalms of Trust have a literary function of girding the entire Psalter through a network of expressions of faith. This device is unattested to in oral tribal *Pedi* culture.

5.5.8 Wrath given to God

5.5.8.1 Similarities

- Vengeance is common in imprecatory songs of both Psalms and *Pedi* people. The presence of enemies or offenders in Israel (Pss 69:4, 14, 27; 137:3, 7; 140:1-5) and *Pedi* (*Leepo*) societies respectively demand these songs.

5.5.8.2 Differences

- Although in both *Pedi* and Israelite religious experience vengeance is removed from the control of human beings a variation appears in terms of its implementation. This is illustrated by the recognition of God as the executor of

punishment in Israel while among the *Pedi* ancestors and custodians of traditions such as traditional healers carry out retribution;

- Another distinction found in *Pedi* society involves the aspect of restoring the offender as against mere destruction. In *Pedi* imprecation for example prostitutes and drunkards are censured in song in the hope of correcting their moral woes.
- The use of gestures, provocative stances and intimidating stances aimed at prostitutes in *Pedi* imprecation does not obtain in the Psalms.
- Through song the psalmists designate vengeance under the jurisdiction of the deity. On the other hand *Pedi* singers use imprecation to censure erring members of the community.

5.5.9 Structuring relationship with God/the divine

5.5.9.1 Similarities

- Instruction and the promotion of observance of God's laws is a critical function of Torah Psalms and *Pedi* law songs. Through singing and hearing God's precepts are taught and internalized to society.
- As a consequence of obedience blessings from the deity are anticipated in both traditions. In ancient Israel observance of the Torah was believed to result in benevolent purposes (Pss 1; 119:93). Likewise, *Bana ba Modimo* teaches that obedience to God's laws leads to God's presence and provision.

- In both cases the law builds a secure and safe community.

5.5.9.2 Differences

- The presence of ancestors as mediators of God's laws in *Pedi* society does not occur in Israel.
- Besides, the literary characteristic of the Torah is not recorded among oral *Pedi* people. Nevertheless, the hearing of laws induces similar responses in both communities⁶⁹.

5.5.10 Festive celebrations

5.5.10.1 Similarities

- In both ancient Israel and *Pedi* society festivities are occasioned by song, jubilation and dance. For example *Pedi* marriage celebrations also paralleled by Psalm 45 (a royal wedding song) are accompanied by the above festive moods. In approximation, harvest festivals were embellished in celebrative festivities.
- Psalms and *Pedi* festive songs alike serve the purpose of actualizing the past and anticipating the future. This function is exemplified by psalms related to the Passover. Similarly, *Ngwana malome nnyale* promotes aged *Pedi* intermarriage practices through recollection and foresee resemblances in the future.

⁶⁹ For example instruction (law) song *Bana ba Modimo* states that if members of the *Pedi* community want rain, they should abide with the instructions (laws) of God. One of the laws is that they must assemble every Wednesday for a joint prayer. By so doing they shall be remembering their Creator (God).

5.5.10.2 Differences

- Although historically Israel's main feasts were agricultural they later became centralized religious occasions observed at the temple in Jerusalem. This included *inter alia* the feasts of Passover, Booths and Weeks. In *Pedi* culture songs like *Ngwana malome nnyale* are primarily conducted for entertainment. However, like elsewhere in African societies *Pedi* people acknowledge the presence of ancestors at such events. Contrary to festival psalms where Yahweh is thematically pronounced the deity is inconspicuous in *Pedi* festival songs.
- Psalms related to the Passover recall and reflect the Egyptian experience and Israel's subsequent possession of the land of Canaan.
- Harvest festivals such as the feasts of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost are embellished in psalms marking thanksgiving for agricultural produce. Although *Pedi* people held feasts after harvest in the past these celebrations are no longer held.
- Another unique function of festive psalms may be observed at the New Year festival where the kingship of Yahweh figured prominently.

5.6 HYPOTHESIS

This study therefore proposes the following hypothesis for further scientific discussion on the importance of dialogue between biblical and African Traditional Religion's traditions.

Further it confirms the initial hypothesis that African (Pedi) psalm-like texts contribute to the communal experience and worship of (Pedi) Africans in ways that are both similar and different when compared with the role of biblical psalms in their ancient Israelite context(s).

While specifics of structure and content may differ, both traditions mediate religious experience of believers and enhance their worship of the divine.

This hypothesis is motivated by the following research elements, which include the following:

- A discussion in chapter two on types of biblical psalms illustrated that different psalms reflect different perspectives on the religious life and religious experience of ancient Israelites. There are different kinds of psalms. Each kind has its own religious function(s).
- A discussion of *Pedi* psalm-like texts in chapter three has illustrated that these texts also involve a variety of different songs dealing with various aspects of life and religious experience or worship in the community.
- The comparison between the two traditions in chapter four revealed that, when Psalms of the Old Testament are compared to the *Pedi* psalm-like texts, there appear to be

many general similarities between the songs of the two cultures with regard to a variety of issues. Nonetheless, there are also many significant differences on a variety of levels.

5.7 CONCLUSION

From this research it is evident that biblical psalms have religious 'equivalents' in African cultures and perform similar functions in traditional religious/ritual activities. The existence, content and structures of these African (*Pedi*) psalm-like songs have not been reflected thoroughly in contemporary scholarship or historical documentation.

In this research it was demonstrated that when Psalms of the Old Testament are compared to the *Pedi* psalm-like texts, definite conclusions follow. On the one hand, there appear to be many general similarities between the songs of the two cultures with regard to a variety of issues. On other hand, a closer look at the songs themselves reveals many significant differences on a variety of levels.

The different historical and cultural contexts of the two textual traditions suggests that each tradition must be appropriated in its own context. Only thereafter can commonalities of the human condition and oral affinity be established. *Both traditions indicate religious experience of believers and enhance their worship of the divine.*

While the African psalm-like texts exhibit rich cultural, moral and spiritual contents, modern biblical and religious scholars are yet to

recognize the need to discover their spiritual, moral and social impact on African worship.

On the basis of the above aims and discussions it is arguable that traditional African musical rites and practices should not be dismissed on face value as practices overtaken by circumstances and hence irrelevant to the present African community's developmental cultural and religious needs.

Pedi psalm-like songs are deeply rooted in myths, taboos and beliefs that form basic philosophical foundations of the *Pedi* cultural fabric and hence its context-utilitarian nature. Therefore, in order to appreciate the relevance of *Pedi* psalm-like songs, biblical and religious scholars/theologians need to be cognizant of its cultural underpinnings.

5.8 SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above findings I conclude with some suggestions.

- Further study should be conducted with regard to retention and transmission of *Pedi* cultural values.
- By so doing results thereof shall enrich education, African theology, indigenous knowledge as well as the preservation of *Pedi* cultural heritage.
- Further research into the function of music in *Pedi* religious rituals pertaining to initiation will advance the wealth of a *Pedi* approach to the divine and people's religious well being in difficult life situations.

These suggestions might be of value to African Christian theology. It is evident that the Bible can be interpreted by all cultures. Every culture is important. None of them is superior to others. Experience of Old Testament texts relates to any individual culture, including the *Pedi* culture.