



**THE RITUAL USE OF MUSIC
IN INDIGENOUS
AFRICAN RELIGION :
*A PEDI PERSPECTIVE***

M E K L E B A K A



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

**THE RITUAL USE OF MUSIC
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*A PEDI PERSPECTIVE***

**BY
MORAKENG EDWARD KENNETH LEBAKA**

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Supervisor : Prof D J Human

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PREFACE

This thesis would never have been possible without my interaction with many Pedi traditional doctors who are full members of Contradosa and the Sekhukhune branch of Contradosa respectively. I therefore wish to thank the chairperson of the Sekhukhune Contradosa, Madikedike Simon Sete for having made it possible for me to attend their rituals. I also had the opportunity to know his colleagues and interview them.



Plate A

Photo : Madikedike Simon Sete (Chairperson of the Sekhukhune Contradosa)

Photographer : Edward Lebaka (Author)

Date : 24 July 1998

Place : Kotsiri Village, Schoonoord (Sekhukhune Area) – Northern Province

Madikedike Simon Sete, a family friend of mine, is a teacher by profession. After having worked in this capacity for five years, he resigned, since his grandfather had instructed him to become a traditional doctor. It is with great gratitude that I recall the many pleasant times I spent with the traditional doctors. I was always well received and kindly assisted by the following **mathasana** (trainees) : Katsibane, Solly, Ruben, Pekwa, Segwarihle. I made numerous friends who made great efforts to let me feel at home.

I wish to express particular gratitude to the senior traditional doctor, Molangwana Matshege Christinah and her **mathasana** who always received me.



Plate B

Photo : Molangwana Matshege Christinah (Senior traditional doctor) and her

mathasana

Photographer : Edward Lebaka

Date : 24 May 1998

Place : Dingwane Village, Schoonoord-Sekhukhune Area (Northern Province)

Mathasana (From left to right). 1. Tšhupša Matšomane 2. Mashianoke Senatadi Phogole 3. Sophia Masalesa 4. Makgoga Hlupi Nkwana 5. Molangwana Mmashele 6. Edward Lebaka (Researcher – who is not one of the **mathasana**).

Seated from left to right : 7. Molangwana Matshege Christinah 8. Lekwana Manare Anna.

I used a Grundig VHS video camera and a Tempest audio tape cassette recorder to record the divination procedures and events. All personal interviews with the various people were also recorded with this equipment. I am indebted to these people, who permitted me to photograph them, their divination bones and their medicines without reservation.

The car travelled in during the field trips is a sedan, and not particularly designed for African conditions. On more than one occasion the author encountered extreme problems travelling on the gravel roads in the area, where research destinations were almost impossible to reach. But with the assistance of Simon Madikedike Sete and his Isuzu bakkie, we were able to surmount these difficulties.

It was both interesting and shocking to learn how these traditional doctors and **mathasana** (trainees) had suffered in the process of being called by their ancestors to the profession. Frightening experiences such as physical visitations by snakes, vivid visions during the night and nightmarish dreams were recalled by these traditional healers as consequences of initial defiance of ancestors' instructions.

During the course of the research for and the preparation of this thesis, I received the help and encouragement of many people. It is a privilege to express my thanks to them :

- Prof D J Human (my Supervisor and Supporter), Department of Old Testament Studies, University of Pretoria;
- Prof P A Geyser, Department of New Testament, University of Pretoria.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to Ms Rina van Coller, Bureau of Financial Analysis, University of Pretoria, for her secretarial assistance in preparing this document.

Finally, I would like to express appreciation for the encouragement and practical assistance of my wife Meriam "**Mahlako 'a Hlabirwa**".