

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ACTUALITY

With the study and research on modern music and religion almost overstretched, it is not surprising that a new research outlet will be a welcome source of information for the advancement of knowledge. In African indigenous religion ritual music is one area that requires scholarly attention. An investigation into the use and influence of pure, natural and authentic African music in the context of rituals in indigenous African religion is inevitable. With the attention of Ethnomusicologists, focusing on less esoteric musical types, one appreciates the need for a closer study of this type of music. Many scholars have been unopportunityed to gain access to this music or to have first hand information on the nature of these musical activities and its developmental prospects. This study is a contribution in furthering knowledge in Ethnomusicology and African Religion. The essence of worship in indigenous African Religion needs to be investigated, versus modern religion. The aim is to investigate similarities and differences in this regard. Therefore, the research has religious as well as musical aims.

1.1.1 Choice of subject

1.1.1.1 Pedi tradition

The Pedi tradition is the basic focus of this research. It is my tradition, in which traditional healers employ music during divination processes. Worship of the ancestors is conducted mainly through prayer (**go rapela**) and sacrifice (**go phasa**). It appears that certain songs performed by these traditional healers are regarded as having more ritual importance than others, such as "*salane*" and "*Leepo*". Songs such as these are re-employed in ritual events. They carry special significance, such as calling the ancestors to draw closer at times when problems seem particularly difficult to surmount.

1.1.1.2 Role of traditional healers in relation to their music

Pedi traditional healers' music constitutes short repetitive texts. The emphasis seems to be on the dance and not on the singing. The **malopo** cult in the Pedi tradition offers its followers in the Sekhukhune area an opportunity to express their emotions and to behave in ways which are unacceptable in the normal Sekhukhune society. An example of this is that in the normal Sekhukhune society aggression is frowned upon. During the malopo dance, though, it is acceptable. It also offers a very powerful stimulant (i.e. the trance state which brings relaxation). The **dingaka** (traditional healers) report that after a trance state they feel relaxed. They experience a break in what is normally a monotonous existence. The **malopo** doctor and the **mathasana** (trainees) offers an opportunity for social contact. Ritual

dancing is performed barefoot. The function of the traditional healers' music is to reinforce, or to strengthen them. It functions further to relate them and their trainees more closely to the ancestors. Great musical creativity is therefore expressed in their religious ritual performances.

Simon Madikedike Sete indicated in an interview (24 July 1998) that the most fundamental issue pertaining to **malopo** songs is that they define life as the Pedi people perceive it. Songs are performed in contexts where power is sought to maintain a lively social bond among the living, between the living and the ancestors and between the living, the ancestors and the-not-yet-born, as well as between all the mentioned subjects, God and the environment. **Malopo** songs are also reflecting music which creates identity. Their performance contexts are marked by the wearing of traditional regalia and contain the enactment scenes of the origins of man.

Dube (1959 : 131) commented : "Traditionally, when Africans worship, they sing and dance together. They have a tendency to become emotionally or spiritually involved in the service. This is not possible in western orientated services, where there is strict order and control by the leader, and where some spiritual peoples' feelings and emotions are not expressed".

1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

1.2.1 Introduction

This research presents an encounter between Christianity and traditional African concepts and life. It precipitates questions such as to what extent can theological meaning be found in tribal religions. Having found an answer, the issue is to relate it to Christian theology and life. Further questions are : In what language or vocabulary is the Christian message being conveyed to African peoples; to what extent can African languages sustain Biblical concepts? What theological issues are precipitated by this encounter and by the presence of the Christian church in Africa? And, what possibilities and limitations are there for the initiation and evolution of an "*African*" theology or more precisely, theological systems in Africa? What is to be African theology's peculiar content, and hence its contribution to Christian theology? These are a few of the many questions arising from this study. I have no pretence to answer them correctly, but simply to raise them in the context of this research.

1.2.2 Solving the problem

A literary study as well as field and laboratory work are essential for this research. The field work will involve participant observation on the part of the researcher. This means first hand observation of the use of music in the religious rituals under study. Necessary recordings and photographs will support this undertaking.

Interviews for the research will be conducted with necessary questions. Different sessions of similar rituals will be observed to ascertain the relevant inherent variations, before a conclusion is drawn. This laboratory method will involve a detailed study of the materials collected from the research field. Library research will also be used in documenting related literature and information on similar studies by others.

1.2.3 Aims

This study will gain further insight on the following :

- 1.2.3.1 It will critically examine the rituals which are performed by the organization of traditional doctors (Contradosa) in order to bring back home the spirit of dead persons so that he / she may be recognized as a protecting ancestor.
- 1.2.3.2 As it has been stated that ancestors, in African traditional religions, are part of the social fabric of the living people, this study will draw the attention of the reader to the part which ancestral spirits are thought to play in the lives of their descendants.
- 1.2.3.3 Finally, the study will let the reader also realize the therapeutic function of music in the divination process of the Pedi culture, as well as the relationship of music and the Bible, music and religion, music and ritual, the living and the living dead.

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

Music is the most important medium of communication in the religious ritual contexts of the Pedi tradition. It confirms how music is a very important vehicle in African religious experience.

1.4 METHOLOGICAL APPROACH

Methods used in carrying out the field work includes the :

- collection of data and information obtained from Pedi traditional doctors;
- recording and reflection of ritual songs and religious performances; and
- photographing material relevant to the survey.

All the traditional healers selected for this study live in the Sekhukhune area. The following procedures were followed :

- Eight of the most important **dingaka** (traditional healers) were selected from the forty seven **malopo** healers who were included in the research. The focus of this research is on the traditional healers' biographical profiles and personal songs.
- Personal interviews with every **ngaka** (traditional healer) will be reflected on.

- Most of the interviews took approximately two hours each. An initial as well as a follow-up interview was held with each **ngaka**.
- I presume that every song in which rhythmic complexity has occurred had more than one rhythmic pattern operating simultaneously. These rhythmic patterns were then identified.
- Having identified the rhythmic patterns, I danced with the traditional healers as a basis for understanding and transcribing the particular song. The procedure was repeated as often as necessary until a transcription was obtained which accounted for what happened in the song.
- Once the preliminary transcription was done, I designed a notation for the song. A quite extraordinary discovery is that the same notation could hardly ever be used for more than one song. Even though in the end, eight songs were completed.

1.5 CHAPTER DIVISION

Religious education in Africa has always been part of an overall educational tradition, either as practiced by indigenous societies or as imposed by outsiders. The purpose of this contribution is also to show that Indigenous African Education is largely informal and participatory : the young learned by participating in activities alongside their elders. The older generation would pass on to the young the knowledge, skills, modes of behaviour and beliefs deemed necessary for them, if they

were to play their social roles in adult life or to contribute to the continued existence of society.

From the first chapter, it is evident that the study will focus on three cultural streams in Africa, streams which all have left their marks on education : First the indigenous African society in which education is inseparable from the way of living and rarely institutionalized; secondly, the Pedi culture, religious at heart, with education simply organized but hardly distinguishable from the all-pervading religious way of living; and thirdly the Western education which was introduced by Christian missionaries. This tradition has brought very different individual and social values. The reader will also realize how Indigenous education is emphasizing spiritual and moral ways of living, because the ancestors are the "*living dead*".

Chapter two focuses on musico-religious aspects with reference to Biblical and Pedi perspectives. It includes descriptions of music in the Bible, music in Africa, music in religion as well as African ritual music.

In chapter three the reader will discover Pedi traditional religion and the role of music in the Pedi divination process. In this chapter it is portrayed that religion, as part of a specific historical and cultural stream, changes through time and can be fully understood only in relationship to its historical and cultural forms. This will emphasize how important the study of religion in the current world today is.

Any musician who is interested in indigenous music in general and in Pedi sounds in particular will find in chapter four a blend of Pedi

musical perspectives. It contains a portrait of a culture immersed in a musical and dance tradition. This chapter portrays the personal songs of the Sekhukhune traditional healers. It includes a personal song with its text and background, musical transcription, function and musical assessment.

Generally, with this study the ritual use and function of music in the Pedi tradition will be investigated. The aim is to ascertain the role of music in indigenous African religion. Information on various aspects of the theme will be documented. Traditional music and compositional materials will thus be preserved for further research. The study is also intended to draw the attention of scientists and researchers to the investigation of other indigenous and African religious rituals and their music. Suggestions are therefore meant to be a contribution to religious studies in traditional African beliefs.

CHAPTER 2

MUSICO-RELIGIOUS ASPECTS : BIBLICAL AND PEDI PERSPECTIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

For many centuries, music has been used in different indigenous African religious rituals as part of communal and personal rites (Krause, 1998 : 90). While some of these religious rituals have come to extinction, others are nearing extinction due to the fast disappearing adherents. In some African societies, such musico-religious practices have been restricted to the members of that society alone. In this study the researcher has first hand experience of Pedi music and ritual sessions. He will therefore give necessary perspectives on the topic. This will enable further research to build on existing insights and information. The study will also help to preserve and imprint the music in the Pedi tradition.

The purpose of this contribution is to show that Contradosa¹ indigenous religion needs not be seen as superstitious, magic or as evil. It can be seen as, and in fact is a respectable religion. It is meant to be part of respectable religion. Pedi music has its own place in the religious history of humankind. This merits respect as much as any other type of religion. Pedi musical and religious forms may be better understood, if they are seen as part of a community religion of

¹ Contradosa simply means Congress of Traditional Doctors of Southern Africa.

societies which developed in Africa since early times. It further went through a long history of change. Contradosa deserves respect for what it has achieved in the past in terms of culture and religion. That past will continue to live on in the modern states of Africa. Contradosa practices and beliefs are in need of study because it reflects an important part of African history and religion.

2.2 MUSIC IN THE BIBLE

2.2.1 Old Testament

2.2.1.1 Introduction

Although the prohibition against images (Deut 20 : 4) prevented Israel from developing an impressive tradition of visual art like the Greeks, music played a central part in its life. Every facet of its life and every stage of its history were marked by music. Music was present when people greeted each other and said farewell (Gen 31 : 27; Luk 15 : 25), when they married and were buried (Jer 7 : 34, 48 : 36), when they went off to war and were welcomed back from it (Jdg 30 : 34, Is 30 : 32). From the least to the greatest, biblical people sang and played instruments (1 Sam 16 : 18, Job 30 : 31). At the everyday level we find romantic songs, working songs and drinking songs (Song 1 : 9 – 17, 2 : 15; Is 21 : 11 – 12, 22 : 13; Ezek 33 : 32). Major events in the life of the people, such as the exodus from Egypt, conquering the Canaanites, recapturing the ark, dedicating the temple, crowning the king and returning from exile, were celebrated in music and song (Ryken et al., 1998 : 576).

Sometimes God or his spirit is said to be the source of the skills that produce music and song, so that music assumes the quality of a gift and inspiration from God (Ex 31 : 3, 6, 35 : 25, 36 : 1; 1 Chron 15 : 22, 25 : 7; 2 Chron 34 : 12; Ps 33 : 3). David describes himself as the God-anointed singer of Israel's songs (2 Sam 23 : 1). But the Bible also speaks more directly of God as a composer of songs and of the divine wisdom they contain (1 Kgs 4 : 29, 32). In Psalm 40 : 3 David claims that it is God who "*put a new song in my mouth*". Music played an important role in secular life and religious rituals of the Bible. The following descriptions reflect musical aspects in these spheres.

2.2.1.2 Secular use

2.2.1.2.1 Soothing

In its most primitive forms, music could be used to soothe a child or restive flocks of sheep. While engaging in strenuous or monotonous work (e.g. trading grapes Jer 25 : 30 and 48 : 33 or digging irrigation canals or wells (Num 21 : 17 – 18) or raising a new house or barn, musical chants could be used to help maintain the rhythm of the workers and speed completion of the day's toil.

In addition to expressing praise and joy, music is associated with such varied moods as consolation, thanksgiving and deliverance. When all is dark the psalmist finds that the Lord's song is with him as a kind of soothing nighttime lullaby to pacify him (Ps 42 : 8).

2.2.1.2.2 Celebrations

Another common use for music and dance would have been in celebrations, both large and small. They were used to mark the major events in the life of the people or just to express their joy and contentment with life. Thus, in Ecclesiastes 3 : 4, in the litany of the events of life, dancing is contrasted with mourning, (Lam 5 : 15 and Ps 30 : 11). Not all frivolity was acceptable to the biblical writers. However, for example, a mocking drunkard's song is mentioned in Psalm 69 : 12 and in Job 21:11-12 the sufferer observe with incomprehension that the children of the wicked dance while the wicked themselves sing to the rhythm of the tambourine, lyre, and pipe.

2.2.1.2.3 Weddings

Weddings were also occasions in which music and other merriment took place. Samson's riddle, so filled with alliteration and wordplay (Matthews, 1992 : 931), suggests a chant or plainsong style that would fit into the festivities of his marriage feast (Jdg 14 : 14). The ritual of the marriage feast also included a staged meeting between the bride and the groom's party. According to 1 Maccabees 9 : 379 they were accompanied by musicians playing tambourines (Matthews, 1992 : 931). They and the whole company then joined in songs as the feasting and other activities commenced (Jer 16 : 9). Curiously, the wedding feasts described in the New Testament (Math 22 : 1 – 13; Jhn 2 : 1 – 11) do not include any mention of musicians or songs.

However, these may have been such common aspects of the feast that they were simply to be assumed.

2.2.1.2.4 Births

Births, with their promise of new life and continuity of inheritance, were also marked by ceremony and ritualized singing. Even before the infant was born, chants and incantations were used to guard the birth process and effect a speedy and safe birth (Matthews, 1992 : 934). In preparation for the birth, midwives were called in. In some cases singers were also summoned to celebrate the birth and guard the child.

The use of the "*Fear not*" formula by the midwives according to Genesis 35 : 17 and 1 Samuel 4 : 20, followed by the mother naming the newborn child, suggests a traditional litany to be sung or chanted at the birth of sons. This is at least partially echoed in the Lucan account of Jesus' birth, where angels tell the shepherds not to fear, then name the child and sing in chorus (Luk 2 : 9 – 14).

2.2.1.2.5 Military

The military also made use of music. This was principally to rally their forces (Jdg 3 : 27, 6 : 34), to guide disparate groups of men on the battlefield, to signal troops to advance (Num 10 : 9) or to retreat. Matthews (1992 : 932) suggests there may have been preparatory "*war dances*" prior to battles. He cites Ezekiel 6 : 11, "*smite with your hand, and stamp with you foot*", as an allusion to such a dance.

Isaiah (13 : 3), which enjoins the soldiers to consecrate themselves before the coming battle, may also be an indication of ritual activity, including dance.

The trumpets used by Gideon (Jdg 7 : 15 – 24) served the additional function of startling the Midianites and aiding in the Israelites' surprise attack. Similarly, the blasting of rams' horns by the Israelite priests in the siege of Jericho added to the psychological effect after the people had marched in silence before the city for six days (Josh 6 : 3 – 16).

2.2.1.2.6 Victories

Especially military victories sparked spontaneous celebration and joy (Jdg 11 : 34). To commemorate these occasions heroic ballads and songs of praise to Jahweh were composed. Among the best examples of these hymns of thanksgiving, are the "*song of the sea*" (Ex 15 : 1 – 18), the ballad of victory over Sihon and the Amorites (Num 21 : 27 – 30), and the "*song of Deborah*" (Jdg 5). Each of these epic poems, as well as the shorter boastful chants of Lamech (Gen 4 : 23) and Samson (Jdg 15 : 16), have a rhythmic style.

The instrumental accompaniment, while subordinate to the reciting of the song, would have helped to create mood, heighten tension, and add to the symmetry of the composition (Matthews, 1992 : 930. Dance, too, would have been a part of these celebrations, as processions of women with hand-drums performed a "*round-dance*", as they joined the victorious soldiers or priests on their way to the sanctuary of Jahweh (Matthews, 1992 : 931).

2.2.1.3 Religious use

2.2.1.3.1 Mourning or lamentation

The use of music for religious purposes can be seen in both popular as well as institutionalized settings. For peasant and king alike, music served as part of the process of mourning or lamentation (2 Sam 3 : 32 – 34, Jdg 11 : 40). Funeral processions throughout the Ancient Near East included professional mourners, beating their foreheads, moaning, and shuffling to the sound of wailing flutes (Matthews, 1992 : 932). Sickness and premature death were basic facts of life for these ancient peoples. Thus they created songs, musical noisemakers (such as the bells on the robe of the high priest (Ex 28 : 33 – 35), and dances with an apotropaic purpose. The hope was that by soothing the sick (1 Sam 16 : 16) or frightening away the demons who caused the illness, a cure could be effected.

2 Chronicles 35 : 25 reports of professional singing mourners, male and female who "*spoke of Josiah in their lamentations*". From 2 Samuel 19 : 36 it is evident that Samuel feels, his life is not complete without music. Thus he expresses fear, for he says : "*can I hear anymore the voice of singing men and singing women?*" That is why he refuses to accompany King David.

Music was used in different forms and for different occasions, like death. This kind of occasion is painful, soar and heart rendering. Music for this type of occasion produces feelings of submissiveness whereas music of victory produces excitement and ecstasy.

2.2.1.3.2 Pilgrimages to sacred shrines and temples

Another occasion for religious singing would have been during pilgrimages to sacred shrines and temples. This was a common activity among the Israelites, starting in the settlement period. For instance, Elkanah and his family annually made the journey to Shiloh to worship before the ark of the covenant (1 Sam 1 : 3).

As music became more formal, professional guilds of musicians were employed to form choirs and orchestras which served at the various temples and shrines or in the palace. One sign of this is found in the book of Amos. During his stay at Bethel, Amos harangued against the emptiness of the worship in the temple there, declaring that Jahweh would no longer listen to the worshippers' songs and harps (Amos 5 : 23). Yet another indication of these musician guides is found in the Assyrian Annals. Following the siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrian King Sennacherib, King Hezekiah was forced to pay a huge ransom for the city. This ransom included male and female musicians (Matthews, 1992 : 933).

2.2.1.3.3 Passover

Following the construction of the temple in Jerusalem and the emphasis placed on annual festivals and sacrifice by the kings (especially Hezekiah and Josiah), annual events like the celebration of the Passover would have brought many people to the city. Along the way, entertainment would have included the singing of pilgrim songs,

such as the "*Songs of Ascent*", (Pss 120-134) which extol the opportunity to "*go up*" to Jerusalem and worship in the sanctuary at Zion. These songs are probably associated with the three great agricultural festivals (Ex 23 : 17, Deut 16 : 16).

2.2.1.3.4 Annual festival

There are in fact a whole group of "*enthronement psalms*" (e.g. Pss 2, 20, 72, 89, 101, 110, 144) which reiterate the Davidic dynasty's right to rule and which were probably used in an autumnal festival to commemorate its founding (Matthews, 1992 : 931).

Among the events that would have taken place in this annual festival is a grand procession, perhaps using Psalm 68, which exhorts the people: "*Sing to God, sing praises to his Name*" (Ps 68 : 4), in its opening chant. Priests and nobles, advisers and representatives of designated tribes, would march through the streets of Jerusalem to the temple with "*the singers in front, the minstrels last, between them maidens playing timbrels*" (Ps 68 : 25). There sacrifices and speeches would be made, which, as in this psalm, would include in condensed form the triumphant acts of Jahweh.

2.2.2 New Testament

2.2.2.1 Introduction

The New Testament has very little reflection on music. In 1 Corinthians (14 : 15) Paul encourages a certain method of musical

approach. References in the book of Revelation include the singing of the heavenly hosts. There is also a stray remark in two of the Epistles about the singing of hymns and spiritual songs, namely, Colossians 3 : 16 and Ephesians 5 : 19.

In the New Testament the emphasis is on personal or congregational singing. Mention of the hymn sung by Jesus and his disciples at the end of the meal in the upper room is made (Math 26 : 3, Mark 14 : 26).

Paul suggests to the Corinthian congregation that at their meetings everyone should be ready with a psalm (song) or a sermon or a revelation. Everyone should be prepared to sing or pray or bless God with both the spirit and the mind (1 Cor 14 : 15ff).

Concerning the Psalms Box (1996 : 11) commented : *"In the New Testament, the psalms are given new significance by being related to Christ. Augustine understood them as the prayer of Christ himself and the prayer of his body, the church"*.

2.2.2.2 Synagogue

It was in the synagogue, however, that music continued to flourish and serve as an emotional and didactic aid to the maintenance of Judaism. The levitical guilds were now gone and instrumental music was forbidden in the synagogue, leaving vocal music to evolve in a new way (Freedman, 1992 : 934). Thus the writers of the New Testament and the founders of the new Christian movement very likely adopted

what they knew of synagogue music to their own worship. That would explain why Paul, who is familiar with musical instruments, considered them *"lifeless"* (1 Cor 14 : 7 – 8) and promoted worship in the forms of *"psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord"* (Eph 5 : 19).

The borrowing from synagogue worship of both hymn and chorus singing added the emotional, communal feeling needed to help build the Christian community. Instruction without the freedom to express joy and praise would have quickly become dull. In any case, many of these early Christian groups met in the local synagogue. They would have been familiar with the form of worship conducted there. It would have been only natural to employ the same hymns they already knew while adding new ones to reflect their new theological understanding (Freedman, 1992 : 933). Among these may be the *"worthy art thou"* hymnic fragments (Rev 4 : 11; 5 : 9 – 10), and the songs of victory and assurance Rev 7 : 15 – 17; 11 : 17 – 18.

Mitchell 1978 : 17 mentions that Paul advises two of the young churches to *"teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God"* (Col 3 : 16, Eph 5 : 19). He suggests to the Corinthian congregation that *"I will sing with the spirit and with the mind also"* (1 Cor 14 : 15). James (5 : 13) exhorts his readers who are suffering to pray, any who are cheerful to sing praise. Paul and Silas exemplify the same convictions in the Phillipian jail as they first pray and then sing (Acts 16 : 25). In Hebrews 2 : 12 we find the affirmation, *"In the midst of the congregation I will (sing) praise (to) thee"*. Similarly in

Romans 15 : 9 it reads : "*Therefore I will praise thee among the Gentiles, and sing to thy name*".

Mitchell (1978 : 22) also emphasizes that singing becomes a kind of "*preparation*". For example, a "*prayer song*" becomes not a prayer itself but rather something to quiet the room and prepares people to pray. In such a case the music may help the experience of the spoken or silent prayer that follows. But this practice tended to erode meaningful (New Testament) singing, simply because it is perceived as a tool to accomplish a related task rather than being something of importance in itself.

Finally, I am convinced that music was part of the prime means of worship and praise. Nothing could bring the worshipper closer to God than the vehicle of music.

2.2.3 Musical instruments

2.2.3.1 Introduction

Musical instruments of biblical times can be scientifically classed into four groups, according to the means used to produce sound. They include idiophones (cymbals, tambourines) which produce sound by means of solid vibrating body; membranophones (drums) with a stretched membrane; chordophones (harps) with strings, and aerophones (flutes, trumpets, pipes, horns) in which vibrating air produces the sound. Instruments of all these classes are widely used

in religious music. Instruments are often played in groups or ensembles.

2.2.3.2 Idiophones

2.2.3.2.1 Cymbals and tambourines

People in the Old Testament were continually encouraged to praise God with cymbals, tambourines and other instruments (Quasten, 1983 : 62). The psalms are testimony to this.

The tambourine or timbrel, a hoop of bells over which a white skin was stretched, probably came from Egypt. Miriam might have used this instrument to accompany the singing and dancing on the shores of the Red Sea (Ex 15).

1 Chronicles (15 : 16 – 24) tells about Levites specializing in the art of cymbals, others in the art of psalteries and still others in the art of harps on the Sheminit, while a fourth group served as singers. We find a most instructive hint to the role of the conductor : *"It came even to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord"* (2 Chron 5 : 13).

While the timbrel seems to have been used primarily by women, the cymbal developed into a musical instrument in the skilled hands of trained Levites. Briefly mentioned in 2 Samuel 6 : 5, in the procession of the Ark, and repeated in 1 Chronicles 13 : 8, we note the cymbal is described in greater detail in 1 Chronicles 15 : 16, 19. A specific

group of Levites had been appointed to sound this instrument. Cymbals were made from copper or brass. The cymbal thus became a most legitimate musical instrument in Temple service. Hezekiah set the Levites in the House of the Lord with cymbals, according to the commandment of David (2 Chron 29:25). Zerubabel "*set priests with trumpets and the Levites with cymbals*" when the foundation of the Temple was laid (Ezra 3:10).

2.2.3.3. Membranophones

2.2.3.3.1 Drums

Genesis (31 : 27) indicates that the drum and lyre accompany songs. According to Isaiah (5 : 12, 30 : 32) and Psalm 81 : 3, the drum is made to "*sound out*". A "*frame drum*", a hand drum with a skin stretched over a circular, is also indicated in Jeremiah (31 : 4). 1 Samuel 10 : 5 and possibly Exodus 15 : 20 include the frame drum as part of the so-called "*Canaanite orchestra*" or band.

2.2.3.4 Aerophones

2.2.3.4.1 Trumpets

From 1 Chronicles (15 : 24, 16 : 6), Ezra (3 : 10) and Nehemiah (12 : 35, 41), it appears that trumpets were played by priests.

The above information leads to the assumption that when royalty or people of importance visit a certain place, the arrival is announced by

trumpets. This strengthens the importance of music during religious worship.

The book of Revelation can serve as a summary of what music means to the biblical imagination. Trumpets serve the ritualistic purpose of announcing the advent of times of judgment and redemption.

The silver trumpets made of hammered metal (Num 10 : 1) had a specific liturgical function at the end of the Old Testament period. 2 Kings (12 : 13) suggests that they also played a role in the temple at an earlier period. In Numbers, as in Ecclesiasticus, they are signs of divine favor. Numbers 10:8-10 confirms that "*the trumpets shall be to you a perpetual statute throughout your generations. On the day of gladness, on your feasts days and at the beginnings of your months you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and peace offerings, so that they may be to you a remembrance before your God*".

The trumpet was blown for decampment, and for the gathering of the people on different cultic occasions, especially during the sacrifice ritual (2 Chron 30 : 21, 35 : 15; Num 10 : 2). It was also the signaling instrument of the Egyptian army. The people under Jehoshaphat, returning with joy to Jerusalem after overcoming the Moabites, made joyful sounds "*with trumpets, kinnors and psalteries*".

Reading from Psalm 17 : 5, it is known that the sound of trumpets accompanied the **ritual** of the altar. A blare of silver trumpets blowing,

as it were, the sacrificial smoke heavenwards. Once the offering was consumed, the offertory music was silent.

Without doubt the two silver trumpets, used by priests exclusively, became one of the supreme symbols of the temple worship. "*And the Lord spoke unto Moses saying : make thee two trumpets of silver*" (Num 10 : 1). "*And the sons of Aaron, the priest shall blow with the trumpets*" (Num 10 : 8). The purposes for its use are clearly stated : calling the congregation to gather to the tent of meeting, moving the camp, going to war, and "*in the days of gladness in your appointed seasons, and new moons*".

Matthews (1992 : 623) describes the musical performance in the Jews' Second Temple by saying "*The morning sacrifice was accompanied by three trumpet blasts : the cymbals clashed, signaling the beginning of the Levitical chant*". At the end of each portion the trumpets joined the singing to indicate to the congregation the moment when they were to prostrate themselves. Every song was probably divided into three portions.

From 2 Chronicles (5 : 11 – 14), all the Levitical singers, Asaph, Heman and Jeduthum, their sons and kinsmen, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps and lyres. They stood east of the altar with one hundred and twenty priests who were trumpeters. It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. Songs were then raised with trumpets and cymbals or other musical instruments, in praise to the Lord.

The trumpets used by Gideon (Jdg 7 : 15 - 24) served the additional function of startling the Midianites and aiding in the Israelites' surprise attack.

With the establishment of a royal court, new applications for music and dance were introduced. The coronation of kings was announced by the blaring of trumpets (2 Sam 15 : 10; 1 Kgs 1 : 39). In Solomon's case a procession was marching to the tune of pipes (1 Kgs 1 : 40). The latter marks an intentional paralleling of his father's career.

2 Chronicles (29 : 24 - 28) states further, *"Then Hezekiah commanded that burnt offering be offered on the altar. And when the burnt offering was offered, they began to sing praise to the Lord and to blow the trumpets and to make music with all the instruments that David King of Israel, had established"*. While the whole assembly worshipped, the singers sang and the trumpets played, until the burnt offering was consumed.

2.2.3.4.2 Horns

The blasting of rams' horns by the Israelite priests in the siege of Jericho added to the psychological effect after the people had marched in silence before the city for six days (Josh 6 : 3 - 16).

It is noteworthy that the *"sons of Asaph"* are showcased in the ceremony dedicating the laying of the foundation of the restored temple (Ezra 3 : 10 - 11), playing trumpets and cymbals and singing responsively a hymn of praise to Jahweh. However, no musicians or

choirs are mentioned at all in Solomon's formal dedication of the temple (1 Kgs 8).

Upon reaching the city, David both worshipped and demonstrated his right to rule through the power of Yahweh and the ark by dancing "*with all his might*" as horns were played (2 Sam 6 : 14 – 15).

2.2.3.4.3 Flute

Psalm 4 indicates that the flute was used specially for dancing. The flute was used in conjunction with the timbrel. A reference to several different kinds of pipes or flutes is made in the Old Testament (1Kgs 1 : 40), although perhaps not including reed pipes.

Only Luke (7 : 32) and Matthew (11 : 7) mention fluting and dance in the New Testament. In the former this involves the play of children.

2.2.3.4.4 Pipes

The joy of the Israelite people when they cry "*God save King Solomon!*" who was promised a peaceful and prosperous reign, was shown by their music : "*The people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them*" (1 Kgs 9 : 40).

Stainer (1914 : 51) confirms the use of pipes by saying "*When the sounds of bagpipes, trumpets and harps gathered on the ear, to which the simple psalteries added their share, how every eye must have*

been strained to catch a glimpse of those strange believers in the unseen". According to him music is magnetic. He vividly tells about the power of music and how music can change human behaviour.

Jeremiah (48 : 36) and Matthew (9 : 23) confirm that reed-pipes were also associated with funeral songs. Reed instruments may have been used to express great *pathos*. A single-pipe was particularly popular at feasts (Isa 5 : 12; 30 : 29).

Genesis (4 : 21) reports that Jubal is presented as the *"father of all such as handle the pipe and harp"*.

2.2.3.5 Chordophones

2.2.3.5.1 Harps

Music, according to the Bible has significant uses. It affects man and changes his mood or emotions. Saul was most susceptible to it. After being anointed by Samuel he was sent on his way with the following instructions : *"You will meet a band of prophets with a harp, psaltery and a timbrel and a pipe, as they will be prophesying. And the spirit of the Lord will come mightily upon you, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and thou shalt be turned into another man"* (1Sam 10 : 5 – 6).

From the above statement, seemingly, the Spirit of the Lord is bestowed on man during religious rituals accompanied by music whereas in the African context the spirit of ancestors is invited first

through the offering of snuff tobacco. This ritual is also accompanied by music.

Laban, upbraiding Jacob for taking away with his daughters, exclaims: "*I might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with harp and tabret*" (Gen 31 : 27).

References to harps lend an otherworldly atmosphere to the picture of heavenly realism (Rev 5 : 8; 14 : 2; 15 : 2). Most pervasive of all is the singing of the saints in heaven about their redemption (Rev 5 : 12 – 13, 7 : 12, 11 : 17, 14 : 3, 15 : 3).

Among the Old Testament prophets music was purposefully used to eliminate tensions and obstacles in man. These obstacles could stand in the way of the infusion of the divine and its revelations (Quasten, 1983 : 40). Elisha used the music of the harp to prepare himself for prophecy (2 Kgs 3 : 15). It reads "*Bring me a harpist! And the harpist played, and the hand of the Lord came upon him*".

David had also entered Jerusalem in procession as the ark of the covenant was brought to the new capital city. On that occasion the people sang as they marched to the sound of harps, lyres, tambourines, castanets and cymbals (2 Sam 6 : 5)

It is significant that David and all Israel played before God with all their might on *kinnors* (lyre), *nebel*s (harp or psaltery) and timbrels (tambourine). In 1 Chronicles 15 the names of the players on *nebel*s are carefully recorded. It is evident that David himself was as

proficient on the nebel as on the kinnor, and that he set aside special players for special instruments (1Chron 25 : 1).

In the Book of Psalms (21 : 22; 31 : 2; 33 : 1 - 2) frequent mention is made of the nebel². This instrument was not restricted in its use to religious ceremonies. Isaiah (5 : 12) complains, "*The **kinnor**, and the **nebel**, the tabret, and pipe, and wine are in their feasts*" Amos (5 : 23) similarly reflects, "*Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy nebel*" The prophecies woe on them because they lie on beds of ivory, "*chant to the sound of the nebel, and drink wine in bowls*" (Amos 6 : 4 - 6)

2.3 MUSIC IN AFRICA

2.3.1 Introduction

"*The most distinctive of the African arts, however, are music and dancing*". The beadwork done by tribes such as the Ndebele is noteworthy (Cornish, 1963b : 285j). "*Africa's choreographic variety hinges on diversity of setting, personnel and purpose*", according to Cornish (1963a : 223t). Much of African music still has not been studied or described. But the initiated listener can usually identify African music easily. It has typical and unique features and seems to have had a long, independent development with relatively little outside influence.

² Nebel : Musical instrument on which David was proficient.

Cornish's viewpoint, namely that *"the most distinctive of the African arts, however, are music and dancing"*, is true. African music has a purity of its own, an undiluted touch with little outside influence. The reed pipe music by the Pedi for example has totally no outside influence.

African music has an essence of purity in itself. Collins (1992 : 10) commented : *"African music is mostly polyrhythmic, composed of multiple rhythms each with its own particular metre"*. Most African musicians combine multiple rhythms with their own particular metre.

For example :

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<i>è.ndòmbà</i>	•	•			•	•			•	•			•	•			•	•			•	•		
<i>dì.kpàkpà</i>																								
<i>ngùè</i>	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲			▲			▲			▲			▲			▲			▲

On the other hand Schmalenberger (1998 : 38) is of the opinion that in essence, African musicians and listeners perceive *"irregular rhythms"* as whole patterns, or Gestalts, and not *"as uneven subdivisions of a regular meter or accretions of different meters"*. To my mind, he is vague in his viewpoint. The question is: how can a listener and a musician perceive in the same manner? Furthermore the musician moulds and then transport the music rhythmically to the listener. Then the listener perceives in a different manner.

2.3.2 Characteristics of African music

2.3.2.1 Polyrhythmic patterns

African music is sophisticated, complex in structure and to most Western listeners, interesting, varied and appealing (Cornish 1963a : 223r).

The degree of complexity in African music, as in primitive music generally, is limited. The music must be learned by Africans from sound alone, that is, through the ear. It has to be remembered without recourse to mnemonic devices, such as musical notation. The music is composed by persons without formal musical training or knowledge of music theory (Cornish, 1963a : 233r).

I agree with Cornish. If one goes to one of the most rural corners of Africa, the best music is composed by very illiterate people. During my research, I met a few people in the Sekhukhune area (Northern Province), who are not musically literate. To my surprise these boys constructed guitars which were tuned to a definite fixed scale.

According to Chernoff (1979 : 95), the most evident dynamic feature of African music is the way the visual sonic rhythmic patterns are established in relationship with visual non-sonic rhythmic patterns. This creates a tension in time. This tension is built into the formal organization of the different parts of the ensemble. Chernoff's observation of how the relationship in African music creates the

tension in the organization in different parts of the ensemble to eventually produce the rhythm that one looks for in music is correct. The Pedi reed pipe music ensemble is clear evidence to corroborate this observation of Chernoff.

Further examples are found in the traditional healers' spiritual ritual ceremonies when they prepare to make contact with their ancestors. Kubik (1969 : 34) commented further : "*African music is organized into the sonic audible rhythmic patterns, visual sonic as well as visual non-sonic rhythmic patterns*".

One must visit some of these Pedi traditional healers' rituals personally to realize the beauty that these rhythms expose.

2.3.2.2 Silent gaps and tonal fluctuation

Collins (1992 : 13) pointed out that, beside polyrhythmic patterns, another feature of African music is the silent gaps between the individual pulses of the rhythm between the striking of the drum and bell, the clapping of the hands, or the downward movement of the feet.

Blacking (1970 : 207) notes that, tonal fluctuation is further an essential feature of South African ritualistic music. Many Pedi melodies "*seem to be derived from a conceptual framework of chords rather than single tones, so that a harmonized melody is the full realization of a sequence of blocks of sound and the single line of melody is in a sense incomplete*". The observations of Collins (1992 : 13) and

Blacking (1970 : 207) bring to the fore how the pulses and chords come together to produce harmonized melodies.

Barret (1971 : 61 – 62) maintains that every culture has its own particular scales. On African instruments one cannot transpose from one key to another, because the intervals of the scale are unequal. On the basis of his experience in East and South Africa, *"An African never speaks about scales because he does not know they exist"*. Nevertheless he tunes his instruments to a definite fixed scale according to his/her natural feeling for music.

I agree with Barrett in his statement. Most of the African illiterate guitarists construct a guitar without any knowledge of scales but when tuning the instruments, he tunes it to a definite fixed scale.

2.3.2.3 Call and response

Call and Response is the typical characteristic of African music. This feature is the repetition of a melodic fragment or entire melody, stated by one voice (the antecedent) and taken up by another (the consequent).

Cornish (1963a : 233s) commented : *"Although a good deal of African music is performed by individual singers or players in solo fashion, the typical way of making music is by alternation between a leader and a group or between two groups"*.

Music of the Pedi is frequently responsorial. A soloist or small group is leading, while a larger group, the entire village, responds (O'Brien, 1994 : 302).

Chernoff (1979 : 55) commented : *"In African music, the chorus or response is a rhythmic phrase which recurs regularly : the rhythms of a lead singer or musician vary and are cast against the steady repetition of the response"*.

This means that the chorus gives musical response to a lead singer. Various examples exist to verify the above observation. The Pedi traditional women dance groups, the traditional healers' rituals, Pedi Apostolic Church gatherings, the **mokhukhu** (male choir) of the Zion Christian Church (ZCC), and the spiritual gatherings of the ZCC (Saint Engenas) are a few examples to prove the feature.

2.3.2.4 Drumming

To activate or set any African musical rhythm in action, Africans would commence with the beat of the drum or the clapping of hands. One could refer again to the Pedi traditional dancers or reed pipe musicians, the traditional healers just to mention a few.

Jones (1954 : 395) confirms this when he says that, *"African rhythm is ultimately founded on drumming. Drumming can be replaced by hand clapping or the xylophone. What really matters is the act of beating"*.

2.3.2.5 Repetition

In almost all African music there is a dominant feature of repetition. This is developed from a dominant conversation with a clearly defined alternation, a swinging back and forth from solo to chorus or from solo to an emphatic instrumental reply (Chernoff, 1979 : 55). Most Pedi verbal music builds itself around the repetition of a dominant musical conversation.

O'Brien (1994 : 300) also states that a characteristic of African music is basic repetition or slight variation of a musical idea. O'Brien clearly reiterates Chernoff's observation in very slender form.

2.3.2.6 Polymetric

Chernoff (1979 : 45) pointed out that, African music is often characterized as polymetric. In contrast to most Western music, African music cannot be notated without assigning different meters to the different instruments of an ensemble.

I agree with Chernoff. Immediately when one tries to assign metres to the ensemble of African music, one can either distort, mislead or confuse the whole ensemble. Then the ensemble will lose its musical objectives.

2.3.3 "African" versus "Western" music

Most African music does not exist for listening pleasure alone, but is intended to accompany other activities. A great deal of African music is associated with religion and ritual, especially with ritual dancing. There are songs whose words give accounts of historical events; songs which voice protests against fate; songs which are sung at particular times of the year or at special events in a person's life like birth, puberty, marriage and death (Cornish, 1963a : 223r).

Schmalenberger (1998 : 37) is of the opinion that *"African music, with few exceptions, is to be regarded as music for the dance, although the dance involved may be entirely a mental one"*.

In Western music theory, rhythm is conceived as something divisive (Dargie, 1988 : 82). The singers are constantly aware of the breakings-up of the beat into more rapid movements. Even when they are not expressed audibly or visibly, the feelings of movement are present in the body. These movements are constantly exploited, not only for various body movements, but also for the placement of syllables in passages of rapid voice movement.

For African people to appreciate Western music the singers are involved in the physical facial and voice movement. Compared to the Pedi traditional healers' music one is introduced first to the verbal expression and then to the rhythm and body expression.

Chernoff (1979 : 91) maintains that, Westerners who learn to appreciate African music may easily forget problems they may have experienced. Once a Westerner understands the organizing principles of African music, he / she is prepared to relate to many of the artistic dimensions which an African musician creates. Chernoff might be a bit overenthusiastic. It is important to understand a culture and its music first in order to interpret it properly. Africans and Westerners experience sound and movement in a different way. *"Where Africans think of the sounds as a bi-product of rhythmical movement, Westerners pay more attention to the sounds than to the movement which causes them"* (Jones, 1954 : 395).

In contrast to most prioritized cultures, the Africans specialize in music (Cornish, 1963a : 223s). Most Africans know many songs. Many individuals know how to play different instruments. On the other hand, there are few famous musicians and no concerts. In the Western world concerts and operas are part of musical festivities.


Differences regarding rhythm is also evident between Africans and Westerners. *"Rhythm is to the African what harmony is to the Europeans, and it is in the complex interweaving of contrasting rhythmic patterns that he finds his greatest aesthetic satisfaction"* (Jones, 1954 : 395).


But there are also a few African musicians who have gained popularity and fame. There are for example, Meriam Makeba, Caifus Semanya, Jonas Kwankwa, Hugh Masekela. The list can go on and on.

Jones (1954 : 395) alluded a minor emphasis on harmony by Africans, but for Africans to produce the beauty of their music, the combination of their rhythm and harmony is very important too. To understand African music might not always be easy for Westerners. "*West African music, in particular, is so complex that non-Africans often cannot comprehend the rhythmic relationships*" (Schmalenberger, 1998 : 35).


Western assumptions about meter, in particular, were responsible for some early scholars' erroneous perceptions of African music. For example, Jones (Dudley 1996 : 272) drew a new measure line in his transcriptions of **Ewe** music everytime there was an accented beat, The result is that various parts of the same ensemble were portrayed as having different, and very irregular meters.


Kpanlogo music (Ga people):

Bell 

Rattle 

Gahu music (Ewe people):

Bell 

Rattle 

Western listeners and musicians often assume that the metric pulse will be audibly articulated and that certain pulses will be consistently accented. For example, the first quarter note in 3/4 time, the first and third quarter note in 4/4 time, or the first and fourth eighth notes in 6/8 time (Dudley, 1996 : 272). African musicians have many different kinds of meter which could be described as 4/4 time. These different rhythmic "*feelings*" all have the same number and value of main beats per cycle, but they are clearly distinguishable by their rhythmic accent and / or texture.

In African music, sounds which qualify as "*music* ("*song*"), are not conceived in the minds of performers in relation to a regular beat or bar (Blacking, 1984 : 1). It is not the same in the case of Western European music with its sequences of stronger and weaker beats (indicated by bar-lines). There is not a *priori* concept of "*strong*" and "*weak*" beats in traditional African music.

In Western staff notation (modified), the "*beat*" is represented by a crotchet, a dotted crotchet and notes of greater durational value, namely: minim, semi-breve. For the African musician it is difficult to isolate the concept of pulse from the rhythmic feel.

2.3.4 Music in religion

2.3.4.1 Introduction

Since religion is subject to cultural and historical influences, its traditions are always developing relative to particular times and places

(Mitchell, 1977 : x). A religion then, as part of a specific historical and cultural stream, changes through time. It can be fully understood only in relationship to its historical and cultural forms.

Therefore, different societies have their own specific concepts of music (Oosthuizen, 1976 : 98). They display specific behavioural patterns towards making music and response to music. They order their musical sound patterns in a specified manner. These patterns are determined by the commonly held concepts and related behaviour in a specific culture. Music, more than any other activity, defines life in a specific way in a specific culture.

Africans sing about their ancestors and their own social history in their sacred songs. Their ancestors accompany them during their migrations as well as in their encounter with other societies. Throughout the continent, it is the African belief that, wherever they go, they know that their ancestors are with them. Thus, they have songs with which they please or remind ancestors about their nearness.

Throughout the history of Christianity, music - mainly in the form of songs - has made a dynamic contribution in forwarding the work of the Kingdom of God. Bainton (1951 : 346) confirms that "*Next after theology, I give to music the highest place and the greatest honor. I would not exchange what little I know of music for something great*".

There is unfortunately a misconception among people that religion is rigid and that religious formulations cannot be changed. Some people

also believe that religion and scripture is the same thing. Religious formulations and expressions can change to suit the situation, although scripture is there and cannot change. That is why religious beliefs develop and can be expressed differently in various situations and cultures.

The strong love of poetry amongst the Jews is shown by frequent allusions in Holy scripture even as early as the Pentateuch (Stainer, 1914 : 6). The question is : where did they learn to set their inspired songs to tunes? In Egypt? Probably the glorious song of Moses was sung to a simple and well known or popular Egyptian chant.

"Luther valued music immensely" (King, 1990 : 35). He considered music a crucial element in theological education and ministry. He further emphasized that *"before a youth is ordained into the ministry, he should practice music in school"* (Plaas, 1959 : 980). For Luther, music went hand in hand with his theology. Not only did he honor music, but he employed music as the servant of his theology. Indeed, the Roman Catholic Church recognized the power and efficacy of Luther's hymns.

From a theological point of view and as a Lutheran, I underscore these viewpoints. Luther's hymns are both motivating, strengthening and inspiring.

2.3.4.2 Functions of music in religion

According to King (1990 : 36), a few major functions of music can contribute significantly in the religious experience and the training of effective church leadership. Music is able to serve as :

- a medium of communication;
- an effective ministry tool;
- a developer of theological understanding; and
- an initiator of contextualization.

2.3.4.2.1 Music as a medium of communication

Not only does music effectively articulate a people's theology, but it also serves as a medium of communication (King, 1990 : 38 – 39). Indeed, music is communication. This is a major assumption within African societies. Traditionally, music has been used to communicate a great variety of messages. On the coast of Senegal, Jomo Kenyatta (the late Kenian president) used music for political communication by setting his election platform to song. The songs travelled across the country informing the people of Kenyatta's position.

As Kenyain people are singing the songs, whether at an all-night evangelistic meeting or at a morning worship service, they are processing the content of the songs and applying them to their particular life situation. They find the songs helping them in their religious experience, in calming their emotions, in participating in

church life, and in applying scripture to their lives. Simultaneously they convey a political content.

African societies have music or instruments of music as a means of transporting messages or emotions. Even in coloured communities, hawkers sing their wares, for example, "lekker tamatie," (meaning: nice or tasteful tomato) in a musical form. Also in the Pedi society "dikgogo tša metono" (meaning: big curved chickens) is communicated in a musical form. Africans, with their dynamic models of musical communication, can offer the world new, bold and creative approaches to employ music wisely for the advancement of God's kingdom. Such a bold, creative and musical approach needs to be developed at theological institutions.

Through music one can make a point of entry into a non-believing society. If one has, for example, an accordion played whilst entering the community when the need arises, it will definitely attract people. The music will act as a launching pad for any religious meetings (e.g. church rally, youth conference, women's league, etc). As stated by Muller (1990 : 43), "*Amongst the black South Africans, music is a social art emphasizing communication and thus vocal music is predominant*". This statement is correct, but not all areas of musical communication is vocal. When looking at the Pedi traditional healers' rituals, the Pedi cultural pipe bands consist of instruments which are the main means of musical communication.

2.3.4.2.2 Music as an effective ministry tool

According to the book of Numbers (10 : 1 – 10, 35 – 36), Moses used music as one of the means to perform leadership tasks. Following God's instructions to make two silver trumpets, Moses had these instruments used as signaling devices to call the Israelite community together and to sound battle cries. Musical accompaniment was utilized at feasts and at New Moon festivals as memorials to God.

Leaders in the Bible wisely included music in their theological preparation and ministry styles (Matthews, 1992 : 934). Moses may well have been educated by the Egyptian priestly caste. Since such education included training in mathematics, music and dance, one might argue that Moses was trained at the equivalent of a *Sacred Academy of Music*.

On another occasion, again following the instructions of Jahweh, Moses taught the Israelites a special song. Deuteronomy 32 might have been used as a teaching device. Thus Moses incorporated music into this leadership skills and ministry, integrating it within his leadership approach. In addition to his roles as priest, judge, and prophet, he can be credited as a music educator of the Hebrews (Sendrey and Norton, 1964 : 4).

There are other Biblical leaders who also employed music in their leadership styles. Among them are Solomon with his literary output of 3 000 proverbs and 1 005 songs, (1 Kgs 4 : 32) and Hezekiah, who

restored the musical worship of Jahweh as the temple was re-opened, (2 Chron 29).

Worship without music is an unthinkable religious experience. King (1990 : 37) concurs : *"Omitting music certainly would save time, but people would go away and perhaps not come back, commenting that they had not worshipped. Worshipful singing allows us to offer a meaningful sacrifice of praise, (Hebrew 13 : 15) to our God, and to encounter God in a way that shapes how we live out our Christian lives during the week"*.

In support of King, it can be said that the Pedi community has largely broken away from the Orthodox churches to embrace the Apostolic way of worship. This is a result of the passive participation in these Orthodox churches. As the Pedi people are rhythmically inclined, they feel bored and uncomfortable in the Orthodox churches. One would ask why this is happening? It is mainly because people feel that the more they get physically involved in the singing, the drum beating, clapping of hands and the stamping of feet, the more they become emotionally involved in worshipping God. Thus it offers them a more meaningful sacrifice of praise.

2.3.4.2.3 Music as the developer of theological understanding

"In the absence of Bible, prayer book and an adequate catechism, it was natural from the hymns to serve as the theological frame of reference for the belief and practice of the emerging church" (Tippet, 1967 : 286).

Tippet (1967 : 287) demonstrates with his description the theological understandings of two different church groups by measuring the frequency and theological content of songs sung in worship services. His findings show that one church had a strong emphasis on faith through works, while the other group dwelt on faith through worship of a high God.

The theological development and understanding of Senufo Christians in the Ivory Coast can be assessed by comparing the texts of early Senufo Christian songs with those that have been developed through their own unique singing styles. They are created with their own hymnody. Growth in their understanding of God is further reflected in these songs (Tippet, 1967 : 238). The songs encapsulate the essence of their Christian growth. The sermons they have heard, their own personal study of Scripture, worship and prayer become the well-springs for their musical expressions. Tippet assessed the habits of the Senufo Christians to emphasize the role of music in their worship and understanding of God.

2.3.4.2.4 Music as an initiator of contextualization

Finally, the use of culturally appropriate music serves as a major means of bringing religious messages home, of making it relevant and meaningful to people within their own worlds. The problem of making the Christian message relevant within various societies, including the African context, remains an ongoing problem. The issue is confronting the serious Christian communicator. Too often religious messages have been accompanied by the introduction of culturally

unrecognizable musical instruments and forms. Suggestions for change abound. Byang Kato indeed recognized years ago that musical instruments such as the organ and piano can be replaced or supplemented with indigenous and easily acquired instruments, such as drums, cymbals and cornstalk instruments (King, 1985 : 24).

Kato (1979 : 31) maintains that Christianity must become relevant not only in outward forms, but also in biblically sound theological concepts and life changing applications for the incarnation of Christianity in Africa. Through appropriate musical training, theological education needs to take up and facilitate meaningful, creative contextualization. It should reflect that God is at home in Africa. On the other hand Barret (1971 : 61) argues that the desire to use local music in worship entails the responsibility of having at least a basic understanding of its nature.

Spencer (1983 : 73) insists that the religious music of slaves was embellished percussively by corporeal rhythmic. This include pounding the earth, body-slapping, and even holy dancing, all of which the rhythmic are of African descent. Response to rhythmic stimuli is for Africans instinctive and as certain as the physical reflexes. These corporeal modes of percussive response to rhythms in African music are intrinsic and immediate, for the corporeal instrument is always at hand.

The worship of the spiritual churches, for example: Zion Christian Church, Saint John Apostolic Church, Tshenolo the holy Church, etc, is lively and exciting (Obeng, 1988 : 106). Musical instruments like

drums are used during worship rituals. Hymns are composed to local tunes and they are accompanied by dancing and clapping of hands. The use of musical instruments in worship is also well known in the Old Testament (2 Sam 6 : 12ff). The introduction of these musical instruments into the worship of various African churches has not compromised the essence of Christian worship. It has rather encouraged maximum and unimpeded participation in worship by members. Noteworthy is the fact that even the mission churches have incorporated this practice into the worship. The massive draft of their members to the spiritual churches as a result of uninspiring worship, seems to have abated.

2.3.5 Ritual music

2.3.5.1 Introduction

Spiritual mediums are widely believed to mediate communication with the ancestors, whether it concerns the Pedi **badimo**, Ndebele **amadlozi**, the Shona **vadzimu** or **mhondoro** or others. It happens when these people are in a state of possession. Haar (1992 : 131) describes some characteristics of such a state, which is in conformity with the abovementioned statement. He says that, when a medium becomes possessed, then he / she behaves as if in a trance or hypnotic state. That possession is usually hastened by the playing of traditional music, while no alcohol or drugs are taken to induce the state of hypoglycemia. Once the trance state has been entered, conversation with the spirit can start.

Depending on the type of spirit and the experience of the medium, Haar (1992 : 132) adds, "*the medium may require music and dancing to go into the trance state or possession may be induced relatively easily, requiring merely that attendants welcome the spirit by rhythmic clapping of hands or simply giving the medium a little snuff tobacco*".

2.3.5.2 Therapeutic function

In Africa, as elsewhere, ritual behaviour is a way of communicating with the ancestors for the purpose of changing the human situation (Ray, 1976 : 78). As such, a ritual has two important dimensions : What it *says* and what it *does*. What a ritual does, or is believed to do, is a variety of practical things. Rituals are performed to cure illness, increase fertility, defeat enemies, change people's social status, remove impurity, and reveal the future. At the same time, ritual words and symbols also express important things about the nature of what is being done. For example, how and why men communicate with the ancestors, expel illness, settle moral conflicts, manipulate sacred power, make children into adults, control and renew the flow of time.

Rituals in African societies are further proof of their community orientation (Thorpe, 1991 : 121). A ritual usually demands participation by various tribal members, apart from the individual on whose behalf it is performed. Rituals often take the form of dramatic presentations among African people. By means of objectifying their inner fears and perplexities, the people are enabled to deal with their feelings in a meaningful and constructive way.

Ellingson (1976 : 169) states, "*Music is widely used as demarcator of ritual time and space. Music may begin before a ritual and end after it, enclosing the performance in a temporal bracket or frame*". This statement is correct. But I would like to broaden the picture. Music is also performed during African religious rituals, and not only when it starts or end. When the ritual is physically carried the music can also be stopped. For example, when a goat is offered to ancestral spirit during a ritual, the music can sometimes be stopped. This can also be done when members of the immediate family give specific messages in relation to the ritual or the offering. In this sense music functions throughout religious rituals in the Pedi culture.

2.3.5.3 Cohesive Function

"A by-product of traditional drum music is its capacity of fusing a community together. It does this by requiring, engendering and fostering a corporate spirit, a togetherness, both in the fashioning of the materials for music making and in the actual making of music" (Adegbite, 1968 : 24). Adegbite is correct, because when the community hears the thumping of drums, it sends out an invitation to a communal purpose. People then flock towards this, where they partake in ululating and hocketing in dancing depending on the occasion. The music brings them into a close-knit community at that time. People can even forget their differences.

CHAPTER 3

PEDI TRADITIONAL RELIGION AND THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN THE PEDI DIVINATION PROCESS

3.1 CONTRADOSA¹

3.1.1 Background to the establishment of the umbrella body (Contradosa)

In 1987, Steve Mamaro, Phare-Phare Mothupi, and Mandla Ndlovu had a meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to establish an African Traditional doctors' Organization because of the prevailing conflict (misunderstanding) between the liberation youth and the African traditional doctors.

Traditional doctors were burnt to death by the liberation youth who believed that they "*bewitched*" people. Another reason for convening this meeting was to establish communication and a mutual relationship between traditional doctors and the liberation youth to end this conflict (see addendum C).

On 5 April 1990, Steven Mamaro and nine traditional doctors met attorney Chachalia in Pietersburg to discuss the problem of traditional doctors being in possession of falsified certificates. Attorney Chachalia

¹ Contradosa : Congress of Traditional Doctors' of South Africa.

advised them to unify and to form one traditional doctors organization, which would represent all traditional doctors in South Africa.

Steve Mamaro had a burning desire to establish the organization, Contradosa. He visited the following places in pursuit of his objective : Masebene, Mogashoa, Ga-Matlala (Phokoane), Maila-Mapitsane, Mohlake, Ga-Malekane (Tubatse), Longtil location (Steelpoort area), Ga-Mathabatha (Malepisi) and Legolaneng (Tafelkop). After his consultation with all the chiefs and traditional doctors of the abovementioned villages, it was unanimously decided to have a meeting on 19 December 1990 at Jane Furse, to decide on the venue for meetings. In that meeting they agreed upon Lobethal Church Centre (in the Nebo area) as a venue.

On 12 January 1991, there was a general meeting of all the traditional doctors and their chiefs from all the above mentioned villages. An Executive Committee of the Congress of Traditional Doctors of South Africa was constituted (see addendum C).

The constitution was drafted in a following meeting, which was held on 6 February 1991 at the same venue, Lobethal Church center (see addendum D).

3.1.2 Establishment of the Sekhukhune African Traditional Doctors' Association

The announcement of the first meeting arranged by Simon Madikedike Sete was broadcasted over the radio. The meeting held at Ga-Maloma on 6 June 1996, was to inform traditional doctors about the formation

of an organization in the Northern Province, namely Kgolomodumo. This organization would replace Contradosa.

The provincial, regional and Sekhukhune Branch Committee members of Contradosa attended. They represented the following villages : Mathabatha, Motetema, Selala, Tšatane, Malegale, Mashabela, Selepe, Maandagshoek, Phokoane, Maila-Segolo and Diphale. There were fifty local traditional doctors and twenty one visitors. Most of the visitors were Contradosa affiliates. The regional president of Contradosa described how they formed one organization and why they are doing so. The provincial president, Letswalo, proposed that traditional doctors should be recognized by the government. Then the Sekhukhune branch committee was constituted.

Regional President of Contradosa, Makgarietse, congratulated the new committee and briefed them on their duties. On 16 June 1996, the constituted committee held their first meeting at Simon Madikedike Sete's home to decide on the name of the branch organization. It was decided to call it Sekhukhune Kgolomodumo. The constitution of the branch organization was then drafted (see addendum C).

On 2 October 1996, the committee held a meeting at Maloma Tribal Office in order to categorize diseases and the specialization of the various traditional doctors. Because of poor turnout at the meeting, the chairperson postponed the task of grouping the traditional doctors, leaving it up to the group leaders to arrange this. Madikedike Simon Sete advised the traditional doctors to work towards improving the patient-traditional doctor relationship. He recommended that traditional doctors keep clinical records of the various diseases.

3.2 PEDI CONCEPTION OF RELIGION

3.2.1 Introduction

Mönnig (1967 : 44) describes Pedi religion as follows :

"Pedi religion is not only individual in character, a striving by the individual for a proper relationship with the supernatural, but is also communal in its approach".

The above description reminds one of Mitchell (1977 : ix), with reference to religion. According to him, *"religion is what man does in his solitude to an expression of collective identity"* and from *"man's experience of awe and fascination before a tremendous mystery"* to *"Projective feelings of dependency"*.

Mönnig's definition about the Pedi religion is for Pedi believers a reality because the Pedi in its originality have no God, but **badimo** (ancestors). Before the reference to God was brought to the Pedi, the **badimo** was the strongest supernatural powers.

Mitchell (1967 : 44) is talking about religion as a phenomenon, not taken from any cultural group. He is vague in his documentation with reference to religion. It is a question whether the layman can really understand his explanation of religion.

Mitchell's statements are very vague, because he does not clarify which religion he is referring to. The question is : Is he referring to Christian beliefs, or to those of Islam or the Hindus, because they all

practice religion in different forms. To the best of my knowledge, among the Pedi, tribe religion is conceived as essentially a human product, though objectivated. It appears to have a being of its own and also in a certain way has an independent dynamic, like other products of human culture, such as language.

3.2.2 Idea of God among the Pedi

The Pedi word for God is **Modimo**. In connection with the creation, **Modimo** is also known as **Mmopabatho**, a word which may be translated as "*the Creator of man*".

The Pedi believe that **Modimo** is very closely associated with the elements of nature, e.g. wind, rain, hail and lightning. To a large extent these elements are personified by **Modimo**. All these elements are then considered as signs of, or as sent by, **Modimo**. Rain is a gift of God.

According to Mönning (1967 : 47), little more information can be elicited on the subject of **Modimo**, because Pedi notions of God are extremely vague. He is of the opinion that "*The Pedi do not pray to **Modimo** and have no direct contact with him in any way*".

In accordance with the idea of God among the Pedi, it seems as if Mönning (1967 : 47) did not research this topic in depth, but was only satisfied by the contribution of an individual, a single unbeliever. His statement "*The Pedi do not pray to **Modimo***" is questionable because in 1967, churches like the Apostolic Faith Mission, Zion Christian Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, to mention a few, were strongly

established in the area Mönnig which has visited. The Christian religious practices amongst the Pedi is so widespread and strong. Thus, one wonders how a statement of this nature could be put forward.

Mönnig (1967 : 47) is contradicting himself for mentioning that "*the Pedi word for God is **Modimo***" and all of a sudden he says : "*the Pedi do not pray to God*". This is a discrepancy in terms. Once a Pedi person refers to God as **Modimo**, that is enough proof that God exists for believers in this culture.

Mönnig argues that **Modimo** thus seems to have little or no bearing on the daily life of the Pedi. They have no contact with Him, or He with them. He does not appear in dreams, or in any other way like the ancestors. To the Pedi, **Modimo** belongs to a hazy supra-natural sphere (Mönnig, 1967 : 48).

I would like to dispute the fact that "*Modimo has no bearing on the daily life of the Pedi*" as commented by Mönnig (1967 : 47), because how then can the Pedi believe that rain is a gift from God? Actually the rain has a deep bearing with God on Pedi in their daily lives.

Very few researchers could bring it out more clearly than Mbiti (1970 : 91) that, African peoples do not consider God to be a human. In order to express certain concepts, they employ anthropomorphic language and images about Him.

I agree with Mbiti (1970 : 91) when he says that God is not human and therefore untouchable. God is, due to the influence of a

hierarchical society, nothing more than a glorified chief. He is the supreme Spirit, the Creator of everything. No one equals Him in power. He knows everything. This conception does not only apply to Africans. It also applies to Whites (Westerners) who do not consider God to be a human only. The Pedi nation, either heathen or Christian, strongly believes that God is untouchable, just like any other believer in God.

3.2.3 Pedi traditional belief

No matter how difficult life may be or may become, the Pedi religious belief, that if he / she communicates (pray) with God, there will eventually be some or total relief.

Van der Hooft (1979 : 147) commented as follows :

"A large percentage of the Pedi people living in the Northern Transvaal still believe that personality disorders are due to supernatural causes".

According to him, most of the disturbed individuals, or their relatives, consult the tribal doctors (**dingaka**) for an explanation or "reason" for their "symptoms". On the basis of this "diagnosis" they then attribute their "symptoms" to either the influence of their deceased ancestors (**Badimo**), or the interference of witches and wizards (**Baloi**), or the hand of God (**Modimo**).

Van der Hooft underscores the Pedi traditional belief, that dreams are the main channel of communication between the living and the "living dead". This form of communication is still dominating. It appears that

the Pedi, in addition to linear historical time with its commencement and termination, are aware of a Great Eternal Time. From this Great Eternal Time all life originates and to this Great Eternal Time it returns. This concept of time, as perceived by the Pedi, is related to their ancestor-worship. Man stands between the Great Eternal Time and linear time.

Van der Hooft (1979 :147) notes that "*most of the disturbed individuals consult the tribal doctors*". As a Pedi, I disagree with him when he uses the term tribal doctors instead of traditional doctors. He also made mention of "*deceased ancestors*" and "*living ancestors*" instead of using only "*ancestors*". Briefly Van der Hooft is using the wrong terminology. He further used the wrong phrase, "*the interference of witches and wizards (**Baloi**) or the hand of God*" (**Modimo**). The reason is that traditional doctors, when throwing divination bones, never contribute any misfortune to the hand of God.

I support Van der Hooft (1979 : 148) in his statement : "*the Pedi frequently say that the **badimo** (ancestors) are intermediaries of God*". It is also the case with the Moslems who believe that Mohammed is their intermediary to God. The Catholic believe that the Virgin Mary is their intermediary to God. This is similar with the Pedi who regard their forefathers to be their intermediaries to God.

The Pedi frequently say that the **badimo** (ancestors) are intermediaries of God. This seems to be an old belief, although it has been strengthened through contact with Christianity and the resultant attempt to ascribe larger powers to God.

The observation of Mönnig (1967 : 61) brings to the fore how the Pedi believe the ancestors to be immortal. No action or lack of action of the living can change this immortality.

I agree with the above observation of Mönnig, that "*the Pedi believe the ancestors to be immortal*". During my research, I was highly disappointed to notice how Jesus Christ is ignored by Pedi traditional healers, as the mediator between God and man. I have also discovered that Pedi religion involve much more than a belief in animistic spirits. The ancestors are part of a human family. Belief concerning the ancestors is indeed a marked feature in Pedi religion.

This research also led me to observe that Pedi religion takes many forms. It would perhaps be better to say that there are many aspects of Pedi religion. This include for example the belief in a creator God through ancestors. There is also the belief in the ancestors and ritual action (e.g. making offerings to the ancestors).

Willoughby (1928 : 1) concurs with Mönnig (1967 : 61) by saying : "*Ancestor worship amongst the Pedi is almost as conspicuous as in central Africa*". In my view the Pedi is actually conspicuous and not almost as conspicuous as Willoughby (1928 : 1) puts it. The Pedi revere their dead ancestors, because they believe that souls of men retain functional roles after death. These functional roles are believed to affect men who are still living.

Looking at the increasing number of Pedi traditional healers' students (trainees) today, approximately 50 per year, it is a proof of how more and more Pedi people are moving towards ancestral worship.

3.3 MAGIC AND DIVINATION

3.3.1 Magic

Butler (1949 : ix) is of the opinion that "*Magic, like poetry, resists precise definition, and in particular its connection with religion is perplexing*".

According to him there would appear to be no religion without some magic at its foundation. Certainly there is no magic in any significant sense without deep roots in religion.

Davies (1969 : 1) defines magic as "*the attempt on man's part to have intercourse with spiritual and supernatural beings, and to influence them for his benefit*". According to him, it rests upon the belief so prevalent in low civilizations, that the powers in the world on which human well-being depends are controlled by spiritual agents. He concludes by saying : "*Indeed, magic and religion have many and close affinities*."

It is difficult and, probably impossible to draw a hard and fast line between magic and religion. In most, if not in all positive religions, there are traces or survivals of magic. In the more advanced development of magic are the beginnings of religion. A moot question is this : Is magic prior to and a stepping stone to religion? Or, is it a step backward from religion, a corruption of religion, a belief, a practice involving a previous knowledge of religion, but a forsaking of it, or at any rate, a rejection of religion in favour of magic?

3.3.2 Divination

Davies (1969 : 6) defines divination as *"the attempt on man's part to obtain from the spiritual world, super-normal or superhuman knowledge"*.

Davies states that, divination takes for granted the primitive belief that spiritual beings are approachable by man, and they have means of knowledge which man has not. They are willing, on certain conditions known to divines, to communicate the special knowledge which they are believed to possess.

3.3.3 Magic and divination in relation to the Ancient Near East

Davies (1969 : 7) further relates the above information with the Ancient Near East. He says : *"When, as among the Israelites, divination co-existed with monotheism, or at any rate with monolatry, to use Stade's word. The modes of divination were but methods of consulting deity"*.

The above method of *"consulting deity"* as was used by the people in the Ancient Near East, is also common to the Pedi traditional healers to consult their ancestors. The Old Testament prophet, under such circumstances, differs from the Pedi diviner mainly in this. The Pedi diviner makes his appeal directly to God, without the employment of such means, as heathen soothsayers used. Both diviner and prophet believe in God. They also sought guidance from Him (Davies, 1969 : 6).

3.3.4 Magic and divination in relation to the Pedi

According to Pedi religious thought a great variety of supernatural forces may cause unfortunate events in peoples' lives. Sanctions may be brought down by the ancestor spirits. Night or day witches may cause harm, either maliciously or for the pleasure which they experience from doing evil. Such events may occur and interfere with all forms of human activity (Mönnig, 1967 : 78).

Various methods of divination are used by the Pedi traditional healers (**dingaka**). The most common method is the utilization of a set of divination bones (**vide** the following plate C).



Plate C : Utilization of a set of divination bones

Photo : Molangwana Matshege Christinah

Born : 2 February 1952

Photographer : Lebaka Edward (Researcher)

Place : Dingwane Village

Date : 24 July 1998

The set of divination bones (in the plate above) is called **dikgagara** or **ditaola**, derived respectively from the verbs **go gagara** (to kill completely) and **go laola** (to control) i.e. to diagnose the patient's problems.

Diviners are consulted about every aspect of life in the Pedi tradition. Imasogie (1985 : 67 – 68) clearly states that, if anything is lost, if a barren woman desires children, if there is a mysterious disease, if a man is troubled by strange dreams, or for many other causes, the diviner is sought out and has recourse to geomancy.

Mitchell (1977 : 40) maintains that there are numerous methods of divination practiced by African peoples. The method cited above is an exceedingly simple one. The answer from the patient or whoever diagnosed is either "Yes" or "No" as a response to the question, Do you agree? The question is asked by the traditional doctor. If the issue is complex, such a method might be repeated a number of times before the answer to a question like "*what is the cause of brother's death?*" can be given.

I agree with Imasogie (1985 : 67) for mentioning that "*if a man is troubled by strange dreams, the diviner is sought out*". As typical Pedi, I am an eye witness to this. Whenever any Pedi has an element of doubt in daily life, he does not only consult a traditional healer, but also consults prophetic diviners. People are therefore going, for example, to the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) or to the Saint John Apostolic Church.

What the Pedi are doing today coincides with practices in Biblical times (Gen. 30 : 14), that is : herbal practices. The findings from this research correlates with what was practiced in the Biblical times. For when Leah wanted more children, her son Reuben went into the field and brought her "*mandrakes*" (*dudaim*) fruit. To my mind, Davies (1969 : 85) has a good collaboration of events with what is happening in the Pedi society. Pedi traditional healers also have a special medicine (herb) similar to "*dudaim*" fruit for women who want more children like Leah. In my personal communication with Pedi traditional healers, namely Madikedike Simon Sete, Mamagabe Michael Tjabadi and Manare Anna Lekwana on the 24 July 1998, I was told that many women with the same problem as Leah were assisted by that type of a herb, and later had more children.

Haar (1992 : 215) makes a statement, "*Healing is common to Christianity, African Traditional Religions and to other faiths*". It is due to the fact that the religious and traditional practices have the same eventuality. Only the method of reaching the eventuality is different. But their objectives are the same : the well-being of the person.

The main line churches used to hold a very negative view of traditional medical practices and practitioners (many still do so today) and tried to discourage the use of traditional medicines as much as possible. They did so for a number of reasons. **Firstly**, because it was felt that traditional healers encouraged the belief in witchcraft, which was considered one of the greatest hindrances to Christian missionary work. **Secondly**, because early missionaries tended to regard the traditional healer as a rogue and a deceiver. Moreover, the traditional beliefs of the people were discarded as pagan and superstitious, in accordance with the Western prejudices of the time. Christian education and mission hospitals had the effect of weakening these traditional beliefs. They proved effective instruments for conversion to Christianity.

3.4 ANCESTOR VENERATION

3.4.1 Human contact and relationship with the departed

3.4.1.1 Introduction

Every African society has ways of establishing and maintaining contact between human beings and the departed. These include the pouring of libation, giving formal and informal offerings (mainly food), making sacrifices, propitiating, praying and fulfilling requests made by the departed.

Goats and sheep are much more frequently sacrificed to ancestors of private families, but in the Pedi tradition tribe cattle are regarded as the correct offering to spirits of status. Fowls and goats are the most

common sacrificial victims, but tribal theories about the relative value of goats and sheep as peculiar offerings are incomprehensibly discordant.

3.4.1.2 Existence of ancestors

As a Pedi believer, I believe that the ancestors were human, but they have acquired additional powers after death. Men seek to obtain their blessing or to avert their anger by due offerings.

God, according to Pedi tradition, is the primordial ancestor of the tribe. He works hand in glove with the ancestors. As such, ancestors deserve to be worshipped. During my research, I have observed that, when praying and pouring libation, the Pedi traditional healers mention names of the departed. They have concluded with the mentioning of God's name on religious rituals. This confirms to me the close relationship between God and the departed (ancestors).

The observation of Adeyemo (1979 : 37) brings to the fore how sacrifices are offered to a spirit or supernatural being, who is supposed to be more powerful than human beings in the natural state. He also stressed that, *"sometimes sacrifices are offered to the ancestors who are more powerful than the living, and in a few rare instances to the supreme God"*.

One should remember that the living dead are still members of their human families. People include them in activities in which they would normally have taken part as if they were still physically alive. According to Pedi culture, if a wedding or other celebration is taking

place within the family, two elderly people in the family accompanied by either the groom or bride visit the concerned ancestor at the graveyard as a signal of respect. The visit functions as an announcement of the coming celebration while it also serves as a plea for the smooth running of the occasion. If one ignores the process, the bride or groom is likely to encounter problems. The occasion may be disrupted by many things, like people fighting one another, or bride and /or groom fainting whilst dancing.

Very few researchers could bring it out more clearly than Mbiti (1970 : 267). He states that the departed appear generally to the older members of their surviving human families, for a friendly visit in order to inquire about family affairs, to warn of impending danger, or to demand a sacrifice or offering. It might also be to request or command something specifically.

The above information correlates with the observation of Olupona (1993 : vii) namely, that "*the African emphasis on ancestors could help us to develop a more critical patriotism*". He notes that very few people can exist without being at home in a "*tribe*", a country, and a language. According to him, to take the ancestors away from the Africans, you destroy their roots of the past, their culture, their dignity and their understanding of *communio sanctorum*.

No words could emphasize Olupona's observation better than how he states it. To cut a man completely away from the heritage that his ancestors left him, the mental and spiritual environment of his earlier years, would be to sever him from all that he has hitherto held sacred.

Lehman (1997 : 18) mentions that *"the God you don't know is very much more attractive than the one you do know"*. His statement is purely a result of Euro-Western influence. Before the reference to God was brought to the Africans by missionaries, Africans were worshipping their ancestors. After the work of missionaries in Africa, confusion started to build among Africans. Many Africans are in a dilemma. They don't know whom to worship. Some are even worshipping both God and ancestors. Willougby's research (1928 : xix) confirms this. He succinctly states that the western missionaries actually tried to make people understand that respect and prayers for ancestors was in fact paganism. According to these missionaries God doesn't want that.

Simon Madikedike Sete (Personal communication, 22 July 1998) is of the opinion that ancestor veneration of the Pedi is based on the belief that the living and the dead can mutually influence one another. He further mentioned that ancestors have therefore to be respected, honoured and obeyed. They have to be thanked for their blessings, and have to be fed through sacrifices.

I agree with Simon Sete. When the ancestors have a demand for a particular ritual and this is not carried out because of defying the instruction, the repercussion of such action can be very severe, if not fatal. Another example : if a Pedi person run into big financial gain or fortune, it is then naturally necessary to have a traditional ritual to thank the ancestors for the fortune bestowed upon him / her.

Parrinder (1976 : 58) supports Simon's viewpoint when he says :

"The ancestors are believed to have survived death and to be living in a spiritual world, but still taking a lively interest in the affairs of their families".

Madikedike Simon Sete (Personal communication, 22 July 1998) is one sided when he indicates that *"the living and the dead can influence one another"*. It is only the dead who can influence the living, and not *vice versa*.

I would like to dispute the fact that, *"the ancestors are believed to have survived death"*, as commented by Parrinder (1976 : 58). To my mind the body dies and the spirit is transported into the spiritual world. Nobody can survive physical death.

According to Molangwana Matshege Christinah (Personal communication, 24 July 1998), the viewpoint of Parrinder (1976 : 58) is correct. Ancestor spirits have, on their part, unlimited powers over the lives of the living. The bond with the ancestors is too strong for most people to simply reject it. These ancestor spirits are venerated by the people. There are no restrictions on either the chastisement or the blessings which they can confer on their descendants. They have power over life and death, over sickness and health, and over poverty and prosperity. Nothing is impossible for the ancestor spirits. Their main desire, though, is to be remembered by their descendants.

3.4.2 Continuation of life after death

3.4.2.1 Introduction

Without exception, African people believe that death does not annihilate life. The departed continue to exist in the hereafter (Mbiti, 1970 : 264).

According to this belief, the departed of four or five generations are still living, as far as Pedi belief is concerned. The departed are named the "*living dead*".

The above information corresponds with the biographical profile of a Pedi traditional doctor, Lekwana Manare Anna, who was interviewed on 24 July 1998. She says :

*"I was influenced by my great grandfather, my personal ancestor, the late Tsabuke Maloma to become a traditional doctor. In a dream he showed me a **kepo** (an instrument used to dig out medicines). He instructed me to take the instrument and go to the mountain. He appeared to me at night as well as during the day when I was asleep. All these things happened in a dream, as signals of instructing me to become a traditional healer".*

The departed or living dead are prayed to by the childless. Many a woman prays like Rachel, "*give me children or I die*". This shows that the African traditional religion never allows man to forget the bond between the individual and his human community on the one hand and between them and the spiritual community on the other hand.

Ancestors maintain their authority over their descendants by sometimes causing misfortune or illness among the living.

3.4.2.2 Offerings to ancestors

I agree with Willoughby (1928 : 104) when he says that, "*Great ancestor-spirits use individuals as mediums of communication with men*". For the Pedi, the ancestral spirits make use of the living people to convey certain messages and deeds. Traditional healers serve for example as mediators between the ancestors and the Pedi people. After throwing the divination bones (or whatever method of divination is utilized), the traditional healer will disclose what the ancestors demand from the patient. If the diagnosed person is suffering because of defying ancestors' instructions, that particular person will be compelled to slaughter either a goat or cow (with specific colours), as demanded by the ancestors.

In support of the above viewpoint, Muga (1975 : 41) states that this practice of giving offerings to the departed was also common in families, clans and tribes in East Africa, in order to maintain good communion and relationships with the spirits of the departed and with God. It is done through the spirits of the dead which were thought to be nearer to God than the spirits of the people who are still alive.

Tjabadi Mamagabe Michael (Personal communication, 27 July 1998), underscores the fact that "*ancestral spirits in Pedi tradition are also sometimes seen or heard during the night. Worship of the ancestors is conducted mainly through prayer (**go rapela**) and sacrifice (**go phasa**)*".

I agree with the above statement and comments by Tjabadi Mamagabe Michael, but would like to portray a broader picture. Ancestral worship is actually conducted in two ways : Firstly, when hardship has befallen an individual or family, the ancestral worship would then take on the form of a traditional prayer and sacrifice. This is a plead for mercy and the expulsion of this misfortune. When fortune has come to the individual or family, the ancestral worship will secondly take place in the form of a traditional sacrifice and verbal thanksgiving.

3.4.2.3 Ancestors as guardians

In a very small measure, Imasogie (1985 : 37) insists that "*the ancestral spirits are also the guardians of morality in the family circle. Ancestors see to it that there is no permanent feud between earthly members of the family*". As long as the ancestors are respected, honoured and obeyed, Imasogie's observation is very appropriate.

I differ from Ray (1976 : 147), who indicated that "*society depends as much upon the ancestors as the ancestors depend upon society*". According to Pedi belief, no ancestor can depend on a living being. It is believed that the ancestors have the potential power to affect the living both for good, if they are respectfully and properly venerated, and for evil, if their worship is neglected.

3.5 FEATURES OF PEDI DIVINATION MUSIC

3.5.1 Introduction

Very few researchers depicts it more clearly than Huskisson (1958 : 10), that the Pedi are not consciously aware of the pitch of their drums. No one realizes that dampness in the air automatically effects the tautness of the drum's skin. This happens despite the fact that they have an ear for music. They cannot differentiate between major and minor intervals, perfect fifth, etc. They have no conscious "*pitch sense*", and they associate "*drum pitch*" not with a particular material used for the drum-head, but rather with a particular village which possesses certain drums. This is a result of not being afforded the opportunity to study music.

3.5.2 Characteristics

3.5.2.1 Music as part of the Pedi social setting

From the songs sung by the traditional healers, I have observed that, music is performed as part of the Pedi social life. The emphasis is on humanly organized sound and on atonal experience related to people. Creativity in their music is chiefly in the organization of relationships between sounds, (drumming) and the different rhythmic patterns they are executing.

It seems that, in all of the world's cultures, music education takes on various forms. The individual can either acquire musical knowledge

through a formal or an informal process. This simply implies learning by observation, imitation and participation.

Despite the fact that the Pedi traditional healers' music is basically repetitive, the durational values of some notes are extended beyond the regular divisions within the time span. Instead of note groups or sections of the same length, different note groups are combined within the time span. There is a frequent use of 3 versus 2 cross rhythm between voice movement and body movement. At times the regular divisions of time span does not always occur in duple or triple forms. The Pedi traditional healers are very good at improvisation. They seem not to be interested in any music which lacks improvisation.

The function of the Pedi traditional healers' music is to communicate with their ancestors and at times to summon the ancestors when problems seem particularly difficult to surmount.

3.5.2.2 Drumming

Drumming is one of the major features in Pedi religious rituals. When the drum-head becomes slack, due to moisture in the air, the drum cannot be played until the skin is dry. Kubik (1962 : 38 – 40) comments with regard to drumming that a drummer, using his two hands, may perform a motional pattern by striking four different sound areas on his drum.

The manner in which the Pedi drum is played, reminds one of the research findings of Kubik (1987 : 79). He refers to significant motional units executed during drumming for the **Vimbuza** dance

among the **Tumbuka** in Rumphu district in Malawi. According to Huskisson (1958 : 122), the Pedi and Lobedu use the traditional drums in the following way : the traditional healer takes the solo lead against the background of rhythmically flowing song. His / her chanted orations usually containing a number of words of foreign origin : Zulu or Sotho or old Pedi, which is indicative of cross cultural borrowing. The pressure exerted by the fingers on the drum head is altered at will to vary the tone quality, either heavy or light. It varies the produced sounds.

3.5.2.2.1 Religious function of drumming

Although a wide variety of drums exists in Africa, each society usually specializes in a small number of drum types. In the Pedi religious ritual, drumming in conjunction with rattles, form the accompaniment for the dancing of both the healer and the "*possessed*" as the ancestor spirits are either urged to leave or enter the patient's body. Drums are seen frequently in traditional Pedi music. They are equally used for communication purposes. Like in Western Africa drums function as more than mere musical instruments. They are vehicles for verbal communication and speak the traditional dialects of ages past. From relaying of simple messages to the presentation of announcement. In the Pedi religious worship, drumming perpetuates traditional values, beliefs and customs.

3.5.2.3 Malopo dances

In view of various opinions by different researchers, it is difficult to define music and dance as separate entities or describing one

independently from the other. Music appears to be an expression of the most basic values and feelings of the Pedi people. In the process of this research, it is important to illustrate that rhythm is in the blood of the performers. Pedi performers are not interested in pitch, but in movement. The emphasis seems not to be on the singing, but on the dance.

Furthermore, the Pedi tradition makes clear that tempo can easily be learned through drumming and dancing. The tempo of the dancing is determined by the speed of the drumming. This simply proves how the Pedi has a natural ear for music. Performers remember extended sequences of actions, combined with a sequence of words (which in itself is a memory aid).

Numerous drumming patterns or drum beats are utilized by Pedi traditional healers. These specialists immediately recognize the beats associated with various **malopo** dances. In most of the Pedi traditional healers' songs, the pitch of the drum was temporarily altered by the pressure of the hand on the drum head. It results in melodic as well as rhythmic sonic patterns. The tonal relationship is expressed in the notation, by placing the drum pitches on two different visual levels.

For the Pedi people of the Northern Province the **malopo** dance is a popular therapy of the so-called **malopo** illness. The **malopo** dance is a significant adjustment reaction after illness and stress, not only of individuals within the Pedi society but also of that society as a whole. This kind of dance is a powerful means to restore and strengthen the contact with reality, in this case the "*acoustic*" reality. In the planning

and in the execution of psychiatric services in the Pedi society it is imperative to be acquainted with the positive value of existing native therapies, inter alia the **malopo** dance. **Malopo**, in Sepedi language, refers to a complex of disorders supposedly all due to possession by the spirits of ancestors, and to be cured only by the therapeutic ritual of performing the **malopo** dance.

Huskisson (1958 : 122) maintains that, "*malopo* are simple in construction, consisting of a single idea or word, repeated in chorus over and over again, to a tune of few notes".

3.5.3 Instruments used by the Pedi Sekhukhune Traditional Healers

3.5.3.1 The **moropa** (drum)

The **moropa** (drum) is the instrument without which no Pedi social or religious ritual is complete (Huskisson, 1958 : 13). Huskisson mentions that there was no sound that she appreciated more than listening to the steady throb of meropa (drums), accompanying the rising and falling of voices, some near, some far from the kraals spread throughout the length and breadth of some vast Sekhukhuneland valleys.

Kirby (1968 : 261) concurs with Huskisson by commenting that "*the drum of the Pedi known as **moropa** has certain ceremonies connected with its construction as well as taboos, relating to its use which were communicated to him by Barnard of Sekhukhuniland*". One example of such a taboo is that drumming is strictly prohibited for the duration of

six months if the chief or any member of the royal family dies. Drumming is also prohibited for three months when the initiation school for both boys and girls is in process.

The instruments played by the Pedi Sekhukhune traditional healers include drums of different sizes together with leg rattles (**vide** plate D).

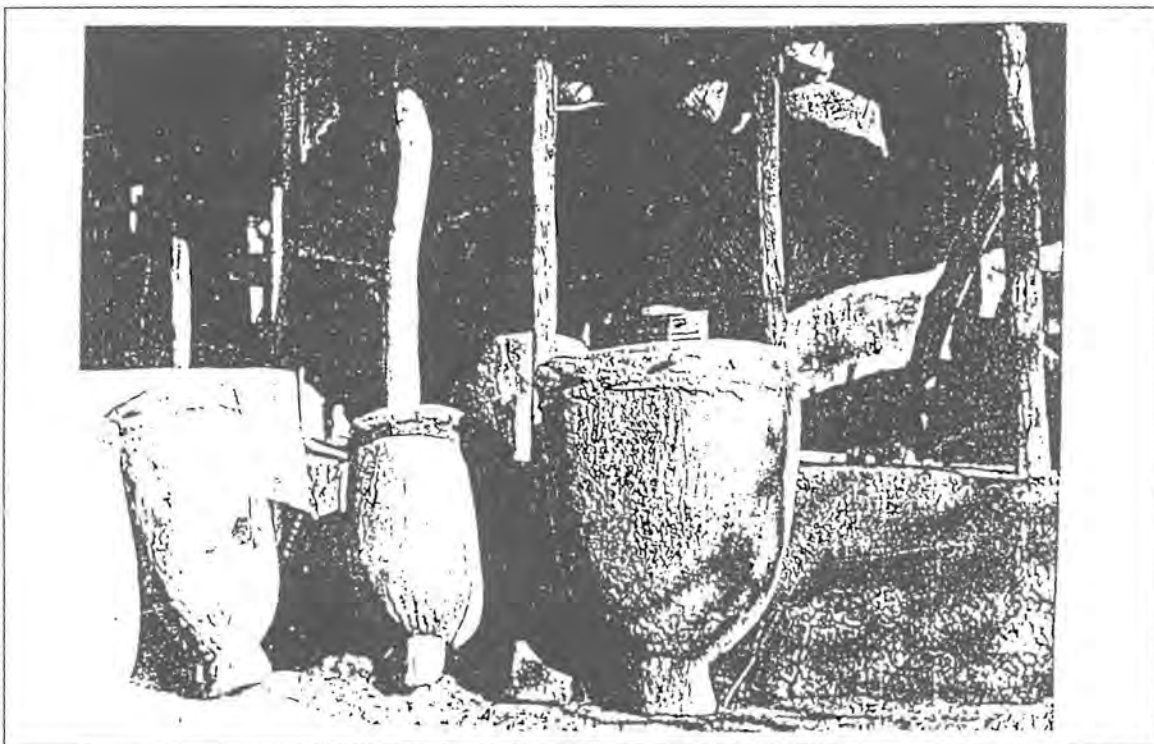


Plate D: **Moropa** : drums of different sizes (Huskisson, 1958 : 9)

Schapera (1937 : 274) also pointed out that conical wooden drums are found among the Pedi. They are in regular use with single heads of skin pegged in position. They are beaten by women, who use the hand as a beater, and are called **moropa** (pl. **meropa**). Such drums are

used chiefly for religious purposes, though they are sometimes used at ordinary dances.

It is quite true that the Pedi use the ceremonial drums or **moropa** for different occasions. This include religious ceremonies, traditional ceremonies, cultural functions and weddings.

3.5.3.2 Pedi leg rattles

The Pedi have "leg" rattles, of which should be played and worn exclusively by the women of the tribe. There are two types, according to Huskisson (1958 : 18) namely :

- **Thlwathlwadi;** and
- **Mathotse,** sometimes called Makgoro (pl. mekgoro).

3.5.3.2.1 Thlwathlwadi

These kind of rattles are made from the cocoons of worms found in the forks of trees. Each cocoon is about 2cm in length. They are sewn on in pairs to either side of long thongs. The thongs are usually about 2 yards in length to fessel the rattles, which are twined round the calf-ankle region of the leg. The **thlwathlwadi** make a pleasant rattling accompanied by the foot movements while dancing. Men do wear these **thlwathlwadi** if they wish. Kirby (1968 : 19) also describes these rattles as **dichela** (**vide** plate E).

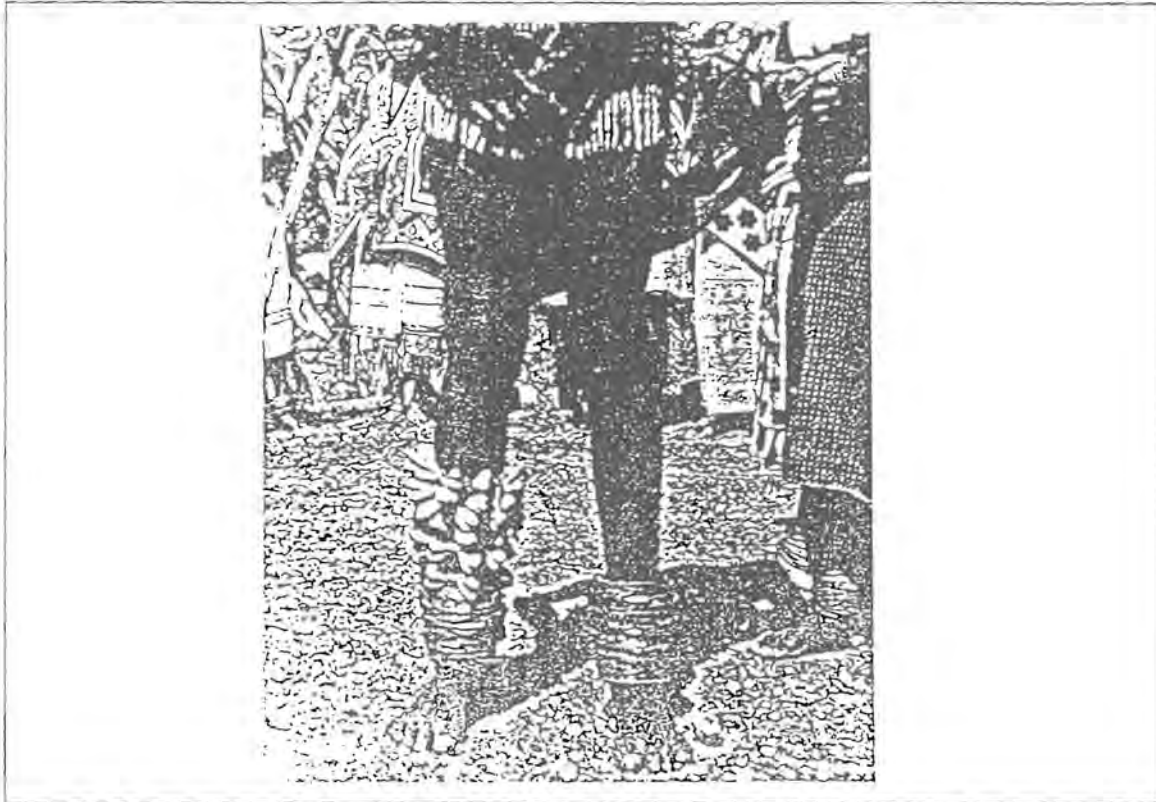


Plate E : Pedi leg rattles
Huskisson (1958 : 19)

3.5.3.2.2 Mathotse or makgoro (pl. mekgoro)

Kirby (1968 : 20) has classified the **mathotse** as a "*hand*" rattle. This classification is not quite correct. Mathotse is definitely a name that only applies to a type of "*leg*" rattle. A small hole is drilled at either end of the seeds of the mathotse tree. A stick can then be passed through these holes. The seeds chosen are usually about 2½cm in diameter, with four seeds firmly fixed, evenly spaced, on a stick of a few centimeters in length. The performer will wear a pair, one on each leg.

The mathotse rattle is used to accompany the drums. As the mathotse tree is becoming scarce, the Pedi users have started using thlwathlwadi, made of plastic and filled with pebbles, to produce the necessary sounds.

3.5.3.3 Magical whistles or flutes

Mönnig (1967 : 93) further illustrates that the Pedi traditional healers use various magical whistles or flutes. The most important one is a whistle fashioned from the quills of a porcupine (the Pedi totem). This whistle is used to ward off hail, lightning and storms. Other whistles are made from wood or bone and covered with copper wire or snake-skin. A flute can also be blown against a powerful enemy warrior.

Finally, Kirby (1968 : 76) also mentions that, the sable antelope horn is used as a blowing instrument among the Pedi. It is called **phalaphala**, as in Bavendaland. All these instruments are used in religious ceremonies. **Phalaphala** is used for conveying signals and verbal messages as well as for playing music.

3.6 RITUAL DANCE

3.6.1 Personal ritual

"The ritual sphere is the sphere par excellence where the world as lived and the world as imaged become fused together, transformed into one reality" (Ray, 1976 : 17). Ray commented that, through ritual man transcends himself and communicates directly with the divine in the African traditions. The coming of divinity to man and of

man to divinity happens repeatedly with equal validity on almost every ritual occasion. The experience of salvation thus becomes a present reality and is not a future event.

I agree with Ray (1976 : 17) when he says, "*through ritual, man transcends himself and communicates directly with the divine*". Religious rituals have an integrating as well as a socializing function. It is in these rituals that the interaction between the living and the dead culminates in the most intense religious moments. In support of this statement, Krause (1998 : 86) mentions that "*ritual is assumed to operate directly on individuals*". Ritual is a communicative performance that always provides a sense of continuity and predictability.

Seemingly, Staples (1981 : 163) has a misconception when he states that "*only a son can offer sacrifices to ancestors*". This is not quite true. The question is : what will happen if there is no son within a family? I cite an example. If someone in a family has received instructions from his / her personal ancestor as the consequence of defying them, one or more of the elderly people (immediate family) will offer sacrifices on behalf of the victim (sufferer). I therefore disagree with the statement of Staples.

3.6.2 Communal ritual

In the pagan traditions of Africa, like in Israel, the awe of God is stressed. In Nyakywsa thought a man who comes too close to the gods goes mad. Religious rituals are directed towards driving them off. One of the radical changes, as Africans turn to Christianity, is the

seeking for union with God, rather than separation from that which is powerful and dangerous.

I agree with Dabrowska (1995 : 89), about *"rituals as symbolic performances at the core of the social identity of communities"*. Rituals are seen to be best understood as acts internal to the category or group that celebrates them or celebrates itself through them. The group is essentially concerned with itself rather than with the outside world.

I further concur with Ahlbäck (1996 : 53), who describes *"music as a vehicle for communicating thoughts and desires"*. During my research, I have observed that rituals are attempts to abolish the separation between the conscious mind and the unconscious, the real source of life. Rituals are performed to bring about a reunion of the individual with the native soil of his / her inherited instinctive make-up. Louhivuori (1998 : 13) supports Ahlbäck by saying that *"expressive forms of culture such as music and dance create, maintain and not least transmit and emphasize their cultural identity"*.

"During rituals of sacrifice, great care is taken to insure that high degree of purity is observed", writes Mbiti (1970 : 41). He also indicated that among some African peoples, the sacrificial animal must be of one colour only and without blemishes. This is a symbol of holiness, which the people associate with God.

Few researchers could phrase this observation more clearly than Brill (1997 : 8). He reiterates that *"most things fall into place according to the basic distinction pervasively enacted by ritual"*. This is true for the

Pedi religious experience. Ritual becomes symbolic action, and the symbolism of ritual then becomes available for the anthropologist to interpret. Either directly as relating to the social order, or indirectly with the help of the performers, whilst expressing the values of the culture.

I agree with Thorpe's (1991 : 117) statement : "*many actions performed both intentionally and spontaneously, are directed towards the same goal*", namely, to create, maintain and not least transmit and emphasize peoples cultural identity. Dancing and other art forms are examples of this type of harmony regulating activity. The Pedi dance to celebrate every imaginable situation, like joy, grief, love, hate, to bring prosperity or to avert calamity. In addition, singing and joyful conversation enable Pedi people to minimize tensions within a closed community.

The observation of Diallo (1989 : 118) brings to the fore how music is involved in the rituals of the secret societies² and in the healing of mental illnesses. His viewpoint is valid in the Pedi context, for dance is sometimes required as a remedial ritual when traditional laws are violated. Ritual is the potentially distanced re-enactment of situations of emotional distress which are virtually universal in a given culture.

The statement of Parrinder (1976 : 27), namely that "*the African people see ritual observances as the supreme observances and the supreme safeguard of the basic needs, for example : social borderland, cattle, rain, bodily health, the family, the clan and the state*", makes me to conclude that communal rituals give expression to major tribal

² Secret societies : societies situated in remote places and are not exposed to the public.

concerns. These include rainmaking, securing fertility for the fields and livestock, the great annual feast of first fruits, strengthening of the chief as well as the protection against lightning, hail and storms. Major communal rituals therefore fulfill a unifying function at the tribal level and foster a religiously grounded feeling of group loyalty. Rituals play a prominent role in supporting cultural identity of black people in Africa (South Africa in particular), and especially among the Pedi.

Finally, dance as a meaningful and enjoyable movement, plays a crucial role in rites and customs of many traditional societies. It is employed as an essential aid to the functioning of a human society. The Pedi uses its traditional rituals as a means to cementing families and communities. It occasionally calls for traditional rituals to be performed before people go to the fields for ploughing or asking ancestors for rain, blessings of seeds and livestock.

CHAPTER 4

PERSONAL SONGS OF THE SEKHUKHUNE TRADITIONAL HEALERS

4.1 A "PERSONAL SONG" FOR EVERY TRADITIONAL HEALER

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Each Sekhukhune traditional healer receives "*a personal song*" from his / her personal ancestor either before or while undergoing training as a traditional healer. Bührman (1984 : 61) makes mention of Tiso's "*special song*", i.e. his personal song, which correlates with this phenomenon. Joseph (1983 : 76) also mentions the occurrence of songs being made known by ancestral spirits to diviners through dreams.

To the Pedi traditional healers dancing and making music not only serve as a means by which they can relax and enjoy themselves. As a typical Pedi I occasionally eye-witnessed traditional healers fainting or falling into a trance. After hearing their personal song the person recovers from the trance state. Normally when such people recover, they start talking or prophesying.

Vanners (1984 : 62) testify to the therapeutic quality of this type of musical performance. It corresponds with what Bührman (1984 : 62) says about Xhosa divination music. He refers to the exhilarating and

stimulating effects of participation in **intlombe**¹. Singing and dancing are very prominent in this ritual.

"Participants who usually emerge from an intlombe, say that their physical aches and pains have disappeared, others, that they feel young in body and mind, and others that they have been rejuvenated" (Vanners, 1984 : 62). Seemingly something must have happened to their psyche and soma. There is no doubt that the **intlombe** and **xhentsha** evoke feelings and physical experiences which cannot be denied, even though there appears to be no entirely satisfactory explanation to account for these changes. Toffler (1980 : xxviii) confirms the dramatic quality of many mediumistic cults in Africa, advocating that they provide both lively entertainment and a means of catharsis.

4.1.2 Function of personal song in veneration

The therapeutic function of music in religious rituals does not only apply to the Pedi tradition. Joseph (1983 : 76) refers to Zulu divination music by saying *"it is in the course of singing and dancing together that diviners come into perhaps the closest communion with the ancestral spirits and this consequently is a central aspect of their activity"*.

The Pedi traditional healers receive training in performing specific music which is associated with the profession. As part of the training to become traditional healers the significance of music is stressed as

¹ Intlombe refers to Xhosa divination music.

an integral part of the profession and the religious experience in the Pedi culture.

The personal song has exceptional ritualistic value for the particular healer. For instance, should the traditional healer "*faint*" or "*pass out into a trance*", it is on hearing his / her personal song as performed by his / her colleagues that recovery is induced and finally gained.

4.1.3 Malopo cult

The **malopo** cult seems to offer its followers in the Sekhukhune area an opportunity to express their emotions and to behave in ways that would be unacceptable in the normal Sekhukhune society. Firth, Beattie and Middleton (1969 : ix – xxix) discuss cults which provide environments where people can express themselves in ways that are unacceptable in other social contexts. Behaviour such as deep breath taking, aggression and falling flat-back, usually happens within an aesthetic framework. Rituals which entails dramatic performance elements such as music and dance are inclusive. An example in the normal Sekhukhune society is that aggression is frowned upon. But during the **malopo** dance aggression is acceptable. It offers a very powerful stimulant. The trance state brings relaxation.

The malopo ritual leaves the impression that during the fainting of participants, certain thoughts or messages are communicated with ancestors. From Pedi perspective, it is valid to suggest that the dream is a vehicle to convey messages between the supernatural and people. The beating of drums and clapping of hands play a part in this whole process. Traditional healers believe that in the world of ancestors,

clapping hands, dancing and perpetual feasting is an ongoing order of the day. When the traditional healers are clapping hands, they are in unison with the ancestral world. It is fair to suggest that singing is a mechanism used by traditional healers to summon the ancestors. Specific songs are sung especially when problems seem particularly difficult to surmount.

It is not all traditional healers whose ancestors give them certain songs as personal instrument to put them into the right mood for their functions. Some of the traditional healers do not employ music as medium for their healing processes. They only use divination bones and medication. These traditional healers differ in their approach to the healing processes. Other traditional healers are using only water for diagnosing patients.

The **dingaka** report that after a trance state they feel relaxed. They experience what is possibly a monotonous existence. In her discussion of the cathartic effect of music (dancing, singing, hand clapping) within the context of Xhosa divination and healing proceedings, Bührman (1984 : 60 – 61) states that "*it seems evident that the **intlombe** (i.e. Xhosa séance, which is saturated with music and dance), clear(s) the mind of the igqira (doctor) and aid(s) him in his divination.*

Joseph's (1983 : 76) statement that "*it is in the course of singing and dancing together that diviners come into perhaps the closest communion with the ancestral spirits*", is correct. It actually refers to the sangomas (traditional healers who employ music in their divination rituals). This does not apply to all traditional healers. The majority of

traditional healers go for training to qualify as traditional healers (**sangoma** or **malopo**).

The **malopo** cult offers to its members a sense of belonging. It also ensures the **malopo** doctor and the **mathasana** an opportunity for social contact. The **malopo** cult therefore fulfils an exceptional social and economic function, which may be directly related to the changed socio-economic conditions of the Pedi. This happens in the form of money, livestock (e.g. goat, cattle, etc), depending on what the patient can afford. The patient gives money or one of the above mentioned animals only after recovery as a signal of thanksgiving to the traditional healer.

The use of music in the African tradition (i.e. the integration of singing, dancing or any other body movements and playing of instruments) to please the ancestors and to communicate with them is widespread in Africa. According to Molangwana Matshege Christinah (personal communication, 24 July 1998), communication between the traditional healers and their personal ancestors happens through dreams (**ditoro**) and music. This is congruent with other accounts relating to communication between diviners and ancestral shades.

4.2 MUSICAL TRANSCRIPTIONS OF THE PERSONAL SONGS

4.2.1 Introduction

Because it is unknown to foreigners and anyone who might be interested in learning the songs for singing, clapping, dancing and

drumming, the author has transcribed eight selected personal songs of some traditional Pedi healers. For convenience, I include the key to symbols to facilitate the transcriptions. Some symbols relate to the drum zones, others to motional units (which in turn produce pitch and tone colour differential), and others to the feet or legs.

The key symbols for the musical transcription are as follows :

The drum zones

- x = center – low tone
- y = middle – average tone
- z = outer – high tone

Motional units

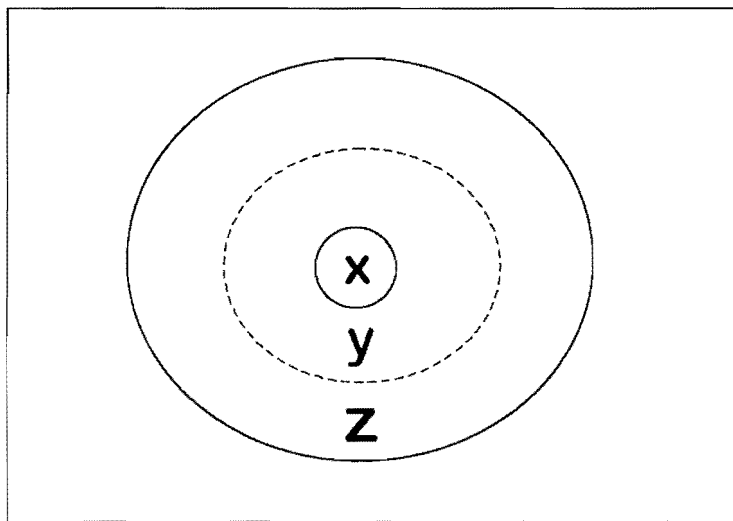
The following describe the motional units :

- : stopped tone (hand attacks drumhead and remains on the skin, thereby stopping the tone).
- : ringing tone (hand lifts after attack almost in staccato manner, causing the tone to ring or extend).

x : clapping.

R : either right hand or leg (is specified).

L : either left hand or leg (is specified).



4.2.2 Song 1 : "Salane" : Traditional healer : Molangwana Matshege Christinah²

4.2.2.1 Text and background

Song text and translation

SOTHO	ENGLISH
<p>Ngwakong wa tate, go na le madulo a mantšhi Rena ka sione re kaseye Ga ngaka moruti Re ya gae ga Mmotla Ga Mmotla ga kgoro ya boraro Re ile go hwetša tatago rena Hlabirwa, se hlwelaboroko Sebodu sa mapompane se kae? Mogatša Pheladi O phasitše bongaka O phasitše lehu la gago</p>	<p>In my father's house, there are many dwelling seats. We shall never go to Zion to the Diviner turned Pastor We are going home at Mmotla's place At Mmotla's place, the member of the third generation There we shall find our father Hlabirwa, very fond of sleep The most lazy person, Where is he? Pheladi/s husband You have triumphed over your herbalistic training You have triumphed over your death</p>

² Molangwana Matshege Christinah is senior traditional healer. She was born in 1952 at Dingwane Village (Schoonoord) in the Sekhukhune area. Christinah was influenced by her grandfather Lehumo Frans Mmotla to become a traditional healer in 1989. Currently she specializes in many diseases and symptoms of ill-health (e.g. insanity, depression, diabetes etc).

make revelations. If there are some problems, one will see the traditional healer-to-be occasionally falling down. They are usually falling flat-back. Whenever "*Salane*" is recited, one must listen attentively to this traditional healer-to-be, for deep breath-taking would normally signal certain unknown matters.

"*Salane*" is also recited when problems are encountered by the traditional healers with respect to the divination bones. For example, when the traditional healer is unable to interpret divination bones, the song is recited. The song can also be recited when the traditional healer is healing the patient, particularly if the patient does not recover. "*Salane*" can further be recited during the first step (**gotielwa**) when the **lethasana-** to-be, does not fall on the ground and disclose what the ancestor demands from this patient. It is recited specifically to summon all the ancestors together to assist the traditional healer to interpret divination bones and to enable him / her to prescribe appropriate medicine for the patient.

"*Salane*" can also be recited when a religious ritual is over, i.e. when participants disperse to their respective homes. Then the traditional healers invite their ancestors to protect the people on their way back home.

This song also warns the traditional healers to take care and to look after themselves. As people have been trained as traditional healers and have met all the requirements for becoming traditional healers, they are likely to be bewitched by other jealous traditional healers. This is possible because traditional healers make a lot of money, especially if they are good and famous.

4.2.2.4 Musical assessment

The major characteristic of the song "*Salane*", is the phenomenon of "*off-beating*" or the accentuation of weak beats, also known as syncopation. Just like the other songs, "*Salane*" has two or more rhythmic patterns operating simultaneously. In most cases, real music amongst the Pedi traditional healers occurs when singing, dancing, hand-clapping and instrumental playing (such as drums and whistles) are synchronized together. The integration of all these aspects produce a combination of different rhythmic units. Hence Pedi traditional music is characterized by inherent rhythms.

As in melody, the spoken word influences rhythm in the traditional healers' music. In general the rhythm of a melody in the Pedi traditional healers' music follows the rhythmic pattern of speech, for the origin of music and the origin of language are inseparable. Singing implies dancing and dancing implies speaking. All these actions become part of the religious experiences.

4.2.3 Song 2 : "Theletšana" : Traditional healer : Sete Madikedike Simon³

4.2.3.1 Text and background

Song text and translation

SOTHO	ENGLISH
<p>Mphegeletšeng ka Dilokong Re ye go ja theletšana Kua ntshe kgomo ga e gona Re fo ja theletšana Ntšu laka le makgwakgwa Le gana ge ke goeletša</p>	<p>Kindly accompany me to Dilokong There we shall feast on "theletšana" (a herb) There we shall find no beef We will only feast on theletšana I am gravel voiced As such I cannot shout</p>

³ Sete Madikedike Simon is a personal family friend. He is a teacher by profession. After having worked in this capacity for five years, he resigned as a teacher, since his grandfather had instructed him to become a traditional healer. He was born in 1962 at Kotsiri Village (Schoonoord) in the Sekhukhune area. This man made it possible for me to have access into the circle of traditional healers. He specializes in the following diseases and symptoms of ill-health : cancer, asthma and diarrhoea.

4.2.3.2 Musical transcription of the song "Theletšana" (Slippery foodstuff)

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
DRUM 1	Rhythm	[Musical notation for Drum 1 Rhythm]																			
	Hands	L	L	R	L	L	R	L	L	R	L	R	L	L	L	R	L	R	L	L	R
	Zones	z	z	x	z	z	x	z	z	x	z	z	x	z	z	x	z	z	x	z	z
	Tones	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
DRUM 2	Rhythm	[Musical notation for Drum 2 Rhythm]																			
	Hands	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R
	Zones	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x
	Tones	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
DRUM 3	Rhythm	[Musical notation for Drum 3 Rhythm]																			
	Hands	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L
	Zones	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x
	Tones	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
FEET	Rhythm	[Musical notation for Feet Rhythm]																			
	CLAPPING																				
	CLAPPING PATTERNS IN CONVENTIONAL NOTATION			x			x			x			x			x			x		

4.2.3.3. Function of the song

This is a song which is recited by a traditional healer-to-be in his / her quest for recognition, supremacy and determination to show flamboyance. The singer says : "If one is keen in seeing the reality of "theletšana", one must see it being recited by those who are from **Dilokong** (name of a village). Women sometimes go to the extent of coming along with a well-decorated, flowery and rosy towel to beautify the environment. Hence the fame of "theletšana" of Dilokong.

This song is sung in the Pedi culture to please the ancestors after every achievement by the traditional healer. When a traditional healer has been successful in healing a patient or when the **mathasana** have qualified as traditional healers under his / her supervision, this song is recited. When the patient has recovered from an illness, this is the song for the day during the following celebration. It is sung by the one who is healed. However, other songs may be sung as well. The singer thanks the ancestors for the achievement or recovery from illness, but also invites the immediate family and friends to rejoice with him. In this sense it functions as a thanksgiving hymn.

4.2.3.4 Musical assessment

In "*Theletšane*", the memorability of the tune derives further from rhythmic repetition. A call and response effect is created whereby the singer affirms his / her love for the child, irrespective of whether the child is short or tall, or whether the nose is wide.

For the Pedi traditional healers music has a therapeutic purpose. This became apparent during my field research. I am under the impression that traditional healers are receiving metaphysical empowerment when ancestors visit them. The sounds which come from the drums during my field research at one of the rituals, held at Dingwane Village (Schoonoord) in the Sekhukhune area, are simple and fragmented, yet creative and unique.

4.2.4 Song 3 : "Mmangwane o wa hlaka" : Traditional healer :
Seepe Kgongwana Mariam⁴

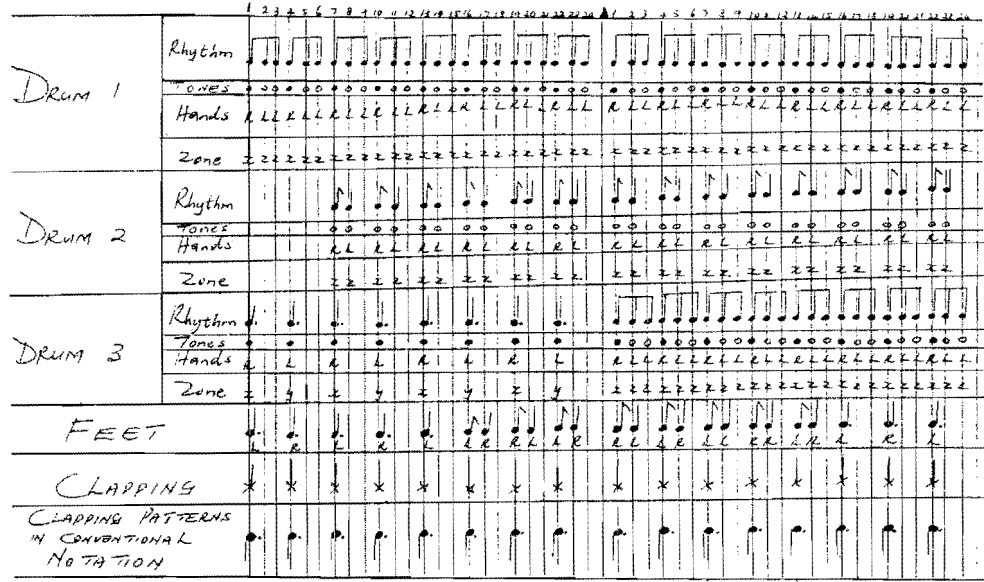
4.2.4.1 Text and background

Song text and translation

SOTHO	ENGLISH
Mmangwane o wa hlaka, O swana le nna Ba tlogele Mmangwane, Ba nyatša dingaka Ba tlo šala ba e hwa Ba tlogele Mmatšhatšhaila O sa ile go phema Mmatšhatšhaila, ga go Na taba go lokile Ke gatile tlapa la Matheledi, gomme ka Thelela ka wa Mmangwane o wa hlaka, O kwa Mohlake, Mohlaka Marole	My aunt is going through difficult times like I do Depart from amongst them, As they are disobeying Traditional healers They shall perish Leave them Mmatšhatšhaila You shall be traile Mmatšhatšhaila, calm Down, all shall be well I trampled on a slippery Stone, I slipped and fell My aunt is suffering, at Mohlake Mohlaka Marole (name of the village)

⁴ Seepe Kgongwana Mariam is a pastor of St John Church at Kotsiri Village in the Sekhukhune area (Northern Province), and initially did not even think of becoming a traditional healer. She was born in 1945 at Kotsiri Village. In 1997 her personal ancestor, Ditedu Bogopa, instructed her to become a traditional healer. She did not carry out the instruction. A few days later she became very ill and could not sleep. Mariam then decided not to go to church any more, but to comply. After carrying out the instruction, she recovered. She is now a traditional healer and her grandfather worries her no more.

4.2.4.2 Musical transcription of the song "Mmangwane o wa hlaka" (*My aunt is suffering*)



The transcription is organized into several horizontal sections:

- DRUM 1:** Rhythm (musical notation), TONES (circles), Hands (L/R patterns), Zone (vertical lines).
- DRUM 2:** Rhythm (musical notation), TONES (circles), Hands (L/R patterns), Zone (vertical lines).
- DRUM 3:** Rhythm (musical notation), TONES (circles), Hands (L/R patterns), Zone (vertical lines).
- FEET:** Musical notation for foot patterns.
- CLAPPING:** Asterisks (*) indicating clapping points.
- CLAPPING PATTERNS IN CONVENTIONAL NOTATION:** Musical notation for clapping patterns.

4.2.4.3 Function of the song

This song is about an aunt who is suffering. She has erected a house adjacent to the river. She was compelled to erect the house away from the people because of some reasons. Firstly, because her neighbours are not happy about the sound produced by the drums, played by "Mmangwane" and her colleagues during rituals. They say, the sound is disturbing, for they can neither sleep nor study. Secondly, her neighbours dislike people who are possessed by

ancestral spirits. Traditional healers are at times described by Christians as witch doctors. Mostly, these traditional healers are associated with witchcraft. Some people think the traditional healers have some powers to apply magic on someone to become a traditional healer unintentionally or without being instructed by the ancestors. All these allegations and misconceptions influenced "*Mmangwane*" (aunt) to stay apart. At her new residential place, she is able to carry out her ancestors' instructions with less disturbance to the community. When a trainee is singing the song, it means that the ancestors have arrived. Then the singer calls the suffering of the aunt into mind. At the river, the singer (either a traditional healer or traditional healer-to-be) will sing a great deal.

The song is dramatic. It is sung by a patient who feels bewildered and lonely. When reciting it, the singer thinks of all his / her beloved ones, inside and outside the family. The singer's voice is not always clear when calling the ancestors. As such the singer cannot call louder. Consequently the ancestors cannot hear the call. At one stage the patient becomes unconscious and passes into a trance. It appears to be a connection between the patient and the ancestors. Consequently, after a deep breath the patient will start disclosing certain demands from the ancestors.

The singer requests the aunt to ignore all those who are gossiping about the traditional healers and the **mathasana** (traditional healers-to-be). The gossipers mean that, they are not really ill or legitimately inspired by the ancestors' spirits, but that traditional healers are pretending. The singer requests the aunt, who is called

Mmatšhatšhaila, to ignore them. For they will die as punishment for undermining traditional healers, their **mathasana** and the ancestors.

When this song is sung, the singer (either traditional healer or trainee) feels comforted. Consciousness is regained. The singer is worried about the aunt who is also inspired by the ancestral spirits. The primary function of this song is to advise the audience to look after their aunts.

Another function of singing this song is to summon the ancestors to come closer to the aunt who is suffering. The request is that they effectuate a speedy recovery.

Whenever the patient and / or traditional healer sings, they remember vividly the aunt, her lifestyle, background, troubles and tribulations. Every one knows troubles and suffering, but the aunt's suffering seems to be severe. Finally, the singer will realize that the aunt is a very important person, and should be well looked after. The aunt is important because, if the mother dies, she looks after the family of her elder sister.

4.2.4.4 Musical assessment

The dramatic interest of the song lies in the highly stylized vocal dramatization entailed. The solo narrator / actor employs voice imitation to depict various character types / roles, using vocal dynamics to denote and pace actions and moods. This solo narrator / actor also teleprompts movement patterns, environmental sounds, and

confrontational actions and sound effects using onomatopoeic techniques.

The song carries a dramatic dialogue and sustains active audience interest. The audience is invariably involved as chorus. Both the actor-narrator, dancers / participants and the audience are relaxed. As such their movements and dramatic actions are very much restricted. They are restrained to the use of the upper body and the face for essential dramatic gestures and mime.

4.2.5 Song 4 : "Mmangakane" : Traditional healer : Tjabadi Mamagabe Michael⁵

4.2.5.1 Text and background

Song text and translation

SOTHO	ENGLISH
Ba bolaile Mangakane Mosadi o moso moloji Ntšu laka ke makgwakgwa, Le gana ge ke Goeletša Mmangakane Moloji	They have eliminated Mangakane A pitch black woman, indicative of a wizard I am gravel voiced, Incapable of shouting At Mangakane the witch

⁵ Tjabadi Mamagabe Michael was born in 1954 at Ga-Maphopha (Dikgageng Village) in the Sekhukhune area, Northern Province. In 1978 he became very ill. When he was a grade 8 pupil he saw darkness which prevented him from writing and reading. On arrival at home he informed his parents about this problem. He was taken to a traditional healer, Thomas Nkwana, at Maandagshoek near to Burgersfort. Thomas discovered that he is not bewitched, but inspired by the ancestral spirits. Then he went for training. Currently he is a traditional healer.

4.2.5.2 Musical transcription of the song "Mmangakane"
(The name of a woman)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
DRUM 1	Rhythm		•	•						•	•	•	•	•			
	Hands		L	L	R				R	L	L	R	L	R	L	R	L
	Zones		Z	Z	Z				X	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z
	Tones	•	•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
DRUM 2	Rhythm	•		•		•		•		•		•		•		•	
	Hands	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R
	Zones	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z
	Tones	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
DRUM 3	Rhythm	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Hands	R	L	L	R	L	L	R	L	R	L	L	R	L	L	R	L
	Zones	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z
	Tones	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
FEE T	L	R	L	R			L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	
CLAPPING	X			X			X		X		X		X		X		
Clapping Patterns in Conventional Notation	•			•			•		•		•		•		•		

4.2.5.3 Function of the song

In the Pedi tradition there is an idiom saying : "This woman Mmangakane is a witch that provided me with poisoned food. I went out and threw it away, came back and said, I consumed it because she is bewitching me". I recall this idiom because women are mostly believed to be witches or sorcerers in the Pedi tradition. The idiom used by the forefathers is confirmed by my research experience. I have met a few women, who are mentally deranged, as the consequence of being witches. If someone is bewitched and consult traditional healers, the traditional healers have some magic or tactics to avenge for the patient. Sometimes the witch will go around naked

while confessing all her evil doings. Generally women are well known to be evil-doers in the Pedi culture.

Mangakane is a mocking song. It is recited by women when they want to tease a specific woman. If the mocking mission is accomplished, and the mocked person is totally unaware, then the traditional healer-to-be will come time and again and move around the singer of mocked person. The motive of this action is that the mocked person in turn, must hit back.

If one wants to grasp the true meaning of Mangakane in the Pedi culture, the listener will hear the performers singing poetically. Though ironically the evils that the witch have committed, for example attempting murder with poisoned food, were not consumed.

4.2.5.4 Musical assessment

The sound of the music denotes a funerary event type. The music is calm and soft soothing. The tempo is rather slow. The intervallic instance between the high and the low voices sounding together is not precise. Its quality is determined by the factors of cultural harmonic concord.

Each repetition either carries a narrative development of the textual theme or is purely musical repetition. It can also be a modification of the preceding statement. The music is pentatonic, with no interval smaller than a tone. The melodic outline has to a large extent, evolved to conform with the speech tone patterns of the language. There is no key change in the course of the tune, but a distinct feeling

of the tune hovering round a central note. The Pedi originally had only one word, "*segalo*" which applied to all three elements, "*accent*", "*pitch*" and "*tone*", and another "*tuma nnoši*" to the "*vowel sound*". It is usual for Pedi traditional healers to sing one note to a syllable. However, at the end of a phrase, notably on a descending motif, they can be heard to sing more than one note on the last or last two syllables. Should the word line of a phrase be lengthy, the singers also glide two syllables into one in the middle of the phrase. An extra note may also be interpolated, when necessary into the middle of the phrase, maintaining the basic rhythm. Scarcely any two phrases are sung in precisely the same manner, either rhythmically or melodically.

4.2.6 Song 5 : "Mmakabulane" : Traditional healer : Mmotla Matshetla Sarah⁶

4.2.6.1 Text and background

Song text and translation

SOTHO	ENGLISH
<p>Mmakabulane, kabula gabedi, bolebadi botlaela bjaka Buti waka, buti wa lešoka O rata ge ke e hwa Nna ka se hwe badimo ba le gona Badimo ba gona Bakgalabje ba go tswala nna Ba re o wa lla, o wa lla moropa malopo</p> <p>Nna nka se hwe ga se nna pitša Nna ga se nna mokgako wa mapono Nna nka se hwe makgolo o gona Wa go tsoša bahu ba hwile</p>	<p>Mmakabulane, nip twice, I am an idiot of being forgetful My brother, my brother, the man of the bush You desire my death I shall not perish, as my ancestors are with me My ancestors are in existence My forefathers who brought me into being It is beating, it is beating, the drum's sound of divination I shall not be demolished like a clay pot I am not an Nguni clay pot I will not die, as my grandfather is with me The very one who raised the dead from the world of the dead</p>

⁶ Mmotla Matshetla Sarah was born in 1933 at Dingwane Village (Schoonoord) in the Sekhukhune area. She had pregnancy problems and had no children. Very often her grandfather, the late Klaas Tshegana, would appear to her in a dream. She was once admitted at Jane Furse hospital about her pregnancy problems. Doctors in the hospital could not help her. One night her grandfather appeared to her and told her that she is not bewitched, but inspired by the ancestral spirits. Her grandfather instructed her to go for training as a traditional healer. She carried out the instructions. Hence her pains have disappeared and she has three children today. She is currently a traditional healer.

4.2.6.2 Musical transcription of the song "Mmakabulane"
(A woman who likes to nip)

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
DRUM 1	Rhythm	[Musical notation: notes on a staff]																			
	Hands	L	L	R		L	L	R		L	L	R	L	L	R	L	L	R			
	Zones	z	z	z		z	z	z		z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z			
	Tones	o	o	o		o	o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o			
DRUM 2	Rhythm	[Musical notation: notes on a staff]																			
	Hands	R	L	R		R	L	R		R	L	R	R	L	R	R	L	R			
	Zones	z	z	z		z	z	z		z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z			
	Tones	o	o	o		o	o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o			
DRUM 3	Rhythm	[Musical notation: notes on a staff]																			
	Hands	R		R	L	R	L	R		R	L	R	L	R	R	L	R	R	L		
	Zones	z		z	z	z	z	z		z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z			
	Tones	o		o	o	o	o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o			
FEET	CLAPPING	L	R		L	R		L	R		L	R	L	R	L	R					
	CLAPPING PATTERNS IN CONVENTIONAL NOTATION			x		x		x		x		x	x	x	x	x					

4.2.6.3 Function of the song

This is a song for women trainees. "Mmakabulane" invokes the skills and abilities of a traditional healer- to-be, so that her whole inner-self should reveal hidden and deep secrets. If a traditional healer is in a state of a trance, and "Mmakabulane" is sung, she will quickly recover. All her ancestors would come to her. The traditional healer will diagnose the patient with a diagnosis such as disclosing all his / her enemies, and their intentions about the patient. "Mmakabulane" is

enemies, and their intentions about the patient. "*Mmakabulane*" is more effective at dawn, since it prompts the traditional healers to be fully alert.

If anyone would like to enjoy the real melodies of "*Mmakabulane*", the listener should employ the services of fully grown-up women in the company of young maidens. There should also be a gravel-voiced man in the midst of the singers to encourage the singers. This action forms part of the improvisation.

In the Pedi tradition there is an idiom saying : "*Mmakabulane hit twice, let the drum beat, let the traditional healer-to-be go into a trance, and the rhythm should go on and on and on ...*" Briefly, the implication of this saying is, play on ... sing and dance until the traditional healer-to-be discloses everything which is demanded by the ancestors. Playing of drums and singing performed by traditional healers and traditional healers-to-be please and invite ancestors. It helps the patient to disclose all demands of the ancestors.

4.2.6.4 Musical assessment

The most common structural feature of the song "*Mmakabulane*" is its antiphonal character. Unlike call and response, two choruses instead of solo singers or leaders are involved in the dialogue. One group usually enters after the end of the phrase, sung by the other.

The song consists of short melodic phrases. Repetition of these short phrases is a common feature in the Pedi culture. The music is sung in peacere. It means that there is no limit to the length of a song. This

length depends solely on the energy of the performer. In this song, the first phrase tends to begin on a high pitch. It then falls towards the end of the phrase.

4.2.7 Song 6 : "Leepo" : Traditional healer : Lekwana Manare Anna⁷

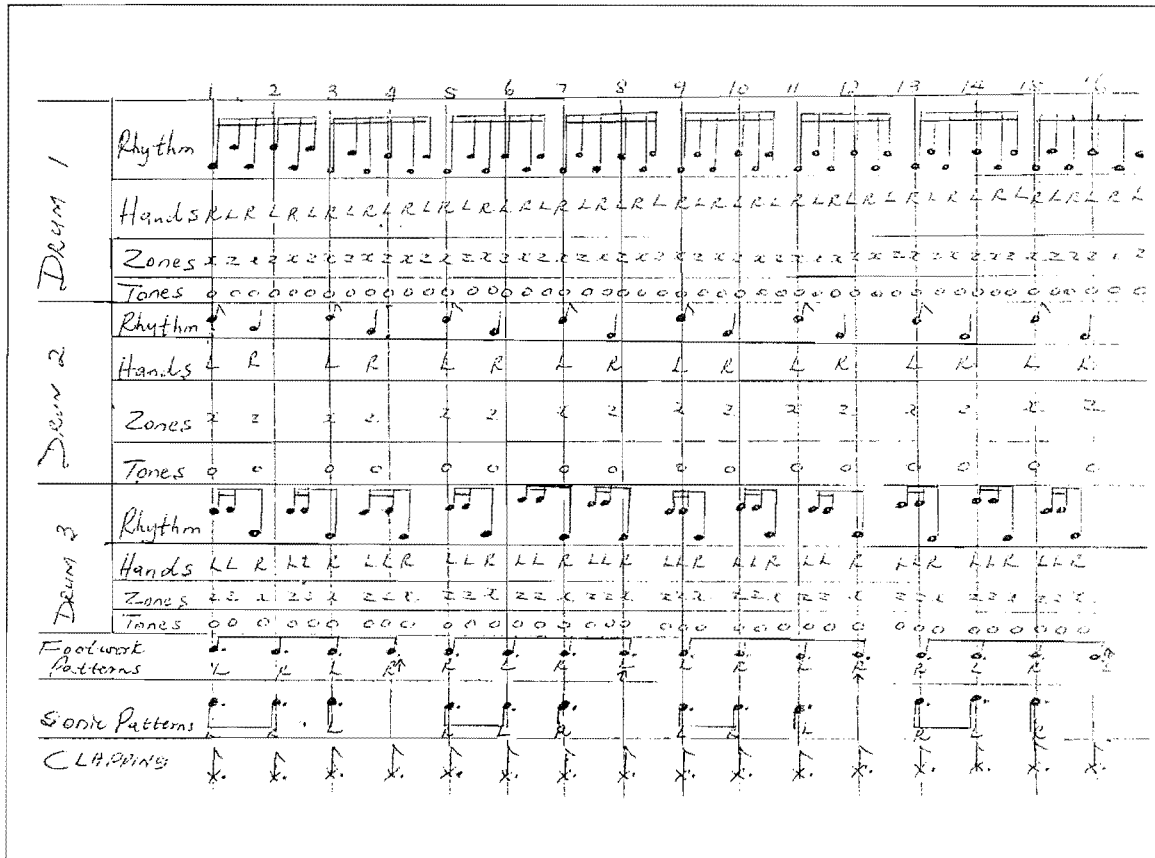
4.2.7.1 Text and background

Song text and translation

SOTHO	ENGLISH
Koloji ya papa šele e etla, e tlile go re tšea Koloji ya papa e na le motono E bile e ya mmakatša, e gana go tshuma mabone Badimo ba nteile K ile go botša Mmane Mmatšhatšhaila seapara tšhwene Ke ra wena maphutha- ditšhaba Ke motlokwa, ke ngwana madimabe	My father's car is coming to take us My father's car has a big boot It is surprising to see it cannot switch its lights on The ancestors have punished me I will report to my aunt, Mmatšshatšhaila, who is clad in baboon skin I am referring to you, the nation's comforter. whom shall you leave out in your mission of comforting I am the Tlokwa, the bad omen child

⁷ Lekwana Manare Anna was born in 1930 at Dingwane Village (Schoonoord) in the Sekhukhune area. Her father, the late Tsabuke Maloma, appeared to her in a dream at night, in June 1985. He instructed her to take the instrument, used to dig medicines (**kepo**), and to go to the Leolo mountain at Schoonoord. She found the medicines she was digging appropriate to cure different diseases, e.g. insanity, diarrhoea, etc. Anna then consulted Molangwana Matshege Christinah for assistance. When throwing her divination bones, Christinah discovered that Manare should be a traditional healer. Manare went for training in August 1985. Currently she is a traditional healer.

4.2.7.2 Musical transcription of the song "Leepo" (Irony)



The transcription is a handwritten musical score for the song "Leepo" (Irony). It is organized into three main drum parts, each with four sub-sections: Rhythm, Hands, Zones, and Tones. The parts are numbered 1 through 16 across the top.

- Drum 1:**
 - Rhythm:** A series of rhythmic patterns represented by vertical lines and dots.
 - Hands:** A sequence of letters (L, R) indicating hand positions.
 - Zones:** A sequence of letters (z, x) indicating zones.
 - Tones:** A sequence of circles (o) indicating tones.
- Drum 2:**
 - Rhythm:** A series of rhythmic patterns represented by vertical lines and dots.
 - Hands:** A sequence of letters (L, R) indicating hand positions.
 - Zones:** A sequence of letters (z, x) indicating zones.
 - Tones:** A sequence of circles (o) indicating tones.
- Drum 3:**
 - Rhythm:** A series of rhythmic patterns represented by vertical lines and dots.
 - Hands:** A sequence of letters (L, R) indicating hand positions.
 - Zones:** A sequence of letters (z, x) indicating zones.
 - Tones:** A sequence of circles (o) indicating tones.
- Footwork Patterns:** A series of rhythmic patterns represented by vertical lines and dots.
- Sonic Patterns:** A series of rhythmic patterns represented by vertical lines and dots.
- CLAPPING:** A series of rhythmic patterns represented by vertical lines and dots.

4.2.7.3 Function of the song

The song has a dual purpose. It is recited by people who are anti-social, or who are gossip mongers. If one is emotionally weak, he / she will feel offended when the song is sung.

The content firstly speaks about a person whose ancestors have instructed him / her to carry out various instructions, namely to slaughter a cow with a specific colour on the forehead. Such instructions have been carried out, but amazingly enough, the

ancestors have visited the same person, demanding the same thing again. This is what happened to Manare.

Ancestors are unique. What they can do, no one else can do. Sometimes they may demand something different in a second situation as a signal of their dissatisfaction or deliberate punishment. Then the patient would report this to the traditional healer, who in turn shall organize a religious ritual. This is then done with the assistance of the patient. Then they offer what the ancestors have demanded. By doing this, it is believed by some Pedi people that the ancestors will be satisfied. "*Leepo*" is the most important song during this ritual. Other songs can be sung as well, but very often, this particular song is used. It means "*the ancestors have punished me, they have forsaken me*".

Secondly, the song functions as a kind of a lament, where the supplicant bewails his situation before the ancestors.

4.2.7.4 Musical assessment

The major characteristic of this song is the phenomenon of **call and response**. This simply means an alternative singing by leader and chorus. There is no gap in the line of singing, e.g. no rests or silent moments from the first to the last bar. At times the leader overlapped, and hence resulted in two melodic lines being sung simultaneously by the leader and singers (traditional healers). The initial call and response patterns then became polyphonic. At times the melodic line, which identifies the song, is sung by the chorus, while the leader improvises mostly on his melody.

The chorus line remains basically unchanged throughout the song, while the solo line changes each time when it is sung. The song is written in a cyclic form. It consists of constant repetitions of rhythmically identical cyclic patterns. These patterns derive their melodic shape from shapes of verbal intonation and speech tone. Seemingly the song also follows patterns of rondo and variation forms. An example of rondo is : A B A C A D A.

4.2.8 Song 7 : *Šibišana Mašabela*” : Traditional healer :
Tshehla Morongwa Angelinah⁸

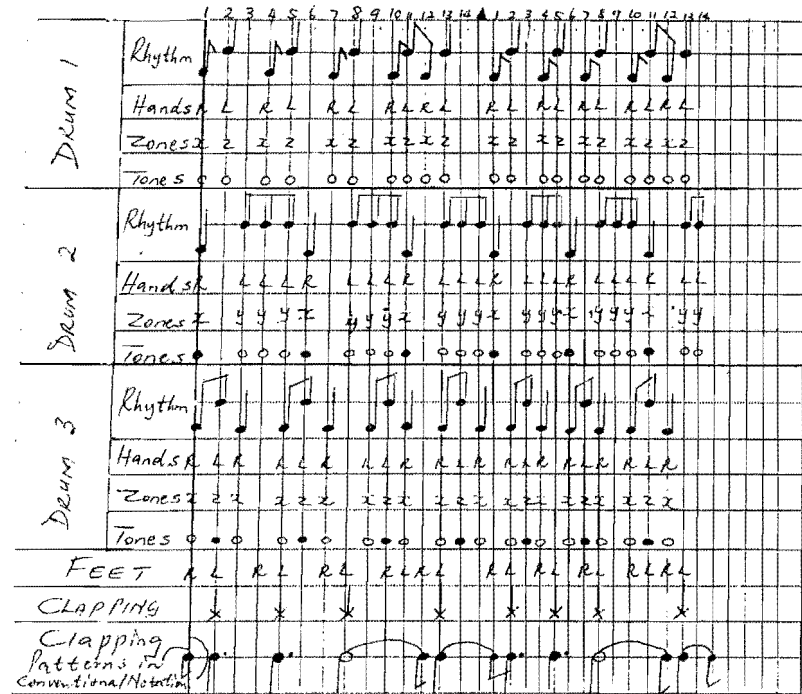
4.2.8.1 Text and background

Song text and translation

SOTHO	ENGLISH
Šibišana Mašabela, ke moswa Mmakwapa Ba re ka re ka bitša, ga ba nkarabe	Šibišana Mashabela, I am a youngster called Mmakwapa I cry out to my Ancestors, but no response, for they have turned their back against me

⁸ Tshehla Morongwa Angelinah was born in 1967 at Ga-Maphopha (Dikgageng Village) in the Sekhukhune area. She is a teacher by profession. After being called into the traditional healers’ profession by her grandfather (Tšabadi Tšabadi) in 1991, she realized that it was necessary to resign from the teaching profession. Before resigning, one night she had physical visitation in the form of snakes as a signal of punishment of defying the ancestors’ instructions. She became ill and fell asleep. The snakes have then disappeared and her health has improved tremendously. She is currently a traditional healer.

4.2.8.2 Musical transcription of the song *Šibišana Mašabela*
(The name of a man who likes meat)



The transcription is organized into three main sections for Drum 1, Drum 2, and Drum 3. Each drum section contains four staves: Rhythm (musical notation), Hands (L/R), Zones (z/z), and Tones (o/o). Below the drums are four staves for Feet (L/R), Clapping (x), Clapping Patterns in Conventional Notation (musical notation), and Clapping Patterns in Conventional Notation (musical notation). The transcription is numbered 1-14 across the top.

4.2.8.3 Function of the song

"Šibišana" is recited when a certain ancestor of a particular traditional healer-to-be is buried at a place reigned by a different king, e.g. Xhosa. Then the particular ancestor (either a man or a woman) will complain and disregard the pleas of the traditional healer by visiting the traditional healer-to-be very often in a dream. He will sometimes ill-treat the person. The ancestor does this deliberately because the traditional healer feels isolated and forsaken by his / her people.

This song is also sung by both traditional healers and traditional healers-to-be during the first step of their training (**go tielwa**). It is offered by traditional healers as a call to the ancestors in order to tell the patient (trainee-to-be or **lethasana**) what they want from him / her. It is during this stage of the ritual that the patient has to disclose to the traditional healer what the ancestors demand. It can be a goat or cow with specific colours. Singing "*Šibišana*" Mašabela is a signal that no connection has yet been established between the patient and the ancestor. It indicates that there is a communication breakdown between the two parties. If disclosure fails, i.e. if the traditional healer-to-be does not fall on the ground and inform his / her supervisor (traditional healer) of what the ancestors are demanding a next song must be sung. This will be "*Salane*". The performance of this song guarantees that the patient will fall down. After falling down the patient discloses what the ancestors are demanding from him / her.

4.2.8.4 Musical assessment

The melody of this song consists of two parts. The second part is a mirror image, a complement or answer to the first part.

The melodic metre can also be divided in two parts, namely a constant phrase and a variable (narrative bearing) part. The variable section carries the textual development of the narrative. In the fixed section, the constant phrase is usually syllabized. It functions out of pure musical value. The constant phrase further gives metric unity to the form of the song. This phrase also serves as a structuring referent which guides the temporal organization of the variable section.

4.2.9 Song 8 : "Ditshela" : Traditional healer : Mashegoana Tswaledi Stephen⁹

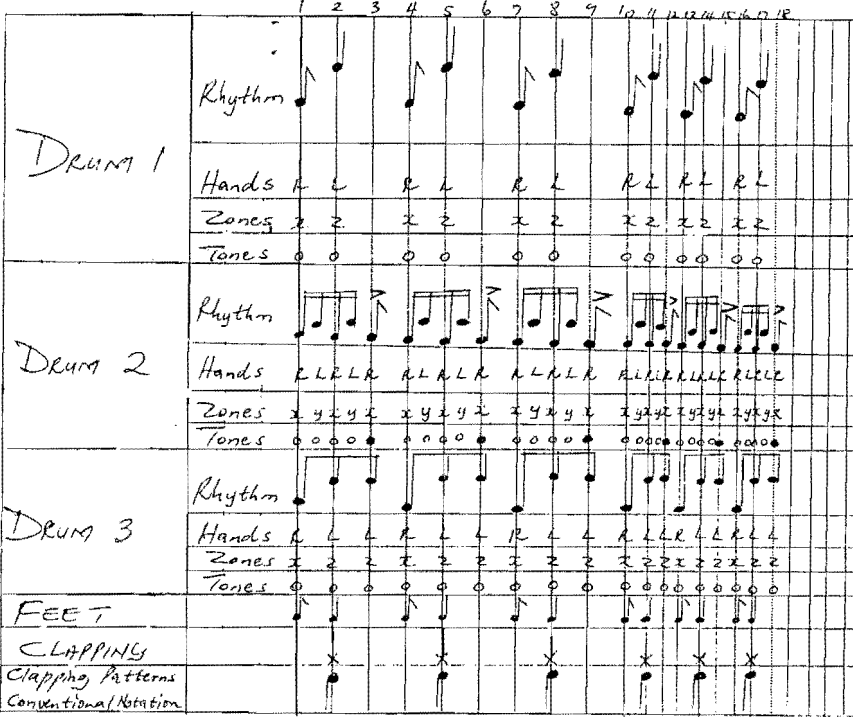
4.2.9.1 Text and background

Song text and translation

SOTHO	ENGLISH
Re tšhaba ditshela Ga ra tlela tšona tša metse ya lena Re tšhaba go thula ditaba Re bona bothata Re tšhaba go nyatša metse ya batho Ga ra tlela go thula baloyi	We shun disharmony We are not here to attend to your community misunderstanding We are scared of disclosing your secrets We foresee trouble We are scared of undermining other households We are not here to point out witches

⁹ Mashegoana Tswaledi Stephen was born in 1954 at Kotsiri Village. In August 1971, when he was in Zimbabwe, he saw big snake in a dream. The following night his great grandfather (Tswaledi Stephen) appeared to him in a dream, and said : "its me my son". A few days later the son became very ill and suffered from high blood pressure. His parents took him to a traditional healer. The healer told the parents that Stephen is not ill, but had ancestral spirits. The following day they went to the great grandfathers grave for ancestors' veneration and he recovered whilst still at the graveyard. Stephen went for training as a traditional healer. He currently specializes in many diseases and symptoms of ill health.

4.2.9.2 Musical transcription of the song "Ditshela" (Disharmony / discomfort)



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
DRUM 1	Rhythm	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Hands	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R
	Zones	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x	z	x
	Tones	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
DRUM 2	Rhythm	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Hands	L	L	L	R	L	L	L	R	L	L	L	R	L	L	L	R	L
	Zones	x	y	z	x	x	y	z	x	y	z	x	y	z	x	y	z	x
	Tones	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
DRUM 3	Rhythm	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Hands	R	L	L	R	L	L	R	L	L	L	R	L	L	L	R	L	
	Zones	x	z	z	x	z	z	x	z	z	z	x	z	z	z	x	z	
	Tones	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
F E E T	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
CLAPPING																		
Clapping Patterns		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		
Conventional Notation		•		•		•		•		•		•		•		•		

4.2.9.3 Function of the song

Most people recite this song whilst in a retaliatory mood against those who assaulted them verbally. When a traditional healer-to-be is singing this song, it is obvious that the particular traditional healer-to-be is crying about the revelations he receives. In a dream his personal ancestor appears to him with a hand bag full of divination bones or medicines. The ancestor does not have the real divination bones. This is only a signal of what the ancestor demands from the traditional

healer-to-be. The visited person is to become a traditional healer and employ divination bones in his / her divination process.

This song is also about a misunderstanding between a brother and his sister. According to the Pedi culture, if the brother's children are suffering from harassment by the ancestors' spirits, this would entail ancestors in dreams. Then ancestors' veneration is required by the brother's sister on behalf of the children. The visited persons (children) become mentally disturbed. Sometimes they can even get physically ill. Their condition could result in loss of concentration, loss of weight and childhood depression. This situation may cause them not to cope with the school situation. The brother's sister has to take the children to the concerned ancestor's graveyard for ancestors' veneration. Either snuff or African made beer (or both) are required for the veneration. If, due to the misunderstanding between the brother and his sister, the sister is not willing to come to the veneration ritual, the brother or any member of the family can take a Kangaroo skin along. This, according to Pedi tradition, is believed to be a substitute for the sister's needed action.

The singer (traditional healer) here is appealing to both the sister and brother to terminate their misunderstanding. The traditional healer warns both the brother and sister about the trouble, which he foresees for the children, if they continue their quarreling. The children will die if the brother and sister do not comply with the ancestors' instructions. The singer is humbly requesting both the brother and sister to stop fighting and think of their children.

4.2.9.4 Musical assessment

The performance of this song is in unison. Supporting melodies, melodic phrases and / or isolated tones are added to the tune.

A single line develops into more than one voice and then return immediately to the main melody. The major characteristic of this song is polyphony (that is different parts not beginning simultaneously or operating in alternation but are making independent entries, giving rise to constant overlapping of their phrases). The general outline of a Pedi traditional tune could be described as following the succession of the teeth of a rip saw, the tendency being for the tune to start on a high pitch platform and gradually work its way down with steep rises and gentle slopes and from tension to rest. Finally, Pedi traditional healers' melody grew up in association with words, which have influenced the way in which it is constructed.

4.3 CONCLUSIVE SUMMARY

4.3.1 Significance of the songs for Pedi religion

Songs accompany every phase of the divination process and also any other task which they perform communally, for example, ancestor veneration, etc. These songs, in conjunction with the drums and rattles, form the accompaniment for the dancing of both the healer and the "*possessed*", as the ancestor spirits are either urged to leave or enter the patient's body. The songs sung include : (a) those centred on the illness of the patient; (b) songs about the ancestors;

(c) places and persons. There is no **malopo** ritual which can be staged without the accompaniment of these songs.

CHAPTER 5

SYNTHESIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Study and research on music and religion is an important source of information for Biblical and Religious studies in the African context. Similarities and dissimilarities need to be taken into account. Praying and recognition of the ancestors in Africa is where music is employed as an instrument. Praying, sacrifice and ritualistic exercises in African religious rituals is the focus of this study. The Pedi tradition receives special attention. The **malopo** cult in the Pedi tradition offers followers the opportunity to express themselves and their religious experiences. A trance is often realized in this culture. It is fundamental to note that the personal songs of traditional healers are used to reach this condition. Songs are sung and recited in order to create harmony between the living and the living-dead.

Christianity and traditional African beliefs should both be open to the practice of ecumenism. Christians in Africa should not be Africanized Christians but Christianized Africans. Different sessions of similar rituals were observed during this study to ascertain the relevant inherent variations between the different religious traditions before a conclusion is drawn.

Eight of the most important traditional healers in the Sekhukhune Contradosa members were selected from the forty seven **malopo**

healers who are included in the research. Indeed, African primal communities are illiterate. But illiteracy neither spells dullness nor ignorance or an inability to carry on with scientific study about African religiosity. Young people learnt by participating in activities alongside their elders in a strong orally learning tradition.

5.2 AIMS

The basic aims of this research were the following :

- 5.2.1 It critically examined the religious rituals which were performed by members of the organization of traditional doctors (Contradosa). These healers perform religious rituals in order to call the spirit of the dead so that they may be recognized by their descendants and relatives as protecting ancestors.
- 5.2.2 Ancestors in African traditional religions are part of the social and religious life of the living. This study has the intention to draw the attention of the reader to the religious rituals where ancestral spirits are thought to play a role in the lives of their descendants. In these rituals music plays an essential part.
- 5.2.3 The study also intended to let the reader realize the therapeutic function of music in the divination processes of the Pedi culture. It draws the attention further to the function of music in the Bible, the relationship between

music and religion, music and ritual, as well as the relationship between the living and the living dead.

5.3 HYPOTHESIS

This research confirms the initial hypothesis of this thesis, namely that ***music is the most important medium of communication in the religious ritual contexts of the Pedi tradition. It confirms how music is a very important vehicle in African religious experience.***

This hypothesis is motivated by the following musico-religious aspects of the research.

5.4 MUSICO-RELIGIOUS ASPECTS

5.4.1 Biblical perspective

The reader has the opportunity to realize that music was not only used in different indigenous African religious rituals, but was also used in Biblical times. Music according to the Bible, has played an important role in secular life and religious rituals. The following musical aspects are identified : music was used to soothe a child or restive flocks of sheep. Most festive celebrations took place with music and dance. Weddings were such occasions in which music and other merriment played an important role. Births, with their promise of new life and continuity of inheritance, were also marked by ceremony and ritualized singing. Military life was similarly characterized by musical activities.

The use of music for religious purposes was also seen in both popular as well as institutionalized settings, for example : mourning or lamentation, pilgrimages to sacred shrines and temples, Passover as well as other annual religious festivals. Nothing could have brought the worshipper closer to God than the musical vehicle. Different musical instruments were also utilized in various religious and secular rituals. This include idiophones, membranophones, aerophones and chordophones.

5.4.2 A Pedi perspective

For many centuries, music has been used in different indigenous African religious rituals as part of communal and personal religious rites. While some of these religious rituals have come to extinction, others are nearing extinction due to the fast disappearing adherents. In some African societies like the Pedi, Tsonga, Venda and Tswana cultures, such musico-religious practices have been restricted to the members of specific societies alone. In this study the researcher has exposed the religious experiences of Pedi music and ritual sessions. The research therefore enables further study in order to build on existing insights and information. Music in the Pedi tradition seems to be inevitable for religious experiences and practices.

African indigenous religion has shown respectable practices and is not evil. Pedi musical and religious forms are better understood throughout this research, for they are part of a community religion of societies which was developed in Africa since early times.

5.4.3 Ritual music

Pedi traditional healers perform ritual music to communicate with the ancestors. They do it for the purpose of changing the human situation. Music always accompanied these indigenous African religious rituals. It serves a therapeutic and cohesive function. Religious rituals are performed to cure illness, increase fertility, defeat enemies, change people's social status, remove impurity, reveal the future and its capacity of fusing a community together.

5.4.4 African rituals

This study is a contribution in furthering knowledge about African religious rituals. Rituals in African societies are further proof of their community orientation. Rituals often take the form of dramatic presentations among African people. By means of objectifying their inner fears and perplexities, the people are enabled to deal with their feelings in a meaningful and constructive manner.

5.5 PEDI TRADITIONAL RELIGION AND THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN THE PEDI DIVINATION PROCESS

5.5.1 Introduction

The scope of this research was to zoom in on a society and organization where the music plays an important role. Contradosa historical background, the Pedi culture divination music and religion. Research material is found in the Northern province at Schoonoord Village in the Sekhukhune area.

5.5.2 Sekhukhune Contradosa

Sekhukhune Contradosa is an organization of Northern Sotho (Pedi) traditional healers in the Northern part of South Africa. This organization was established in 1987 as an affiliate of the umbrella body, Contradosa. The organisation was established after many traditional healers were burnt to death by comrades of the youth liberation movement. These people believed that traditional healers *bewitch* people. It is the traditional healers' fervent wish to collaborate with medical doctors in hospitals. The primary function of their musical activities is to reinforce or strengthen people, and to relate themselves and their trainees more closely to the ancestors.

5.5.3 Pedi traditional religion

The Pedi traditional religion is a community religion. In two ways it could be described as :

- co-extensive with its society; and
- an undifferentiated part of the Pedi social life.

The theological meaning of tribal religions today is very important. The African black man in the Pedi culture still believes that Christianity comes from God (**Modimo**). He / she clings to this belief although his mind is sometimes in a state of revolt against the Western practice of Christianity.

Among the traditional healers (Sekhukhune Contradosa), one does not have to prove the existence of God. People easily accept the idea and

existence of the Christian God. Contradosa meetings are opened with a prayer directed to the God of Christianity (see minutes, Addendum C). Smith (1926 : 28) affirms that if one comes into an African village, people eagerly talk about God. Different cultures also give Him several names. These names express the deepest thoughts of their ancestors.

5.5.4 Pedi divination music

In the Pedi culture divination is very important. No one can decide on his own to become a traditional healer. He/She inherits the ability either from his / her parents or grandparents. The time spent on religious rituals, where Pedi people are connected with the dead, is considerable. The practice shows the profundity of Pedi belief in the spiritual world, and in the importance of the ancestors. The dead are felt to be near.

The more one listens to and participate in Pedi divination music, the more people become conscious of its vital power. Musical activities touch the chords of man's innermost being. It stirs people's primal instincts. Music therefore demands the performer's whole attention.

To the Pedi traditional healer and believer, music cannot be enjoyed in isolation. It brings people in contact with other human company and with their ancestors. In the Pedi culture, music is a social practice.

5.6 PERSONAL SONGS OF THE SEKHUKHUNE TRADITIONAL HEALERS

5.6.1 Introduction

The ritual use of music is clearly illustrated in the different personal songs of traditional healers who belong to Sekhukhune Contradosa. Information on these songs was documented for posterity and further research. The focus was to link the traditional healers' biographical profiles with their personal songs and to formulate the function of the songs. A musical assessment of each song was also made.

5.6.2 Function of the personal songs

The personal songs have exceptional ritualistic value for the traditional healers. For instance, should the traditional healers *faint* or *pass out into a trance*, it is on hearing their personal songs as performed by their colleagues that recovery is induced and finally gained.

5.6.3 Musical assessment of the personal songs

Personal songs are characterized by the phenomenon of *off-beating* or the accentuation of weak beats, also known as syncopation. Songs have two or more rhythmic patterns operating simultaneously. As in melody, the spoken word influences rhythm in the traditional healers' personal songs. In these songs the memorability of the tune derives further from rhythmic repletion.

The intervallic instance between the high and the low voices sounding together is not precise. Its quality is determined by the factors of cultural harmonic concord. The music is pentatonic, with no interval smaller than a tone. The most common structural feature of the personal songs is the antiphonical character.

5.6.4 Conclusion

From this research it is evident that whenever the Pedi traditional healers want to communicate with the supernatural, they use the medium of music. Songs and / or instrumental music, especially drums and whistles are utilized in such rituals and rites. There are dramatic ritual occasions when spirits manifest themselves in one perceptible way or the other. Then they address the human worshippers. This process happens in musicalized modes. Invocations and supplications to superiors or to the supernatural are felt to be more persuasive or acceptable in elevated musical or musicalized sounds by the Pedi.

Music as an effective medium for social intervention is well-known in the Pedi culture. The rallying as well as cohesive potential of music is exploited to bring people together for different purposes. It also spurs members of a group towards achieving a corporative objective in a community. Music as a direct agency for social intervention is further recognized as a censure free medium among the Pedi. It helps expressing and exposing corporate truth, communal or personal views, agitations as well as aspirations.

Traditional music and compositional materials must therefore be preserved for further research. This study is also intended to draw the attention of scientists and researchers to the investigation of other indigenous and African religious rituals and their music. Suggestions are therefore meant to be a contribution to biblical and religious studies in traditional African beliefs.

As a final suggestion this study concludes with a recommendation. In the organization of psychiatric services in developing countries, the dialogue between psychiatry and native healing art should not be neglected or lost. In African societies psychiatric centers should not be isolated from the culture and community in which they serve. The importance of a study like this should create understanding for different cultures and the religious experiences of traditional African beliefs among people in South Africa.