

**PSALM-LIKE TEXTS IN
AFRICAN CULTURE :
*A PEDI PERSPECTIVE***

**BY
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***This thesis is submitted as partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree PhD (Biblical and Religious
Studies) at the Faculty of Humanities***

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I greatly appreciate the permission to embark on this study, that was granted to me by the Faculty of Theology. It is my hope that this thesis will be found useful in clarifying some issues in the theological anthropology debate in Africa (Pedi tribe) today, and thus help to take that debate a step further, especially in regard to Christian anthropology.

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Lastly, my thanks go to Ms Rina van Coller for the typing, patience and able guidance in the preparation of this thesis.

DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for a degree requirement in any other University. No part of this thesis may be produced without the prior permission of the **author** and/or **University of Pretoria**.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved parents, Ditswejane William Lebaka (Father) and Kgaato Maria Lebaka (Mother), who have passed away since 16 June 1986 and 13 May 1993 respectively. I am fully aware that one of the major challenges facing many families today is good parenting. I have indeed received tender loving care from my parents while they were living. I came to know Jesus Christ through their guidance. I therefore dedicate this work to them as a memorial of their service to me. Thank you Dad and Mom.

SUMMARY AND KEYWORDS

Title: Psalm-like texts in African culture: a Pedi perspective

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Degree: Philosophiae Doctor (Biblical Studies)

Up to now there has been no attempt by Biblical scholars to compare the book of Psalms in the Old Testament with Pedi psalm-like songs. This study aims to fill that gap in the research and so contribute to the development of the African cultural heritage – especially that of the Pedi culture, by using indigenous knowledge systems.

The research commences with a descriptive analysis of the various genres within the Book of Psalms. A variety of psalms types are discussed, including: Hymns of praise; Thanksgiving songs (communal and individual); Laments (communal and individual); Royal psalms; Hymns of Zion; Psalms of Yahweh's kingship; Wisdom psalms; Liturgical psalms; Entrance liturgies; Judgement liturgies; Psalms of trust; Imprecatory psalms; Creation psalms; Torah (Law)-psalms; and Festival psalms. Each of these genres is described with reference to structural elements, characteristics and function(s).

Then follows a descriptive assessment of numerous types and specific examples of Pedi Psalm-like songs via the provisioning of text, translation and a detailed commentary pertaining to contents and function. These include: Songs of Praise (e.g. *Kgoparara*); Thanksgiving songs (e.g. *Mogale wa marumo* - thanksgiving birth poem); Lament songs (e.g. *Madi a manaba* - a funeral song); Royal

songs (e.g. *Kgoshi* - an inauguration song) Liberation songs (*Ga e boe Afrika* - a liberation song); Wisdom songs (*Mokgoronyane* - initiation song for boys and *Kgogedi* - initiation song for girls); Prayers of trust (e.g. *Salane* - a song of trust); Imprecatory songs (e.g. *Leepo* - song with irony); Law songs (e.g. *Bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo* - instruction song); Feasts (e.g. *Ngwana malome nnyale* - a lobola song and *Hela Mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana* - a wedding song).

Finally the thesis provides a critical comparison between biblical psalms and Pedi psalm-like songs. The research demonstrates that, on the one hand, there are numerous interesting similarities between the two cultures' songs with regard to a variety of aspects. On the other hand, the assessment also reveals substantial differences between the two musical traditions pertaining to an equally great number of issues.

KEYWORDS

Bible
Old Testament
Psalms
Genre
Music
Culture
Africa
Pedi
Pedi psalm-like songs
Comparison

OPSOMMING EN SLEUTELWOORDE

Titel: Psalm texts in African culture: a Pedi perspective

Student: M E K Lebaka

Promotor: Professor D J Human

Graad: Philosophiae Doctor (Bybelkunde)

Tot op hede was daar geen poging aangewend deur Bybelkundiges om die Psalmboek in die Ou Testament te vergelyk met Psalm-tipe liedere uit die Pedi kulture nie. Hierdie studie poog om die betrokke leemte in die navorsing te vul en so by te dra tot die bewaring van die kulturele erfenis van Afrika en die ontwikkeling van die Pedi kultuur deur die gebruik van inheemse kennis sisteme.

Die navorsing skop af met 'n deskriptiewe analiese van die verskillende soorte genres wat aangetref word in die Bybelse Psalms. 'n Verskeidenheid psalm-tipes word bespreek, insluitende: Lofpsalms; Dankpsalms (van die gemeenskap en die individu); Klaagpsalms (van die gemeenskap en individu); Koningspsalms; Sionhimnes; Psalms van Jahwe se koningskap; Wysheidpsalms; Liturgiese psalms; Ingangsliedere; Oordeelsliedere; Vertrouenspsalms; Wraakpsalms; Skeppingspsalms; Tora (Wets)-psalms; en Feespsalms. Elkeen van hierdie genres word bespreek met verwysing na strukturele elemente, karaktertrekke en funksie(s).

Hierna volg 'n deskriptiewe assessering van die vele tipes en spesifieke voorbeelde van Pedi Psalm-tipe liedere via die beskikbaarstelling van die teks, vertaling, en 'n gedetailleerde kommentaar met verwysing na die inhoud en funksie daarvan. Hierdie sluit in: Lofliedere (bv.

Kgoparara); Dankliedere (bv. *Mogale wa marumo* - dankseggings gedig by geboorte); Klaagliedere (bv. *Madi a manaba* - 'n begrafnislied); Royal songs (bv. *Kgoshi* - 'n inwydingslied); Bevrydingsliedere (*Ga e boe Afrika* - 'n bevrydingslied); Wysheidsliedere (bv. *Mokgoronyane* - 'n inisiasielied vir seuns en *Kgogedi* - 'n inisiasielied vir meisies); Vetroutensgebede (bv. *Salane*); Wraakliedere (bv. *Leepo* - 'n lied met ironie); Wetsliedere (bv. *Bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo* - instruksie lied); Feesliedere (bv. *Ngwana malome nnyale* - 'n lobola lied en *Hela Mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana* - 'n huwelikslied)

Laastens verskaf die tesi 'n kritiese vergelyking tussen die Bybelse psalms en Pedi psalm-tipe liedere. Die navorsing dui aan, enersyds, vele interessante ooreenkomste tussen die liedere van die twee kulture se musiek wat betref 'n veelvoud van aspekte. Andersyds toon die studie aan dat daar ook merkbare verskille is tussen die twee tradisies wat betref 'n ewe groot verskeidenheid van sake.

SLEUTELWOORDE

Bybel

Ou Testament

Psalms

Genre

Musiek

Kultuur

Afrika

Pedi

Pedi psalm-tipe liedere

Vergelyking

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 ACTUALITY AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

Christianity among the *Pedi* tribe has led to widespread use of Christian music that has interfered with the performance, format and role of traditional *Pedi* psalm-like songs (Blume 1979:8, 13; Foley 1987:407; Leaver 2001a:366). The intervention of Christian missionaries in the *Pedi* community resulted in some *Pedi* people observing the hymns introduced by the missionaries and forgetting about their indigenous songs (Moila 1988:111ff; 152ff; 189ff). In some extreme cases, there has been total replacement of the *Pedi* psalm-like songs with Christian hymns and gospel music¹. This has been due to devaluation of African culture by some early church missionaries, and perpetuated by younger *Pedi* Christians.

For many years, scholarly research on psalms have concentrated mainly on the psalms as documented in the Bible and their parallels in the ancient Near East (Hallo and Younger 1997:538). Scholarly works have centered on the nature, function, use, structure and the origin of these psalms (see Eaton 1967; Dahood 1970; Kuntz 1974; Hayes 1976; Kraus 1979; Brueggemann 1984; Gunkel 1985; Gerstenberger 1988; Day 1990; Anderson 1991; Craven 1992; Brueggemann 1995; Crenshaw 2001; Gerstenberger 2001; Brueggemann 2002; Terrien

¹ Aleaz (2003:107) emphasizes that the Christian churches continue to manifest their colonial heritage today in different ways: in the style and functioning of their bureaucracy; in the shape of their worship; in the language and content of their theology; and in the way in which all these are tightly controlled by a central authority, European in its mentality, that allows little local autonomy and is insensitive to local needs.

2003; Goldingay 2006 and others)². So far, however, it appears that biblical scholars or scholars of religion have given little attention to the psalm-like texts in African culture(s) or that they are unaware of their existence and ignorant of their purpose and function (Adamo 2001:2-3). Yet, there are and have been many psalm-like songs in African culture(s) (Mbiti 1975; Kebede 1982; Zake 1986; Arnston 1998; Cooke 2000; Phibion 2003; Soko 2003; Idamoyibo 2005; Wanyama 2005). This study will produce evidence of this.

There is a need for in-depth research on the nature, forms, uses, roles and contexts of psalm-like texts in African cultures, and a comparison between these and the Old Testament psalms. Such an investigation in the *Pedi* tradition has hitherto not been attempted. This study is meant as a contribution to the provisioning of perspectives on African psalm-like songs when comparing to the religion of ancient Israel. Above all there is a need to provide access to the African psalm-like texts to researchers and scholars of theology and religion, in this instance the *Pedi* culture.

This study would be a contribution towards the wealth and value of indigenous knowledge systems in Africa, specifically the *Pedi* culture in South Africa.

² Mowinckel (1962); Weiser (1962); Murphy (1963); Leupold (1969); Anderson (1972); Childs (1976); Westermann (1980); Smith (1984); Hurvitz (1988); Longman (1988); Stuhlmüller (1989); Seybold (1990); Murphy (1993); Pleins (1993); Mays (1994); Eaton (1995); Whybray (1995).

1.2 NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL VALUE

1.2.1 National importance

Documentation and dissemination of the activities of the *Sekhukhune Contradosa*³ is of importance to enable the retention of the *Pedi* cultural heritage. One cannot understand culture without reference to subjective meaning and one cannot understand it without reference to social structural constraints. Furthermore, culture is a historically created system of explicit and implicit designs for living, which tend to be shared by all or, especially, designated members of a group at a specific point in time (Balasuriya 2002:93).

Exposure to the *Sekhukhune Contradosa's* activities can lead to proper assessment, aesthetic appreciation and a clear understanding of the *Pedi* indigenous psalm-like texts. Such exposure could lead to more research interest by national scholars, which therefore motivates the *Sekhukhune Contradosa* to engage in more productive religious and cultural activities.

Research attention and interest in the activities of *Sekhukhune Contradosa* will encourage the traditional African practitioners psychologically and creatively. Such research studies could enable the re-assessment of pre-conceptions and prejudices that may have surrounded the contextual African approaches to theology and religion. It will lead to an enhanced interaction and utilization of the benefits of the activities.

³ *CONTRADOSA* refers to Congress of Traditional Doctors of South Africa.

1.2.2 International importance

This study will enable scholars internationally to become aware of the existence of psalm-like texts in African culture(s). The research also document some indigenous songs as a contribution to the development of the African cultural heritage, but also offer interested researchers and scholars the opportunity to carry out further research on psalm-like texts in African culture(s). Aleaz (2003:107) has reported that indigenisation today is well rooted in the Bible as parts of the Bible are actual “models” of indigenisation. He argues that the Old Testament and the New Testament should be taken as models of indigenisation, not only in the matters of religious customs, practices, and expressions of faith, but also in literary forms and religious writings (Aleaz 2003:108).

Literary documentation as well as an analytical study of the content and structures of African (*Pedi*) songs will enable proper focusing on the potential and value of African (*Pedi*) psalm-like texts. This at once elicits discussions and cognitive attention that would necessitate both historical and contemporary understanding of the biblical psalms. Such literary attention will not only coerce congruent knowledge of the psalms, but will, in addition, create much needed balance between the study of the hitherto untouched African (*Pedi*) psalm-like texts and the already well-researched biblical psalms. In other words, as more scholars focus on the study and understanding of the nature and forms of African texts, a balance in the historical research of African and other biblical psalms will be this researcher’s intention. Furthermore, international exposure to the *Sekhukhune Contradosa* could also lead

to international interest and assessment of African religious cultures and heritage (Nurnberger 2007:152).

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Since the Book of Psalms in the Old Testament has not been subjected to a comparative evaluation/analysis with *Pedi* psalm-like songs, the objectives of the study, therefore, will be to:

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

1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.4.1 Introduction

This research is primarily a literature study based on primary oral traditions and secondary literature. In order to situate the study theoretically and generate the conceptual framework, secondary data

was consulted and assessed. Secondary evidence included written sources like books, journal articles, articles, MA and PhD theses, etc. Available online journals on internet were also consulted.

Due to the oral character and scope of the African context the literature aspect is complemented by field research conducted through interviews, observation and recording (Du Toit 1998:308). It is further argued that songs and dancing, rites and ceremonies, among others, are vital repositories of African religious cultural experiences (Awolalu 1991:131). To that end the foregoing elements particularly songs are harnessed for the purposes of this research. Thus recordings on audiocassettes and videotapes captured group performances on *Pedi* psalm-like songs (see CD in the addendum). Here the information on audiotapes and videotapes was translated into English. Collected *Pedi* psalm-like songs were classified and assessed according to their function(s). This was done by counterchecking, comparing, contrasting and corroborating the collected information from various sources together with the outlined theoretical framework, research questions, hypothesis and objectives.

1.4.2 Theoretical framework

Arguments about models of interpreting the Bible in an African context have been rehearsed by commentators such as Mugambi (1994), West (1999), Adamo (2001), Ukpong (2002) and others⁴.

⁴ In South Africa Paton (1996) proposes a liberationist approach of conducting hermeneutics. He is supported by Boesak (1984) who employed biblical texts to resist apartheid.

Mugambi (1994:9-16) approaches theologizing in Africa from two perspectives, which are mutually dependent. Firstly, he suggests the collection of data about African societies. This matter of fact means fresh studies concerning various religions and cultural systems must be embarked on. Secondly and, consequently, the results from the foregoing investigations should be used in biblical interpretation and theologizing. Mugambi's call echoes Agbeti (1972:6-7) and has been undertaken at various levels in African studies and theology. Increasingly the need for authenticity is motivating such studies. The present research complies with this endeavor since *Pedi* indigenous songs are collected and comparatively assessed against similar Psalm texts herein.

West (1999:9-19) for example, suggests a method of performing biblical interpretation which draws on liberation theology's⁵ commitment to the poor. The South African context is ideal for the method since the consequence of the historical past has left the ordinary people poor and marginalized. This model is employed in Bible study with the ordinary reader. West's method is grounded in the South African context. The method employs the approach by ordinary readers. Ordinary readers are the poor, marginalized, illiterate or semi-illiterate who are mostly found in the rural areas. The interface between the ordinary readers and an academic facilitator brings both the cultural context of the ordinary reader and the critical tools of the facilitator into discussion.

⁵ According to Martey (2003:128-129) African liberation theology sets Africa's socio-economic and political struggle within a theological context. He further insists that it defines poverty in anthropological terms and draws attention to all structures - political, economic, ecclesial, religious - that dehumanize and impoverish the African created in the image of God.

West's approach enriches Biblical and Religious Studies in Africa as it bridges the gap between previously marginalized communities and western scholarship. Through interface academically qualified facilitators, are able to conduct Bible study with illiterate and semiliterate faith communities. West's model employs the South African context as its point of departure.

Adamo's (2001:3-4) model is an extension of the interpretation practice common to African indigenous churches in Nigeria. This method engages in the African worldview, culture and life experience as a vantage point for the interpretation of the Bible (Ukpong 1995:5). It is a contextual approach designed in protestation against western approaches. Adamo aims at appraising biblical and African cultural and religious experience (Yorke 1997:145-158). African cultural hermeneutics is premised by an acknowledgement that the Bible is God's word. It possesses potent words approximated to African traditions (Adamo 2004:29). Furthermore, practitioners of this methodology must be experienced in African culture. Commitment to the Bible as God's word, God's ability to perform miracles and experience in African culture are essential pre-requisites for utilizing Adamo's approach.

However, Adamo's approach lacks due consideration of the contextual differences between the Bible and African traditional religions (Adamo 2001:8-35). In his reading Adamo transfers African religious concepts into the Bible. Thus, he fails to raise the religious cultural differences which have a bearing on the definitions of the concepts. For instance, Adamo applies psalm texts for healing from an African traditional religious point of view (Adamo 2001:18-24). A closer examination of

the Psalms yields no attestation to such applications and the Psalms, like the Old Testament Yahweh-faith, appear to be distanced from such magical practices.

Ukpong (2002) proposes inculturation as a method of conducting African hermeneutics. The major components of this model are the interpreter and the text. Ukpong (1995:50) argues for an in-depth analysis of the historical and cultural elements behind the text. After a meticulous analysis of the textual and interpreters' contexts the process of actualizing the biblical message in real life situations is carried out.

Ukpong's model has strengths of being contextual and interrogating relevant questions challenging African people. Moreover, it is complemented by scientific hermeneutical aspects regarding historical cultural context of biblical texts. Hereby a superficial reading of biblical texts is avoided. Further, since this approach interacts with historical cultural contexts it can easily be adapted to different African environments.

The above four models of Mugambi (1994), West (1999), Adamo (2001) and Ukpong (2002) have post-colonial reclamation tendencies. In a post-colonial approach we have the element of scrutiny of biblical documents for colonial themes. Secondly, it seeks to resist oppressive historical characteristics of the past. The post-colonial approach is meta-cultural, hence it promotes research into previously marginalized societies, like the African society in particular in order to reaffirm their cultural elements. For instance, West's model opposes the imbalances

caused by the apartheid⁶ past of the South African history. Adamo (2001:44-45) on the other hand seeks to destabilize the hegemony of western approaches while at the same time re-appraise religious cultural systems. Mugambi's (1994:13-14) proposal to collect religious cultural data affirms the importance of religious indigenous systems. He promotes a method of interpretation that challenges and seeks redress of the conditions caused by the colonial past in Africa. For example, the consequences of colonialism in African states includes problems of economical nature (Mugambi 1994:14).

Ukpong (1995:5) like Adamo (2001:3-4), seeks to destabilize the hegemony of western approaches, while at the same time he re-appraises African religious cultural systems (Yorke 1995:145-158). This is supported by an in-depth analysis of the historical context of the text in Ukpong's approach (Ukpong 1995:3-13). Equally while the two foreground their methods in the African context, Ukpong includes economic and political elements.

Classical liberation theology is an attempt to address economical imbalances (Sugirtharajah 2001:206-215). Other aspects of the liberation hermeneutics include appraising the Bible as well as the belief in the plurality of application of the biblical message. Liberationist hermeneutics utilizes Western exegetical methods to attend to the problems of economic deprivation (Bosch 1991:439; Sugirtharajah 2001:250).

⁶ Apartheid has been described generally as "an Afrikaans term coined as an election slogan for the Afrikaner-led National Party that won the 1948 general election in South Africa" (Pato 2003:7). Pato emphasizes that the word apartheid comes from two Afrikaans words, *apart*, meaning "separate," and *heid*, meaning "ness," and implies racial segregation in all spheres of life.

Similarly, the tendency of West to use and support the ordinary reader in his method is drawn from liberationist interpretations (West 1999:124; Sugirtharajah 2001:206-207). In the same way Adamo employs a liberationist concept of the sacredness of the Bible (Bosch 1991:439; Adamo 2004:29).

This study is enriched by a post-colonial argument that biblical traditions need to be positioned with other religious traditions. My study interrogates the hypothesis that even though specifics of structure and content of biblical psalms and *Pedi* psalm-like songs may differ, both traditions mediate religious experience of believers and enhance the worship of the divine.

In the light of the above models, this study has adopted a comparative approach based on Fiagbezi's ethno-musicological theoretical framework (see figure 1.5.3). Equally this research draws from inculturation hermeneutics' emphasis and reappraise of indigenous cultural systems (Adamo 2001:45; Ukpong 2002:18)⁷. While inculturation is nuanced variously in different parts of the Third World, Fabella (2003:105) is of the opinion that it addresses the following concerns: first, culture is seen as comprehensive, taking into account the tension between the influences of modernity and Westernization on the peoples' culture as well as the traditional ways of life; second, as a dialogical process, inculturation takes into account the anti-life components in both the local culture and the biblical gospel (e.g. its patriarchal orientation), which must be critiqued and transformed. In this sense, Fabella (2003:105) insists that inculturation is liberative. Third, today inculturation is mainly the responsibility of the local

⁷ Inculturation hermeneutics takes its cue from the methodology of Third World theology (Torres and Fabella 1987:269-271).

community and evangelizers, not of expatriate missionaries or of local experts alone. Fourth, inculturation is an ongoing process since culture is dynamic and continually evolves. Fifth, inculturation cannot be so local that the faith is no longer recognizable by others within the communion of churches in general. Sixth, the Holy Spirit has an essential role in the work of inculturation⁸. Since this study is conducted in Biblical and Religious Studies, I have elected to commence with the descriptive analysis of biblical psalms then followed by *Pedi* psalm-like texts. This approach does not necessarily mean that *Pedi* culture in general and *Pedi* psalm-like texts in particular are less important than the study of the biblical tradition. But rather this approach enables the researcher to move from a well researched study field to a study field with a shorter research history, in many ways from the known to the unknown, from experienced to the less experienced research field.

In approximation to the present study other scholars have employed a comparative model between African religious experience and the Old Testament. Included under this approach are Schapera (1982), Steiner (1982), Ukpong (1990), Kamuwanga (2007). Kamuwanga (2007) has examined prayer for protection among Lozi people of Western Zambia. Like this study his model is a construct of synchronic and diachronic elements. Further similarities are noticeable in the area of appraising and advancing indigenous knowledge systems. His integrated approach does not posit an equilibrium between African religious traditions and biblical texts. However, the relevance, applicability and

⁸ Fabella (2003:105) continues to say that in Africa emphasis is given to cultural values such as relationship with ancestors, rites of passage, and traditional healing services. According to him Africans focus on the Africanization of Christianity rather than on the Christianization of Africa, while recognizing that not all aspects of African culture are in consonance with the Christian gospel.

appraisal of both traditions is pertinent in this study. Thus texts are primarily examined against the historical background in which they arise. Results are simultaneously analyzed comparatively. My research is however, distinguished from Kamuwanga (2007) thematically and contextually as evidenced by the variation of study subjects. Moreover, this research has endeavoured to collect and utilize observation methods to supplement a literature study. Ultimately, the research is an assessment of Pedi psalm-like songs in relation to biblical psalms.

1.4.3 Qualitative dimension.

The researcher belongs to the *Pedi* people. He therefore has experience in life situations of the *Pedi* environment. By studying their songs in their context(s) he managed to situate the place of *Pedi* religious rituals' music and hence try to analyze them in terms of form and language use, contexts, content as well as functions. My contextual approach has led to the achievement of research objectives. Therefore, on the basis of the foregoing, this study adopted the qualitative approach in the collection and analysis of data (Mouton 2001:108). Data from this qualitative approach are analyzed and the results are compared with similar biblical psalm-texts. Thus, this study is contextual as it considers the local context (*Pedi* culture) and the influence of biblical and Israelite culture on the people.

1.5 DATA COLLECTION

1.5.1 Introduction

Subjects for this study (see Chapter 3) were identified because of their knowledgeable and informative qualities. The sample size of subjects consisted of the local chief (*kgoshi Maloma*), the president of *Contradosa*, *Simon Sete* (from Jan 1995 to date), seven members of *Contradosa* executive committee, five song leaders/composers, two headmen, eight appointed traditional healers who are also musicians, two *Pedi* cultural informants who were purposely identified. These together with other participants made up a total of forty subjects (see a list of names in appendix II).

During my interaction with different traditional dance groups in the *Sekhukhune* district, I have personally attended the musical and religious activities in the society. *Contradosa* members, dancers and singers in different rituals made it possible for me to attend public performances with them. During my association with them they corroborated my data on *Pedi* information/cultural aspects in its social context.

This thesis presents aspects of the culture of *Pedi* society as well as *Pedi* psalm-like songs as a pragmatic continuity. The rationale for music as a social activity does not meaningfully emerge until the ethnological background that informs it is explained. An aim of this thesis is therefore to be a descriptive, comparative, expository and interpretative study. It will present principles of religion and the internalization of *Pedi* psalm-like songs in a context in which it is vital,

integral, and with consolidatory focus on the dynamics of human interaction.

To put it tersely: *Pedi* society composes psalm-like songs, and in turn these songs promote moral and religious values in the society. This study will rely to a large extent on the knowledgeable perspectives of *Pedi* traditional healers and leaders of different traditional dance groups who are knowledgeable about *Pedi* psalm-like songs. It will expose *Pedi* perspectives of music, religion and culture as an event-specific activity with its own internal logic, and as a social institution.

1.5.2 Scientific observation

The observation method⁹ is a commonly used method, especially in studies relating to behavioural sciences. Kothari (1990:118) observes:

In a way we all observe things around us, but this sort of observation is not scientific observation. Observation becomes a scientific tool and the method of data collection for the researcher when it serves a formulated research purpose, is systematically planned and is subjected to checks and controls on validity and reliability.

These views are corroborated by Binnet (2003:97), when he notes that "observation is used as a research technique when data on actual practices are required". In this study therefore, data from documentary and oral sources are carefully collected. A combination of participant observation and free attitude interviewing methods have

⁹ Part of the primary source was the carrying out of both participant and non-participant observations, mainly within the *Sekhukhune* district, in *Limpopo* province of South Africa.

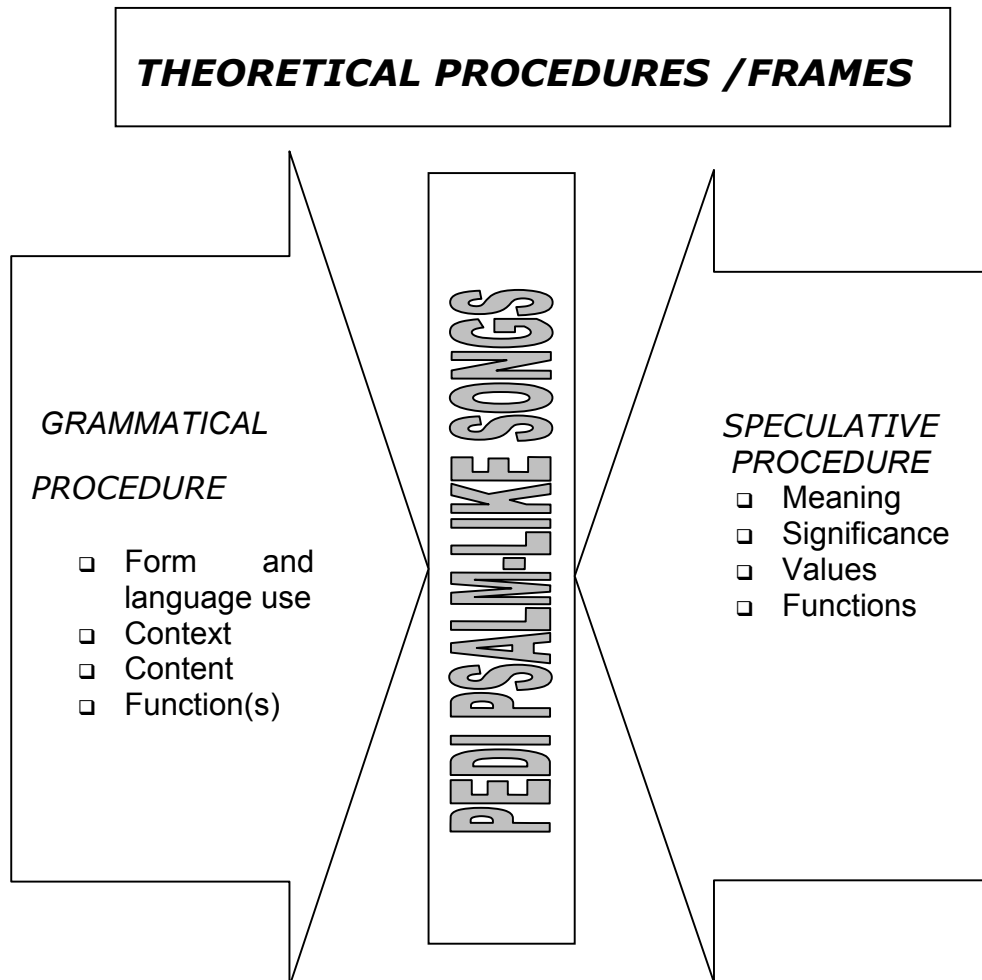
been employed in the course of research (Mouton 2001:105). A detailed collection process coupled with meticulous selection and analysis has been conducted. Consequently, a historical record for the present study and future secondary data analysis has been realized.

Here *Pedi* songs on audiotapes and videotapes are coded and translated to result in understandable statements and conclusions (see CD in the addendum). The *Pedi* songs collected from *malopo* rituals and different traditional dance groups in *Sekhukhune* district in *Limpopo* province are categorized and assessed according to their form and language use, content, contexts of genre or literary styles and functions. The known categories in the *Pedi* society are *lebowa*, *makgakgasa*, *dipepetlwane* and *kiba*.

1.5.3 Procedures of assessment

The procedure for assessment is derived from the form and language use, contexts, content and functions of both biblical psalms and *Pedi* psalm-like songs. The theoretical procedures or frames, as employed in the study, are illustrated in figure 1.5.3. In this figure the theoretical procedures or frames are based on the grammatical and speculative procedures that form the theoretical framework of the entire study.

FIGURE NO. 1.1: Illustration of theoretical procedures/frames derived from Fiagbedzi's (1989:45) "Philosophy of theory in ethnomusicological research".



In the context of this study, the grammatical procedures focus on a structure to assess both biblical psalms and *Pedi* psalm-like songs. This procedure underscores the form and language use, content, functions and contexts of genres or literary styles. Furthermore, they are a useful tool in the determination of techniques of making and transmitting of *Pedi* psalm-like songs from one generation to the other. The speculative procedure on the other hand addresses the

meaning, significance and value of *Pedi* psalm-like songs and their performance. An integration of the two approaches is utilized in this investigation. Hence this study interrogates form, language-structural elements and characteristics, content and context and function according to set objectives. This theoretical framework forms the conceptual framework of the study. Grammatical aspects of language embedded in song texts are analyzed. Form analytical investigations search literary devices such as metaphors. Thematic motifs are revealed against the related contextual background. Similarly the speculative analysis illuminates the meaning of concepts, their significance and functional values.

At the conceptual level, it is observed that *Pedi* psalm-like songs are not static. There is a continuous interaction between values embedded in their form and content and values associated with the modern western/eastern social values. Within this interface, we encounter the *Pedi* psalm-like songs to be assessed: these are emergent *Pedi* songs in the modern traditional interface context. When examined through the theoretical framework of this study, the grammatical theory focuses on the text, context, form and ritual purpose. On the other hand, the speculative theory illuminates meaning, significance, values and functions of the *Pedi* psalm-like texts.

Consequently the results from the assessment of biblical psalms and *Pedi* psalm-like songs are compared. The basis of this comparative assessment is done on form and language use, contexts, content and functions of genre styles (literary genres) in their unique religious context(s). In this way the religious significance of both *Pedi* psalm-like songs and biblical psalms is confirmed.

1.6 HYPOTHESIS

This study is based on the following research hypothesis: *African (Pedi) psalm-like texts contribute to the communal experience and worship of Pedi Africans in ways that are both similar and different when compared with the role of biblical psalms in their ancient Israelite context(s).*

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

1.7 CHAPTER DIVISION AND OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The contents of this study may be outlined as follows:

- In chapter 1 an introduction to the study is provided by discussing the actuality and research problem, national and international value, aims and objectives, research design and methodology, procedures of assessment, hypothesis, chapter division and outline of the study;
- In chapter 2 I examine the various types of biblical psalms and their theological function(s) as found in the Old Testament *Psalter*.
- In chapter 3 I deal analogously with a variety of *Pedi* psalm-like songs.
- Chapter 4 provides a comparative analysis between the biblical psalms and the *Pedi* psalm-like songs.
- In the final chapter I conclude the study with a synthesis.

1.8 ORTHOGRAPHY AND TECHNICAL TERMS

Technical terms not listed hereunder will be defined and described in the footnotes. Furthermore I follow the orthography of the adjusted Harvard reference system. Many different Bible translations are used in this study. They are indicated in brackets in the text.

1.8.1 Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in the study: e.g (for example), etc (etcetera), vv (verses). Abbreviations of names of biblical books are: Jdg (Judges), Kgs (Kings), Ps (Psalm), Pss (Psalms), Jer (Jeremiah), Ez (Ezekiel), Jon (Jonah), Rom (Romans).

1.8.2 Technical terms

ancestors: deceased relatives who have intermediary role at family, clan and tribal levels in the *Pedi* society.

bodika: first phase of initiation school for boys.

bogwera: second phase of initiation school for boys.

Contradosa: Congress of Traditional doctors of South Africa.

malopo: is an illness, which can only be terminated by a ritual called *malopo*.

meropa: plural of *moropa*, which means drums.

Pedi: name of the tribe in Limpopo Province.

psalm-like texts: used in this study to classify *Pedi* religious cultural songs which serve various purposes and reflect the same poetic characteristics and historical settings as the biblical psalms.

sorcery: involves casting of spells, poisoning or other physical harm done secretly (Hayes 1995:340).

Sotho: language spoken by the Sotho people (*Basotho*).

witchcraft: is defined as the manifestation of mystical forces which may be inborn in a person, inherited, or acquired in various ways (Mbiti 1975:166; Hayes 1995:339). It may be used to cause harm on certain individuals (Hopkins 1980:60; Schiltz 2002:347).

Chapter 2 Biblical Psalms

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reflects on the nature, content and function of biblical psalms. This is not a comprehensive discussion but important aspects are dealt with to introduce the different genres and their theological functions. The Book of Psalms provides us with some of the most reliable theological, pastoral, and liturgical resources in the biblical tradition. No wonder the Psalms are referred to as the “Hymnal of the Second Temple” (Crenshaw 2001:1). They provide a window through which ancient Israel’s response to God’s presence or absence may be viewed. It is one of the most frequently read books of the Bible.

2.2 BIBLICAL PSALMS: CLASSIFICATION AND FUNCTION

2.2.1 Introduction

Arguments for the classification and function of biblical psalms have been put forward by many commentators (e.g Mowinckel, 1962; Gunkel, 1985; Gerstenberger, 2001; Brueggemann, 2002; Seybold, 1990; Pleins, 1993 and others)¹⁰. In particular, Herman Gunkel has pioneered the classification of the psalms into different forms, types or genres (*Gattungen*) and tried to determine their life setting in ancient Israel (*Sitz im Leben*). Examples of his psalm-types include *inter alia*, “Hymns,” “Laments of the people,” “Laments of the individual,” “Songs

¹⁰ See also Murphy (1963), Eissfeldt (1965), Eaton, (1967), Kuntz (1974), Childs (1976), Kraus (1979), Wilson (1985), Stuhlmüller (1989), Day (1990), McCann (1993), Whybray (1995) and Crenshaw (2001).

of thanksgiving of the individual” and “Songs of thanksgiving of the people.” After his recognition of the presence of liturgy and the role and function of singing, dancing, shouting, sacrifices, prayers, temple, etc, he concluded that the psalms were related to the worship of ancient Israel and were not originally meant for meditation by pious individuals. Wilson (1985:513) has also paid attention to the canonical shape of the Psalter. He concluded that the Psalter is not a random collection of songs and prayers. The Psalter, according to him (Wilson 1979:513-514), is not a mere collection of liturgical material, but has the purpose of being read and heard as “a source of Torah.” That is, as a source of instruction. As such they are songs and prayers that originated from the response of the faithful to God.

Mays (1987:3) argued that Torah Psalms are present throughout the Psalter for the purpose of orientating the faithful to hear the Psalms as instructions of God. Other scholars such as Childs (1976:378), having recognized the limitations of the older approaches to the Book of Psalms has called for a totally new direction. He has argued for the need to go beyond the form-critical and historical critical approach to the Psalter. He argues that more attention should be given to the final form of the Psalter. He refers to this as “canonical criticism.” Thus, Childs’ (1976:376) analytical work allows scholars to determine how the meaning of individual psalms in the Psalter may be affected by their titles and their placement in that particular place in the canon.

Since much of the discussion on the biblical psalms, which appears at the beginning of this chapter, is based on an encounter between God and man, it makes sense to briefly discuss the psalms as a running account of the continuing encounter between God and man. The above

considerations and indications have shown an encounter based on who God is, made inevitable by who man is, obviously initiated by God, and needed, even if not always wanted by man. Now I will outline the various forms of genres in the Psalter.

2.2.2 Classification of genres

2.2.2.1 Hymns of Praise

a) Form

Ten percent of the psalms are hymns or prayers of praise (Craven 1992:23). These prayers typically celebrate God as creator and sustaining controller of history. Often they follow a threefold A-B-A pattern of the opening call to worship (A), followed by the motive or reason for praise (B), with a concluding recapitulation of the opening (A). Imperatives are regularly employed to express the mood of certainty that God's creation and order for the world is sure and worthy of praise.

Hayes' (1976:21) structure of hymns of praise also comprises of three elements and confirms the abovementioned: Firstly, the introductory exhortation or call to praise. Secondly, the main body of the hymn which praises God for his attributes and deeds. Thirdly, a concluding section expressing some wish, prayer, or blessing (see also Anderson 1972:33). In addition, he emphasized that the introductory exhortation is a call to worship, praise, thank, or bless God, as it is addressed to those who are called to share in the worship or praise¹¹.

¹¹ Hayes (1976:21) insists that examples of hymns of praise in the Psalter are Psalms 8, 29, 47, 93, 95-100, 104, 113-115, 117, 135-136, 146-150. According to him, many other psalms contain sections or verses, which are praises of God. In addition, he found that some of the hymns of general thanksgiving might be

This genre is perhaps best motivated by Smith's (1984:15) view on hymns of praise: "some psalms are completely expressions of praise to God. They contain no laments and no petitions, only praises." Smith (1984:15) emphasizes that most hymns have two or three parts: namely, a call to praise, a reason or reasons for praising God, and sometimes a concluding call to praise. The call to praise is usually an imperative form such as: "rejoice in the Lord!" (Ps 29:1), "clap your hands!", "shout to God!" (Ps 66:1), "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" (Ps 103:1), "Praise ye the Lord" "Hallelujah," (Pss 111:1, 113:1, 117:1, 135:1, 146:1, 147:1, 148:1, 149:1, 150:1).

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Smith's point of view links closely with what Gerstenberger (1988:17) terms "expressions of praise to Yahweh alone." Gerstenberger sees the hymns as pointing to: first, calling on Yahweh (Pss 8:2, 65:2-3, 139:1); second, summons to praise, call to worship (Pss 33:1, 34:4, 47:2; 95:1-2, 96:1-3, 98:1, 100:1-4, 105:1-3). third, praise of Yahweh because of His works, deeds and qualities (Pss 8:3-9, 19:8-11, 46:5-8, 47:3-10, 96:4-6, 103:3-19). According to Gerstenberger (1988:75), praise, thanksgiving, petition and complaint all aim essentially at securing the mighty help of Yahweh for his suffering, miserable congregation of the faithful¹².

considered as praises of God (Pss 67, 103, 105-107, 111, 124). He further regarded hymns of praise as sharing characteristics, features and a common structural pattern.

¹² The words of Gerstenberger (1988:18) indicate that the hymns themselves often refer to liturgical details and the very structure of some hymns suggests a responsive presentation (Ps 136). Naturally, instruments provided melody and rhythm for holy dances (e.g. the harp in Pss 57:9, 92:4; the timbrel in Exod 15:20, Ps 149:3; and the lute, pipe, cymbals, and other instruments in Ps 150:3-5). On the

For the purpose of substantiating this statement, Longman (1988:29) directs our attention to the lament song. In his study of the hymns of praise he has shown that they are common toward the conclusion of a lament. Various authors have pointed out that in numerous psalms, many hymns of praise focus on Israel's Exodus from Egypt, her possession of the land of Canaan, and God's care of and gifts to his people. Brueggemann (2002:55) recognizes "hymns of praise" to be a very general classification. Indeed, there is a tendency to treat the term hymn as a synonym for the phrase "psalms." But in fact, the term 'hymn' has a more precise reference. A hymn characterizes a public (as distinct from personal or intimate) song that is sung with abandonment in praise to God for the character of God's person or the nature of God's person or the nature of God's creating and liberating actions. Hayes (1976:18) suggests that hymns of praise give expression to the central themes of the spring celebrations.

While Anderson (1972:31) classifies twenty-four psalms as hymns, Longman (1988:24)¹³ has demonstrated that hymns are easily recognized by their exuberant praise of the Lord. He further confirms that, though there are many different types of hymns, almost all of them share a similar basic structure: Hymns begin with a call to worship, and they continue by expanding on the reasons why God should be praised. Hymns often include, and sometimes conclude with further calls to praise.

other hand, Gerstenberger (2001:37) observes that the hymnic praise as a whole thus radiates the values, concepts, and interests of a community of parishioners, not a people at arms.

¹³ Thus even though the hymns of praise look toward God, they are no less concerned with the human than the laments, the songs of trust, or the psalms of thanksgiving. According to Pleins (1993:80), the hymns of praise differ only in those aspects of our humanness in which they wish to draw out for further inspection and redefinition.

c) Content and context

The emphasis on hymns in the Old Testament leads to an improved understanding of these songs of praise. While these songs can be elaborated in various ways, it is clear that its basic structure is clear and consistent. Focusing on the characteristics of this psalm-type, to my mind, the praise of God in the Old Testament is always devotion that tells about God, i.e. a theology and proclamation that seeks to draw others into the circle of those who worship this God.

Hymns of praise do open us to the God who lives in an enduring relationship with humanity and creation. Praise not only cultivates a sense of mystery and wonder toward God¹⁴, but also fosters a desire to extend the love and compassion of God to all people who are in need.

Human address to the divine expresses itself in two basic modes: petition and praise. In praise the worshipping individual or community offers adoration to the deity and proclaims his magnificence and the greatness of his works and deeds. He insists that, in singing hymns of praise, the congregation feels itself in the glorious and holy presence of God and extols who and what God is and does for the community.

¹⁴ The focus has been on God's creation, for Pleins (1993:89) says, "In our hymns of praise, we may not entirely penetrate the veil of eternity, but we can at least glimpse the enduring love that binds God to God's creation." Of interest also, was evidence from Pleins (1993) suggesting that hymns of praise show us that sky and sea, mountains and valleys, beasts and birds are all to be feed to offer praise to God. Pleins provide us with another function of these hymns: "The hymns of praise work to expand our comprehension not only of ourselves and of creation, but ultimately of the God of eternity. From Pleins' observation about the functions of hymns of praise, it is clear that the probing of ourselves and of creation, that we find in the hymns of praise is critical to our emergent spirituality, but these psalms go further to suggest that worship can indeed foster a sense of God's grandeur and God's compassion.

Hayes (1976:21) finally points out that the mood of the hymns reflects reverence, laudation and enthusiasm.

Mowinckel (1962:181) drives the point home well: "...a hymn is a true outcome of disinterested piety, praising the greatness and glory of God, who is at the same time merciful and terrible, the God who is God though every land lie desert"¹⁵. Therefore the hymnic psalm is a surprising, buoyant articulation of a move of the person or community into a new life permitting and life-enhancing context, where God's way and will surprisingly prevail (Brueggemann 2002:21). Such hymns are a joyous assertion that God's rule is known, visible, and affective just when we had lost hope.

d) Functions

A discussion of the most important functions of the hymns are as follows. The primary function of hymns or descriptive praises is to "extol God, his character, and so on, but occasionally this praise may be expressed indirectly by praising the Temple or the Holy city" (Anderson, 1972:35)¹⁶.

It may be argued thus, even though the hymns of praise point toward God, they are no less concerned with the human than other kinds of psalms. Hymns of praise teach worshippers that the deepest form of

¹⁵ Mowinckel (1962:181) confirms that it is before God that believers prostrate themselves in worshipping eagerness.

¹⁶ Anderson (1972:35) defined this category as hymns of praise, or simply hymns, while Westermann preferred to speak about "descriptive praises" (Anderson 1972:35). The principal aim of this psalm type is to declare Yahweh's greatness, which he has manifested both in nature and in the history of Israel; thus the main theme is his praise.

divine praise sharpens worshippers' understanding of what it means to be human.

Craven (1992:48) holds that hymnic expressions of praise provide well-ordered maps of life that support belief in "God's non-negotiable governance" of the world. In speaking of the function of hymns, Craven thus declared that some hymns express the conviction that life is good.

Pleins (1993:76-89) points out that hymns of praise: Firstly, show that worship is a time to encounter the glory and majesty of God. Secondly they teach that the deepest form of divine praise actually sharpens people's understanding of what it means to be human. Thirdly they urge believers to reflect on their humanity against the backdrop of the eternal and to help the worshipper to gain some perspective on power and poverty, history and idolatry. Fourthly they show that a theology of God and creation must also be a theology of justice. Fifthly they present the worshipper with a positive vision of creation as the wellspring of joy and beauty. Sky and sea, mountains and valleys, beasts and birds are all to be freed to offer praise to God. In sum, they expand believers' comprehension not only of themselves and of creation, but ultimately of the God of eternity.

Hymns of praise are not philosophic tracts designed to pin down in precise terms the nature and substance of the divine but they open people's views on God who lives in an enduring relationship with humanity and creation (Pleins 1993:89). Pleins emphasizes that praise not only cultivates a sense of mystery and wonder toward God, but it

fosters a desire to extend the love and compassion of God to all who are in need.

From all this, one may conclude that, interest in asking God for favours yielded to a greater interest in praising God. It is important to read the entire Psalter and its component sections contextually, with an eye for the evolution of the various components. The heading of the Psalm book gives a hermeneutical key to interpret every psalm as a song of praise.

2.2.2.2 Thanksgiving Songs

a) Form

Thanksgiving Songs may be distinguished between individual and communal thanksgiving psalms (Gunkel 1926:475). In defining what a Thanksgiving Psalm is, Longman (1988:31) stresses the fact that a Thanksgiving Psalm is most easily identified by a restatement of the lament, which is now answered. There is a close connection between hymns and thanksgivings and a typical thanksgiving begins in a similar way to a hymn of praise. According to Anderson (1983:111) "...community Songs of Thanksgiving are relatively few in number, and even these come to being hymns".

In his distinction between a hymn and a thanksgiving song Westermann (1980:71ff; 81ff; 1981:97) prefers "descriptive praise" instead of "hymn" and "declarative" or "narrative praise" for the

community's songs of thanksgiving¹⁷. Craven (1992:10) argues that communal thanksgiving psalms "present most vividly the perennial dialogue between God and human beings." He insists¹⁸ that the psalms as we read, study and pray them today, record only one-half of the conversation. Most often community songs of thanksgiving express the sentiments of members of the community in dialogue with God.

Declarative praises are also described as individual Songs of Thanksgiving, or private hymns of thanksgiving (Anderson 1972:35). These praises presuppose laments and they are man's response to God's gracious intervention. Their aim is not only to offer praises or thanks to God, but they are also intended as a testimony to the saving work of God, declared before the whole congregation. Thus also private thanksgiving is a communal act of worship. The ultimate characteristic of the Thanksgiving Song is that it has double speech direction namely to God and to the congregation. The worshipper directs his speech acts both to God and the believing worshippers.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Gerstenberger (1988:15) points out that Thanksgiving Psalms consist, inter alia, of the following elements: invitation to give thanks or to praise Yahweh¹⁹, account of trouble and salvation²⁰, praises of

¹⁷ Kuntz (1994:89) is of the opinion that the former celebrates the deity's attributes and creative power while the latter responds to specific acts of divine deliverance.

¹⁸ Brueggemann (2002:50) regards songs of thanksgiving as belonging to the personal sphere. The counterpart in the public domain is the hymn. In general, this is a sound division. He (Brueggemann 2002:51) has shown that these psalms do suggest that on occasion the whole community had given thanks.

¹⁹ Pss 30:2, 5; 34:2-4; 118:1-4.

²⁰ Pss 18:4-20; 32:3-5; 40:2-4; 41:5-10; 116:3-4; 118:10-14.

Yahweh, acknowledgement of God's saving work²¹, blessings over participants in the ceremony²² and exhortation²³.

Mowinckel (1957:14) continually asserts that the Thanksgiving Psalm begins ordinarily with a general expression of the worshipper's intention to thank and praise God or with a general statement of His praise worthiness. Then follows the record about the worshipper's experiences, his distress and his salvation. Contributions made by Mowinckel (1957:14) and Gerstenberger (1988:15) have sparked further debate on the thanksgiving songs. For example, Brueggemann (1995:15) has shown that these psalms move from petition and plea to praise.

Mowinckel (1962:132-135) surmises, quite realistically, that the thanksgiving psalms are often richly varied. Sometimes it involves confession of sin e.g (Ps 32), at other times a religious problem, which becomes the main topic. Here fundamental emotion and gratitude find many expressions. But the personal element features in a special way²⁴. These psalms seem to have been the particular favourites of the "wise."

Smith (1984:14) considers the individual songs of thanksgiving as expressions of the payment of those vows. He observes that the form of the individual Song of Thanksgiving usually includes an introduction, like "I will give thanks, to the Lord." (Ps 30:1), "I love the Lord," (Pss

²¹ Pss 18:47-49; 30:2-4; 12-1; 40:6; 92:5-6; 118:14, 28-29; 130:2; 138:1-2, Isa 12:1.

²² Pss 22:27; 40-5; 41:2; 118:8-9.

²³ Pss 32:8-9; 34:10; 12-15; 40:5; 118:8-9.

²⁴ According to Mowinckel (1962:132-135) many of the psalms have been composed for use in situations, which are so humanly common and familiar. For example, in times of illness. Hence, we can take for granted that many of the professional temple-singers have also had similar experiences.

18:1; 116:1), a narration of past troubles, prayer and deliverance, and the announcement of a thank offering or a confession of praise.

c) Content and context

Mowinckel (1962:32-43) effectively narrowed down the variety of life situations proposed by Gunkel. He sets the majority of the psalms in the context of a particular interpretation of Israel's cultic life. His work also demonstrates that the occasions for a thank offering with a Psalm of Thanksgiving were just as numerous as the dangers and tribulations and difficulties of life (Mowinckel 1962:54-55).

Thanksgiving Songs prove to be a testimony by one or many who has/have experienced salvation from distress and danger by Yahweh. A Psalm of Thanksgiving is actually a particular kind of hymn, a doxologizing thanksgiving for some definite benefit. It is the personally experienced outcome of Yahweh's power, righteousness and mercy. The experience expressed in this kind of psalm has established and again confirmed the confidence of the worshipper in Yahweh. Individual Psalms of Thanksgiving are the ones in which most personal touches and background are found.

Psalms of Thanksgiving affirm mostly that God hears the worshippers' prayer (Pleins 1993:60). For believers it is often difficult to believe that God listens to them yet the Psalms of Thanksgiving remind them that God hears them even in the midst of their sorrow: (e.g. "I sought the LORD, and God answered me; God rescued me from all that terrified me" (Pss 34:5; 138:3). Pleins (1993:63) singles out the notion that the community Psalms of Thanksgiving place a special emphasis on God's provision of food for the world.

There is no greater affirmation in these psalms of God's global concern than that found in Psalm 65. To substantiate this statement, Pleins (1993:64) directs attention to the fact that in several of the Psalms of Thanksgiving, thankfulness imparts to the worshipper a more profound respect for the house of prayer and ritual: the temple and its sacrifices. Psalm 65 sets this posture out clearly for the people of Israel.

While it is too simplistic to be prescriptive, it is clear that by contrast, these psalms give the worshipping community and the individual a way to offer thanks to God, in times when healing defeats suffering, forgiveness blots out sin, and humane deeds triumph over political expediencies. This response could only be made possible by a strategic commitment with the ability to giving thanks. Offering this song to God is a radically humanizing endeavour by which worshippers refuse to let the triumphs of evil destroy their capacity to see God at work in their torn world.

Brueggemann (2002:50) has shown that the most obvious song of new orientation towards life is the thanksgiving song. The speaker is now on the other side of a lament or complaint. Thanksgiving songs tell stories of getting into the trouble and emerging from the trouble (Pss 30, 34, 40 and 138). Brueggemann (1988:145-146) pointed out that the individual Songs of Thanksgiving offer a third way (besides disorientation and orientation) in which Israel goes back behind hymns to the concrete sphere of pain. He emphasizes that these are songs in which individuals and community tell of actual troubles that have been resolved.

d) Functions

Pleins (1993:64-74) gives some direction towards the functions of thanksgiving songs. This includes the following: firstly, they affirm that God hears and forgives; that He heals and gives nourishment. The Psalter's concern for healing challenges believers on the individual level, by asking them to rejoice when individuals find care, comfort and healing. Second, they confront believers with a worship that is wide-ranging and relevant to the lives of individuals and entire communities. Thirdly, they employ a praise language that is concretely rooted in the experience of human suffering. This is a praise that is tied to life lived in a world of pain, affliction, and social injustice. Fourthly, these psalms encourage the individual worshipper to share specific misfortunes and joys with the larger worshipping community. The songs empower them to continue the search for a worship that will deepen the experience of the God of history, the God of those who are in misery and sorrow, a God who speaks to injustice, poverty, suffering on the community and global scale. Lastly, these songs sharpen believers' sensibilities about joy in worship, calling for a response in words of thanksgiving when one discovers that God has truly "turned my lament into dancing" (Ps 30:12).

Thanksgiving Songs look back upon the situation of distress as a past reality from which redemption has been experienced. God is praised for his action of salvation which has changed the life and fate of the one praying (Hayes 1976:10). They express gratitude and praise with vow, offerings and meal (Ps 22:25-26). Thanksgiving Songs recognize the power and intervention of Yahweh. These songs confirm confidence

in Him. Testimony to the great deeds of God is therefore realized in both individual and community Thanksgiving Songs.

In sum, the prime functions of Thanksgiving Songs are to respond to the experience of God's grace and power, to exalt God as redeemer, provider and sustainer, as well as to bear witness to everything that God has done in the lives of the belief individual and community

2.2.2.3 Lament Songs

a) Form

Laments can be distinguished as either communal or individual. They are prayers of complaint (Craven 1992:26-27). Forty percent of the prayers of the *Psalter* belong to this type. Laments reflect experiences in the depths of loneliness, frustration and fearfulness. The attitude that YHWH is ready to hear the protestations of the dissatisfied is coupled with the practice of unrestrained complaint. Psalmists are confident that, if God will intervene, distress would be alleviated.

The conviction in these prayers is that the world of the individual or the community is out of order. In many cases, the disequilibrium is charged to God who has failed the psalmists, or to enemies who have triumphed unfairly. Usually the psalmist claims innocence. The individual laments are not always negative. Most of them have a note of praise and a confession of trust in God. Seybold (1990:116)²⁵ classifies the following 36 psalms as laments of the individual (Pss 3;

²⁵ Seybold (1990:120) further mentioned that the (36) lament psalms belong together according to his classification in a polar relationship. In their polarity they show what it is to be completely human.

5; 7; 13; 17; 22; 25; 26; 27; 28; 35; 38; 39; 41; 42; 43; 51; 54; 55; 56; 57; 59; 61; 63; 64; 69; 71; 86; 88; 102; 109; 130; 140; 141; 143). Day (1990:33) regards Psalms 12; 44; 60; 74; 79; 80; 83; 85; 90; 94; 126 and 137 as communal laments.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Laments are characterized by several structural elements. First, an address to God; second, a complaint; third, a confession of trust; fourth, petitions; fifth, words of assurance; sixth, a vow of praise (Day 1990:19-20). The psalmists unrestrainedly complain to God about whatever personal or communal crisis occasions their prayer. One of the remarkable things about lament is, that despite the fact that God is frequently held responsible for the distress, the psalmists usually express unqualified trust in God's good intention for them. Completely surrendering the situation to God, they freely petition God for whatever they desire.

The conclusions of Smith (1984:14), based on the community lament, are most relevant for our present study. The structure of the community lament is essentially the same as that of the individual lament. The community lament begins with an invocation and a cry for help. Reasons for the lament grow out of defeat in battle (Ps 44:9-10), the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple (Pss 74:4-7; 79:1-3), or a feeling that God has rejected his people without a cause (Ps 44:17-22). The petitions in the community laments are for God to "arise," "come," "hear," "consider," "be not silent," "remember," "help," "protect," "vindicate," "sustain," and "rescue." Motivations for God's actions are: "for thy name's sake" (Ps 79:9), "why should the

nations say, 'where is their God?'" (Ps 79:10; 74:10, 22-23), or "for we are brought very low" (Ps 79:8)²⁶.

Anderson (1972:39) indicates that communal laments are less numerous than the individual songs of lamentation. He points out that the following psalms are often reckoned as communal laments (Pss 64; 74; 79; 80; 83; 85; 90; 124; 126; 137 and 144). Seybold (1990:115) classifies ten psalms as laments of the community (Pss 44; 60; 74; 79; 80; 83; 85; 89; 90; 137). They are prayers of the people, in a time of tribulation. On the other hand, Gerstenberger (1988:12) has identified several elements of laments, namely: invocation (appellation and initial plea or petition), complaint (descriptive, reproachful, petitionary), confession of sin or assertion of innocence, affirmation of confidence, plea or petition for help, imprecation against enemies, acknowledgement of divine response, vow or pledge, hymnic elements, blessings as well as anticipated thanksgiving.

Characteristic elements of the lament are the sharp cries for God's hearing and help, the descriptions of the people's plight, which are to stir God's compassion, and the invocation of judgement on the oppressors. Appeal is made to the covenant promises of God. Often there are expressions of confidence that God has heard the prayer (Eaton 1967:17).

²⁶ Smith (1984:14) notes that one feature of community laments that is not often present in the individual laments is the appeal to the past. He is of the opinion that some of the community laments end in vows to praise God if he will hear their prayers and restore their fortunes (Pss 79:13; 80; 83; 90; 123; 129; 137). Westermann (1989:22) proposes that the communal lament psalms are a collection from the post-exilic period when Israel was a mere province inside an empire.

Personal laments usually begin with a call on God or invocation, such as, "O Lord, how many are my foes" (Ps 3:1), "Help, Lord" (12:1; 88:1), "How long, O Lord" (Ps 13:1); "Save me, O God" (Pss 54:1; 69:1). The structure of the personal laments normally includes invocation, lament, petition, confession of trust, motivation, assurance of being heard, and vow. All these elements are not always present in each psalm but enough of the form is present to identify the psalm as a lament.

The lament is the polar opposite of the hymn on the emotional spectrum, and similar to the hymn, the lament genre is primarily defined by its mood.

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

One of the difficult issues in interpreting the individual laments is the identity of the "enemies." The latter finding appears to be confirmed by the fact that the description of the enemies is to a certain degree coloured by mythical ideology (Birkeland 1955:16).

Longman (1988:27) argues that besides mood, individual laments are also united by a similar structure. He sums up his argument on the function of individual lament psalms to introduce the seven elements²⁷, which are associated with a lament, though not strictly in

²⁷ Rarely will all seven elements actually occur together, but a number of them will appear in each lament (Longman 1988:27). In his investigation of psalms, Longman (1988:26) holds that the lament is the psalmist's cry when in great distress. He has nowhere to turn but to God. We discover three types of complaints as we read through the laments: First, the psalmist may be troubled by his own thoughts and actions. Second, he may complain about the actions of others against him (the "enemies"). Third, he may be frustrated by God himself. Longman (1988:28)

order listed here. They include: an invocation; plea to God for help; complaints; confession of sin or an assertion of innocence; confidence in God's response; and a hymn or blessing.

c) Content and context

Lament psalms were created in certain great crises in the life of the individual and the nation. These psalms were composed by skilled poets for the use of other people less able to clothe their experiences in a poetical language (Anderson 1972:30).

Brueggemann (2002:41)²⁸ claims that communal lament psalms are not so numerous in the Psalter, yet they are important for the nurturing of responsible faith. In particular, Brueggemann's (2002:47) view of the communal lament psalms is that most frequently the psalms stay with the experience to bring the speech to a second decisive move, from disorientation to a new orientation. He sees laments as expression of disorientation.

The above arguments bring another problem to the fore, namely, the people's relationship with God. Plein's (1993:33) arguments regarding the community laments provide an illustration of the statement concerning the people's relationship with God. His main thesis is that, although many of the community laments reflect disarray and despair,

concludes that "since a lament predominantly reflects a downcast mood, it is surprising to note that all laments include some expression of trust in God."

²⁸ Brueggemann (2002:41) in fact tried to convey the message that the psalms regularly bear witness to the surprising gift of new life just when none had been expected. Westermann (1981) however, has argued that the full form of the complaint psalm is the most basic rhetorical pattern in Israel's faith. Although he did not go on to say this explicitly, he is of the opinion that the full form constitutes a dramatic whole that moves from wretchedness to joy (Brueggemann 2002:48).

in several texts this conflictual atmosphere serves to focus the community's ongoing dialogue with God. This relationship is thought of in generational terms, like "God, we have heard with our own ears, our ancestors have told us, you acted in their day, in former times" (Ps 44:2). Yet, the community laments are hardly content with nostalgia; rather, they explore the contradictions between such an affirming history and a disrupted present in which the only sensible theological response seems to be, "God, you have thrown us off and torn us down" (Pss 60:3a; 74:1)."

It is however not clear from the context whether Pleins (1993:34) intends his statement to include how the communal laments can verbalize positive experiences. For Craven (1992:43) communal laments show that the psalmists verbalize their anger and resentment with no reservations. They express their bitterness and vindictiveness in the promise that once their own righteousness and God's justice are proven, they will praise him for deliverance and sovereignty. Furthermore, these laments contain both inspiring and shocking poetic expressions of individual and communal concerns, perceptions, and exchanges with God.

From the above considerations, there is much evidence to suggest that laments are connected to a specific cause, a threat to the people or an individual.

The following related remark by Anderson (1983:83) needs attention.

"... in the individual laments, however, we can never be sure what the trouble is, for the psalmists resort to picturesque language to describe the human condition."

The notion that the psalms of lament are pain put into words of joy appears to support a great deal of Brueggemann's viewpoint (1995:18)²⁹. He means that the individual lament is a painful, anguished articulation of a move into disarray and dislocation.

The notion that the psalms of lament are pain put into words of joy remains enveloped in an uncertainty for Seybold (1990:112). Three conditions must be fulfilled before individual psalms can be put together into a common group: There must be a "common treasury of thought and feeling" a uniformity of meaning and of mood; there must be a "particular basis in worship" in which the texts are all rooted; a uniform setting in cultic life; and there must be a "shared diction," a uniformity of style and structure.

It seems that laments have a regular structure, but they never become stereotyped. I tend to see major parts addressing God, lamenting, confessing confidence, petitioning, and a vowing to praise.

Pleins (1993:26-27) maintains that the personal laments raise difficult questions about worship in a world of suffering and injustice; they call for a worship that strives to touch those who suffer, without negating their suffering or making them feel further abandoned; they bring about a free expression of grief, thereby opening the way to a deeper struggle with God; continually they call to plumb our beleaguered condition; they give voice to radical doubts about God's action in the world, and bring to the surface people's disquiet over suffering; and

²⁹ Brueggemann (1995:18) puts a great deal of emphasis on the lament as a candid, even if unwilling, embrace of a new situation of chaos, now devoid of the coherence that marks God's good creation.

they show believers that the sufferer's call to God "out of the depths" (Ps 130:1) of misery and oppression is central to a vital worship³⁰.

Craven (1992:22), however, offers a different opinion. He presumes that laments are prayers of complaint about crisis situations involving personal enemies, sickness, military affairs, concern for the sanctuary, friends who no longer are friends, problems with God's being inaccessible, or other distressing situations. He further notes that laments bespeak the knowledge that the individual or the community is not in control, and that God is an agent of powerful change. Laments call God to bring order out of chaos, and to restore the peace and wholeness of shalom.

d) Functions

Four functions regarded by Brueggemann (1995:68) as the most significant of this psalm-type are the following: firstly, manifestation of Israel at its best, giving authentic expression to the real experiences of life. Secondly, making clear that faith and worship deal with and are shaped by life as it comes to the people. Thirdly, witnessing to a robust form of faith that affirms that God seriously honours his part of the exchange. Fourthly, laments lead directly and necessarily to petition or supplication. Given these functions of the lament it is obvious that the context of the petition can be derived from the nature

³⁰ In support of the above information, Pleins (1993:26-27) emphasized that in the individual laments, the questions directed at God can be rather pointed such as, "has God forgotten how to show pity?" (Ps 77:10a), or "If you keep track of people's sins, Lord, who will survive?" (Ps 130:3). Questions like these speak to the harsh reality of human suffering in the face of divine indifference. He also mentioned that throughout the individual laments there is a compelling theological and human response to the reality of personal suffering and social injustice, a response that arises from inside situations of hurt and hopelessness, injustice and oppression.

of the complaint, for it urges simply that the distress should be dealt with.

Craven (1992:28-29) notes that in laments, honest complaint coupled with complete trust in God seem to effect relief for the psalmists. Laments bespeak the knowledge that the individual or the community is not in control and that God is an agent of powerful change. They call on God to act so as to bring order out of chaos, to restore the peace and wholeness of "shalom." Laments are spoken by those whose world is out of order. Laments are powerful testimonies to the faith of a people who believed it is appropriate to praise God from the depths of human distress with honest words of complaint.

It is worthwhile to mention here Stuhlmüller's (1989:107-108) view on acknowledging how the largest number of psalms fit into the category of individual laments. Stuhlmüller has suggested that the division between communal and personal laments is somewhat arbitrary. She assumes that individuals may have composed the psalms not only to express and sustain their personal sorrow in God's presence, but also to share their sorrow with other Israelites on days of mourning. Crenshaw (2001:16)³¹ endorses this observation by stating that the majority of laments give the impression of having been composed for use by a single individual, but exceptions such as Psalm 60 lend a communal dimension to the voice of distress.

The lament is one of the basic forms of psalmic expression. Most other psalm forms are derived from or responses to the lament, a viewpoint which is shared by Brueggemann (1995:18). Brueggemann (2002:39)

³¹ Crenshaw (2001:81) is convinced that the original circumstances evoking the laments were later generalized to make the prayers more universal.

emphasizes that it is the function of personal laments to enable, require, legitimate and complete the rejection of the old orientation.

Brueggemann has shown that the lament psalms express the basic moves of faith in God, ranging from deep alienation to profound trust, confidence and gratitude.

Laments belong rather to healing ceremonies within the circle of the family (Miller 1986:6). Miller motivates his observation by citing an example that a person who may be threatened by any of a wide range of troubles goes to a ritual expert within the family or clan, someone trained in the ritual but not a priest, participates in a healing rite involving both words and actions, and gets rid of the threat or trouble. In Miller's view laments were more like family or group therapy than prayer and worship in the church. He further mentions that lament psalms are an indication of the fact that individuals live their lives "above all in the small world of the primary group" rather than in the larger, albeit secondary, when viewed sociologically-sphere of community of people.

Pleins (1993:34) affirms that community laments have several functions, namely: firstly, they make room for the worshipping community to say to God: "You fed them (the people of Israel), the bread of tears. You had them drink tears in great measure. You set us at strife with our neighbours and they ridicule us," (Ps 80:6-7). Secondly, they focus on the dire consequences of empire building. Thirdly, they create a space for the community as a whole to gather and reflect on its stricken condition. These psalms do not try to give a final answer. Fourthly, they raise disturbing questions about God's

actions towards Israel. In one case, such a question opens the lament: “Why are you so angered with the flock in your pasture?” (Ps 74:1). The poet wrestles with the contradictions of a theology, which believes in a God who rewards and punishes but must contend with a world that knows war, destruction, and justice. Fifthly, they press us to consider how worship can, and indeed must, speak to a society and a globe that is beset by suffering. Lastly, they give the worshipping community a compelling vocabulary for confronting a God who oversees social dislocation and tragedy.

2.2.2.4 Royal Psalms

2.2.2.4.1 Introduction

There are two different kinds of royal psalms, namely, psalms about the earthly king and Yahweh as king. These are psalms centering around the king, whom can be understood as the pre-exilic Israelite monarch (Day 1990:12). Amongst other things these psalms deal with the king’s coronation (Pss 2; 110), marriage (Ps 45), and battles (Pss 18; 20; 144). These psalms are not strictly a form-critical category, since there is no typical structure, but a category delineated purely on grounds of content. Seybold (1990:19) argues that there are clear signs of their origin in the Jerusalem Temple. These psalms relate to the so-called “Ritual of the King,” and the royal cult at the state sanctuary. They stem from the heritage of the first temple. Seybold (1990:115) defines that they derive primarily from post-exilic times. Therefore he asserts that their group identity bears the stamp of a pre-exilic tradition.

Like Gunkel, Anderson (1972:39) is convinced that royal psalms are considered to be one of the main psalm types, but unlike Gunkel's opinion, they do not form an independent literary type. They are rather comprised of psalms of various categories. Their distinguishing feature is the subject matter, which concerns the relationship between God and the king. Hayes (1976:10) argues that several psalms which belong to the category of hymns or songs of praise do not have God as the primary object of praise. For example, Psalm 45 is a psalm in praise of the earthly king and his bride on their wedding. Thus one could classify this and other such psalms as royal hymns.

Gerstenberger (1988:14), on the other hand, is not much in favour of the idea that royal psalms do not form an independent literary type. He asserts that royal psalms are singled out as a separate *genre* and that they fit into the common categories of complaint and thanksgiving (Pss 18; 89; 144), of which intercession is an apt modification (Pss 20 and 21). There are also hymns for a number of specific occasions (e.g. annual ritual of re-enthronement at the Feast of Tabernacles, war time, victory and coronation).

2.2.2.4.2 Psalms of the earthly king

a) Form

Psalms of the earthly king find their setting in specific historical situations (Bullock 2001:181). Bullock has advocated that in these psalms the focus is, for example on the subject of the king's conquests,

his concern for justice and the oppressed, as well as on the theme of the Davidic covenant.

Both Westermann (1981:109) and Bullock (2001:182) share the conviction that these psalms are a major source of messianic hope. Royal psalms, are sometimes called "messianic psalms". Westermann (1981:109) is convinced that the "original" significance of the royal psalms referred to the earthly king in Jerusalem.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

The common thread that holds psalms of the earthly king together is the subject of kingship (Bullock 2001:178-179). Bullock discusses the most obvious language of these psalms. They refer to the "king", mention the "anointed" one by means of a noun or make use of the verb, but they also refer to David. Seven of the psalms refer to the "king" (Pss 1, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 89), while six of them (Pss 2, 18, 20, 45, 89, 132) refer to the "anointed one" (Hebrew *mashiakh*, or English "messiah"). In the four that do not use the word "king" at all, David is nevertheless mentioned in the content of two (Pss 132 and 144), while neither king nor David is mentioned in the other two (Pss 101 and 110; see Bullock 2001:178). In his view, there are other criteria holding these psalms together as a group. Two of them (Pss 101 and 110) show none of the three characteristics. Some of these psalms clearly describe the power, paraphernalia, and activities of the king, even though they do not mention the king's name. Psalm 101 satisfies the "royal" criteria whereby the psalmist promises to "cut off every evildoer from the city of the LORD" (v.8), a kind of power over Jerusalem that no one other than the king would possess (Bullock 2001:179). Psalm

110 uses language that obviously refers to the king, by speaking of him as “my lord” (v.1) and referring to his “sceptre” (v.2). These allusions suppose the king figure.

b) Content and Context

Bullock’s (2001:179) emphasis on the relationship of the king with the Lord is an important feature of these psalms. The Lord, has installed his earthly representative in Jerusalem: “I have installed my king/on Zion, my holy hill” (Ps 110:6).

When the royal psalms refer to the king and to David, they directly indicate historical figures in the Israelite history. When the psalmist declared “You are my Son; today I have become your Father” (Ps 2:7), the psalm notes the special relationship between God and the king who reigned in Jerusalem.

On the basis of the introductory formula, Old Testament commentators generally affirm the presence of prophetic speech in Psalm 110. While some suggest that the speaker is a cultic prophet (Anderson 1972:767; Kraus 1978b:929; 1989:346), others prefer to assign the oracle to a court prophet (Weiser 1962:693; 1987:476; Seybold 1996:438), or some simply speak of a court poet who adapted a prophetic revelation (Allen 1983:86).

With regard to Psalm 110, Gunkel recognizes the prophetic style in the text but proposes that a singer announces an oracle before the king, probably in the sanctuary (Gunkel 1904:17; 1926:481, 483). He made cross-references to his own discussion of Psalm 20 where he accepted

the existence of a sanctuary (Gunkel 1926:82-83). Gunkel also observes that Psalm 110 bears a similar introductory formula which is found in Assyrian oracles. He notes a similar expression in Psalm 110 and the Assyrian prophetic text currently referred to as SAA 9 1-4, of which both speak about the deity at the king's right hand (Gunkel 1926:481). Nevertheless, Gunkel (1926:481, 483) prefers to identify the psalmist simply as a poet or an "inspired singer" (who received a "divine revelation"), without the explicit use of the term "prophet".

Gerstenberger (2001:265) observes that the universal outlook, world government from Zion and eschatological battle against the nations are incompatible with pre-exilic Judean theology; the psalm rather emerged with post-exilic messianic expectation by using veiled language to avoid the attention of Persian officials (Gerstenberger 2001:266-267). Tournay (1960:26; 1991:211-212; 1998:330-331) argues that Psalm 110 cannot be dated earlier than the fourth or third centuries because of its dependence on the narrative of Abraham and Melchizedek, which must be dated in the post-exilic period.

Melchizedek's association with the Creator God confers universal dominion over the Creator's representative, in this case the Melchizedekian king (Seybold 1996:439). In support of the possibility of a pre-exilic date, he notes that the theology of the post-exilic community (reflected in 2 Chr 26:16) was no less cautious about such a merger than the pre-exilic community. Likewise Rooke (1998:206-208) argues that the Jewish community was ambivalent toward Hasmonaean pretensions to royalty: a king might have functioned as priest by virtue of sacral responsibilities, but a priest (i.e the Aaronic Hasmonaean) was not an acceptable substitute for the expected Davidic monarch.

Day (1998:74) has argued that “the most natural time for the Israelite royal ideology to have been fused with that of the Caananite Melchizedek king was soon after David’s conquest of Jerusalem”. In his view, Psalm 110 preserves authentic traditions concerning the royal priesthood of Jebusite Jerusalem. Against proposals for a post-exilic fusion, Day notes that post-exilic theology sought to enhance the standing of the Aaronite priesthood, making the origin of a Melchizedek tradition unlikely at this time.

Because of the inclusion of first-person, divine speech in Psalms 110; 2; 132 and 89, as well as the use of introductory speech formulas (Pss 110:1, 4; 2:7; 132:11 and 89:20), these royal psalms presented to the worshipping community divine words concerning the legitimacy of the king, his royal prerogatives, and the hope for his dynasty and kingdom (Hilber 2005:127). Rather than prophetic speech uttered in the context of worship, the poet drew from elements of the prophetic tradition that originated outside the cult. For Hilber (2005:127) two lines of argument suggest that Psalms 2; 89; 110 and 132 witness to prophetic ministry within the cult. First, details in the psalms suggest that prophecy was uttered in the liturgy. The opening announcement of an “oracle” (Ps 110:1) aroused in the congregation the expectation of prophetic speech. Similarly, the performance “today” (Ps 2:7) lends a spontaneity to the divine words of the psalm. Psalm 132 reports on the transfer of the ark (a liturgical event) and offers prayer for the king (a liturgical act). Here the divine words form a response. Second, both the form and function of comparative sources support the likelihood that these royal psalms preserve cultic prophecy. An Egyptian enthronement ritual, including oracular speech, corresponds in many respects to Psalms 2 and 110. The form and style of Assyrian cultic prophecy is

very comparable to the speech of all four psalms and functionally similar to the royal legitimation and enthronement (Hilber 2005:127). Hilber recognizes the presence of Assyrian cultic prophecy in a seventh-century monarchic context in Israel which support the argument that prophets supported the king in worship in pre-exilic Israel as well. Thus Psalms 2; 89; 110; and 132 preserve elements of this cultic prophecy.

d) Functions

Royal psalms celebrate occasions in the king's life like weddings (Ps 45), coronations (Pss 2; 110), preparation for battle (Pss 20 and 21) or ritual enactments (Ps 72). It is through the God of the worshipping community that the king's just judgement will affect justice for the people (Anderson 1972:40).

Brueggemann (2002:51) has proposed that psalms about the earthly king belong to the category of songs of new orientation *par excellence*. They give public liturgical articulation to the "kingship" of Yahweh, which is celebrated.

Psalms of new orientation, according to Brueggemann (2002:72-73), celebrate a new settlement of the issue of theodicy. The liturgical event is a foretaste of the real settlement. In his view, psalms of new orientation speak about the new state of things when life is whole and well-ordered, when the system is just and God is known to be righteous and just. For that reason these psalms reveal a readiness to a life of order that replaces the old order, which had been distorted by pain, suffering, life endangerment, etc.

Psalms of the earthly king nurture a worship that boldly sets the demands of justice before those who hold power (Pleins 1993:102). They not only describe the king and his conquests, but they also paint a picture of the monarchical era as one characterized by justice and righteousness. Psalm 2, for example, was probably used in more than one historical situation. During and after the exile in Babylon, when Israel had no king, the psalm must have been reinterpreted and used to anticipate the coming of the ideal king, a new David, the coming Messiah (Mowvley 1989:11).

Psalm 72, a prayer for the king, is not so much a prayer for his personal well-being, but that he may rule to bring prosperity to the whole nation. The king is responsible to establish peace and justice in his kingdom. This means more than keeping an eye on the law courts; it means ensuring that social life is ordered in such a way that no one is neglected, oppressed or deprived (Mowvley 1989:158). The justice which the king has to exercise, is measured against the justice of God. It is this divine justice which the king, as God's adopted son (see Ps 2:7) must maintain (Mowvley 1989:159).

2.2.2.4.3 Psalms of Yahweh's kingship

a) Form

Psalms of Yahweh's kingship (Pss 93; 96-99) form a unified block (Gerstenberger 198:38). It seems that this group of psalms does not represent a formal psalm *genre* as such. Bullock (2001:196) suggests that the universal perspective in Psalms 96-99 suggests that Psalms of Yahweh's kingship may have been dependent upon Isaiah 40-66 and

might have originated in the post-exilic era. In sum, Psalms 93, 95-100 might all be linked to the kingship of Yahweh.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

The basic characteristic clause that binds these psalms into a group is the Hebrew declaration *yhwh malak*, which either means "The LORD (Yahweh) reigns," or "The LORD (Yahweh) is king" (Pss 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; and 99:1), In Psalm 47:8 the clause occurs as "*elohim malak*" (God is king).

Psalms of Yahweh's kingship by certain scholars also called enthronement psalms (Smith 1984:15). They usually begin with or contain the phrase "Yahweh reigns" (Pss 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1) or "God reigns" (Ps 47:8). Themes of God as creator and judge are prominent in these psalms and there is a strong universal tendency in them. Yahweh is king of the whole earth. However, there is also a tone of particularism in the these psalms. Moses, Aaron, Samuel, and Zion are mentioned in some psalms (Pss 99:1; 97:8) along with Israel's rebellion in the wilderness (Pss 95:8-11). God is the shepherd of his people (Ps 95:7) and has been faithful to his covenant with them (Ps 98:3).

These psalms portray Yahweh as taking his place on his throne (Pss 47:8; 99:1) to judge the world (Pss 96:10, 13; 98:9) and to rule in righteousness (Pss 97:2, 10-11, 99:4). Smith (1984:15) associates this group of psalms with the idea of the kingdom of God.

General characteristics in the Yahweh's kingship psalms are inter alia (Watts 1965:343):

- Concerns over the earth, the people and the nations (Pss 96; 97; 98; 99);
- Reference to other gods (Pss 96; 97);
- Signals of kingship and praise (Pss 93; 96; 97; 98; 99);
- Characteristic deeds of Yahweh, namely, to create and to judge (Pss 93; 96; 97; 98; 99);
- Expressions of praise before the heavenly king (Pss 96; 97; 98; 99).

Prinsloo (1997:210) shows the following similarities between the Yahweh kingship psalms:

- Hymnic expressions and descriptions (Pss 96:1; 97:1; 98:1; 99:5);
- Emphasis on Yahweh's savings acts (Pss 96:3; 4; 98:2); creation works (Ps 96:5); acts in history (Ps 99:7);
- Emphasis on the powerful deeds as well as on the greatness of Yahweh (Pss 96:4; 6; 97:7; 98:2; 99:2).
- Kneeling, worship and honouring God (Pss 96:9; 97:5; 99:5).
- Universal descriptions (Pss 96:1; 7; 9; 97:1; 98:5; islands: Ps 97:1; introduction of the saving acts to the nations: Ps 98:2; elevation above the nation: Ps 99:1-2; governing the world: Ps 98:9).

Prinsloo (1997:211-212) is of the opinion that the similarities between these psalms bind them together. Craigie (1983:347) agrees that they are connected by the common theme of praising Yahweh's kingship. Although these psalms have functions in unity, they each have their own unique characteristics. Some of them form a closer underlying bond. It is seen that Psalms 96-97 and Psalms 98-99 are closer bound together. According to the content Psalms 96-97 and Psalms 98-99 show similarities (Tate 1990:508).

b) Content and context

In this corpus it is explicitly stated that Yahweh's throne is established "from of old", his kingdom is "from everlasting" (Ps 93:2). The God who established his kingdom from old, will also reign for ever (Ps 93:5).

Seybold (1990:115) argues that Royal Psalms relate to the so-called 'Ritual of the king', and the royal cult at the state sanctuary in pre-exilic times. They stem from the heritage of the first temple, and defy any classification which is mainly derived from post-exilic times. Therefore Seybold is convinced that their group identity bears the stamp of a pre-exilic tradition.

The role of the earthly king was to ensure peace and justice within the Israelite community (Ps 72). The frequency of the topic of justice in these psalms would therefore suggest that these psalms were intended to deal with circumstances where injustice prevails (Bullock 2001:190). Yet, this God of righteousness and justice does not stand apart from his creation. Therefore an earthly symbol of his heavenly throne is situated between the cherubim of the ark of the covenant (Ps 99:1).

As righteousness is expected of a king who reigns over the whole world, God's righteous judgement applies to all nations (Ps 97:6). God's righteous judgement even goes beyond the sphere of humanity (Bullock 2001:190). As creator who endows his creation with himself, the creation also proclaims his righteousness:

*The heavens proclaim his righteousness,
And all the peoples see his glory (Ps 97:6)*

d) Functions

The principal function of the Yahweh's King psalms is to declare Yahweh's greatness, which he has manifested both in nature and in the history of Israel; thus the main theme focus on his praise.

These psalms further stress the kingship of Yahweh in view of the failure of the earthly kingship represented by the Davidic dynasty (Bullock 2001:190). When the human institution had failed (Pss 2-89), there was no greater reassurance than to illustrate that Yahweh is the king himself (Pss 90-100).

Psalms of Yahweh's kingship (Pss 47; 93; 96-99) betray a fervent desire to see Yahweh universally as victorious and Israel as part of the greater universe. In this regard these psalms give stimulus to a new dimension of individual guilt, personal salvation, communal perseverance, and hope for restoration (Gerstenberger 1988:28).

These psalms further announce and proclaim the kingdom of God; they praise the God who reigns in spite of the appearance of distressful circumstances and they paint a picture of the future reality of the kingdom of God alongside the present tragedy, which a life with Yahweh can transcend.

2.2.2.5 Songs of Zion

a) Form

The term 'Songs of Zion' is derived from 137:3, where the captors of the Israelites asked them to sing the 'Songs of Zion' (Anderson 1972:35; Smith 1984:15; Kraus 1988:58). In Anderson's view, these songs were probably a group of songs composed for the glorification of Jerusalem, and ultimately for the praise of Yahweh, for the glory of Zion is Yahweh.

The Songs of Zion are classified as such on the basis of content rather than form (Smith 1984:16). Zion in these psalms is symbol for the dwelling place of God, which can never be moved. It is a place of refuge for threatened and buffeted people of God (e.g Ps 46:1). Songs of Zion can be identified as Psalms 46, 48, 76, 84, 87 and 122.

Kraus (1988:65) dates the "Songs of Zion" to the time of the Israelite monarchy-especially in those cases when the most ancient (pre-Israelite) traditions glorify the city of God (Pss 46; 48; 76; and the excursus on Ps 46).

Consequently, there is justification for regarding these songs implicitly as praises of Yahweh. Songs of Zion therefore function as a subdivision

of the ordinary hymns (Crenshaw 2001:7). In form-critical terminology, Gerstenberger (2001:539) confirms that these songs are hymns of praise. They reflect not the theology or tradition of one particular family of singers but the early Jewish community in the dispersion. In this community worship was oriented toward the spiritual center of the Israelite faith, Jerusalem. Nevertheless, ancient or pre-Israelite traditions of the mountain of the gods in northern territories, known also from Ugaritic mythology, are preserved for Israel in texts like Psalm 48:3 (Gerstenberger 2001:539).

The Songs of Zion, whose theme is the preservation of the holy city in the face of enemy attack, are probably related to the pilgrimage songs too. Westermann (1989:283) illuminates that these psalms presuppose the choice of Zion, with its city and temple, as the mountain of God. He is convinced that many of the motifs in this psalm category (e.g Pss 46; 48; 76; 84; and 87) go back to the pre-Davidic era, when Zion was still a Jebusite holy place.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Four central ideas appear in the Songs of Zion (Miller 1986:13): first, God, whose power is revealed in creation and deliverance from exile, enters into rule and appears on Zion. Second, there is the theme of deliverance from exile, return, and renewal as people occupy a central place. Third, the nations recognize the redeeming acts of God and assemble to worship Him on Zion; and fourth, Israel's posterity shall possess the land and inherit Yahweh's blessing.

Form-analytical investigations arrive at the following observations regarding the structural elements and characteristics of these psalms: firstly, at the beginning of some of these psalms stand confessionallike static expressions with emphatic and similar headings. Almost always in the form of predicate nominatives appear sentences that describe God as resident and protector of Zion, or Zion as a fortress splendidly furnished and fortified by God (Ps 46:7), "The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress". Secondly, these static statements are then supported by sentences with verbs in the perfect tense: the Lord and protector of Zion is Yahweh, because he has averted the assaults of the nations (Ps 87:2). Thirdly, detailed consequences are often given to the hearers in imperative sentences, preceded by jussive forms and enjoining people to acknowledge Yahweh (Ps 46:8a, 10), to join in the festal procession (Ps 48:12ff) or to perform their vows (Ps 76:10f). Although Kraus (1988:58) is convinced that most of the Songs of Zion probably originated in pre-exilic times, he asserts that their materials were handed down in most diverse ways and were in later times adapted.

In the Songs of Zion the chosen sanctuary of Yahweh is glorified in various ways. Kraus (1989:187) has observed that the mystic elements have been blended into the cultic election tradition and served to glorify the holy place that transcends time and place. It is possible that the glory of the chosen city was celebrated musically in an entrance procession with song and dance (2 Sam 6).

c) Content and context

Songs of Zion reflect a communal orientation that affirms Israel's close relation to God and rejoices in Zion as God's chosen abode (Miller 1986:14).

These psalms glorify Zion. The holy mountain of Jerusalem is the place where Yahweh is present (Ps 46:5). The situation and context of these psalms can well be ascertained from a number of revealing verses. Thus, according to Psalms 84:2f and 122:2 Zion was celebrated in song as the entered holy place. At this occasion the psalmists look back upon their pilgrimage (Ps 122:1) but then turn toward the wonders of the city of God. 'Associations with the great cultic ceremony of entrance, with the ark of the covenant as the focal point, are discernible' (Kraus 1988:58). In the glorification of Zion, reference is made to the age-old cultic traditions of the Jebusite sanctuary (Kraus 1988:58). Kraus also shows that these songs of praise had a connection with that festal activity which has found its literary expression in Psalm 132.

A number of these Songs of Zion celebrate the Lord's choice of Zion with Jerusalem as the earthly center of the Lord's presence (Freedman 1992:533). The songs declare the Lord's presence in Jerusalem (Ps 46:7, 11) as the city of God (Ps 46:4-5; 48:8; 76:2; 87:1-3), where beautiful Mount Zion is located (Ps 48:1-3). Psalm 48:12-14 suggest a procession around the city walls. Psalm 84 expresses the thoughts of someone longing to visit the temple, where even the sparrows find refuge (vv.1-4, cf. v.10). Psalm 122 expresses the joy of a pilgrimage to the city and prays for the peace of Jerusalem.

Gerstenberger (2001:140) contends that Songs of Zion are rooted in rituals and festivities around the holy site of Yahweh's choice. He is convinced that some other texts, which are focusing on Jerusalem and Zion (e.g. Ps 87) have the special function of clarifying the admission of foreigners to the Holy City. Jerusalem as a city was apparently famous for her invincibility guaranteed by her deities of old (Gerstenberger 2001:328).

Schaefer (2001:357) infers that some Songs of Zion can be classified according to content. According to him, in these Songs of Zion (Pss 46, 48, 84, 122), Jerusalem is the focus of praise. God and the holy city, his dwelling place among the people, are inseparable. Israel's greatness and strength were conceived as connected with God who dwells in her midst. Psalms 46 and 48 celebrate this invincibility of Zion.

d) Functions

The role of the Songs of Zion for the temple and praise stands on the foreground. Mountain and temple of Yahweh as symbols of Zion are praised for various reasons. Pleins (1993:119-127) introduces several functions for the Songs of Zion. Firstly, they are not only making believers conscious of peace and security issues, but they also raise fundamental questions about war. In what is perhaps the most provocative of the Songs of Zion, the psalmist proclaims that it is from Zion, God's "lair" (Ps 76:3), that God breaks the flaming (arrows of the) bow, the shield, the sword, and war (Ps 76:4).

Secondly, these songs point to the achievement of communal peace and global security. Thirdly, they are not solely concerned with Jerusalem's ability to survive foreign attacks but are looking beyond that, to see how the divine presence within the city can creatively transform the world beyond the walls of the city. For Pleins (1993:127) these psalms provide believers a valuable opportunity to assess critically the just-war tradition, but also help the community to discover that it is the God in the city, not the king in the palace, who brings well-being and peace to the world outside Zion's walls.

The Songs of Zion focus on Jerusalem or Zion as the place of God's presence. Furthermore they express the people's joy over the physical experience of Yahweh's presence in Jerusalem, the sacred mountain (Crenshaw 2001:85). Therefore these hymns communicate God's marvellous victories and just power to believers. Gerstenberger (2001:87) is convinced that Jerusalem and the Zion songs express the strong desire of early Jewish people from the fifth century on to visit the city of David, where the roots of ancient Israel's political and religious strength were.

The following generalizations can be made when taking into consideration comments and contributions made by the above-named biblical scholars. It seems reasonable to assume as argued by Miller (1986:13) that God, whose power is revealed in creation and deliverance from exile, enters into rule and appears on Zion. From this genre it appears that the theme of the divine presence in Zion penetrates most of the hymns and prayers (Pss 46:5,10; 48:1-4; 78:68-69; 87:1-2). In these texts, the psalmists tirelessly proclaim Yahweh's delight in his holy mountain.

2.2.2.6 Wisdom Psalms

a) Form

Some psalms in the Psalter have been categorized as “wisdom psalms”. No two scholars seem to agree about the precise number of psalms to be included in this category. According to Mowinckel (1962:76-80) the wisdom psalms are Psalms 1, 34, 37, 49, 78, 105, 106, 111, 112 and 127. He called it “learned Psalmography.” Murphy (1963:60) recognized the wisdom psalms as Psalms 1, 32, 34, 37, 49, 112 and 128 together with some psalms parts like 28:8-10, 12-14; 31: 24-25; 39:5-7; 40:5-6; 62:9-11; 92:7-9; 94:8-15. His criteria³² for identifying wisdom psalms were extended to include juxtaposition of the wicked and the righteous, the notion of two ways, retribution, offerings of counsel, and the phrase “fear of Yahweh”.

Most scholars³³ accept the presence of a small group of wisdom psalms. Longman (1988:33) is of the opinion that scholars normally turn to books like Proverbs, Job, Song of songs and Ecclesiastes, but in the Book of Psalms there are several psalms that contain elements of the Old Testament wisdom literature.

³² Murphy also thinks that the sages always inserted brief sections in the psalms to give them a wisdom character (Pss 18:21-25; 27:11; 32:8-9; 86:11; 92:6-10; 13-15; 94:8-15; 105; 107; 43; 111:2; 144:3-4; 146:3-4; see Whybray 1995:152-160). He further notes that Psalms 1 and 119 have a close relationship with the wisdom. His criterion for identifying them as wisdom psalms is their didactic character.

³³ Seybold (1990:118), Rewards and punishment will be fairly realized according to the disposition of the wisdom psalms (Seybold 1990:118). Seybold recognizes Psalms 9, 10, 25, 34 as psalms with a fixed formal structure, and also the free didactic poems, which have a variety of objectives (Pss 1, 19, 49, 73). Hurvitz (1988:41-51) analyses the vocabularies particular to wisdom literature and wisdom psalms and uncovers transliterate “turn from evil,” and the word “transliterate wealth.” This vocabulary approach identifies only four psalms as wisdom psalms (Pss 34:15, 37:27, 112:3 and 119). Crenshaw (2001:94) believes that few psalms treat the same topics that the author of Job enjoys.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Research suggests that “wisdom psalms all share the feature of offering advice for daily living” (Craven 1992:32). These psalms emphasize the choice of the way of righteousness over the way of wickedness. Craven (1992:32) summarizes these characteristics of wisdom as follows: the contrast between the just and the wicked; advice concerning conduct; fear of the Lord; the presence of comparisons and admonitions; alphabetic (acrostic) sequence of verses; “better” sayings; the address to a son; and the “blessed” (“ashre”) formula. Several features of wisdom psalms appear as often characterized by advice concerning behaviour, contrast between the wicked and the just, “better” or “happy” sayings; and inclusion of the “fear of the Lord” formula.

Gerstenberger (1988:20), in his discussion of the structure of wisdom psalms, draws attention to the fact that, the original wisdom elements are: proverbs, sayings, admonitions and prohibitions. Language in all wisdom psalms seems to be much more didactic and meditative than cultic songs. They are characteristically molded into larger patterns of speech that clearly show an instructional and exhortative intention.

While it is noted that the *Psalter* have some cultic prayers from synagogue congregations, Kuntz (1974:186-222) identifies four characteristics when he categorizes texts as wisdom psalms. This includes rhetorical elements, vocabulary, thematic elements, and forms.

In sum, most scholars³⁴ accept Psalms 1, 32, 34, 37, 49, 73, 112, and 128 as wisdom psalms. Several other psalms reflect wisdom elements.

c) Content and context

While wisdom psalms serve as models compelling worship and catechesis to challenge prevailing views of poverty, wealth and righteousness, Psalms 49 and 73 probe the problematic character of the amassing of wealth and its effects on both rich and poor. Psalm 37 offers a perspective that rises above mere charity. It presents the view that God takes action to vindicate those innocents who are in need.

Nevertheless, Psalms 37, 49, and 73 create a context that seriously grapples with disparities and the aspirations of the poor. In this regard these psalms depart from the received wisdom of Proverbs in constructive ways (Pleins 1993:169). They protest against the traditional wisdom paradigm of the retribution principle.

Psalm 73 is often regarded as the greatest of all the wisdom psalms (Anderson 1983:225). Also Brueggemann (1984:115) regards it as "the most remarkable and satisfying of all the psalms". It is true that this psalm does have a special place in the Book of Psalms. The process of movement into, through and out of disorientation into a situation of new orientation is present in this psalm. Its content reflects "a mightily engagement with God, a struggle against God and a wondrous communion with God" (Brueggemann 1984:115).

³⁴ They argued that this group of psalms reflect wisdom themes and vocabularies (Ceresko 1999:160-161). Although there is consensus among scholars that at least Psalms 1, 2, 34, 37, 49, 112 and 128 have their origin from the wisdom circles, other scholars have suggested that many other psalms are also part of the wisdom group.

McCann (1993:143) summarises the significance of Psalm 73 strikingly. It shows that "God reigns; we belong to God; no experience separates us from God; happiness or goodness means to live in dependence not upon oneself but by taking refuge in God".

Psalm 1 may have been originally intended as a prologue to the whole Psalter. At some time Psalm 2 was also known as 'the first Psalm' (see Acts 13:33). Its central doctrines, the blessedness of the godly life (verses 1-3) and the futility of godlessness (verses 4-6), are certainly characteristics of the psalmist's faith (Packer and Leaney 1977:16).

Wisdom psalms are not prayers as such but they are reflections on life and life's problems. They belong to a broad category of literature that seeks to instruct the reader on a particular issue or way of life (Bullock 2001:211). Psalm 112 stylistically has little to commend it as a wisdom psalm. Apart from the occurrence of the blessing formula in verse 1, this psalm pronounces that a "blessed" person fixes his/her sight on the blessings of the one who fears the Lord. Psalm 112 capitalizes on the life of the righteous rather than the life of the fool.

Psalm 127 represents an expression of faith that agrees with Solomon's great wisdom and his dependence upon God (I Ki 3 and 8). The use of proverbs in this poem (vv. 2, 3; see Prv 16:3, 9; 17:6) and the occurrence of wisdom admonitions (vv. 1-2, 3-5) are reasons in favour of its stylistic kinship to wisdom.

Psalm 128 is a companion psalm to Psalm 127 (Bullock 2001:211). Bullock describes the performance of Psalm 128 as reinforcing its

theme of children as the Lord's special blessing on the human family. Stylistically, Psalm 128 features the blessings of those who fear the Lord. It also opens with the "*blessed*" formula (v.1). Thematically this psalm continues the thought of Psalm 127 regarding children and the central place of the temple and the city (Zion) from where the Lord blesses Israel (vv. 5-6). The psalm presents a fuller picture of the blessing that accrues when the Lord is the Designer/Architect of the social order.

d) Functions

Worship should be understood as a life-style. Worship is the broad umbrella term that includes man's total life walk in his relationship with God. It is not limited to certain rituals and ceremonies, but in essence, it is synonymous to the believer's total life.

Wisdom psalms could therefore be read as an expression of Israel's guidelines to wise behaviour (Kosmala 1964:431). These psalms function didactically. They are meant to convince the believers to live wisely 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who practise it' (Ps 111:10). Psalm 1 in particular advises believers to reject folly and refrain from wicked behaviour.

2.2.2.7 Psalms of Trust

a) Form

The Psalms of Trust fall into the categories of individual and community psalms (Murphy 1993:73). Those that articulate the

individual are Psalms 4; 16; 23; 27; 62 and 73, while the community Psalms of Trust include inter alia Psalms 90; 115; 123; 124; 125 and 126. Sentiments of trust occur in numerous psalms, but the expansive tone of trust characterizes this group of poems. These Psalms of Trust express the psalmist's trust in God. Sometimes the Hebrew root verb "*to trust*" or "*to have faith*" occurs to express this idea.

In addition to the language of faith, the psalmists use many metaphors and expressions to represent their sense of trusting, like lying down to rest (Ps 23:2) and to sleep (Ps 4:8), and enjoying safety in the presence of one's enemies (Ps 23:5). Metaphors depicting the Lord as light (Ps 27:1), as rock (Ps 62:2,6), and fortress or refuge (Ps 16:1; 27:1; 62:8), and walking in a straight path (Ps 27:11), are taken from the landscape of the psalmist's world. Individual Psalms of Trust in particular use the terms "tower", "fortress" and "refuge" to suggest height and security.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Generally Bullock (2001:169-170) structures prayers of trust as follows: the declaration of trust is the first and most important component of the individual and community Psalms of Trust. For example: For the individual: (Ps 4:3,8) "The Lord will hear when I call to him"; "I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O lord, make me dwell in safety". For the community: (Ps 90:1-2) "Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations".

A second element in the Psalms of Trust is the invitation to trust addressed to the community. This invitation is not always present, but

it does occur in Psalms 4:4,5; 27:14; and 62:8 (individual psalms of trust), and in Psalm 115:9-11 (community psalm of trust).

The third element of this group of psalms is the basis for trust; namely God. Sometimes the psalmist recounted a point of knowledge or an experience that had taught him a lesson of faith. Apart from the crisis that shaped his faith, the psalmist had discovered the basis of faith. He was well aware of the mountains that surrounded Jerusalem, and he had observed that the Lord's protection of Jerusalem was as constant and defensively certain as that geographical fact: "As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forever more" (Ps 125:2).

The theological tenets of the psalmist's faith taught him about the majesty of Yahweh, and that he could trust in him: "I lift up my eyes to you whose throne is in heaven" (Ps 123:1). And not only was he enthroned in heaven, but he was the Maker of heaven and earth, the Creator of the universe (Ps 124:8). This was enough to assure any troubled soul that God was powerful and could deliver from the most threatening circumstances.

A fourth element in the Psalms of Trust is petition. These are prayers of faith. The psalmist, for example, knows that God is a God of mercy, and that he can show mercy again (Ps 123:2-3).

In at least two instances a fifth element enters these psalms. The worshipper makes a vow or promise to praise the Lord (Pss 16:7; 27:66; 115:17-18). The promise arises out of the depths of his faith that God will hear his cry and come to his rescue.

A sixth element, and next to the declaration of trust, the most frequent component of the Psalms of Trust, is the interior lament. It is not a lament as such, but the remnant of one (Ps 48:7-8).

The six elements of the psalms of trust compose the texture of this group, even though they do not all occur with the same consistency. The declaration of trust and the interior lament are the consistently recurring elements.

c) Content and context

Many of the psalms of trust express a deep confidence in God and his goodness. Such expressions are numerous and can be found in various types of psalms. However the sentiment of trust dominates a few psalms and singles them out as special expressions of confidence in God (see for example Pss 16; 23 and 63).

Gerstenberger (1988:92) recognizes Psalm 16 as a singular confessional psalm of confidence. Apparently it once served in worship liturgies that purported to clarify the individual's affliction with the Yahwistic community.

Gerstenberger (1988:90) infers that the compact phrase "You are my Lord" is immediately augmented by a pleonastic title (v.2b). For Gerstenberger the phrase is elaborated with regard to its consequences for the supplicant (vv. 3-4) before it echoes again in a longer confessional statement (v.5).

Psalm 16 implies intense distress due to an unknown peril (Terrien 2003:177). In this psalm the psalmist has understood that death could not separate him from the divine lover. The God whom the poet loved, is the one in whom believers live, move and have their being.

Bullock (2001:171) and other biblical scholars³⁵ regard Psalm 23 as the best known and beloved text in the entire Psalter. Commentators such as Westermann (1989) and Bullock (2001) divide Psalm 23 in two parts: The Lord as Shepherd (vv. 1-4) and the Lord as Host (vv 5-6), while others insist that the shepherd imagery follows through the whole psalm. In particular Bullock (2001:171) found that the theology of this psalm arises out of the practice of life, the practice of the lowliest of occupations, shepherding sheep.

Gerstenberger (1988:16) suggests that the extremely personal tone of Psalm 23 excludes a royal and national use. He emphasizes that there is no reference to danger already overcome as is customary in thanksgiving songs. Instead, confidence and hope are articulated, especially in verse 6. Gerstenberger argues that Psalm 23 aims at re-establishing the personal relationship with God, especially within a ritual of petition for individual sufferers who were persecuted or ostracized.

Westermann (1989:128) approaches Psalm 23 from two perspectives, which are mutually dependent. Firstly, he suggests that Psalm 23 has a motif of the individual lament and the avowal of trust. Secondly, he proposes that all six verses belong to the motif of the avowal of trust.

³⁵ For example Day (1990:53) maintains that Psalm 23, the best known of all psalms, depicts God's loving kindness under two images, those of the shepherd (vv. 1-4) and the gracious host (vv. 5ff).

Both Gerstenberger (2001:14) and Terrien (2003:462) share the conviction that liturgically, thanksgiving and trust form the gravitational center of Psalm 63. Terrien (2003:462), has shown that Psalm 63 is about a poet who has a thirst for God (vv. 2-4). He confirms that the poet exclaims at once on his longing for his sublime treasure. Terrien illuminates that the *Elohim* of transcendent breath and magnitude is the most intimate *EL*, "O God! Thou art my God!" Yet, the circumstances that surround such an exuberance are ominous. Whether the desiccated landscape is to be viewed literally or symbolically, the passionate seeking of "my God" is motivated by physical and moral exhaustion on the part of the singer.

d) Functions

The purpose of the Psalms of Trust is to give a faithful witness to the psalmist's trust in God. Bullock (2001:170) introduces several functions for the Psalms of Trust. Firstly they carry a tone of deep faith in God and his providence. For the most part, they arise out of some crisis in the psalmist's or Israel's life, a crisis whose hardship and testing shaped the psalmist's faith.

Secondly, these psalms often do not give evidence that the crisis has passed, but they exhibit the faith that can see the individual and the nation through the crisis.

Thirdly, Psalms of Trust are the girdles of the Psalter, for they crisscross the book with expressions of the faith of the Old Testament in its finest form.

Pleins (1993:46) endorses that the Psalms of Trust not only strengthen, comfort and encourage the worshipping community or the individual, but more importantly, they awaken in the worshipper a need or thirst for God as the comforter (Ps 63:2).

2.2.2.8 Imprecatory Psalms

a) Form

Of particular trouble for Bible readers are those vengeful prayers that are described as "imprecatory psalms" (Craven 1992:50). These prayers invoke God because of a particular experience of calamity and request God to judge and punish the enemy harshly. About twenty psalms contain imprecatory elements. Nine of these focus almost entirely on calling God to afflict evildoers. Psalms 7; 35; 58; 59; 69; 83; 109; 137 and 140 are examples where psalmists pray to God³⁶ for the destruction or doom of others.

Because these psalms express the desire for God's vengeance on their enemies they are variously referred to as "Psalms of violence," "Psalms of vengeance," "Psalm of hate" and "Psalm of disorientation" (Murphy 1993:46). Psalm 109 is one of the most troublesome, if not the most uncomfortable text of imprecatory psalms. Ironically, it is one of the most loved passages among most indigenous African Christians (Craven 1992:51).

³⁶ The following psalms or parts thereof are widely recognized and classified as imprecatory prayers: 5:10; 6:10; 7:6,9; 15-16; 9:19-20; 10:15; 17:13; 28:4; 31:17-18; 35; 4-6; 8: 19; 24-26; 40:14-15; 52:5; 54:5; 55:9; 15; 56:7; 58:6-10; 59:5; 11-13; 68:1-2; 30; 69:22-25; 27-28; 70:2-3; 71:13; 74:11; 22-23; 79:6; 10; 12; 83:9; 11; 13-18; 94:1-2; 104:35; 109:6-15; 17-20; 29; 129:5-8; 137:7-9; 139:19; 21-22; 140:8-11; 141:10; and 143:12 (Day 2002:166-186). There are a total of ninety-eight verses in thirty-two psalms.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

These violent, vengeful sentiments may be embarrassments to modern day religious sensitivities, but they are not censored or silenced in the Psalter. Negative wishes or prayers are spoken with the hope that God will execute swift, harsh judgement against offenders. The psalmists do not sanitize their fierce desire for strict retribution. They pray for what they want. They express their bitterness and vindictiveness with the promise that once their own righteousness and God's justice are proven, they will praise their deliverance and God's sovereignty (Pss 35:12; 69:6 and 109:4-5).

Imprecatory psalms are wishes and prayers for destruction. Craven (1992:50) puts a great deal of emphasis on the petitions by the community. For example, "O God, break the teeth in their mouths" (Ps 58:6). He regards this prayer as an exemplary imprecation. Other expressions used included "Pour out your indignation upon them, and let your burning anger overtake them" (Ps 69:24), and Psalm 140 which asks God's protection from wicked, violent enemies with the petitions, "Let burning coals fall upon them! Let them be cast into pits, no more to rise!" (Ps 140:10). Many scholars have testified to the fact that the imprecatory psalms belong to some of the most troublesome parts of the Bible.

c) Content and context

The historical context of these wishes and prayers is one where people are threatened, endangered, injured and unjustly treated.

“... imprecations are almost like a valve to release pressure, a healthy way of controlling anger” (Craven 1992:52).

The believer’s part in this process is to risk a journey on a path whose destination will be known only in dialogue with God. If not the lectionary, they function to tell the whole of the psalmist’s story to God and community.

The attitude of the psalmists, that God is the avenger, is of particular importance in understanding what at first glance looks like unrestrained vindictiveness in these psalms. Rage is not pent up in the psalms. In prayer, rage is relinquished to God. It is God who decides how vengeance is to be executed.

Imprecatory psalms offer a platform from which oppressed people can request God’s fulfilment of His righteousness and justice. Although these psalms truly express humanness, it becomes an act of faith. Despite the injustice suffered it is left for God to respond, rather than the sufferer taking vengeance into his/her own hands. This action conforms to a *Pedi* wise saying and teaching, *tšohle di tsebjwa ke yo godimodimo* (everything is known by the one in heaven). It means everything is in God’s control.

d) Functions

The function of these imprecations is to illustrate how therapeutic prayer is, and that all life experiences could be brought before God. Admittedly, care must be taken in the use of the imprecatory psalms for evil intention. These wishes should be uttered for God’s vengeance

only. All pain experienced and their consequences must be submitted to God with humility and understanding that God is a righteous God, but that He is a God of vengeance who will do justice when justice is necessary no matter how long.

Anger which believers experience should not be ignored, eliminated, or stored up. Angry people are not driven from the community. As covenant partners Israelite believers are called to submit their lives to God and to relinquish unto God in real and irreversible ways the governance of the universe and their place in it.

These imprecations are indeed a reflection of what worshippers are. To most African Christians, there is nothing morally inferior or un-Christian in the imprecatory psalms. Praying the imprecatory psalms is an expression of the desire for an oppressor to be punished in proportion of the crime committed (Pss 109 and 137; see McCann 1993:117). To my mind there is nothing morally wrong in praying these psalms.

2.2.2.9 Torah (Law) Psalms

a) Form

The Torah psalms, as the name suggests, focus upon the Torah with its multiple facets of theological expression. Only three psalms, Psalms 1; 19; and 119, can be called Torah psalms in the true sense of the word; that is, their major concentration is the Torah (Bullock 2001:214). Torah psalms do not comprise a literary genre of the psalms, since there is no standard literary genres. Bullock recognizes Psalms 18; 25; 33; 68; 78; 81; 89; 93; 94; 99; 103; 105; 111; 112;

147; and 148 as psalms dealing with the notion of Torah, although it is not their key idea.

On the other hand Day (1990:56-57) regards the Torah (law) psalms as a sub-category of wisdom psalms. Gerstenberger (2001:537) draws attention to the fact that Torah psalms focus on the Mosaic Torah as the only fountain of divine revelation and guidance. They reflect early Jewish community life and worship. The vocabulary of Torah ethics, such as "justice", "righteousness", and "truth", comes into prominence in these psalms as an expression of God's revelation of his will and character.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Psalms 119 appears to be monotonous. It repeats in many different ways the psalmist's devotion to the Torah. Ten different terms for the Torah are used throughout the psalm: eight major terms are employed, namely, commandment, statute and word (22 times each), judgement and testimony (23 times each), precept (19 times) and law or instruction (25 times).

The outline of God's will is primarily found in the Torah (Kraus, 1979:34). While the concept "law" is connected with the impression of something fixed, rigid, or static, this reference arouses the impression of something living and dynamic, in which directions, suggestions, commands, orders, and advice are imparted.

The Law (or Torah) includes God's promises to people and individuals. Psalmists often appeal to these promises like in Psalm 25:3.

Judgements also include acts of deliverance (Pss 39; 52; 73; 84 and 120; see Eaton 1995: 37).

Brueggemann (1984:39) rightly describes Psalm 119 as “a massive intellectual achievement”. The acrostic structure of this psalm, where every eight verses start with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet letter, testifies to genius. The central *theologoumenon* of Psalm 119 is Torah (Mays, 1994:383). Its text is the literary composition of a poet who wishes to make the Torah the “governing principle” of his life (Dahood, 1970:172). The psalm gives instruction in the “a-b-c’s” of obedience to the Torah. Burden (1991:174), calls this psalm the ABC of righteousness. This confirms that the Torah covers every aspect of man’s life in order to experience joy and prosperity. Man should know that life is reliable when the Torah is obeyed (Brueggemann, 1984:40). The symmetrical structure of Psalm 119 gives utterance to this feeling of safety and well-being. This is in contrast with Weiser (1962:739), who maintains that the formal character of the psalm stifles its subject matter.

c) Content and context

Biblical psalms have been preserved and treasured because they teach about God, and the life of faith in God. Instruction is not something that primarily takes place in a classroom. Torah (law) psalms have instructed the people of God as they have read and meditated upon them in private devotion. Above all, Israelites have been instructed as they have read and heard and sung the psalms in public worship. Liturgy is inevitably instructive. It shapes minds and hearts; it moves and transforms; it creates a new vision of reality.

Quite likely, the kind of Torah piety that brought the Psalter to its final form was the impetus for the instalment of Psalm 1 as the title text of the book (Bullock 2001:218). Meditation on the Torah was the key to the blessed life, and such a demeanor stamped the entire collection with its piety (Bullock 2001:218). The way the wicked is set stands in sharp contrast to the way of those who meditated on the Torah (vv. 1-2).

While some critics (Bullock 2001:219), believe that the Torah or the laws of Israel were written rather late, it is known that written codes of law were quite common in the ancient world. Psalm 119, with its prolific vocabulary of Torah, declares “blessed” those who “walk according to the law of the Lord” (v.1). This oral and written traditions of revelation are the source of the psalmist’s joy and knowledge of the Lord, even though the auxiliary modes also figure into the larger picture.

The all but invisible seam between God’s “ways” and his works of justice and goodness can be detected in Psalm 25:8-9. Psalm 111 uses the nouns “truth” and “justice” as complements to “precepts”: “The works of his hands are *faithful* and *just*; all his *precepts* are trustworthy” (v.7).

In the broad view, Torah and wisdom represent two paradigms of faith, with wisdom complementing and rephrasing the shape of faith, as found in Torah. For example, the perspective of Torah focussed on the nation of Israel, while that of wisdom was turned on the individual. Strangely the wisdom books of the Old Testament do not capitalize on history as the medium of divine revelation as do the Torah and the

prophets. God's revelation, in the view of the wisdom writers, is written in nature and in human conscience.

Psalm 19:8-15 explains the form as a combination of hymn (praise of the Law, related to the old forms which sang of God's thunder-voice, Ps 29, etc), and a more personal section (12-14) in the form of a lament (Eaton 1995:32). The sacrificial terms in verse 15 indicate that prayer has taken the place of sacrifice. In discussing the law-piety of the piece, Eaton explains the inner joy as fitting a time before the Law's requirements were swollen by the manifold additions of the scribes. At the time when the view of sin was not profound - the Law's requirements could be fulfilled and granted purification from unwitting errors.

d) Functions

There is nothing random or arbitrary in the commands of the Torah. They express the very order of existence for the Israelite community. The cosmic-life's own law and God's Torah are, at the deepest, one and the same. The Law is not only austere demand, but also the framework of God's revelation of the way to salvation.

Torah is not understood as a set of lifeless laws, as "do's and don'ts", but as life-giving instructions from God, which confirms his presence among humans. Torah must be understood here as the totality of God's self revelation to Israel and not as law in the strict sense of the word. The Torah is not a burden placed on the believer but a joyous expression in a believer's way of life.

Kraus (1979:39) supports this where he writes: "In Ps 119 *ist die Tora keine starre, statische Grosse, sondern lebenschaffende, schöpferische Macht*". This life-giving creative power of the Torah is explained by the fact that it comes from God. Leupold (1969:823) is therefore correct when he infers that Psalm 119 does not show the way for legalism. It is rather a way of experiencing life in freedom.

The Torah was, therefore, the delight of the poet's life, and the way that Yahweh had prescribed for his people to live. It was not a burden but a joy. No pleasure or activity could compare with the life of the Torah (Bullock 2001:225).

The purpose of the Torah was to build a life lived in accordance with the will of God revealed in his laws, and to build a secure and safe community. Through the Torah Yahweh has, therefore, provided a context of love in which he gave his Torah. Those who keep it find that its benevolent purposes meet life's aspirations and produce human happiness. In the context of threat and danger, the Torah can preserve the observant's life: "I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have preserved my life" (Ps 119:93).

Obedience to the Torah thus does not mean a life free from problems, but it provides those who worship God with the assurance of Yahweh's presence and faithful care in their lives. Knowledge of the Torah brings man to a position where he wants to praise Yahweh.

2.2.2.10 Psalms at festivals

a) Form

The basic festivals of early Israel at which attendance at sanctuary by all males was required, were the Feasts of Unleavened Bread and Passover, Harvest (also known as Feast of Weeks or Pentecost), Ingathering (also known as Feast of Booths or Tabernacles) and the Feast of New Year. All these festivals were associated with the agricultural season. To appreciate properly the importance of the seasonal associations of these festivals, it is necessary to comment briefly on these festivals (Hayes 1976:16; Hunter 1999:236)

The Old Testament contains a number of passages which discuss these three festivals (Ex 23:14-17; 34:18-26; Lev 23; Deut 16:1-17). The earliest festivals in the spring were the Feasts of Unleavened Bread and Passover which were observed for seven days in the month of Abib (later, this month was called Nisan), which corresponds roughly to late March and early April. At the time of this festival, all the leavened food had to be thrown out and all leaven (yeast) removed from the homes (Hayes 1976:17).

In Judaism the Exodus from Egypt was particularly associated with the Passover. This association existed even in early times. The Passover was the main religious festival of the semi-nomads before the entry into Canaan. It is a true historical tradition which already in the most ancient records connects the Exodus with the Passover.

Hayes (1976:18) explains that the second major festival in Israel was the Feast of Harvest (Weeks or Pentecost) which was held seven

weeks after the beginning of the barley harvest. The feast was one day in length and coincided with the wheat harvest. In thus closed the season of harvest associated with the cereal crops.

The third major festival in Israel was celebrated in the fall, during the seventh month, which corresponds to late September and early October at the time of the ingathering of fruit, wine and oil. This festival was called the Feast of Ingathering, Booths or Tabernacles (Day 1990:67; Hayes 1976:18). This festival also occurred at the season just prior to the beginning of the autumn rains and the sowing of the new crops. During the Feast of the Tabernacles all male Israelites had to appear at the sanctuary, according to the pre-exilic sources (Exod 23:14-17; 34:22-23; Deut 16:16). In origin these were agricultural festivals which must have been appropriated from the Canaanites (Day 1990:67).

The special 'festival psalms' (Pss 120-134) were probably sung at the water-pouring rite on the great day of the festival (Tabernacles), i.e. the eighth day of celebration. At the feast of tabernacles, the singers used to stand on the fifteen steps leading from the court of the people to that of the women, and sing the fifteen festal songs, while two priests blew on horns from the gate behind them.

Day (1990:69) infers that during the above mentioned festivals psalms such as 47; 93 and 96-99 (the so called enthronement psalms) were sung then, as well as many others.

In post-biblical Judaism Yahweh's kingship was an important theme of the Jewish New Year festival (Day 1990:70). Passages about Yahweh's

kingship were recited on this day, including Psalms 93:1 (one of the enthronement psalms) and the related Psalm 24:7-10. Other verses recited are the *Shofaroth* (passages referring to the blowing of the *shofar* or ram's horn), which include verses from the two enthronement psalms (Pss 47:5 and 98:6) as well as the related Psalm 81:3.

Day (1990:70) analyses Psalm 29 with special reference to the Septuagint and indicates that the heading to Psalm 29 in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, connects the psalm with the Feast of the Tabernacles. Psalm 29 is a psalm pervaded by the theme of Yahweh's kingship (v.10) and is clearly related to the so-called enthronement psalms (vv. 3, 10 with Ps 93:3f; and vv.1f with Ps 96:7-9).

Festival psalms are principally hymns of praise with the usual character of such hymns, and with the free variations occasioned by their special theme (Mowinckel 1962:109). Furthermore, the main themes of these psalms are: the exhortation to praise, the mention of Yahweh's glorious presence and the excellent deeds he has performed or is about to perform.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Most festival psalms share characteristic features and a common structural pattern. The structure is comprised of the following elements: Firstly, the introductory exhortation or call to praise. Secondly, the main body of the hymn, which praises God for his

attributes and deeds. Thirdly, a concluding section expressing some wish, prayer or blessing (Hayes 1976:21).

Most commentators of the Psalms of Ascents have, however, indicated a step-like parallelism as an important and characteristic aspect of the collection. The phenomenon certainly persists in translation, though some instances are lost because of the change of word order involved (Hunter 1999:188). Psalm 132 appears to be the exception. The absence of a step-like parallelism could be a consequence of the different purpose of Psalm 132, and its far greater length.

Psalm 81 was probably intended for use in the great autumn Feast of Tabernacles where, among other things, the Law was read (Deut. 31:9-13) and people pledged their obedience to it. This accounts for the fact that it begins with a call to praise the Lord (vv.2-6) which is followed by a prophetic oracle. In this psalm God speaks to his people through the prophet (vv.7-17) (Mowvley 1989:183). Trudinger (2004:126) comments that Psalm 81:5 there is an undertone of a summons to obedience to the whole Torah, a connotation that is more fully developed in the second part of the psalm. The verse has an anticipatory as well as an explanatory force.

The call to worship is based on the fact that observation of the feast is enjoined by law, as one of the three great festivals which the Israelites celebrated: Unleavened Bread and Weeks in the spring and Tabernacles in the autumn (Exod 23:14-17; Lev 23; Deut 16:1-17). The mention of Joseph and Egypt in v.6 indicates that the Law was already regarded as ancient and going back to the time of the Exodus (Mowvley 1989:183). Goulder (1996:147-148) who comments that

Psalm 81 belongs surely with the Asaph collection, mentions that this is confirmed by the notion of Joseph for the people in v.6, as in Psalms 7:16; 78:67 and 80:2.

There are a number of striking structural features in Psalm 81. The psalm opens with a marked change of tone: there is celebration, joy and the sounding of music. But the psalm divides into two parts. The summons to festal rejoicing lasts five verses, and then gives way to a further homily (Goulder 1996:147-148). The density of structure encourages the reader to believe that God calls his people to hear, and to obey; he delivered them in Egypt and gave them his law; but they did not hearken, and he gave them up; if only they had listened, all would have been well. Psalm 81 warns believers against unfaithfulness.

Although the opening tone is so different from Psalms 77; 78; 79 and 80, Goulder (1996:147-148) maintains that the historical sermonizing is very similar. The preacher begins with the oppression in Egypt (see Ps 78) goes with the Exodus (as in Psalms 77; 78 and 80). He stresses the disobedience of the wilderness, again (as in Ps 78); and concludes that further deliverance is still possible. The call, 'Hear, O my people' (Ps 81), with its prophetic sounding challenge, is reminiscent of the similar charge in Psalm 50.

Trudinger (2004:173) has made an extensive comparison between Psalms 81 and 94. He states that both psalms concern relief from a painful situation afflicting God's people. Psalm 94 is an impassioned cry for help that leads to the assurance that God will intervene. In Trudinger's view Psalm 81 is, in a sense, God's answer to such plea.

Trudinger acknowledges the reality of the existence of a situation of oppression, but gives a different perspective for the cause of this situation.

Trudinger shows that whereas in Psalm 94 it is the oppressors who spurn God and lack understanding. In Psalm 81 Israel itself exhibits these traits (Pss 81:12-14; 94:7-8). Trudinger maintains that both psalms contain testimony to God's saving activity in the past. In Psalm 94, this takes the form of the personal testimony of the speaking voice (vv. 16-19), while in Psalm 81 it is drawn from the historical memory of the nation (vv. 6-7). While Psalm 94 calls on God to act thus again, Psalm 81 explains God's inaction. All these links illustrates a developmental continuity of thought between the two psalms.

c) Content and context

One of the main contributions of Mowinckel was the reconstruction of the New Year Festival, of which an important part was the Enthronement Festival of Yahweh (Mowinckel 1962:106-192); Rowley 1967:184-195). Mowinckel assigned a large number of psalms to this cultic festival, and it is this special emphasis on the New Year Festival which may well be one of the 'weaknesses' of his hypothesis.

Another contribution was made by Weiser (1962:23-52) who postulated a Covenant Festival of pre-monarchical origin, celebrated at New Year in the autumn. An essential aspect of this festival was the renewal of the Sinaitic Covenant and the cultic representation of the salvation history of the nation. In Weiser's view, the Covenant Festival of Yahweh provided the setting for the majority of psalms.

In a similar way, Kraus (1966:179-222) has drawn the readers' attention to the Royal Zion Festival in which the election of David and of Jerusalem played an important role.

The basic religious festivals in Israel, of which attendance at the sanctuary by all males was required, were the Feasts of Unleavened Bread, Harvest (also known as Feast of Weeks or Pentecost), and Ingathering (also known as Feast of Booths or Tabernacles). Hayes (1976:16) observes that these festivals were associated with agricultural season.

These major Israelite festivals formed the background and cultic setting not only of most of the national psalms but also of the majority of the psalms of the individual. The three pilgrimage festivals may have been the only occasions when most of the Israelites had the opportunity to worship in the temple or at the sanctuary.

d) Functions

Festival Psalms were used in different contexts and for different purposes. For example:

Passover: Numerous psalms and many hymns of praise were used for Israel's Egypt experience from Egypt, her possession of the land of Canaan, and God's care, provision and protection of and gifts to his people, as well as for offering thanksgiving for the new harvest (see Exod 12 on Passover and Exod 23:15 on the Feast of Unleavened Bread).

The purpose of these festivals were therefore, two-fold. On the one hand, the message conveyed by these psalms was about the harvest and new crops. On the other hand, they stressed the great redemption experienced by Israel in the Exodus from Egypt (Hayes 1976:17). On the whole Nasuti (2005:334) points out that these psalms serve both to actualise the past and to anticipate the future. Thus, the function of these psalms was to celebrate, to thank as well as to relieve experiences in the cult.

Psalms connected to the Harvest festival in Autumn (September/October) were used to celebrate the Ingathering of fruit, wine and oil. They were also sung during the two festivals held in spring, namely the feast of Unleavened Bread (which came to be associated with Passover) to celebrate the barley harvest in March/April. The chanting of these psalms were also heard in May/June celebrating the feast of Weeks (or Pentecost) at the time of the wheat harvest. In origin Autumn festival psalms were meant for agricultural festivals which must have been appropriated from the Canaanites (Day 1990:67; Goulder 1996:149).

New Year Festival: Traditionally psalms connected to the New Year festival were sung to celebrate the grape harvest but there were possibly other elements involved including a symbolic humiliation, death and rising of the king representing the death and rising of the rain-giving god or more likely, of the people whose life was threatened by the heat and drought of the summer months (Mowvley 1989:2-3).

During the procession into the Temple, Mowvley has observed that they served to celebrate and reaffirm the Kingship of the Lord and his

authority over the whole earth. Several of them contain the words 'The Lord is King' (Pss 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1). The phrase may simply be a statement about God's authority which could be used on any occasion. However, the fact that it is similar to the acclamation made at the coronation of two human kings, Absalom (2 Sam 15:10) and Jehu (2 Ki 9:13) has led many to the conclusion that there was a ceremony as part of the Feast of Tabernacles in which the Lord's kingship was reasserted each year.

Mowvley (1989:2-3) maintains that the Israelites employed these psalms to express their deep feelings which they and their contemporaries experienced in the varied circumstances of life. The celebration of the Kingship of Yahweh was an important part of the ancient Israelite feast of Tabernacles/New Year (Day 1990:74; Mowinckel 1962:106-192; Rowley 1967:184-195).

With the transfer of New Year to an independent day, Goulder (1996:149) notes that New Year festival's psalms were sung to close the long summer, pray for the autumn rains, and primitively for the perseverance of light through the winter.

2.2.2.11 Liturgical Psalms

2.2.2.11.1 Entrance liturgies

a) Form

"Entrance liturgies" have to do with liturgical worship or activity (Craven 1992: 31). Craven has shown that in a single suggestive of possible liturgical parts, Psalm 15 opens with a liturgical question about who may be admitted to the temple. The psalm continues with

the answer (v.2) that those who come into God's presence should be blameless with regard to sins of the tongue and the abuse of wealth.

Probably we are dealing here with a pilgrim or worshipper. Psalm 24 contains a similar question: "Who shall be allowed to stand in God's holy place?" Then the answer (v.4): one with clean hands and a pure heart will be allowed to enter the gates of the king of glory. This format links closely with what can be described as a characteristic of entrance liturgies (Craven 1992:31). Anderson (1972:40) recommends entrance liturgies (Pss 15 and 24), which may have been used by pilgrims wishing to enter the temple as the mere important classes.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Structural elements and characteristics of entrance liturgies have been rehearsed by commentators such as Gerstenberger (1988); Day (1990); Terrien (2003) and others. In particular Gerstenberger (1988:88) has observed that genre classification of Psalm 15 depends more than usual upon social and cultic localization. In Gerstenberger's (1988:117) view, Torah instruction is an element familiar from Psalm 15; 24 and Isaiah 33:14-16. These texts show the same structure: question, answer and confirmation (promise), but with sufficient modifications to exclude literary dependency. Day (1990:60) claims that Psalm 15 is the only psalm which in its entirety may be said to constitute an entrance liturgy. His theory is concerned with the same structure as found in both Psalms 15 and 24:3-6 and, by way of prophetic imitation, in Isaiah. 33:14-16. Day (1990:60) showed that the structure consists as follows: Firstly, there is a question about who may be admitted to the temple (Pss 15:1; 24:3; cf Isa 33:14).

Secondly, there is an answer setting out the ethical requirements (Pss 15:2-56; 24:4-5; cf Isa 33:15). Thirdly, there is a word of blessing with regard to those who are qualified to enter the temple (Pss 15:5c; 24:6; cf Isa 33:16).

Terrien (2003:247) provides convincing evidence of a relationship between cultic worship and devotion. He asserts that cultic worship may offer psychological encouragement for high morality, but it cannot be a substitute for inner and total devotion. Terrien (2003:247) further argues that, whereas Psalm 15 considered the qualification for residence in the sacred tent (v.1), the poet of Psalm 24 insists on a profound aspect of the human personality. The devotee who shall climb the hill of the Lord will have to remain standing in the holy place (v.3). A hidden tension persists between the question and the answer.

c) Content and Context

In Psalm 15 admission rituals are intended to protect the community from ritual or moral impurity that might anger God (Gerstenberger 1988:89). Psalm 15 reveals the theological insights of the early Jewish congregations (cf Isa 33:14-16; 58:1-2; Mic 6:6-8).

Whereas Psalm 15 as a whole is an entrance liturgy, Psalm 24:3-6 forms part of a larger liturgical piece involving a procession into the temple with the Ark, the symbol of Yahweh the divine king (vv. 7-10), who has been victorious over the chaos waters at creation (vv. 1-2). As such, it has its setting at the celebration of Yahweh's enthronement as king probably at the feast of the Tabernacles. Day (1990:60)

proposes that whatever the date of Psalm 15, Psalm 24 is certainly pre-exilic, as is shown by its reference to the Ark. The emphasis in this text is on ethical rather than ritual qualifications. Clearly, the moral qualities enumerated must represent typical virtues rather than constituting the sum total of those required.

In Psalm 15 the ethical requirements appear to be ten in number (vv, 2-5b), which calls to mind the character of the Decalogue. Similar requirements are attested elsewhere in the Ancient Near East with regard to those who seek entrance to the sacred temples, though there ritual qualifications are also sometimes included (Day 1990:61).

In a broad sense the term liturgies would include practically the entire Psalter, since so many psalms play a role in the temple liturgy either by origin or by application (Murphy 1993:12). However, it is a useful term to designate certain psalms in which choral recitation is made explicit.

The question and answer style of Psalms 15 and 24:3-6 is typical of these kind of psalms. They are not a kind of catechism; they seem to be entrance (or "gate") liturgies, a profession of faith upon entering the Temple to serve the Lord. Murphy's imitations of this genre also appear in Isaiah 33:14-16 and Micah 6:6-8. His observations show that analysis of the structure of entrance liturgies will reveal the respective roles of Temple personnel and the faithful.

d) Functions

In the case of liturgical texts, the primary purpose is obvious. Liturgies serve to regulate and to order the course of a service of worship intelligently and in accordance with worship ritual(s) (Seybold 1990:99-100). Seybold noted that liturgies reflect different phases of the coronation ritual, which bring together in the anointing and enthronement of the newly inaugurated ruler various elements of tradition such as the rights of kings, the covenant of David and the latter's adoption as a son of God. Entrance liturgies shape minds and hearts of worshippers; but also create a new vision of reality (McCann 1993:21).

Entrance liturgies like Psalms 15 and 24, could have served to prepare worshippers before they entered into the holy temple (Crenshaw 2001:85). They guarded against transgression of holy ground by unclear or immoral visitors. Therefore the entering visitor should reflect on his inner attitude or belief.

Along the lines of ethics, liturgical psalms challenge a kind of piety, prevalent even in our day, that lifts up the name of God but avoids tangling with questions of suffering and injustice. It keeps the believer aware of his/her own religious intentions.

2.2.2.11.2 Judgement liturgies

a) Form

Some psalms reflect a change of speaker, in which some give voice to prophetic interests, while others concentrate on the Torah; see for example Psalms 50; 81; 82 and 95 (Crenshaw 2001:82).

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

God, by means of a cultic official, speaks a word of judgement to an assembly in psalms of this type (Craven 1992:30; Crenshaw 2001:82). In Psalm 82, God judges the gods in the heavenly council because of their unjust and partial behaviour (vv 1-2). Also in Psalms 50, 81 and 95, God indicts the people assembled for worship (Craven 1992: 31).

*“Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee:
O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me” (Ps 81:9).*

Gerstenberger (2001:110) found that the text was probably introduced by a call to attention “Listen, my people,” (Ps 81:9). He explored the relationship between Psalm 81:9 and Deuteronomy and has observed that in content and style the text is very much like Deuteronomy’s speech “Listen, Israel, Yahweh, our God, is the only God” (Deut 6:4; cf. 5:1; 9:1; 20:3). This is the famous central text of Judaism that constitutes a close parallel to verses 9-10. The only difference is that while in Deuteronomy the human intermediary, Moses, remains visible at all times, Psalm 81:6-16 as well as 50:7-23 and 95:8-11 have God speak for himself (Gerstenberger 2001:110). The cultic or prophetic functionary communicating the message does not introduce himself, nor does he become very transparent.

Psalm 95 opens similarly with a song of the people (vv. 1-7a) and continues with an admonishment from God that the people should hearken to his voice (vv. 7b-11). Judgement liturgies contain elements of the laments, whereas prophetic liturgies have a warning, often in oracular form, by means of which the liturgist summons the congregation to conduct its life in accordance with Yahweh's will (see for example Pss 50; 81; 82 and 95).

c) Content and Context

Considering structure and themes, as outlined above, and comparing some close parallel texts like Psalms 50, 75 and 95, Gerstenberger (2001:111) argues that there should be little doubt about this genre classification, even though it does not coincide completely with literary typology. In supporting his argument, he cites Psalm 81, where the homily proper starts with an introduction (vv. 5-6b), giving the reference point for all Jewish preaching. Unusual, then, is the explicit legitimation to speak up in the first person of God (v. 6c). He says, ("I removed the burden from their shoulders; their hands were set free from the basket"). Gerstenberger is convinced that this audition formula clearly does not belong to prophetic traditions but could derive from sapiential discourse (see Ps 62:12). Gerstenberger affirms that various elements of the divine allocution in their present order emphasize liberation from bondage (vv. 7-8), the exclusiveness of Yahweh worship (vv. 9-11), a statement of failure (vv. 12-13), and a fervent appeal to renew relationship with Yahweh (vv. 14-17). The direct address of the community always in the second person singular, is present only in vv. 8-11 and 17b.

d) Functions

Judgement liturgies kept together those faithful Israelites who entered the covenant with Yahweh; summon all the world and even heaven; stabilize and orient the new community of the faithful that is gathering on the basis of, and in active confrontation with, the old tradition (Gerstenberger 1988:210).

Furthermore, judgement liturgies played a prominent role in mediating on the fate of Israel's earlier existence in order to warn the actual generation of pitfalls and temptations along the way. Through the singing or recitation of judgement liturgies the history of the people as well as the testimony of the Torah encourage hope, thanksgiving, and trust in Yahweh (e.g. Ps 95:1-7b).

2.2.2.12 Creation Psalms

a) Form

Several psalms or parts thereof, for example, Psalm 66:5-7 declare the "works" of Yahweh as his works of creation. The heavens are the works of his hands (Pss 8:3; 19:1; 102:25). All the creatures were formed by his creative acts (Ps 95:5) and the heavens (Ps 33:6) by his word. The distinctive term which in the Old Testament designates only Yahweh's acts of creation, the verb ("to create") is found several times in Psalms 89:12, 47; 104:30; 148:5.

"Creation" is an act of God. Yahweh's relationship to all that was created, is determined by the fact that He as Creator has established a reality which is distinguished from himself. He is active in creation (Ps

104) and preserves it. God is not the creation, he is the Creator. Creation psalms are also kinds of hymns or songs of praise, in which God is praised for his work.

b) Language (structural elements and characteristics)

The Psalter expresses the Lord's creation and gives four ways by which God created: (1) by his Word or command, (2) by his personal deed, (3) by his attribute of wisdom or understanding, and (4) by his strength (Bullock 2001:127).

Creation by the Word or command: the unique verb "to create", used also in Genesis 1, appears in Psalm 148:5b-6 in conjunction with the verb "he commanded". The noun "word" does not occur in the Genesis narrative either, but it is evident that it is the Word of the Lord that brings creation into existence. For example, God commanded and the sun, moon, stars, and waters were created (Ps 148:5-6). That is the way Psalm 33:6 puts it: "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth".

The same psalm uses the verb "to speak" parallel with the verb "command", recognizing the synonymy of the two ideas: "For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm" (v.9). It is God who made heaven and earth and whose name is majestic in the entire world. In a mythological way, Psalms 74 and 89:5-12 tell of God's conflict with the forces of creation that were honoured in the surrounding nations. Yahweh created the world, heaven and earth by his word (Ps 33:6,9).

Creation by deed: the second way of describing God's creating activity, by his deed, is found in Psalm 147:4. Here the Lord brings the stars into existence and calls them each by name as he takes his inventory: "He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name". The anthropomorphism of Genesis 2 lies behind this description. The Lord's personal interest in his creation can be seen in his naming of the stars, an activity that also suggest his authority over the creation (Gen 2:19-20; 3:20).

Creation by wisdom and understanding: in wisdom thought, the terms "wisdom" and "understanding" are virtually synonymous. Just as Proverbs describes wisdom as God's *craftsman* in creating the world (Pr 8:30), the terms "wisdom" and "understanding" occur in parallel fashion to describe the creating activity of God in Proverbs 3:19: "By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations, and by understanding he set the heavens in place"

Psalm 104, a creation hymn, describes creation in wisdom terms:

"How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures" (v.24)

In this psalm there is an ethical connection between God's *steadfast love* and his creation. The creation experiences the nature of the Creator. According to Psalm 145, the same link exists between the Lord's righteous nature and the relationship to his creation:

The Lord is righteous in all his ways
and loving toward all he has made (v.17)

Creation by power: Jeremiah uses three instrumental ideas to describe creation: by power, by wisdom, and by understanding (Jer 51:15). While all three concepts do not occur together in the Psalms, power and understanding do occur in different contexts. In Psalm 65 the brute strength of the Creator becomes the instrument by which the Lord brought the mountains into existence.

The Hebrew participial noun that stands behind *Maker* is derived from the word "to do" or "to make", and introduces the creation narrative of Genesis 2 (v.4b): "When the Lord God made the earth and the heavens". This term suggests the deed-creation of that narrative.

Two other characteristics regarding the Creator and the creation occur in the Psalms of praise. One is the sheer beauty of creation, lauded by the psalmist in the immortal language of Psalm 8:

O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name
in all the earth! (v.1)

Psalm 8 also mediates thanksgiving. It bridges the expression of thanks at the end of Psalm 7 with the thanksgiving Psalm 9, building together a strong, thankful conclusion to this group of psalms, Psalms 7-9 (Rendtorff 2005:56).

This well known hymn (Psalm 8) begins and ends on a note of universal praise to God. It implies, not that all men recognize his presence and power, but that he has universal significance. While the central section is concerned with the place of man in the scheme of things, Mowvley (1989:22) confirms that on the one hand it describes his relationship with God. The psalm also sets out man's relationship with the rest of the created world.

Psalm 8, like Genesis 1-3, is connected to a pattern of creation myths, connected to Egypt and Mesopotamia (Hunter 1999:120). The refrain in the psalm ("O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!"), and the central question 'What are human beings?', sets up a reflective structure which suggests a use of the creation myth in an analogous, though not identical, fashion to its use in Genesis.

c) Content and context

Creation includes the whole range of existing things, from humans to ants, the abyss and Leviathan (Carm and Murphy 1998:36). This is the world open to human experience (or to human imagination, in the case of Leviathan).

Job admonishes the three friends to learn from beasts and birds, from reptiles and fish, the agency of the Almighty in all that happens (Job 12:78). Similarly, the sage draws on the animal world to underline the lessons to be learned in life (Prov 6:6-8; 30:15-31). Creation speaks, and its language is peculiar (Ps. 19). It is not verbal, but it is steady, and it is heard (Ps 19:2). It is parallel to the Torah, which 'gives wisdom to the simple' (Ps 19:8). The Lord allowed creation to do the

speaking for him according to Job 38-41 ('will the lightnings say to you, "Here we are?" (see Job 38:35; also Carm and Murphy 1998:36).

While the liturgy indeed represented the saving events of Israel's history, creation was a telling witness of the highlights and troughs of daily life, in which God hid his face (Ps 13:2; 104:29) but also showed it (Ps 31:17; 80:20; see Carm and Murphy 1998:36).

The psalms are not concerned with when history began. In the Psalter Creation marks the boundary line between the divine and the human orders. God, the Creator, establishes the boundary in such a way that his existence is intertwined with the created order (Ps 104:1b-4). The psalmist understands quite well that the Creator not only brought the world into existence, but the world is an expression of himself (Bullock 2001:100-101). Creation is a metaphor of his being. Thus, "the heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands" (Ps 19:1). And the reciprocal transaction is expected, that humanity should reflect his character: "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer (Ps 19:14). Cult and liturgy is the context in which the Psalms praise God's power, recognize his strength and celebrate his creation deeds.

d) Functions

Creation psalms illustrate Yahweh's omnipotence (Kraus 1979:45). They celebrate the salvation or saving intervention of God in Israel's history: from the patriarchs, to the beginning of the monarchy to the divided kingdoms and their eventual destruction, and to the return of the exiles from Babylon (Murphy 1993:45). These psalms praise the

Lord's steadfast love and faithfulness. In this community the Lord is clearly praised for creation by word (Ps 33:6-9).

Bullock (2001:126) introduces several functions for creation psalms. Firstly, they praise God for his loving care as a shepherd and for his protection as a fortress. Secondly, these psalms often point to creation, historical events, Yahweh's universal reign, and his awesome deeds. Thirdly, they serve to fix the believers' eyes upon the exalted realities, those that can transfer their majesty to the things of earth and transform the shepherd into a God-figure, make the sheep God's people, and transfigure the pasture into the life with God.

These psalms do inform the reader from time to time how central praise is in expressing faith. God is enthroned on (or inhabits) the praises of Israel, another way of informing the reader how very close he is to the person of faith.

Furthermore, these psalms of praise, extol the Lord for what he has done in creation and history. Creation psalms were chanted or read in the Israelite cult to celebrate God's creation of the world, and his reign as King over Israel and the nations. In these texts, the psalmists praise God's goodness in creation and preservation.

2.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it would seem that different psalms reflect certain perspectives on the created world. There are several kinds of psalms. Each has its own function as may be observed in the following figure.

FIGURE NO. 2.1: ELEMENTS OF ANALYSIS

			G	E	N	R	E	S		
ELEMENTS OF ANALYSIS	Praise	Thanksgiving	Lament	Royal	Zion	Wisdom	Trust	Imprecatory	Torah	Festival
Form	Psalms of praise celebrate God and his attributes of creation sustaining and controlling history. Generally, they include exhortation, praise and wish or prayer.	Thanksgiving psalms are intended to provide testimony concerning the saving work of God. They are divided into communal and individual Thanksgiving.	Laments arise out of situations of frustrations, fearfulness, calamity and defeat. They reflect the petitioners attitude of protestation and unrestrained complaint towards Yahweh. They also comprise petition for God's intervention in prevailing situations of distress.	Royal psalms consist of two sub-groups, namely, Psalms about the earthly king and Yahweh as king. Psalms of the earthly king focus on aspects of kingship such as inauguration, weddings and other experiences. Yahweh is king psalms on the other hand appraises ascribed to God for his greatness. They also act as means of re-orientation after collapse of the kingdom.	Songs of Zion derive their classification from the central theme of Zion the city of God. Zion symbolizes the dwelling place of God which offers refuge for threatened people of God. Primarily these songs implicitly praise God.	Wisdom psalms are identified as such due to their central theme or motive of warning against wickedness and promoting wise behaviour. This is underpinned by the fear of Yahweh.	Psalms of trust are situated in the psalmist's landscape which is pervaded by danger and enemies. They represent a tone of trust and God amidst dire situation metaphorically	Imprecatory psalms invoke God because of a particular experience of calamity and request God to judge and punish the enemy harshly. They are variously referred to as "Psalms of violence", "Psalms of vengeance", "Psalms of hate" and "Psalms of disorientation" because they express the desire for God's vengeance on their enemies.	Occasionally, Torah psalms are identified as a sub-category of wisdom psalms. However, they have a distinct regard for the Torah with its multiple facets of theological expressions.	These psalms are cast against the backdrop of Israel's major religious festivals, namely, Unleavened Bread, Passover, Harvest and Tabernacles. Festival psalms are principally hymns of praise. They mention Yahweh's presence and excellent deeds.
Language	Structurally, hymns of praise exhibit the following characteristics: call on Yahweh, summons to	Since Thanksgiving is the consequence of God's response to petition,	Laments are characterized by the following structural elements: address to God, complaints,	Psalms of the earthly king distinctively portray a language descriptive of the king. The king is	Central to the songs of Zion is the concept of God's power revealed in creation,	Wisdom psalms commonly feature advice for daily living. This is achieved by	Generally, psalms of trust exhibit the following structure: declaration of trust,	Imprecatory psalms are characterized by sentiments of violence and vengeance. They	The emphasis on the Torah in this group of psalms is exemplified by the use of similitudes	Festival psalms share the following characteristic features: call to praise, hymn, concluding wish,

	praise, praise of Yahweh for his works and qualities.	therefore it follows that these elements are exhibited: invitation to give thanks, accounts of trouble in salvation, acknowledgement of God's saving work, blessings over the congregation and exhortations.	confession of trust, petitions, assurance and vow to praise.	referred to as the anointed One, Messiah and Lord. In contradistinction Yahweh-is-King psalms reflect God's reign. Thematically God is depicted as Creator, Judge, King of the whole earth and shepherd of his people.	deliverance from exile and the rule from Zion. Through metaphorical language the psalmist illustrate Zion as the place of refuge.	contrasting the just from the wicked, comparisons, admonitions, acrostics and formulaic language such as blessed and the address to one son.	invitation to trust, basis of trust, petition, vow to praise and declaration of trust.	negatively portray wishes against the victims' adversaries.	such as commandment, statute, judgement, testimony precept, law and instruction. Torah psalms also convey promises of experiences of joy and prosperity to the obedient.	prayer or blessing. Moods of celebration, joy and the sounding of music are deeply imbedded in this group of psalms.
Content & Context	Hymns tell about God. Through theological proclamation they draw the hearers into worship. Simultaneously, God's magnificence and great acts are announced.	It arises out of experienced outcome of Yahweh's power. Thanksgiving reflects confidence in God's intervention, affirms that he hears and answers petitions.	Laments grew out of situations of crises either in an individual's life or communally. They indicate faith in God. Structurally, laments portray regular features of address, confidence, and petition and vow to praise.	Royal Psalms emphasize the relationship between the king and God. Reference is made to historical figures in Israelite history.	These psalms glorify Zion God's abode. Songs of Zion are associated with great festivals and entrance ceremonies.	Contextually, Psalms of wisdom grapple with disparities in life and the plight of the poor. They raise matters surrounding a life centred on godly living and blessedness.	Psalms of trust express a deep confidence in God and his goodness.	Historically imprecations are grounded in contexts of threat, endangerment and injustice. The petitioner therefore, seeks God's assistance and vengeance against his adversary.	Torah psalms teach God's people about life and faith. Instructions are relayed to the worshipper through meditation on Torah. Moreover through hearing and reading Torah psalms Israel is instructed in the way of the Lord.	Psalms of festivals are grounded in the major New Year Festival. All male Israelites were required to converge at the Temple in Jerusalem for the Feasts of Unleavened Bread, Harvest and Ingathering.
Function(s)	Hymns extol God, his character, justice and great works. They teach	Thanksgiving demonstrates that God hears prayer. It employs	They reflect authentic expression to life experiences, show that	Royal psalms celebrate various occasions in the life of the ruler such as	These songs raise an awareness of peace, protection	Wisdom psalms belong to a broad literary genre focusing on	They witness to the psalmists trust in God and his providence	Imprecations demonstrate how therapeutic petition is.	Its purpose is build life in accordance with God's will. Yahweh	Numerous psalms were sang in commemoration of God's care

	worshippers to comprehend who they are as they reflect on God.	language rooted in human suffering. Individuals are encouraged to share their experiences with the broader community. Ultimately, it is a response to God's salvation acts.	worship and faith are shaped by life, witness to robust faith amidst calamity and lead to petition.	weddings, coronations, preparation for battle and ritual enactments. Through the king God's justice is extended. Functions- Principally they declare God's greatness. They stress his kingship figuratively represented by Davidic kingship. They demonstrate desire to see God's universal rule.	and war. Songs of Zion point to communal and universal peace. Fundamentally, they are concerned about Jerusalem's ability to survive attack.	guidelines to wise behaviour. They are didactic espousing the fear of the Lord.	during crises. They arouse a quest for God in the worshipper.	Equally they illustrate trust in the justice of God.	expresses his love to his people in the Torah. An observant worshipper's life is thus ordered in God's way.	and protection exemplified by the Egyptian experience and subsequent deliverance. Other themes are possession of Canaan, harvest of fruits, wine and oil and other crop. God's rule over the earth is a key theme at the New Year celebration.
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Following a closer look at the various types of psalms found in the Old Testament, it is now appropriate to investigate some of the types of psalm-like texts found in the Pedi culture. This will be the issue under consideration in the next chapter and forms the core of this study and contribution.

Chapter 3

Pedi Psalm-like Songs

3.1 INTRODUCTION

It is not unusual to begin the description of the culture of a people with a discussion of their religious texts (Nurnberger 2007:174). Several aspects of their life, their economic activities, the socialization of the individual, their political organization, the functioning of their legal system, are so interpenetrated with ritual that nothing can be properly understood without a proper understanding of its religious system. Moreover, Rikotso (2003:30) contends that Africans, like all other cultures, have their own heritage of legal ideas, beliefs and social life. Africans are proud of their culture, which is always inherited from generation to generation. Rikotso (2003:30) states that, though many Africans do not pray to God directly, they believe that the world has its owner. Agreeing with Mbiti (1969:1), Rikotso (2003:30) states that, though many Africans do not pray to God directly, they believe that the world is owned and governed by God.

The *Pedi* is a Northern Sotho tribe in South Africa with their Northern Sotho language. *Pedi* psalm-like songs and music as such cannot be discussed without their relationship to the *Pedi* culture³⁷. Several researchers have investigated African religions and philosophy in the

³⁷ In the *Pedi* tribe music may be examined in terms of its use within the context of social activities. Since music forms an integral part of many social and religious occasions, its use is generally quite obvious. Music may be labour-related, associated with a birth or marriage ritual, used to accompany a dance, death, and so forth. Speaking of the universal use of music, Merriam (1964:210) says "When we speak of the use of music, we are referring to the ways in which music is employed in human society, to the habitual practice or customary exercise of music either as a thing in itself or in conjunction with other activities."

African context. Mbiti (1969:2) for example, acknowledges that, to be human, is to belong to the whole community. This involves participating in the beliefs, ceremonies, rituals and festivals of that community. In this chapter, the emphasis is on the types, characteristics, and analysis of some of the *Pedi* traditional religious psalm-like songs. *Pedi* traditional songs reflect the heart of the *Pedi* culture and tradition. Akuno (2005:52) describes African music as an expression, a work of art and performance. In his view, African music is a human behaviour involving people with their communities. It is an agent of socialization. He is convinced that since African music reflects and expresses culture, it embodies a people's total existence: beliefs, philosophy (worldview), religion, norms, mores, language, expressions, relationships and aspirations. The *Pedi* society considers life as a continual process of favourable circumstances for the promotion of life, health and fertility in house and field. Ancestors are closely bound up with the shepherding of their people. They are part of the family, clan, or lineage, it uses their names, they govern the social order among the living and the ancestors, though dead, are present and continue to influence life in their erstwhile communities on earth.

Pedi psalm-like songs are used to express success (joy), happy times (thanksgiving), times of sorrow (laments), protesting (liberation), the inauguration and funeral of the chief (royal), telling stories (wisdom), emotional expression (rituals), ancestor veneration, pouring of libation and communication (security and survival), irony (imprecation), instructions (law), as well as prayers of trust.

3.2 PEDI TRADITION

3.2.1 Introduction

Pedi tradition, by definition, is like other African traditions always undergoing modification. It does not remain fixed; it grows. The *Pedi* psalm-like songs contain expressions about who ancestors are and how ancestors influence the living, but these cannot be reduced to an absolute set of propositions on the *Pedi* religion. *Pedi* psalm-like texts demonstrate that tradition is a continually developing process of dynamic interaction with the living dead (ancestors). In bad times, when bad things happen, some people question ancestors, themselves, and others. In good as well as in bad times, ancestors are supportive and protective.

Prayer is a vehicle for increased congruity. In a variety of ways, relationship or interaction with ancestors brings life and hope for the future, even when the features of this future are still undisclosed. The question 'Why do the innocent suffer?' can be transformed into 'how does history work?' One possible answer that the *Pedi* society knows well is that history works through social processes. Those social processes are either legitimated by ancestors or not. The ancestors operate either equitably or unjustly, either for the well-being of the community or for its destruction. That is how history works.

Pedi psalm-like songs are not systematic prescriptions of perfect words uttered to ancestors; they are rather models of dynamic prayer that encourage prayer in particular circumstances and in the words suitable to the *Pedi* society's needs. *Pedi* tradition is playing a prominent role in

shaping and forging the life of the *Pedi* people. In *Pedi* songs the culture is reflected. The fact that the youth shows lesser respect to their elders and culture is deeply regretted (Hall and Diallo 1989:45). They associate culture with uneducated people. Therefore they do not want to be associated with their culture and traditions. An older generation should be proud of their culture and learn their tradition so that it can be passed on to their children. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999:202) observe that communities in Africa have traditionally communicated information by word of mouth rather than in written form. They advocate that the older members of the community are considered to have wisdom and it is their obligation to pass on this wisdom to the younger generation. Nurnberger (2007:39) aligns himself with Mugenda and Mugenda by stating that the elderly have received the communal traditions from their forebears and are expected to hand them down to their offspring. He further mentions that it is the elderly that determine the life of the community while the youth has to keep quiet and obey. The younger person has to listen and obey the older person. There is not a single person who rejects all indigenous songs in the entire *Pedi* tribe, but particularly the youth is ignorant of their culture. Mbabi-Katana (2001:93) observes that indigenous music of a society is a phenomenon of life that gives historical depth to the musical art of the society.

As Simon Sete³⁸ explained his view on *Pedi* tradition (22 July 2003), he singled out his notion that any African tradition is the way of life of a specific people. He is of the opinion that tradition includes people's customs, traditions and heritage. Sete endorses that culture applies to all human beings and ethnic groups, and that an African sensitive

³⁸ Simon Madikedike Sete is the President of Sekhukhune Contradosa (i.e. Congress of Traditional Doctors of South Africa – Sekhukhune branch).

perspective is one that assesses all things from the traditional worldviews of indigenous Africans rather than from other people's eyes.

3.2.2 The role of songs in African (*Pedi*) culture

To sing is a way for the *Pedi* society to express themselves with regard to how happy or sad they are. There are many rich indigenous religious ideas occurring in the *Pedi* songs: trust, hope, praise, love, survival, etc. These songs have a directness in language; they speak to ancestors and of ancestors; and also to the *Pedi* people in their reflection on human nature. These songs have kept or retained their actuality down through the centuries. *Pedi* religious texts reflect life with its depths and heights, life lived in the context of the vastness of history, which extends from the era of the forefathers to the present time. These texts reflect individuals' joys and sorrows between birth and death, their toil and celebration, sleeping and waking, sickness and recovery, losses, anxieties, confidences and temptations to despair.

These songs even reflect the grievous problems that life presents, when the righteous should live in the midst of evildoers, and into whose hands they have been delivered. Praying, recognition of the ancestors, sacrifice and other exercises in *Pedi* religious rituals are enriched by musical activities. It is inconceivable that *Pedi* psalm-like texts could ever disappear from the (esteemed) forms of ancestor worship.

Pedi traditional psalm-like songs are categorized for this study. The categories are distinguishable according to the form and language use, content and context as well as functions in which they are used in life.

To Africans and the *Pedi* tribe in particular, their psalm-like texts express life itself. These psalm-like songs are used to express success, happy times (thanksgiving), times of sorrow (laments), protesting (liberation), the inauguration and funeral of the chief (royal), telling stories (wisdom poems), *malopo*³⁹ cult, cohesion and emotional expression (rituals), ancestor veneration, pouring of libation and communication (security and survival), irony (imprecation), instructions (law), as well as for prayers of trust.

The *Pedi* tribe freely uses their songs for various purposes, namely to instruct, attack, ridicule, support, educate, clarify, warn, and comment on events or persons, etc. As a form of oral communication, both stories and songs play a great role in the *Pedi* society. Ekweme (1996:6) states that functionality is a known feature of music in Africa and in the functionality, communication becomes a primary objective. Through *Pedi* psalm-like songs people express their views on all aspects of life. Because of their nature, *Pedi* songs have more authority than stories. One song can be used at many different occasions, and can also carry several applications and interpretations. Nketia (1974:189) observes that in African music, themes of songs tend to center around events and matter of common interest and concern to members of the entire community or the social groups within it. They may deal with everyday life or with the traditions, beliefs and customs of society.

³⁹ *Malopo* is an illness, which can only be terminated by a ritual called *malopo*.

Pedi culture is largely based on oral tradition and the popular use of songs. Merriam (1964:187) concurs with this view by stating that music is a human phenomenon produced by people for the people existing and functioning in a social situation. Nannyonga (1995:9) agrees with Merriam's postulation when he states that music does not exist in isolation from the people who produce it. He further mentions that to understand music of a given people, the basic knowledge of the cultural factors behind the production of sound structure is important. People express their views about different issues of life through the word of mouth. In particular, they do this through stories and songs. For the people these are generally easy to learn and repeat. Songs circulate freely in society. Both stories and songs are public property. Anybody can use them as they wish (Purdon 2002:106-111).

Naturally the production of songs does not stop in African societies. New ones emerge with time, just as others are abandoned. Similarly, there are many songs that have been handed down over a long period. The wording of stories tends to change, depending on the storyteller. But the content or structure of a story does not change drastically in the *Pedi* society/African societies. Similarly, songs are consistent, both in wording and in content. Stories would normally be told at particular times, especially in the evening or at night, while *Pedi* songs are used all the time at various occasions and by everyone in this culture. Music is such a powerful medium in the *Pedi* society that even history and tradition are preserved in song. Oral tradition is the basic means of transmitting ideas to the next generation. The above observation is supported by Mugambi (1989:94) when he states that the African cultural and religious heritage was passed on orally from generation to

generation and the wisdom of the ancestors was conserved, not in written books, but in songs and oral traditions.

An understanding of the importance of culture in the *Pedi* society requires some insight into the way the *Pedi* tradition developed over more or less of three centuries. As should be clear from my own argumentation in this introduction, it is with the following authors, namely Mwamwenda (1995) and Nurnberger (2007) that I align myself in and on culture as manifested in the concrete ways. In particular Nurnberger (2007:174) observes that African traditional life is a package. He insists that there is no separation between culture, knowledge, technique and religion. This view is consonant with Mwamwenda's (1995:43) observation that it is apparent that many culturally determined beliefs and rites do not lend themselves to scientific and technological substantiation. Since this is not the basis of their existence, they thrive regardless.

From the moment people are born until they die there is constant conscious or unconscious pressure upon them to follow certain types of behaviour created by their societies in which they live (Hall and Diallo 1989:24). Culture is what binds people together.

Traditionally, from a *Pedi* perspective, life does not belong to the individual but to the clan. The experience of illness, for example, is consequently not so individualistic too. The individual is important because he carries the life of the clan from the one generation to the next. Life requires balance, harmony, health, and well-being.

3.2.3 Genre categories and evaluation

Gunkel's seminal work on the Psalms, *An introduction to the Psalms* (a translation of his 1933 *Einleitung in die Psalmen: die Gattungen der religiösen Lyrik Israels* (1998) advanced form criticism and its use in psalm study. This approach emphasizes genre analysis and the psalms' situation in life and cult. Hence, Gunkel proposes the following psalm genres: Hymns of praise, Thanksgiving songs, Laments, Royal psalms, Songs of Zion, Wisdom psalms, Psalms of trust, Imprecatory psalms, Torah (Law) psalms, Psalms at festivals, Liturgical psalms and Creation psalms. However, since Gunkel there was development in genre research. As a result the former categories are not always regarded universal genre classifications. Presently, Psalms Studies are not limited to fixed genre categories but also includes genre elements such as praise, petition, trust, etc. A lament, for example, consists of *inter alia* a cry, lament, prayer, trust and praise.

Identification of psalm genres in this study is important and serves as indicator of specific religious experiences in Israel. It identifies certain historical contexts in which psalms functioned in life, cult and literature. Genre categories are therefore suitable for analyzing language, phrases, contexts and functions. This study elicits comparisons in religious experiences between biblical psalms and Pedi psalm-like texts.

Given the distance between the two traditions and their contexts, categories are used because they mediate similar religious experiences. The aforementioned places emphasis on the functionality of both biblical psalms and Pedi psalm-like texts. While specifics of

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

This study is not aimed at proving that the psalms and Pedi genre categories are exactly similar but that similar genre elements mediate similar or different religious experience. They effect parallel functions. On the other hand similar situations and contexts are sometimes exposed by different genre categories too. Therefore, within categories there are links between Israelite and Pedi psalm-like texts. Our research has identified the said links and demonstrated similarities and differences in the two religious experiences. Therefore some categories might seem appropriate and others not in the analysis of Pedi psalm-like songs (e.g. Songs of Zion versus Liberation Songs). These results are documented under the discussion of each category.

3.3 PEDI PSALM-LIKE SONGS: ANALYSIS OF SONGS

3.3.1 Praise songs (*Mogale wa marumo*)

3.3.1.1 Form

In most cases African praise songs are recited for the warriors who have gone to battle and proved their valorous worth. These songs are recited in praise of chiefs, cattle, clan, mountains, etc. In Africa, nearly every aspect of life is the subject of a song. Mbiti (1992:142) and Kekana (2005:63) observe that music is used in all activities of African life: in cultivating fields, fishing, herding, performing ceremonies, praising rulers and warriors, hushing babies to sleep and so on. African music and dance are one of the chief treasures of the African culture and heritage. Traditional praise poems are valuable in that they indicate the relationship that exists amongst the various Northern *Sotho* tribes. Idamoyibo (2005:7) confirms that African music

performs the functions of praise and commendation to deserving members, in order to encourage such persons who are doing well in the society to continue in their good deeds, as well as stimulate others to emulate them.

Praise songs at the birth of a child are rejoicing poems. They are recited by people of the same clan, normally the immediate family⁴⁰. These songs are appealing to receive and welcome the newly born baby (e.g. *Mogale wa marumo*). Monnig (1967:98) conducted a study of birth and name giving and concluded that among the *Pedi* the birth of a child is an event of great cultural importance. In the song '*Mogale wa marumo*' neither God nor the ancestors are praised but the newly born baby. The poet and the clan welcome and praise the child with his forefather's name.

Praise poems in the *Pedi* culture are always accompanied by both singing and dancing. The *Pedi* are rhythmically inclined. They like movement. African music is centered around rhythm. Tablino (1999:142) states that rhythm and music, for the African comes very natural because it inundates every part of life. Africans are exposed to this unique rhythm at a very early age. Therefore, they do not sing without dancing. As one of the elderly people in the family recite the praise poem in respect of the newly born baby, other members improvise the poem by both dancing and singing. They are hocketing and ululating as a signal of a warm welcome of the baby in the family. In indigenous African societies every person has a chance to experience the social, moral, health and entertainment values of music and dance on a daily basis. These values become richer if a person

⁴⁰ Among the *Pedi* people music also provides an opportunity for interpersonal relations.

takes part as an active performer. Proverbs, folktales, wise sayings and oral discussions are methods of intellectual explanation and reflect indigenous theory (Nzewi 2005:vii).

Mogale wa marumo is a praise name of a newly born baby who is a boy. The boy is named after his grandfather whose praise name was *Mogale wa marumo* (hero). In the *Pedi* culture, the first born (boy) in the family is named after the father's father (grandfather), while the first born girl is named after the father's mother (grandmother). This statement is perhaps best motivated by Mugambi's (2005:529) view on name giving after birth in Africa. Mugambi notes that in the African heritage there are rituals of praise and thanksgiving in the process of welcoming the newborn child. The child would be named according to the established customs of the community. For example, a child might be named after an important event that had taken place around the time of birth (*Moiponi*), after the season or time of the day in which birth takes place. A child might also be named after a relative in the family of its father or mother (Mugambi 2005:529). This is the case in this praise song. The following text is one example of *Pedi* praise songs that comments on a newly born baby who is named after his grandfather who was a hero.

3.3.1.2 Text and translation

PRAISE SONG: MOGALE WA MARUMO (HERO)

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Ke a dumedisa wena Thobela morena.	1. I salute you, your worship.
2. O mogale wa marumo, mo o gatilego re bona seedi.	2. You are the hero, all that you have done, we are enlightened.
3. O motho wa bo molomo mmetla betla, motho yoo a betlilego monoko maropane.	3. You are a super star, who is always exemplary.

4. O sepipimpi se pipa molomo,	4. You are an unknown secret,
5. Se pipile mmakwele seremong.	5. You are also unknown to the birds You are water from the big rivers.
6. O meetse a noka tse kgolo, go ratana go etelana.	6. You are the water from big rivers which love to visit each other.
7. O di rwalwa ke moya, di thiba `etsa sa dinaledi.	7. You are carried by air and cover the stars.
8. O meetse o mong wa meetse, legoleng,	8. You are the water and owner of water in the land,
9. Go se go wena pula re tla e bona kae?	9. Without you, where can we get the rain from?
10. E hupilwe ke wena maleng a matelele,	10. It is contained within you from afar,
11. Mola dimela ka moka di lebeletse godimo.	11. While all plants are looking up on us.
12. O meetsefula a bokgomo, sera mathaba ka mpa go khora.	12. You are the flood of the cattle, the enemy that becomes happy when satisfied with food.

The song was recorded by the author at *malopo* ritual held at *Dingwane* village, *Sekhukhune* area-Limpopo Province in May 2003 (Refer to track 1, Audio CD)

3.3.1.3 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

For the *Pedi* society praise songs are characterized by joy. Joy is both an attitude and a most exciting divine gift. It is an attitude stemming from confidence and trust in their ancestors and God. Joy brings with it enthusiasm for life, determination to persevere on and a desire to encourage others. The poet in this song is directly addressing the newly born baby '*Mogale wa marumo*'.

Singing plays an important role in the *Pedi* life. Van der Hooft (1979:150) infers that to the people of Africa dancing and music making serve as a means by which they relax and enjoy themselves. In Africa dance and music are essential elements of life⁴¹. Praise songs in the *Pedi* culture are becoming the predominant style of music. Some celebrations, for example commemorations of important historical

⁴¹ Hammond (2004:105) maintains that music, which acts partly on a conscious and partly on an unconscious or emotive level, is therefore frequently a way to articulate those aspects of our character of which we are not consciously aware.

events are lively with the singing of praise songs, drumming, clapping and dancing. This is confirmed by Levine (2005:143) who mentions that in the *Pedi* culture men chant praise songs (*direto*) resembling historical epics in the still of the night. They usually recall events pertaining to tribal chiefs and heroes. Levine further mentions that, while men use praise poetry to narrate the past glories of the *Bapedi*, women use folktales to explore their world. These tales are ancient stories that have been passed on through the generations. Indeed, these activities determine their style of living. Indigenous stories and songs are useful sources for learning about attitudes and values, cultures and generations (Burton and Chacksfield 1979:70; Potgieter 2006:vi).

Most of the *Pedi* rituals reflect joy. Joy is a stepping-stone to life above one's miserable circumstances. Rituals are highly flexible and not entirely mutually exclusive. They are multi-functional (e.g. certain songs can be used as praise poetry). In Africa, praise songs most often compliment an individual (or individuals) present at a performance; yet the vehicle for praise, and advice or challenges offered in the guise of praise, take the form of a song in praise of a historical or mythical person from the past. Texts with praise words include proverbs or references to proverbs; a brief narration or description of the current situation; commentary, advice or criticism; and bits of text, drawn from a much longer narrative, to which the praise song alludes to (Arntson 1998:488-489).

Praise poetry is characteristic of the *Pedi* people's life style. Births, with their promise of new life and continuity of inheritance, are marked by ceremony and ritualized singing. Even before the infant is born,

chants and incantations are used to guard the birth process and effect a speedy and safe birth (Matthews 1992:934).

3.3.1.4 Content and context

In the *Pedi* tribe the birth of a male child invariably occasions far more joy than that of a female. Mbiti (1987:533) who has done research on the birth of children reported that the birth of boys in Africa is considered to be very important, both for inheritance and for the defense of the community. Men are important because they perpetuate and expand the family or clan. Mothers breast-feed male children for a longer period than they do female children. They more readily sing lullabies to males than to females. Female children are required to work at an earlier age than males. Their duties and responsibilities are more suitable to adults, e.g. looking after smaller siblings, housework and taking care of livestock.

The song is one of many that uses introductory praise as a point of departure, positioning the poet as subject in a narrative. The text is divided into two sections. It starts with an introductory praise '*ke a dumedisa wena Thobela marena*' ('I salute you, your worship', line 1). Thanksgiving praise is explicated from lines 2-12. The poet presents an idyllic picture of a hero, and explains the hero in favourable light. The expressions '*O mogale wa marumo*' ('hero', line 2) and '*molomo mmetla betla*' ('a super star', line 3) with the use of the diminutive to express admiration, accomplish that. The poet further presents a picture of a unique personality '*O sepipimpi se pipa molomo*' ('you are the unknown secret', line 4), probably alluding to reputation, respect, dignity and orderliness of '*Mogale wa marumo*' ('hero').

The dignified position that *'Mogale wa marumo'* ('hero') holds among the clan is demonstrated in line 5 *'se pipile mmakwele seremong'* ('you are the unknown to the birds') and line 6 *'O meetse a noka tse kgolo, go ratana go etelana'* ('You are the water from big rivers which loves to visit each other'). Acknowledging the negritude efforts of *'Mogale wa marumo'* ('hero') in lines 7 and 8, the poet depicts the newly born baby as the people's willingness to lend a hand in matters that affect others. In line 9 *'Go se go wena pula re tla e bona kae?'* ('without you, where can we get the rain from?') the poet is still hiding behind the intricacies of metaphor. He hereby continues to allude to *Mogale wa marumo's* potential of leadership and majesty, characterized by the realization of his dignity and integrity.

The significance of this song is equally personal. Lines 9 and 10 constitute a loud and clear call for *'Mogale wa marumo'* to provide rain for the clan. As can be seen in line 10 *'E hupilwe ke wena maleng a matelele'* ('it is contained within you from afar'), the poet's request is shrouded in this metaphor of hope and confidence. The austere dignity and integrity of *'Mogale wa marumo'* is recognized and acknowledged in this song text. The identification of hero and clan is established from the beginning to the end of this song. In line 11 *'mola dimela ka moka di lebeletse godimo'* ('while all plants are looking upon us') an earnest appeal is made to a supernatural helper *'Mogale wa marumo'* to provide rain for both the clan and the plants.

The song concludes by ironically expressing appreciation and confidence in the newly born baby *'Mogale wa marumo'*: *'O meetsefula a bokgomo, sera mathaba ka mpa go khora'* ('You are the flood of the

cattle, the enemy that becomes happy when satisfied with food' (line 12).

The description of the hero offers the reader a vivid picture of confidence the clan has in the newly born baby as their future leader. The role of '*Mogale wa marumo*' is encapsulated in the names that the poet assigns to him, thus enabling him to objectify the polarities of moral and social situation with the clan, as revealed in the song.

3.3.1.5 Function

Not only do praise and thanksgiving poems *initiate and welcome* a new member into the clan. In the case of a first child, they confer on the mother the status of parenthood, which for the *Pedi*, is synonymous with *attaining the full status of a woman*.

While receiving a newly born baby in the family/clan, irrespective of whether the child understands and hears all that the poet is saying the song serves to *welcome the child* in his/her new world. *Love for* the newly born baby among the *Pedi* is shown throughout the above praise song (lines 1-12), by the immediate family and whoever is present.

Pedi praise songs are a *plea, request and praise* to the *Pedi* ancestors who are communicated to and pleased through song and dance. Praise songs are sung to ask *for rain and good life* for the *Pedi* people in general. These songs and dances are performed when *rain does not come* at the expected time of the year, which in Limpopo Province is usually September to October.

Praise songs are also sung to praise God and the ancestors as *Pedi* traditional *thanksgiving or appreciation belief*, especially during years of good harvest.

3.3.2 Thanksgiving Songs (*Kgoparara*)

3.3.2.1 Form

Singing is by far the most prevalent mode of musical expression among the African people. Although there exist genres of “instrumental music”, no such genre completely excludes song (Chernoff 1979:37; Oehrle and Emeka 2003:39). Many formal and informal activities are marked by singing, whether or not the occasion is designated a “musical occasion”. Although there are certain amount of private, solo singing, the *Pedi* people regard singing as essentially a group activity, an opportunity to express their “communal ethos”.

In the *Pedi* culture social and ethical values are communicated through Thanksgiving Songs, while the content is largely dictated by current concerns and the way people approach them. Musical cultures and societies in Africa are guided by complex sets of moral and ethical values and beliefs that are historical and cultural. Values are lived (normatively), perceived (in ourselves and others) and exhibited (as in a way of living, dress, or music), according to Mans (2005:16). *Pedi* Thanksgiving Songs provide opportunities for people to express their interpretations of society.

The use of Thanksgiving Songs in the *Pedi* culture helps the narrator to hold the listeners’ attention, and adds another dimension to the story. The narrator therefore dramatizes the ‘story’ through musical techniques. Kebede (1982:7) writes that ‘responsorial’ is a common

style of singing amongst the sub-saharan African cultures. It is a pattern of call and response that involves two or more singers, a solo or group response to the lead singer imitatively, duplicative or otherwise. Kebede defines 'antiphony' or 'antiphonal singing' as the call and response form that involves two independent groups that respond to one another, or two performers from each group responding to each other. Hansen (1993:58) describes the concept of antiphonal singing as a structure that comprises solo and chorus phrases with occasional overlapping. Arom (1991:18) discusses these concepts as follows:

"Antiphonal and responsorial structures are the dominant characteristics of traditional central African music. In certain pieces in which the melodic material is more developed, the two techniques may appear alternately. But very generally a soloist is contrasted with a choir made up of the whole of audience. Musical repetition, in its simplest form, is responsorial or litanical. The soloist sings a series of phrases that the choir punctuates with a response, which is usually shorter than the solo utterance".

The definition of Arom seems explicit, clearly distinguishing between responsorial and antiphonal styles. The former being call and response pattern involves a soloist and a chorus where the chorus response, whether imitative of the solo line or not, is shorter. The latter involves a note by note repetition of the solo line by the chorus. In *Pedi* Thanksgiving Songs there are these forms of call and response patterns. The kind of group versus group call and response singing defined by Kebede as antiphony does exist in *Pedi* performance

practice. In the following song the traditional healers are expressing their appreciation and thanksgiving to the ancestors.

3.3.2.2 Text and translation

THANKSGIVING SONG: *KGOPARARA*

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Bo tate, go ja re jele,	1. Our forefathers, we have enjoyed the meals,
2. e fela re nyaka nama.	2. But we are still in need of the meat.
3. Re tsoma ga go nona, lekhura le kae.	3. We would appreciate if you give us enough meat full of fat.
4. Ga gesu motse o agwa ke basadi.	4. According to our culture, the household is built by women.
5. Banna ba fedile.	5. All men have passed away.
6. Nka be e sa le botala,	6. If it was a long time ago,
7. nkabe ke bitswa kgobadi pholo ya mmala.	7. I could be described as "Kgobadi" the coloured oxen.
8. Mpiletseng Tshumu,	8. Please call me "Tshumu",
9. Ramapantele se alafa batho.	9. "Ramapantele" the traditional healer.
10. Mpiletseng "Tshumu",	10. Please call me "Tshumu",
11. Ramapantele ngaka mosemanyana.	11. "Ramapantele" the young traditional healer.
12. Nkabe e sa le botala,	12. If it was long time ago,
13. nkabe ke bitswa mmate, mokane.	13. I could be described as a friend indeed.

The song was recorded by the author on a field trip at *malopo* ritual held at *Dingwane* village, *Sekhukhune* area-Limpopo Province in May 2003 (Refer to track 2, Audio CD).

3.3.2.3 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Like in other cultures *Pedi* musicians perform prophetically by foretelling the future consequences of certain actions taken by men and women in the society. *Pedi* musicians, in their foresight,

investigate, evaluate, probe and foretell future events in the *Pedi* society.

In the *Pedi* culture there are fixtures at appropriate times of the year for religious festivals dedicated to the ancestors. There are also other annual religious rites of mass purgation, regeneration and thanksgiving like. These rites involve a particular clan or the entire community as a body corporate participant even though the process may select key celebrants and officials.

Thanksgiving Songs are used to conduct the religious aspects, which constitute the core event of the festival theme. The social celebration, which mandates the entire population to participate actively in the festive programmes secures the successful outcome of the core event. This entails feasting and secular musical arts performances. Clan songs are found in many societies (Kofie 1994:33). In those who support a moiety system it often happens that each of the two divisions supports its own songs. Kofie further mentions that even lineages sometimes have specific songs with regard to their own social grouping. MacGaffey (2002:12) confirms that music was and is thought to enable communication with the dead.

The *Pedi* community observes the practice of feeding or venerating the ancestors. The head of the clan performs this rite of communion. The essence is to invoke and share communion with ancestors that are emotionally close to the living, and whose intangible interventions are known to impact on the psyche and life fortunes of selected, and sometimes collective, living progeny. Such a communion, in the form of symbolic feeding, regenerates the energies of the ancestral spirits

for affective-effective performance of their roles in ensuring favourable fates and accomplishments for the living.

Ancestors are meant to protect, strengthen and bless their offspring, but they are not omnipotent (Nurnberger 2007:154). For every success ancestors' veneration is to be conducted as a signal of appreciation, acknowledgement, respect and honour to them. They are recognized as strong affective presences in the hierarchy of the affective supernormal essences (Nzewi 2007:129). They play palpable metaphysical supporting roles in the psychical wellness of the *Pedi* individual and community. Furthermore, they constitute cohesive forces in the affairs of family and compound units, lineage groups and the community at large. Ancestor veneration of the *Pedi* is based on the belief that the dead can influence the living but not vice versa (Tjabadi Mamagabe Michael, personal communication 23-07-2003). Ancestors have therefore to be respected, honoured and obeyed. They have to be thanked for their blessings, and have to be fed through sacrifices (Mbiti 1969:81; Staples 1981:68). The *Pedi* acknowledge whatever gift or fortune is received from the ancestors. Without any acknowledgement the ancestors have the power to withdraw their gifts or fortune. In addition, *Pedi* people believe that the spirits of departed ancestors have considerable power both for good and evil. Spirits of departed ancestors may cause all kinds of misfortunes if they are offended by any action of a living relative.

In such a case the offender must make a sacrificial offering to appease the ancestral spirit. It is not unusual at a burial ceremony for an individual to talk to the corpse, to persuade the spirit not to trouble the family or village (Rader 1991:25). In our modern time such

messages are normally conveyed through sympathy cards. Ancestor veneration is a widespread phenomenon among the *Pedi* people (Phibion 2003:148). *Badimo* (ancestors) play an important role in the lives of the *Pedi*. Ancestral spirits are generally believed to be benevolent and concerned about the welfare of their descendants. However, when offended, they can kill and maim their own protégés. Therefore, people always seek to maintain the closest possible relationship with these divinities. This includes heeding their requests and instructions.

Songs as expression of appreciation and thanksgiving is evident in the *Pedi* society. Appreciation is indeed an important part of the tribe's act in general. Music serves as an adjunct to religion, and is used for happy and sad purposes, for expressing ideals and emotions, and romantically, for describing scenery (Kofie 1994:99). In improvised verses and pre-composed songs, the *Pedi* single out those members of the community noteworthy for their accomplishments: *matona* (headmen) and other political figures and their descendants. They also include wealthy members of the community who are actively involved in the community development of the *Pedi* people.

The *Pedi* society employs thanksgiving songs to rally warriors, tuning up their morale, and generating public sentiments or moral support as well as pleasing their ancestors. At some festivals which have primary political orientation, thanksgiving songs are sung to celebrate and commemorate the founding of a community.

3.3.2.4 Content and context

In this song text singers who are traditional healers are communicating directly with their ancestors. The text and melody play complementary roles in the communication process. The singers make use of words that are sometimes suggestive of double or multiple meaning. These conceptual words often form the basis for the themes and sub-themes in this song. The text falls into six clearly-defined sections: a) recognition of the deeds of ancestors (line 1); b) request and expressions of the singers' confidence in the ancestors (lines 2-3); c) tone of loneliness and frustration (lines 4-5); d) recognition of a traditional healer '*Tshumu*' who trained the singers to become traditional healers (lines 8-11) and f) imagery (lines 12-13).

The introductory statement (line 1) poetically announces the recognition of ancestors' deeds '*Bo tate, go ja re jele*' ('Our forefathers, we have enjoyed the meals'). The tone of the singers from line 2, '*e fela re nyaka nama*' ('but we are still in need of the meat') and line 3, '*re tsoma ya go nona, lekhura le kae*' ('We would appreciate if you give us enough meat full of fat') presents a dissatisfaction that the singers (traditional healers) are still in need of more meat full of fat. The message communicated to the ancestors by the singers is that they are thankful, but they would appreciate it if the ancestors could offer them some more meat. The belief that ancestors will respond positively includes a request as well as the singers' confidence in the ancestors.

In this song we observe the careful use of figurative words with powerful associative meaning. The text possesses variation in poetic

expression. The singers make use of several figures of speech, forms of imagery, idioms, parables and proverbs that require serious thinking and one's vastness in the language to fully comprehend. This is evinced in the fourth line which remarks that 'according to our culture, the household is built by women', and fifth line 'all men have passed away'. The tone in lines 4 and 5, reflects loneliness, despair and frustration because all men in the community have died. Taking melancholy of the lyrics into consideration, the focus in these two lines (4 and 5) is on relationships, the loss of men in the community and death-human concerns rather than upon the communication with ancestors.

Most themes in this song are derived from the sense of realism rather than from idealism. Songs such as '*Kgoparara*' are normally composed as reactions or responses to the realities of life (e.g. inauguration of the chief) that unfold in the *Pedi* society from time to time. They therefore had to reflect things that had occurred, which the musicians/traditional healers had seen or heard.

The song recognizes the traditional healer '*Tshumu*' (lines 8-11) who trained all the singers to become traditional healers. Because of the trust the singers (traditional healers) have in their mentor ('*Tshumu*'), as a signal of respect they call him with his praise name '*Ramapantele*', (line 1). It is not clear why they are calling '*Tshumu*'. It is possible that they might be calling him, with the sole purpose of thanking him for the good work he has done in training them to become traditional healers.

3.3.2.5 Function

Thanksgiving Songs in the *Pedi* culture express sincere *thanks to the ancestors* after every achievement, whether it is a good harvest or a patient's full recovery, etc. However, songs such as *mogobo* and *motholoane* may be sung for celebrating victory after winning the battle or war.

Thanksgiving Songs are sung to *thank, please and praise ancestors* after having responded positively towards the community's requests. Similar rituals take place in thanksgiving after harvest, a very festive occasion, especially if the harvest has been a good one (Bourdillon 1976:303). In some chiefdoms the thanksgiving ceremony occurs after a particularly good harvest and includes feasting on the meat of oxen killed by the chief for the occasion. If the spirit guardians have failed to provide a good harvest the previous year, they are not so lavishly honoured and the celebrations cease.

The *Pedi* are singing these Thanksgiving Songs to acknowledge *the good work or service* the above-named figures have done for them. In *Sotho* praises there is always the same aim, namely to glorify a person, a place, an animal or whatever the topic of glorification may be. In African culture music is used to praise worthy people, good deeds and achievements (Nzewi 2005:156). To attain this aim imagination of prominent leaders is an essential necessity.

To the *Pedi* mind ancestors are human and have acquired additional powers after death. Ancestors play a very vital important role in a person's life. They are protectors of society and can destroy it as a

means of punishment. Ancestors control moral behaviour because they are the moral agents. No serious misbehaviour or anti-life attitude escapes their gaze. They are authority figures who maintain the norms of social action, but cause trouble when these norms are not obeyed (Magesa 1997:48). Men seek to obtain their blessing or to avert their anger by bringing offerings. Therefore they thank the ancestors to *keep a happy relationship*.

3.3.3 Lament Songs (*Madi a manaba*)

3.3.3.1 Form

Pedi laments are songs with a focus on a distinct, special range of topics. It includes: a) extolling the sex-specific subsistence skills of those who have passed on; b) death by drowning, accident, or ill health; and c) notable events and incidents in the *Pedi* community. Tchebwa (2005:15) observes that music and history are mutually supportive through a complete vision of the events that give rhythm to the life and to the journey of a people. Significant events in a person's life may be woven into a memorial or Lament Song. The crux of the argument rests on the African traditional worldview as one in which people recognize and experience many dangers and threats of life, even if they smile, sing and dance (Mbiti 1986:156). Life is seen as a struggle in the face of these threats, which are both physical and spiritual in nature.

In the *Pedi* society illnesses are believed to be caused by witchcraft. The family spirit (*modimo*) normally protects all family members from harm, but if one of them transgresses, particularly by omitting a religious ritual, the spirit becomes annoyed and punishes the family by causing an illness or the death of one or more of its members

(Ndemera, et al (1985:31). Kofie (1994:41) and Soko (2003:3-1) agree with Ndemere et al (1985:31) when they note that disease and misfortune are supposed to come as punishment from the ancestors who are believed to be very powerful. Ancestors are more powerful than any living being, and can bring about the death of a lineage member.

Most of the *Pedi* Lament Songs deal with some sort of trouble like adversity, experiences of enmity, oppression, and wickedness. Particularities of the situation of the supplicants are often difficult to discern. What is going on? Who are the enemies? Why are they hostile to the supplicant? What have they done that is bad? What is happening to the supplicant that is regularly described in extreme terms?

Complaint and accusation are directed to ancestors as well as towards enemies, and sometimes towards the lamenter himself. Ancestors play a crucial role with regard to life and death. Sorrow features in many *Pedi* songs are caused either by sentiments of lost love, desertion and poverty, or by the women's vocal quality, which reflects strained emotion. The phrasing of *Pedi* lament songs is determined on the basis of its melodic sequence, the repetition of note and rhythmic sequences, pauses for breath or short breaks, and by shorter notes marking the end of phrases⁴². In *Pedi* lament songs sentences end with a falling intonation.

⁴² In the *Pedi* tribe dirges and laments are accompanied with body rhythms (clapping and stamping), and not with instruments. Dynamic movements, gestures and textual and musical extemporizations are integral parts of dirges and laments.

Pedi laments normally end in the plea and confidence that ancestors will cause the enemy to flee and be put to shame. Newell (1976:87) states that the relationship between ancestor worship and society is complex: ancestor worship reflects the society, is determined by it, and at the same time shapes it.

The next song, "*Madi a manaba*", is an individual lament song. The supplicant is lamenting about the death of her parents. She is blaming the witches for having killed her parents. *Pedi* laments are characterized by both hope and despair. According to *Pedi* belief ancestors can turn the most impossible situation around.

3.3.3.2 Text and translation

FUNERAL SONG: MADI A MANABA (BLOOD OF THE ADVERSARIES/ENEMIES)

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Ke dutse fase ka khutsa.	1. I sat down and rest.
2. Ka bala dipalo.	2. And started counting.
3. Kgwedi ya malofa.	3. A month of pessimistic persons.
4. E gana go fela.	4. It does not come to an end.
5. Madi a manaba,	5. The enemies' blood,
6. bosego ga le robale.	6. You are enjoying sleepless nights.
7. Le lala le dikologa metse ya batho.	7. You spend the whole night long walking around families' household.
8. Ke rwele morwalo ka magetleng.	8. I put on heavy luggage on my back.
9. Ke a imelwa.	9. It is heavy for me.
10. Ke a robegwa.	10. It is painful.
11. Lehu le tsere tatane mothommelegi.	11. Death has taken my father, the comforter.
12. Ke tshuana magolegole.	12. I am an orphan.
13. Lehu le tsere mmame.	13. Death has also taken my mother.
14. ka sala ke e kgonere.	14. I am bewildered.

The song was recorded by the author at a *malopo* ritual held at *Dingwane* village, *Sekhukhune* area-Limpopo Province in May 2003 (Refer to track 3, Audio CD).

3.3.3.3 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Despair and helplessness are the underpinnings of *Pedi* funeral songs. Mourning can cause illness, and disruption in patterns of sleeping, eating and socializing. During a funeral ceremony, which usually lasts for one or two days, the manifestations of grief take a variety of forms. Mourners may cry, and utter expressions of pain and sorrow. Both in Christianity and African cultural heritage, the death of an individual causes great concern to the community of which he has been a member. "This is especially so if the deceased had favorable relations with the members of the community" (Mbiti 1972:535).

In African tradition, the death of an elderly popular individual is felt to be a great loss to the community (Mbiti 1972:535). Mourning is symbolized by black clothing. Moreover, for months, mourners may live a life of seclusion, and abandon all outward manifestations of joy. Such manifestations include listening to or performing what is regarded as *Pedi* traditional funeral songs.

Burying the dead, for example, is an important social occasion in the life of the *Pedi* tribe. While the wailing and the dirges furnish a socially patterned outlet for grief, the lament songs form the most dramatic part of the setting of display and celebration, which surrounds the occasion. Death rites are held to celebrate and mourn the passage to the afterlife. Music at funerals and most other occasions is there for whole making. African events consistently resort to music⁴³ (Uzoigwe and Tracey 2003:82). In Africa the death of any member of a

⁴³ Along similar lines it is worthwhile to mention here Owomoyela's (1979:15) view that in traditional African community. Singing accompanied important periods or turning points in the life of an individual, such as childhood, marriage and death.

community, particularly the prominent or the accomplished members, attracts the rendition of music and in some cases dirges in honour of the deceased (Onyeji 2004:92). Sometimes such music is created and performed by the adult women of the community.

In the text, language variety associated with the mourning situation shows an exaggerated metaphor blended with euphemism. This is so because *Sepedi* speech community is inclined to respect the dead more than the living. Two things compared in a form of metaphor are bound to retain slight similarities in order to maintain this mutual identity. This is evident in the above song text.

In the *Pedi* culture witchcraft is evident and a reality⁴⁴. A large percentage of the *Pedi* people living in the *Limpopo* Province still believe that personality disorders are due to supernatural causes (Van der Hooft 1979:147). Most of the disturbed individuals, or their relatives, consult tribal doctors (*dingaka*) for an explanation or the reason for their symptoms.

The basis of this diagnosis is that they attribute their symptoms to either the influence of their deceased ancestors (*badimo*), the interference of witches and wizards (*baloi*), or the hand of God, *Modimo* (Van der Hooft 1979:147). A *Pedi* is always conscious of the vicissitudes of life, particularly the incidence of witchcraft, which is to him one of the main causes of death (Mokgokong 1978:105). That is why some Northern Sotho speakers will answer a greeting by: *re sa*

⁴⁴ Monnig (1967:71) concurs that, to the *Pedi*, witchcraft (*boloi*) represents all that is evil and destructive. It is loathed and feared more than anything else and is a force, which is even recognized by many who have become Christians.

paletse baloi 'We have still baffled the witches' (Mokgokong 1978:105).

The *Pedi* community has ancestral worship as part of their indigenous religion. This ritual activity is universally known as '*go phasa*' ('to venerate'). The head of the tribe or family, with the assistance of traditional healers, normally takes the lead in conducting this ritual. Sekhukhune (1988:48) writes that "*Badimo*" ('ancestors') are believed to be omnipresent and as a result they are worshipped everywhere but preferably where the dead are buried or in a brackish spot known as '*sebatlabadimo*'. Sekhukhune describes '*sebatlabadimo*' as a place that is believed to be prepared by the departed themselves. The act of '*go phasa*' is generally multi-purposeful. Among the *Pedi* people it is executed for the purpose of asking for rain in times of drought and famine, curing, and alleviating pain from any epidemic.

In the *Pedi* culture it is further believed that the living dead (ancestors) can influence the living generation but not *vice versa*. On the basis of the latter statement, the song warns the sorcerers who are responsible for the death of the supplicant's parents. Ancestors are powerful and shall avenge the death on behalf of the supplicant. The song is not an idle threat to the sorcerers.

3.3.3.4 Content and context

This song is a passionate complaint to ancestors about suffering the supplicant is enduring. Like Job (6:4) the supplicant does not hesitate from attributing his sufferings to a source of origin. In our case it is the ancestors (lines 8-14).

The lament is divided into three sections: In lines 1-4 the supplicant is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. In lines 5-7 he appeals to enemies to abandon him, while in lines 8-14 he appeals to ancestors for help. The singer explains his difficulties. He is persecuted or harassed by enemies, who remain unidentified. This situation is kept open so that any other petitioner could fill in his/her exact context of distress.

The supplicant establishes his theme in the first four lines that become the recurring refrain. The refrain reflects an element of an absolute lament. Over this thematic refrain the supplicant weaves series of proverbs to which the refrain is a response.

'*Manaba*' (line 5) means witch/wizard (witches/wizards) in the context of the text but literally it means "enemies". It is a term that has dual meaning; witch/wizard who belongs to the spiritual secret cult⁴⁵ and all people who seek and practice any form of wickedness against humanity in the physical world. The activities of the latter category could be a secret, but they are all performed in the physical world.

The term '*lehu*' ('death'-lines 11 and 13) in the *Pedi* culture has a dual meaning; the death where human beings stop breathing and the death which signifies that one is living wretchedly and hopelessly. In this song the supplicant refers to the real death (lines 5-7).

Life is short and everyone dies, but the supplicant does not accept it. He feels bewildered (lines 1-14), and thinks that the ancestors have

⁴⁵ Spiritual secret cult refers to the cult instituted by those who possess powers to do extraordinary things from the spiritual world to control and affect the physical world (positively or negatively).

forsaken him. The supplicant is troubled by the witches/wizards: “You are enjoying sleepless nights” (line 6); and “You spend the whole night long walking around families’ households” (line 7). This implies that witches/wizards never sleep. For them to accomplish their mission of witchcraft they have to operate in the dark.

The text is presented in the form of a traditional funeral letter and reflects such stock phrases as *'ke a robegwa'* ('It is painful'-line 10) as well as the signature of the supplicant at the end *'lehu le tsere mmane'* ('death has also taken my father, the comforter'-line line 11 and 'death has also taken my mother'-line 13). The tone of the supplicant reflects despair and frustration.

The supplicant has lost confidence that ancestors will deal effectively with his enemies (lines 11, 13-14). We find a description of enemies who are attacking the supplicant: “The enemies’ blood” (line 5). There is neither doubt about the trouble this supplicant is in, nor about his underlying belief in the ancestors. He is scared stiff while uttering “I am bewildered” (line 14). Because of his enemies, who are indeed frightening, the supplicant feels insecure. In lines 11 and 13 the supplicant is lamenting about the death of both parents (father and mother). It is not clear whether both parents died at the same time, or whether they will be buried at the same time. All that the supplicant is lamenting about is the death of her parents.

3.3.3.5 Function

This typical *Pedi* lament song may serve to encourage people to *recognize ancestors*, as it is believed among the *Pedi* that things do not always turn out well for those who do not recognize ancestors.

Only if the supplicant's ancestors are pleased about the supplicant as the consequence of loving, respecting, remembering them and carrying out their instructions in the form of ancestor veneration and pouring of a libation, vengeance will be realized and protection experienced. The song serves therefore as a *warning* to the community. The community is made aware of sorcerers or witches who are walking around families' households during the night. They are on a mission of killing innocent people through witchcraft. Whoever prospers or is successful in life could become a victim of witchcraft according to *Pedi* culture. That is why most successful people prefer to settle in the cities for survival.

The reason why successful people settle in the cities is because in the cities there are many nationalities or people from different ethnic groups or cultural backgrounds. They do not know one another and jealousy does not prevail amongst them. Ndemera et al (1985:33) states that in actual life, feelings of jealousy are more likely to grow when people see one another regularly and know one another's affairs. A large number of people in the cities are successful or rich.

It is unclear what influenced the sorcerers to kill the supplicant's parents. In most cases witchcraft is influenced by jealousy or due to misunderstanding or conflict. Lament songs generally focus on *bewailing the beloved*, recognition of the ancestors, avoiding power of witchcraft as well as *creating a good relationship* between the living and the living dead. In Africa lament gives birth to an ancestral spirit, because without death there would be no ancestors (Porter 2001:156). Women therefore sing the dirge to bring life.

3.3.4 Royal Songs (*Kgoshi*)

3.3.4.1 Form

The *Pedi* express their ideas in songs, but in artistic music this kind of self-realization offers a highly limited truth that has been altered by convention. Two reasons are identified by Nzewi (1991:93) for the expression of ideas through music. Firstly, music has to engender a contextual atmosphere that promotes maximized social interaction at any given time and place. Secondly, music has to possess innate qualities. The *Pedi* tribe's chant of Inauguration Songs is symbolic, because it expresses the nature of their present state, that is, a cultured nature. Music and oral traditions are a way of consolidating collective will, symbolic of a thriving culture, and legacy (Mataira 2000:25). The communal way of *Pedi* life is central. Human beings hereby employ music and song to share joy, blessings, sorrows, and burdens. For the *Pedi* tribe harmony within oneself, one's clan, society, nature and the spiritual world forms the basis of a healthy society.

Inauguration Songs have played an important role in the history of the *Pedi* society. Msomi (1981:19) emphasizes the significance of folk songs: "*Music is the medium through which the African expresses all his/her feelings and emotions*". Music plays an integral part of the African tradition and of everyday life such as breathing, eating and sleeping (Liebenberg 1998:107).

Men and women who are remembered in a song are the important historical figures. These historical figures are famous public leaders of their day. People achieved fame as leaders, amongst other things, by establishing reputations as poets and in the case of both men and

women, also as dancers. Music and dance in Africa exist within an interdependent relationship with other forms of expressive culture (Kubik 2001:210). Music creates movement and leads to new ways of seeing things and, as Blacking (1987:53) suggests, gives people a sense of empowerment and confidence.

The chief in the *Pedi* tradition fulfills the role of a king. In this sense Royal Songs in the *Pedi* culture are well known. Inauguration Songs are such songs sung when a chief or a headmen in the *Pedi* tribe is throned. Like other African societies, the *Pedi* tribe has a strong poet-singer tradition. Accordingly, a wide range of poetry is chanted in a variety of languages and in contexts ranging from entertainment to religious practice (Moore 2001:274). Akpabot (1986:69) argues that an African musician, first and foremost, is a poet who unlike the Western poet does not write for different performers, but has his poems tied to special occasions where he reaches an audience:

“His output can be seen as a commentary on life styles, praising, protesting and cursing human foibles and fads, reminiscing on the exploits of national heroes; invoking the might of ancestral gods; imparting knowledge; arousing emotions and making suggestion for the common good” (Akpabot 1986:69).

A group of singing dancers performs with one or more leaders, sometimes accompanied by a rhythm instrument, *moropa* (drum) or leg rattles during this song. Most of the rhythms in the *Pedi* inauguration songs are subject to metric schemes, and the sounds reveal the rigidity of a pre-existing tonal system. Sadie and Latham

(1988:17) state that “The most basic element in music is rhythm” and some musical systems, in fact, use rhythm alone.

In Africa, Inauguration Songs are often integrated into story-telling. Such *chantefables* display remarkable, unitary behavioural patterns across Sub-Saharan Africa, from West Africa to areas of primary Bantu-language speakers (Kubik 2001:205). The next Inauguration Song tells about a leader who is born a chief and has the potentials of leadership and managerial skills.

3.3.4.2 Text and translation

INAUGURATION SONG: KGOSHI

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Ke moukamedi wa ditshabatshaba.	1. He is the overseer of the community.
2. Ke thobela Marena, ge re mmona.	2. We salute him when we see him, because he is the hero.
3. Dingaka di thinthathithebele.	3. Traditional healers are shivering too when they see him.
4. Bogoshi ke bja madi,	4. Chieftainship is heredity,
5. Ga se lekhekhwe ga bo fetele.	5. It is quite different from infectious diseases/sores.
6. Ke leabela thobela Marena.	6. It is really a heredity.
7. Etlang re ye mosate ga bo Shorwane, Mphepedimeng.	7. Please accompany me to the royal family at Shorwane village, Mphepedimeng.
8. Ga motho wa Seakalala, thobela Marena.	8. Where the chief is really born a chief.

Recorded by the author at *Shorwane* village, *Sekhukhune* area in *Limpopo* Province in July 2003 during the inauguration ceremony of *Kgoshi Shorwane*. (Refer to track 4, Audio CD)

3.3.4.3 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

In the *Pedi* tradition the song *kgoshi* (chief) is commonly sung as an inauguration song. The song is characterized by social excitement.

During the chief's inauguration ceremony the *Pedi* people participate in the enjoyment by singing the song, *kgoshi*. As some are singing and dancing, celebrating their new chief, others will improvise by telling stories about *Pedi* history and tradition, all of which herald unexplored possibilities for the future. The use of stories with music and participation is not a new idea. Storytelling is part of many of the world's cultures (Levine 2005:143). Music and song add to the storytelling by providing a rich sound environment that helps to convey information to the listener. Musical stories motivate, increase attention span, provide an effective vehicle for learning a moral from a story, aid in language development, and help the listener learn about music in general (Flohr 1998:140).

Pedi Inauguration Songs are characterized by joy, interaction, concentration, expression, self-confidence and imagination. In this song the chief is praised. Repetition is clearly the key to the structure. Through repetition one of the most important compositional features in the *Pedi* Psalm-like songs serves as a useful means by which the performing musicians emphasize and project to the listening audience the principal idea of this song. In this song performance, '*Thobela marena*' (lines 2, 6 and 8) is the phrasal idea that constitutes the main theme. Repetition is a powerful, rhetorical and expressive device skillfully employed by poets to hammer key words home, in order to implant dominant emotions in listeners or readers' mind (Burton and Chacksfield 1979:115-116). In *Pedi* Psalm-like songs repetitions often appear in forms of chorus refrain or a frequent return of the narration to the principal idea at strategic intervals (see lines 4-6).

The use of the call-and-response method in *Pedi* music is seen as a performance style, non-comparable to the European verse form. It is more a performance style than a structural form, because a solo performance of the same piece does not show incompleteness of any sort. The song *kgoshi* only shows the complementary phrasing of the song itself, which in a group performance may be presented in complementary call-and-response style for aesthetic and labour distribution purposes. By far the most common form of group singing in most parts of Africa is the call-and-response style, different from the common European form of a verse of several lines followed (or not) by a chorus (Roberts 1972:9). Roberts asserts that European verse is complete in itself, while the African call by itself is only half of the equation; it needs the response before it is complete. Africans see music and song as a stimulus to dance. Both are inseparable sister arts (Brown 1989:128).

3.3.4.4 Content and context

When a chief dies in *Sekhukhuneland*, for example, some stages in the funeral are marked by musical performance designed to perform various dramatic functions. For the inauguration of the new chief who succeeds a dead *kgoshi* (chief), a different type of performance is presented. Different stages of the ceremony are again marked by music. Various social events with which music is most usually associated, include the inauguration of chiefs and kings, religious worship, therapy, magic, work, children's games, sports, festivals and ceremonies pertaining to the life cycle, such as birth rites, infant rites, puberty rites, marriage and funeral rites (Euba 1982:232).

African music, dance and songs as embodied in the entire concept of African culture, are a cherished treasure and source of pride for African peoples. African songs are most meaningful and carry inspiring messages that convey the true picture and personality of the African.

This inauguration song falls into three clearly defined sections: a) introductory praise (lines 1-3); (b) circles of integrity (lines 4-6); and c) the song closes with praise (lines 7-8).

In the *Pedi* Psalm-like songs the performers sometimes open a performance with an introductory speech (lines 1-3). Spoken introduction informs the audience about the background of the theme or songs to be performed. It prepares the audience for the experience. This is an indication that poetry in *Pedi* music involves both elements of speech and song. *Pedi* songs are either short or long, in some thorough-composed narrative and varied verse forms. The simplest *Pedi* songs are composed in very short melodic sentences, as it is evident in this song. Here performing musicians emphasizes certain words and wise sayings. For example '*dingaka di thintsha dithebele*' ('traditional healers are shivering when they see him') line 3.

The performing musicians do not dispute the fact that chieftainship is heredity. In fact they acknowledge chieftainship in the opening lines of the song (lines 4-6). What they intend to communicate to the audience is that the inaugurated chief is really born a chief. They put this proverbially and ironically that 'chieftainship', as is known in the *Pedi* culture, is not an infectious disease but heredity (lines 4-6). This implies that not every *Pedi* qualifies to become a chief. One should inherit the chieftainship from either the father or mother.

The impression created in lines 7 and 8 is that the *Pedi* have full confidence in the chief who has full-time attention for his royal activities and who leads and govern his community by example. Expressions with roots in human experiences are also used for example '*Ga motho wa Seakalala, thobela Marena*', ('where the chief is really born a chief'), line 8.

A variety in the choice of words appear where the performing musicians insert new words that mean exactly the same as those used earlier or as those they replace. For example '*moukamedi*' (line 1), '*marena*' (line 6) and '*seakalala*' (line 8). The precise connection between the three words '*moukamedi*' ('overseer'), '*marena*' ('heros') and '*seakalala*' ('chief') is easy to ascertain. The combination of these words in the text refers to a leader who is born a chief and has the potentials of leadership and managerial skills.

This song is sung by the *Pedi* people (community) on behalf of their chief (*kgoshi*). This song originally celebrated the inauguration of a chief at "*Shorwane*" village (line 1), "Please accompany me to the royal family at *Shorwane* village, *Mphapedimeng*" (line 7).

This song expresses the situation of a capable chief (line 8), "where the chief is really born a chief." It adds to the evidence that there are *Pedi* rites of inauguration with a highly dramatic character. The song is specifically portraying heredity and respect: "chieftainship is heredity" (line 4). This statement is perhaps best motivated by Duncan's (1960:48) view on traditional successions when he states that traditional law in African traditions controlling succession might be

described as “heredity modified by expediency.” That is to say, normally succession would be by heredity.

With the phrase “we salute him when we see him, because he is the hero” the singers address the chief, praising his dignity and status. This characteristic marks him as the overseer of the community. They bid the chief to use his strength for the cause of truth. Noble qualities of heart and mind befit him in his lofty calling. Similarly, *Igoru* music in *Okpe* (Nigeria) is a powerful medium of communication, by which human actions and reactions are expressed (Agbese 1989:4). It provides a forum to mirror the society and its leaders so that members could understand themselves and their society better and learn more about life (Agbese 1989:4).

3.3.4.5 Function

The song retains its value for people today, especially those of the *Shorwane* village in particular. It serves as a *reminder* of hierarchy and of the chief’s potential for leadership. The chief cares for his people. His people serve him and the whole community recognizes him as chief.

The song is not addressed directly to the ancestors but is a *testimony* offered to other people about the chief’s ability to serve his community. Therefore the song offers important evidence for the scene of humility in the inauguration sequence or related rites. This Royal Song may be related to a historical situation, but it functions to *praise* the chief. The song further functions as a means of *communication* between the singers and visitors who do not know the history of the community.

Historically, the performance of Inauguration Songs has served to reinforce knowledge about the community, its owners, and protocol for its usage. African music arises naturally and spontaneously from the functions of everyday life. The aim of African music has always been to translate the experience of life and of the spiritual world into sound, enhancing and celebrating life through cradle songs, songs of reflection, historical songs, fertility songs, songs about death and mourning, and other song varieties (Omolo-Ongati 2005:60). When the *Pedi* perform an inauguration song, they are making a statement about who they are. They establish the otherness of the original performers and *reaffirm* their cultural *identity*.

Furthermore the contemporary role of *traditional leadership becomes evident* in the Inauguration Song, which is normally performed at an inauguration ceremony.

3.3.5 Liberation Songs (*Ga e boe Afrika*)

3.3.5.1 Form

Liberation Songs are not unique to a particular country or century. As long as inequity between people exists, those who feel oppressed will find strength and inspiration in these kinds of songs (Gray 1998:30). In the *Pedi* tribe, like in some African tribes, music serves as the medium of communication. The tactics and situations of liberation singers throughout the world change over the ages, but the goals remain the same: better working and living conditions without discrimination against ordinary people. In the South African context the black liberation struggle was paramount (Gray 1998:75). In this conflict one of the transforming forces, which manifested itself, was the extensive use of liberation or protest songs.

Ga e boe Afrika is a *Pedi* liberation song. This song is a “chant” and draws the oppressors’ attention to the inequality of wages. In this song the rhythm and melodic line are varied to fit the words of the song⁴⁶. *Ga e boe Afrika* is said to be “*logo-centric*,” which means the focus of the song is on the words rather than on the rhythm or melody lines.

In this category music is a binding force amongst Africans. It is communicating the social solidarity among the *Pedi* people, while solving common political and social problems. Such music becomes instrumental for mutual support and confidence as well as for the rallying point for the *Pedi* people. Colonial governments in Africa feared the use of traditional music by natives because, it would foster political solidarity against the colonial leadership (Mindoti and Agak 2004:156).

In Africa many musical activities reflect and enhance political systems. Song and music are performed to emphasize and assert the importance of a socio-political structure (Levine 2005:189). In the *Pedi* culture the medium of song plays a significant role in expressing personal and communal views on how life affects society. Ironically, many South African sounds that have achieved recognition in the outside world are generally considered *passe’* back home. Musical taste in South Africa has often followed political events (Eyre and Barlow 1995:11). MacLeod and Harvey (2000:30) are of the opinion that music and song liberate listeners to express emotions without a need to disclose.

⁴⁶ The chorus’s response is essentially in two-part harmony but occasionally includes a third tone, producing triadic chords. Intervals of major and minor thirds are used in the chorus part. The song makes use of the diatonic scale, and the setting of the text is syllabic.

3.3.5.2 Text and translation

PROTEST SONG: GA E BOE AFRIKA

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Ga e boe.	1. Bring back.
2. Ga e boe Afrika.	2. Bring back Africa.
3. Go fediswe dipasa le melao e boima.	3. Abolish the pass laws and unbearable laws.
4. Re tsoma ponto,	4. We want a pound,
5. Re tsoma ponto,	5. We want a pound,
6. Re tsoma ponto ka letsatsi,	6. We want a pound a day,
7. Re tsoma ponto ka letsatsi.	7. We want a pound a day.

Recorded by the author at Jane Furse, *Sekhukhune* area in Limpopo Province in September 2004 during the National heritage day celebration (Refer to track 5, Audio CD).

3.3.5.3 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Pedi liberation songs are not only historical records of popular memories shared by the *Pedi* people, but they reflect certain modifications that songs underwent due to deteriorating socio-economic conditions. Liberation songs contain powerful critique in the liberation struggle. Euba (1982:232) pointed out that kings and important chiefs in Africa usually had personal musicians whose duties include image making. Musicians are particularly gifted in the subtle use of praise texts designed to enhance the prestige of their clients while castigating the clients' opponents (McDaniel 1998:42-43).

Pedi liberation songs are antiphonal, repetitive and cyclic in nature⁴⁷. Their improvisational character and their rhythmic patterns invite

⁴⁷ Songs in this category feature cyclical melodic statements in responsorial form. The tempo is determined by the mood of the singers. Quite often though, they are presented in fast tempo. The presentation form is determined by the contingencies of given contexts. The atmosphere of such performances is usually charged. New

bodily movement. Biko (1978:60) asserts: *"The singing of liberation songs leads to a culture of defiance, self-assertion, group pride and solidarity. This is a culture that emanates from a situation of common experience of oppression and is responsible for the restoration of our faith in ourselves and offers a hope in the direction we are taking from here."*

Rhythms of liberation songs are both regular and irregular in the *Pedi* tradition. They are characterized by the chanters stamps, which relate to the drum pattern. The leader's part in these songs may be sung with slight variation, according to individual expression. Steve Biko (1978:60), the black South African activist who died in detention, corroborates this statement: *"To the African, music and rhythm are not luxuries but part and parcel of their way of communication. Any suffering we experienced was made more real by song and rhythm"*. Music and rhythm are indeed influential for effective communication, because it is inspiring, unifying, arousing and unlocks an exhilaration in one's soul. As powerful vehicle music expresses universal truths as well as individual emotions.

Africans turned from subsistence cultivation to cash-cropping (Machin and Morrel 1999:195). To prove that this was called for, at all national, provincial and municipal ceremonies the tribal, cultural and ethical dances, demonstrations, music/liberation songs have become the norm. As economic, social and political conditions for black South Africans deteriorated due to discriminatory laws by the white

songs are sometimes introduced in the context of a performance. Singers with the ability to project voices that can be heard by all usually lead the performances of the songs. Because the performance is often done in motion, musical instruments are generally not used. If used at all, light instruments such as *dithlwathlwadi* (rattles), *leparapata* (African horn) and *dinaka* (reed pipes) are preferred (Stone 1998:7).

government, the style of the songs changed from indigenous to political to reflect the mood of the people. Any interpretation of dance, aesthetics, music, and literature of the African *diaspora* should begin with the assumption that religious practice, political struggle, and the search for social mediation and justice share similar metaphors in the thinking of oppressed people (McDaniel 1998:69).

3.3.5.4 Content and context

The liberation song *Ga e boe Afrika* can be divided as follows: It begins with a) a prayer (lines 1-2); b) dissatisfaction and instruction (lines 3); and the song closes with c) a demand (lines 4-7).

A concern is raised by the chanters. Three issues are addressed: Firstly, chanters want Africa back in their own hands (lines 1-2). During the period 1840 to 1880 the major force affecting South Africa was British imperialism. Britain was the most powerful industrial and commercial nation of the period. Its leaders and businessmen wished to maintain their dominance and this was frequently reflected in colonial policy (Morrel and Machin 1999:189). Secondly, they are not satisfied about the pass laws (line 3). Pass laws were laws that restricted free movements and choice with regard to place of living, for example, separate residential areas and curfews⁴⁸. The demand they put across is that they want at least one pound per day for labour (lines 4-7). In the past one pound was equivalent to two rands. As

⁴⁸ Curfews refers to certain times that black people had to leave white residential areas. Country wide tours by black performance groups were unusual, as curfew regulations restricting concerts and passes required by blacks travelling outside their own provinces were major obstacles to ventures of this nature (Gray 1998:34).

Mminele Letladi Phillip⁴⁹ explained his view on a pound (21 May 2004), he singled out his notion that his grandparents and parents were earning five rands per month. Demanding at least one pound per day would benefit them the earning of 1 pound x 22 (working days), which is equal to 22 pounds (fourty-four rands).

Lines 4-7 are all about one pound per day (or 22 pounds per month which is equivalent to fourty-four rands). The reason why the South African currency was a pound in the 1950's is because South Africa was a British colony (Lamplough 1999:189). As a result, the *Pedi* were not happy with unbearable pass laws (line 3). Black people were not allowed to shop where white people shop; they were also prohibited to travel abroad as a result of suspicion that blacks would travel abroad to take action against apartheid. These were some of the unbearable laws in South Africa. Black people have really gone through difficult times. African societies have experienced unprecedented changes through the colonialists policies of westernization, industrialization and urbanization (Adeogun 2005:66).

3.3.5.5 Function

Liberation songs recall a struggle for political freedom, and refer to the existential difficulties people had gone through. Some liberation songs are *praising political leaders* and *recalling aspects of the struggle* for the transformation to a new society. Music and song played a part in all aspects of culture (Bascom 1970:50).

⁴⁹ Mminele Letladi Phillip is one of the subjects who resides at *Phaahla Mmakadikwe* village, Nebo area in *Limpopo* Province.

In political organization, for example, the functions of music are apparent in songs sung in praise of chiefs, but many other manifestations may also occur (Bascom 1970:50). *Pedi* liberation songs are thus used effectively as a positive strategy to *accelerate change* in the *Pedi* society as well as in the country, South Africa. Many times the use of music in political situations does little to solve the political problems, but it has a positive effect on the performers and the society (Kaemmer 1993:154).

African liberation songs such as *Ga e boe Afrika* are further used as a medium for *seeking equality and peace* as interlocking aims in a society. They are used politically not only by the ruling class in a society, but also by the powerless classes (Kaemmer 1993:162). These songs are used as a vehicle through which people learn about life and, amongst other things, recount current and historical events. Through liberation songs and dance people are able to share their burdens, triumph, sadness and gladness of heart⁵⁰. Hereby, people are bound together and united for one common aim⁵¹.

Musical systems of African societies should therefore not be understood as static structures but dynamic ones. Intimate knowledge of the black and white liberation struggle was obtained, based on the content of the songs. In the past, these songs thus fulfilled the overall

⁵⁰ People sing songs about the common oppressor or exploiter. Liberation songs can be used to draw people together and unite them in one common aim, goal and purpose (Gray 1998:30). This is often so when there is the need to protest or disagree with some political or economic impositions of the government, or to place social sanctions on an erring member of the community. In these instances appropriate music is used to express the opinion or effect of the action.

⁵¹ I would like to declare that compassion, warmth, understanding, caring, sharing, humanness and such, are cornerstones of all the major tribal views, ideologies and religions of the *Pedi* people. Their moral order is characterized by having a feeling about other human beings, helping the needy, physically, emotionally, socially and spirituality.

functions of asserting cultural unity and assisting in societal integration in South Africa (Gray 1999:36).

Liberation songs are responses to particular experiences in the South African history, and changes in style which the songs underwent mirrored the black liberation struggle (Gray 1998:31). These songs played a vital role in the rise of black nationalism and the subsequent establishment of a new South African society. It is however, essential that these songs should also be transcribed and systematically classified for future reference and preservation for posterity (Gray 1998:75).

3.3.6 Wisdom Songs (*Mokgoronyane and Kgogedi*)

3.3.6.1 Form

Pedi Wisdom Songs' performance involves both male and female participation. In most initiation songs the chorus sections are performed in unison. *Pedi* Wisdom Songs are mainly vocal with instrumental accompaniment provided by *leparapata*, a percussion instrument that enriches the music by giving it a regulated beat and hence strict rhythm. However, performances are embellished by whistle blowing and occasional ululations. More often, songs that share the same meter are smoothly joined by a skilful soloist.

Pedi Wisdom Songs are teaching songs. They are more educational than for purposes of leisure or recreation. They are focused on how one should become a responsible adult. Some of these songs are confidential (Levine 2005:153). They are only taught at a specific place or arena like an initiation school for both girls and boys. Without attending the initiation school of either boys or girls, the *Pedi* youth

will not be familiar with these type of songs. Traditional music education in African cultures is a systematic process informed by the concept of music as a social experience as well as an agency for the management of people and society. Objectives of music education in African cultures are human-oriented (Nzewi 1998:139).

The *Pedi* initiation school for both girls and boys is far different from the normal schooling system under the auspices of a national Department of Education. The fundamental significance of initiation for the total African cultural life was not fully realized by most missionaries (Mugambi 2005:532). For some of the missionaries, the practices were considered to be unnecessary ordeals, causing great suffering to the adolescents. In African traditional life, however, the education and training, which is given during initiation, is vital for the community's maintenance of self-understanding. It provides every individual with the opportunity to learn what the community expects from him/her. Songs such as "*Kgogedi*," and others, help initiates not to feel lonely and to think of their loved ones from whom they have been estranged. These songs assist them to ease their minds to find their work easy and enjoyable.

3.3.6.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

A circumcision rite is characterized by taboos and beliefs that are depicted in the actions of participants through various rituals. Initiation songs are used as a carriage that embodies relevant messages. The structure of most initiation songs entails various forms of short solo-response phrases. The language used is often metaphorical. A metaphor has hidden meaning, which has to be interpreted by the

targeted listeners. Some musicians use song texts with hidden meanings to convey special messages to mature members of the audience, but at the same time hide the meaning(s) from young members of audience (Merriam 1964:193). The reiterative nature of *Pedi* initiation songs serves the purpose of emphasizing the messages.

In general, therefore, the performance of *Pedi* initiation songs incorporates several aspects of artistic-aesthetic communication such as song, dance and various visual and verbal arts that are integrated. While the *Pedi* initiation dances for girls are characterized by movements that represent the development of the child in the womb, the songs are characterized by a vocal style in which the women sing in unison (Levine 2005:156). They are plucking their lower lips with their fingers. Furthermore, paramusical features such as whistling, yelling and ululating express their joy and enhance the aesthetic-artistic feel during the performance.

3.3.6.3 Content and context

3.3.6.3.1 Introduction

Circumcision is a very important ceremony in the *Pedi* society. It is considered as one way of graduating from childhood to adulthood. In communities that participate in circumcision, anybody who avoids it or who is circumcised in hospital is looked down upon and rejected by the society (Akivaga and Odaga 1982:76). This behavior is against the cultural norms that direct and correct the behavior and life of the community (Nyang'oli 2000:39; Wanyama 2005:80). In most African societies, one has to go through the ritual of initiation at a certain age, in order to achieve manhood or womanhood. Until then, one is still

considered a child however old he or she may be (Nyang'oli 2000:39; Wanyama 2005:80).

Among the *Pedi* circumcision for boys is a sacred institution which is strictly taboo to women and the uncircumcised '*masoboro*' (Pitje 1948:72). Men are extremely reticent when asked questions about it. One who reveals the secrets of the school is punished in a way. The tuition received by the initiates is confidential. Respect and submission to authority are emphasized during the initiation ceremonies. Words of songs refer to rules and customs which have to be kept at all cost. Initiates must be humble and respectful to all. They have to use the special terms characteristic of the initiation school. There is nothing wrong with all the formalities as prescribed by the African traditions as long as they do not contradict the 'Word of God' (Mashau 2005:54).

The circumcision ritual in the *Pedi* society was traditionally a test of maturity and preceded marriage. It took place between the ages of 18 to 24 or even higher. Today, it is no longer a test of maturity and does not necessarily precede marriage. It is at risk of losing its religious value and becomes gradually secularized as the focus rests more on the physical than the social functions of the ritual. Today most initiates are circumcised at the age of ten to sixteen.

Circumcision of girls is rarely discussed in depth. Where there is commentary it is consistently within the context of marriage (Floyd 2000:92). Circumcision takes place as a necessary preparation for marriage, because an uncircumcised girl cannot give birth (Mitzlaff 1998:82).

Many poems and songs in the *Pedi* tribe are associated with animals and birds. Effective teaching in poems and songs is realized by employing imagery of birds and animals. The following initiation songs for boys and girls are illustrations of this feature.

3.3.6.3.2 Text and translation

INITIATION SONG FOR BOYS: *MOKGORONYANE*

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Hela ... Hela!	1. Hallo ... Hallo!
2. Mokoronyane swaiswai,	2. Mokgoronyane is passing by,
3. Wa Mmaseakapilwanabotsha.	3. My mother's child.
4. Molongwana moswana.	4. With black lips.
5. ka morago ga kgoro tsa botsha.	5. Have a look at the back of the kraal.
6. Maswikana maswikeng.	6. On the stones.
7. meetse re ya go nwa neng?	7. Shall we be able to drink water?
8. Re yo nwa selalelo,	8. We shall enjoy an evening drink,
9. bjalo ka mosadi wa mesereteletsane.	9. Like a woman who is ignorant.
10. Sereteletsa boroko.	10. Who likes sleeping.
11. A re go go bona ba gagwe ba robala,	11. As she sees her children sleeping,
12. A re rekereke boroko.	12. She becomes excited because she can also sleep.

Recorded by the author at *Ga-Maloma* village, *Sekhukhune* area in *Limpopo* Province in April 2004 during the unveiling of the tombstone of *Lehumo Mmotla* (Father to *Matshekge* *Christinah Molangwana*). Refer to track 6, Audio CD.

"*Mokgoronyane*" is an initiation song for boys. "*Mokgoronyane*" is the name of a bird. *Pedi* people are under the conviction that the bird "*Mokgoronyane*" is one the most clever birds they know. (Mahlomola Majatladi Personal communication, 9 April 2004). The "*Mokgoronyane*" is the first to wake up early in the morning. She daily looks for food for her children. Before all birds wake up,

"*Mokgoronyane*" would be back with food. This song is associated with this clever bird "*Mokgoronyane*."

This Wisdom Song falls into six clearly defined sections: a) plea for a hearing (line 1); b) advice (line 2); c) appreciation (lines 3-4); d) advice (lines 5-6); e) belief (lines 7-8); and f) warning (lines 9-12).

Within this short song, we identify eleven successive metaphors than can be interpreted in different ways. To enable readers to make meaning from them, I have translated them interpretively. But for this discourse I give a kind of transliteration to enable readers to comprehend how these metaphors function.

The first metaphor in this song (line 2) translates well. The bird called *Mokgoronyane* is passing by. It means that the subjects, the initiates (boys), should imitate this clever bird, by waking up early, to look for food for their children daily when they are later heads of their families. In the second and third metaphors (lines 3-4) which read 'my mother's child' and 'with black lips', the literal meaning could be misleading. What could be misleading is that '*mother's child has black lips*'. The interpretation of the second and third metaphors is that initiates are handsome and beautiful.

The song presents other two metaphors namely 'have a look at the back of the kraal and on the stones' (lines 5-6). In most cases the initiation regiments are erected at the back of the royal kraal and is surrounded by stones. The metaphors 'have a look at the back of the kraal and on the stones' (lines 5-6) imply that in future if initiates might have social problems, they should not hesitate to come back to

the regiment's elders for advices. In this context the singers suggest that any grown member of the society who practices evil or imbibes very bad habits that have ill implications on him and the society, and fails to take counsel from the performances of *Pedi* initiation songs such as '*Mokgoronyane*', would certainly live to regret in the end.

The singers make use of two other metaphors in lines 7 and 8. They develop the theme in such a way that only those who can interpret them could comprehend the message completely. The sixth and seventh metaphors 'shall we able to drink water and we shall enjoy an evening drink' strengthen the belief of the *Pedi* people, that if one is in the forest and thirsty and does not know where to get water, you can just follow the clever bird '*Mokgoronyane*'. Then you will definitely get water. The belief is that the bird takes water very often. In this context it is expressed that initiates should take water very often. By so doing they shall not dehydrate.

The ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelve metaphors are a warning to the initiates that they should not behave like a woman who is ignorant (line 9), and likes sleeping (lines 10-12). Sleeping is time consuming and brings no reward. Hereby it is suggested that this song is taught to the initiates by their supervisors at the initiation school. It is initially sung by the initiates' supervisors and later on the initiates are afforded the opportunity to sing the song too. There is much wisdom in the above song. *Mokgoronyane* provides enlightenment to the initiates concerning accountability and responsibility. The enlightenment is significant in the society because very often, it is parents who suffer the blame and consequent attacks from their children and wards,

especially when the children are not successful in life. The following is an initiation song for girls.

3.3.6.3.3 Text and translation

INITIATION SONG FOR GIRLS: *KGOGEDI*

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Kgogedi, Kgogedi.	1. Kgogedi, Kgogedi.
2. Ngwananoka Kgogedi.	2. River's child Kgogedi.
3. Ke ya le noka, Kgogedi.	3. I am flown by the river, Kgogedi.
4. Kgogedi ya Kwena Madiba.	4. Kgogedi who belongs to crocodile's lakes.
5. Ngwananoka Kgogedi,	5. River's child Kgogedi,
6. mme ntshware ke a ya.	6. my mother, please hold me, I am sinking.
7. Ke ya le noka, Kgogedi.	7. I am flown by the river, Kgogedi.
8. Kgogedi ya kwena le kubu,	8. Kgogedi of crocodiles,
9. Ngwananoka kgogedi.	9. River's child, Kgogedi.
10. sekwakwalala ngwananoka.	10. sekwakwalala, river's child.
11. Ngwananoka ke kgalegile.	11. River's child, I am thirsty.
12. Ke hloka le mogedi wa meets.	12. I am in need of someone who can fetch me water.
13. Ngwananoka ke kgakegile.	13. River's child, I am thirsty.
14. Sekwakwalala ngwananoka.	14. Sekwakwalala, river's child.
15. ngwananoka ke kgalegile.	15. river's child, I am thirsty.

Recorded by the author at *Ga-Maloma* village, *Sekhukhune* area in *Limpopo* Province in April 2004 during the unveiling of the tombstone of *Lehumo Mmotla* (Father to *Matshekge Molangwana* Christinah). Refer to track 7, Audio CD.

Synthetic philosophy is the original and traditional method by which human beings reach the knowledge of truth through reasoning, often referred to as rationalism (Ajah 2004:16). With some past experiences and synthetic approach, the older generations have passed down some values on the meaning of names in the *Pedi* culture like in most other cultures. *Pedi* people then follow and apply this synthetic philosophy in ascertaining truth about the meaning of names as they manifest in the lives of people in the society.

"*Kgogedi*" is an initiation song for girls. "*Kgooga*" is the name of a small, beautiful and slow moving animal which looks like a tortoise. The song "*Kgogedi*" is associated with this slow moving animal called "*Kgooga*." Therefore the tempo of the song "*Kgogedi*" is slow. Most ritual dances that are not intended for a trance are slow in tempo. They have the solemn mood of the contexts of the performance (Bakare and Mans 2003:223).

The initiation song *Kgogedi* can be divided as follows: a) It begins with an advice and enlightenment on co-operation and mutual relationship (lines 1-3 and 5-7); b) signal of appreciation (line 4); c) praise (lines 8-10) and d) request (lines 11-15).

In '*Kgogedi*' the poet depicts the small and slow moving animal called '*Kgooga*'. The term has two primary classes as follows. The poet addresses name of the song as well as the name of the character (line 1). The song was originally composed to educate and enlighten initiates about their behavior. Lines 2 and 3 present metaphors '*river's child Kgogedi*' and '*I am flown by the river Kgogedi*'. While the one implies that *Kgogedi* likes taking a bath and she is always clean the other literally means the poet is in a dire need for the person called *Kgogedi* to rescue her as she is flown by the river. The intention of the poet is to educate initiates that they should love and take care of one another.

The expression '*Kgogedi ya Kwena Madiba*' (line 4) indicates that *Kgogedi* is always clean. '*Kgogedi*' is associated with the crocodile which is always in the water. The expression suggests a signal of appreciation. In this context, the poet inspires the initiates to take a

bath as often as possible to be clean and beautiful like *Kgogedi*. The metaphors in lines 5-7 suggest a similar meaning as in lines 2-3. They imply that the poet is flown by the river and intend to remind initiates to love and care for one another.

The meaning of metaphors in lines 8-10 is clear. With repetitive praise they express that '*Kgogedi*' looks after herself and she is beautiful. With the expression 'river's child *Kgogedi*' the song reminds initiates to look after themselves to be as beautiful as '*Kgogedi*' or as the slow moving and beautiful animal called '*Kgooga*'.

The last four metaphors (lines 11-15) utter that the poet is thirsty. Initiates should go to the river to fetch water. Utterances in lines 11, 13 and 15 are forms of expression in the *Pedi* culture especially when one is thirsty. Lines 12 and 14 convey the same meaning. Repetition is clearly present in the structure of this song. It is evident in lines 2, 5 and 9 '*ngwana noka Kgogedi*' and lines 11, 13 and 15 '*ngwana noka ke kgalegile*'. There are two dominant ideas in the above song, namely, '*ngwana noka Kgogedi*' and '*ngwana noka ke kgalegile*'. The repetition technique is a clear emphasis of the central message of the song. Joshua Uzoigwe (1998:20) examines the use of repetition in song texts and writes as follows:

As repetition of musical phrase is one of the most important compositional features in *ilulu nkwa*, it often serves as a useful means by which the soloist emphasizes and projects to the listening audience the principal idea or ideas of the particular song. Thus, in *ilulu nkwa* song-performance it is the phrasal idea

or group of ideas with the greatest number of occurrence that usually constitutes as the main theme.

Burton and Chacksfield (1979:115-116) similarly write that repetition is a powerful, forceful, rhetorical and expressive device skillfully employed by poets to hammer key words home, in order to implant dominant emotions in listeners or readers' mind. In *Pedi* songs, repetitions often appear in forms of chorus refrain or a frequent return of the narration to the principal idea at strategic intervals (see the song *Kgogedi*, page 158).

Most *Pedi* themes are educative either by use of direct statements or by use of idioms, epigrammatise, metaphors and proverbs that are poetically structured to stimulate further reasoning and realization of meaning through deduction. The theme of the song, '*ngwana noka Kgogedi*' for instance, is metaphorically educative. It implies that initiates should take a bath as often as possible. The song has didactic significance. Similarly, the female initiates are taught different formulas that are intended to prepare them for womanhood. Most of these formulas are presented as songs, such as *Kgogedi*. Some of them are intended to be self-consoling in view of the hardships the initiates endure everyday (Sekhukhune 1988:186).

The song is sung during and after the girls have been circumcised. While singing the girls are ill-treated by their supervisors in different ways. For example, they administer corporal punishment on them, curse them, make them to work hard without rest or intervals, etc (Sekhukhune 1988:186). They are deliberately doing these unacceptable deeds to the initiates to show them that to become a

responsible adult is not an easy task. A girl will go through difficult experiences. Formal education is given to the girls in the initiation schools. This education plays a very important part in the life of every individual (Krige 1937:99).

3.3.6.4 Function

Initiation for boys in the *Pedi* culture is divided into two distinct ceremonies: *bodika* and *bogwera*. The aim of *bodika* ceremony is to put to the test the initiates' strength, courage and endurance through various devices. The second initiation (*bogwera*) usually takes place after a year has lapsed since the first school. Its chief function is to help the initiated boys create lasting friendships with one another. Once again, the boys enter a lodge, but they are not completely separated from the rest of the community. During the day they receive further training in the initiation formulae. The second ceremony, *bogwera* ('friendship'), reinforces the bonds that were forged between the boys and the first school (Levine 2005:151-152).

Initiation for girls in the *Pedi* culture has two phases. During the first phase the daily activities of the female initiates follow a set routine. In the mornings, after they have washed in the river and eaten breakfast, they form a single, S-shaped line, and perform a dance-song with slow movements. They have formal training sessions during which the older girls teach them the extensive repertoire of initiation songs. They learn the school's formulae, chanting the short phrases over and over as well as using mime to learn the behaviour that is expected of them as women. And the duties that they will be obliged to perform as adults (Levine 2005:156-157). During the second phase of the initiation school, the girls are located at the head-kraal. The most important

activity throughout this period is the singing that takes place in the enclosure every morning and evening. In between, the girls work in the chief's fields, or are hired out to work elsewhere. Towards the end of the initiation, role-play and disguise are an important feature in their activities. In the evenings, mini-dramas are performed as a method of instruction. Disguised figures wearing reeds and leaves sing and dance for them, using symbolic gestures (Levine 2005:157).

Through the singing of these wisdom songs, in the *Pedi* culture the aim of initiation school is to *preserve the Pedi cultural heritage*. Other aims are to *inspire the initiates to be respectful* as well as to *reduce crime and divorce* rates. One of the main objectives of the *Pedi* initiation school is to train the boys in *courage and endurance* (Krige 1937:101). Boys have to sleep on their backs on the bare ground without covering, and are severely punished if unable to repeat the formulae and songs that are great features of the *Pedi* tradition. Boys receive a *good training in hunting*.

The function of an initiation school is *to test who has perseverance and who has not*. At times the initiates both girls and boys are made to suffer from hunger and thirst. They are compelled to spend few days without food. In traditional life, initiation was a long process involving the whole community and lasting at least several weeks. Initiation is an integral part of the life of the community. The youth of a particular age group would be initiated into adulthood together (Mugambi 2005:532).

Pedi Wisdom Songs contain a lot of wisdom in as far as virtues related to ideal humanistic creativity, sensibilities and meanings are

concerned. They therefore, embody the African philosophy of life, achievement and identity. A lot of ideas may be borrowed from virtues/lessons and philosophies embedded in the cultural practices. Music, therefore, being held high among the African societies plays a role of training and preparing the individuals to understand their societies and themselves better for the survival of the human race (Orawo 1998:142).

The function of the song "*Mokgoronyane*" is to make the initiates aware that sleeping is time consuming and brings no reward. Every evening most families in the *Pedi* tribe meet as family members of the same household to share good and bad news of that day. They then convey teaching to their children by means of wisdom sayings. The song also functions to alert the initiates of how precious time is.

The small and slow moving animal called "*Kgooga*" can be described as well behaved, beautiful, and as fond of water and honey. By singing this song the initiates' supervisors are urging the girls (initiates) to behave like "*Kgooga*". They should 1) sit properly and not expose their private parts; 2) take a bath very often to look beautiful like this animal and to avoid the bad smell; 3) look after their husbands by cooking them delicious food; 4) be friendly to other people like this animal; 5) respect their husbands and whenever the husbands are angry should be humble to calm down the situation; 6) walk slowly as that will make them secure their reputation.

The *Pedi* people believe that a woman, who walks at a fast pace, does not deserve respect. She is also associated with prostitution. The song is about teaching the initiates to look like "*Kgooga*". *Kgooga's* body is

covered with hard skin, which is not easy to break. When it sleeps, the head is also hidden, covered by this hard skin. With this song, the girls are advised to cover their whole bodies like "Kgooga" and not to be half-naked. This would result in people respecting them, especially their husbands and children.

3.3.7 Prayers of Trust (*Salane*)

3.3.7.1 Form

Both men and women in the *Pedi* society engage in prayers of trust. Nevertheless most of the *dingaka* 'traditional healers' found in the *Pedi* society are women. These *dingaka* attend to sick people through singing, and asking for the healing power from the ancestors. It is through these songs that *dingaka* 'traditional healers' have special powers to identify the source(s) of misfortunes, diseases and other negative things afflicting an individual. Singing, hand clapping, drumming and dancing are part of the prayers of trust.

Pedi traditional healers normally use drums during religious rituals since they regard them to be therapeutic. Dancing is only performed by traditional healers. The rest of the people who are present at the *malopo* ritual clap, sing and respond to what a *ngaka* 'traditional healer' is saying. *Pedi* traditional healers sing about their ancestors and their own social history in their prayers of trust. *Pedi* traditional healers confess their trust and confidence in ancestors by employing songs such as *Salane*. *Salane* is a song of trust which is sung during a ritual called the *malopo* ritual. *Malopo* is an illness, which can only be terminated by a rite called the *malopo ritual*, accompanied by the *ngaka ya malopo* (Olivier 1985:2).

3.3.7.2 Text and translation

SONG OF TRUST: SALANE

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Re a tloga.	1. We are leaving.
2. Re boela gae.	2. We go back home.
3. Re ile go hwetsa bo makgolo.	3. We are going to join our forefathers.
4. Re a rola,	4. We now put off our rattles,
5. re siela ba bangwe	5. We give chance to others to participate.
6. kosa bo makgolo.	6. Our forefathers' dance.
7. Re tsoga ka yona.	7. We make use of it every morning.
8. mohla lehu laka,	8. during my funeral,
9. hleng le mpolokeng.	9. Please bury me.
10. le mphelegetseng ka yona.	10. Please employ this song to accompany me to my grave.
11. A retse, re bina malopo.	11. We are dancing the malopo dance.
12. Re bina kosa ya bo nkoko.	12. We are dancing our forefathers' dance.
13. Re ya go nyaka mabitla.	13. We are going to seek for our forefathers' graves.
14. Re ile go tsea Legwame, mokgalabje mohlabana ntwana.	14. We shall take Legwame, the forefather, who is a hero.
15. Badimo ba gona,	15. Our ancestors are in existence,
16. re bone ka rena.	16. We are witnesses.
17. Re gopola modimo wa rena ngwato.	17. This reminds us of Ngwato, our ancestor.
18. Ngwato, modimo wa go tsosa rena.	18. Ngwato, the ancestor who rescued our life.
19. Bana besu ba ile.	19. Our brothers and sisters have passed away.
20. molapo moswana, ba tshaba ntlhwela kosa malopo le go epa digwere.	20. They defied the ancestors' instructions and did not want to dance the malopo dance and dig medicines.
21. Re gopola Ngwato,	21. We are thinking of Ngwato,
22. se apara nkwe le magoshi.	22. Who is always in the leopard's skin like the chiefs.
23. se apara nkwe masasane lerolane.	23. The one who is clad with the leopard skin.
24. Re tshaba go lwa le badimo.	24. We are not prepared to fight with our ancestors.
25. Letsatsi hlaba o re namolele.	25. The sun, please rise to relieve us.
26. Salang gabotse bo mmane baka.	26. Bye ... bye ... my dear grandmothers.
27. Salang gabotse bo makgolo.	27. Bye ... bye ... my forefathers.

28. Re tshaba go nyatsa dingaka.	28. We are not prepared to undermine traditional healers.
29. Modimo ke mpa, ke mmopa batho.	29. God is the comforter; He is the Creator of all people.
30. Re ya thapelong re tshaba go lwa le Modimo, AMEN.	30. We are going to pray because we do not want to fight with God, AMEN.

The song was recorded by the author at a *malopo* ritual held at *Dingwane* village, *Sekhukhune* area-Limpopo Province in May 2003 (Refer to track 8, Audio CD).

3.3.7.3 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Pedi songs of trust are sophisticated and complex in structure. The degree of complexity in the *Pedi* Psalm-like songs, as in primitive music generally, is limited. The songs have to be remembered without recourse to mnemonic devices, such as musical notation.

The structural content of the *Pedi* songs of trust may be traced to *Pedi* origin, with their call-and-response patterning, voice and drum instrumentation, cyclephonic texture, reiterative statements, and integral association with dance. Allen (1993:4) writes the following on the cyclical structure in a South African urban popular music typology known as *Kwela*, a good justification of African identity for which Africans must be unblushing, but be proud of this character: "The repetitive nature of *Kwela*, so complained of elite critics, results from the styles cyclical structure". These elements are broadly termed "*African*". *Pedi* songs of trust are frequently responsorial. A soloist or small group is leading, while a larger group, responds. To activate or set any song rhythm in action *Pedi* traditional healers would commence with the beat of the drum or the clapping of hands. In almost all *Pedi* songs of trust there is a dominant feature of repetition.

Arom (1991:17) argues while discussing formal musical structures as follows:

All musical pieces are characterized by cyclic structure that generates numerous improvised variations: repetition and variation are of the most fundamental principles of all central African music, as indeed of many other musics in Black Africa.

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. Manoff (1982:87) aptly remarked: "There are indeed musics which find in repetition or variation and consequently in non-development, their very accomplishment" (Rouget 1956:133).

During ceremonial and ritual occasions music making similarly goes hand in hand with set sequences of symbolic actions. These actions are performed with or without props by specified people⁵². These dramatic actions take place in the presence of participants and spectators. Rituals in which possession is considered to occur, where the spirits are active participants, are characterized by noise, by jumping, and by "dancing like crazy" (Howard 2000:62).

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

⁵² These dramatic actions take place in the presence of some participants or spectators. Expressive forms of culture such as music and dance create, maintain, transmit and emphasize people's cultural identity.

implies dancing and dancing implies speaking. All these actions become part of the religious experience. One of the most important aspects of the social content of music is that the community at large has ample opportunity to participate in music making (Euba 1982:232).

3.3.7.4 Content and context

In the *Pedi* tradition, *Salane* is commonly designated a song of trust, though the tone of the language suggests a more appropriate description as a prayer of confidence. The song is employed in communal ancestor veneration. The lines alternate between prayer, confession and expressions of the singer's confidence in ancestors.

The song *Salane* can be divided into the following elements: The song begins with a) the intention to trust in the ancestors (lines 1-7); b) request for a dignified funeral (lines 8-10); c) testimony and confession (lines 11-16); d) trust, confidence in ancestors' goodness and warning (lines 17-24); e) prayer and expressions of the singers' confidence in the ancestors (lines 25-27); f) confession (line 28); and g) the song closes with trust in God (lines 29-30).

In lines 1-7 the singers begin with the intention to trust in the ancestors, which has its grounds in the succeeding extended narrative. In lines 1-2 the singers (traditional healers) declare that they are leaving the ritual place to go back to their respective homes. The expression "We are going to join our forefathers" (line 3) confirms how the *Pedi* society has ways of establishing and maintaining contact between the living and the living dead. The means of contact include

the pouring of libation of beer, giving formal and informal offerings (mainly food), making sacrifices, propitiating and fulfilling requests made by the ancestors. In some societies this is done daily, but most Pedi people do it less often. Such offerings are given to the oldest member of the departed, who may still be a living-dead, or may be remembered only in genealogies. This is done with the understanding that he/she will share the food or beverage with the other spirits of the family group. Words may or may not accompany such offerings, in form of prayers, invocations or instructions to the departed (Mbiti 1975:82). Graves⁵³ of powerful ancestors, especially of chiefs, become places of worship where meat and beer are offered to the spirits (Schapera 1937:255). The singers use the personal possessive pronoun 'We' to imply that the song *Salane* is a communal narrative song for ancestor veneration.

The expressions 'we now put off our rattles' (line 4) and 'we give chance to others to participate' (line 5) imply how the *Pedi* traditional healers employ drumming and songs to please and invite their ancestors. In line 6 the singers use the expression 'our forefathers dance' to refer to the *malopo* dance. The dead are never dead. Songs have always played a key role in the conversation between the living and the ancestors in Africa. The ancestors provide guidance and spiritual healing to those on earth in ceremonies where participation in the singing of songs help to open the channels of communication (Eyre and Barlow 1995: viii). The expression 'we make use of it every morning' (line 7) refers to the *malopo* dance and implies that, for the *Pedi* traditional healers the *malopo* dance is a popular therapy for the

⁵³ Schapera (1937:255) indicates that the *Sotho* consider the grave to be the proper place for most sacrificial rites, but many of the other tribes have additional altars and do not visit the graves of the deceased frequently. *Salane* is one of the songs of trust sung in the *Pedi* culture during the performance of the above-named activities.

so-called *malopo* illness. The *malopo* dance is a significant adjustment reaction before and after illness and stress, not only of individuals in the *Pedi* society, but also throughout the African continent. Buhrmann (1984:62) testify to the therapeutic quality of Xhosa divination music. He refers to the exhilarating and stimulating effects of participation in *intlombe*⁵⁴. Singing and dancing are very important 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 the body and mind, and others that they have been rejuvenated" (Buhrmann 1984:62). This kind of dance is a powerful means to restore and strengthen the contact between the living and the living dead with reality. This is evident in line 7. That is why the singers of lines 8-10 request the audience that during their funerals, they shall appreciate if the audience could sing the song *Salane* to accompany the singers to their graves.

The significance of the song *Salane* as a song of trust is once more realized in lines 8-10 'during my funeral' and 'please employ this song to accompany me to the grave'. The expressions in lines 8-10 suggest that singers have trust in their ancestors. They believe that, if they are accompanied to their graves with the song *Salane*, God and the ancestors shall welcome them in heaven.

Lines 11-16 exhibit confession and testimony. The singers confess that they are dancing the *malopo* dance, their forefathers' dance in lines 11-12. Repetition of these short phrases like those in lines 11-12 is a common feature in the *Pedi* culture. Repetition simply means that there is no limit to the length of a song. The length depends solely on

⁵⁴ *Intlombe* refers to Xhosa divination music.

the energy of the performer. The expression 'we are going to seek for our forefathers' graves' (line 13) implies that the mission of the traditional healers is to venerate their ancestors because of the trust for protection they have in them (ancestors).

Besides veneration the expression 'we shall take *Legwame*, the forefather, who is a hero' (line 14) the traditional healers also express their mission of bringing home their forefather. The singers' trust and confidence in their ancestors are again shown in this statement. There are various reasons which can influence the traditional healers to bring home the spirit of the deceased who is buried far away from home. For instance, the ancestor might be harassing the offspring for abandoning him/her. The family does not remember, honour, respect and love the ancestor anymore. Seeking the forefathers' graves in the *Pedi* tradition is a signal of trust and confidence that the traditional healers have in ancestors. The expressions 'we are going to seek for our forefathers' graves' (line 13) and 'we shall take *Legwame*, the forefather, who is a hero' (line 14) imply that the traditional healers have hope that after visiting their forefathers and taking their ancestor *Legwame*, their lifestyle may improve. By the expressions 'our ancestors are in existence' (line 15) and 'we are witnesses' (line 16) the singers give testimony to the audience of how protective, powerful and helpful the ancestors are. The singers witness what their ancestors have done for them. The expressions are a testimony but also serve as a warning to the audience that they should not abandon their ancestors. The personal possessive pronoun "our" witnesses a vital, intimate submission by the traditional healers.

In 17-24 the singers express their trust and confidence in ancestors' goodness. The tone of the singers in lines 17, 18, 21, 22 and 23 suggests that ancestor *Ngwato* has played a prominent role in the lives of the singers. They express their sincere thanks to ancestor *Ngwato* who has rescued their lives. The singers recall that they were in danger of death. The expression '*Ngwato*, the ancestor who rescued our life' (line 18) suggests that the singers have full confidence and trust in their ancestors, *Ngwato* in particular, because they are the witnesses of how protective, powerful and helpful their ancestors are. Simultaneously the singers warn the audience about their brothers and sisters who have died as the consequence of defying ancestors' instructions (lines 19-20). The message is that ancestors are worth venerated. They deserve honour, respect and love by their offspring. The expression 'we are not prepared to fight with our ancestors' (line 24) implies that the singers are respectful and they love, remember, respect and trust their ancestors.

Prayer 'the sun, please rise to relieve us' and expressions of the singers' confidence in the ancestors 'bye-bye my grandmothers and grandfathers' are expressed in lines 25-27. As the *malopo* ritual takes place a whole night long, the expression 'the sun, please rise to relieve us' (line 25) literally means that the singers are tired of singing and dancing and would like to disperse to their respective homes to have a rest. In this context the singers use the expressions 'bye-bye grandmothers and grandfathers' (lines 26-27) to bid the ancestors of the visited family where the ritual was held good-bye as they (traditional healers) are dispersing to their respective homes. Simultaneously, the expression implies that the singers plead with the ancestors for safety and protection on their way back home.

Because of the trust the singers have in their traditional healers, they confess their trust and confidence in the traditional healers in 'we are not prepared to undermine traditional healers' (line 28). The expression signals the full confidence the singers have in the traditional healers.

The singers of *Salane* employed the figure of speech in lines 29-30. The figurative expression 'God is the comforter, He is the Creator of all people' (line 29) means that the singers have resolved to follow and trust the God of their forefathers who they believe is capable of giving them safety and protection. This is the climax and the heart of the song *Salane*. The song *Salane* is in itself not a complete song without an appeal to God through the ancestors for safety and protection. The conclusion in line 30 takes up words and ideas of the introduction, but adds here "AMEN". The song closes with an aspect of trust in God by the singers 'we are going to pray because we do not want to fight with God, Amen' (line 30). Thus the whole song is an expression of trust in God through the ancestors and traditional healers.

3.3.7.5 Function

Not all the *malopo* songs have the same ritual value. During the *malopo* ritual a song like *Salane* is regarded as one of the most important vehicles *to summon the ancestors to draw closer* to the *Pedi* people especially when problems seem difficult to surmount. Other songs can be sung but in the *Pedi* mind *Salane* guarantees that ancestors will respond positively.

Salane is mostly sung when a traditional healer-to-be has met all the requirements of becoming a traditional healer. It may happen that, when a traditional healer-to-be is in the midst of dancing, one may hear this person singing *Salane*. This is an indication that his/her ancestors are on the verge of a diagnosis or that ancestors intend to make revelations through this person. If the ancestors want to reveal some problems, one will see the traditional healer-to-be occasionally falls down.

Salane is recited when problems are encountered by traditional healers with regard to divination bones⁵⁵. For example, when the traditional healer is unable to interpret divination bones, the song would serve to summon the ancestors to assist the traditional healer to interpret the divination bones. When the traditional healer heals the patient, and the patient does not recover, *Salane* is sung as a signal of trust that ancestors will effect a speedy recovery. *Salane* can be recited during the first step (*go tielwa*) of the *malopo* rite when the traditional healer-to-be does not fall down on the ground and disclose what the personal ancestor demands from his patient. Then the song specifically summons all the ancestors to assist the traditional healer to enable him/her to prescribe appropriate medicine for the patient.

⁵⁵ Quite often, in the *Pedi* tribe, some special music, chanting and incantations are required in the conduct of divination and traditional healing. Music functions as a means of connecting with the spirits and sets the mood for the activities of the diviners. In some instances, it enables the transformation of the diviner into a state of trance in order to communicate with the spirits on behalf of the client. It also serves anaesthetic purposes in traditional healing by soothing the psyche of the patient when he or she is undergoing painful treatment. Some traditional musical instruments such as the *dithlwathlwadi* (rattles), *meropa* (drums), *mekuduetane* (steel pipes) or *leparapata* (African horn) are used for accompaniment. The specialized music types are composed or extemporized by the healer or diviner in the conduct of the vocation.

Salane warns the traditional healers *to take care and to look after themselves*. When people had been trained as traditional healers and they have met all the requirements of this profession, 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. The *Pedi* people believe that disease, death, and other misfortunes are caused by the work of witches and sorcerers. And this is influenced by jealousy.

When a religious ritual is finished, i.e. when participants disperse to their respective homes, *Salane* is sung while they go home. By singing *Salane* the singers *invite their ancestors to protect everyone* who attended the ritual on their way back home.

By singing *Salane* *Pedi* traditional healers of the *Sekhukhune* area show trust in their ancestors, namely that they shall come to their rescue. "We" shows that *Salane* is a communal narrative song. Traditional healers have trust in their ancestors because they witness how helpful their ancestors are. Thus the whole song is an expression of trust in God through the ancestors.

This *malopo* ritual has two important dimensions, which relate to the ritual's content and function: firstly, what the ritual says and secondly, what it does. Rituals have various functions. Kaemmer (1993:150) agrees that curing rituals are used as a form of medicine, but the view of most observers is that these rituals are functioning to relieve anxiety. In Africa rituals are performed to cure illness, to increase fertility, to defeat enemies, to change people's social status, to remove impurity, or to reveal the future (Parrinder 1976:27; Ray 1976:78).

These rituals contribute for example to how and why men communicate with the ancestors, to expel illness and to settle moral conflicts (Ray 1976:78). Schapera (1937:254) explains the relationship⁵⁶ between ancestors and their descendants, and notes that ancestor spirits have power to protect and to help their descendants. These spirits can also punish their descendants.

3.3.8 Imprecation Songs (*Leepo*)

3.3.8.1. Form

Imprecation in the *Pedi* culture is used with regard to alcohol, abuse, prostitution, etc. Apart from being an expression of disappointment, imprecation provides advisory information to the subject to improve on his/her living habits (Idamoyibo 2005:141). In African societies, narratives in imprecatory songs can be classified broadly into three, segmental narrative; incremental cycle and multiple recycle forms. The segmental narratives may have four sections, namely: introduction, development, recapitulation and coda or conclusion (Idamoyibo 2005:33).

In the segmental narrative themes are lyrically developed to enact a story. The story is built into segments that assume different forms. Each segment often introduces a new idea, though it might be related to the former part. The new sub-section could start with a solo statement and move to chorus, to conclude with strict antiphony.

⁵⁶ Schapera (1937:254) does point out, however, that continued good fortune is attributed to ancestors' benevolence, while calamity may result from neglecting the ancestors.

The song 'Leepo' is an example of this form. Section A (lines 1-4) forms the introduction of the narrative. The soloist presents textual-melodic statements to firmly establish the theme of the narrative. Section B (lines 5-8) illustrates segments of the narrative development. Within this section (lines 5-8) we find recycling of the rhythmic and melodic themes recurring with variations as new lyrics are continually being introduced. In this section the poet expresses confidence in her traditional healer. Section C (line 9) has aspects of persona, lament and despair. Section D (lines 10-21) has the highest form of recycling where the poet sets different poetic lines to the same thematic idea. This section reflects strong irony. Section E (lines 20-21) marks the conclusion of the narrative, presented in a recycled solo and chorus responsorial style. The next imprecation song reflects strong irony about people who undermine traditional healers as well as their ancestors.

3.3.8.2 Text and translation

SONG WITH IRONY: LEEPO

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Koloji ya papa sele e etla, e tšile go ntsea.	1. My father's car is coming to take me.
2. Koloji ya papa e na le motono,	2. My father's car has a big boot,
3. e bile e ya mmakatsa,	3. It is surprising to see,
4. e gana go tšuma mabone.	4. It cannot switch on its lights.
5. Badimo ba nteile.	5. The ancestors have punished me.
6. Ke ile go botsa mmame, Mmatshatshaila seapara tšhwene.	6. I will report to my aunt, Mmatshatshaila, who is clad in baboon skin.
7. Ke ra wena maphutha ditšhaba.	7. I am referring to you, the nation's comforter.
8. O tla sia mang ge o phutha ditšhaba?	8. Whom shall you leave out in your mission of comforting the nations?
9. Ke motlokwa ke ngwana madimabe.	9. I am the Tlokwa, the bad omen child.



10. Tlogelang manyatsa dingaka,	10. Ignore those who are undermining traditional healers,
11. a hleng ba tlo sala ba e hwa.	11. They shall die.
12. Etlang le bone ngaka tsa go tsosa nna, kgole mabitleng.	12. Come and see traditional healers who raised me from the grave.
13. Lesaba la gesu le ile,	13. My friends and relatives are gone (dead),
14. ka go nyatsa mangaka.	14. Because of undermining traditional healers.
15. Ba ile masabasaba.	15. They are gone.
16. Lesaba la gesu le tshabetse tumelong.	16. Most of the people have gone to the missionary and indigenous churches.
17. Le tshaba go epa digwere.	17. They are scared of digging out medicines.
18. A hleng ba tshaba go ba disuputsane,	18. They do not want to be dirty,
19. dikolobe diepa digwere.	19. just like pigs as they dig out the roots.
20. Ba leswa ke go bea meeta hlogong.	20. They are fond of putting their pots on their heads. (solo)
21. Ba ile, ba tshaba go rapela mabitla.	21. They are dead, because they are scared of venerating their ancestors.

The song was recorded by the author on a field trip at *malopo* ritual held at *Dingwane* village, *Sekhukhune* area-Limpopo Province in May 2003 (Refer to track 9, Audio CD). Lines 1-20 (Solo) and line 21 (Chorus).

3.3.8.3 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Leepo is an imprecation song reflecting strong irony. This is a characteristic of all kinds of imprecatory songs in the *Pedi* culture. *Leepo* is sung in irony about the people who do not love, remember, respect and honour their ancestors. Major characteristics found in this song are pun (lines 1-4), confidence (lines 5-8), persona, lament and despair (line 9), irony (lines 10-21), recycled solo and chorus responsorial style (lines 20 and 21).

In singing imprecatory songs *Pedi* singers do not conceive their poetic lines in writing, but follow the grammatical structure of the *Pedi*

language to ensure that the lyrics of their songs make poetical and melodical meaning.

3.3.8.4 Content and context

The imprecation song *Leepo* can be divided as follows: It begins with a) introduction of the narrative (lines 1-4); b) confidence in the traditional healer '*Mmatshatshaila*' (lines 5-8); d) lament and despair: development of the narrative (line 9); e) irony: different poetic lines to the same thematic idea (lines 10-21); f) conclusion of the narrative, presented in a recycled solo and chorus responsorial style (lines 20-21).

Leepo is a poem in a narrative form. The poet is a woman. Pun is a figure that is used to express double meaning. In line 1 we find an expression 'my father's car is coming to take me'. This expression would normally be understood that the car is coming to fetch the poet. The second meaning suggests that the car which was supposed to come and fetch the poet could not come, assuming that it was night and the car could not switch on its lights (lines 3 and 4). In this context the poet implies that the traditional healer '*Mmatshatshaila*' is coming to rescue her from her failures and sufferings. The poet associates '*koloi*' ('car') in lines 1 and 2 with the traditional healer '*Mmatshatshaila*' and '*papa*' ('father'), her personal ancestor. This means that the traditional healer of my ancestor is coming to rescue me. In line 5 the poet discloses her problem to the audience, saying '*badimo ba nteile*' ('The ancestors have punished me').

In lines 5-8 the poet uses an ironical figure to suggest that her aunt 'Mmatshatshaila' is a powerful and helpful traditional healer. She expresses this (line 6) by saying 'seapara tshwene' ('who is clad in a baboon skin'). In the *Pedi* society only powerful or senior traditional healers could be clad in baboon skin while dancing in a *malopo* ritual or during the divination process. It is believed that from all the animals the baboon is the most important and favourite animal for traditional healers to perform their divination and healing processes. As *Madikedike* Simon Sete explained (22 May 2004) that, even though other animals are important, the baboon is regarded as the most important because its physical features look the same as those of a human being. That is why traditional healers make use of many divination bones from the baboon. Other bones used by *Pedi* traditional healers for divination are from the dog, pig, jackal, cow, goat and sheep (Mahlase 1997:66-77).

The poet in this context however implies that she is suffering from ancestral spirits. This is the consequence of the punishment by the ancestors. Therefore she will report her problems to her aunt 'Mmatshatshaila' to plead with the ancestors on her behalf for a speedy recovery. The poet is convinced that 'Mmatshatshaila' would draw her closer to the ancestors for recovery: 'I am referring to you, the nation's comforter' (line 7). The tone of the poet in line 8 'whom shall you leave out in your mission of comforting the nations?' indicates how powerful, famous and helpful 'Mmatshatshaila' is in the *Pedi* society.

In lines 6-9, 12 the aspects of persona, lament and despair are important. Burton and Chacksfield (1979:9) define the term '*persona*'

as a useful term to describe a narrator or a character of whom a poem speaks in the first person. They argue that the *persona* is not the poet, but functions as a mask or disguise that the poet puts on for the purpose of enacting a poem in a narrative form. The *persona* is a common and prominent feature in *Pedi* psalm like-songs and poetry. It appears in the first person pronoun such as 'I and We'. *Pedi* singers (performers) use either of these *personas* to narrate events that took place, as if they are right at the scene of the incidents. In this way it looks real and more effective in the presentation.

In 'Leepo' the poet uses the *persona* to create various effects. She uses it in line 9 to portray the narrator as the victim and reporter of what happened between her and the ancestors. She continues the narrative with subtlety. In line 12 she uses the third person pronoun 'nna' ('me') to suggest and transform the character of the narrator from being the reporter to being the protagonist who is involved in the encounter. In an ironical manner the poet adopts the *persona* again in line 7 by the second person 'wena' ('you') to reinforce the latter role.

The poet presents the narrative in the guise of the *persona* that changes roles. The opening 'ke ra wena maphutha ditshaba' ('I am referring to you, the nation's comforter' in line 7) presents the narrator as an observer and reporter, but she is subsequently transformed to the protagonist (line 9) who was narrating the story of her own experiences. This change of tone by which the narrator assumes the position of the protagonist in disguise is a poetic technique adopted to create the mood and effect of a narrative being narrated by the affected person. This technique often intends to arouse emotions that

could stimulate sympathy, in order to have more effect on the audience. Other people may then identify with the same role.

In lines 10-21 the poet uses irony to suggest that traditional healers are important, powerful and helpful. Irony is a style figure that means the direct opposite of what is said. The poet expresses this by saying that those who undermine traditional healers will die (lines 10-11). This implies that ancestors are not only protective but can also kill if their offspring defy their instructions. The family spirit normally protects all those in that family from harm, but if one of them transgresses, particularly by omitting a religious ritual, the spirit becomes annoyed and punishes the family by causing an illness or death of one or more of its members (Gelfand et al, 1985:31; Monnig 1967:54).

The poet also uses irony in lines 10-21. She tells the story of how traditional healers have rescued her from her severe pain and illness. The ironical statement 'come and see traditional healers who raised me from the grave' implies that the poet (patient) was in a coma or she was critically ill. 'From the grave' (line 12) does not really mean that traditional healers have rescued the poet physically from the grave, but it expresses in how a bad and serious state of death the poet was. The poem continues and state that her friends and relatives are gone (line 13). This ironical figure is employed to express her feelings and experiences as well as to describe the present situation. In traditional *Pedi* society when someone so dear to one's heart dies, particularly in a sudden manner, the grief is expressed as something very cold. The affected persons (close associates) would normally say '*bohloko*' meaning ('my condolence to you'). In the context of irony:

different poetic lines to the same thematic idea in lines 10-21, the singers narrate the biography of people who undermine traditional healers and ancestors. They tell the audience of the people who have died as the consequence of undermining traditional healers and ancestors or looking down upon their culture. The irony here is that the singers are neither expressing their heartfelt condolences nor grief to the deceased but urging the audience to observe all the cultures and never ever forget their own. The message put across is also ironically directed to the audience that if they do not respect traditional healers, consult with them and venerate ancestors, shall die.

The expression '*le ile*' ('are gone'- dead in line 13), does not mean to visit but provides more information on the real death as the consequence of undermining traditional healers (line 14). Her friends and relatives are really dead as the consequence of witchcraft because they do not want to consult with traditional healers for divination, prevention and protection (line 15).

Lines 16-21 reflect strong irony, which is intermixed with a plea for a hearing. The poet's expressions (lines 16-21) suggest that most people (in the *Pedi* community) are indoctrinated by the missionaries. They have forgotten about their culture and they have abandoned their ancestors. The expression '*le tshaba go epa digwere*' ('they are scared of digging out medicines') in line 17 implies that the indoctrinated people oblige and comply with their church doctrines (dogmas) which prohibit people from observing their tradition, like ancestor veneration, circumcision, polygamy, etc (Amanze 1998:52; Mugambi 2005:532).

A metaphor describes the indoctrinated people (line 18). The poet expresses in line 19 that '*dikolobe diepa digwere*' ('just like pigs as they dig out the roots'). This implies that the indoctrinated people do not want to be like pigs which are fond of digging the roots. She deliberately raises the characters (pigs), because pigs like digging. The poet personify the pigs as human beings. In the *Pedi* society personification is so common that it has become a commonplace expression in everyday language of the society.

In line 20 the poet uses of an expression: '*ba leswa ke go bea meeta hlogong*' ('they are fond of putting their pots on their heads'). The expression literally means that *Pedi* people very often fetch water with their pots. In *Pedi* society the expression suggests that the indoctrinated people are good in fetching water with their pots but cannot dig out medicines. The seeming contradiction is that 'digging out the roots' (line 19) has nothing to do with 'putting the pots on the heads' (line 20).

In line 21 '*ba ile, ba tshaba go rapela mabitla*' ('they are dead, because they are scared of venerating their ancestors'), the poet and performers (solo and chorus) express their disappointment ironically. Apart from expressing disappointment, the poet and performers provide advisory information to the audience, that they should honour, remember and respect their ancestors.

The climax of this song is the ending: those who undermine traditional healers and who are not willing to venerate ancestors, are and/or will be punished by death. They are dead (line 21). The aid of the ancestral spirits is sought because, the susceptibility of earthly

descendants to disease depends largely on their ancestral spirits (Krige and Krige 1954:61). Their favour could provide their dutiful descendants with immunity from the ill-effects of sorcery and witchcraft. Ancestral spirits are not only punishing ancestors but are also the guardians of morality in the family circle (Magesa 1997:48). Ancestors see to it that there is no permanent feud between earthly members of the family. They have unlimited powers over the lives of the living. There are no restrictions to either the chastisement or the blessings that they can confer on their descendants. Ancestors in the *Pedi* society, like in African traditions have power over life and death, over sickness and health, and over poverty and prosperity (Nthoi 1995:50; Parrinder 1976:58).

In Africa, *enswezi* cult members, like members of other spirit cults throughout Africa, regard it as necessary to communicate frequently with the spirits of their homesteads since neglect of one's familial spirits can bring misfortune to the home. Ancestors are believed to be so concerned about the destiny of men that, whenever the affairs of the living are not going on well, the ancestors send one of their kind, to be reborn in order to provide upright and deserved leadership (Assimeng 1989:60). The poet of *Leepo* was commenting on the people who do not love, remember, respect and honour their ancestors. Therefore the song *Leepo* is an imprecation song which reflects strong irony.

3.3.8.5 Function

Pedi imprecation songs are deliberately sung to *advise*, to *insult*, to *mock* and to *provoke*. They are recited as the consequence of avenge or being bully, being selfish, naughty or jealous. In most cases

members of the *Pedi* tribe sing imprecatory songs to *build moral* in the society. For example, if a girl or woman is a prostitute, whenever people see her, they will sing an imprecation song, not necessarily to mock her, but to advise her to improve on her lifestyle. After listening to the song about her, she will hopefully change or improve on her lifestyle. Matairea (2000:28) confirms that the songs of adultery contain derogatory references, slanders and sneers directed at others. Matairea maintains that the songs use terms aimed to stir emotions and are composed with the deliberate intent to denigrate. Songs that touch on adultery are accompanied by facial gestures; gesticulative hand movements, provocative stances and intimidating stares interplayed with insults.

Imprecation songs can also be sung to a man who is an alcoholic, *advising him to reduce* his drinking habits. Monnig (1967:50-51) endorses this observation by stating that in the *Pedi* culture, when a man is under the influence of alcohol or wild hemp (*cannabis indica*), his *seriti* (dignity) and reputation are tarnished. People will say of a friend who is drunk: "*Thaka ya rena mamohla ga a tee, ba babedi*" This friend of ours isn't one, they (man and alcohol) are two. The expression simply means the man is drunk. In sum, *Pedi* imprecation songs are sung to change *peoples' behavior* as well as to build their *identity*.

3.3.9 Instruction (law) Song (*Bana ba Modimo thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo*)

3.3.9.1 Form

'*Bana ba Modimo*' is most obviously an instruction (law) song. Not everyone in the *Pedi* tribe are allowed to sing the law songs to the community. Law songs are only sung by those few people who have close and regular contact with either God or their ancestors, or with God through their ancestors. Members of the community such as diviners, traditional healers and priests, after God and/or ancestors have instructed them about what to tell the community, can do so through either music and/or narrative. Joseph (1983:76) mentions the occurrence of songs being made known by ancestral spirits to diviners through dreams.

In the study of *Pedi* Psalm-like songs, we observe that the *Pedi* language, though tonal, is flexible when the words are set to music or narrative. The singers/narrators have liberty of setting the words with consideration of communication objectives. This is evident in the song *bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo*. Several forms of responsorial and antiphonal singing exist in *Pedi* performances. In the song *bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo*, there is a form we describe as solo and punctuation chorus response, where the narrator takes a fairly long passage in the narrative and the chorus comes in occasionally with the three-word statement 'pula, pula, *Jehova*' (line 8) in only three-note phrase.

The instruction (law) song below simply states that if members of the community want rain, they should abide with the instructions (laws) of God. One of the instructions is that they should assemble every Wednesday for a joint prayer. By so doing they shall be remembering their Creator (God).

3.3.9.2 Text and translation

INSTRUCTION SONG: *BANA BA MODIMO, THAETSANG MELAO YA MODIMO KA BADIMO*

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo.	1. Children of God, please listen to the laws of God through our ancestors.
2. Modimo ga a lahle ngwana wa gagwe.	2. God never abandons His child.
3. Modimo ga a sitwe ke selo.	3. Nothing is impossible for God.
4. Feela seo Modimo a se nyakago ke go tlogela mekgwa ye methata ya go hloka leago.	4. All what God expects of you is to abandon all your mischiefs, which will not help you in any way.
5. Ge le bona pula e sa ne e le bjalo e tshaba meferefere yeo e lego gareng ga lena.	5. The reason why we are without rain is because of violence prevailing amongst you.
6. Modimo wa lena o re pula ke ye ntsi fela ge le ka se rapele tse ke dinyane.	6. God says rain is in abundance, but if you are not prepared to pray to Him, the suffering you are experiencing is still at the initial stage.
7. Bana beso ka lerato la Modimo, le tsebeng gabotse gore Modimo ke lerato le mang le mang wa lena a swanetsego go le hloma pelong.	7. My dear brothers and sisters in the love of God, be informed that God is love. Everyone of you should have a room for Him in your hearts.
8. A re opeleng sefela seo se rego: "Pula Pula Jehova?"	8. Shall we sing the hymn: Rain, rain Jehovah?"
9. Ke re Modimo a le feng pula tsa medupi.	9. May God give you long lasting rain.
10. Bjalo ka ge Modimo a phala baloi, ke a holofela gore o re kwele.	10. As God is superior to the witches, I hope He has heard our prayer.
11. Ke a holofela gore o mongwe le o	11. I also hope that each and everyone of you has understood the message I put across.

mongwe wa lena o ithwaletse ka leumo.

12. Morena Modimo a re ke le botseng go re ge le tsoma pula, Laboraro le lengwe le le lengwe, setshaba se kgobokane go bea thapelo, ka yona e be go mo gopola.

13. Khutso ga e be le lena.

14. Go ya ka magoro ga se go tswana.

12. The Lord God Almighty has instructed me to inform you that if you want rain, as the community, you should have a communal prayer every Wednesday, in so doing you shall remember Him.

13. Peace be with you.

14. You can now disperse.

The narrative is narrated by a man called Tema (diviner) who lives at *Ga-Seopela* village in the *Sekhukhune* area-Limpopo Province (Nkademeng 1993:118). Refer from track 10, Audio CD.

3.3.9.3 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

So-called *Pedi* law songs are instructional. They are characterized by instruction and warning. Song, text, speech and oral poetry are characteristics that are often used in these songs. Song in its simplest definition is packaged information in various sound forms that involve a combination of sounds in melody, often with words that centrally dominate the communication function. Poetry is an organized form of communication whereby words are skillfully knitted together in manners where only few words cleverly express a body of ideas. Speech is normally an organized use of words to communicate feelings to an audience. Words (without musical sounds) are composed as a text in prose or poetry form to inform an audience with a body of information. A text refers to the words that in a song communicate: thoughts, expressions and experiences.

In *Pedi* law or instruction songs the performers often open a performance with an introductory speech or narrative. The information

in this narrative is usually not sung but spoken. It informs the audience about the background of the song, which is to be performed and prepares them towards an experience. This is evident in '*Bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo*'. In Nigeria *Igoru* law songs are employed by the singers to warn and counsel their audiences against some wanton attitude and practices that could result in painful experiences. Some of the warnings and counsel are directed to individuals, communities and the entire *Okpe* nation (Idamoyibo 2005:157).

3.3.9.4 Content and context

Bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo (Children of God, please listen to the laws (instructions) of God through the ancestors) is designated a so-called law song in the *Pedi* tradition. It is sung by a man called *Tema*, a diviner. *Tema* lives in the *Sekhukhune* area, at *Ga-Seopela* village (Nkadimeng 1993:118). After God has communicated with him in 1984 through his ancestors, *Tema* deemed it necessary to consult with chief *Seopela*, to request him to assemble *Seopela* community. The arrangements for the meeting through the initiatives of chief *Seopela* was successful. Not only the *Seopela* community attended the meeting, but also adjacent communities such as *Maila, Maloma, Kotsiri and Maphopha*.

The law song '*Bana ba Modimo thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo*' can be divided as follows. It begins with a) an introductory narrative for instruction and warning (lines 1-3); b) an instruction and warning from God (lines 4-6); c) statement and admonition (line 7); d) request and climax of the narrative (lines 8-9); e) proverbial

expressions assuring the audience of God's omnipotence and sovereignty (lines 10-11); f) instruction from God (line 12); g) benediction (line 13); and h) concluding proverbial expression for best wishes (line 14).

The expression '*Bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo*' (Children of God, please listen to the laws of God through our ancestors') describes a complex situation. The verse suggests that there is great trouble awaiting the community. This does not however mean any danger, but implies that the problem on ground that demands resolution is not an easy one to cope with.

The expression '*Modimo ga a lahle ngwana wa gagwe*' (God never abandons His child') in line 2 is proverbial. It means that those who have not gone out of the ways of God, can be certain of his (God's) support. Therefore the community requires the backing of God for survival.

The poet's tone (line 3) in the above song suggests safety and security. The tone and diction in '*Modimo ga a sitwe ke selo*' ('nothing is impossible for God'). suggest the meaning of what the poet intends to communicate.

In lines 4-6 the poet deliberately organizes words, syllables and lines in patterns that will generate similarity in sounds; create audible sensitivity and stimulate curiosity and emotionality. The poet recycles the theme in order to fix the principal ideas firmly into the minds of the audience. No word is wasted in this poetry; they are all aimed at communicating specific messages, directly to the audience.

In line 7 of the above excerpt (*Bana beso ka lerato la Modimo, le tsebeng gabotse gore Modimo ke lerato le mang le mang wa lena a swanetsego go le hlome pelong*) the poet creates alliteration⁵⁷ by repeated use of the consonants “l”, “M”, and “m” within the same line. While the first “l” begins with the key-word of the verse; the second begins with the name of the subject. The correspondence of consonant sound between the name and the key-word creates an emotional mood that stimulates sympathy.

In line 8 '*a re opeleng sefela seo se rego: "Pula Pula Jehova'* the poet builds the narrative and its climax gradually by requesting the audience to sing to God while they are pleading for rain. In line 9 the poet repeats an idea that seems very significant within the previous line '*pula tsa medupi'* ('long lasting rain'). In rare cases the poet uses the first person pronoun 'Ke' ('I'), to refer to himself, both as narrator and the poet. In *Pedi* Psalm-like songs this very often occurs when the poet wants to convey certain messages, particularly when he is much involved in the context. In this song, the poet uses 'I' to refer to himself directly, being involved in the very context of the poetry theme.

The *Pedi* culture is rich in the use of proverbs both in speech and in song. Gadsby et al (2001:1136) states that a proverb is “a short well-known statement that contains advice about life generally”. The *Pedi* believe that an eloquent orator and musician is known and honoured for his use of proverbs, because in proverbs various issues are raised and a multitude of counsel is given in brevity. The poet presents

⁵⁷ Alliteration is the use of two or more words in close succession, in order to repeat the sound of a particular consonant letter within a line of a poetic verse, while assonance is the use of same or corresponding vowel sound closely within a line.

proverbs (lines 10-11) that God is superior to the witches and '*o ithwaletse ka leumo*': '...has understood the message I put across'. The first proverb refers to the God's omnipotence and sovereignty and the second proverb in this context implies that the poet has some hope that the audience understood the message put across. The central message of the two proverbs is that, as God is great, the poet hopes that God has enabled members of the community to understand the message the diviner has put across.

During periods of drought songs are used as a medium of prayer to 'heal the land'. Songs enhance the activities of rainmaking rituals (Levine 2005:149). In line 12 the narrator instructs the people to carry out the instructions (laws) as instructed by God through the ancestors to convey the instruction to the people. The expression '*ge le tsoma pula*' ('if you want rain') conveys meaning beyond consultation in this context. It implies invocation of the powers of God to come into action, for the survival of the community. The poet in fact presents a reported dialogue that ensued between him and God through the ancestors.

In line 13, the poet imports the pastoral language 'peace be with you' to illustrate his point. This is a benediction on the community. The last metaphor '*Go ya ka magoro ga se go tswana*' (line 14) means that, to disperse does not necessarily mean that people are no longer friends or relatives. It might imply that the audience may disperse to their respective homes.

In sum, for the *Pedi*, the ancestral spirits make use of the living people to convey certain messages and deeds to the community. Traditional

healers and/or diviners serve for example as mediators between the ancestors and the Pedi people (Levine 2005:147).

3.3.9.5 Function

The primary function of the song is *to command* members of the community to follow the laws of God. The purpose of the command is in two-fold, namely: 1) *to instruct* the people to carry out the instructions (laws) as instructed by God through the ancestors; 2) *to admonish* the people to comply or oblige for survival or improvement of their lifestyles. The song serves as a teaching song in which God gives the instructions to people as a guide for life. It prompts a prayer expressing man's continuous need of God's care. The song breathes a spirit of devotion and celebrates the closest of relationships between the diviner (a "mouthpiece") and God as creator of heavens and earth. This song reveals the dimensions of truth and reality in the existence of the people, for it is given by God, the giver of life.

Furthermore, the significance of this song is *to revive life* in the *Pedi* tribe. It is the fundamental force, restoring to full vigor and vitality the flagging spirit of mankind. The laws (instructions) as reflected in this song reflect God's own permanence. It then gives hope to the *Pedi* people that their lives will not be cut short.

3.3.10 Feast (festival) Songs (*Ngwana malome nnyale and Hela mmatswale tlogela dipotwana*)

3.3.10.1 Form

Festival Songs in the *Pedi* culture are meant for entertainment on occasions such as *lobola* (bride-price) and *monyanya* (wedding)

ceremonies. Drumming, hand clapping, singing and dancing accompany Festival Songs. In cases where there are no drums, two other instruments are acceptable even though the effect is not the same. *Dithlwathlwadi* (leg rattles) and *seferenyane* (referees whistle) are also used as rhythmic accompaniments. The dancer, who is the lead singer for that particular song blows the whistle.

In *Pedi* Festival Songs the words take precedence over the tune. A good lead singer is the one who does not have to repeat words he/she has already sung. Instead, he/she goes on improvising new words, which closely fits the pattern of the singing and also makes musical sense. Because of this practice, the melodic line does not receive the attention it deserves, and very often the same type of short phrases are repeated time after time, without the melody developing any further.

Form critically the song *hela mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana* ('Hi! mother-in-law, please abandon the cooking pots') is a wedding song. *Pedi* people sing the song to welcome a daughter in law (bride) at her place of marriage (*bogadi*). *Pedi lobola* songs are originally a simple improvised dialogue, sung during a furtive meeting between a groom and a bride or during a *lobola* ceremony. Those who recite, sing, move or play instruments at a performance vary in numbers according to the size of the community and the importance of the event. Music and words differ considerably from traditional African music (Mbiti 1971:119)⁵⁸.

⁵⁸ Mbiti's (1971:119) observation is with reference to the area of musical notes, pitch, rhythm and intonation of words, and lack that vital spirit of spontaneous expression of emotions, which is common in African societies. As non-professionals, the performers come from all walks of the community and sometimes from adjacent communities. Some of them participate regularly in a local group; others join only

The song *hela mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana* (Hi! mother-in-law, please abandon the cooking pots') depicts some *Pedi* traditional chores the bride is expected to perform at her place of marriage. Such activities include sweeping with a bunch of grass, which is a typical traditional *Pedi* broom. A bride in the *Pedi* traditional culture is expected to sweep the whole yard every morning before people wake up. She is also expected to make fire and warm up water for the whole family to bath. So these are some of the activities demonstrated in the song *hela mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana*.

3.3.10.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

The rhythm in this song, which is first sung by the leader and then repeated afterwards by the others, is given extra accent by the percussion instruments. All parts of the body take part in the dance. Only the feet and chest perform precise and rhythmical movements. Sometimes this song is causing people (especially immediate family) to melt and to weep with emotion, as they visualize estrangement with either the bride or groom. The performance of *lobola* and wedding songs in the *Pedi* society emphasize successively improvised poetry, choral song, dance and drumming. In its descriptions we find the remains of the oldest forms of African religions and philosophical wisdoms (Mbiti 1969:67).

The major musical characteristic of the song *ngwana malome nnyale* is call-and-response. *Hela mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana* is a wedding song in which singers are pleading with the mother-in-law to welcome the daughter-in-law (bride) in her new location, that is, the groom's

occasionally. Regardless of their expertise and accomplishments the performers are not professionals, but participants in a community event.

place (*bogadi*). While singing the song, the singers are in a cheerful mood. The performance of this song is in four part harmonic setting (i.e soprano, alto, tenor and baritone). The expressive intent of this song is established through a combination of syncopated patterns, stepwise melodic patterns and the textual message.

The song is accompanied by a dance in which dancers assume a bent contour. The body and knees bend at an angle to the earth at varying degrees. The low posture and crooked knees integrate the singing and the dancing. Dance variations include the open palms and dancing on knees. The distinguishing elements of *hela mmatswale*, *tlogela dipotwana* include an uplifted stance, the extension of the winged skirt, and partner dancing. In solo dances, the dancer faces the three drummers, and the eyes of the center drummer focus on dancer's feet. The dancer's foot movements dictate the lead drummer's improvisation mode, for he converts the movement of the dancer's steps into audible rhythmic patterns.

Hand clapping and percussion instruments normally accompany *Pedi lobola* songs, such as *Ngwana malome nnyale*. In the dance men and women partners hold each other by the little finger or by the hand. They may even place their hand on the shoulder of their male or female partner. Dance is a poetic and evocative body language that encodes emotive, gender, age, occupational, status and other decodable texts (Nzewi 2003:30).

3.3.10.3 Content and context

3.3.10.3.1 Introduction

There are various kinds of feasts in the *Pedi* culture. Marriage celebration (*lenyalo*) is one of them. Marriage (*lenyalo*) comprises of two phases, namely *lobola* (bride-price) and wedding (*monyanya*) ceremonies. The *lobola* ceremony is a pre-marital ceremony. This ceremony is comprised of the submission of cattle, goats as well as money to the bride's family. The transfer of the animals gives the husband control over the reproductive powers of his wife and his unmarried daughters (Kuckertz 1990:163). But this is a family matter. Among the *Pedi*, progeny is 'owned' primarily by the *bogadi* (bride wealth) delivered by the family. The biological father can be substituted (Van Wyk 1973:414). At this time the immediate families of both bride and groom come together to discuss the *lobola*.

Lobola is the price for the bride paid by the groom to the bride's parents. The *Pedi* people are not selling their daughters. *Lobola* is not a business. It rather symbolizes a token of appreciation by the groom's family to the bride's family for bearing and rearing the child who is now their son's wife and who will take care of their son, bear them grandchildren and thus preserve their family name. The *lobola*⁵⁹ payment seals the marital negotiation (Matlala 2000:310) and demonstrates to a woman that she is valued. *Lobola* makes her feel

⁵⁹ The word *lobola* is derived from the Zulu word *ilobolo*, which means to give precious presents (Voster & De Beer 1988:182). In South Africa various indigenous groups make use of this concept, for example *ikhazi* (Xhosa), *lobolo* (South Ndebele), *thakha* (Venda), *lovolo* (Tsonga), *bogadi*, *bohali*, *magadi* (North Sotho, South Sotho and Tswana).

wanted, cherished and welcomed in her new family. A responsible husband-to-be will take care of his future wife (Khumalo 1995:85).

The emphasis on *lobola* by the groom leads to an improved understanding of the marriage contract. In Africa, the payment of the bride-wealth remains a necessary, ritualistic, token payment to guarantee the stability of the marriage (Bascom 1970:191). At the same time it binds the new husband to his obligations.

Stayt (1968:144) adds further insight to the understanding of *lobola*⁶⁰. A great deal of bargaining generally takes place between the contracting parties. Sometimes a man will give his daughter to a friend with the promise that *lobola* will be paid at a future date. Marriages take place with the payment of cattle or sometimes without it, but it depends on the wishes of the parents of the girl. Generally marriages take place with the payment of cattle (Duncan 1960:25).

Among the *Pedi* marriage has the wider aspect of an alliance between groups of kin. Marriage is a matter of interest not only to the parents of both parties, but also to a wider circle of relatives, particularly the members of the lineage of each (Mair 1964:4). Marriages are usually arranged, not by the young couple themselves, but by their parents and other close relatives (Schapera and Van der Merwe 1950:162). Marriage can be treated as a transaction between two parties (Fortes 1972:3). Getting married in African context has now become a burden to the majority of young people. It has become an expensive exercise

⁶⁰ Sometimes a man betroths a child, or even an unborn baby, to a man from whom he has borrowed cattle (Stayt 1968:144). Stayt points out that in cases where the whole *lobola* has not been handed over, a check on the numbers received is kept by both parties.

because of the high amount to be paid in the form of bride price (Mashau 2005:59).

3.3.10.3.2 Text and translation

LOBOLA SONG: NGWANA MALOME NNYALE

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Ngwana malome nnyale,	1. My uncle's child marry me,
2. Ngwana malome ntsee,	2. Cousin, marry me,
3. Ngwana malome motswala,	3. My uncle's child, cousin,
4. kgomo di boele sakeng.	4. So that the cattle should go back to the same kraal.
5. O di bone di goroga, (2x)	5. See them arriving, (2x)
6. Di tswa ko Mmakadikwe,	6. Arriving from Mmakadikwe village,
7. Kgomo di boele sakeng.	7. Cattle go back to the same kraal.

The song was recorded by the author at a *lobola* ceremony held at *Ga-Phaahla Mmakadikwe* village, *Nebo* area-Limpopo Province in March 2005 (Refer to track 11, Audio CD).

Ngwana malome nnyale (My uncle's child, please marry me) is a *lobola* song. The song is divided into three main sections, namely: plea for a hearing (lines 1-3); b) motivation (line 4); and c) vision (lines 5-7). The song begins with a plea for a hearing and action (lines 1-3). There is humble request begging the uncle's child to marry the singer. The motivation by the singer is clear "so that the cattle should go back to the same kraal" (line 4). The singer is convinced that the uncle's child will marry her (line 4). She visualizes the cattle arriving from the uncle's home to her home (line 5). The name of the village where the cattle are coming from is mentioned, "*arriving from Mmakadikwe village*" (line 6). Lines 4 and 7 ("*cattle should go back to the same kraal*") form the heart of the song. As a whole, *ngwana malome nnyale* is characterized by earnest appeal and hope. The song repeats the purpose of intermarriage (lines 4 and 7).

Ngwana malome nnyale ("Please marry me, my uncle's child") is sung at a *lobola* ceremony. The request refers to the custom of *lobola* or the preference for bride-wealth, which is part of the African culture and does not refer only to the transfer of cattle (or money). The song begs a cousin to marry the niece. It is one of the favourite songs for the elderly people in every family (parents and grandparents) of the *Pedi* tribe, because a large percentage of elderly people prefer and recommend intermarriage. Intermarriage implies marriage within the same clan. The *lobola* ceremony is joyous occasion and the mood of the occasion resembles that by the choices of songs that are sung and the accompaniments of ululations.

3.3.10.3.3 Text and translation

WEDDING SONG: HELA MMATSWALE, TLOGELA DIPOTWANA

Northern Sotho (Pedi)	English
1. Hela! Mmatswale,	1. Hi! Mother in law,
2. Mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana.	2. Mother in law, please abandon the cooking pots.
3. Hela! mong wa tsona,	3. Hi! The pots owner,
4. mong wa tsona ke yo, o fihlile.	4. Here is the pots' owner, she has arrived.
5. Hela! Mosuthelele,	5. Hi! Open the way for her to enter,
6. mosuthelele, mosuthelele, mosuthelele.	6. Open the way for her to enter, open the way for her to enter, open the way for her to enter.
7. Hela! Mosuthelele,	7. Hi! Open the way for her to enter,
8. mosuthelele, ke yo o fihlile.	8. Hi! Open the way for to enter, here she is, she has arrived.

The song was recorded by the author at a wedding ceremony held at Ga-Phaahla village, Nebo area-Limpopo Province in June 2005 (Refer to track 12, Audio CD).

The structure of the song may be set forth as follows: a) plea (line 1-2); b) announcement of the bride to the mother-in-law (lines 3-4); c) request (lines 5-8).

The singers further request the bride's mother-in-law to abandon the cooking pots and all cooking utensils she was using because the reliever (bride) has arrived, and shall make use of the pots to cook the food on her behalf for her and other family members (line 2). In the *Pedi* tradition, assigning some duties to the bride by the mother-in-law is a great respect for the bride as well as a warm welcome for her in the groom's family (*bogadi*).

Assigning some duties to the bride might sound to be a punishment to the bride but it is not. The bride is in fact proud and happy about all the duties she is executing at the new location, for example, cooking food for the family, cleaning, etc. She feels recognized, respected and helpful to the family, especially to the mother-in-law. The large percentage of the brides (*dingwetsi*) in the *Pedi* tribe look after their parents-in-law very well, as a reward for having brought up their husbands for the brides'. An announcement of the arrival of the bride in the groom's home (*bogadi*) is made by the singers to alert the mother-in-law of the bride's arrival (line 3-4).

The song as a whole is closely integrated by the repetition of key terms. Lines 5-8 use the verb *mosuthelele* (open the way for her to enter). There is an emphasis on the verb *mosuthelele*. Several other words are used twice, for example, *fihlile* (arrived), *mong wa tsona* (owner of the pots) and *mmatswale* (mother-in-law). Taking all these key terms into consideration, the precise occasion on which this song would have been used remains certain. They portray the context of a wedding. The word *mosuthelele* (open the way for her to enter) in lines 5-8 is addressed specifically to the mother-in-law. This is a humble request for her to respond promptly. The concluding line

"*Please open the way, she has arrived*" brings together the various dimensions of the song's theme, namely: humility, politeness, friendliness, praise, thanksgiving, joy and hospitality.

3.3.10.4 Function

The name and sound of *hela mmatswale tlogela dipotwana* become synonymous with the meaning and observance of the occasion, namely a wedding. The meaning of the song/dance and its movements clearly relates to its purpose. One purpose of the song includes *entertainment*, which broadly implicates forms of socialization and companionship. Dance has long been used by Africans as a medium to express the issues of life, be they social, religious, occupational, stages of life (death, birth, marriage and initiation), moral values, ideologies, war, etc (Bakare and Mans 2003:217).

Traditional *lobola* songs have certain specific functions in the *Pedi* society. They are mostly associated with *companionship and intermarriage*. The primary function of the song, *Ngwana malome nnyale* (Please marry me, my uncle's child) is to *promote intermarriage* in the *Pedi* tribe. A secondary function is for *entertainment or enjoyment* by the singers (whoever attend the *lobola* ceremony and is participating in the dancing and singing). Dance in Africa has several human or social purposes, but takes on a myriad of forms depending on purpose, context, history and contact with others (Bakare and Mans 2003:217)⁶¹. In addition, music making in Africa

⁶¹ Bakare and Mans (2003:217) further mentions that dance provides an important social framework through which people interrelate. The performance of social dances may facilitate communication and create social cohesion while revealing much of the structure of a society, the relationships between age, class, lineage and gender structures.

has several dimensions (Addo, Miya and Potgieter 2003:237). They claim that music is social, philosophical and artistic.

Ngwana malome nnyale (Please marry me, my uncle's child) is sung during *lobola* ceremonies not only for the bride and groom, but also to *advise whoever is intending to marry, to think of intermarriage*. This *promotes the survival and future of the Pedi tribe's marriages*. The song *establishes mutual relationship* among the *Pedi* people as well as *cementing friendship*. In addition to the above-named functions, the song plays a prominent role in *relieving stress*. The song is enjoyed by both the attendees and the participants of the *lobola* ceremonies in the *Pedi* tribe. The central significance of the song *ngwana malome nnyale* (Please marry me, my uncle's child) is that *lobola* should be kept within the same clan.

The song alerts *the bride's mother-in-law of the arrival of the bride in her new family (bogadi)*. *Hela mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana* (Hi, mother in law, please abandon the cooking pots) *makes the bride feel wanted, cherished and welcomed in her new family*. Music is a vehicle for the expression of ideas. Africans are fully aware of its function. Music is not an optional decoration to life, but has a social function (Uzoigwe and Tracey 2003:76).

Both song texts reflect personal and social experiences of the *Pedi* tribe. Both are sung to *set the mood* for the action of the occasion or simply to *express emotions*. *It compels inter-communal participation and obligations* at the *lobola* and wedding ceremonies that enact family and social relationships.

3.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

3.4.1 Introduction

It is with joy and excitement that I undertook to translate *Pedi* psalm-like songs, bringing them to the English-speaking world. I have highly benefited from the privilege of repeated contact with *Contradosa* members (*Pedi* traditional healers) and other members of different *Pedi* traditional dance groups. Our many hours of dialogue over the translation, musical analysis and religious assessment were invaluable. In this chapter, the following categories of *Pedi* psalm-like songs are documented, translated from Northern Sotho (*Pedi*) into English and analysed: songs of praise, thanksgiving songs, lament songs, royal songs, liberation songs, wisdom songs, penitential songs, prayers of trust, imprecatory songs, law songs and feasts.

3.4.2 Function

Pedi Psalm-like Songs are multi-functional. They are the very fibre of traditional life. The songs are essential part of religious ceremonies and are associated with the events of the life cycle: birth, marriage and death as well as with initiation for which special songs are learned. Initiates (both girls and boys) receive instructions by employing these songs. The language and expression in the initiation songs are so complex and sophisticated. It is difficult for anyone who never attended the initiation school to understand the meaning, interpretation and message of the song.

Only those who attended the initiation school could easily communicate by singing the initiation songs. They are also used to spur on workers and here the rhythms of the work are cleverly exploited: pounding grain, digging ditches and rock drilling in the gold mines are all accompanied by singing. Beside the communal role, *Pedi* songs (instrumental or singing) are also practiced by the individual simply to enjoy for his or her own pleasure. In all its varied forms, *Pedi* songs still play a vital part in rural traditional life. They reflect the values of the tribe within which they exist (i.e. *Pedi*). Specific songs for *malopo* rituals are amazingly good, as they are therapeutic. After singing these songs, patients/dancers say they feel young in the body and mind. Some say they have been rejuvenated. Something must have happened to their *psyche* or *soma*. Ancestors are remembered, honoured, respected and venerated by singing *malopo* songs.

The *Pedi* cultural heritage is preserved because of *Pedi*-psalm like songs. The *Pedi* tribe is successful in sustaining and retaining a high standard of living in terms of respect, hierarchy and cohesion because of these songs. As such enmity, greediness and theft are gradually phased out. Any kind of misbehaviour by any member of the *Pedi* tribe is addressed by singing these songs. Irony songs are more appropriate for such misbehaviour. Songs are beneficial to the *Pedi* people by building their moral. Some songs remind the *Pedi* tribe about age differences. Other bring joy, while others could bring sadness and comfort. The songs are also important in comforting the bereaved families. By singing these songs the *Pedi* people are able to share ideas, express their appreciation as well as their grievances or dissatisfaction. Kaemmer (1993:156) supports the above findings by stating that music often results in communication even when people

are not aware it is taking place. He further mentions that sometimes communicating through music is a way of publicly disseminating information. I agree with Kaemmer (1993:156) because through enhancing communication, music is often a way of building and maintaining group identity. The identity of a group includes both the indication of boundaries separating one group from others and the strengthening of solidarity within a particular group.

The songs also establish mutual relationship among the *Pedi* people as well as cementing friendship. They play a prominent role in relieving stress. For example, post-traumatic stress disorder and childhood depression. Wedding and *lobola* ceremonies are enjoyed by those who attend them by singing these songs.

These songs do not only seek to identify the people's culture, they further uphold and check the socio-moral values that identify the society and the people. The themes centre on issues of socio-cultural practices and events that manifest around them.

3.4.3 Structure of Songs

This structure refers to the way the songs are put together. The poetic or musical structure of many *Pedi* songs is *cyclical*. This means that cycles of four, eight or more beats are repeated again and again. Signals are used to stop, start and change the songs. Accompaniment patterns provide layers under the improvisatory solo lines. The bass patterns are central to defining the piece of music being played while accompaniment patterns can be the same for several different rhythms. Solo lines take their material from all other parts of the

ensemble helping to weave an exciting, polyrhythmic structure. Breaks are points of unison playing typical of choreographed performances.

3.4.4 Religious experience

Songs give expression and contribute to religious experience within this specific cultural group, the *Pedi* tribe in particular. It shows that religiosity in various cultures can be supported by similar genres and structures like psalms of Old Testament. Such similar psalm like texts fulfil similar functions to support culture, social life and religion.

Chapter 4

Comparative assessment

4.1 Introduction

The relationship between the biblical psalms and *Pedi* psalm-like texts is a difficult and detailed issue. This is due to historical cultural distance between the two traditions. African societies may not have undergone similar developmental processes as ancient Israel. The purpose of this chapter is to compare the biblical and *Pedi* psalm-like texts: to provide a genre comparison, in order to point out some of the similarities and differences between the two cultures' poetry and religio-cultural texts. Common functions and structural elements of these songs are as follows.

4.2 Genre evaluation

In chapters 4 and 5 genre evaluation is made in terms of its function in the applicable culture/tradition. Therefore descriptions of headings in these chapters will differ from genre descriptions in chapters 2-3. Moreover, in chapters 4-5 the headings are designed to find common denominator(s) in the function of the songs from both traditions. Importantly, similarities and differences occur between the traditions. Thus, it will explain the reason for different category headings in these chapters, which deviate from the previous chapters 2-3.

4.2.1 Praise

4.2.1.1 Form

In the Psalms praise is a central element of hymns. Generally the motivation to praise is premised by God's character and acts in the past. Thematically, hymns focus on celebrating God as creator, sustainer and controller of history. The imperative to praise is heightened by calls to shout, clap hands and bless God. Praise is offered against a backdrop of certainty in God's creative genius, his ordering of and provision for the world. This matter is supported by the structural movement from call to praise through motivation and concluding statement of praise.

African praise songs on the other hand are focused on concrete situations of success. Praise is recited to God, ancestors, victorious warriors, chiefs, newly-borns, clans and mountains. However, *Pedi* people are more inclined to praising their ancestors as against God. This is evident in the examined Psalm-like texts. Generally, when faced with difficulties *Pedi* people may approach God through their ancestors. Subsequent to the answers they compose songs which are primarily addressed to the ancestors. Songs are a medium for celebrating every aspect of African life (Mbiti 1992:142; Kekana 2005:63). Among the *Pedi* it is equally common for an individual to praise himself/herself. Since *Pedi* people are predisposed to rhythm it is not uncommon for songs to be accompanied by hocketing, ululating and dancing. Besides focusing on valorous acts, songs and other oral discussions serve the purpose of conveying indigenous theory (Nzewi 2005:vii).

The above analysis confirms the presence of praise in both biblical and *Pedi* traditions. Praise highlights positive and hilarious situations in life. *Pedi* people and ancient Israelites alike materialise praise in ululations and dance. For example Old Testament recounts the practice through Merriam's performance in the song of victory at the Sea of Reeds (Exod 15). Equally recounting historical phenomena is a form of retaining traditions orally. However, there are marked distinctions. While biblical psalms recollect God's acts in history *Pedi* psalm-like songs celebrate occurrences in life, responses from God and ancestors and people of worth in society. This matter reaches its limit when individuals sometimes sing their own praises.

4.2.1.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

The structure of hymns of praise in biblical texts is comprised of three elements: a) the introductory exhortation or call to praise; b) the main body of the hymn which praises God for his attributes and deeds; c) a concluding section expressing some wish, prayer, or blessing.

Pedi Songs of Praise (e.g. *Mogale wa marumo*) consist of the following elements: a) praise, thanksgiving and request; b) commentary on the request; c) extended narrative; d) confession of what happened as the consequence of hunger; e) memory of ancestor (*Mogale wa marumo*, new born son symbolically represents the clan's anticipation of a hero like his grandfather) and hope; f) advanced praise; g) plea for a hearing; and h) praise and self-confidence.

In the Psalms there is an acknowledgement of God's magnificence and the greatness of his works and deeds, whereas in the *Pedi* Psalm-like

texts (e.g. *Mogale wa marumo*), the *Pedi* people acknowledge the good work or service of those members of the community noteworthy for their accomplishments.

Mogale wa marumo indirectly includes ancestral invocation as hope is placed in figurative hero. *Mogale's* birth is evocative of his ancestor grandfather. Besides its celebrative elements the song has petitions.

4.2.1.3 Content and context

In the Psalms hymns furnish believers with glimpses at the God of Israel. A theology emerges from the explication of these devotional proclamations. God stands in a relationship with humanity and creation. Themes of God's benevolent acts depict his compassion to the needy. Theological representations are further conveyed through adoration of God's magnificence. Thus, through praise assertions of God's rule are confirmed during calamities (Pss 64:9-10; 140:12-13).

Pedi praise songs objectify the place and function of significant personalities and inanimate entities such as mountains. Exemplarily '*Mogale wa marumo*' (hero of the battle) is a song in praise of the birth of a male child. Metaphorical allusions are mystically worked into his praise. The hero provides rain for both clan and plants. He provides for cattle and is a recipient of clan requests. Figurative language serves the purpose of orienting the clan towards futuristic expectations attached to the birth of a boy. Selected *Pedi* songs are devoid of focus on the Supreme Being. Instead praise is addressed to heroes and personalities of worth in society. The exemplar '*Mogale wa marumo*' (hero of the battle) induces futuristic hope, hence he is inundated with praise. This object of praise orients the community around their

expectations. Since the concept of the divinity is unattested to in many *Pedi* Psalm-like songs praise is rarely expressed to God but rather to victorious individuals such as a warrior who returns from his exploits.

4.2.1.4 Function

In praise, the worshipping individual or community offers adoration to the deity and proclaims his magnificence and the greatness of his works and deeds. In singing hymns of praise, (e.g. Pss 8; 29; 47; 93; 95-100; 104; 113-115; 117; 135-136; 146-150), the congregation feels itself in the glorious and holy presence of God. They extol what God is and does for the community.

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

4.2.1.5 Conclusion

In both biblical and *Pedi* traditions songs of praise are employed for religious purposes. Variations are noted in the area of functionality. Whereas the psalmists proclaim the greatness of God *Pedi* people on the other hand acknowledge the good work of distinguished members of the community. Ultimately *Pedi* people draw their abilities from their

ancestors and deity. For that reason *Pedi* people praise their ancestors directly or indirectly for achievements such as good crop.

4.2.2 Thanksgiving

4.2.2.1 Form

Psalms of Thanksgiving are broadly divisible into two groups, namely individual and communal thanksgiving. They are responses to laments which are now answered. Thanksgiving Psalms are closely connected to hymns. The latter, in most cases, represent community responses to previous needs. However, there are few communal thanksgiving psalms. Members of the community express their gratitude to God in Psalms of Thanksgiving in response to his gracious interventions.

Pedi Thanksgiving Songs are essentially a group affair. To be sure individuals also offer thanksgiving primarily in their private lives. Thanksgiving Songs express *Pedi* people's interpretation of their society. It is common for the *Pedi* to sing antiphonally and in a responsorial style. To that end songs are led by an individual while the group responds or groups respond to each other.

In both biblical psalms and *Pedi* Psalm-like songs the divisions of individual and communal thanksgiving are found. However, Old Testament psalms emphasize the individuals' response to God's acts. *Pedi* songs on the other hand pronounce communal aspects. Responsorial devices are detectable in selected psalms as well as in *Pedi* Psalm-like songs. Among *Pedi* people, particularly, during communal rites singing is often done in a responsorial manner.

4.2.2.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Thanksgiving Psalms (e.g Pss 67; 103; 105-107; 111; 124) mostly consist of the following elements: a) invitation to give thanks or praise to Yahweh; b) account of trouble and salvation; c) praises of Yahweh; d) acknowledgement of his saving work; e) blessings over participants in the ceremony and exhortation; and f) promise of thanksgiving offerings. They are directed to God and community.

Pedi Thanksgiving Songs (e.g. *Kgoparara*)⁶² consist of the following elements: a) thanksgiving and praise, b) appreciation and confidence in the ancestors. The petitioners' attitude consist of respect and humility.

4.2.2.3 Content and context

In view of the above information, it is clear that in most cases, Thanksgiving Songs in the Old Testament (e.g Pss 65; 66; 124 and 129) are public attestations to the salvific acts of rescuing his people from trouble. They reflect on their life in light of the majesty of God as a community forgiven and provided for. Therefore they are ready to begin afresh Brueggemann (2002:51), whereas in the *Pedi* Thanksgiving praises are recited in honour of God, ancestors and chiefs for provision. Praise is also done for possession such as cattle for one's clan, and inanimate objects like mountains. For instance in memory of a victory achieved at a specific site from the mountain, praise may be composed.

⁶² *Kgoparara* is the *Pedi* Thanksgiving Song. It is normally composed as reactions or responses to the realities of life (e.g inauguration of the chief, expressions of appreciation and thanksgiving to the ancestors).

The *Pedi* Song of Thanksgiving (e.g. *Kgoparara*) may arise out of an event that transforms the life of the individual from birth to childhood. Not only do *Pedi* Thanksgiving Songs initiate a new member into the clan, but in the case of a first child, they confer on the mother the status of parenthood, which for the *Pedi*, is synonymous with attaining the full status of a woman.

4.2.2.4 Function

The purposes of biblical Thanksgiving Songs are: a) to affirm that God hears and forgives the sinners; and that God heals and gives nourishment to the faithful. The *Psalter's* concern for healing challenges believers on the individual level, asking them to rejoice when individuals find care, comfort, provision and healing; b) to confront believers with worship that is wide-ranging and relevant to the lives of individuals and to entire communities. c) to employ a praise language that is concretely rooted in the experience of human suffering and other experiences. This is praise that is tied to life lived in a world of pain, affliction, and social injustice; c) to encourage the individual worshipper to share specific misfortunes and joys with the larger worshipping community and address God with a grateful attitude. Likewise, these psalms permit the larger community to wrestle with the sorrows of the individual and to give thanks for the worshipper's triumphs and successes.

A comparison of Thanksgiving Songs in both Old Testament psalms and *Pedi* psalm-like songs yielded a significant difference: Old Testament worshippers acknowledge God's redeeming work while the

Pedi people show appreciation and confidence in ancestors, as mediators to the Supreme Being/God.

4.2.2.5 Conclusion

Thanksgiving Songs are a testimony about God's saving work in the Old Testament. They affirm God's concern for his people. Songs of Thanksgiving demonstrate that God listens and hears their petitions.

In the *Pedi* culture Thanksgiving Songs are commonly addressed to ancestors. Ancestors are thanked for their assistance for instance in agricultural production after harvest. Such occasions are accompanied by rituals and feasting. Thanksgiving Songs play critical role in terms of identifying the source of gifts and good things in both traditions. In both they mediate religious experience of God or the transcendental.

4.2.3 Lamenting

4.2.3.1 Form

The similarity between Old Testament lament psalms and *Pedi* lament songs is intriguing. Both traditions have elements of complaint. Old Testament laments are directed towards God about whatever personal or communal crisis occasions their prayer. *Pedi* laments however are directed to ancestors about misfortunes as well as towards enemies, and sometimes towards the lamenter himself (see p.131 for example *Pedi* funeral song *Madi a manaba*: blood of the adversaries/enemies). Old Testament laments are characterized by honesty, pain and vindictiveness, while *Pedi* laments are characterized by despair and helplessness.

4.2.3.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Old Testament laments (e.g. Ps 88; Job 3; 6; 10 and II Sam 1:18-27) are characterized by several structural elements. In a lament to God there are often: a) an address to God; b) complaint; c) confession of trust; d) petition; e) words of assurance; and f) vow of praise. In the laments the psalmists unrestrainedly complain to God about whatever personal or communal crisis.

Even when complaints are directed towards God petitioners persistently trust and supplicate him. Structurally there is a close affinity between communal and individual laments. Victims appeal to God's close relationship with them in the past. Due to the prevalence of mythical ideology and poetic vagueness the identity of the enemies in the psalms is problematic. Three situations of complaint are identified as one's own acts, human enemies and God's actions against the petitioner.

Lament is encapsulated vividly during funeral rites among *Pedi* people. A funeral ceremony may last up to two days. During this process mourners express their despair by crying and singing. Singing has a soothing function. These songs employ metaphors and euphemisms. In *Pedi* culture suffering arises from diverse causes. It is commonly blamed on ancestors, witches and God. Witchcraft is a reality largely contributing to all manner of unprecedented calamities on both human victims and property. Therefore aversion of witches through music is common. Such songs are aimed at invoking ancestors against one's enemies. This function is illustrated by '*Madi a manaba*' ('blood of the adversaries/enemies').

4.2.3.3 Content and context

Old Testament lament songs (e.g Pss 3; 5; 7; 13; 17; 22; 25; 26; 27; 28; 35; 38; 39; 41; 42; 43; 51; 54; 55; 56; 57; 59; 63; 64; 69; 71; 79; 80; 83; 86; 88; 90; 102; 109; 123; 129; 130; 137; 140; 141) are prayers of complaint. They are prayers in a time of tribulation. Laments express distressful situations of believers in the promise that they will praise him for deliverance and sovereignty. Laments contain both inspiring and shocking poetic expressions of individual and communal concerns, perceptions, and exchanges with God. Numerically the dominant psalm type in the Old Testament is the lament, which reflects experiences in the depths of loneliness, frustration and fearfulness.

Pedi laments (e.g. *madi a manaba*) are songs with a focus on a distinct, special range of topics, which include inter alia: a) extolling the sex-specific subsistence skills of those who have passed on; b) death by drowning, accident or ill-health; and c) a notable event and incidents in the *Pedi* community. Such significant events in a person's life may be woven into a memorial song. *Pedi* laments are characterized by both hope and despair.

Despair and helplessness are the underpinnings of *Pedi* funeral songs. Most of the *Pedi* lament songs (e.g. *madi a manaba*) deal with some sort of trouble like adversity, experiences of enmity, oppression, and wickedness.

4.2.3.4 Function

Suffering is universal. Thus people devise ways of coping with their difficulties. In the Psalms laments are expressions arising from situations of sorrow and disorder. They represent experiences of life for both individuals and community. Through laments the psalmists direct their complaints to God interrogating his actions towards Israel. Yet their confidence in God's power and help in the past are noticeable even when he is held responsible for the distress. Laments allow the community to reflect on tragedy without elucidating the final answer. It appears that laments played a role in healing ceremonies at family level. A ritual expert may have officiated employing both words and actions. Similarly *Pedi* people blame God or other people for their problems. Among *Pedi* people failure to honour ancestors spells out trouble. Erring members of society are struck by tragedies as punishment from ancestors.

Therefore victims bemoan such occurrences calling on ancestors to relent. Suffering may also result from witchcraft. Witches and sorcerers attack their unsuspecting victims at night. Thus laments are used to warn the community about witchcraft danger. Lament songs also focus on mourning the loss of loved ones and creating a relationship between the living and their ancestors. In view of the above functions it is evident that there are differences due to a strong belief in witchcraft and ancestors among *Pedi* people. If Miller (1986:6) is right about the therapeutical function of music then there is resonance between ancient Israelite funeral musical rites and *Pedi* experience. But the presence of a ritual expert is unattested to among

Pedi people. However, both the psalmists and *Pedi* people utilise music for reorientation from situations of despair.

4.2.3.5 Conclusion

Suffering is universal to people of different societies and historical periods. Through lament therefore ancient Israelites as well as *Pedi* people approach the supernatural in pursuit of redress. Laments reach their peak as victims complain against God in the psalms or towards ancestors among the *Pedi*. Nevertheless, just as the psalmists have trust in the ability of God to intervene so do the *Pedi* in their ancestors, who mediate deliverance and upliftment of distress with God/Supreme Being. On the other hand the presence of ancestors and witches in *Pedi* religious experience marks a clear distinction from biblical psalms.

4.2.4 Royal celebration

4.2.4.1 Form

Royal psalms in the Old Testament (e.g. Pss 2; 18; 20; 21; 45; 72; 89; 101; 110; 132) celebrated occasions in the earthly king's life like weddings, coronations, preparation for battle, ritual enactments, and so forth. In addition there is a category of royal psalms distinguished by its focus on Yahweh the king. After the collapse of the monarch Israel reoriented herself by considering the kingship of God. This kingship knows no end.

Yahweh-is-king Psalms (Pss 93; 96-99) have as a central theme praise of God's reign. Psalms of Yahweh's kingship may have originated in

the post-exilic period. They arose out of a backdrop of monarchical failure and Israel's subsequent dispersal into exile. Thus disoriented by this historical calamity, the believing community placed their confidence in Yahweh's reign.

Historically, the performance of royal inauguration songs in the *Pedi* tradition has served to reinforce knowledge about the community, its owners, and protocol for its usage. When *Pedi* people sing inauguration songs, they are making a statement about who they are. They thus establish the otherness of the famous historical figures such as chiefs invoke the might of ancestors and impart knowledge thereby reaffirming *Pedi* cultural identity.

4.2.4.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Old Testament Royal psalms consist of the following elements: they are openly raising questions about the community's understanding of a) security; b) peace; c) justice; and d) solidarity. These elements are raised as prayer for the earthly king. In this way Israel hoped for community well-being. Through God the king is able to maintain peace and justice. Psalms 47 and 93-100 depict God's assumption of royal power, in imitation of the ceremony of an earthly king. These psalms (96:13; 98:9) proclaim God as judge of the world. The expression "Yahweh is king" is shared by them all.

Pedi royal (inauguration) songs (e.g. *Kgoshi*) contain four defined elements: a) praise and testimony-music and singing are interspersed by telling of legends and histories; b) circles of integrity-simultaneous activity of singing and storytelling enhances conveying of moral

information; c) inauguration songs, whereby the chief is inundated in praised; and d) confession of integrity-through the aid of call and response the community participates in affirming morals embedded in song. Repetition is clearly the key style figure to the structure of such songs. *Pedi* inauguration celebrations are characterized by joy, self-confidence, and imagination accentuated through song and dance.

4.2.4.3 Content and context

Royal psalms emphasize the relationship between king and people and between king and God. Authority to rule is derived from God. Contextually royal psalms are associated with Jerusalem, the royal capital. In the Old Testament enthronement ceremonies were occasioned by declarations, prayer and song exhibited by royal psalms. It appears that these declarations were products of court prophets. Such pronouncements were commonly shared by other nations in the ancient Near East. Other contexts which are graced by royal music are kingly weddings and pre-battle rituals.

Among *Pedi* people royal music features prominently through-out the life of a chief. However, royal music reaches its height at inauguration and funeral rituals of *Pedi* chiefs. Its elements include praise and descriptive narrative of the earthly chief. In *Pedi* culture royalty is hereditary. A matter of fact rehearsed in song. *Pedi* songs are repetitive and powerful communication media.

4.2.4.4 Function

Royal psalms in the Old Testament celebrated occasions in the earthly king's life like weddings, coronations, preparation for battle, ritual

enactments, and so forth, whereas performance of royal inauguration songs in the *Pedi* tradition has served to reinforce knowledge about the community, composers, and royal protocol. Yahweh is king psalms serve as praise of God's historical acts, project an ideal king after the failure of the earthly monarch, they emphasize individual guilt and salvation as well as communal perseverance and hope for restoration. Furthermore, Yahweh is king psalms declare the kingdom of God which is untouched by distressful circumstances thereby depicting its futuristic aspects when life in God will transcend calamity.

Old Testament royal psalms are raising questions about the community's understanding of security, peace, justice, solidarity and that the king's rule may bring prosperity to the nation. This is the opposite to what *Pedi* people are doing. When *Pedi* people e.g. sing royal inauguration songs, they are making a statement about who they are. They thus establish the otherness of historical figures who achieved great fits in their lifetime and are hence commonly accepted as poets. Consequently, through song *Pedi* people reaffirm their own cultural identity.

Both Royal Psalms and *Pedi* inauguration songs have elements of lament and petition (for example, pleading for security, peace, justice and solidarity). *Pedi* royal inauguration songs have elements of praise and testimony (for example, they are characterized by joy, self-confidence and imagination).

An attempt has been made by Anderson (1972:32), to show that the principal function of this psalm type is to declare Yahweh's greatness, which he has manifested both in nature and in the history of Israel;

thus the main theme is his praise. It is important to note that through psalms of Yahweh's kingship, God's unchanging love, and his persistent and continuing compassion and affection for man are extolled.

The peculiar Yahweh-is-king Psalms principally function as praise to the greatness of God. Yahweh's kingship is distinguished from the earthly failed monarch. As a result the distressed Israelites were reassured by the firmness of God's reign. These psalms depict Israel's desire for Yahweh's universal victorious rule. In addition they proclaim God's kingdom which remains untouched by the appearance of disaster. In this manner future success over tragedy by inhabitants of God's kingdom is emphasized.

4.2.4.5 Conclusion

In both *Pedi* and Old Testament Royal Psalms celebrating the life of the king is a central theme. Occasions that elicit royal songs include weddings and pre-battle rituals in Israel while royal funerals are distinct among the *Pedi*. Resemblances occur in coronation usages. A subgroup of Yahweh is king psalms is particular to Israel and is unattested to in *Pedi* society.

Royal Psalms have structural elements that are characterized by requests for security, peace and justice offered to God on behalf of the king in order to have a successful reign and prosperous kingdom. On the other hand *Pedi* inauguration songs exemplify praises of king, historical leaders and conveying of morals through story lines. In

addition there is a distinction in the repetition device frequently used in *Pedi* songs.

Old Testament Royal Psalms grew out of a cultic context of the pre-exilic era. These psalms emphasize the relationship between king and God as they depict that the authority to rule derives from the Deity. Their central motif is the praise of Yahweh. To the contrary *Pedi* royalty is hereditary. Hence instead of stressing on the divinity *Pedi* people celebrate legendary heroes rehearsing their historical achievements, invoking and communicating tribal religious-culture. *Pedi* enthronement rituals are joyous occasions typified by elation, self-confidence and imagination in inauguration songs.

4.2.5 Zion and the urge for liberation, trust and peace

4.2.5.1 Form

Songs of Zion glorify Jerusalem and praise Yahweh. Zion is the dwelling of God. It is a place of refuge for God's people (Ps 46:1). Form-critically songs of Zion are classified as hymns of praise (Crenshaw 2001:7; Gerstenberger 2001:539). Historically, these songs reflect early Jewish setting in the dispersion (Anderson 1972:35). Ancient pre-Israelite traditions have influenced Zion songs (Gerstenberger 2001:539; Kraus 1988:65). Against the backdrop of Jebusite beliefs the choice of Zion, the mountain of God is rehearsed in Psalm 48:3 (Westermann 1989:283).

Pedi liberation songs belong to the larger South African and African political and cultural contexts. They are protestations against poor working and living conditions and racial discrimination in the previous

South African society (Gray 1998:75). Therefore these songs are aimed at social solidarity and working towards the solution of political problems. Through music a powerful liberation message is communicated.

A common liberation thread runs through the songs of Zion and *Pedi* liberation songs. Affected by exile the psalmists yearned for their return to Jerusalem. In this way Zion is idealized as a place of safety and refuge (Smith 1984:15; Kraus 1988:58). *Pedi* people, like many South Africans, longed and are still longing for an exploitation free country during and after the Apartheid era. Moreover they desire better living conditions.

4.2.5.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Old Testament Zion Songs (e.g Ps 46; 48; 76; 84; 87; 122) liberate listeners to express emotions without a need to disclose, whether interpretations of experiences and lyrical content could be used to explore common themes or not (MacLeod and Harvey 2000:30). In most cases these songs are used as a medium for seeking equality, trust and peace as interlocking aims.

Pedi liberation songs (e.g *Ga e boe Afrika*) are used as a vehicle through which people learn about life and, amongst other things, recount current and historical events. Through a liberation song like *Ga e boe Afrika* and dance people are able to share their burdens, triumphs, sadness and gladness of heart. Songs are also sung by people to bind them together or to unite them for one common aim. These *Pedi* liberation songs are antiphonal, repetitive and cyclical in

nature. Their improvisational character and their rhythmic patterns invite the body to move. The music is inspiring, unifying, arousing and unlocks an exhilaration in one's soul. Kaemmer (1993:157) has observed that traditions of improvising music and lyrics enable performers to make personal comments on events as they are occurring.

When we compare Zion Songs and *Pedi* liberation songs the results have shown that both Zion and liberation songs begin with a) despair and plea for a hearing; b) negative conditions; and c) petition and anticipation. Both are arousing and unlocking exhilaration in the reader's/performer's life. These songs reflect life with its depths and heights, life lived in the context of the vastness of history. Comparisons have further shown that both perspectives reflect individual's or the nation's joys and sorrows between birth and death, toil and celebration, sleeping and waking, sickness and recovery, losses, anxieties, confidences and temptations to despair.

Songs of Zion convey thematic ideas which focus on God's power demonstrated in creation, deliverance from exile and rulership (Miller 1986:12). Structural elements and characteristics of these psalms are confession-like static expressions descriptive of God as resident and protector of Zion. These static statements are motivated by Yahweh's aversion of enemy assault. Subsequently imperatives urging the audience to acknowledge Yahweh, join in the festal procession and perform their vows are provided.

4.2.5.3 Content and context

Israel's relation to God and the choice of Zion as God's dwelling place are key motifs in Songs of Zion. Jerusalem is the earthly centre for God's presence. Worshippers long to visit the temple on mount Zion. It is a place of refuge, symbolically sheltering even the sparrows (Ps 84:1-4). Jerusalem was renowned for her invincibility drawn from ancient deities. Later it was a centre for rituals and festivals in honour of Yahweh. Hence Israel's greatness is based on God who dwells among his people at the temple.

The *Pedi* song *Ga e boe Afrika* is illustrative of a *Pedi* liberation song. It consists of requests, instructions and a demand. Singers petition the restoration of Africa to indigenous owners. Petitions precede protestation against pass and other unbearable laws. Subsequently, there is a demand for a pound per day wage. Composed for contestation against exploitation in South Africa the song addresses unbearable pass laws and biased remuneration conditions. Segregation contributed to feelings of estrangement, disorientation and a lack of belonging for people in despair. Hence the song expresses a demand for self rule by indigenous South Africans.

In both traditions land is idealized as a sanctuary and place of freedom. The psalmists portray an image of mount Zion as Gods' dwelling place and consequently a place of refuge. *Pedi* and South African liberation songs convey a futuristic land of freedom and well being.

4.2.5.4 Function

Songs of Zion are composed primarily for the *temple and praise* of God. In a dialectical style these texts mention *peace and war* (Pss 84:1-4; 122). Zion is God's home from where he symbolically extinguishes the flaming arrow (Pss 46:7; 87:2). A universal manifestation of God's peace is raised. Zion does not only survive attacks but radiates security to the whole world (Pss 47:7-11; 48:13; 87:5). Foundational to the state of peace is the *presence* of the heavenly and not an earthly king. Songs of Zion *reveal the desire* of Jewish people to make pilgrimage to the holy city.

Pedi songs of liberation are a *recollection of the struggle for emancipation* in South Africa. Political leaders are hailed and descriptions of fight for transformation narrated. But *Pedi* songs are not restricted to the past. Themes aimed at accelerating contemporary change at societal and national levels are raised. *Equality and peace*, are subjects of note in these songs. *Catharsis is achieved* through songs as burdens, sadness and gladness are brought out in song.

Liberation songs *disseminate themes of nationhood, security and well being*. In war time songs *rally people in pursuit of refuge*. Under exploitative governmental systems the oppressed employ music to *raise their hope* about a glorious future. However, the centrality of God's presence in the Songs of Zion distinguishes them from the exemplar *Pedi* song *Ga e boe Afrika*.

4.2.5.5 Conclusion

Liberation songs are common to many people of the world. Oppressive regimes breed resistance. *Pedi* people like the ancient Israelites utilized songs for orientation during periods of distress like occupation and political exploitation. The psalmists praise Zion, a figurative representation of trust, peace and deliverance. At the centre of these songs is the indwelling presence of Yahweh. For that reason Zion cannot be moved and her citizens are safe and secure. *Pedi* people raise their voices in song for mobilisation and solidarity against tribal and national sufferings. In spite of the resemblances there is a variation regarding the role of God as protector and ally in trouble. *Gae boe Afrika* however does not represent a stereotype by virtue of not depicting a direct petition to the Supreme Being. *Pedi* people like many Africans seek God for the resolution of their difficulties.

4.2.6 Promoting wise behaviour

4.2.6.1 Form

Old Testament wisdom psalms are identified by motifs like retribution, counsel, fear of Yahweh, juxtaposition of wicked and righteous people and the two 'ways'. An important feature of wisdom psalms is their didactic character. Wisdom psalms contain vocabulary of turning from evil and a connectedness between wealth and uprightness.

Pedi wisdom-like songs are educational. They focus on adult responsibilities. For that reason they are taught at *Pedi* initiation schools. At such schools neophytes are taught the aged customs of

Pedi people. In this way individuals are equipped with skills to participate in the larger community and in adult life.

Few differences exist between Old Testament wisdom psalms and *Pedi* wisdom-like texts. In wisdom psalms prohibition against foolish conduct is very often mentioned whereas in *Pedi* wisdom songs the use of irony is evident. However, both Old Testament wisdom psalms and *Pedi* wisdom songs share a general characteristic of wisdom poetry and language.

4.2.6.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Old Testament wisdom psalms offer advice about life. They promote righteousness over wickedness through contrast. The fear of the Lord as principle for everyday behaviour is promoted. Other poetic devices that are used in wisdom psalms are the acrostic structure, rhetorical elements, formulaic language and repetition. This genre is cast in a father-son setting. Language in wisdom psalms is didactic and meditative.

Since most *Pedi* wisdom songs are prominent in initiation rites they are characterized by taboos and traditional beliefs. Structurally these songs have short solo-response forms. Proverbial language is generic. Equally *Pedi* music is reiterative which signifies its didactic nature. *Pedi* initiation songs are artistic-aesthetic communication which integrate dance and other visual and verbal arts.

In both traditions practical life is central. Psalms focus on righteousness and wickedness and the resultant success or failure from such lifestyles respectively. *Pedi* songs on the other hand

promote an adjusted lifestyle through taboos and customs. Exemplarily *Kgogedi* a *Pedi* initiation song for girls addresses issues of loneliness and estrangement through words of encouragement. Further, the girls are motivated to enjoy their work and ease their minds. The expressiveness of *Pedi* music is either subdued or accounted for in wisdom psalms where a sombre meditative approach is preferred. There is a distinction in the structure of the song texts from the two traditions. This is demonstrated by the occurrence of variant elements in the songs. Old Testament wisdom songs include the following elements: proverbs, sayings, admonitions and prohibitions while *Pedi* wisdom songs include a plea for God to hear, a general character of wisdom poetry, despair and irony.

Pedi songs are marked by the presence of short solo-response phrases. Their reiterative characteristic enhances wisdom sayings. Another common feature of *Pedi* songs is its artistic-aesthetic aspect conveyed by dance, visual and verbal arts. Paramusical features such as whistling, yelling and ululating are common too.

In view of the above discussion similarities are found in use of proverbs. To the contrary artistic-aesthetic practices, paramusical features and reiterative aspects are uncommon in Israelite wisdom psalms.

4.2.6.3 Content and context

Old Testament wisdom psalms (e.g. Pss 1; 9; 10; 25; 34; 49; 73, etc) could be interpreted as an expression of Israel's worship, but their

purpose is to offer believers wisdom views. They convince of righteous behavior.

Pedi wisdom songs like *Mokgoronyane* and *Kgogedi* are teaching songs. The songs are educational focused on how one should become a responsible adult. Wisdom texts are meant to convince the hearer of wise conduct. They are not initiation texts, have no attempt to speak to the ancestors, no concern with the problems of modern Western living challenges. *Pedi* initiation texts show a directness in language; they address to ancestors and of ancestors. Thus these songs have kept or retained their popularity in oral tradition down through the centuries.

4.2.6.4 Function

There is a strong emphasis on the didactic character in psalms of wisdom. This corpus is an expression of Israel's behavioural guidelines. By promoting the fear of the Lord the psalmists intend to raise practical lifestyles conforming to the admonition. Hence the community is urged to shun wickedness.

Pedi wisdom songs are aimed at promoting community well-being. Cultural heritage is preserved through retentive memory. These songs assist in the preservation and transmission of religion and custom. It appears that the presence of initiation schools and a strong value system in *Pedi* society have contributed to the reduction of social delinquency, crime and divorce rate. Conversely respect, politeness, authority courage and endurance are pronounced due to cultural education forms.

Wisdom songs feature prominently in the Psalms and in the *Pedi* society. Emphasis is placed on didactic aspects. Through teaching and warning the communities are urged to live exemplarily. However in the Psalms the origin of wisdom is the fear of the Lord while among *Pedi* people it is drawn from the community. In any case results from both religious experiences impact on the respective communities.

Pedi wisdom songs like other African songs embody an African philosophy of life. They assist in the training and preparing of individuals to be better citizens and contribute to society positively. Laziness is eschewed while hard work is encouraged (e.g. *Mokgoronyane*). Equally the value of time management, decency, hygiene, spousal honour and family care are inculcated in girls at the initiation school through song. Wisdom psalms are didactic; believers are urged to live wisely through the fear of the Lord. They are advised to reject folly and refrain from wicked behaviour. To that end wisdom songs in both traditions encourage right living. The emphasis on the fear of the God obtaining in biblical psalms is however lacking from *Pedi* songs.

4.2.6.5 Conclusion

Wisdom psalms belong to the larger biblical corpus of wisdom. Psalmists locate meaning in life in the fear of God. Ideally, those who follow God's ways are successful. Wisdom psalms are therefore instructional and aimed at promoting a godly life. Poetic devices of rhetorical speech, contrast, acrostic style, repetition and formulaic language are employed. Similarly, *Pedi* people employ wisdom songs to promote well-being and success in life. Its domain is the cultural educational system centred on initiation schools for boys and girls. It is

hoped that through teaching Pedi society will comprise well adjusted adults.

4.2.7 Expressing trust

4.2.7.1 Form

Psalms of Trust are broadly classified into individual and community psalms. Although the motif of trust occurs in numerous psalms its tone is pronounced in the Psalms of Trust. The psalmists place their trust in God. Trust is expressed metaphorically such as 'resting', 'sleeping' and finding 'safety' in God's presence (Pss 4:8; 23:2,5). Similarly, God is figuratively portrayed as 'rock', 'fortress' and 'refuge' (Pss 16:1; 27:1, 11; 62:2, 6, 8). Through symbolic language the psalmists convey their trust in God and his acts.

Among *Pedi* people prayers of trust are commonly associated with healing sessions. At such occasions traditional healers attend to the sick through singing and expressing petitions directed to ancestors. Both men and women may offer prayers for the sick but the majority of *Pedi* traditional healers are female. Healing rituals include singing, clapping, drumming and dancing. Traditional healers sing about their ancestors and the *Pedi* social history.

Prayers of Trust express people's confidence against debilitating situations. Metaphoric language pervades Psalms of Trust. God's attributes are represented symbolically. In this way the petitioners depict the dependability of God during periods of crises. *Pedi* people, however, use songs to elicit the ancestors' assistance. God is indirectly petitioned through ancestors.

In the Old Testament Psalms are focused on the worshipping community and on God, whereas in the *Pedi* society the focus is on the spirits, diviners, trance as well as the healing situation.

4.2.7.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Structural elements of the Psalms of Trust in the Old Testament are as follows: declaration of trust exemplified by “The Lord will hear when I call to him” (Ps 4:3). Communal psalms of trust commonly have an invitation to trust addressed to the community (Pss 27:14; 62:8; 115:9-11). Generally God is the basis of trust in these psalms. Occasionally, psalmists draw their trust from historical experiences eliciting faith and imagery of nature such as mountains that surround Jerusalem (Ps 125:2). Since psalms of trust are prayers of faith petition is embedded at their core (Ps 123:2-3). They may also contain a remnant of lament (Ps 48:7-8) and vow to praise the Lord (Pss 16:7; 27:66; 115:17-18).

Pedi Prayers of Trust (e.g. *Salane*) reflect elements like a) a declaration which aptly sums up and introduces what is to follow; b) confidence in ancestors’ goodness; c) a plea for ancestor veneration; d) confidence in the ancestors’ goodness; e) confession; f) prayer and expressions of the singer’s confidence in the ancestors; and g) trust in God.

In view of the above comparison, it is evident that in both Psalms of Trust and *Pedi* Prayers of Trust, there are elements of petition embellished by trust. Similarly supplicants express their trust in the Supreme Being. To the contrary in *Pedi* Prayers of trust vows to praise

God, lament and communal invitations to Trust in God are lacking. In psalm texts there is an absence of ancestors this feature is pronounced in Pedi prayers. This practice is prohibited in the Old Testament.

4.2.7.3 Content and context

Psalms of Trust convey deep confidence in God and his goodness. As a dominant motif *trust* pales situations of peril experienced by the petitioners. For example, shepherd imagery in Psalm 23 depicts the psalmist's trust in God's protection and guidance amidst danger. Motivated by physical and psychological exhaustion petitioners seek God for intervention.

Salane, the *Pedi* Song of Trust, is employed in ancestor veneration. It contains prayer, confession and confidence in ancestors. *Salane* is part of the repertoire of rituals surrounding invocation of ancestors. *Pedi* ritual context includes libations, offerings and propitiations. In the main rituals are performed at ancestral graves. Through rituals and song trust in ancestors and God is expressed. Ancestors therefore are requested to mediate on the people's behalf with God for protection and resolutions.

Similarities regarding reliance on powers outside their own is noted in both above mentioned traditions. However, there is a variation regarding the place of ancestral veneration in *Pedi* culture. Contextual distance is depicted by the rituals and place of worship. Psalms are predominantly temple songs unlike the grave and other designated places among *Pedi* people. Functionally though trust serves a similar

purpose of relying on a higher transcendental power in the two traditions.

4.2.7.4 Function

Psalms of Trust (e.g. Pss 16; 23) are designed not only to *strengthen, comfort* and *encourage* the worshipping community, but more importantly, to *awaken* in the worshipper a sense of a longing, i.e. a quest that is like thirsting for water in a “dry and weary land” (Ps 63:2).

Pedi Songs of Trust (e.g. *Salane*) function as a means of *connecting* people with the spirits and sets the mood for the activities of the diviners⁶³. In some instances, it enables the transformation of the diviner into a state of a trance in order to *communicate* with the spirits on behalf of the client. It also serves *aesthetic purposes* in traditional healing by soothing the *psyche* of the patient when he or she is undergoing painful treatment.

4.2.7.5 Conclusion

God is the object of trust in the Psalms of Trust. When overwhelmed by physical and psychological distress victims rely on God’s goodness for reprieve. *Pedi* people hold healing rituals for the sick. Powerful ancestors are summoned through gifts and requests to effect healing. Although God is not addressed directly among the *Pedi* ancestors have a mediatory role of conveying requests to the Deity. This feature distinguishes *Pedi* religious experience from the psalmists. Further,

⁶³ Diviners are traditional doctors who are inspired by the ancestors’ spirits.

traditional healers are not attested to in Psalms. Consulting such functionaries is prohibited in the Old Testament.

4.2.8 Wrath given to God

4.2.8.1 Form

Imprecatory psalms in the Old Testament invoke God to avenge the victim. Through prayer the psalmists request God to destroy or harm the adversary. Thus they are called Psalms of violence, Psalms of vengeance, Psalms of hate and Psalms of disorientation (Murphy 2000:46).

In *Pedi* culture imprecation is employed for the censure of drunkenness, abuse and prostitution. These songs are developed thematically. Generally they are antiphonal. Other poetic devices which are commonly utilised in these kind of songs include irony. In this way sanctions are advanced on erring members of society. Confidence in human intermediaries and ancestors is also expressed. To that end *Pedi* cultural and religious traditions are rehearsed and inculcated in the community.

The presence of imprecatory prayers in both religious experiences is affirmed. Yet there are variations concerning the subject of negative expressions. While the psalmists aim at the destruction of their enemies *Pedi* people, exemplified in *Leepo*, are censuring errant members of the community. Disregard for *Pedi* traditions and custodians of customs is disastrous as it may invoke ancestral punishment. The role of God as executor of vengeance is pronounced in the Psalms unlike in the above *Pedi* song.

4.2.8.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Psalms of imprecation use a language that is negative and harsh. The psalmists convey their bitterness and vindictiveness. Simultaneously they vow to praise God upon effecting their deliverance. These words of destruction must be conceived within the context of petitioning God for protection from enemies or life endangering situations.

Leepo, the exemplar *Pedi* imprecation, exhibits elements of irony, pun, confidence, lament and despair. This song is aimed at people who disregard traditional healers and ancestors. Through irony negative words are uttered against them. For that reason irony is employed as a corrective device in *Pedi* imprecatory songs.

While the psalmists' enemies aim at causing harm on them, the song *Leepo* reflects how errant community members are targeted for punishment. In any case such community members are enemies as they are defiant of *Pedi* traditions. Their deviant behaviour breaks them from solidarity.

4.2.8.3 Content and context

Imprecatory psalms (e.g. Pss 5:10; 6:10; 7:6,9; 15-16; 9:19-20; 10:15; 17:13; 28:4; 31:17-18; 40:14-15; etc) express the desire for God's vengeance on the individual or Israel's enemies. These psalms teach how important prayer is, and that all life experiences could be brought before God. If not lectionary, they teach the believer to tell the whole of his/her story to God. *Pedi* imprecatory songs are deliberately sung to advise, to insult, to mock and to provoke. They

emphasize the corrective role of judgments and the need to abide by communal values in order to experience well being.

Imprecatory psalms arise from historical contexts of danger, threat and unjust treatment. For that reason the victims place their destiny in God's abilities. God is understood as the one who holds the power of vengeance. Through prayer victims relinquish their anger to God. Ultimately God holds the right of execution. To that end God's righteousness and justice are experienced while saying or meditating these kinds of psalms.

The *Pedi* imprecation song *Leepo* arises from a situation of disregard for tradition. It appears that the offender(s) has ignored *Pedi* religious traditions and traditional healers by joining missionary and indigenous churches. The offender has neglected important *Pedi* cultural rites like ancestral veneration, circumcision and polygamy. Erring members of the community face punishment from ancestors for their misbehaviour. Although protective, ancestors are capable of vindictiveness. Thus, those who rebel against aged customs such as Christians who refuse to venerate their ancestors are in danger of death. Disobeying traditional healers may also elicit punishment. Other traditions which must be obeyed include circumcision and polygamy. In order to resolve the situation the poet seeks the assistance of the traditional healer.

Specific life situations cause danger to befall the individual and the community. In the Psalms the enemy attacks the innocent. On the other hand *Pedi* songs ridicule those who defy traditional customs. The

psalmist requests God to avenge. Similarly *Pedi* people warn erring members of community of pending ancestral malevolent acts.

4.2.8.4 Function

In the Old Testament imprecation psalms serve varying purposes. They are *therapeutic* as they accord the petitioners an opportunity to offer their experiences of hurt to God. By so doing God assumes the responsibility of retribution. Anger is not allowed to build up but it is rather vented to God. Equally they portray a *desire for justice*.

Pedi imprecations are aimed at *providing advice*. They function to *insult, mock, and provoke* the defiant members of the society. In this way morals are promoted and maintained. Vices such as adultery, drunkenness, use of wild hemp and dishonouring of ancestors and traditional healers are censured.

Functionally therefore imprecatory songs serve divergent purposes in the two religious-cultural experiences. Yet in both cases the power of vengeance lies beyond human poets. In the Psalms this power is vested in God, but among the *Pedi* it is centred in traditional healers and ancestors. Another difference involves the fact that *Pedi* imprecations are supposed to incite transformation while vengeance is the chief objective in the Psalms.

4.2.8.5 Conclusion

Imprecatory songs are common among both *Pedi* people and Israelites. These retributive songs serve various functions such as education, upholding and promoting morals and customs through

advice, insults and mockery in Pedi culture. Biblical imprecation acts in the expression and request for vengeance. By imprecation psalmists seek God's intervention, rescue, redress and destruction of their adversaries. God is the executor of retribution in the psalms but among the Pedi traditional healers and ancestors perform this function. The role of ancestors and traditional healers is premised by their position as custodians of custom. In most cases the psalmists' foes are condemned to a fate fitting their crimes. Erring Pedi people on the other hand are in danger of destruction since they have broken faith with their community by disregarding traditions. Therefore imprecatory songs are employed in the two traditions; they denounce, warn and invoke the power of God or ancestors and traditional healers in the Psalms and Pedi cultures respectively.

4.2.9 Structuring relationship with God/the divine

4.2.9.1 Form

Certain psalms focus on the Mosaic law, hence they are called Torah psalms. Three psalms deal entirely with the Torah motif (Pss 1; 19; 119) Yet allusions to the Torah are found in many more psalms particularly wisdom psalms (Pss 18; 25; 33; 68; 78; 81; 89; 93; 94; 99; 103; 105; 111; 112; 147; 148). Ethical matters such as justice, righteousness and truth are central issues in these texts.

Pedi so-called law songs feature among the intermediary offices of diviners, traditional healers, priests and chiefs. These functionaries relay messages from God and ancestors to the community. The exemplar *Bana ba Modimo* is addressed to the community by urging

members to heed God's laws. It elaborates the reason for drought and warns against disregard of godly instructions.

Functionally, law songs admonish members of the communities to uphold the commandments and/or instructions of God. Warnings are pronounced on errant members. By so doing the welfare of the individual and the society is promoted. Nevertheless, the added dimension of ancestors in *Pedi* religious experience has no approximation in Israel. Similarly the mediatory functionaries, diviners, traditional healers and chiefs are not attested to in the Psalms.

4.2.9.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

At least ten different terms for the Torah are used in the law psalms: eight major terms are employed, namely: a) commandment; b) statute; c) word; d) judgement; e) testimony; f) precept; g) law or instruction; and h) way (Day 1990:56-57).

Pedi law songs (e.g. *Bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo*) can inter alia be divided into several parts: *Bana ba Modimo* sets off by pleading with the community to heed God's law. It is followed by a declaration of confidence in God's encompassing presence. His presence is complemented by an attribute of all-powerfulness. Thereafter the singer then admonishes his community to follow God's instructions by desisting from evil acts. A rationale for suffering in view of a prevailing drought is provided as the presence of violence in society. To that end mediated sayings of God's assurance concerning the provision of rain are stated however they are hinged on

the cessation of the community's wickedness. Subsequently, the audience is encouraged to trust in God and his love.

Petitions for rain are addressed to the Deity embellished by affirmations of God's ability to answer prayer. Requests and confessions precede instructions to the congregation to remain faithful and fervent at prayer. In conclusion the poet pronounces blessings of peace in benediction and disperses the gathering.

It seems that teachings about God and his instructions are found in both Old Testament Torah psalms and *Pedi* law songs. When comparing Old Testament law psalms and *Pedi* law songs results have shown that the primary function of both is to command the believer about his/her relationship with God (or the divine). Psalm 1 for example admonishes the righteous one to follow the way of the Lord. Similarly *Bana ba Modimo* urges the community into a relationship with God through obedience to his instructions. In the Old Testament God employs prophets and priests as His intermediaries to the believers, but in the *Pedi* society diviners, traditional healers, chiefs and ancestors are intermediaries between the *Pedi* people and God.

4.2.9.3 Content and context

Torah psalms are instructional. Individual Israelites have experienced teaching through meditative private devotions as well as in liturgical public worship. Worshippers are taught that meditating on the Torah results in blessings (Ps 1:6). In contrast the way of the wicked leads to destruction. God is faithful and extends his justice and good acts to those who keep his precepts. Consequently the psalmists are filled with joy and knowledge from God.

Bana ba modimo is a *Pedi* law song which comprises instructions to take heed of God's laws, warning about waywardness, and express wishes and benediction. The poet, a diviner, is a mouth piece of the gods and intends to transmit the message to his community. God's omnipotence is also communicated by the song. In sum, the *Pedi* song teaches that obeying God's instructions which are mediated by the ancestors result in blessings.

Both biblical and *Pedi* traditions encourage obedience to the law of God. There is strong emphasis on the role of the community in *Pedi* culture while a proviso for individual piety is embedded in Torah psalms. Psalmists promote the Torah in public worship. Distinctions arise from the aspects of petition and role of diviners and ancestors in the *Pedi* song. Similarities are noticeable from the concreteness of the consequences of obedience and disobedience. Exemplarily the Old Testament teaches that God provides justice and blessings for obedience and punishment to the wicked. Similarly in *Pedi* culture wayward members of society experience calamities while the obedient enjoy success in their endeavours.

4.2.9.4 Function

The Torah (law) psalms were not treasured merely as examples of beautiful poetry. Rather, these psalms have been preserved and treasured because they teach about God, his relationship with believers and about the guidelines of faith. Psalms (e.g. Pss 1; 19; 119) have instructed the people of God as they have read and mediated upon them in private devotion; above all, Israelites and

believers have been instructed as they have read, heard and sung the Psalms in public worship.

The primary function of *Pedi* law songs is to command the community and the individual. The purpose of this command is two-fold, namely: a) to instruct the people to carry out the instructions (laws) as instructed by God through the ancestors; b) and to admonish the people to comply with God's laws for their survival. Consequently, obedience leads to improved and revived religious life.

Pedi law songs (e.g. *Bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo*) serve as teaching songs in which God gives instruction to mankind as a guide for life. They prompt a prayer expressing man's continuous need of God's care.

4.2.9.5 Conclusion

Law songs are aimed at admonishing members of the community to follow God. Obedience to God's law precedes realising a blessed life. Individuals and the community are secure in God when laws are followed. On the other hand *Pedi* people follow oral religious traditions, revere ancestors and are directives from diviners. Furthermore while the religious community is involved in both traditions it appears that private devotion is less pronounced in the *Pedi* religious experience. In both traditions religious experts are involved. Priests and prophets mediate the precepts of God to Israel.

4.2.10 Festive celebrations

4.2.10.1 Form

Certain psalms are associated with the major religious festivals of Israel. They include Unleavened Bread and Passover, Harvest, Tabernacles and New Year. These festivals correlate with the agricultural seasons. It appears that Psalms 120 - 134 were sung at the water-pouring rites on the great day of the Feast of Tabernacles. Enthronement psalms were sung at this occasion too (Pss 47; 93; 96-99). Equally, Yahweh's kingship and enthronement psalms were probably recited at the New Year festival. Festival psalms are principally hymns of praise. Thematically these psalms highlight exhortations to praise, mention Yahweh's presence and his excellent acts.

Pedi festive songs relate to entertainment. Such occasions include bridal payments and wedding ceremonies. Drumming, clapping, rattles and whistles accompany singing and dancing at these festivals. Generally, festival songs are low on melody. A song leader improvises by adding new words as the song proceeds. During bridal negotiations performances comprise recitations, singing, dancing and playing of instruments. Such songs may be high on advice, such as *Hela mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana* (Hi! Mother-in-law, please abandon the cooking pots). This wedding song admonishes a *Pedi* bride to attend to household duties.

Religious festivals are found in both *Pedi* and the Old Testament. These occasions are characterized by singing. While psalms became a

common feature of the centralized religious festivals *Pedi* festive songs on the other hand are biased to entertainment and *rites of passage*.

4.2.10.2 Language (structural elements and characteristics)

Festival psalms that are sung during religious feasts like Passover, Booths and Weeks are principally hymns of praise with the usual character and structure of such hymns. Free variations occasioned by their special theme. The main emphases of these psalms are for example, the exhortations to praise; the mention of Yahweh's glorious presence; and the excellent deeds God has just performed or is about to perform. Most festival psalms share characteristic features and a common structural pattern. The structure is comprised of three elements namely, the introductory exhortation or call to praise, the main body of the hymn, which praises God for his attributes and deeds and a concluding section expressing some wish, prayer or blessing.

Pedi festival songs (e.g. *Ngwana malome nnyale* and *Hela mmatswale*) are characterized by several structural elements. This includes a singer's plea for a hearing and marriage to her cousin; motivation for the active participation of both performers and spectators; an announcement of what the festival is all about; and some humble requests by the singers on behalf of the host for everybody to be free and joyous.

Happiness and joy are two prominent characteristics of both Old Testament and *Pedi* festival songs. This confirms that there is no entertainment which can take place without musical accompaniment and/or singing.

4.2.10.3 Content and context

Old Testament major religious festivals form the cultic context of the festive psalms. Mowinckel (1962:106-192) has argued that the New Year festival was important in the reconstruction of a cultic setting. He proposes that at this festival Yahweh was enthroned. Weiser (1962:23-52) has postulated an autumn Covenant Festival. At this occasion the primary focus was on the renewal of the Sinaitic Covenant. Yet another suggestion by Kraus (1966:179-222) points to a Royal Zion Festival. This festival re-enacts the appointment of the Davidic kingship and Jerusalem the city of the king. Several other feasts like Booths, Weeks and Tabernacles as well as family feasts like weddings (see Ps 45) set the context for festival Psalms.

Of the many feasts in *Pedi* culture marriage illustrates an occasion of celebration. Marriage comprises two stages namely bride-price negotiations and payments, as well as wedding ceremonies. The former signifies the transfer of animal or monetary gifts to the bride's family. It is a joyous occasion graced with songs and ululations. A wedding is an equally festive event. Music, dance and feasting are typical activities at such celebrations. Although wedding songs appear to be devoid of religious connotations at the core of these festivities, is a deep sense of African religiosity. Marriage brings together the couple, their families and ancestors. The underlying involvement of ancestors is clear at every stage of the process.

The role of music in both cultures is underlined although the nature of music and musical instruments of biblical times is unknown to us. Songs are normally utilized to convey particular ideas. Functionally

songs and festivities relieve stress, convey important messages aimed at teaching the participants. But the centrality of God or religious experience in festival psalms is not a common feature among *Pedi* people.

4.2.10.4 Function

A particularly important function is how these psalms, performed at annual festivals or celebrations, were used for the celebration of the historical deeds of God: e.g. the election of God's people, the deliverance from Egypt, and the making of the covenant. The purpose of *Pedi* festival songs (e.g. *Ngwana malome nnyale and Hela Mmatswale*) includes entertainment, which broadly implicates forms of socialization and companionship.

The main festivals of early Israel required attendance at the sanctuary. These festivals were closely associated with the agricultural season. Hence, they served a double function, in celebration of the harvest, but importantly also as a reflection on God's redemptive activities of the Exodus. Thus these festivities assisted to actualize the past and to anticipate the future. Through song God is thanked in the cult for his great deeds of provision and redemption.

Central to *Pedi* festival songs is the aspect of entertainment. Traditional *lobola* songs encourage companionship and intermarriage. This is done in an atmosphere of enjoyment as participants and guests celebrate the joyous occasion. Friendships are cemented through marriage and stress is relieved by festivity. Further, marriage within a clan is encouraged in order to keep wealth within family circles.

Wedding songs serve the purposes of welcoming the bride and making her feel cherished.

While the major festivals and songs of Israel surround religious celebrations among *Pedi* people the deity is inconspicuous. Although the gathering of an African community invokes the presence of the living and dead the Deity is hardly mentioned in *Pedi* culture and song texts.

10.2.10.5 Conclusion

Festive psalms are associated with the major religious festivals of Israel namely Unleavened Bread, Passover, Harvest, Tabernacles and New Year. Although originally linked to the agricultural seasons in time they came to be highly religious festivals. Thus festival psalms thematically focus on praising Yahweh. *Pedi* festive songs on the other hand relate to entertainment. They occasion bridal negotiations and payments as well as wedding ceremonies.

Structurally, many festive psalms exhibit the following elements: introductory exhortation, praises of God's attributes and acts, wish and blessing. *Pedi* festival songs are characterized by a plea to be heard, motivation and requests for communal participation in the festivity. Although *Pedi* festival songs do not normally mention the deity rituals surrounding weddings for example are steeped in religious rites. At such rituals ancestors are invoked, spouses are introduced to their "ancestors-in law" and requests for blessings and protection are made.

Festive psalms such as Yahweh is king psalms have a theological focus on the kingship of Yahweh. His rule and its results of blessings are mentioned and anticipated. Since this feature is missing in *Pedi* festival songs they in turn primarily promote celebration. *Pedi* songs regularly convey culturally educative messages. In addition they are therapeutic particularly when considered from their celebrative function. They assist to relieve stress and promote joy and relaxation.

4.2.11 Poetic features

4.2.11.1 Introduction

Both biblical psalms and *Pedi* songs show definite structural patterns to which they conform. Both contain repetition and parallelism, both are songs in the form of poetry. Music and words complement each other in both traditions.

4.2.11.2 Musical application

Psalms feature almost completely in textual form while *Pedi* songs are still very much oral. Old Testament songs are in Hebrew while *Pedi* songs are in the *Pedi* language (Northern Sotho). Different musical accompaniment⁶⁴ with wind, stringed and percussion instruments were utilized in the Old Testament. For example, psalms were used with instruments⁶⁵.

⁶⁴ Sendrey (1969:264) states that the Bible mentions sixteen musical instruments as having been used in Ancient Israel. He further mentions that the book of Daniel refers furthermore to six instruments, which were played at King Nebuchadrezzar's court, their names, however, characterize them as non-Jewish instruments.

⁶⁵ Stringed instruments: a) *kinnor*; b) *nebel*; c) *'asor*; d) *gittit*; e) *sabbeka*; f) *pesanterin*; g) *kathros*; h) *neginot*; i) *shushan*; j) *kleshir*. Wind instruments: a) *'ugab*; b) *halil*; c) *nekeb*; d) *nehilot*; e) *'alamot*; f) *mahol*; g) *mashrokita*; h) *sumponyah*; i) *hazzerah*; j) *keren*; k) *yobel*; and l) flutes. Percussion, shaking and

A notable observation on the similarities between instruments in the Old Testament and *Pedi* society should be mentioned. For both traditions wind and percussion instruments are used.

It is noteworthy that the *moropa* (drum) was also part of the musical instruments which were employed to accompany the Old Testament psalms, as it is found in the *Pedi* tradition.

In conclusion, one may observe that traditionally *Pedi* people do not use stringed instruments to accompany their cultural songs as it is experienced in the Old Testament psalms.

4.3 Life setting (*Sitz im Leben*)

4.3.1 Historical setting

Different socio-political events gave rise to the two traditions, namely Old Testament and *Pedi* songs, i.e. different political settings, different cultural challenges, different underlying religious assumptions and frames of reference. For example Israel developed over a period of time from an egalitarian society to monarchy. *Pedi* society is tribal composed of connected clans and families under a chief. Israel's chequered history has ensured borrowing of ideas and practices to form a religious cultural system exemplified by biblical accounts. Similarly *Pedi* culture although unique in certain aspects broadly

rattling instruments: a) *tof*; b) *meziltayim*; c) *zelzelim*; d) *shalishim*; e) *menacan'im*; f) *pa'amonim*; and g) *mezillot* (Sendrey 1969:264), while *Pedi* songs are sung with instruments like a) *meropa* (drums); b) *dinaka* (reed pipes); c) *phalafala* (horn); d) *mekuduetane* (flutes); e) *dithlwathlwadi* (rattles) and f) *dipela* (mbiras). The latter finding is confirmed by (Stone 1998:7) when he observes that singing, playing instruments, dancing, masquerading and dramatizing are part of the conceptual package that many Africans think of as one and the same.

resembles other African cultures. Central to Old Testament beliefs is a strong monotheism. Yahweh worship developed by overthrowing and assimilating ideas from neighbouring cultures. Pedi people also share a common religious belief system with other African people. At the core of Pedi religiosity is belief in a Supreme being and ancestors. In view of the above underlying historical religious structural influences it is tentatively possible to postulate religious differences between the two traditions.

Many of the *Pedi* songs originated in the twentieth century while the Psalms were composed 2-3 millenia ago (Coggins 1990:84). Headings in Psalms provide pseudo-identification of historical life settings but *Pedi* songs lack such identification.

The comparison generally shows that on the one hand, the addressee in biblical psalms is most often God himself (Pss 4:3,8; 81:1; 90:1-2) and sometimes it is people. On the other hand in the *Pedi* songs it is almost exclusively the ancestors and people whom are the addressees.

4.3.2 Cultic setting

Psalms were mostly recited or meditated by believers of the Yahweh faith but *Pedi* texts by people not necessarily attached to temples and sung by many different types of people in the *Pedi* community. In the *Pedi* tribe, music making is generally organized as a social event. Public performances take place on social occasions when members of a clan or a community come together for enjoyment of leisure, or for recreational activities. In the *Pedi* tradition, social occasions and music

are inseparable. This is also the case with the psalms, although the contexts are different.

Both cultures' songs deal with themes, which are universally human. These include life, death, wisdom, veneration of divine being(s), etc. Both Psalms and *Pedi* songs feature in the context of specific significant situations in life, politics, social events, religion and religious ritual.

4.4 Ritual revival of a divine experience

Generally, on the one hand, various types of Old Testament psalms express worship in one way or the other; whether it is praise or lament, or anything in between these two poles. On the other hand, *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs are used to express success (joy/praise), happy times (thanksgiving), times of sorrow (laments), protesting (liberation), the inauguration and funeral of the chief (royal), telling stories (wisdom), *malopo* cult, cohesion (penitence), emotional expression (rituals), ancestor veneration, pouring of libation and communication (security and survival), therapy (possession), irony (imprecation), instructions (law), as well as prayers of trust.

Furthermore, a close look at both Old Testament Psalms and *Pedi* Psalm-like Songs reveals that the *Pedi* tribe freely uses their songs for various functions: to instruct, ridicule, support, educate, clarify, warn, and comment on events or persons, etc. As a form of oral communication, both narratives and songs play an important role in the *Pedi* society. Through them people express their views of all aspects of life. Because of their nature, *Pedi* songs have more

authority than stories. One song can be used at many different occasions, and can also carry several applications and interpretations. Psalms in the Old Testament were originally more restricted to specific themes or contexts. For example, in the *Pedi* tribe imprecatory songs (e.g. *Leepo*) can be used to insult, mock, provoke and to submit a petition to the ancestors. In the *Pedi* culture imprecatory songs such as *Leepo* are employed as an expression of confidence in the ancestors and declaration of loyalty, whereas the focus in the Old Testament imprecatory psalms (e.g. Pss 59; 109; etc) is on the precise prayer for what the worshippers want.

Community Psalms of Thanksgiving (e.g. Ps 65) place a special emphasis on God's provision of food, good health and security for the world (Pleins, 1993:63). *Pedi* Songs of Thanksgiving place a special emphasis on ancestors' provision of food for either the clan or community.

Psalms and *Pedi* songs function to create religious significance for the local cultural community. In addition to expressing praise and joy, both are associated with such varied moods as consolation and thanksgiving. The basis for music making is usually dependent on the members of the clan or group who share the common habitat, and who have common local traditions, common beliefs and values. This is not to say that members should know one another, but they may be bound by the network of social relations.

In view of the above descriptions, we may conclude that both traditions mediate and revive religious experience of believers in and outside the cult and enhance their worship of the divine.

4.5 Final synthesis

When Psalms of the Old Testament are compared to the *Pedi* psalm-like texts there appear to be many general similarities between the songs of the two cultures with regard to a variety of issues. A closer look at the songs themselves reveals many significant differences on a variety of levels.

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

Chapter 5

Synthesis

5.1 INTRODUCTION

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

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

5.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

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

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

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

5.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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

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

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

5.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

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

5.5.1 Praise

5.5.1.1 Similarities

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

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

5.5.1.2 Differences

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

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

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

5.5.2 Thanksgiving

5.5.2.1 Similarities

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

5.5.2.2 Differences

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

5.5.3 Lamenting

5.5.3.1 Similarities

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

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

5.5.3.2 Differences

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

5.5.4 Royal celebration

5.5.4.1 Similarities

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

5.5.4.2 Differences

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

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

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

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

5.5.5 Zion and the need for liberation, trust and peace

5.5.5.1 Similarities

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

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

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

5.5.5.2 Differences

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

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

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

5.5.6 Promoting wise behaviour

5.5.6.1 Similarities

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

5.5.6.2 Differences

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

5.5.7 Expressing trust

5.5.7.1 Similarities

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

5.5.7.2 Differences

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

5.5.8 Wrath given to God

5.5.8.1 Similarities

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

5.5.8.2 Differences

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

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

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

5.5.9 Structuring relationship with God/the divine

5.5.9.1 Similarities

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

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

5.5.9.2 Differences

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

5.5.10 Festive celebrations

5.5.10.1 Similarities

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

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

5.5.10.2 Differences

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

5.6 HYPOTHESIS

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.7 CONCLUSION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.8 SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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

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APPENDIX II

LIST OF SUBJECTS : ANNEXURE TO CHAPTER 3

1. Local kgoshi (chief)

Surname Name	Place (village)
Maloma Alfred	Ga-Maloma (Schoonoord)

2. The President and Eight (8) members of *CONTADOSA* Executive Committee.

Surname Names	Designation	Place(village)
1. Sete Madikedike Simon	President	Kotsiri
2. Molangwana Matshege Christina	Vice President	Dingwane
3. Mashegoana Tswaledi Stephen	Secretary	Kotsiri
4. Lekwana Manare Anna	Vice Secretary	Dingwane
5. Mabelane Nthepeng william	Additional member	Ga-Mashegoane
6. Tjabadi Mamagabe Michael	Additional member	Ga-Maepa
7. Bokgobelo Nkahloleng Victor	Additional member	Mohlaletse
8. Tshehla Morongwa Angelinah	Additional member	Dikgageng
9. Maloma Mafege Michael	Additional member	Dingwane

3. Five (5) song leaders/composers identified

Surname & Initials	Sex M: Male F: Female	Identity	Place (village)
1. Moganedi M. D.	F	4504290294088	Kotsiri
2. Kgwale P. T.	M	3004305213083	Kotsiri
3. Senong N. E.	M	6904225719084	Ga-Maloma
4. Makunyane S. F.	F	4208160488081	Dingwane
5. Modipa M. A.	M	3802075339081	Ga-Tswaledi

3. Two (2) Headmen

Surname & Initials	Sex M: Male F: Female	Identity	Place (village)
1. Mayimela M. P.	M	4207015540088	Kutululo
2. Mashegwane M. R.	M	1807140153088	Kotsiri

4. Eight (8) appointed traditional healers who are also musicians

Surname & Initials	Sex M: Male F: Female	Identity	Place (village)
1. Moila S. I.	F	5611060495081	Ga-Maloma
2. Mmotla M.	F	3305070266085	Dingwane
3. Maepa M. D	F	5408310317086	Ga-Maila
4. Metsana S. J	M	3101016190087	Ga-Legare
5. Makolane N.J	M	3904235228087	Masebene
6. Maphopha L. M	F	4008290157089	Ga-Maphopha



7. Mogoshi K. C	F	4612140267087	Ga-Tswaledi
8. Tshehla S. F	F	5111200499085	Ga-Moela

5. Two (2) Pedi cultural informants who were purposively identified

Surname & Initials	Sex M: Male F: Female	Identity	Place (village)
1. Mmaboki M. M	F	3904170148084	Ga-Maloma
2. Ntuli M. E	F	3704260146083	Ga-Legare

6. Other Participants

Surname & Initials	Sex M: Male F: Female	Identity	Place (village)
1. Thokoane M. J.	F	4407010185083	Ga-Maloma
2. Tau M. S	F	4810285460083	Ga-Rantho
3. Maripana N	F	3909090309088	Ga-Legare
4. Matentshi L. J	M	3405125140085	Ga-Maloma
5. Tshesane P. M.	M	5004015481085	Kotsiri
6. Mokwena M. S	M	3110205118080	Ga-Tswaledi
7. Mashegoana T. J	M	4601285236080	Kotsiri
8. Masha L. E	F	4006280406086	Ga-maloma
9. Mashabela R	F	4402290186083	Kotsiri
10. Mmushi M. J.	M	4604125267083	Ga-Maloma



11. Magatsela M. P	M	5312235386087	Ga-Tswaledi
12. Rachidi M. B.	F	5205130634082	Ga-Nchabeleng
13. Molopo S. A	F	4810110709084	Ga-Seopela

TOTAL: 40 SUBJECTS

APPENDIX III
PEDI PSALM-LIKE SONGS: ANNEXURE TO CHAPTER 3
AUDIO CD INFORMATION

The CD that accompanies this thesis contains excerpts from live and field recordings relevant to chapter three. It is no way intended to be complete, either in terms of the musics discussed in this thesis, or in terms of experience and engagement with the performance/events of the recorded musics. My intention is primarily to enable an engagement that converts readers into hearers, and thereby encourages richer understanding and entices towards further engagement.

The excerpts remain copyright of the composers and/or performers in all cases. In accordance with international legal agreements, the intellectual property rights and copyrights are held by the composers and/or performers. These recordings are provided solely for educational purposes and are not to be reproduced or distributed without this thesis.

List of tracks

Track 1. '*Mogale wa marumo*' ('Praise song'), performed by Tjabadi's clan at *malopo* ritual held at *Dingwane* village, Sekhukhune area in Limpopo Province. Recorded at the homestead of Molangwana Matshege Christina by the author in May 2003.

Track 2. '*Kgoparara*' ('Thanksgiving song'), performed by traditional healers during the *malopo* ritual held at *Dingwane* village, Sekhukhune

area in Limpopo Province. Recorded at the homestead of Molangwana Matshege Christina by the author in May 2003.

Track 3. '*Madi a manaba*' ('Lament song'), performed by the senior traditional healer, Molangwana Matshege Christina at *malopo* ritual held at Dingwane village, Sekhukhune area - Limpopo Province in May 2003.

Track 4. '*Kgoshi*' ('Inauguration song'), performed by a group of singing dancers during the inauguration ceremony of *kgoshi* (chief) Shorwane held at Shorwane village, Sekhukhune area in Limpopo Province. Recorded at mošate wa Shorwane (Shorwane's Royal family) by the author in July 2003.

Track 5. '*Ga e boe Afrika*' ('Liberation song'), performed by chanters during the commemoration of the National heritage day held at Jane Furse, Sekhukhune area in Limpopo Province. Recorded by the author in September 2004.

Track 6. '*Mokgoronyane*' (Initiation song for boys), performed by a group of singing dancers (men) who belong to Maloma's clan during the unveiling of the tombstone of Lehumo Mmotla (father to Molangwana Matshege Christina) held at Ga-Maloma village, Sekhukhune area in Limpopo Province. Recorded by the author at Ga-Maloma village in April 2004.

Track 7. '*Kgogedi*' ('Initiation song for girls'), performed by a group of singing dancers (women) who belong to Maloma's clan during the unveiling of the tombstone of Lehumo Mmotla (father to Molangwana

Matshege Christina) held at Ga-Maloma village, Sekhukhune area in Limpopo Province. Recorded by the author at Ga-Maloma village in April 2004.

Track 8. '*Salane*' (Song of Trust'), performed by traditional healers during *malopo* ritual held at Dingwane village, Sekhukhune area in Limpopo Province. Recorded by the author at the homestead of Molangwana Matshege Christina in May 2003.

Track 9. '*Leepo*' (Imprecatory song-song with irony), performed by a traditional healer (Lekwana Manare Anna) during *malopo* ritual held at Dingwane village, Sekhukhune area in Limpopo Province. Recorded by the author at the homestead of Molangwana Matshege Christina in May 2003.

Track 10. '*Bana ba Modimo, thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo*' Instruction (law) song, narrated by a man called Tema (diviner) during a community meeting held at Ga – Seopela village, Sekhukhune area in Limpopo Province. Recorded by the author at Ga-Seopela village in November 2003.

Track 11. '*Ngwana malome nnyale*', (festival song-*lobola* song) performed by a group of singing dancers during a *lobola* ceremony held at Ga – Phaahla Mmakadikwe village, Nebo area in Limpopo Province. Recorded by the author at the homestead of Ramaoto Boas Kgaka in March 2005.

Track 12. '*Hela Mmatswale, tlogela dipotwana*' (festival song-wedding song), performed by a group of singing dancers during a wedding

ceremony held at Ga-Phaahla Mmakadikwe village, Nebo area in Limpopo Province. Recorded by the author at the homestead of Ramaoto Boas Kgaka in June 2005.

APPENDIX IV

GLOSSARY OF TERMS IN SEPEDI

Badimo : ancestors

Baloi : wizards (sorcerers)

Bana ba Modimo : children of God

Batswadi : parents

Bogadi : groom's place

Bogwera : second phase of initiation school for boys

Boloi : witchcraft

CONTRADOSA : Congress of Traditional doctors of South Africa

Dinaka : reed pipes

Dingaka : doctors

Dingwetsi : brides

Dithlwathlwadi : leg rattles

Dipotwana : cooking pots

E maswi ga e ke tswale : heredity does not always apply

Fihlile : arrived

Ga-Phaahla Mmakadikwe : name of the village in the Sekhukhune area

Ga-Seopela : Name of the village in the Sekhukhune area where lives

Go tielwa : the first phase for training as a traditional healer

Kgogedi : an initiation song for girls

Kgooga : the name of a small and slow moving animal

Kgoparara : name of the song of praise

Kgoshi : chief

Kotsiri : name of the village in the Sekhukhune area

Laboraro : Wednesday

Leepo : irony

Legwame : name of the ancestor

Lenyalo : marriage celebration

Leparapata : African horn

Letswalo : ethnic group in Limpopo province

Limpopo : one of the nine (9) provinces in South Africa, situated far North (closer to Zimbabwe and Mozambique)

Lobola : bride price

Mabu a utswitswe : the chief is dead

Madi : blood

Magoshi : plural of kgoshi (chief) which means chiefs

Maila : name of the village in the Sekhukhune area

Maloma : name of the village in the Sekhukhune area

Malome : uncle

Malopo : it is an illness as well as a ritual

Manaba : enemies (adversaries)

Maphopha : name of the village in the Sekhukhune area

Marumo : spears

Masoboro : uncircumcised

Maswi : literally means milk

Matona : headmen

Mekuduetane : steel pipes

Meropa : plural of moropa, which means drums

Mmatshatshaila : senior traditional healer

Mmatswale : mother in law

Modimo : God

Mogale : hero

Mokgoronyane : name of the bird

Monyanya : wedding ceremony

Moropa : drum

Moshuthelele : open the way for her to enter

Motlolo : Name of the village in the Sekhukhune area

Ngaka ya malopo : doctor of malopo

Ngwana : child

Ngwato : A praise name of ancestor whose name is Legwame

Nnyale : marry me

Pedi : name of the tribe in Limpopo province

Pula : rain

Re sa paletse baloi : we have still baffled the witches

Salane : name of the song of trust

Sekhukhune : name of the area in Limpopo province

Sekhukhune CONTRADOSA : Congress of Traditional doctors of South Africa-Sekhukhune branch

Sekhukhuneland : name of the area in the Limpopo province

Seriti : dignity

Shorwane : name of the village in the Sekhukhune area

Sotho : language spoken by the Sotho people (Basotho)

Tsohle : everything

Tswana : one of the eleven official languages in South Africa

Tshwarelo hle : please forgive me

Thaetsang melao ya Modimo ka badimo : Please listen to the laws (instructions) of God through the ancestors

Tema : name of the diviner

Tshumu : name of the Pedi traditional healer

Yo godimodimo : One in heaven



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