



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Where leaders learn*

**Enculturation and adaptation: A practice-led investigation into  
the history and contemporary transformation of the  
Bahananwa *harepa***

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for the degree of

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I thank the Lord for walking with me all the way. I can do all things through Christ, who gives me strength (Philippians 4:13).

# Abstract

This thesis investigates the cultural and musical transformations of the *harepa*, a stringed instrument initially introduced as the autoharp by Christian missionaries in the late nineteenth century, now deeply embedded within the Basotho ba Lebowa community in Limpopo, South Africa. Through an interdisciplinary approach that blends historical ethnography with practice-led research, this thesis explores the *harepa's* negotiation of identity amidst the cultural shifts and modernisation affecting the community. The musical output of the *harepa* showcases a unique hybridity that fuses Basotho ba Lebowa traditions with Western musical influences. The aim of this research is to document the *harepa* instrument, analyse its music and transformation processes, highlight the musical history of research partners and emphasise the unique tunings which are distinct from Western standards.

Employing methodologies that integrate participant observation, ethnographic interviews, and direct musical practice, the research engages with local musicians to understand the contemporary relevance of the *harepa* and its role in sustaining cultural heritage. It examines shifts in musical practices, the decline of traditional uses of the *harepa*, and efforts towards its revitalisation, including documenting musical repertoires and analysing performance practices.

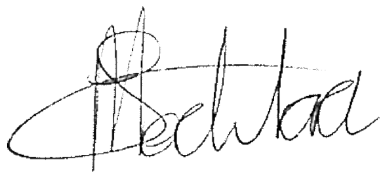
The findings highlight a complex narrative of enculturation, adaptation, and resistance, revealing the resilience of cultural identity through unique tuning systems that contrast sharply with Western musical paradigms. African tuning practices, characterised by their flexibility and reliance on auditory perception, challenge the adequacy of Western tuning methodologies. This study also investigates the potential of sampling as a method for the sonic representation of African music, advocating for a more culturally sensitive framework that respects the diversity of global musical traditions.

By focusing on this localised musical phenomenon, the study illustrates broader cultural preservation and innovation dynamics within Limpopo's Basotho ba Lebowa community. It calls for ongoing dialogue and research to develop methodologies that reflect the unique cultural contexts of musical traditions worldwide. Ultimately, this work underscores the importance of engaged, practice-led research in documenting and revitalising endangered musical cultures in the face of globalisation and cultural homogenisation.

Keywords: Bahananwa, Sehananwa, Basotho ba Lebowa, Sesotho sa Lebowa, Harepa.

# Declaration of originality

I declare that this thesis is my own work, written in my own words. Where I have drawn on the words or ideas of others, these have been acknowledged using complete references according to Departmental Guidelines.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bechtaal', written in a cursive style.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

*Rutang bana ditaola, le se ye le tšona badimong* (Teach the children the bones, do not go to the ancestors with them) (a Sesotho sa Lebowa proverb that emphasises that handing down wisdom to the young preserves our heritage).

In the mountainous region of Limpopo, the small town of Bochum has four wizened men who all play a unique instrument called the *harepa*. The music performed on this instrument calls to the ancestors of the Bahananwa, using tonal systems that have existed for centuries on the African continent. The instrument itself, however, has not and it is the unique combination of ancient sound with modern organology that lies at the heart of this research. This journey has taken me from the International Library of African Music (ILAM), a sound archive, to the homesteads of the Bahananwa, a small community of Basotho ba Lebowa. I am a sound engineer and my job at ILAM has revolved around listening to the archival holdings. It was there that I heard recordings of the *harepa*, a sound I remembered from childhood, as I was born in Limpopo Province myself. This awakened a yearning in me to explore this very recognisable impression and I decided that this was a calling.

As will be outlined in detail later in the thesis, the *harepa* is a plucked string instrument with its origins in Europe. Basotho ba Lebowa reproduced a traditional Sotho sound on the instrument, resulting in a hybrid aesthetic as the music was both Sesotho sa Lebowa and influenced by the music of Christian original aesthetics of the original instrument itself, the autoharp (Crevoisier, 2008; Whalley, 2008; Ware, 2011; Lončar, 2018). This original, yet traditional sounding instrument has a complex history and an unusual contemporary manifestation, introduced by the Christian missionaries who were a huge influence in the area where this research took place. Accordingly, a central aspect that I investigated is the role of Christian missionaries in transforming the music traditions of Basotho ba Lebowa through the introduction of the *harepa*. My research investigated how *harepa* music intersected with the modernity experienced by Basotho ba Lebowa. Many of those who moved to large cities such as Johannesburg continued to use and strongly identify with instruments such as the *harepa*. Early research suggests that when migrant workers from various places in Southern Africa,

including the province of Limpopo, worked in Johannesburg, the *harepa*, for reasons outlined below, became the instrument that could connect them with the life they left behind (Mapaya, 2014, p.30).

Although the *harepa* is not indigenous to South Africa, it has provoked a strong identification with broader traditional music practices among the Basotho ba Lebowa. It was initially brought to Bochum in Limpopo by Christian missionaries from Germany in the late 1800s when it was known as an autoharp. The community in Bochum recognises *harepa* music as a traditional instrument. The question of naming the instrument speaks to the varied transformation processes in many traditional music cultures, providing significant evidence about recontextualising the power invested in the authority of missionaries.

Traditional Sesotho sa Lebowa music involves the *dinaka*<sup>1</sup> reed pipe ensemble, which comprises a fluid group of between seven and twenty players; sometimes more as the same notes can be repeated. The *dinaka* pipes are tuned to a pentatonic scale, yet they are arranged as a set of seven notes. Each performer plays a single reed pipe while completing a complex, choreographed dance. The dance is accompanied by three or four drummers. The reed pipes are tuned on a pentatonic scale spread across two octaves (Mapaya, 2014). According to Mapaya (ibid., p.427), *dinaka* is “the blueprint of Northern Sotho indigenous music”<sup>2</sup>. The musicians confirmed this observation as they called this music *motheo* (foundation), which they consider the origin of their music. Another influence on *harepa* is provided by the *dipela*<sup>3</sup> musical instrument, which in Sesotho sa Lebowa tradition is played by only one musician. The *dipela* is a plucked instrument similar to the Zimbabwean *mbira*. Its frame is made of wood and the keys are made from metal strips, which in most cases are made of flattened nails. The performer plays using the same tonal and scalar system as located in *dinaka* music.

As the name *harepa*, was not traditionally known among Basotho ba Lebowa, it was referred to as *dipela*, while others would call it or its music “*dipela tša harepa*”, which could mean that it is a harp that plays *mbira* music or *mbira* music played on a harp (Mapaya, 2014, p.30). Mashao and Setati speak of the similarities between *dipela* and *harepa* music. Their observations are that in the music of the Basotho ba Lebowa, the performer (usually a male) sings and accompanies himself on the *harepa*,

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<sup>1</sup> *Dinaka* is a name for reed pipes (*dinaka*-plural, *naka*-singular) which are played by blowing the ends of the pipes, producing a single note each and then played in a hocketing style.

<sup>2</sup> Northern Sotho is an Englishised term for Sesotho sa Lebowa and is used in literature on the language. This terminology emerged during the apartheid era, when the Lebowa bantustan was established for language speakers, linking the name to a specific historical and political context.

<sup>3</sup> *Dipela* (*dipela*-plural and *pela*-singular. The name is used in a plural form) is a kind of *mbira*/thumb piano played by Basotho ba Lebowa, it is made of a piece of wood about 20cm long and 14cm wide. It has a bridge which separates and connects at the same time the metal notes made out of flattened nails. *Dipela* is tuned on a pentatonic scale, the same as the *dinaka* pipes.

producing double the effect of a *kiba*<sup>4</sup> ensemble (Mashao and Setati, 2004, p.24). The sound of the *harepa* and *dipela* has been altered and enhanced by electrical amplifiers, allowing *dipela* practitioners to increase the volume and tone quality significantly. This feature attracted audiences who could now hear the dexterity involved in producing music on the instruments. In this case, the concept of a passive audience, something that is alien to traditional African performances, emerges. The focus is on the display of dance routines and the skilful rendition of song and dance. During these performances, the audiences become “spellbound” as they watch from the periphery of the performance instead of participating (Mashao and Setati, 2014, p.24). Preliminary research shows, however, that this is not always the case. One of the goals of this research is to explore how the musicians managed to involve the audience instead of the audience merely being “spellbound”, as Mashao and Setati (2014, p.24) observed.

In addition, as *harepa* music fades from the memories of current musicians, it will be essential to quantify the space of Basotho ba Lebowa musical traditions and the role that older musicians play in custodianship (Mashao and Setati, 2004). Processes of *harepa* transformations and decline follow in the path of another South African instrument, the *isitolotolo* (African Jew’s harp). Impey (2018) provides a rich, ethnographic account of this instrument’s decline. My research builds on ethnographic research such as Impey’s, as the *harepa* is similarly at risk of disappearing altogether. Her research reveals and amplifies multiple local perspectives on musical transformation, trade, land ownership, and environmental justice, with much evidence coming from rich oral histories and other conversations. This approach will be outlined later in the thesis.

Although some *harepa* traditions are declining, the music has already been partially archived at ILAM, and I expand the scope of the extant archive by collaborating with contemporary musicians. Many of the recorded songs on the *harepa* found in the archive at ILAM were made by Hugh Tracey in 1945 when he recorded Tyson’s autoharp group for release on the Gallotone record label. Tyson and his group recorded eleven songs on their own and then another seven songs with a group of women under the name *Tyson and company*.<sup>5</sup> Tyson was a prolific musician who sang and played the *harepa* and *dipela* (*mbira*). During this period, he popularised the *harepa* instrument among the Basotho, and the “European sound” of the autoharp transformed into the more recent *harepa* sound as the *harepa*

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<sup>4</sup> *Kiba* is a music genre for men in the Basotho ba Lebowa culture, *Kiba* music comprises *dinaka* players mainly men who both play and dance, and drummers who can either be men or women. The music sounds complete when all the musicians play together in a hocketed style. The *harepa* player then plays it in a way to mimic the *kiba* ensemble on his own.

<sup>5</sup> These songs by Tyson and his group are on tracks CR0373-ABC10496, CR0368-ABC3693, TP0083-ABC789, TP0082-ABC788, TP0085-ABC791, TP0084-ABC790, TP0086-ABC793, TP0087-ABC792, TP0088-ABC794, CR0373-ABC10495, and CR0368-ABC3692 in the ILAM archive.

was tuned to mimic the indigenous instruments of Basotho, that is, the *dipela* and the *dinaka* instruments (Mapaya, 2014, p.30). This transformation and acceptance of a foreign instrument as a traditional one, lies at the heart of this research.

I argue that the *harepa* represented the experiences of both forced enculturation and adaptation. Many scholars such as Impey (2018) and Lebaka (2020) agree that in a process of forced enculturation, a modern tradition was introduced by missionaries for whom African musical cultures had to be destroyed if the African was to be “saved” from the wrath of God (Chikowero, 2015, p.3-4, p.61; Magwira, 2016, p.34-38; Setumo, 2015). Chikowero argues that missionaries were aware of how resilient African cultures were and that they could not root them out easily (2015). He continues, “many Africans did not simply self-immolate at the missionaries’ altar of cultural prejudice” (ibid., p.61). Observations such as these allow us to consider why the Basotho ba Lebowa people retained aspects of their music culture even when provided with European instruments such as the autoharp. The *harepa* was adapted to play Basotho ba Lebowa music. As a result, through multiple encounters in Bochum between 2019 and 2023, I have yet to meet a mosotho musician who plays the *harepa* the way it was initially played in Europe. In Europe, the player typically strums the strings with a plectrum in the right hand while the left hand operates a damper button for the chords. On the *harepa*, the Basotho musicians remove the dampers leaving it with only the strings, and the performer then uses both left and right-hand fingers to pluck the strings in ways very similar to how *dipela* is played. This unique adaptation will be carefully analysed in Chapter 6.

Erlmann, in agreement with Chikowero (2015 p.174-175), observes that Europeans were trying to modernise “African culture” by advancing a form of Eurocentrism that regarded Africans as inferior. Missionaries and colonialists needed the cooperation of those they sought to convert or draw into the colonising mission. In the process, the latter became complicit in successfully implementing these policies. The missionaries sought to destroy many cultural foundations and a sense of self-worth to disarm and dominate the Africans. There was collaboration, but below the surface, there was room for resistance or for retaining that which was held sacred. As elsewhere in the colonised world and in South Africa itself, how musicians pushed back against this influence is of significance. For example, we can hear resistance in the harmonic language and the grain of the voices of the *amakwayas* along the entire east coast of southern Africa (Kidula, 2000, p. 412). I argue that the aesthetics of the *harepa* music is one way in which the local people found a means of resisting the musical language of the missionary on their own terms. Given the above, I used my experience as a musician, a student, a

teacher, and an archivist, to fully engage with the music and meaning of this instrument including historical contextualisation of the music. These engagements are documented in Chapters 4 and 6.

More evidence of musical adaptation can be seen when migrant musicians in urban centres adapt the instrument to play in conditions with fewer or solo players. The hybridity follows a process of enculturation as local communities adopted a foreign musical language (Morrison, Demorest and Stambaugh, 2008; Morrison and Demorest, 2009; Tan, 2014; Raharjo et al., 2021). I investigated the *harepa's* relationship with traditional Sesotho sa Lebowa instruments such as the *dinaka* and *dipela* to examine the degrees of enculturation in its sounds and performance technique. As described earlier, the music played on the *harepa* is the same as that played on the *dipela* and the *dinaka* instruments. Therefore, by incorporating the indigenous musical genres, including Sesotho sa Lebowa styles such as *kiba*, the musician invents a new and unique instrument playing. This investigation led to deep listening while I was transcribing the music and to pertinent findings relating to indigenous tonality. After consultation with experts such as Andrew Tracey (1936-2024), and Dave Dargie (1937), I consider these findings as important new research that adds to a gap in the literature (Rigg, 1940; Schneider, 1961; Kubik, 1985; Butler, 1989; Agawu, 2023). These results are recorded in Chapter 6.

## **1.1 Overview of the *harepa* and its cultural significance in Basotho ba Lebowa music**

The *harepa* is a traditional musical instrument integral to Basotho culture, symbolising the rich musical heritage of Lesotho. It holds significant cultural value, being more than just an instrument; it represents the Basotho ba Lebowa people's identity, history, and social practices. Traditionally used in ceremonies, storytelling, and as a form of expression, the *harepa's* music resonates with the Basotho community's experiences, beliefs, and values. Melodies and rhythms are deeply intertwined with the Basotho's way of life, reflecting their emotions, struggles, and joys. Its significance is deeply rooted in the cultural fabric, playing a vital role in preserving and transmitting Basotho heritage across generations. The instrument's presence in cultural occasions underscores its importance in reinforcing social cohesion and identity among the Basotho people, acting as a bridge between the past and present. The significance of the *harepa* in Basotho culture can be further appreciated by considering how traditional music acts as a living archive of a community's history, values, and social bonds. Instruments like the *harepa* not only produce music but also serve as cultural symbols, embodying the

resilience and creativity of the Basotho people in the face of historical changes and contemporary challenges (Mashao and Setati, 2004; Lebaka, 2019).

## **1.2 Statement of the research problem and objectives**

The research problem revolves around understanding the contemporary relevance and transformation of the *harepa* within Basotho culture, mainly focusing on how historical influences, such as Christian missionary activities, have shaped its musical and cultural expressions. The objectives include documenting the *harepa's* historical journey, assessing its role and significance in modern Basotho society, and exploring practice-led research methodologies to engage with and preserve this musical tradition amidst evolving cultural landscapes.

As outlined above the instrument at the heart of this research originated on another continent. Thus, it is essential to investigate how the integration of the *harepa* into Basotho ba Lebowa music has evolved over time, particularly in response to external influences such as Christianisation and modernisation. Objectives include delineating the ways in which these influences have altered the construction, performance, and meaning of *harepa* music, identifying strategies for its preservation, and examining the role of practice-led research in sustaining cultural heritage (Schippers, 2007; Kemmis, 2009; Harrison, 2011). This involves a nuanced analysis of the interplay between tradition and change within Basotho ba Lebowa music culture.

Focusing on the research objectives requires a comprehensive approach to document and analyse the current status of the *harepa* within the Basotho community. It involves understanding the role of the instrument in contemporary society, evaluating the impact of cultural shifts, and proposing strategies to ensure its preservation. A crucial objective is to engage the community in this process, leveraging practice-led research to foster a collaborative environment where cultural heritage is actively preserved and appreciated.

The history of the *harepa* and its introduction to Basotho ba Lebowa by Christian missionaries is a fascinating aspect of cultural exchange. Christian missionaries, arriving in South Africa during the 19th century, played a significant role in the cultural and musical landscape of Basotho ba Lebowa (Mojela, 1999; Chikowero, 2015; Torp, 2017). They introduced various elements of Western culture, including musical instruments and hymns. The *harepa* was influenced by these interactions, blending Basotho ba Lebowa musical traditions with Christian hymnal practices. This cross-cultural integration or

enculturated process enriched the Basotho ba Lebowa musical repertoire and facilitated the spread of Christianity, intertwining religious and musical practices in Basotho ba Lebowa society. The interaction between the Basotho ba Lebowa and Christian missionaries deepened, leading to a unique fusion of musical traditions (Seroto, 2010). Importantly to this research, the missionaries' influence extended beyond religion, embedding Western musical instruments and styles into Basotho ba Lebowa culture, including *harepa* adaptations. This period marked a significant transformation in the musical identity of the Basotho ba Lebowa, as the integration of the *harepa* within social functions illustrated a dynamic cultural exchange and adaptation process (Mashao and Setati, 2004; Mapaya, 2014).

The impact of colonialism and Christianisation on Basotho music and culture was profound, leading to significant transformations. Colonialism introduced new socio-political dynamics, and Christianisation brought new religious beliefs, which influenced Basotho cultural practices and music. Christian hymns and Western musical instruments were integrated into the Basotho musical tradition, altering traditional music forms and practices such as chord singing style and the use of pentatonic scale. Notably, the vocal harmonies were modified to align with the Western chord structure together with choral SATB (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) style. This integration led to a fusion of musical styles but also raised concerns about preserving indigenous musical traditions amidst these external influences. The assimilation and resistance dynamics further complicated the cultural and musical landscape of the Basotho. While some elements of Basotho music were preserved, others were altered or marginalised. The introduction of Western musical scales, harmonies, and instruments sometimes overshadowed traditional music forms (Van der Linden, 2015). However, Basotho music and culture have shown resilience, maintaining distinct traditional elements while integrating new influences. This blend reflects the complex history of cultural exchange, adaptation, and survival within the context of colonialism and Christianisation. These aspects will be rigorously examined in Chapters 4 and 6.

### **1.3 Research question**

The central question is to consider how the European autoharp developed into the *harepa*, an instrument that is able to incorporate authentic Bahananwa musical characteristics without compromising the indigenous sound associated with the culture.

### 1.3.1 Goals

1. To document the *harepa* instrument and its repertoire as found in Bochum, Limpopo.
2. To transcribe and analyse the music to understand transformation processes in traditional music and how these could lead to the development of new insights into the analysis of the aesthetics of musical change and musical transmission.
3. To document and amplify the musical history of my research participants.
4. To understand how knowledge relating to music repertoire can be developed through participatory research methods.
5. To understand how Christianity and colonialism unfolded in the northern parts of South Africa through the introduction of the *harepa* and how this underscored the development of musical style.
6. To underscore that, despite observable differences, the inherent musical identity is consistently maintained within these regional variations.
7. To emphasise and detail the distinct deviation of these tunings from Western musical standards.

### 1.4 Methods, Procedures and Techniques

The central methodologies employed combine ethnographic interviews and practice-led research by closely interacting with musicians named Mr Morukhuladi, Mr Sekiba, Mr Moshi and Mr Mothemana. According to Penny (2014, p.85), practice-led research emerged “as a result of the desire to recognise the value of practice in education and research”. Practice-led research is concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance or functional implications for that practice. The main focus of the research was to advance knowledge about the practice or to advance knowledge within that practice. Therefore, the results are described in text form without including a creative outcome (known in musicological terms as practice-based research). In other words, the research included practice as an integral part of its method. Importantly, however, this type of practice-related research is not the same as those that include artefacts and works as part of the submission (Candy, 2006, p.3). Penny states that “practice-led research is an inclusive approach that may use a mix of methods chosen by the researcher, and it will almost always include reflective critique” (Penny, 2014, p.85). In light of this, I have learned to play the *harepa* instrument to develop knowledge through an embodied understanding of my research participants’ practice. I have used this approach with other methods, including historical ethnography and a collaborative approach where

“art is used to create a collaborative and dialogical form of ethnographic knowledge” (Rutten, 2016, p.298).

As ethnomusicologists, we closely follow methods used by anthropologists. Therefore, I have used a historical ethnographic approach which Vaughan defines as “an attempt to elicit structure and culture from the documents created prior to an event in order to understand how people in another time and place made sense of things” (2004, p.321). Sutherland writes that historical ethnography “still takes seriously the traditional anthropological method of intensive, personal fieldwork to find out how people think, what they do and what it means to them” (1999, p.120). Instead of “eliciting structure and culture from documents”, as mentioned in the historical ethnographic approach, I used oral histories to achieve the same results. My understanding of the differences between traditional and historical ethnography finds strength in Kravitz’s description, which states, “as traditional anthropological ethnography does, it seeks to translate the culture of a particular time and place into words which will recreate it in the minds of readers in another time and place” (1994, p.4). This thought resonates with my research as I look at how musicians use their experience and memory of Basotho ba Lebowa to transfer and create new works.

As the sound engineer at the International Library of African Music (ILAM), I can access many recordings from different repertoires and genres from many African countries. While listening to the recordings, I became fascinated with the recordings of *harepa* music from the Limpopo province where I was born. The relationship between my place of birth, the archive, and the recording brought to attention how the sense of hearing may be animated through memory and recall. My interest in this instrument was triggered because I first heard this style of music as a child. I knew the sounds but had never seen the instrument. In my observations, the music is very recognisable in that the rhythms of Sesotho sa Lebowa music are different from other traditional music such as Zulu music. Unlike other musical styles, Sesotho sa Lebowa music is distinguished by its 12 pulse patterns and is typically performed with the feel of a 6/8 beat. During my childhood, the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) musical traditions left a lasting impression on me. The ZCC’s distinctive vocal style, enriched with elements of traditional Sesotho sa Lebowa music, often evoked the same resonant qualities characteristic of that indigenous tradition. As an adult, listening to *harepa* recordings at ILAM rekindled those cherished memories.

This research required primary research such as fieldwork and secondary research on all related literature. Currently, not many secondary resources directly engage with the history of the *harepa*,

players, and their music. The research was conducted in Ga-Matšhaba, Ga-Kobe, My Darling, and Buffelshoek villages in the Makgabeng district. The fieldwork research took place from 27 February 2020 until 19 December 2023 via interviews and musical events with musicians. Other approaches involved reflexive engagements through learning and teaching and obtaining information from secondary sources such as the print media, libraries, and archives. This research further employed video/audio documentation of all interviews, events, and field notes of my observations and impressions. A database of my field recordings of interviews and events have been created and archived at ILAM.

During my fieldwork, individual and group interviews were conducted with four key *harepa* players: Mr Morukhuladi, who was a hundred and three years old, Mr Moshi, eighty-nine years old, Mr Sekiba, also eighty-five years old and Mr Labson Mothemana, sixty-seven years old at the time of writing. All of them reside in different villages of Bochum.

The table below shows the specific times that the field work took place.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Reason</b>
2020 February 27	Ga-Matšhaba	John Morukhuladi	Interview
2020 October 13/14	Ga-Kobe	Albert Sekiba	Interview
2020 October 14	My Darling	Daniel Moshi	interview
2021 August 07	My Darling	Albert Sekiba	Tombstone unveiling ceremony
2022 October 11,12,19,	Ga-Matšhaba	John Morukhuladi	Interviews and lessons
2022 October 13,14,18,	Ga-Kobe	Albert Sekiba	Interviews and lessons
2022 October 20	Ga-Kobe	John Morukhuladi and Albert Sekiba	Joint interviews and lessons
2023 January 02	Ga-Kobe	Albert Sekiba	Interviews and lessons
2023 December 18-19	Buffelshoek	Labson Mothemana	Interviews

Figure 01. Table reflecting places and dates when fieldwork took place

### **1.4.1 Theoretical Framework**

As explained earlier, the use of a practice-led approach is imperative in this research. The theoretical framework for practice-led research in ethnomusicology emphasises an immersive, hands-on approach to studying music cultures. It involves researchers actively engaging in creating, performing, and interpreting music to gain insights into cultural practices, beliefs, and values. This methodology allows a deeper understanding of music's role within its cultural context, emphasising the dynamic relationship between music, society, and cultural identity. It challenges traditional observational methods by placing the researcher within the practice, fostering a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of musical traditions (Candy, 2006; Mafe and Brown, 2006).

Within this theoretical framework, practice-led research was positioned as a transformative approach in ethnomusicology, enabling researchers to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Harrison, 2011). By engaging directly with musical practices, researchers can offer insights that transcend traditional analytical perspectives, enriching our understanding of music's cultural significance and capacity to express and shape communal identity. This approach advocates for a participatory, experiential methodology that respects the integrity of musical traditions and contributes to their preservation and continuation.

### **1.4.2 The role of ethnography and oral history in understanding musical traditions**

The delicate relationships that I developed with the music participants in this research taught me the importance of story-telling as a means of data collection. Ethnography and oral history play crucial roles in understanding musical traditions by providing in-depth, culturally contextualised insights into music practices, beliefs, and values (Sutherland, 1999). Ethnography may allow researchers to immerse themselves in the community, observing and participating in music-making processes. At the same time, oral history captures personal and collective memories, offering perspectives on music's evolution and its impact on community identity. Together, they enrich our comprehension of music as a dynamic cultural expression, revealing its complexities and meanings for practitioners and communities. By leveraging ethnography and oral history, researchers can document the nuances of musical tradition that might not be captured through scores or recordings alone (Sutherland, 1999). These methods facilitate a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural contexts in which music is created and performed, revealing the intricate ways in which music serves as a vessel for history, identity, and social cohesion. Oral histories, according to Kravitz (1994), provide invaluable insights

into the lived experiences of musicians and communities, offering a rich narrative that complements ethnographic findings.

The use of oral histories and participant observation in fieldwork is crucial for capturing the lived experiences and cultural nuances of musical traditions. Oral histories provide personal and collective narratives that illuminate the historical and cultural contexts of music. Participant observation allows researchers to immerse themselves in the community, experiencing music not just as outsiders but as active participants. This dual approach enriches the research with a depth of understanding and insight into the cultural significance of music practices, fostering a more empathetic and comprehensive portrayal of the musical tradition under study (Radano & Olaniyan, 2016; Porteli, 1991; Turrini, 2013).

By incorporating oral histories and participant observation into fieldwork, researchers gain invaluable insights into the emotional and socio-cultural layers of musical practices. This approach allows for a deeper connection with the community, understanding the significance of music beyond its technical aspects. It emphasises the importance of narratives and personal experiences in shaping musical traditions, providing a comprehensive view that enriches the study of ethnomusicology. The use of these approaches cocoons the research and guided my field-work interactions. As will be outlined in the rest of the thesis, interactions with research participants was not without mishap, misunderstanding and an incredible amount of learning. What was most apparent however, is that the musical style of the *harepa*, despite the fact that it is perceived as having a finite life-span, is highly thought of and worth preserving. In the following chapters, I hope to present the participants' truths and do justice to their musical legacy.

### **Chapter content**

The following section outlines the chapter themes that follow.

Chapter 2, a literature review, introduces key themes that provide context and framework for this research.

Chapter 3 explores the methods used in this research, including practice-led approaches, oral history, and engaged ethnomusicology. Additionally, the chapter focuses on an-archives and living archives.

Chapter 4 examines the historical background of the Bahananwa, with a particular focus on the influence of missionaries in their community. This chapter also examines the Sesotho sa Lebowa

language and explores how certain dialects have come to dominate the written form, leading to confusion in the perception of the language among some communities in Limpopo Province.

Chapter 5 explores the lives of the research participants, narrating their stories through their music.

Chapter 6 forms the core of this research by focusing on tuning systems and questioning how African music is analysed and interpreted using Western methodologies. This chapter also includes an analysis of Bahananwa songs from the perspectives of the research participants.

The Epilogue, Chapter 7, provides a summary of findings, offers recommendations for further research, and presents conclusions derived from the analysis of the music.

As outlined above the next chapter introduces key themes that give contextual information relating to the emergent themes.

# Chapter 2

## Introduction

In this chapter I provide a comprehensive exploration of the scholarly discourse that informs and contextualises this research. I carefully present key theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, and critical debates introduced in Chapter one, that have shaped the research relating to the ethnographic inquiry into the *harepa*, through the lens of practice-based research. This review not only situates the current study within the broader academic landscape but also identifies gaps in existing knowledge, highlighting the significance of this research in advancing our understanding of oral history and archival practices. Through a critical analysis of relevant literature, this section lays the foundation for the subsequent empirical investigation, ensuring that the research is both theoretically grounded and methodologically rigorous. I introduce the key terms of the thesis in this chapter, which will be expanded upon and their relevance to the topic demonstrated in Chapter 3, thus explaining the repetition of the titles.

### 2.1 Practice-led research

Practice-led research, as discussed in detail in the next chapter, brings about the prospect of generating new knowledge intertwined with creative practice, culture and artefacts (Mafe and Brown 2006). McKerrel (2022, p. 10) writes,

Performance has not been an end in and of itself in ethnomusicology, but has always been a method used in the service of understanding more about human culture and society around the world, and that today, there is potential for practice research to emerge as both a more central method, and the object of research in ethnomusicology.

This approach is not new to ethnomusicology. Southern African scholars such as Dave Dargie (1986), Andrew Tracey (Interview, 2023), Gerhard Kubik (1985) and John Blacking (1995, 1971, 1970) were active in the field where they used this approach. These scholars employed a participatory approach to their research, immersed themselves in the cultures of the people they encountered, learned to perform the musical arts of the region and sought to create collaborative creative knowledge. The

researchers learned the music, the language and the cultural practices of the people they came into contact with. This is of great interest to me as their approach has guided mine and indeed, I consider Dave Dargie and Andrew Tracey as mentors. In West Africa, researchers including John Chernoff (1991, 1997, 2017), Kofi Agawu (2006), John Collins (2007), JH Kwabena Nketia (1965), and Akin Euba (1975) amongst others have dedicated extensive time to studying the nuanced and multifaceted concept of hearing within various cultural contexts. Chernoff spent seven years immersed in these communities while Agawu engaged in practice-led research by performing and teaching Ewe drumming and dance. His work is not only analytical but also deeply rooted in the practical aspects of Ewe music-making. He integrates performance into his research to better understand the intricate rhythmic structures and cultural meanings. His 2014 book "Representing African music: Postcolonial notes, queries, positions" is an important contribution to the field based on practice.

However, a practice-based approach is not always about learning to play instruments, it can also include engaging in music composition or creation (Stacey & Mason, 2019). Stacey and Mason write, "Creative praxis is often woven into ethnomusicological fieldwork but is perhaps not always overtly articulated as a central tenet of the discipline" (2019, p. 20). Hannan (2006, p. 5) explored his creative process called "comprovisation," which involves creating new compositions from recordings of improvised material. Hannan investigated the legitimacy of this method within the broader debate on creative practice as research. His research demonstrated how comprovisation as a practice-led research method could yield innovative compositions and expand the understanding of creative processes in music. I employed a similar methodology by experimenting with sound and composition after visiting the residences of my participants. I immersed myself in their environment and dedicated time to understanding the music, culture and tonal make-up of the music. When they taught me how to play the *harepa*, this added another layer of understanding which became an invaluable research component. Their methods of tuning, which constitute a significant part of my study, and is discussed in Chapter 6, were also part of this learning process. Penny (2014), Smith (2009), and Candy (2006) highlight the emergence, significance, and methodologies of practice-led research, emphasising its flexibility, importance for artistic application, and contribution to knowledge production and scholarly discourse. Draper and Harrison (2011) and McConnachie (2016) explore its application in arts, music education, and integrating Indigenous music into curriculums, highlighting the challenges and opportunities for bridging theory with creative practice while Durán (2015) and Nketia (1986) offer insights into the transmission of musical knowledge and cultural practices, emphasising informal learning and the sociocultural dynamics in music. These important approaches guided my own research and are referred to in my methodology and analysis. Mafe and Brown (2006) discuss the

collaborative synergies in creative processes, highlighting the role of digital technologies which I found inspiring. As a sound engineer, the use of technology has always been a part of my practice and indeed, as will be expanded upon in Chapter 6, I make use of digital software for analysis purposes.

In his important work on the Xhosa people of South Africa, Dargie (1986) sheds light on the cultural and historical significance of musical bows, underscoring the preservation of musical heritage. During his various research projects, he employed practice-led methods, emphasising listening, imitation, and oral transmission as keyways to pass on knowledge. The themes of listening, imitation and oral transmission, as presented by Kubik (1985); Mafe and Brown, 2006 Penny (2014), Smith (2009), and Candy (2006) emerge in the other literature that informed this research which I will discuss further later in chapters 5 and 6.

The works of the aforementioned scholars emphasise the dynamic interplay between creative practice and theoretical exploration, advancing the discourse on practice-led research in creative arts and its potential to foster a deeper understanding of artistic practices and their cultural implications. Their experiences align closely with my research approach, which involved immersing myself in the lives of my participants through actions such as getting instrument lessons from them and helping with their copyright concerns. Engaging in practice-led research opened doors to insights that might have remained inaccessible through other methodologies. Learning to play the instrument also unveiled specific nuances the participants had not verbally expressed. The literature across various authors illustrates a comprehensive examination and advocacy for practice-led research in the arts because it underscores the unique contributions of creative processes to knowledge production, bridges theoretical and practical domains and enriches both scholarly discourse and artistic practice by fostering a deeper understanding of cultural and contextual dynamics (Brown, 2006; Chernoff, 1997; Draper and Harrison, 2011; Hannan, 2006; Mafe and Brown, 2006; McConnachie, 2016; Tracey, 2023).

This understanding was only deepened when I was able to closely discuss the nuances with the musicians involved in the research, after all it is their stories that are being retold. Their oral histories and the use of historical ethnographies have enabled me to learn from their memories.

## 2.2 Oral history

Oral history is integral to most African cultures' social fabric and has proven to be a vital data collection tool for this research. The autoharp is not available for purchase in South African music shops, and its scarcity makes it a relatively uncommon instrument to play. Only a few musicians, primarily elderly individuals who obtained the instrument long ago, play the *harepa* proficiently. Due to its lack of popularity, there is limited written information on the instrument and only a few elderly musicians who continue the tradition. This underlines the significance of oral history in this research. Portelli (1991) and Turrini (2013) explore oral history's pivotal role in capturing and shaping collective memories, albeit in different contexts. Portelli focuses on historical events, emphasising the discrepancies between official accounts and oral histories, to argue for the method's significance in understanding subjective experiences. The book "The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories" by Portelli (1991) looks into the intersectionality of history and memory. Portelli discusses, amongst other things, the distinction between remembered events and experienced events. This is significant when embarking on research such as this that may rely on the oral accounts of people who have lived or remember a certain experience. Similarly, Turrini (2013) highlights oral history's role in documenting culture, underlining its ability to preserve personal and communal experiences beyond traditional documentation. Brook (1979) and Zdzinski (2008) further support the value of oral history, with Brook detailing its application in music history research and Zdzinski providing a specific example of contributions to music education. These authors describe oral history's critical role in enriching our understanding of cultural and historical landscapes by preserving nuanced personal narratives. As utilised by these diverse authors, oral tradition has played a crucial role in bridging the historical gaps concerning the *harepa*. It narrates the musicians' journeys, connection with the instrument, and the traditional music it symbolises. This important information is shared in Chapter 5.

Kravitz (1994), Sutherland (1999), Vaughan (2004), Denzin and Lincoln (2018), Emerson et al. (2011), and Paulsen (2009) collectively emphasise the profound impact of ethnography across diverse fields. Kravitz's (1994) exploration of the Harvard Report through an ethnographic lens parallels Vaughan's study (2004). Vaughan's detailed historical ethnography uncovers the complexities behind decision-making processes at NASA, while Sutherland's (1999) analysis of the Belizean banana industry and Paulsen's (2009) research on temporary events showcase ethnography's power to reveal the complexities of social, economic, and cultural phenomena. Both Kravitz (1994) and Sutherland (1999) use historical ethnography as a methodological tool. This approach brings personal fieldwork and an analysis of history to understand the construction of identities and cultures over time. In this regard,

I have looked into the history of Bahananwa to understand where their music comes from, why they have strong reactions towards colonial power, and how the *harepa* became an integral part of their lives (Krie, 1997,1999; Setumu, 2012, 2014). Rutten (2016) focuses on integrating ethnography and art, advocating for a bottom-up approach that enhances understanding through practice-led research. Rutten (2016) also emphasises a growing relationship between art, collaborative practices and ethnography. This was the case in this research and was explored when I visited the participants at their homes which will be described in Chapter 5. My interactions with them presented a means to generate ethnographic knowledge. The stories they told about their movements within different communities painted a picture of what life was like growing up, how similar the music was in various communities, and what knowledge transmission was like in their childhood. Having lived for over eight decades, the participants supplied ample data and through that an ethnographic picture that draws together their lives and musical practices.

### **2.3 Engaged Ethnomusicology**

In today's scholarly era, it is essential to adopt a role of advocacy tailored to the specific circumstances one encounters. This is due to the many years of failed interactions in the manner in which scholars conducted fieldwork (Summit, 2015; Ceribašić, 2019). Wong (2004), emphasised the need for active engagement with communities, challenging the long history of detached observation in the field. Wong argued that scholars should no longer remain neutral but instead must advocate for more marginalised groups, reflecting a shift towards more interactive and scholarly conscious fieldwork practices. This practice recognises the importance of reflexivity and mutual understanding in the research process. Those were times when informants, consultants or collaborators were deemed as just service providers who aided the scholar in improving their “reputation, earning potential, and security” (Averill, 2003, p.51). There is a growing tendency towards academic advocacy which Averill (2003) and Thram (2014), amongst others, term engaged ethnomusicology (Diamond, 2019; Bohlman, 1988). Averill (2003) writes that the moral and ethical basis of engaged ethnomusicology should go beyond mere reciprocity. Thram (2014) presents a model for engaged ethnomusicology that sought to create functional, long-lasting relationships. She highlights the importance of archival recordings for research and discusses how music archives have evolved to embrace digital conservation, online access, and engaged practices. Thram also illustrates engaged ethnomusicology through case studies, including projects at the International Library of African Music, which I participated in, focusing on preservation, education, and repatriation. One notable project led by Thram involved digital returns in Kenya, where recordings made by Hugh Tracey were returned to the musicians or their families

(Thram, 2019). This project aimed to encourage communities to engage more deeply with the recordings. However, ILAM still needs to revisit these communities to assess the impact beyond the initial digital returns. Similarly, as part of my Master's research (2019) I returned recordings to the Grahamstown/Makhanda community in South Africa. Local musicians utilised these recordings to create new music in various ways, such as sampling and using the ILAM recordings as the foundation for their new compositions. In that research, as with this, I became a 'cultural broker' (Madiba 2019, p.12) and helped the participants regarding copyright problems. As will be related later in this thesis, I became involved in an issue relating to a man who was meant to help register music with the South African Music Rights Organisation. Instead however, he registered the music for them while including his relative as one of the composers of the music so that he could gain royalties for the music. This type of story is heard far too often and an engaged approach emphasises ethnomusicology's role in cultural preservation and revitalisation, showcasing its potential to impact communities and foster cultural equity.

Archives such as ILAM and the Makerere University Klaus Wachsmann Audio-visual Music Archive (MAKWMA) are duty bound to ensure that ethical collection and use of the housed recordings are implemented. But, of course, that goes beyond just holdings that are recorded in traditional manners. As research using archival materials develops, living archives (Madiba, 2019; Sabiescu, 2020; Watkins et al., 2021) and now anarchives are starting to play a more significant role.

## **2.4 ILAM as an anarchiver**

McConnachie et al. (2025), Herceg (2022), Singh (2018), and Manning (2020) collectively explore the shift from traditional forms of knowledge transmission and archiving to more inclusive, dynamic, and engaged approaches. They emphasise community engagement, heritage, and personal experiences as vital sources of knowledge. This approach to research challenges conventional systems and ideas of archiving by advocating for the acknowledgement of diverse narratives and the ephemeral nature of memory and identity through the lens of creative practices, the body as an archive, and the acceptance of the concept of the anarchiver itself, highlighting the need for a fluid understanding of history and memory. As the researchers at ILAM consider its future as an archive and repository of static moments in time, or recorded memories, we have to consider and explore all approaches to archiving. McConnachie et al. (2025) write that the idea of anarchiving helps us challenge traditional archival and knowledge systems, which often prioritise certain types of information or experiences

while excluding others. This approach to data collection and recording highlights the importance of acknowledging and preserving marginalised knowledge, such as in the case of this research where the obscurity of the focus would mean that the older musicians' point of view would have been forgotten. I understand the idea of the archive as giving people's memories and their musical performances the space to be considered as important. Working with my participants I was privileged to give them the opportunity to share their music as evidence of their knowledge and history. McConnachie et al. (2025, p. 484) write that archiving "...works towards the emancipated transmission of knowledge from a development to an empowerment framework, where previously undervalued perspectives actually guide the research process". McGarry et al. (2025) write that archiving emphasises Indigenous worldviews and fosters collaborative research approaches. This intention is closely linked to the engaged ethnomusicological approach and is important to this research in that the stories and data that were shared through music and performance, and indeed the music and performance itself, must be considered legitimate.

## **2.5 Living archives**

Sabiescu (2020), Tracey (1958), Watkins et al. (2021), Madiba (2019), McConnachie (2008), and Thram (2014) collectively illuminate the dynamic and transformative power of "living archives" in various contexts. They explore living archives as memory repositories and vibrant, participatory platforms where communities actively perform, share, and engage with cultural heritage. These works highlight the role of living archives in fostering community connection, cultural preservation, and social cohesion, showcasing their significance in documenting and sustaining the vibrancy of traditions, especially within the realm of African musical heritage. Together, they advocate for a nuanced understanding of archives as active, evolving spaces that contribute to cultural continuity, societal transformation, and the decolonisation of knowledge. In my study, the participants serve as living archives of advanced age, marking them as invaluable resources that demand urgent attention, given the limited time available.

Interestingly, instruments are also looked upon as archival in nature (Pietroni, 2021) and their form and shape, the sounds they carry and the cultural weight they carry are often critical in recalling memories.

## 2.6 The Decline and Transformation of Traditional South African Instruments

Due to various factors, including colonialism and the devaluation of indigenous and traditional cultural expressions, the transformation and reconfiguration of musical instruments is a common phenomenon (Kartomi, 2001). As will be outlined in detail in Chapter 4 processes of *harepa* transformation and decline follow in the path of another South African instrument, the *isitolotolo* (African Jew's harp). Impey (2018) provides a rich, ethnographic account of this instrument's decline where, in her research, she investigates the evolution and slow disappearance of the *isitolotolo*, emphasising the various factors that have contributed to the decreased presence of the instrument. She writes that the advent of contemporary entertainment options such as cassette players and radios diminished the use of the *isitolotolo* (p.131). This has led to the fact that buying this instrument, much like my experience of trying to find an autoharp, is difficult in current times. Impey's ethnographic research has guided my own due to the fact that the *harepa* is similarly at risk of disappearing, which I speak more of in Chapter 4. Impey's research further reveals and amplifies multiple local perspectives on musical transformation, trade, land ownership, and environmental justice, with evidence retrieved from rich oral histories and other conversations. Although this research does not analyse the environmental impact of the *harepa*, it does look at transformation and organology, displacement and political justice. Another important point of reference relating to African instrument organology is work by Mashao and Setati (2004) who write about the similarities between *dipela* and *harepa* music. Their observations state that in the music of the Basotho ba Lebowa, the performer (usually a male) sings and accompanies himself on the *harepa*, producing double the effect of a *kiba* ensemble. Critical to this research, their view is that the music of the Basotho ba Lebowa is defined not by the instrument being played, but by the manner in which it is played. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 6. Their observation that musicians' shift from using *dipela* to *harepa* did not alter the musical output is pertinent and guided my understanding of the data that I captured during my field-work in Limpopo. Building on this foundation, in Chapters 5 and 6 I delve deeper into the intricacies of the *harepa* instrument, focusing my research on the co-researchers with specific analysis relating to the issues surrounding tuning, and the methods of knowledge transmission. I looked at the works of Anderson (1983) and Halewood (2015) who sparked my interest in exploring alternative tuning systems and significantly contributed to my research. In contrast, Lehman (2005), Rasch (2017), and Lindley (1997) have rejected the notion that unequal temperaments offer more possibilities in tuning systems. Mhlambi and Michael (2022) addressed this phenomenon in the context of Southern Africa, using the example of piano tuning, which helped me examine Bahananwa tunings within their cultural framework. The data that I captured was particularly difficult to transcribe and analyse due to its oral

nature. Thus, I had to approach this research in an embodied and experiential manner. It is in this section that I found that there is no other research that speaks to these issues and, apart from capturing new data from the participants relating to their music, it is this analysis that revealed the most new knowledge.

## **2.7 Tuning Systems**

The origins of music theory in the west are widely attributed to the Pythagorean era, particularly between the fourth and sixth centuries B.C., a period when Pythagoras' mathematical ideas profoundly influenced Western thought. Pythagoras' explorations into the nature of sound led to the discovery of important concepts such as musical ratios, harmonic means, and the division of tones. These developments played a crucial role in shaping the foundation of Western music theory as we know it today (Anderson, 1983). However, a significant issue arises when these Western theoretical frameworks are imposed upon non-Western musical traditions, particularly those of African origin. The use of Western systems to interpret African music often leads to oversimplification or misrepresentation of the intricate, culturally specific tuning systems and musical practices found across the African continent.

This dilemma formed the basis of my research into the tuning systems of the Bahananwa, a community with a rich musical heritage. My goal was to investigate how their traditional tuning systems function, how they differ from Western models, and how they reflect a broader understanding of African musical theory. During my research, I encountered a Ugandan musician who was deeply concerned about the tuning of a traditional Ugandan instrument we had in our possession. His concern was not about a potential error in the tuning, but rather a reflection of his deep connection to the cultural significance of the instrument's tuning system. This prompted me to delve deeper into Ugandan tuning practices, and I soon discovered that much like the Bahananwa, Ugandan musicians approach their tuning systems with intention and precision, not as a problematic system in need of correction.

To ground my research in a broader context, I drew upon the works of various scholars, including Rodgers (2003), Laderman and Westrup (2014), Johnston (1975), Moelants et al. (2009), Blacking (1959), Kubik (1960), Dargie (1986), Mhlambi et al. (2022), Halewood (2015), and Madiba (2019). Their collective writings examine the role of music across cultural, social, and political landscapes, providing a comprehensive look at how music functions within African societies and the challenges presented by colonial and post-colonial influences. Kubik (1960) and Dargie (1986) have conducted detailed

explorations into African music traditions, focusing particularly on traditional instruments and their tuning systems, shedding light on the complexity and intentionality behind these musical practices. Halewood (2015) takes this a step further by critically examining the equal temperament tuning system—widely used in Western music—and questioning its universal applicability, especially in modern contexts where music from non-Western cultures is increasingly being incorporated into global performance spaces.

These explorations sparked my interest in the Bahananwa tuning systems, which I then analysed to establish their classification as unique and distinct from Western tuning methods. My research revealed that Western notation systems often fall short in accurately transcribing African music, as they are based on assumptions and standards that do not account for the nuanced tuning systems present in African traditions. To address this, I have proposed a new system of transcribing Bahananwa music, one that better reflects its inherent complexities and cultural significance. This shift is crucial because the standardisation of musical notes, as seen in Western systems, often involves compromises that fail to honour the original intentions of the music being studied, as noted by Anderson (*ibid*) and further explored by Halewood (2015).

These compromises in Western music theory and notation raise a critical question: why should African music be forced into a framework that does not accommodate its unique characteristics? Why must its tuning systems be "adjusted" or "standardised" to fit within a Western understanding of music? In my research, I also examined other musical traditions, such as Indian music, to explore how they have developed their own systems for expressing individuality and nuance in ways that are culturally aligned. Indian music, much like African music, has maintained its distinct theoretical frameworks, allowing for more personalised expressions of sound that do not conform to Western norms.

The result of this investigation has led me to a deeper understanding of the *harepa* and its central role in shaping the music of the Bahananwa people. This underscores the need for a more flexible, culturally aware approach to the study and transcription of African music. Rather than forcing African music into a Western mould, we should be developing new methods that respect and reflect the rich musical traditions that have existed on the continent for centuries. This approach, which I explore in more detail in Chapter 6, involves not just a rethinking of how we transcribe and study African music, but a broader examination of how we engage with non-Western musical systems in general. By challenging the dominance of Western theoretical frameworks, we can begin to appreciate the full depth and complexity of African musical traditions, leading to a more inclusive and accurate representation of global music traditions in the academic and performance spaces.

As previously mentioned, the colonial powers that settled in Southern Africa had a profound impact on the lives of the indigenous people, influencing not only their societal structures but also their musical traditions. The introduction of Western instruments and the Western tuning system marked a significant shift in the musical landscape. These Western systems often clashed with the diverse, non-standardised scales traditionally used in African music. The rigid, equal temperament of Western tuning imposed a structure that differed vastly from the more fluid and varied tonal systems found across Africa, necessitating a different approach to the analysis of scales, as noted by Moelants et al. (2009).

While learning to play the *harepa*, I encountered this conflict firsthand. Despite being a pentatonic instrument, the harepa's tuning was distinctly different from the standard Western pentatonic scale I was familiar with. This experience prompted me to critically reflect on how Western scales, in many instances, have been adjusted to produce specific sounds, ultimately altering the original essence of the music. Such adjustments, often made to fit African music into a Western framework, compromise the authenticity of the traditional sound.

This realisation led me to question the broader implications of using Western theoretical tools to interpret and teach African music. It became evident that, to truly engage with and understand music from other cultures, we must develop methods of study that do not force these musical traditions into Western moulds. By imposing foreign frameworks, we risk distorting the unique characteristics that define these musical forms. Instead, we need to embrace approaches that preserve the integrity of the original sound, allowing African music to be appreciated and studied on its own terms. This issue, and its wider significance for the field of ethnomusicology, will be explored further in Chapter 6.

## **2.8 Missionaries and the contextualisation of the Sesotho sa Lebowa language**

The colonial history of Africa has significantly shaped many aspects of the lives of Africans. Southern Africa did not go unscathed. Colonial government policies influenced the missionary practices of the different missionary societies that settled in the different parts of colonial South Africa (Bethke 2020). These missionary societies employed different approaches when dealing with the people they encountered, approaches influenced by their beliefs and origins, which ultimately changed the way of living of the people in contact with the missionaries. Mojela (1999, p.13) delves into the 'prestige' terminology within the Northern Sotho language and reveals the profound effects of urbanisation, industrialisation, missionary activities, and language standardisation on dialect hierarchies and

identity. This is significant to the thesis in that it highlights how Basotho ba Lebowa from urban areas often adopt urban slang and language varieties to elevate their social status, leading to a preference for prestige dialects over inferior ones. This phenomenon is explained by the higher standard of living and employment opportunities in urban areas, contrasting with the rural communities' lower socio-economic status. The thesis also explores the historical context and socio-political dynamics that have shaped the language, comprehensively analysing the implications of prestige terminology on the Sesotho sa Lebowa vocabulary. Kriel's (1997, 1999) focus primarily revolves around the historical narrative of the Bahananwa people and their interactions with colonial forces. Her analysis indirectly contributes to the discourse on language and power dynamics. Through the detailed examination of Christoph Sonntag's diary, Kriel provides an account of the colonial encounter's complexity, revealing the negotiation of identity and cultural integrity in the face of external pressures. Setumu's (2012, 2014) historical background of the Bahananwa, based on both documentary evidence and oral tradition, provides a foundational understanding of the cultural and linguistic landscape before and during the colonial period, offering context to the discussions presented by Mojela, Phaahla, and Kriel.

## 2.9 Musical styles

Mapaya (2013, 2014) and Rafapa (2013) delve into the significance of music within African Indigenous Churches (AICs), mainly focusing on the Sesotho sa Lebowa context and the preservation of indigenous musical traditions through the fusion of African culture with Christianity. They examine how AICs serve as custodians of these musical practices, ensuring their survival and adaptation amidst Western cultural impositions. AICs have incorporated Sesotho sa Lebowa music styles, such as *kiba* and *dinaka*, into their church music. Their musical compositions, structures, and harmonies adhere to traditional music forms. Although they may not use reed pipes or drums, they preserve cultural elements in their sound. Mapaya (2014) and Chambers (2018) complement this by providing a detailed analysis of the *dinaka/kiba* genre, its cultural importance, and the intricacies of its performance and instrumentation, enriching the understanding of Sesotho sa Lebowa music and cultural identity. *Dinaka* music and church involvement have significantly influenced my participants' music creation, an essential aspect of my research.

Crevoisier (2008), Whalley (2008), Ware (2011), Lončar and Pavlović (2018), and Mapaya et al. (2004) collectively highlight the significance of blending traditional musical elements with modern technologies to innovate and maintain cultural identity through music. These studies explore the creation of hybrid musical instruments and genres, reflecting a seamless integration of cultural

heritage with contemporary expressions. Each research project, whether focused on enhancing musical interfaces, preserving traditional sounds, or adapting music to reflect modern identity, underscores the importance of music as a dynamic, evolving form of cultural expression that bridges past, present, and future. These articles align with my study by exploring hybrid instruments and their integration into traditional music with modern elements, similar to the *harepa*, a hybrid instrument of German origins.

Impey (2018), Lebaka (2020), Chikowero (2015), and Magwira (2016) collectively illustrate a profound engagement with music's role in cultural identity, resistance, and enculturation across diverse contexts. They explore music's function in articulating identity, contesting colonial and missionary influences, and preserving cultural heritage within African societies. Kidula (2000) examines gospel music's evolution in Kenya, highlighting its interplay with cultural identity and commercial success. Morrison et al. (2008, 2009) and Tan (2014) delve into how enculturation shapes music cognition and perception, emphasising its impact from infancy through adulthood. Raharjo et al. (2021) focus on maintaining cultural identity through music education and enculturation practices in Indonesia. Together, these studies underscore the pivotal role of music in cultural preservation, identity formation, and resistance against external influences. These articles highlight themes of resistance and resilience, echoing my participants' experiences. They have succeeded in preserving the core of Bahananwa music, retaining and transferring ancestral knowledge to the *harepa* while withstanding Western influences.

Rabie (1985), Etherington (1977), Bethke (2020), Torp (2017), and Kriel (1997) collectively explore the intricate dynamics between missionaries and Indigenous communities in Africa through various lenses, including anthropology, sociology, history, and musicology. Rabie and Kriel offer insights into the impacts of missionary efforts on local cultures and identities in South Africa using ethnographic methods and historical diaries. Rabie (1985) discusses the arrival of the Moravian missionaries in South Africa in 1737, focusing on the work of missionary Georg Schmidt. Schmidt's interactions with the local population were contentious, as the missionaries viewed the indigenous inhabitants as beyond salvation and found it outrageous that someone would undertake missionary work without financial compensation. Kriel (1997) explores the intricate dynamics between the missionary Sonntag, King Seketa Mmalebogo of the Bahananwa people, and the Boers. Kriel highlights how Sonntag, caught between his moral duties and the need to appease the Boers, frequently compromised his Christian principles. Etherington (1977) calls for a nuanced approach to missionary studies, advocating for incorporating sociological theories. Bethke (2020) focuses on the religious and cultural transitions

within the Anglican Church, while Torp (2017) examines the influence of missionary music education on sociocultural dynamics in sub-Saharan Africa. These works underline missionary activities' complex interactions and lasting effects on African societies. This indicates that not all missionaries arrived with ill intentions; however, colonial powers influenced many. This parallels the experiences of missionaries such as Stech and Sonntag and their interactions with the Bahananwa people.

## **Conclusion**

As this chapter demonstrates, the Practice-led research approach to this study has been guided by several authors and their research in order to contextualise and ground the methodology and subsequent analysis. Despite not finding a huge variety of sources to build upon, this literature review underscores the necessity for an engaged and ethically conscious approach in ethnomusicology that not only seeks to understand but also to support and empower the communities involved. It calls for ongoing reflection and adaptation in research methodologies, ensuring that they align with the values of respect, reciprocity, and cultural integrity. As the field continues to evolve, it must remain vigilant in addressing the complexities and challenges of preserving and celebrating diverse musical traditions in a manner that honours their authenticity and significance.

# Chapter 3

## Introduction

As the sound engineer at the International Library of African Music (ILAM), I have access to many recordings from different repertoires and genres from many African countries. While listening to these recordings from southern Africa, I became fascinated with the sounds of *harepa* music from the Limpopo province, where I was born. The relationship between my place of birth, the archive, and the recording brought to my attention how the sense of hearing may be animated through memory and recall. My interest in this instrument was triggered because I first heard this style of music as a child. I knew the sounds but had never seen the instrument. During my formative years, I encountered the *harepa* music through the Northern Sotho radio broadcasts on Radio Lebowa now known as Thobela FM, albeit without any visual representation of the instrument itself. Only when I started working at ILAM and had access to the archived sounds and photographs did I see pictures of the instrument for the first time. This inspired events that led to me becoming an engaged participant observer. I opted to learn how to play the *harepa*, acknowledging the urgent need to safeguard this musical heritage given its limited representation in archival records. Through the process of learning, I was motivated to undertake the task of not only understanding the history and nature of the *harepa* but also generating new, enduring recordings of this tradition.

As a child, I was influenced by the music of the Zion Christian Church's (ZCC). Members of the ZCC use a different singing style with many elements from traditional Sesotho sa Lebowa music. Listening to them is almost like listening to traditional Sesotho sa Lebowa music. My family and I occasionally experienced the music when the church performers marched in the streets of my hometown, Phalaborwa, in the northern part of the Limpopo Province. I have memories of these musical parades and remember that when they reached the corner of the road, they made a circle and started dancing and singing. Much like a classical orchestra conductor, the leader performs a gesture using not a baton but a whip that signalled a change of songs. In fact, when I first met *harepa* performers recently, two of them were members of the ZCC and performed church songs on the *harepa*. Listening to the recordings at ILAM reminded me of these experiences.

From my observations, the music is very recognisable in that the rhythms of Sesotho sa Lebowa music are distinct in their nature and are different from other traditional South African musical styles, such

as Zulu music. AmaZulu, along with amaXhosa, form part of the Nguni family along the south-eastern coast of South Africa, while Bahananwa are part of Basotho lineage. According to Lebaka (2023), Basotho ba Lebowa music represents a comprehensive artistic expression which combines dance, gesture, and dramatisation. The musical composition involves the simultaneous execution and repetition of multiple rhythmic patterns or lines. The primary drum, which is called *sekgokolo* or *kaedišo*, assumes a pivotal role, aligning its patterns with the dancer's movements rather than strictly adhering to the rhythm. An additional distinctive feature in Basotho ba Lebowa music is the utilisation of 6/8 time signatures or, more specifically, the manifestation of musical patterns that convey the impression of being in 6/8 time. This is in contrast to many Nguni musical styles which often emphasise a 4/4 feel and do not have an allocated drum which accompanies the dancers.

### 3.1 Practice-led Research

In this chapter, I discuss the approaches to my research which include practice-led research, oral history, ethnography, and engaged ethnomusicology. I employed a practice-led approach to my research. Practice-led or practice-based research is commonly employed in creative fields such as art, design, music, dance, and other performing arts (Candy, 2006, p. 3; Mafe and Brown, 2006, p. 1). It combines artistic or creative practice with academic research to generate new knowledge, insights, and understanding in both the creative and scholarly domains. This approach is particularly relevant when traditional, text-based research methods may not fully capture or convey the nuances of innovative processes and outcomes. The practice-led approach assumes heightened significance within the framework of the present research, which adheres to an embodied approach aimed at comprehending the subject matter – explain this with another sentence or two. Moreover, it holds particular relevance for individuals who have acquired knowledge through the oral tradition. All of the musicians that I encountered in this research learnt to play the *harepa* by listening, imitating and through oral transmission. This is a common approach in indigenous ways of learning in Africa, as is confirmed by Dargie (1986, p.34), who speaks to how amaXhosa view aurality and the process of learning. He wrote about how Xhosa songs are passed on:

For a Xhosa child, the process of becoming a Xhosa musician begins perhaps as early as the time when, in its mother's womb, the unborn feels the rhythmic movements of her body as she moves with the song, feels the sounds of the song in her body. Certainly this process moves forward strongly when the child is carried, snug in its blanket, on the back of the mother or another woman or girl, as the carrier moves with the dance or claps as she sings.

Nketia (1986, p. 116) asserts that acquiring knowledge in many African societies is an ongoing process that spans a lifetime. Word of mouth is paramount when transmitting knowledge from generation to generation. It involves observation, active participation, and oral traditions. Duran (2015) observes that in Griots' families in Mali, "children absorb and learn both 'vertically' (inter-generational guidance from elders) and 'horizontally' (via peer learning)." This is apparent in the observations that I made. Much of the skill that the research participants/interlocutors have learned comes from their embodied experiences throughout their lives. By the time they were learning to play the *harepa*, they had acquired enough knowledge through hearing and listening to perform on the instrument without needing direct intervention.

Practice-led research typically begins with questions or objectives guiding the creative process. These questions may pertain to aesthetics, technique, cultural or social contexts, or other aspects of the creative work. Practice-led research often produces artistic or creative outputs, such as artworks, performances, prototypes, or designs. These outputs are not mere products of the study; they also serve as vehicles for conveying the research findings and insights (Rutten, 2016, p. 301; Mafe and Brown, 2006, p. 1). In my research endeavour, the findings have been disseminated through video clips accessible through YouTube and the ILAM platform. These video clips serve as invaluable points of reference, particularly for individuals lacking prior knowledge or comprehension of this musical tradition. A notable aspect of the research lies in the scarcity of documented *harepa* music within archival records, with only limited recordings available, notably those recorded in 1947 by Hugh Tracey and in 1978 by Andrew Tracey.<sup>6</sup> There is a conspicuous absence of visual documentation depicting the instrument itself.

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<sup>6</sup> ILAM tracks recorded by Andrew Tracey in 1978. Identifier: RRA03-01, RRA02b-02, RRA03-02, RRA03-05, RRA03-03, RRA03-06, RRA03-07, RRA03-04, RRA02b-03, RRA02b-01.



Figure 02. 2 *harepas* in the ILAM instrument collection, collected by Hugh Tracey. Permission granted by ILAM.

Brown and Mafe (2006, p. 01), Draper and Harrison (2011), Hannan (2006), Rutten (2016), and Smith (2009), are all in agreement regarding the primary goal of practice-led research, stating that it is to

advance knowledge in the field. They believe it can involve contributing to the theoretical understanding of the creative practice, informing pedagogy, or addressing broader societal and cultural issues. Researchers often disseminate their findings through various means, including written texts, exhibitions, performances, presentations, and digital media. These diverse modes of communication aim to reach both academic and non-academic audiences. Practice-led research is valuable for advancing the understanding of creative practices and fostering innovation in the arts and design (Rutten, 2016, p. 301). It acknowledges that knowledge generation in these fields can emerge from the act of creation itself, and it bridges the gap between artistic expression and scholarly inquiry.

Important to this research approach, Rutten (2016) delves into the broader concept of practice-led research, focusing on art and ethnography. He describes how practice-led research intersects with ethnography, highlighting its relevance in arts-based research. The ethnographic approach proved vital to data collection as the fieldwork in this project was undertaken in Limpopo Province, deep in the rural areas and with aged knowledge bearers. Smith (2009) encompasses a range of contributions from various authors and explores practice-led research in the creative arts. He addresses the relationship between practice-led research and research-led practice, examining how creative arts practitioners engage in research activities embodying the research. Smith comprehensively explores practice-led research across diverse creative disciplines, including music. Embodiment is key to the approach taken in this research, as learning to play the *harepa* from the elders gave me insight into their comprehension of rhythmic features, their mastery of instrument tuning techniques, and their insights into the structural intricacies of the music. I might not have gained this insight without using a hands-on methodology, as participants often convey their knowledge through nonverbal but practical means.

These sources collectively contribute to understanding practice-led research in various contexts, including music and the creative arts. While Draper and Harrison (2011) and Hannan (2006) offer focused insights into practice-led research within the domain of music, Rutten (2016) takes a broader interdisciplinary perspective. Similarly, Smith's edited volume (2009) comprehensively explores the topic across diverse creative disciplines. These sources demonstrate the multifaceted nature of practice-led research and its relevance in academic and artistic contexts.

Candy (2006) observes that there is often an interchangeable use of the terms "practice-based" and "practice-led." She explains the distinctions between these terms, asserting that "If a creative artefact is the basis of the contribution to knowledge, the research is practice-based" (2006, p. 1). Conversely,

she notes, "If the research leads primarily to new understandings about practice, it is practice-led" (ibid). Thus, grounded in Candy's conceptual framework, it can be posited that my research endeavours to engender fresh understandings of the practice under investigation.

According to Penny (2014, p. 85), practice-led research emerged "as a result of the desire to recognise the value of practice in education and research". Practice-led research is concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance or functional implications for that practice. The main focus of the research is to advance knowledge about the practice or to advance knowledge within that practice. Therefore, the results are described in text without including a creative outcome (known in musicological terms as practice-based research). In other words, the research includes practice as an integral part of its method. Importantly, however, this type of practice-related research is not the same as those that include artefacts and works as part of the submission (Candy, 2006, p. 3). Penny states that "practice-led research is an inclusive approach that may use a mix of methods chosen by the researcher, and it will almost always include reflective critique" (ibid.). In light of this, I learned to play the instrument to develop knowledge through an embodied understanding of my research partners' practice. I combine this approach with other methods, including historical ethnography and a collaborative approach where "art is used to create a collaborative and dialogical form of ethnographic knowledge" (Rutten, 2016, p. 298). The approach has been highly valuable because through my research, I gained a substantial understanding of the music through active engagement with the musicians and by observing their practices closely. Numerous implicit aspects of the music have become apparent, as will be discussed in Chapter 5 and it is only through my embodied experience that I can interpret them fully.

The historian, Alessandro Portelli (1991, p. 7), acknowledges the tension between the search for "more reality" and direct experience in oral history, emphasising the importance of first-person testimony. He mentions the experience of the encounter in the field, the process of memory, and the form of oral historical narrative as key themes in his book. The musicians I worked with possess knowledge primarily transmitted orally, making it challenging to articulate their insights in writing. Orality in Southern African performance practices is not always conveyed through verbal instruction; instead, it is a lived experience where learning occurs profoundly but remains unspoken. In this context, I realised that to learn from my participants, I needed to be physically present, observing and experiencing the music in action. By spending time watching their performances and trying it out for myself, I could perceive the unspoken elements, which deepened my understanding of the music. Based on my experience, learning and understanding the music of Africa is best achieved through

imitation, attentive listening, repetition, observation, and asking questions (McConnachie, 2016). Consequently, I have actively engaged in these methods to become a part of the rich learning experience. In this context, I employed a method referred to as artistic research, which can be elucidated as an "inquiry through practice," as expounded by Penny (2014, p. 86). Penny further elaborates that artistic research may entail exploring an idea or question originating from a performance and the subsequent investigation of potential approaches, solutions, or responses. It can also encompass inquiries into collaborative efforts, particularly within the realm of intercultural music-making connections or the adoption of performance styles derived from specific contexts, such as free improvisation or technologically based performance.

## **3.2 Engaged Ethnomusicology**

### **3.2.1 Oral History**

Through oral history methods, one collects, preserves, and interprets historical information through recorded interviews with people who have first-hand knowledge of past events, traditions, and experiences (Zdzinski, 2008; Brook, 1979). This information is often related to a particular community, culture, or social group and is passed down through spoken words rather than written texts. Oral history can be used to capture personal stories, memories, and experiences that are not always documented in traditional historical sources. Oral history can also provide insight into the social, cultural, and political contexts in which these events occurred (Perils, 1994, p. 614). The process of collecting oral history involves conducting interviews with individuals, transcribing and archiving the interviews, and analysing the data to identify patterns and themes. Oral history is an important tool for understanding the experiences and perspectives of marginalised communities such as the one in question and documenting the impact of historical events on individuals and communities. It can also provide a more nuanced and diverse perspective on history that is often missing from traditional historical narratives (Turrini, 2013, p. 65).

An oral history approach has gained increasing worldwide attention in recent years as a valuable tool for understanding the experiences and perspectives of individuals and communities. This practice aligns with decoloniality and benefits from such an approach. Unlike the Western tradition of documenting information in writing, the southern African method involves verbally passing down knowledge from one generation to the next. This method can be observed in many aspects of life. For

instance, my grandmother had extensive knowledge of herbs and often told us that her mother had taught her about various trees, roots, and plants used for healing certain ailments. Similarly, Morukhuladi shared a similar story about learning about herbs from his mother. Further evidence of this method can be observed in music and storytelling, where crucial information is often conveyed through song and stories. According to Portelli, oral history is "a historical record composed of the memories and narratives of people who participated in or witnessed events in the past" (1991, p. 1). It has been used to document a wide range of historical events, from the experiences of soldiers in wars (Coles, 1983) to the memories of survivors of the Holocaust (Rosenfeld, 2000). In addition, oral history has been used to explore the experiences of marginalised communities, such as women (Sacks, 1990) and African Americans (McAdam, 1982). According to oral historian Paul Thompson, oral history is "not just a method of collecting information, but also a way of preserving and interpreting it" (Thompson, 1978, p. 15). One of the key advantages of the oral history approach is that it can capture personal stories, memories, and experiences that are not always documented in traditional historical sources. In addition, it can provide insight into the social, cultural, and political contexts in which these events occurred. As historian Ronald Grele notes, "Oral history is not just about the past, but about the ways in which the past shapes the present and the future" (Grele, 1985, p. 10). Thus, oral history is an important tool for understanding the experiences and perspectives of individuals and communities and for documenting the impact of historical events on people's lives. Oral history can provide a more nuanced and diverse perspective on history that is often missing from traditional historical narratives, such as engaging with their musical history. Oral history is not only a valuable tool for understanding historical events and experiences, but it is also a rich source of cultural heritage, including music. Oral history in music refers to the collection and documentation of music-related stories, memories, and experiences of individuals and communities. According to ethnomusicologist Mark Slobin, oral history in music "encompasses the study of individual lives, musical practices, performance, and reception histories of performers and audiences alike" (Slobin, 2011, p. 174).

This approach has been used to document a wide range of music genres, including folk, blues, jazz, and hip-hop. For example, oral history has been used to capture the stories and experiences of blues musicians and their communities (McGhee & McGhee, 2016). Similarly, in the field of jazz, it has been used to document the evolution of music and the experiences of its musicians (Stewart, 1999). One of the advantages of oral history in music is that it can capture musicians' personal experiences and perspectives, which may not be evident in their music or other forms of documentation. According to musicologist Robert Cantwell, "oral history in music can help us understand how the experience of music-making intersects with the larger cultural and social histories of communities and nations"

(1996, p. 2). Oral history in music is not limited to the experiences of musicians but also includes the experiences of audiences and communities. The documentation of music festivals, for example, can provide insight into the role of music in community identity and social relations (Titon, 1992). In addition, oral music history can help document music's impact on social and political movements, such as the civil rights movement in the United States (O'Meally, 1998). Overall, oral history in music is an important tool for documenting music's cultural heritage and understanding the experiences and perspectives of individuals and communities. It can provide a more nuanced and diverse perspective on music history that is often missing from traditional historical narratives. During my field research, I heard intriguing stories about the activities around the mountains of Malebogo, particularly about the honesty of the people. These stories echoed what my grandfather used to tell us. On one occasion, Mr Morukhuladi, one of the participants, recounted how when someone committed an offence, the police would come on foot to arrest them. Due to the lack of transport, it would take many days to get the arrested person to jail. The arrested individual would walk with the police, cook, eat, and sleep with them unshackled along the way without considering escape. Although unrelated to the music, this story gave me a deeper understanding of how people lived together in these communities. Mr Moshi described that when they were small children, they learned to play *dinaka* music within their community. In their community, as in other communities in the Mmalebogo area, playing *dinaka* was a common activity in which everyone participated. Children learned to play as part of their upbringing, and it was never considered an activity exclusive to a specific group. This deep understanding of Shehananwa music made it easy for them to transfer it to the *harepa*.

### **3.2.2 Ethnography**

Ethnography is a qualitative research methodology employed in the social sciences to investigate and understand specific social groups or communities' cultures, behaviours, and practices through immersive participant observation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Paulsen (2009, p. 509) characterises ethnographic research as "an iterative process in which layers of knowledge gradually accumulate as we spend time in a setting." Paulsen also underscores that it is "distinguished by the ability to move past surface descriptions or superficial indicators within research settings and toward some type of deeper truth" (ibid.). I employ this method in my research endeavours to seek a deeper understanding of the historical context surrounding the *harepa* instrument. This research approach aims to provide rich, contextual insights into the social phenomena under examination by integrating into the target community and engaging in prolonged fieldwork (ibid).

Ethnographic studies often involve collecting data through various methods, including participant observation, interviews, and document analysis (Jackson, 1987; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Paulsen, 2009; Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 2011). One of the foundational principles of ethnography is the emphasis on a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the social setting under investigation. Ethnographers strive to uncover the nuances and complexities of the culture or community they study, recognising that social phenomena cannot be fully comprehended in isolation but are interconnected with broader social, historical, and contextual factors (Denzin & Lincoln 2018). Ethnographic research is characterised by its flexibility and adaptability to the research context, allowing researchers to adjust their methods and approach as they gain deeper insights and refine their research questions (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This dynamic and iterative process enables ethnographers to capture the evolving nature of social practices and meanings within the studied community.

As ethnomusicologists, we closely follow methods used by anthropologists. Therefore, I have used a historical ethnographic approach, which Vaughan defines as “an attempt to elicit structure and culture from the documents created prior to an event in order to understand how people in another time and place made sense of things” (2004, p. 321). Sutherland writes that historical ethnography “still takes seriously the traditional anthropological method of intensive, personal fieldwork to find out how people think, what they do and what it means to them” (1999, p. 120). Instead of “eliciting structure and culture from documents”, as mentioned in the historical ethnographic approach, I use oral histories as a way to achieve the same results. My understanding of the differences between traditional and historical ethnography finds strength in Kravitz’s description, which states, “As traditional anthropological ethnography does, it seeks to translate the culture of a particular time and place into words which will recreate it in the minds of readers in another time and place” (1994, p. 4). This thought resonates with my research as I look at how musicians use their experience and memory of Basotho ba Lebowa to transmit and create new works.

### **3.2.3 Engaged Ethnomusicology**

Throughout my research, I have recognised the ethical and relational complexities inherent in the researcher-participant dynamic. This complex interplay is exemplified by Thram's (2014) commentary, which emphasises that researchers often enter communities to extract information for their benefit, frequently departing with no tangible improvement or potentially leaving the community in a less favourable state than before their arrival. Thram advocates for a transformative shift in research

methodologies, promoting more significant involvement of research participants and endeavours that contribute positively to their well-being. Such contributions need not be solely monetary but can encompass enriching experiences in various forms. Upon reflection and collaborative engagement with the research participants, I recognise that my research, initially perceived as rooted in a practice-led approach, is inherently intertwined with the principles and methodologies associated with engaged ethnomusicology. In my approach to engaged ethnomusicology, I observed that I was able to establish a profound level of trust with the participants. Interlocutors felt comfortable sharing with me the intricacies of their artistic pursuits and broader personal concerns, including grievances related to prior research interactions.

Upon our initial encounter with the participants, I explicitly communicated my intentions to them. These objectives remained clear throughout our engagement. I believe that through such an understanding, a sense of trust was cultivated, fostered by my role that developed into one of a familiar figure. Regular interactions, including shared meals and domestic assistance provided when needed, contributed to the establishment of a significant level of trust between us. Being a Mosotho wa Lebowa myself could have potentially reassured them, offering peace of mind. I sincerely hope this foundation of trust will endure and continue to characterise our relationship. Their mistrust at my first arrival was based on previous experiences. One such issue involved a situation in which two participants had engaged with an individual whom I will refer to as Mr. Joe. Mr. Joe persuaded these participants to record their musical compositions, to which they consented. After the recording, Mr. Joe provided them with 50 copies of their recorded music to sell independently. However, the participants later discovered that Mr. Joe was also distributing and profiting from these copies without their consent. Mr. Sekiba also had an unpleasant experience. He had already paid for recording his album in a studio when he encountered Mr. Joe. Mr. Joe subsequently appropriated and repackaged the album, produced fifty additional copies, and furnished Mr. Sekiba with copies for independent sales while concurrently selling the album. The participants now sought additional copies for resale but could not locate Mr. Joe. They also desired an accounting of the copies sold and their corresponding share of the proceeds.

Mr. Joe further advised the participants to register their music with the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) to ensure the receipt of royalties for airplay. Taking it upon himself to oversee the registration process without the musicians' involvement, Mr. Joe included the name of an unrelated third party in the registration, stipulating that this individual was entitled to fifty percent of the royalties. The involvement of this unrelated party in the music-making or recording process was

non-existent, and questions raised concerning this matter have gone unanswered. With my background in the music industry, I was approached to intervene in this matter, as the participants hold faith in my ability to facilitate a resolution. Mr Joe never disclosed to the individuals that the community radio station through which they access music does not adhere to SAMRO's reporting requirements, precluding the generation of royalties. Thus, to my research participants, Mr. Joe is perceived as potentially withholding their rightful earnings given that their music receives radio airplay exacerbating the situation beyond its inherent complexities.

I contacted SAMRO to clarify this matter and received new forms to rectify the erroneous names. It is noteworthy that Mr. Joe has recorded numerous musical groups, apart from the performers I worked with, and I made it my mission to solve their situation. These circumstances have highlighted the challenges associated with engaging participants who have experienced negative interactions with prior researchers. Such experiences tend to foster mistrust, significantly affecting the information participants share. In my case, however, the participants conveyed a heightened level of trust in me, expressing their appreciation of my honesty and approach and have subsequently welcomed me into their homes to document their performances and readily agreed to share their musical knowledge as evidenced by their willingness to teach me to play the *harepa*. Having established this close relationship with these gentlemen, I could listen to their stories and am grateful that I could record this vital information, which all of them had collected over decades.

### **3.2.4 ILAM as an Anarchive**

Within the context of my research, I discuss ILAM as an "anarchive," a perspective underscored by the organisation's operational methodology (McConnachie et al., 2024). Originally conceived as a static archive, ILAM distinguishes itself by actively involving musicians as vibrant repositories of substantial knowledge about musical performance. The failure to archive this reservoir of expertise poses an inherent risk of irreversible loss. Moreover, ILAM actively explores avenues for accessing and leveraging its collections in research, music composition, and other pursuits.

The term, anarchive, denotes a conceptual framework which challenges conventional archival practices. In contrast to traditional archives with their structured and systematic organisation, anarchives often adopt more flexible and dynamic approaches to knowledge preservation and dissemination. Singh (2018) describes an an-archive as "the future archive, the archive of alterity." Manning (2020) characterises it as "that strange and stunning 'something' that catches us in our

becoming." McConnachie et al. (2024) refer to an anarchival as an archive that "represents the unstructured, unfiltered, and often chaotic accumulation of traces and marks that escape the control of traditional archiving systems." Herceg (2022) regards the anarchival as "activating and orienting—making it a collaborator in all forms." An anarchival approach thus prioritises decentralised, participatory, and non-hierarchical archiving methods, fostering diverse perspectives and interpretations. An anarchival seeks to capture information's living and evolving nature rather than adhering to static and fixed representations. Rooted in postmodern and poststructuralist theories questioning authoritative narratives and advocating for diverse voices (where does this come from? The introduction of these terms – they are rather complex and should either be elaborated upon or dismissed), this concept aligns with the broader discourse on challenging traditional notions of knowledge preservation (McConnachie et al., 2024).

In the International Library of African Music (ILAM) context, labelling ILAM as an anarchival suggests a departure from conventional archival norms, emphasising a dynamic engagement with musicians and their living knowledge instead of a static, rigid preservation of materials.

### **3.2.5 Living Archives**

What is living archival practice? Archives have traditionally been perceived as repositories where researchers store and occasionally access records and artefacts, often rendering them inert spaces with inaccessible knowledge (McConnachie, 2008). Primarily stemming from insufficient funding, many archives encounter significant difficulties in digitising their collections. Additionally, some archives face accessibility issues due to rights or permissions restrictions. These factors collectively contribute to the archives becoming dormant and removed from public reach, thereby diminishing their relevance (Thram, 2014; Madiba, 2019; Watkins et al., 2021).

The International Library of African Music (ILAM) transitioned from being a dormant repository to a living archive through the comprehensive digitisation of its audio collection. This transformation facilitated access to recordings for both researchers and the general public. Consequently, this digital archive supported various projects, including the repatriation project to return recordings to their places of origin (Madiba, 2019). A project of significance was the collaborative endeavour conducted in 2014 in association with the Singing Wells project and Ketebul Records, led by Tabu Osusa of Kenya (Odidi, 2015). In this venture, the ILAM recordings played a pivotal role in reviving a nearly extinct musical genre, specifically focusing on the resurgence of the *entenga* drums of Uganda. This

undertaking encompassed identifying and commissioning skilled drum artisans to construct these instruments. Subsequent to the completion of the drums, musicians adapted their compositions to harmonise with the *entenga* drums, with ILAM's audio recordings serving as a crucial reference. The preservation of this cultural heritage was facilitated by the audio documentation undertaken by Hugh Tracey at the time (1950 and 1952), without which the performance of *entenga* drums might have faced irrevocable extinction (Madiba, 2019). Projects of this nature underscore ILAM's distinction as a living archive, as they actively engage with the community rather than relegate their holdings to the obscurity of the archives. ILAM's digitisation efforts since 2002 and adaptation to the digital age exemplify the broader transformation of archives from physical entities to virtual, intangible spaces, allowing individuals to create and curate their personal archives (McConnachie, 2021; Madiba, 2021; Thram, 2014).

This evolving landscape compels archives to explore innovative ways to engage with the public and remain relevant. In the realm of academic research, my work may be likened to capturing a contemporary snapshot of our current era. While we remain uncertain about the future value of this research, we can draw valuable lessons from the pioneering work of Hugh Tracey, who effectively documented his own time, thus contributing significantly to our understanding of historical contexts (McConnachie 2008). In accordance with Sabiescu's (2020) assertion, living archives have perpetually manifested themselves through rudimentary means such as storytelling to captivate audiences and through the utilisation of tangible artefacts to elicit or chronicle historical occurrences. Consequently, there is a case for further research in these types of archives due to the substantial wealth of information they contain and the manner in which this information can be documented, retained and disseminated.

Various approaches to archiving exist, with an institution such as ILAM employing strategies such as repatriation and revitalisation to maintain the vitality of the archive. However, it is worth acknowledging that there are occasions where a simpler approach is warranted. This simplicity lies in the act of accessing and preserving knowledge from individuals within our immediate surroundings, who are often overlooked despite the wealth of insights they possess. Notably, in addition to archives and collectors, individuals themselves constitute a vital and fragile wealth of information. They serve as custodians of knowledge, particularly intangible heritage, which remains unrecorded and at risk of being permanently lost. These custodians, however, are transient by nature due to the inevitability of their passing taking invaluable information with them. As posited by Sabiescu (2020), living archives represent an amalgamation of archival and artistic elements which are achieved through the fusion of creative practices with the recording and tracing of historical events. The archival aspect pertains to a

particular focus on memory, the communal sharing of memories, and the methods employed to facilitate memory integration within a context of presence, which is often achieved through the medium of memory texts. My research centers on the historical documentation of the *harepa*, and on the perspectives of three musicians whose insights are grounded in their life experiences. These musicians provide a first-hand account of a rich cultural heritage that might otherwise be lost if not captured and preserved.

### **3.3 Methods, Procedures and Techniques**

The central methodologies employed in this research combine the different practice-led approaches and result in a mixed methodological approach. The research participants I closely interacted with were musicians named Mr John Morukhuladi, Mr Albert Sekiba, and Mr Daniel Moshi. Before starting my research, I harboured doubts about the feasibility of finding individuals who played the *harepa*. This apprehension stemmed from encounters with acquaintances who were unfamiliar with the instrument or incorrectly identified it as the *dipela*. They believed I was searching for *dipela* players, likely because many *dipela* players transitioned to playing the *harepa* while still referring to it as *dipela*. These interactions initially hindered my research progress as I felt that my fieldwork was not producing results. However, a pivotal moment occurred when I met Mr. John Morukhuladi, a centenarian residing in Ga-Matšhaba village within the town of Bochum in Limpopo. Mr Morukhuladi, aged one hundred and two years and now retired, had a professional career during which he served in various capacities for several mining sector firms based in Johannesburg. The important introduction to Mr Morukhuladi transpired through my brother-in-law, who initially expressed uncertainty upon my inquiry about potential *harepa* players in the Limpopo Province. He explained that the known *harepa* players had, regrettably, passed away. Nonetheless, my brother-in-law mobilised his network of contacts and eventually received a reference to Mr Morukhuladi, albeit with reservations about the latter's age and vitality. On 27 February 2020, I commenced my research collaboration with Mr Morukhuladi, which extended over three years. I also regularly visited his residence, interacting with him and his family. Furthermore, I sought guidance from Mr Morukhuladi through formalised lessons on the *harepa*.

A subsequent meeting with Mr Morukhuladi occurred marking a pivotal juncture in my research journey. Notably, during this encounter, we were introduced to an octogenarian, Mr. Sekiba. I enquired from Mr Morukhuladi about any knowledge of additional *harepa* players. In response, he directed our attention to a musician from Ga-Kobe village who had previously engaged in collaborative

performances with a group of dancers and drummers. During our visit, Mr Morukhuladi's granddaughter presented a video recording captured on her mobile device featuring Mr Sekiba's musical performance with his ensemble. This visual documentation facilitated the acquisition of Mr. Sekiba's contact information, subsequently enabling a scheduled meeting with him. Mr. Sekiba, born in 1939, is an octogenarian at the age of eighty-four. Having retired, he boasts a career in the mining industry in Johannesburg, transitioning between various firms until his eventual retirement in 1997. My research with Mr Sekiba commenced on 13 October 2020. Mirroring the structure of my engagement with Mr Morukhuladi, our interaction spanned a three-year period and encompassed interviews, instructional sessions, and visits.

During my interactions with Mr Sekiba, I inquired about the potential existence of other *harepa* players, and he guided us to a nearby village named My Darling. There, we encountered an octogenarian named Mr Moshi, who was proficient in playing both the *dipela* and the *harepa*. Mr. Moshi, born in 1935, is an octogenarian at eighty-eight years old. Having concluded his professional tenure, he retired after a career in Johannesburg. Notably, he served at Jan Smuts Airport, presently recognised as OR Tambo International Airport, where he worked for various airlines until his retirement in 1995. A singular visit with Mr. Moshi transpired on 14 October 2020. Regrettably, subsequent attempts to organise follow-up meetings were unsuccessful, as he communicated a lack of interest, citing his discontinued engagement with music as the primary reason.

After meeting these three musicians, I thought my research had ended and that there were no more *harepa* players. However, in 2023, I met a musician named Seka Maleka, who, together with his band, came to Makhanda to conduct a mixed traditional and contemporary style music workshops and performances at Rhodes University. In our conversations with Seka, I mentioned that I was researching *harepa* music. He told me that his uncle was a *harepa* player and also had a group with which he performed. After hearing that, I asked if he could put me in contact with his uncle, which he did, and that is how I met Labson 'Molokoloko' Mothemana, a sixty-six-year-old who lives in a village called Buffelshoek, near Bochum. Mr Mothemana was born in 1957 in Malebogo village near Buffelshoek, where he now resides. My research with Mr Mothemana commenced on 18 December 2023, followed by a performance with his group on 19 December 2023. A point to note, discussed in Chapter 5, is that Mr Mothemana's group comprises women who play drums and sing with him. Due to time constraints, my meeting with him occurred over those two days only. However, we have arranged to record an album of his music in the future. I will elaborate more about it in the conclusion chapter.

These four musicians were situated in villages within the Bochum region of South Africa's Limpopo Province, each located within a radius of roughly 50 kilometres.

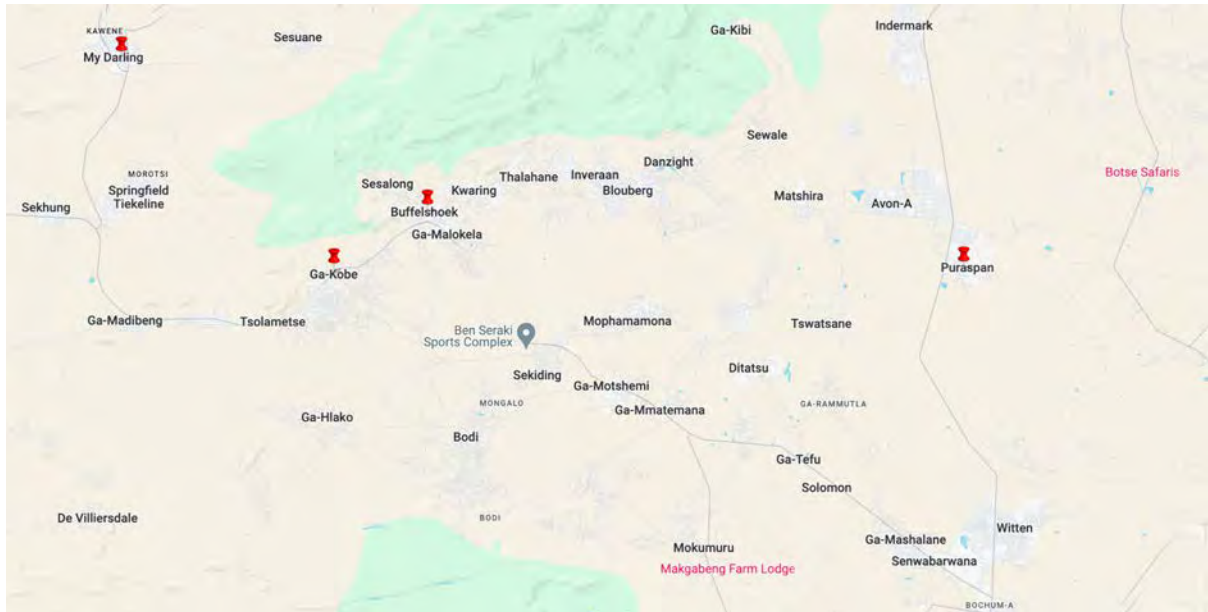


Figure 03. Map of Bochum showing the villages where the performers reside. Source: Google maps.

This research required primary research, such as fieldwork and secondary research on all related literature. Not many secondary resources directly engage with the history of the *harepa*, *harepa* players, and their music. The research was conducted in villages including *Ga-Matšhaba*, *Ga-Kobe*, *My Darling*, and *Buffelshoek* in the *Makgabeng* district. The research was conducted through interviews with musicians. I elected to use interviews as the primary method for my research due to the participants' ease of engaging in conversation. Given their advanced age, the use of open-ended questions aimed at stimulating memories proved very effective in triggering stories and reminiscences. Turrini (2013, p. 65) underscores the effect of interviews in research, emphasising their capacity to authenticate narratives by directly capturing the words of the participants. This is a quality that coincides with my research approach. I asked them about their upbringing, the games they played as children, and how their musical journey had begun. Within their responses, I could map out their experiences and what made them the musicians they are today. As they responded to the questions, they sometimes said things that they did not think were essential to the interview, yet they served as crucial threads binding their narrative together.

According to Chege (2015), it is crucial to contemplate one's position and acknowledge the unequal power dynamics inherent in the interaction between researcher and participants. Pike (1990) discusses the concepts of emic (insider) and etic (outsider), suggesting that we need to adopt an insider perspective to understand the emic aspects of nonverbal or verbal behaviours. Subsequently,

we can analyse our actions from an outsider's perspective by observing or listening to the material. Conducting the interviews in Northern Sotho, the participants' native language, was a deliberate choice intended to foster comfort and unrestricted expression. Northern Sotho is also my mother tongue, thereby facilitating seamless communication during our interactions. The mutual linguistic understanding ensured clarity and coherence in all our engagements.

On my first research trip in 2020, I was not familiar with the area of research. I opted to stay at my sister's place in Polokwane, a town about a hundred kilometres away from my research area, which meant that I had to travel a long distance every time I wanted to spend time with my research participants. I could not stay longer because I had to travel back to Polokwane. For the following trips, I located a B&B in the town of Bochum, nearer to the research participants, and that meant that I could spend more time with them without time limitations.

I recorded all my sessions with my participants using a SONY PX470 audio recorder and two PANASONIC UX90 video cameras, one at a different angle from the other and serving as a backup on the other hand. I recorded in this way to ensure that there is no data loss. In all the interviews, I placed the cameras on tripods, always facing the participants. I transcribed all the data to text, including the lyrics of all the songs I recorded. In addition, I used the Hugh Tracey tuning forks to measure the tuning of the *harepas*. A tuning fork is a steel device with two prongs utilised by musicians or researchers. When struck, it vibrates to produce a note of a specific pitch. Tietze (2012) explains the functionality of tuning forks, stating, "The tuning fork vibrates at a set frequency after being struck on the heel of the hand and is used to assess vibratory sensation and hearing (air conduction and bone conduction)." Hugh Tracey, for his fieldwork purposes, commissioned a set of fifty-four tuning forks graduated in steps of four vibrations, ranging from 212vs to 424vs within one octave in the middle of the piano range (Tracey, 1958). These tuning forks were utilised to measure the tunings of instruments he recorded. Presently, these tuning forks are housed at ILAM, where I had the privilege to access and utilise them for my research under the guidance and permission of Andrew Tracey.



Figure 04. Hugh Tracey tuning forks. Photo by Author.

In adherence to university ethics guidelines (clearance number: 7060), I explicitly communicated the purpose of recording sessions, the intended use of the recordings, and the accessibility of such recordings. Furthermore, I sought permission from the participants to record the sessions, employing a language comprehensible to them. This adherence to ethical standards involved a transparent explanation, solicitation of consent, and signing of release forms, a process adapted to accommodate participants with limited literacy skills through verbal communication recorded for documentation purposes. In the evenings, I reviewed the recordings and recorded detailed field notes. This process enabled me to identify gaps in the information. The following day, armed with these insights, I could conduct more targeted follow-up questioning during subsequent interviews.

Important to this study is the use of musical transcription because of the need to analyse the tonal and rhythmic systems and patterns that the musicians use on the *harepa*. In Chapter 6 I present a rigorous analysis of the musical systems used and discuss these in comparison to Basotho ba Lebowa musical style. Assistance was given by Prof Andrew Tracey and Prof Dave Dargie, both international experts in this field.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, we explored the multifaceted research methodologies that underpin the study of the *harepa* music tradition of the Limpopo province. These methodologies, namely practice-led research, oral history, ethnography, and engaged ethnomusicology, were chosen for their strengths and their synergistic potential to deepen the understanding of a rich cultural heritage that is both vibrant and vulnerable.

As a sound engineer at the International Library of African Music (ILAM), my connection to the sounds of *harepa*, rooted in the memories of childhood and reinforced by professional exposure to archived recordings, guided the choice of these methodologies. The practice-led approach, in particular, allowed me to immerse myself in the learning and performance of *harepa*, thus bridging the gap between theoretical research and practical, embodied experience. This hands-on engagement provided invaluable insights into the subtleties of the musical tradition, which might have remained elusive with a purely observational approach.

Oral history played a crucial role in capturing the living memories of the musicians, offering a window into the lived experiences of those who have been custodians of this musical heritage. Through their stories, I gained access to a body of knowledge passed down through generations, highlighting the importance of oral traditions in the preservation of cultural identities. The use of ethnography allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the social and cultural contexts within which *harepa* music has evolved. By embedding myself within the community, I was able to observe and document the nuances of musical interactions and the cultural significance of the *harepa* within the broader Basotho ba Lebowa community. Engaged ethnomusicology underscored the ethical dimensions of this research, emphasising respectful and beneficial interactions with the community of focus. This approach ensured that the research process was not only about data collection but also about contributing positively to the community's cultural and social well-being. Each of these methodologies contributed to a richer, more nuanced understanding of the *harepa* tradition, underscoring the complexity and depth of this musical expression. This chapter not only highlighted the methodologies employed but also set the stage for a detailed analysis of the findings, which will be further elaborated in the subsequent chapters. By integrating these diverse approaches, the research aims to contribute significantly to the academic literature while also ensuring that the vibrant musical traditions of the Basotho ba Lebowa are preserved and appreciated both within and beyond their community.

Moving forward, the insights gained from this chapter will inform the ongoing discussion and analysis, helping to frame the *harepa* not just as a musical instrument but as a valuable element of cultural identity and continuity in the Limpopo province. As we transition to the next chapter, the historical contextualisation of the Bahananwa will provide an essential backdrop against which the contemporary significance of the *harepa* can be further understood and appreciated.

# Chapter 4

## Missionary Influence on the Indigenous Music of the Basotho ba Lebowa

In this Chapter, I outline the effect that the presence of missionaries and the indigenous music had on the development of the *harepa* played by the Bahananwa people, the descendants of whom are the musical co-researchers in this project. The missionaries' arrival heralded an unsettling time for the indigenous communities all over Africa. Chikowero (2015, p. 174-175) observes that Europeans were trying to modernise African culture by advancing a form of Eurocentrism that regarded Africans as inferior. Missionaries and colonialists needed the cooperation of those they sought to convert or draw into the colonising mission for it to be successful. The missionaries sought to destroy many cultural foundations and a sense of self-worth to disarm and dominate the Southern parts of Africa. In the process, some indigenous community members became complicit in implementing these policies.

There was collaboration, but below the surface there was room for resistance or retaining that which was held sacred. As elsewhere in the colonised world and South Africa, how musicians pushed back against this influence is significant. For example, we can hear resistance in the harmonic language and the grain of the voices of the *amakwayas* along the entire east coast of southern Africa (Kidula 2000, p. 412)<sup>7</sup>. Along this vein, this thesis hypothesises that the aesthetics of the *harepa* music is one way in which the Bahananwa people found a means of resisting the musical language of the missionary on their terms.

More evidence of musical adaptation can be seen when migrant musicians in urban centres adapted their instruments to play in conditions with fewer or solo players. This hybridity follows a process of enculturation as local communities adopted a foreign musical language (Morrison, Demorest and Stambaugh, 2008; Morrison and Demorest, 2009; Tan, 2014; Raharjo, Eko, Soesanto, Rohidi, and Utomo, 2021). I investigate the *harepa's* relationship with traditional Northern Sotho instruments such as the *dinaka* and *dipela* to examine the degrees of enculturation in its sound and performance technique. As will be described in this chapter, the music played on the *harepa* is the same as that

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<sup>7</sup> *Makwaya* represents a Swahilized version of the word "choir." These choirs were associated with specific Christian denominations. In Tanzania, and to some extent in Kenya, their music, composed in Swahili, was extensively distributed and promoted among certain groups (Kidula 2000, p.412).

played on the *dipela* and the *dinaka* instruments. Therefore, the musician invents a new and unique instrument by incorporating indigenous musical genres, including Northern Sotho styles such as *Kiba*.

## **4.1 Missionaries and Enculturation**

### **4.1.1 Arrival of Missionaries**

In July 1737, Georg Schmidt, a Christian missionary, arrived in South Africa and established the first Protestant mission station known as the Moravian Brethren at Genadendal (Rabie 1985). He commenced his work with the Khoisan sociocultural group. After two years of service, Schmidt returned home to Germany leaving the place with no action until 1792 when the Moravian Brethren returned and re-established their presence in South Africa by sending three missionaries. Over the following three decades, a significant influx of Christian missionaries arrived in the rapidly expanding South Africa, which had become a pivotal hub for maritime trade between Asia and the West. These missionaries hailed from various countries including England, Scotland, France, the United States, Switzerland, and the Netherlands (Rabie, 1985; Torp, 2017).

According to Etherington (1977), the movement of missionaries in South Africa started in the early nineteenth century, specifically in the 1840s and 1850s. The American missionaries, affiliated with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), initially aimed to establish an independent, republican Zulu state modelled after American institutions. They believed in the rapid advancement of Africans towards American standards of government, religion, and civilisation. Their strategy included demonstrating and planting American values in other lands while also being anti-imperialist in their approach. On the other hand, the Lutheran missionaries of the Hermannsburg Society, led by Louis Harms, had a different goal. They aimed to enrol their entire village in the missionary service and create self-supporting missions in Africa. Harms believed in the survival of Christianity in Africa during a period of darkness in Europe and was also anti-imperialist, expressing discontent when missionaries settled in British Natal (Etherington, 1977; Lindemann, 2001).

The Anglican missionaries, particularly those from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), had a more respectful approach towards Nguni society in Natal and their tradition as compared to the American and Hermannsburg missionaries. They worked closely with colonial officials and were involved in diplomatic services, gaining special status for their converts and aligning with British imperialism, an example of the interventions that were made to create loyalty. The Wesleyan missionaries, associated with the Methodist Church, focused on itinerant preaching and

establishing mission stations. They faced challenges in converting people, as resistance to Christianity was strong among the northern Nguni communities. Despite variations in their approaches, missionary societies in South Africa eventually saw similarities in their operations, leading to movements between stations across denominational lines (Etherington, 1977).

Bethke (2020) describes the significant impact of Western musical conventions on the conversion process in nineteenth-century mission stations. Missionaries, firmly convinced of the superiority of European poetry and music, incorporated these conventions into their missionary work. This imposition manifested in promoting four-part SATB choral singing and disseminating Western musical theoretical concepts, often through Sarah Anna Glover's tonic sol-fa method which was popularised by John Curwen, who adapted it from various earlier musical systems. Due to their hubris, which marginalised indigenous worldviews, missionaries presented Christianity exclusively through a Eurocentric lens of asserting the superiority of European musical expression.

The missionaries' promotion of Western musical conventions was rooted in a complex interplay of religious, political, and cultural motives, leading them to dismiss or overlook indigenous traditions. This cultural arrogance extended to the assumption that European concepts of poetry and music were inherently superior, warranting their integration into the conversion process without critical evaluation. The missionaries believed that teaching Western musical conventions would bolster the delivery of Christian doctrine without considering their compatibility with indigenous traditions or potential compromises to their teachings (Bethke, 2020). Overall, the missionaries' unquestioning adoption of Western musical conventions reflected a broader Eurocentric approach to religious conversion, reinforcing cultural hegemony and erasing an indigenous musical heritage. This complete adoption of Western musical conventions highlights the missionaries' adherence to the prevailing attitudes of their time, which prioritised the imposition of European culture as a means of civilising indigenous peoples, even at the expense of their traditions and identities (ibid).

The missionaries viewed Western art and church music as symbolic of a higher civilisation as compared to local forms of music in sub-Saharan Africa. They believed that Western music represented a more advanced and civilised culture, while they considered non-European music as primitive. This interpretation of music by missionaries led to the establishment of what they viewed as a God-given hierarchy that privileged Western music over local African music. The missionaries were zealous in disseminating Western music because they saw it as an essential component of religious practice and as a way to civilise the local populations. This perspective on music played a significant role in shaping

the colonial dialectic of discipline and subversion in sub-Saharan Africa during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Torp, 2017).

The missionaries justified their belief that Western music represented a more advanced and civilised culture compared to local African music by subscribing to the evolutionist distinction between nature and culture, primitive and civilised races. They saw Western art and church music as symbolic of a higher civilisation and actively disseminated this music to establish a hierarchical cultural gap between European and non-European music. They believed that providing locals with a musical education, particularly in Western music, was essential because the music of the congregation was a standard component of religious practice, especially within Protestantism. This belief was further reinforced by the missionaries' view of hymn books as the Gospel in miniature, a condensed version that must be spread at all costs (Bethke, 2020).

This approach allowed missionaries to use music as a powerful tool of evangelism and as proof of successful conversion, shaping the dialectic of colonial discipline and subversion in the process. The American missionaries emphasised American values and anti-imperialism, the Hermannsburg missionaries focused on self-supporting missions and village-based evangelism, the Anglican missionaries aligned with British imperialism, and the Wesleyan missionaries emphasised itinerant preaching and station-based conversions (ibid.).

## **4.2 The Berlin Missionary Society**

The Berlin Missionary Society (BMS), which I view as the one at the centre of my research, was established on 29 February 1824. Missionaries were sent to South Africa in 1833 (safika.org, online). Their primary goals included spreading the gospel, establishing churches, and educating the South African population by often incorporating educational facilities into their missions. The arrival of German missionaries in South Africa coincided with a noticeable decline in African cultures and traditions which were attributed to missionaries viewing African cultures as primitive and needing conversion (ibid.).

According to Situmu (2012), E.B. Beyer established the first BMS mission station among the Bahananwa people in 1868 at Sehlong. Beyer named Sehlong Leipzig after his hometown. This area is still referred to as Leipzig. In 1870, Gustav Trumplemann established a mission at Makgabeng. According to Kriel (1997), In 1874, C.H.C. Stech assumed control of this mission station and was

present when the rift between the Bahananwa leadership emerged between Seketa and his half-brother Kibi in 1879, which will be discussed in detail later in this Chapter. Stech's tenure at Blaumberg was accompanied by the arrival of A.G.E.G. Herbst in 1886. However, due to a disagreement with Seketa, Stech departed the region, and subsequently, Herbst was also instructed to leave by the King. It was against this backdrop that Christoph Sonntag took up the position of the new missionary at Blaumberg on 15 August 1892.

Christof Sonntag, who had been in South Africa since 1885, assumed leadership of the Leipzig mission in 1890 before relocating to the Venda area. In 1897, Robert and Helene Franz took over the Leipzig mission. Helene's significant contributions to the medical field had the couple relocate to Senwabarwana, where they were granted a farm to establish a mission and hospital. They named the farm Bochum after Robert's hometown. Over time, Bochum grew into a town capable of serving the surrounding villages. The following is an excerpt from a table detailing all missionaries commissioned to South Africa by the Berlin Missionary Society.

Missionary	Date and place of Birth	Arrival in SA*	Date and place of Death	Date and place of Marriage	Wife	Date and place of Birth	Date and place of Death
<b>BEYER, Emil</b> Bernhard	13.10.1836 Volkmarisdorf bei Leipzig	1864	1.4.1920 Luckau Middelburg	1868	ENDEMANN, Anna	1838	1915
<b>TRÜPELMANN,</b> Rudolph Friedrich Gustav	14.4.1841 Brandenburg, Preußen	1868	19.4.1923 Middelburg, Tvl	1872	PAUL, Anna Charlotte Luise	15.7.1850 Deutschland	17.7.1900
<b>STECH, Carl</b> Heinrich Christian	29.6.1844	1872-1892	?	?	MEINEKE, Emilie	1848	?
<b>SONNTAG,</b> Christoph	1.3.1862 Fürstenau, Ostpreußen	1885	19.1.1919 Tshakhuma, Venda	1) ? 2) ?	1) <b>BRENNING, Marie</b> 2) <b>TRÜPELMANN,</b> Magdalene	1) ? 2) 14.2.1877	1) 22.3.1897 2) 14.2.1947
<b>FRANZ, Carl</b> Heinrich <b>Robert</b>	7.8.1864 Nieder Adelsdorf, Schlesien	1892-1914	12.6.1919 Pietersburg	Waterberg, distr. Nylstroom, Transvaal	<b>SCHULZ, Helene</b> Magdalene Elisabeth	24.3.1866 Eydkuhnen, Ostpreußen	16.7.1935 Pretoria

Figure 05. except for names of missionaries who were sent to South Africa by the BMC.

Taken from: <https://safrika.org/Names/berliner.html>

Sonntag's involvement in the conflict between the Bahananwa and the Boers exemplifies how missionaries were instrumentalised as tools in warfare. Acting as a messenger for both the Boer and Bahananwa leadership during the conflict, Sonntag observed the unjust treatment of the Bahananwa by the Boers and strongly condemned the violence perpetrated against them. Despite recognising these injustices, Sonntag still urged the Bahananwa to surrender voluntarily. As per Kriel (1999), Sonntag maintained a positive relationship with King Seketa which was characterised by a level of trust that prompted Seketa to surrender to the Boers. However, there are no documented efforts by Sonntag to advocate for Seketa's release from prison or to visit him during his imprisonment, indicating the superficial nature of their friendship. As noted by Kriel (ibid.), Sonntag believed that if

the Bahananwa community were subdued by the Boers, they would be more open to his evangelistic efforts. He surmised that such efforts would potentially lead to their conversion to Christianity as a gesture of gratitude for the superficial sympathy he had extended to them. According to Van der Hyden (2011), the actions of missionaries such as Stech and Sonntag were not unexpected by the Berlin Missionary Society (BMS), as their director, Herman Theodor Wangemann, acknowledged the missionaries' practice of freely reporting on the movements and intentions of the indigenous population, a task considered unique to the BMS. This stance reflects the Eurocentric worldview prevalent among European missionaries, which not only entailed rejecting "heathen" cultures but also justifying active engagement against them (Van der Hyden, 2011, p. 216).

In 1892, Robert Franz arrived in South Africa, but it was not until 1897, after the war had ended, that he began working at the Leipzig mission. As mentioned above, alongside his wife Helene, their focus was on the welfare of the Bahananwa people. Helene, a nurse by profession, commenced assisting individuals with various ailments. The government recognised their efforts through their dedicated work and granted them a farm, named Bochum, to continue their endeavours. Additionally, they assisted in establishing a hospital named St. Helene Franz Hospital in their honour, which continues to operate to this day. During my research excursion in 2021, I visited Helena Franz Hospital to explore potential documents associated with the mission station and any related musical activities during Robert Franz's era. Upon meeting with the hospital's director, I learned that the hospital does not retain any historical records concerning the mission or the hospital itself. The director informed me that all historical documents had been transferred out by the Department of Arts and Culture and were not accessible to the public. Despite this unfruitful field excursion to the hospital in (2021), based on oral historical evidence given by a co-researcher and the fact that the autoharp, discussed below, was produced during this period, I suspect the autoharp's introduction among the Bahananwa occurred during this period.

### **4.3 The arrival of the Autoharp**

Robert Franz's arrival coincided with the autoharp's growing popularity among travellers in America and Europe. The instrument's origins can be traced back to Germany, where Charles Zimmermann, a German immigrant to the United States, played a crucial role in its dissemination. In 1865, Zimmermann designed the autoharp, patented it in 1881, and began production in 1885 (Moore, 1963). The design of the autoharp was based on a similar-sized zither already existing in Germany,

with the addition of a bridge and dampers that allowed non-musicians to strum chords easily (Taussig, 1967). Its compact size and user-friendly design made it a favoured choice among travellers, providing a portable alternative to carrying a piano and offering simpler playability than a guitar.

# THE AUTOHARP



**Style No. 2 1/2. \$5.00**

Style No. 2 1/2 has 27 strings and 5 bars, producing the three chords of C, F and B Major, G and C Seventh. Thumb pick, brass pick, music rack, tuning key and instruction book containing 27 pieces of music. Nicely packed.

**A GOOD-NATURED  
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT**

**"EASY TO PLAY"**

... Chapter 1

"The Autoharp encourages the musical effort of the person who is least musical, and will respond with harmonious chord to the touch of anybody. It never is ill-tempered; practice cannot disturb those who listen, for it knows no discords. People of more or less musical skill find it charming in its simplicity, delightfully easy to become acquainted with and companionable at all times, while it baffles the attempt of the skilful to find its musical limitations."

**"EASY TO BUY"**

... Chapter 2

"It accommodates itself to the means and musical abilities of everybody. It says to the person who desires recreation at home, 'Buy me for \$5.00.' And so all the way up, as one can see from the complete catalogue shown on this page, it will follow the growth of musical desire and accomplishment. It appeals to one and another with the irresistible argument of economy; for in all styles it will be found much cheaper than any other instrument possessing anything like the same possibilities, for even the skilful artist finds in the \$150.00 Autoharp an instrument with as great scope as any which can command his attention."



**AUTOHARP**  
PATENTED, MADE IN GERMANY  
MANUFACTURED BY  
**C.F. Zimmermann & Co.**  
DOLGEVILLE, N.Y., U.S.A.



**Style No. 2 3/4. \$7.50**

Style No. 2 3/4, entirely new this year has 28 strings and 7 bars, producing 7 chords with minor changes. A very superior Autoharp. Thumb pick, brass pick, music rack, tuning key and instruction book containing 22 pieces of music. Nicely packed.



**Style "Parlor Grand." \$75.00**

Style "Parlor Grand" has 30 strings, 10 bars and 13 shifters--8 chords. Complete Major keys of F, C, G, D, A, and E; Minor keys of G, D, A and E, also 12 Diminished Seventh chords. Beautifully finished and packed in carrying case. A magnificent instrument. Appropriate and complete furnishings.



**Style "Concert Harp." \$150.00**

Style "Concert Harp" has 34 strings. This instrument produces 72 chords, comprising all the Major, Minor, Seventh and Diminished Seventh chords of every key, as well as a number of compound chords. Tone quality: rich, full, sympathetic. For solo and orchestral work. Finish and equipment commensurate with price. The Perfect Autoharp.

Figure 06. Picture of different versions of autoharp sold by Zimmermann. Image copied from the MOUNTAIN MUSIC AUTOHARP cover.

According to autoharpstore online (2008), Karl August Gutter obtained a British patent sometime between 1883 and 1884. While Gutter was German, no records indicate he had a patent for his autoharp in his native country. It is speculated that upon visiting Germany, Zimmerman began producing the Gutter design under his own patent in 1885.

The autoharp, with its distinctive five-sided flat shape, features a wooden body resembling a piano. It houses 36 strings anchored to a double row of metal pins, similar to those found on a piano, alongside a sound hole and several chord bars. The soundbox is hollow with a hole on one side, reminiscent of a guitar's body. The 36 strings are anchored on the metal pins with a wire bridge guiding them. Using a specialised tuning tool, they can be tuned chromatically or diatonically over three octaves. Suspended above the strings are chord bar buttons with springs held together by a chord bar holder. Each bar corresponds to a specific chord, with dampers attached to mute strings as needed selectively. The bars are labelled with chord names for easy identification by the player.

To play, one presses down the desired chord's damper while strumming all or selected strings. The autoharp has evolved, including adding pickups for amplification, leading to the creation of the electronic omnichord. Notable musicians like Dolly Parton have incorporated the autoharp into their performances. The image below illustrates the overall design of the autoharp.

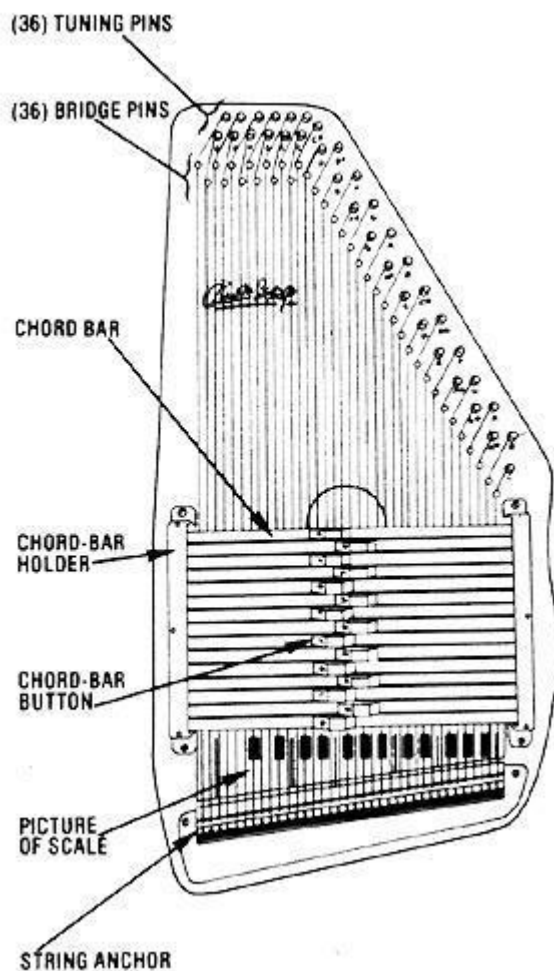


Figure 07. Image of autoharp design (image taken from <https://www.motherearthnews.com>)

According to Morukhuladi (2020), the autoharp was initially used to play hymns in churches during the early 1900s. He recalls first encountering the instrument's sound in church, albeit played differently from their customary style. This church, as described by Morukhuladi, was associated with Robert Franz. He explains that their community faced social exclusion due to their attire, religious practices, and adherence to cultural traditions, leading to them being labelled as *majakale* (heathens). This recollection of events raises questions regarding Morukhuladi's age, which will be further explored in the subsequent chapter.

#### 4.4 Basotho ba Lebowa (Northern Sotho people)



Figure 08. Map of South Africa highlighting Bochum. Source: Google maps.

#### 4.4.1 Contextualisation of the language group

In my research, I focused on the Basotho ba Lebowa (Northern Sotho), specifically the Bahananwa dialect, the only group of people that I found who play the *harepa* and whose music has been significantly captured within the enculturated framework of this instrument. Basotho ba Lebowa are Northern Sotho speakers in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. Within the Northern Sotho language there are many different dialects, some which have more prominence than others. According to Mojela (1999), missionary endeavours were pivotal in shaping the concept of a superior dialect within the Northern Sotho community. By establishing mission stations in key Northern Sotho regions such as Sekhukhuneland and Maleuskop, missionaries effectively introduced Western values to the indigenous population of Southern Africa. These communities, hosting missionary stations, emerged as pioneers of Western influence, fostering education and cultivating an elite class nearby. This select group, instrumental in advancing their native languages, included individuals actively involved in standardising Northern Sotho (Mojela 1999).

The missionary presence facilitated the transcription of the superior local dialects spoken in these regions into written forms (Pedi and Kopa dialects), which garnered high esteem as the first written representations of the language group. Consequently, these written variants became prestigious within Northern Sotho communities (Phaahla, 2006). Institutions such as schools, churches, hospitals, and tertiary centres blossomed around these missionary hubs, nurturing the first cohort of Northern Sotho elites who contributed to linguistic publications. Beyond language development, they engaged in language boards and committees, thereby influencing the standardisation process (Mojela, 1999). This privileging of specific dialects, notably Pedi and Kopa, over others, emphasised the emergence of the idea of a prestigious language and therefore agentic dynamics within Northern Sotho speakers (Phaahla, 2006).

As mentioned above, the Pedi and Kopa dialects were regarded as the *lingua franca*, while other varieties of Northern Sotho were considered mere sub-dialects of Pedi. The missionaries from Berlin in Germany, who had several mission stations in Bopedi (Sekhukhuneland), had a significant role in developing these more prestigious dialects and their written forms. They wrote several sacred works in Pedi-Kopa dialects, such as translations of catechisms and religious manuscripts which were among the first readings that Northern Sotho readers used in schools and churches (ibid). Colonial administrations in South Africa displayed little commitment to fostering education and preserving the languages of the native South African communities. According to Phaahla (2006), this lack of investment and support exacerbated the marginalisation of indigenous languages and cultures, thus

perpetuating the imbalance of power between the colonisers and the colonised. The repercussions of this power disparity are observable in South African black communities, where, in my own experience I have seen that individuals are unfamiliar with their indigenous instruments and cultures.

#### **4.4.2 The Bahananwa People in Bochum**

My focus centred on the residents of the villages of Bochum, approximately 60kms in diameter, inhabited by the Bahananwa people who are believed to have migrated from present-day Botswana early in the nineteenth century. Upon their arrival, they were led by a prominent female figure named Mmatsela, who, along with her followers, departed from their homeland due to internal conflicts within the royal household of Malete of the Bahurutse, a cultural group in Botswana (Situmu, 2012). According to Situmu, they settled in the Blouberg mountains, now known as thabeng tša Malebogo, named after the fact that Mmatsela was the mother of the future leader, Lebogo. Instead of referring to them as the mountains of Mmatsela, they were called the mountains of Malebogo, to honour the mother of Lebogo. Lebogo subsequently assumed leadership of the Bahananwa people from his mother and while other leaders followed Lebogo. It is noteworthy to mention that a later leader, King Seketa Mašilo Ratšhatšha Lebogo, had significant encounters with missionaries and the white settlers' invasions. In fact, King Seketa, mentioned earlier in this chapter, fought against the oppression of the Boers and managed to hold his ground, defending the territory (ibid.).

The Bahananwa people viewed the presence of missionaries such as Stech, Herbst and Sonntag in their territory with caution and strategic consideration. They understood that having a missionary among them could potentially serve as an intermediary between themselves and the Boer authorities. However, they were selective in their acceptance of missionaries, preferring those who did not challenge the authority of their leaders or draw unnecessary attention from the Boer officials. The Bahananwa recognised the importance of maintaining a good relationship with the Boer government in order to benefit from the services of a missionary as a liaison between parties. Therefore, they expected missionaries like Sonntag to be on good terms with the South African ZAR officials and not engage in activities that would jeopardise their relationship with the Boer state. This cautious approach by the Bahananwa towards missionaries like Stech, Herbst and Sonntag influenced their interactions with the Boer authorities, as they sought to balance their own interests with the expectations of the colonial power (Kriel, 1997).

Situmu (2012, p. 47) states that the Boers wanted to gain control over the Northern regions of South Africa, and Seketa denied them that chance, leading to the war between the Boers and Bahananwa people in 1894 known as the Malaboch War or the also known as Bahananwa-Boer war of 1894. The Boers recognised that they could not defeat Seketa on their own and sought assistance from Seketa's adversaries. Kibi, Seketa's half-brother, eagerly allied with them, viewing it as an opportunity to retaliate against his brother. The Mapene, Matlala, and Matebele kingdoms also allied with the Boers, each driven by different motives to fight against King Seketa (Situmu, 2014). As briefly outlined above, in July 1894, King Seketa surrendered to the Boers and was taken to prison in Pretoria for six years only to be released during the Anglo-Boer war. King Seketa was encouraged to surrender by Christof Sonntag, a German missionary stationed among the Bahananwa (Kriel, 1999). Sonntag engaged in a conversation with Chief Mmalebogo, aiming to persuade him to surrender. He openly addressed the possible outcomes of refusing to comply with the government's demands, highlighting the risks, including the loss of independence, the threat of hunger, and the potential casualties in a war. Sonntag stressed the importance of considering the welfare of Mmalebogo's people and the advantages of seeking peace. Despite his earnest efforts, Sonntag's persuasion fell short in convincing the Bahananwa to alter their stance and surrender at that juncture. However, subsequent events, as documented by Kriel (1997), reveal that Sonntag eventually succeeded in his endeavour. As can be seen, the involvement of missionaries in the politics of South Africa had a significant role which I will discuss further in this chapter.

## 4.5 Musical Styles

The Bahananwa, as mentioned above, are part of the Basotho ba Lebowa people. Their cultural and musical practices hold a lot of similarities to other Sesotho sa Lebowa practices and include music composed and performed on *dinaka* reed pipes and *dipela* music. However, their music incorporated cultural differences which were articulated through the addition of different sounds, which they called *Sehananwa* (music of Bahananwa). Mapaya (2013) describes how the musical performance of *Sehananwa* incorporates poetry recitation and ululating. The act of ululating typically denotes a moment of heightened excitement during the performance which is enacted by women alone. Men, also excited by the moment, utilise a small wind instrument crafted from an antelope horn called *letsiyé* for the same purpose (ibid.). All the nuances of *Sehananwa* music, including the rhythmic and melodic approach to songs, as well as the *dinaka* and *dipela* songs and dances, have been successfully transferred to the *harepa*. This has positioned the *harepa* centrally within their musical tradition. The

*harepa*, like *dinaka* and *dipela*, is considered a traditional instrument by the Bahananwa people. Musicians playing the *harepa* have adeptly incorporated the sounds of Sehananwa into their instruments. This movement allowed them to capture their audience in a similar manner as the audience could recognise the aesthetics of an older music repertoire on a new instrument. All the participants in my research have their musical roots in *dinaka* and *dipela* music, making the transition to the *harepa* easy and seamless. Sehananwa is something they have internalised from childhood to adulthood. The National Academies of Sciences, Division of Behavioral, Board on Science Education, Board on Behavioral, Sensory Sciences, Committee (2018) expresses how cultural contexts influence learning, defining culture and its role in learning and development. It also emphasises the importance of social activity and the dynamic interaction between culture, and context. Similar to Bahananwa, the Chopi *timbila* playing tradition in Mozambique operates in the same unique way. When adults are performing, children are allowed to observe them closely. Once the adults have completed their performance, children are free to play it on their own. Without any formal guidance, they play together, mimicking the adults' performances. Through this playful imitation, they naturally learn and internalise the nuances of the instrument over time. Consequently, seasoned *timbila* players often assert that it is challenging to learn to play the *timbila* if one has not grown up around it.

#### 4.5.1 Stylistic Components of Bahananwa Music

##### 4.5.1.1 *Dinaka* Music



Figure 09. QR Code of Magongwa CCV *dinaka* group.

Traditional Northern Sotho music involves the *dinaka* reed pipe ensemble, which comprises a fluid group of between seven and twenty players; sometimes more, who play a set ensemble of pipes tuned to seven notes as the same notes can be repeated (the pipes are tuned to seven notes). Each performer plays a single reed pipe while completing a complex, choreographed dance. Three or four drummers, who play instruments called *meropa*, accompany the dance. The reed pipes are tuned to a pentatonic scale spread across two octaves (Mapaya, 2014). According to Mapaya (2014, p. 427),

*dinaka* is "the blueprint of Northern Sotho indigenous music". The musicians confirm this observation as they call this music *motheo* (foundation), which they consider the origin of their music.



Figure 10. a set of *dinaka* metal pipes made for ILAM by a member of Magongoa CCV. Photo by Author.

The name *dinaka* in a direct translation means horns (*naka* meaning one horn and *dinaka* meaning many). As explained above, *dinaka* is regarded as the quintessential expression of Pedi music, encapsulating the musical structures and concepts upon which nearly all other Northern Sotho genres are based (ibid). Rafapa (2013) describes the impact of *dinaka*, or at the very least, its performative psychology, as the foundation for acculturated church music, notably within the musical repertoire of African Independent Churches such as the Zion Christian Church. Thus the roots of the music, such as the rhythm and melodic structure are built upon these foundations.

*Dinaka* pipes are made of bamboo-like river reeds cut to different sizes and tuned to a pentatonic scale. However, despite the fact that *dinaka* are tuned on a pentatonic scale, for musicians, the seven notes form a complete set of *dinaka* by including two notes that add an octave to existing notes. Chambers' (2018) research extensively studied the *dinaka* and found that most *dinaka* groups all over Limpopo Province no longer use reeds as they are hard to obtain. Instead, they use metal pipes readily available at hardware stores and which produce a louder sound than reeds.

#### 4.5.1.2 Vocal Style/singing

The musical style of the Bahananwa people resembles much of the music in the surrounding areas. The vocal style of the Bahananwa and various other Basotho ba Lebowa is rooted in a pentatonic scale similar to that of *dinaka*. The harmonies they sing resemble *dinaka*, including their musical structure which is known as '*go dumela*,' (to agree) a form of call and response, where a lead vocalist takes the forefront while other voices provide support (Mapaya, 2013). One might even argue that they are performing *dinaka* music using their voices (Ibid.). This vocal style is often accompanied by drumming, typically by women, which mirrors the drumming style in *dinaka* music as well. In some instances, the same drummers play for both the instrumental and vocal performances.

#### 4.5.1.3 Dipela

An instrument important to this research is the *dipela*, which is a plucked instrument closely related to the Zimbabwean *mbira*, a lamellophone. Crafted from wood, its frame houses metal strips as keys, often fashioned from flattened nails or bicycle wheel spokes. The performer utilises a tonal and scalar system reminiscent of *dinaka* music. In contrast to Zimbabwean players, *dipela* musicians pluck with their thumbs upward and employ their other fingers downward, creating an inverse technique. Many *dipela* musicians are also vocalists who are adept at bridging the gap between *dinaka* music and vocal styles. Notably, several musicians who later transitioned to playing *harepa* began their musical journey with *dipela* (Morukhuladi, 2020; Moshi, 2020; Sekiba, 2020).

#### 4.5.1.4 Harepa

The focus of this research, the *harepa*, is a plucked string instrument originating in Europe, which was adopted by the Basotho ba Lebowa who imbued it with a traditional Bahananwa sound, resulting in a hybrid aesthetic that encompassed both Basotho and Christian-influenced music (Crevoisier, 2008; Whalley, 2008; Ware, 2011; Lončar, 2018). As the name *harepa* was not traditionally known among the Northern Sotho, it was referred to as *dipela*. In contrast, others would call it, or its music "*dipela tša harepa*", which could mean that it is a harp that plays *mbira* music or *dipela* music played on a harp (Mapaya, 2014, p. 30). Mashao and Setati write of the similarities between *dipela* and *harepa* music. Their observations are that in the music of the Basotho, the performer (usually a male) sings and accompanies himself on the *harepa*, producing double the effect of a *kiba* ensemble (Mashao and

Setati, 2004, p. 24). In some instances, the sound of the *harepa* and *dipela* would be enhanced by electrical amplifiers, allowing *dipela* practitioners to increase the volume significantly allowing them to include drumming and dancers in their performances. This feature has attracted contemporary audiences who could now hear the mastery involved in producing music on the instruments. In this case, the concept of a passive audience, alien to traditional African performances, emerges. The focus is on the display of dance routines and the skilful rendition of song and dance. During these performances, the audiences become "spellbound" as they watch from the periphery of the performance instead of participating (Mashao and Setati 2014, p. 24). This research shows, however, that this is not always the case. One of the goals of this research is to explore how the musicians managed to involve the participation of audience instead of the audience merely being "spellbound", as Mashao and Setati (2014) observe.

Although some *harepa* traditions are declining, the music has already been partially archived at ILAM. This research expands the scope of the extant archive by collaborating with contemporary musicians. Many of the recorded songs on the *harepa* found in the archive at The International Library of African Music (ILAM) were made by Hugh Tracey in 1945 when he recorded Tyson's autoharp group for release on the Gallotone record label. Tyson and his group recorded eleven songs on their own and then another seven songs with a group of women named *Tyson and Company*.<sup>8</sup> Tyson was a prolific musician who sang and played the *harepa* and *dipela (mbira)*. During this period, he popularised the *harepa* instrument among the Basotho ba Lebowa. The "European sound" of the autoharp transformed into the more indigenous but recent *harepa* sound, where the instrument was tuned to mimic the indigenous instruments of the Basotho ba Lebowa, that is, the *dipela* and the *dinaka* instruments (Mapaya, 2014, p. 30).

## 4.6 Cultural Hegemony and Enculturation

Cultural hegemony refers to the predominance of specific cultural beliefs, values, and practices imposed by a ruling or influential group over others in society (Lears, 1985). This predominance is sustained through the control of cultural institutions such as education, media, and religion, which shape societal norms and ideologies to uphold the status quo (Gramsci, 2020). Consequently, this process marginalises or suppresses alternative cultures and perspectives. This oppression, as found in

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<sup>8</sup> These songs by Tyson and his groups are on tracks CR0373-ABC10496, CR0368-ABC3693, TP0083-ABC789, TP0082-ABC788, TP0085-ABC791, TP0084-ABC790, TP0086-ABC793, TP0087-ABC792, TP0088-ABC794, CR0373-ABC10495, and CR0368-ABC3692.

the cultural expressions discussed in this thesis, created an opportunity for the Bahananwa people to create a new approach to their musical output. Despite the indigenous sounds being side-lined, they used this hegemony to their advantage and mixed two worlds together. This enculturated process is at the heart of this research. Enculturation, or cultural hybridisation, in multicultural contexts encompasses several pivotal elements that significantly influence cultural dynamics and integration. Cultural hybridisation occurs when two or more cultures merge, creating new practices or artefacts, exemplifying the dynamism of cultural exchange (Nederveen Pieterse, 2019). Exposure to foreign cultures can also reinforce native cultural practices and identities, with individuals and groups emphasising traditional norms to protect their cultural identity against global influences (Hannerz, 1992). This process can lead to significant transformations in norms and values, such as the shift from collectivist values to more individualistic ones under the influence of Western cultures and in this case missionary influence, affecting perceptions of family roles and community interactions (Schwartz and Unger, 2017). Lastly, intergenerational differences often emerge within the same community, particularly under strong external influences. Younger generations, more engaged with global culture through advanced communication technologies, may integrate these influences differently, potentially leading to generational gaps in cultural practices and beliefs (Portes and Rumbaut, 2024).

I argue that the *harepa* represents the experiences of both forced enculturation and adaptation. Many scholars such as Impey (2018) and Lebaka (2020), agree that in a process of forced enculturation, a modern tradition was introduced by missionaries for whom African musical cultures had to be destroyed if the African was to be "saved" from the wrath of God (Chikowero, 2015, p. 3-4, p. 61; Magwira, 2016, p. 34-38; Setumu, 2015). Chikowero argues that missionaries were aware of how resilient African cultures were and that they could not root them out easily (2015). He continues, "Many Africans did not simply self-immolate at the missionaries' altar of cultural prejudice" (ibid., p. 61). Observations such as these allow us to consider why the Basotho ba Leobwa retained aspects of their music culture even when provided with European instruments such as the autoharp. The *harepa* was adapted to play Basotho ba Leobwa music. As a result, through multiple encounters in Bochum between 2019 and 2022, I have yet to meet a Mosotho musician who plays the *harepa* the way it was initially played in Europe. As explained earlier, in Europe, the player typically strums the strings with a plectrum in the right hand while the left hand operates a damper button for the chords. On the *harepa*, the Basotho ba Leobwa musicians remove the dampers, leaving it with only the strings, and the performer then uses both left and right-hand fingers to pluck the strings in ways very similar to how the *dipela* is played.

## Conclusion

This chapter illustrates the imposition of Western cultural norms, particularly in music, by missionaries who viewed European music as superior. This imposition reflects a broader Eurocentric worldview prevalent during colonial times. However, the chapter also reviews the resilience of indigenous cultures as they sought to retain and adapt their musical traditions in the face of external pressures. This dynamic raises questions about cultural hegemony, power structures, and how marginalised communities resist dominant narratives.

As was demonstrated, the cultural dominance imposed by the missionaries, played a large part in the development of the enculturated practice of *harepa* music where the influence of the missionaries' approach to music was subverted in a culturally appropriate manner. The discussion of the *harepa*, originally a European instrument adopted and adapted by the Basotho ba Lebowa to produce a unique hybrid sound, is fascinating. This process of musical adaptation reflects broader themes of cultural hybridity and how cultures interact and influence one another. It also speaks to the agency of local communities in shaping their cultural identities through creative expression and adaptation.

The chapter focuses attention on the significant role of missionaries, particularly the BMS, in shaping the religious landscape and the cultural and musical practices of the Basotho ba Lebowa. Missionaries were often instrumentalised as tools in colonial endeavours, contributing to the spread of Western cultural norms and the marginalisation of indigenous traditions. The chapter focuses on the complex power dynamics between missionaries and indigenous communities, bringing to the fore instances of collaboration, resistance, and coercion. It emphasised the nuanced relationships between missionaries and local leaders, often characterised by conflicting interests and negotiations. The Europeans achieved success in conflicts against the Bahananwa and other local kingdoms by forming alliances with their adversaries, who were willing to join forces due to their motives. Specifically, in the war against the Bahananwa, the Europeans allied with the kingdoms of Kibi, Mapene, Matlala, and the Matebele, all of whom were enemies of the Bahananwa.

The chapter also highlights the efforts made by the Tracey family to preserve and archive indigenous musical traditions, particularly in the face of cultural assimilation and the decline of traditional instruments like the *harepa*. It emphasises the role of contemporary musicians in collaborating to expand the scope of existing archives and document cultural heritage for future generations and

invites us to critically examine the historical and cultural contexts that shape musical traditions and the broader implications of missionary activities in colonial settings.

# Chapter 5

## Accounts of the Four *Harepa* Musicians

In this chapter, I investigate the lives of four *harepa* musicians whose stories have never been told. I look into their history, how they started their musical journey and what drives their music-making. As mentioned in Chapter 3, it was not easy to locate *harepa* players, and at one stage I felt that I could not proceed with my research project. However, the research was rescued by the efforts of my brother-in-law, who, through his contacts, managed to locate the first participant, whereafter, things started to work out for my research.

I conducted interviews with the participants intermittently from February 2020 to December 2023. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted this process, as I took multiple breaks to ensure the safety of the participants, who are elderly. Due to their unpredictability of the virus, it was crucial to avoid any potential risk to their health.

### 5.1 John Morukhuladi



Figure 11. John Morukhuladi. Photo by Author.

On the morning of 27 February 2020, together with my brother-in-law, I arrived at a village called Ga Matšhaba. We were looking for Mr Morukhuladi, as advised by my brother-in-law's friend. As we entered the village, we had no idea where to find Mr Morukhuladi's home, and we did not have his contact details. Our first point of reference was the Zion Christian Church (ZCC). ZCC churches all over South Africa are marked the same by walls painted green and yellow, so it was not hard to recognise it. We headed to the church to see if anyone could direct us to Morukhuladi's home. When we arrived at the church we stood outside as there were protocols to enter the grounds. We waited for a man who was on his way out and, hopefully, asked him if he knew Mr Morukhuladi. To our real surprise, he said yes, he knew him, and he was in the church. He also mentioned that Morukhuladi awaits visitors, so it was unsurprising that we were there. The man went to call Morukhuladi from church and they both returned. Mr Morukhuladi came out holding a small bag and said he was waiting for us to arrive. This was so unusual because we did not say we would go to the church to look for him, but somehow, he knew we would go there. We then went with him to his home, where we introduced ourselves formally. I explained the reason for our visit and he welcomed us and said he was happy that someone was interested in his life and music. He also said that he had never done this kind of interview before as the people who came to see him, just wanted the music and did not show interest in his life.

Mmakwena John Morukhuladi hails from the mountain of Mmalebogo, situated in gaRadimang, which is known as Danzight. Morukhuladi explained that he did not know when he was born but according to his Identity document, he was born in 1921. He claims that 1921 was the year his younger brother was born, and there was a big gap between them. In those years, when you went to obtain identity documents, the officials would just look at you and give you an English or Afrikaans name to make it easy for them to address you because African names were too difficult for them to pronounce. In addition, as explained by Morukhuladi, they would write your age according to your physical stature, and often, they would give you a younger age because they wanted to keep you working beyond retirement age. In Morukhuladi's case, they wrote 1921, so he kept it at that.

Morukhuladi described the time when he was still small and how he received no education. He lived through the era when the significant division arose in the community due to the influence of the white population. On one side were the Christians, and on the other were the adherents of traditional practices, known as heathens. The two groups held opposing views and did not see eye to eye. The Christians, also known as Majakane, attended school, wore Western attire, and abstained from participating in initiation ceremonies. Conversely, those on the traditional side remained at home,

tending to cattle and adhering to traditional customs such as initiation rites. The areas where Christians resided were labelled as such, and their influence in community matters was notable. At community gatherings, Christians often had the upper hand in discussions, while the others were disregarded.

Morukhuladi's opportunity to attend school arose after his father's passing in 1925 when he and his peers were of age. However, his uncle, responsible for his care, chose to send Morukhuladi's cousin to school while dismissing him, citing his father's death. The uncle told him that he would not send him to school because he was not his father. A friend, Joel Rasekgela, who also lacked a father figure, briefly attended school before being expelled due to financial constraints. Morukhuladi and Joel conversed about school experiences while herding cattle, with Joel sharing what he learned in school. These interactions were important as they became the root of Morukhuladi's schooling. Subsequently, Morukhuladi sought clarification from other school-going boys to ensure accuracy in his learning.

Upon relocating to Johannesburg for employment, Morukhuladi faced challenges due to his limited education. Despite being able to read, he struggled with writing. However, witnessing a fellow non-educated white co-worker in a similar predicament prompted Morukhuladi to overcome his limitations. He devised strategies to manage tasks requiring writing skills, such as signing for meals at the workplace canteen. Eventually, Morukhuladi's proficiency in writing led to his appointment as a secretary within his workplace and later within the church, demonstrating his capability to adapt and excel despite his educational background. He laughed and said, "At home, I was herding cows. But the funny thing is that later on when we were in Johannesburg the same people who went to school, I was the one who wrote letters for them" (Interview 27/02/2020).

Initially, Morukhuladi was primarily involved in playing *Dinaka* reed pipes. He eventually transitioned to playing the *dipela* and later the *harepa*. Despite a long break from playing, he unexpectedly resumed his musical journey. Initially, he felt that playing instruments was a waste of time as he wanted to focus on work, especially after witnessing the premature death of a fellow *harepa* player in Johannesburg. Nevertheless, a pivotal moment occurred in the mid-1960s when he heard a voice, which he perceived as divine, urging him to pursue playing the *harepa*. This voice instructed him to learn how to craft a *harepa* himself and although he initially struggled with the construction process, he eventually succeeded with guidance from the voice. After completing the *harepa*, the voice instructed him to discard it and purchase a new one, which he did in 1974. With the guidance of this mysterious voice, he diligently practised and honed his skills, eventually mastering several traditional

songs. The voice continued to provide guidance and encouragement, visiting Morukhuladi while he worked whilst urging him to persist in his journey of learning about the instrument. Despite initial doubts and challenges, Morukhuladi's dedication to the *harepa* ultimately led to significant progress in his musical abilities.

Interestingly, a colleague, Johannes Mokgwadi from Sekhukhune also pursued learning to play *harepa* music. He learned to play a solitary piece while in Johannesburg before returning home. When traditional music began airing on the radio, he became a featured *harepa* performing musician. Witnessing his success, others, including Morukhuladi, felt inspired to follow suit. Despite initially feeling overshadowed by Mokgwadi's extensive repertoire which developed quickly, Morukhuladi continued practising and eventually felt confident in his abilities.

Morukhuladi even ventured into radio himself, participating in a faith-based program on Radio Lebowa, now called Thobela FM. However, his recordings were omitted due to what he perceived as jealousy from the programme's leader. Undeterred, Morukhuladi remained dedicated to his craft. When Mokgwadi passed away, Morukhuladi could not attend the funeral due to work commitments and unfortunately, others thought he stayed away out of anger. Later, he encountered the radio-programme leader with a group of musicians and they ironed out their problems. After they sang unaccompanied, she invited Morukhuladi to perform one of his songs. He sang a composition about an older man bidding farewell to his children which was the first song he ever composed and the reception of the song by the audience gave him confidence and set the stage for his future compositions. This experience marked the beginning of his musical journey, which was characterised by periods of departure and return to the *harepa*. He began learning in 1940 but paused his musical pursuits for a period. He resumed and became more dedicated to his craft in 1974 (Interview 27/02/2020).

When I asked him about his knowledge of where the *harepa* comes from, Morukhuladi explained that the instrument initially served a different purpose, primarily playing hymns at church with multiple strings and bridges. However, they adapted the instrument to fit their needs when they began incorporating it into their *dipela (mbira)* music. They modified it by removing some strings and adjusting the tuning to emulate the sound of the *dipela*, effectively transforming it to align with their traditional music. This transformation illustrates how enculturation occurred with this instrument, influencing the evolution of Bahananwa music. The original design of the autoharp allowed for various timbres and even had buttons akin to those on a piano, but they removed these features to ensure

the instrument could convey their musical language effectively. He mentioned that the *harepa* he plays is tuned similarly to the *dipela*, which is tuned similarly to the *dinaka*. Morukhuladi clarifies that although he has experience playing *dinaka* when tuning his *harepa*, he does not rely on the names of the *naka* pipes to identify the notes. For him, tuning is intuitive; he does not need to know the string names to achieve the correct sound. This tuning adaptation is outlined in Chapter 6.

When I asked what kind of music he played Morukhuladi explained that he had been tuned to the people's language, focusing more on traditional singing, including songs sung by women and various types of traditional music such as *dikgoba*.<sup>9</sup> He mentioned that they learned to play whatever they could translate to the *harepa* from these traditional musical forms. He explained that even though the *harepa* is tuned like *dinaka*, he was never interested in playing *dinaka* music on the *harepa*. Instead, he preferred the vocal music and story-telling in song. However, he noted they were unable to play Western music on the autoharp because it felt foreign to their fingers and lips. He learned to play by ear without formal instruction. He observed Ernest Rammutla, a childhood friend, and listened to him play, then taught himself by practising until he could play a traditional song. Rammutla, a distinguished musician renowned for his mastery of the *harepa*, created numerous hit songs including "*Morwakwakwa*", "*Legotlo le roka marokgo*," and "*Lorry e a duma*", which gained popularity on Radio Lebowa (now Thobela FM), a station dedicated to Basotho ba Lebowa content. Celebrated for the humour and narratives within his music, Rammutla initially played the *dipela* before transitioning to the *harepa*, where he made a significant impact. His music served as an introduction to the *harepa* for many subsequent musicians. Despite being blind, Rammutla's talent and determination allowed him to overcome his physical challenges and leave a legacy in the music world.

I asked if he had taught anyone, and he responded that no one had ever expressed interest or come to learn from him. He explained that learning to play the *harepa* is primarily observational. He remarked that one can gradually develop the necessary skills by watching others play and observing their finger movements. The *harepa* guides the learning process, providing feedback when notes are misplayed and indicating progress as the player becomes more proficient. Stolz (2015) proposes that the concept of embodied cognition, which views the mind and body as interconnected entities engaging with the environment, offers a more precise understanding of human cognition and learning. He emphasises the importance of embodied experiences in facilitating meaningful learning.

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<sup>9</sup> *Dikgoba* (singular: *kgoba*) rituals for individual young virgins who are menstruating for the first time and would be kept in seclusion for about a week (Batibo and Seloma 2006).

Morukhuladi emphasised the importance of showcasing their traditions in front of people to ensure their preservation. Referring to a Sotho sa Lebowa saying, he stated, "*Rutang bana ditaola, le se ye le tšona badimong*" (teach the children the bones, don't die with them), conveying the idea that it is essential to pass down knowledge to the younger generation so that they can carry it forward and share it with others. There is a noticeable lack of interest from people in his community. No one has approached him to learn, and he laments that the youth have become enamoured with Western culture. He believes they dismiss traditional practices as outdated and view Western practices as superior, although they merely imitate without genuinely understanding. He expressed concern that this detachment from tradition is detrimental to the youth, as they miss out on the depth and skill required by traditional music. While Western instruments may allow for easier dancing, traditional ones demand a unique skill set and patience.

This inquiry about teaching and learning stemmed from an awareness of cultural narratives where musical proficiency was purportedly not acquired through formal instruction but rather perceived as a manifestation of ancestral influence, such as with the Zimbabwean *mbira dzavadzimu*. This prompted an exploration into whether a similar belief system existed within the context of the *harepa*. Morukhuladi observed that a shift had occurred towards a model of music transmission characterised by direct teaching among individuals, diverging from the traditional ways relating to ancestral inspiration. He continued to explain that according to his understanding, ancestral teachings do not involve direct instruction in playing instruments. Instead, the ancestors desire for their music to be played, leaving the onus on individuals to learn the instruments themselves. Given that the ancestors were not familiar with the *harepa*, Morukhuladi questions how they could impart knowledge of it. He notes that the ancestors were knowledgeable about drums and other instruments. Therefore, Morukhuladi suggested that aspiring learners should observe someone playing and experiment with the instrument. Through this process, they may discover patterns resembling existing songs, enabling them to play those songs as well. Once proficient in playing one song, individuals are considered to have entered the tradition.

I asked Morukhuladi to comment on Ernest Rammutla's ability to play drum patterns on the *harepa*, resembling the lead drum of *kiba* music. His response was, "Yes, Rammutla could do that, but most of us cannot because it is very difficult. It's like playing two instruments at the same time. When he played *dinaka* music, he also incorporated drum patterns on the harp." (Interview 12/10/2022). Morukhuladi explained that he grew up with Ernest Rammutla, but Ernest was slightly older than him. Ernest also never went to school because he was blind. Rammutla took his first wife, and they had a

son named Kwena. Tragically, shortly after their son's birth, Rammutla's wife was killed. Following this event, he relocated from one side of the mountains to the other, where he lived until his passing.

I asked Morukhuladi if all *harepas* are tuned the same. He responded by stating that they all sound the same. The reason for him removing some strings is that there are many of them, and the fingers might inadvertently play the wrong ones. Removing a few strings makes it easier to play. He confirmed that the tuning is consistent among all players. However, the number of strings is dependent on the musician. With regard to composing his own songs, he said: "Yes, I compose my own songs," he affirmed, noting that while he might know one or two traditional tunes, he infuses his unique style into each rendition (Interview 12/10/2022).). Recollecting his younger years, he recalled possessing a vocal range that spanned both high and low registers, enabling him to compose songs where he could use this dynamic vocal ability. Reflecting on one of his song's origins, he recounted witnessing a quarrel between a man and a woman. He described how he imitated the voices of a child, the mother, and the father while playing the song, utilising vocal mimicry to convey the child's cries and the parents' conversation. However, he lamented being unable to sing it anymore.

Within his community, Morukhuladi is renowned as an herbalist. He expresses his role as one of aiding others, stating, "I'm assisting people" (Interview 27/02/2020). Over the years, he has provided assistance to individuals with various health issues. His exposure to people sharing their problems has also enriched his collection of compositions. An example of this is "*O oretše letšatši*", which is analysed on page 78.

When asked if he was familiar with other *harepa* players, Morukhuladi mentioned knowing two individuals. The first individual solely plays the music of *dinaka* without singing or composing but occasionally collaborates with pipe players. Morukhuladi was unaware of his name or how to locate him. The second player was Albert Sekiba from the village of Ga-Kobe, who not only played *dinaka* music on *harepa* but also created his own compositions. Sekiba stands out for having a group of drummers and dancers similar to those accompanying *dinaka* players. "In the past, Rammutla was the first to play, and then we all followed. Essentially, he would open the events for us. However, now that he is no longer with us, this practice has ceased" (Interview 27/02/2020). As for Rammutla's family, no one else plays the *harepa*. His son attempted to learn, but did not continue.

I asked Morukhuladi what kind of events he performed at and he said that in the past, they were not typically invited anywhere; instead, they played for themselves, and those who enjoyed their music

would gather to listen. There were no people who would specifically request them to play at events. However, nowadays he noted that they do receive invitations, including one to play for the municipality.

### **5.1.1 The songs**

In the section below I outline the inspiration and stories that lead to the composition of songs by Morukhuladi. These represent the entire collection of *harepa* pieces that he could remember of those he composed. Please refer to Addendum #2 for the original lyrics and translations of the songs by Morukhuladi. The analysis of the sound and structure will be presented in Chapter 6.

#### **5.1.1.1 *Bana baka etlang mono, nna kea tsamaya* (Gather around my children, I am going)**

This is the first song that Morukhuladi composed and is the piece that had the most impact on him as a musician. Therefore the description of the origins and context of the piece are very detailed. The inspiration for this track came from an experience he had involving his friend and homeboy by the name of Joel who was working with him in Johannesburg. In 1953, Morukhuladi recounted an incident involving Joel, who frequently indulged in heavy drinking with another friend from Sekhukhune land. One night, while they were working a night shift, Joel and his companion decided to make a fire to stave off the cold. As Morukhuladi was sleeping, having been scheduled to relieve them at 4 am, a resident of the flats where they stayed woke him up to inform him of an unusual situation downstairs. Upon investigation, Morukhuladi discovered that Joel had been badly burnt in a fire mishap. Joel and his friend, under the influence of alcohol, had attempted to blow on the fire, resulting in both of them sustaining serious burns. Concerned for Joel's well-being, Morukhuladi rushed to check on him at the hospital. He found Joel's injuries to be severe, with his clothes fused to his body.

Despite the severity of Joel's injuries, Morukhuladi took on the responsibility of caring for him during his hospitalisation, even urging him to abstain from drinking beer for his own health. During the Christmas break, Morukhuladi informed the hospital staff that he would be away for three weeks but returned thereafter to continue supporting Joel. As Joel required a skin graft procedure, he identified Morukhuladi as the only viable option to provide the necessary flesh, as Joel's younger brother was unwilling to assist. Morukhuladi agreed to undergo the procedure, believing it to be a spiritual test

from God. He provided the hospital with his particulars and work phone number for the flesh harvesting process.

The incident demonstrates Morukhuladi's unwavering commitment to his friend's well-being, as he selflessly stepped up to provide support and assistance during a challenging time. The hospital contacted Morukhuladi's workplace to inform his manager about the situation, prompting the manager to call Morukhuladi and instruct him to go to the hospital for the transfer. Concerned about the implications for himself, Morukhuladi questioned the doctors about the procedure's impact on his well-being, to which they reassured him that his skin would regenerate. Despite his confusion about being chosen for this task, Morukhuladi complied and visited the hospital, where the doctors reiterated the situation. Morukhuladi hesitated initially, attributing the request to a spiritual test from God. He decided to involve Joel's younger brother in the decision-making process, fetching him with his bicycle. Upon the brother's arrival, the doctors questioned their relationship and his willingness to assist, to which the brother affirmed his commitment. However, when confronted with the procedure, the brother became visibly distressed, prompting a realisation within Morukhuladi that he was the intended donor.

Acknowledging the inner guidance he felt, Morukhuladi affirmed his decision to proceed with the procedure, signifying his acceptance of the role. They required Morukhuladi to sign documents before proceeding with the procedure, after which he remained at the hospital. Two days later, on a Friday, they escorted him to the operating room illuminated by a bright light, where he was positioned on the bed. The surgeons commenced the process, extracting approximately 10 pieces of flesh from one of his thighs. They postponed further extraction to avoid compromising his ability to walk. A week later, Morukhuladi returned for additional harvesting, this time from his other thigh, yielding 17 pieces of flesh. The transplanted flesh contributed to Joel's recovery, with signs of vitality becoming evident in the areas where Morukhuladi's tissue was grafted. Morukhuladi actively participated in Joel's recuperation, assisting him with daily walks around the hospital.

As Joel regained his health, he expressed gratitude by promising to purchase four cows with the first two intended for Morukhuladi. Despite his recovery, Joel failed to correspond with Morukhuladi until prompted by Morukhuladi's family inquiry about his well-being upon returning home. Disappointed by Joel's lack of acknowledgement, Morukhuladi expressed his sentiments through a song, imploring others to summon Joel. In the song, Morukhuladi confronts Joel about his lack of gratitude and urges him to confront the consequences of his actions, particularly regarding the suffering of Morukhuladi's

children. In the song, he explains to his children that the reason he could not afford to send them to school, provide for their basic needs, or clothe them is because of Joel. He instructs them that after his passing, they should seek out Joel to understand why they endured such hardships.

This song holds great significance in Morukhuladi's life, not solely due to the narrative it conveys but primarily because of the profound reception it garnered when he performed it. This positive reception inspired him to compose more songs reflecting his personal experiences and observations of the world around him.

#### **5.1.1.2 *Mmasepala ore tshwarele* (Municipality workers, please forgive us)**

This song urges municipal workers and leaders not to communicate in English at gatherings, as most attendees may not understand. It expresses concern about relaying information accurately to the community when English is used. They request that officials address them in Sesotho, as they can speak the language.

#### **5.1.1.3 *Thabakgone***

Critics often challenge one's beliefs, questioning their understanding and credibility. In response, Morukhuladi composed this song, affirming his faith in Zion (ZCC), specifically at Thabakgone (the sister church located at Podungwane). The lyrics emphasise Zion's vitality and life-giving nature, encouraging others to comprehend the rationale behind entrusting oneself to Zion.

#### **5.1.1.4 *Mokgotsi* (My friend)**

Morukhuladi had a friend who consistently disregarded warnings regarding his actions. Despite attempts to advise him otherwise, he remained heedless and subsequently encountered negative consequences.

#### **5.1.1.5 Soko (Suffering)**

Morukhuladi explained that the song pertained to poverty and orphans, likening their struggles to dogs without owners. Morukhuladi did not compose this song; rather, it is a traditional piece performed by *dinaka* musicians and *harepa* players. However, Morukhuladi has arranged the song, and added his own lyrics. He notes that each performer has their own unique arrangement of the piece.

#### **5.1.1.6 Segwagwanyane bolwetše bo bo fetša batho (Segwagwanyane, this disease is killing people)**

The song begins by addressing nurses and individuals disrespecting the Zion church. It communicates the church's willingness to extend its presence to hospitals, specifically mentioning Baragwanath Hospital in Johannesburg where nurses reside. It emphasises the importance of people from all nations embracing Zion (ZCC), asserting that its teachings offer life freely to those who heed them. The song brings out the efficacy of items used for healing, such as water, despite some people dismissing their healing properties. It emphasises the importance of faith in facilitating healing through these items. While acknowledging the government-built hospitals as essential for medical care, the song underscores the complementary role of prayer for healing at Thabakgone before seeking medical treatment. It clarifies that seeking medical treatment at hospitals is encouraged, especially for conditions related to physical disabilities or broken bones, where hospitals are better equipped to provide care.

#### **5.1.1.7 O oretše letšatši (Tšatši mmawe) (Sitting outside in the Sun)**

*Eya thebathebana phuana mo mothong o mogolo, ke o mogolo motho o!* (If your head is pulsing like a child's fontanel, you are in trouble).

The song describes a man who has fallen ill, experiencing a severe headache and a softness in his head akin to that of a newborn child. The lyrics express concern over his condition, noting that he was previously working in town but has since returned home with this illness, leaving doctors puzzled. The song attributes his illness to his involvement with older women, colloquially referred to as "getting into big pots," implying participation in questionable activities (Interview 13/10/2022). The song's title, "o oretše letšatši," translates to "he is sitting in the sun," indicating his current state of being incapacitated and unable to engage in any activities due to his illness).

#### **5.1.1.8 Bua nnete (Tell the Truth)**

Morukhuladi explains that he typically titled songs based on their first sung line, but this one's official name is "*Bua Nnete*," which translates to "Tell the Truth," emphasises the importance of honesty at all times. The lyrics address the issue of people resorting to violence, particularly with guns, and then denying their actions when confronted. The song urges individuals involved in criminal activities, referred to as *tsotsis*, to discard their weapons and live peacefully among others, ultimately serving God. Its message serves as advice to guide people away from crime and towards a path of honesty and harmony.

He further explains that when he recorded these songs (as mentioned in Chapter 3), he was troubled by the lack of obedience from children towards their parents, coupled with the government's implementation of new regulations. As a response, he composed a song expressing his observation that people do not demonstrate love and respect towards one another.

#### **5.1.1.9 Batho ba sekgowa (Modern People)**

He explained that the song addresses the behaviour of disobedient children who engage in theft, violence, and other destructive activities. They disrupt companies' operations, leading to their closure and leaving people without employment opportunities. Additionally, they resort to stealing from homes and shops and hijacking cars on the roads. The lyrics depict a scenario where victims encounter armed individuals who rob them of their possessions without concern for their well-being. The song highlights the challenges of modern life, where individuals prioritise theft over honest work, leading to job loss and societal decay.

#### **5.1.1.10 Bahananwa**

This song, composed by Morukhuladi, is a tribute praising the Bahananwa people.

Praise singing: *ke bahananwa ba mmatšhwene'a leruri*

*Bahananwa bahana tšhwene*

*Tšhwene senaiwa mmele, Ka makopong go a sala*

Direct translation of this piece is difficult but the meaning relates to the praising of the Bahananwa people.

#### **5.1.1.11 Ditlabakelo (Tools)**

Morukhuladi explained that the song pertains to a cultural practice known as *kgopa*, which marks a girl's transition into womanhood during her initiation. Traditionally, this period involves older women singing for and advising the girl on appropriate behaviour. They counsel her to refrain from engaging with men until they deem it acceptable and to avoid using her *ditlabakelo* (tools) during this time.

He further elucidated that *ditlabakelo* refers to the rules or instructions provided to the girl during her initiation. The elders emphasise that she is still considered young and under their guidance. Therefore, she must refrain from any contact with men. If the elders discover that a man has visited her, they inquire about the whereabouts of the *ditlabakelo*, questioning where she took them.

#### **5.1.1.12 Wa nhlanamela (You deny me)**

Traditionally played with a flute, the song narrates a tale of romantic betrayal. It tells of a man who laments his relationship with a woman he considers his girlfriend. They live harmoniously until men from Johannesburg arrive, at which point the woman forsakes him and turns her back on their relationship. He skillfully played the high notes on the *harepa* instrument, adeptly mimicking the melodic tones of a flute.

#### **5.1.1.13 Thokamabu (The unmarried woman)**

In the contemporary era, girl children often remain unmarried, labelled as *dithukamabu* or *magole* due to their defiance against parental guidance and their independent lifestyle choices. In this song, such people are called *thakadu* (skunks) because their attitude stinks. The name *thakadu* also refers to women who act like prostitutes. The song refers to an older woman who is attired in a long skirt and the sangomas who wear traditional regalia and look respectable. At the same time, *hakadu* opts for a form-fitting pair of trousers, colloquially known as *potsotso* (tight pants). Makgotlho (the character in the piece) dons a short skirt, symbolising her lack of respect for traditional values. Their choice of attire implies promiscuity and a scent reminiscent of men.

The song delves into the lives of girl children who eschew marriage, opting instead to bear children while residing with their parents. When questioned about the paternity of their children, they claim

that their fathers are the fathers. This paradoxical notion prompts contemplation on how a man could impregnate his child. The song further portrays the confusion among the children, who point to their grandfather as their father due to their lack of knowledge regarding their true paternity reflecting the complexities of societal norms.

#### **5.1.1.14 Go nale phošo (Something is wrong)**

Indeed, it is a reality that the community's youth demonstrate irresponsibility by fathering children and leaving them in the care of their parents while they travel to Johannesburg. Upon their return, they often bring yet another child with them, perpetuating a cycle of neglect and lack of accountability. This narrative echoes the theme of *o oretše letšatši*, where a young man's visit to urban areas results in illness from promiscuous behaviour, as symbolised by his "softened" mind (Interview 27/02/2020).

#### **5.1.1.15 Dumela (Hello)**

*Dumela* (hello), a greeting song, delves into a cultural practice among the Basotho ba Lebowa, familiar to many African cultures, where marrying cousins is acceptable. The proverb "*kgomo di boele šakeng*" encapsulates this, translating as such marriages keep the dowry cows within the family kraal, essentially conserving resources. The song narrates the interaction between cousins Malesela and Mmakomana, with Malesela coaxing Mmakomana for a kiss, urging her not to mind the onlookers. This practice is sometimes criticised as indicative of a man's reluctance to venture out in search of a spouse, captured in the saying "*lesogana le sa eteng, le nyala kgaetšedi*," which translates to "a young man who never explores beyond his village may end up marrying within his immediate family" (Interview 27/02/2020). Morukhuladi, through this song, doesn't take a stance but rather observes that such occurrences are part of their reality.

#### **5.1.1.16 Comrade**

When I inquired if he had ever composed songs inspired by the style of other *harepa* players, Morukhuladi confirmed that he had. He mentioned a song titled comrade, which he compared to Johannes' *Tsodio*. This composition depicts the tale of a naive young man who, under the guise of a

comrade, unjustly persecutes innocent individuals, branding them as witches while being unaware that his mother is also regarded as a witch.

In apartheid South Africa, the term comrade was initially used to refer to freedom fighters. My personal understanding of this is that the name originated from the way the freedom fighters addressed each other, which eventually became the name by which they were known in their communities. In South Africa, during times of political unrest when black people were fighting for their freedom, there emerged a practice of targeting what they called *mpimpi* (informants). These were those who provided information to the police about planned actions. If someone were identified as a *mpimpi*, they would be caught, a car tyre would be placed around their neck (referred to as "necklacing"), petrol would be poured on them, and they would be set on fire. This gruesome act was carried out in public as a warning to potential informants. However, some individuals with ulterior motives began using this method to target older people who seemed suspicious to them or individuals they disliked, labelling them as witches without any proof. If someone were accused of being a witch, they would be killed in the same manner using necklaces. The song addresses comrades, urging them to cease their acts of violence. It highlights the hypocrisy of killing individuals accused of being witches while ignoring the fact that their mothers may also be considered witches. It suggests that if they are genuinely committed to their cause, they should begin by addressing these issues in their homes (Interview 27/02/2020).

## 5.2 Ngoako Albert Sekiba



Figure 12. Albert Sekiba. Photo by author.

After meeting with Mr. Morukhuladi, I requested his daughter to assist me in obtaining contact details for Mr. Sekiba. Two months later, she reached out with Mr. Sekiba's contact information. I established communication with Mr. Sekiba and arranged to visit him. I had to wait because of COVID-19 restrictions, but as soon as I received permission to travel, I went immediately. On October 13, 2020, I returned to Bochum and met with him. My brother-in-law, who had enjoyed his previous visit with Mr. Morukhuladi, accompanied me to see Mr. Sekiba. We travelled to Ga-Kobe village, approximately fifty kilometres from Bochum. Mr. Sekiba provided us with directions, advising us to meet him at a well-known bottle store to ensure we did not get lost.

Ngoako Albert Sekiba was born and raised in Ga-Kobe, also known as Blackhill. Born in 1939, he recalls fond memories of his schooling years, although exact dates elude him. He attended a lower primary school locally and for higher primary he moved to Sehlong in Leipzig. He completed school up to standard 5 (grade 7) before leaving formal education. Passionate about sports, particularly running, he recalls enjoying that a lot in school rather than learning. Sekiba draws inspiration from the renowned *harepa* player Ernest Rammutla. Witnessing Rammutla's exceptional skill on the instrument at various events and on radio sparked a desire in Sekiba to emulate his performance. Although

Rammutla did not directly instruct him, Sekiba was captivated by his music and aspired to play like him. He learned by listening to Rammutla's songs and honing his skills by ear. Sekiba's exposure to Rammutla's music began in his childhood, as Rammutla was highly regarded in the community and frequently invited to perform at various ceremonies. These experiences laid the foundation for Sekiba's journey into playing the *harepa*.



Figure 13. Sekiba sitting at his house awaiting my arrival. Photo by Author.

Sekiba recounted his journey of learning to play music and explained that initially, he crafted a *harepa* using a plank and nails and wires taken out of a bicycle tyre, using it as a makeshift instrument to practise and play his music. However, he only began playing the *harepa* when he started working in Johannesburg. During a stint there, while browsing through shops, he encountered the *harepa* and eventually purchased one for himself. In 1960, Sekiba ventured to Johannesburg for work at Basil Reed, a company based in Boksburg involved in house construction. After four years, he transitioned to another firm, Witsak in ISANDO, where he worked for a decade. Following this, he moved to DILLO, where he spent another ten years. Later, he joined NORTON, a stone company, where he continued to work for a decade until his retirement in 1997.

Observing Ernest Rammutla's method of tuning his instrument which was based on *dinaka* music, Sekiba followed suit, finding it a natural process. Music held a deep significance for him, and he found it effortless to learn new techniques. With a particular fondness for *dinaka* music, Sekiba demonstrated an aptitude for tuning these pipes, contributing to the performance of *dinaka* music with ease. In fact, the first song he learned to play on the *harepa* is an arrangement of the *dinaka* introduction called *Makgowa a ma khibidu* (red, white people). This song is indispensable in *dinaka* performances, as they typically do not commence without it. It encompasses various themes and employs an extensive vocabulary. Regarding its meaning, interpretations vary. His version of the song includes phrases such as "*nna nkabe ke ikhwele, nkebe ke hwele maleng, tša ntle di a ntsholeka*" (I should have been left to die in my mother's womb because things in external world disgust me). This version of the song reflects the struggles caused by white people, often referred to as "the red white man," who bring suffering and unrest to Bahananwa community. When performing, he expresses a sentiment of wishing he were never born to avoid witnessing the injustices perpetrated by the white settlers. He believes that because it is the opening song in *dinaka* performances, it holds significance as the first song he learned. The accompanying dance reflects the song's intense and angry nature.

After embracing Christianity and joining the Lutheran church, Sekiba discontinued playing *dinaka* music due to his newfound faith. Growing up in an environment where the Lutheran church was predominant, with the Methodist church also present, Sekiba faced a clear conflict between traditional beliefs and Christian practices. The church people labelled those engaged in *dinaka* music as heathens, while the churchgoers were referred to as "*Majakane*," (no direct translation but meaning Christian) creating distinct groups within the community. Aligning with the church, Sekiba ceased his involvement in *dinaka* music. However, he continued to offer his expertise in tuning pipes when requested, even after relocating to Johannesburg for work.

Sekiba innovated the concept of playing *harepa* by introducing a group of drummers and dancers, a style he developed to emulate the sound and essence of *dinaka* music, including its traditional dances. Sekiba asserts that he was the pioneer of this unique style, believing that integrating drums would enhance the music and distinguish his performances from others. His innovative approach proved successful, aligning with his vision and setting him apart in the musical landscape. Drawing inspiration from *dinaka* music and traditional melodies sung by local communities, Sekiba crafted his songs. Additionally, he composed original pieces, reflecting his individual creativity. Over time, Sekiba developed the ability to write songs independent of *dinaka*, showcasing his evolving musical autonomy. Sekiba shared that he only ever taught one person, that being Johannes Moremi, who

successfully learned to play the instrument. Moremi, the founder of the group, TV 12, passed down this skill to his son, who also became proficient in playing the *harepa*. Sekiba proudly identifies Moremi and his son as the individuals he personally taught to play the instrument.

Sekiba employed amplification for his *harepa* performances due to the instrument's soft sound. When playing alongside drums, the *harepa* can be overpowered and its leading role diminished. Therefore, he utilises a PA system to make his harp louder, ensuring that it is audible and enjoyable for listeners, akin to the experience of listening to *dinaka* music. This amplification allows Sekiba and his group to perform at various events where a louder sound is necessary for people to hear, sing, and dance to their music. This enhancement is discussed further in the chapter.

Sekiba's hand action when playing the *harepa* music lacks clarity, a consequence of a severe accident he experienced while fixing his roof. He recounts being on a ladder, addressing a leak, when a loose zinc roof sheet dislodged, striking him and severing veins in his right hand, crucial for finger movement. Despite surgery, doctors warned him of permanent loss of finger functionality. Unwilling to accept this, particularly as it threatened his ability to play the *harepa*, Sekiba dedicated himself to rehabilitation. Through persistent exercise, he achieved partial recovery. However, his fingers remain bent, affecting the precision of sounds produced by his right hand, hence the noticeable lack of clarity in his music.



Figure 14. Sekiba with his group performing at his house. Photo by Author.

As mentioned earlier, when I asked him about the tuning of his instrument, as compared to *dinaka*, he affirmed that they tune it the same way, which facilitates playing *dinaka* music on the *harepa* as well. In essence, the *harepa* draws from both the *dipela* and the *dinaka*. When I asked about his music recording experience, he recounted approaching a man named Gideon from Mogalakwena, who operated a studio. He requested Gideon to record him, resulting in two albums at that studio. In the studio, the experience differed from performing in front of an audience. He opted not to record with a group; instead, he recorded the *harepa* first, followed by vocals, and played the drums. However, this arrangement differs from live performances where simultaneous drumming is not feasible. Incredibly, Sekiba and his group receive invitations to various events such as weddings, unveiling ceremonies, and others to this day, where they perform a set repertoire. However, he also plays gospel music and expresses a desire to teach it to his group so they can also perform at church events. Although *harepa* and *dinaka* music are not currently included in church services, church members invite the musicians to perform at their ceremonies, including tombstone unveilings and parties. Sekiba aims to add church music to his repertoire, hoping that if people hear him play it at these events, they might invite him to perform in church. Sekiba composes songs about what he sees around him and he makes up the melodic lines to play on the *harepa*. Sometimes he incorporates the lyrics in the *dinaka* songs that he plays because most do not have words.

## **5.2.1 The songs**

### **5.2.1.1 *Makgowa a ma khibidu* (red white people)**

The initial song in their repertoire is *Makgowa a ma khibidu*, (red-white people) a traditional piece commonly played at the beginning of *dinaka* performances. Whether on *dipela* or *harepa*, this song always marks the commencement of the performance. When performing for the Bahananwa community, this song holds particular significance as it is traditionally expected to be the opening piece. Thus, adhering to tradition, it is always the first song he plays.

### **5.2.1.2 *Wa tsoga bošego* (You wake up at night)**

This song relates to witchcraft and warns of the dangers of going out at night. Sekiba sings that if you enjoy getting up in the middle of the night, don't go wandering around outside, you might encounter things you're not supposed to meet, like baboons. While we sleep, others are busy, so if you go outside at night, you might run into them. The song is warning people about witches and wizards.

### **5.2.1.3 *Soko* (Suffering)**

This song is a *dinaka* song and some *harepa* players such as Morukhuladi play it in their repertoire. Sekiba explains that the song as he knows it was performed by individuals of humble means, and delves into their experiences with poverty, wherein they poignantly liken themselves to dogs to express their societal standing.

### **5.2.1.4 *Ba nwele lentsene (Letlaputla)* (they are drunk from beer)**

Sekiba sings, "They are drunk! I will never drink beer, as it leads to drunkenness". His song discusses the behaviour of individuals who consume beer and become inebriated, leading to misconduct. Once sober, they fail to take responsibility for their actions, attributing them to the effects of alcohol.

### **5.2.1.5 *Morwakwakwa* (Son of Kwakwa) (composition of Ernest Rammutla)**

Sekiba used to play Ernest Rammutla songs while learning to play the *harepa*. He said "we copy his songs because the whole of Limpopo listened to his music" (Interview 13/10/2020). The song tells the story of a train that transports people to Johannesburg for employment. The narrator expresses familiarity with Johannesburg, attributing this knowledge to the fact that his grandfather and uncle reside there.

#### **5.2.1.6 Michael ga a kgone go raloka (Michael does not know how to play with others)**

This song relates to how the main character of the piece, Michael, has a strong inclination towards women and often engages in inappropriate behaviour by tugging at their dresses, demonstrating traits of a womaniser.

#### **5.2.1.7 Sekwakwalala sa Rrammutla 'A digo tša go kgatla nkwe ka leswika' (There is nothing that can hit a leopard with a stone)**

Sekiba states in this song that the quality of the songs his groups play are superior. They sing, "In our competitive singing, when we proclaim '*a digo tša go kgatla nkwe ka leswika*,' (there are no more songs that can hit a leopard with a stone) we assert that no other group's songs surpass the quality of ours, symbolically claiming victory in the competition" (Interview 13/10/2020).

#### **5.2.1.8 Sehanyanya (Sehananwa) (The ways of Bahananwa people)**

Sekiba crafted this song for the coronation of their king, Ngoako, at a time when widespread scepticism surrounded his rise to the throne due to internal royal disputes. Interestingly, both Sekiba and the king bear the name Ngoako, allowing Sekiba to praise both the monarch and himself within the lyrics.

#### **5.2.1.9 Mantlotlwane Moloji (Mantlotlwane the witch)**

Sekiba commented that this song was one of the old songs that was a staple of his upbringing. He stated that he was not entirely sure of the song's theme, but to him the lyrics suggest that it involves a confrontation with a woman named Mantlotlwane, whom they accuse of witchcraft.

#### **5.2.1.10 Ovorolo (Overall)**

This song draws a parallel between the homestead and a pair of overalls, stating that despite the houses within the homestead being physically separate, they are interconnected in the same way that

overalls are. A man may have multiple wives and children who might experience disagreements, yet they remain a family nonetheless.

#### **5.2.1.11 *Mmamolateo* (Mother of Molatelo)**

The name *Mmamolateo* is frequently assigned to a daughter-in-law. In the song, *Mmamolateo* is reminded of her responsibilities, which include traditional tasks expected of daughters-in-law such as fetching water, gathering wood, and cooking.

#### **5.2.1.12 *Bodibeng ba mahlomola* (Amidst sadness?)**

This is Sekiba's interpretation of this Sotho hymn sung at his church (The Lutheran Church).

Towards the conclusion of our interview, I inquired if Sekiba knew other *harepa* players I could connect with. He mentioned knowing Johannes and his son, though he was uncertain of their current whereabouts. However, he did mention a gentleman residing in a location called My Darling. Sekiba generously offered to take us there. This led to our meeting with Mr. Moshi.

### 5.3 Daniel Moshi



Figure 15. Daniel Moshi playing his *harepa*. Photo by Author.

On October 14, 2020, I picked up Mr. Sekiba from his residence, and together we made our way to My Darling. Upon arrival, Sekiba could not recall the exact location, prompting us to inquire from locals about Mr. Moshi. Fortunately, the first person we approached was familiar with him and provided directions to his house. Mr Moshi holds a significant position in his village as one of the chief's key aides. Upon reaching his home, we found Mr. Moshi absent as he was attending a gathering at the chief's place. We patiently waited for his return, and when he did, we introduced ourselves. Our acquaintance with Sekiba facilitated our conversation with him. Initially, Mr Moshi expressed reluctance towards the interview, as he did not view himself as a notable musician and simply enjoyed playing for his family. However, after some persuasion, he agreed to participate in the interview. When asked whether he had been interviewed by other people previously, Daniel acknowledged being interviewed once. He recounted an encounter with a man named Setati from Venda, during which he performed music for him, similar to what he did for my interview. Despite Setati's apparent satisfaction during the interview, Moshi expressed disappointment that he never received any follow-up communication or feedback regarding his music. He mentioned that he did not hear anything about the interview being broadcast on radio or any other platform, leading him to believe that Setati might have conducted the interview solely for his own purposes. Daniel expressed uncertainty about the

outcome of the current interview and emphasised that while he would like to hear it someday, he preferred not to be identified as an accomplished musician, as he still considers himself a learner in that regard.

Daniel Moshi was born in 1935 at Makgabeng, at Mokobane's place. His family later moved to Ga-Lekgwara due to issues in the area, and then relocated again to Mongalo which was under a district called Makhwiting. During his time in Matlhakeng, Moshi would herd cattle alongside other young men, observing them play *dipela* (*mbira*). Intrigued, he began searching for a suitable plank to craft his own *dipela*. Finding a piece of wood from a burnt marula tree, Moshi carved it into the base of the *dipela*. With determination, he punched holes into the wood and fashioned keys from flattened steel wire, tuning them to his liking. Practicing with friends, Moshi's skill improved through mutual teaching. Despite eventually relocating to Mongalo and later to Johannesburg for work, Daniel continued playing *dipela*, even bringing it with him to the city.

In Johannesburg, Moshi encountered Mr Sekiba from Ga-Kobe, a *harepa* player, and shared his passion for traditional music. Upon returning home from Johannesburg in 1995, Moshi found renewed motivation to play *dipela* when he encountered Sekiba playing music at an event. Although he initially considered making his own *harepa*, he decided to stick with *dipela*, playing it at home for personal enjoyment with his wife. Unexpectedly, Sekiba brought visitors to hear Moshi play, encouraging him to perform despite his reservations about his skill. Moshi reluctantly played for the visitors, finding satisfaction in continuing to play and even expanding his repertoire to please them.

Moshi reflects on his learning process, describing how he learned to play by sitting down and figuring things out on his own until he could produce music. However, he acknowledges a challenge when unexpected visitors request him to play on the spot, as he struggled to improvise in such situations. Moshi explains that he feels more comfortable playing alone, without the pressure of an audience, allowing him to freely explore and play many songs. However, when faced with the presence of others, particularly in a crowd, Moshi admits that the songs he knows tend to slip from his memory, as he does not enjoy performing in front of people. Despite this discomfort, Moshi expressed his willingness to play what he could in such circumstances, hoping that it would suffice to bring happiness to his listeners.

Having moved from Ga-Mampote, Mongalo and Tšhabangpula, Moshi now resides in My Darling.

In 1949, he crafted his *dipela*, an instrument he cherished and played throughout his life's journey. While working in Springs and Brakpan, he would return home during holidays to continue playing his *dipela*. In 1972, he relocated to My Darling but still commuted to Johannesburg for work, bringing his beloved instrument with him. It was during his time in Johannesburg that he crossed paths with Mr. Sekiba. In 1995, following Nelson Mandela's inauguration, Moshi retired and returned home. During his time in Johannesburg, he lived harmoniously with Zulu men in a hostel, sharing his passion for music. Upon retiring, he left his *dipela* behind at the hostel where he used to stay, a decision he later regretted as his ancestors spoke to him, reminding him of the importance of preserving tradition. Feeling compelled to retrieve his cherished instrument, Moshi embarked on a journey back to the hostel, where he was warmly welcomed by the men. They had safeguarded his *dipela*, untouched, exactly where he had left it. Relieved, Moshi brought his *dipela* back home, reaffirming his commitment to his cultural heritage.

Despite the challenges of ageing, Moshi remains dedicated to his music, even starting to craft a *harepa* from a plank given by a friend. He continues to practise, recognising the significance of passing down this musical tradition to future generations. For Moshi, playing the *dipela* is not a mere hobby but a profound connection to his culture and ancestors, a legacy he intends to preserve for his children and grandchildren. In his younger days, Moshi played *dinaka* extensively, even during his time at the hostels in Johannesburg. Although he was not formally part of any group, his proficiency with the drum made him a sought-after musician. His neighbour at the hostel, Mopayi, a group member, often acted as a liaison, inviting Moshi to join competitions and assist in securing victories for their group at competitions. Despite being occupied as a tailor, Moshi would readily set aside his work to participate in musical gatherings. Through these experiences, he honed his skills in drumming and playing pipes, talents he had inherited from his upbringing in Makgabeng. The music, passed down from their grandparents, particularly from kgoši Mokobane, held deep cultural significance for Moshi.

However, upon returning home after retirement, Moshi noticed a difference in the way *dinaka* was played compared to his familiar style. Consequently, he gradually withdrew from active participation, preferring to observe rather than engage. While some acquaintances would still request his involvement, Moshi would often avoid such requests, feeling disconnected from the music. Despite his reluctance, Moshi was unable to decline my invitation to play. Though he may not actively pursue *dinaka* anymore, he was willing to play what he remembers, if only to bring me joy.

Moshi reflected on the similarities between the *dipela* and *harepa* despite the *harepa*'s Western origins. He noted that the tuning of both instruments aligns with that of the *dinaka*, allowing for a consistent playing style across all three. Moshi emphasised that the repertoire typically played on the *dinaka* can be seamlessly adapted to the *harepa*. Furthermore, Moshi expressed his fondness for traditional songs, mentioned earlier, such as *segololo* and *malopo* songs, which hold a special significance for him due to their deeply rooted traditional nature. In addition, Moshi shared his belief in the healing power of music, especially when playing tunes known as *malopo*, which are associated with sick individuals. He explained that playing these songs not only honours the sick but also provides him with a sense of strength and healing, particularly during times of pain. Moshi mentioned that he played various *dinaka* songs, including "*Makgowa a makhibidu*" (red white people) and *konkoriti* (concrete), indicating his ongoing dedication to mastering these melodies.

Lebaka (2018) explains that in Basotho ba Lebowa society, *malopo* rituals are pivotal in forging a connection with ancestors for healing through music and dance. These rituals act as a unifying and vital bridge to the ancestral world, enabling the Basotho ba Lebowa to communicate and sustain a relationship with their forebears. The performance of *malopo* dance and incorporation of music into the rituals facilitate a crucial link with the spiritual realm, deemed necessary for resolving health issues tied to ancestral spirits. Ancestors are considered guardians of individual and community moral standards, and engaging with them through *malopo* rituals allows for enhanced health and well-being. Consequently, *malopo* rituals are an essential communication channel within the social and religious fabric of ancestor worship among the Basotho ba Lebowa. According to Lebaka (ibid), within the ancestor veneration practices, slaughtering or offering an animal as a sacrifice serves as a means to communicate with the spiritual realm and to appease ancestral spirits. Such a ritual is crucial for fortifying the bond between the living and their ancestors, securing their safeguard, blessings, and direction. Animal sacrifice is perceived as an essential measure for preserving community harmony and well-being. It is thought to mitigate health issues linked to ancestral spirits and to avert adverse outcomes like sickness or distressing occurrences.

Moshi played many other styles, including those traditionally performed by the people involved in the *malopo* rituals, known as *kiba*. These songs, not meant for dancing but for healing ceremonies, hold a profound spiritual presence. Moshi recounted a personal experience where he heard a familiar voice he attributes to his ancestors, warning him of danger. This encounter affirmed his belief in the tangible connection between ancestral spirits and the living, shaping his appreciation for and dedication to playing their music.

*Kiba*, as mentioned before, is a well known style of music. Moshi uses the name *kiba* to relate to songs being sung by those he describes as "sick," which originally served as war chants among their ancestors. These songs, once performed as war dances by both men and women, held a special significance as prayers for the safety of their children who had joined the army and were deployed to places such as Italy. Reflecting on the past, Moshi recalls witnessing a plane with a single propeller and wings resembling bicycle spokes during his upbringing in Makgabeng. The plane dropped papers, and in Moshi's community he and his friends were sent to pick those papers up at a location called Bolaola. Their grandparents sang songs, praying for the safe return of their fathers, who were away at war. Soon after, the fathers returned, with other soldiers camped at Maliboro receiving bicycles from the army to journey home. Among them were Mr. Ramohlaba and Daniel's father. The papers dropped by the plane were handed to the grandparents, who took them to the local school, a thatch-covered building in Olonsine where his educated sister, having completed Standard 6, was teaching. The papers confirmed the return of their children from war, arriving by bicycle, as predicted. These songs, rooted in their family's history, hold deep significance for Moshi. They were sung during challenging times, like when they battled locust infestations named *selongwana* and *montlhorokgomo*, the latter being less harmful. Moshi recalls his father sharing stories about their culture and the challenges they faced after returning from war, including the government taking away their weapons and replacing them with bicycles. His father expressed discontent about having to buy land after fighting for it, leading them to relocate to Lekgwara, where they faced water scarcity. After his father's passing in 1950, Moshi took on the role of decision-maker for the family, eventually leading them back to Lekgwara before settling in Springs for work. He later worked at Jan Smuts Airport (OR Tambo today), witnessing its evolution from three small planes to larger aircraft such as the 727 and 707. His career later took him to work for the German airline Lufthansa, where he remained until his retirement in 1995. Now, in his retirement, Moshi tends to cattle and plays his instruments, connecting with his heritage through music and memories of his family's past.

Importantly, with regard to both the *dipela* and the *harepa*, Moshi perceives them as similar instruments, differing mainly in finger placement. Despite the technical variations, the essence of the music remains consistent for him. He offered to demonstrate both instruments to showcase the subtle differences in sound.

### 5.3.1 The songs

#### 5.3.1.1 *Makgowa a ma khibidu* (Red white people)

As with Sekiba, from Moshi's experience in playing *dinaka*, he learned that when performing at celebrations or events, the song, *Makgowa a makhibidu*, held significant importance as the opening piece. He described it as the foremost song in *dinaka* music, indicating that it sets the tone for the rest of the performance. During the rendition of the song that I witnessed, Moshi explained that the poet initiates the performance by praising and concludes his praise by shouting, "College!" The group responds with "C," after which the poet instructs them to "*mphuralleng*" (turn your backs towards me), followed by "*ntebeleleng*" (look at me), to which they comply. Finally, the poet calls out "*Makgowa a ma khibidu*", signalling the start of the song and the commencement of the musical performance. In Moshi's description, he referred to "*Makgowa a makhibidu*" (based on the call and response above) as the initial song, followed by others.

#### 5.3.1.2 *Ke lantlha re bona Mogalakwena* (It is the first time we see Mogalakwena river)

Moshi mentions the presence of a praise singer who introduces the subsequent songs. The praise singer narrates the story behind the songs, describing this one as one sung by a woman cutting grass along the *Mogalakwena* river for the first time. This storytelling cues the musicians to begin playing the corresponding song, as they are familiar with its significance and melody.

#### 5.3.1.3 *Pholwana tše pedi di a lwa* (Two bulls are fighting)

Moshi explained that they took some songs traditionally performed by women during household chores and adapted them in the *dinaka* style for the *harepa*, while retaining their original significance as women's songs. He further mentions a particular song that touches on traditional values and conflicts between people. His rendition of the song, titled "*Pholwana tše pedi di a lwa, ke Nkwana le Mmamabolo*," (Two bulls are fighting, they are Nkwana and Mmamabolo) addresses disputes within the community: "That's the way we play them, as I practise, they guide me in our own tradition, not the Western way" (Interview 14/10/2020).

#### **5.3.1.4 *Dietla dikoloi tša makgowa* (The white people's cars are coming)**

This song belongs to the *dinaka* tradition, and its lyrics, "*Dietla dikoloi tša makgowa*," translate to "the white people's cars are coming". It serves as a cautionary message, alerting the community to the arrival of white people and advising them to seek shelter.

#### **5.3.1.5 *Kgakgantšhane ba kome* (no direct translation but this is used for rituals)**

*Kgakgantšhane ba kome* (*ka ntle go lela ditšhela*) is a *malopo* song.<sup>10</sup> This is the song Moshi sings when he thinks about sick people, believing it has healing power. He wrote it to honour traditional healers, who interpret signs and provide guidance for healing rituals. The song emphasises the importance of following ancestral advice, such as slaughtering a goat to restore health. When Moshi sings this song, it's a solemn occasion, as it is intended to convey messages from the ancestors about healing practices.

#### **5.3.1.6 *Makgabeng a mmasewela* (Makgabeng of Mmasewela)**

*Bomma ba a mpitša* (My mother is calling me)

This is the first song Moshi wrote when he lived in Makgabeng. It is a piece that held significance due to its unmatched quality. Inspired by his grandfather, who despite being crippled, danced with unmatched vigour, the song carried a unique energy. The poet's invocation, "*a kgabakgaba makgaba, ke makgaba a mmasewela, a gana tšatši le wela*," (the makgaba of Mmasewela refuse for the sun to set) was met with ululation and further praise from Moshi's grandmother, echoing the sentiments of respect and admiration for their lineage. Moshi fondly recalls the realisation of the song's greatness, prompting him to give his song the same name to continue its legacy. Despite being played on different instruments, such as the *harepa*, the essence of the music remained unchanged.

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<sup>10</sup> Malopo is a ritual in the Basotho ba Lebowa community that communicates with the spiritual world, particularly with ancestors. It involves sacrifices, songs, and dance and is considered a source of healing therapy and a way to maintain a connection with ancestors. Malopo rituals are believed to be essential for appeasing ancestors, seeking guidance from them, and ensuring the well-being and health of individuals and the community as a whole (Lebaka, 2014).

#### **5.3.1.7 Mmapula (Mmapula is the name of a girl)**

The song for *dinaka* goes, "*Mmapula seka ntshwara, a se nna thaka yagago*" which translates to "*Mmapula, do not touch me, I am not the same age as you*". These are war songs, also known as songs of the spear. They are ancient melodies passed down through generations, heard from parents and grandparents. Moshi recalls running to the mountains and hiding in caves during wars, experiencing these stories first-hand rather than simply being told about them.

#### **5.3.1.8 Konkoriti (Concrete)**

The *dinaka* people bestowed the name *konkoriti* upon a certain concept. Despite its origin as an English word, meaning concrete, in their language, it signifies something hard, difficult, or problematic. Therefore, when encountering difficulties or facing someone who brings trouble, they may refer to them using this term.

#### **5.3.1.9 Otlaba wa tšhaba wa tlogela polasa (Instrumental) (You will end up running away from this farm)**

The group performs this song during competitive events against other groups. It serves as a signal of dominance, indicating that they are prevailing over their opponents. Referred to as a song of defeat, its lyrics suggest that the defeated party will ultimately retreat and abandon their land.

#### **5.3.1.10 Seakaki**

The evening song, '*Seakaki sa nko ye telele*', is exclusive to individuals from Olonsine, Makhwiting. It is traditionally played towards the conclusion of an event to assert their superiority and conveys the message that they cannot be defeated.

When asked if there was anything else he wanted to share about the *harepa* and *dipela* instruments, Moshi responded with a profound reflection. He spoke about the significance of the *dipela* in relation to the beliefs of the *malopo* people, comparing their awakening to the biblical notion of the dead rising when the trumpet sounds. He expressed his belief that the ancestors have already risen, as

evidenced by his personal experiences, such as miraculous healing from a severe illness known as *letadi* when he was just 12 years old.

Moshi recounted a vision where two elderly figures came to take him away, but his grandmother intervened, stating that he was still young and not ready to depart. This encounter further strengthened his belief in the existence of the ancestors. Another vision, involving the spirit of his deceased son, reinforced this belief when his son expressed disquiet until Moshi performed a ceremony involving the slaughter of two cows, after which his son found peace. He emphasised his conviction that the ancestors are present and responsive, contrasting their presence with his inability to hear the prayers of pastors, only hearing the voices of the ancestors. Moshi made clear his wishes for his own funeral, expressing a preference for traditional rituals over Christian prayers. He instructed that upon his passing, only a praise poet should recite his family name and play the *harepa*, as he believed that this would bring him peace in the afterlife.

After the positive interview with Moshi, he asked me to source a *harepa* for him when I returned home. I promised to find one. On my second visit I telephoned him and he told me not to come because he was not interested in interviews or even playing music. He said that he was done with music. I honoured his request and did not return to him.

## 5.4 Labson Mahlodi ‘Molokoloko’ Mothemana



Figure 16. Labson Mothemana. Photo by Author.

Upon completing my field-work and returning to ILAM at the end of August 2023, a musical ensemble named 'Roots Grown Deep' visited us to perform and conduct workshops for our students. This group specialises in contemporary music, incorporating a diverse array of instruments, including traditional from various parts of the world. During a conversation with one of the ensemble members, I mentioned my research on *harepa* music. To my delight, he informed me that his uncle, Mr. Mothemana is a *harepa* player and leads a group. Eager to connect, I requested his uncle's contact details. He did not have the contact details at that moment but later provided them to me.

I reached out to Mr. Mothemana, and he graciously agreed to meet with me. On 18 December 2023, I visited him in Buffelshoek, a village near Bochum, approximately twenty kilometres away. Accompanied by my nephew, who operated one of the cameras, we were warmly welcomed upon arrival at 10:00 in the morning. We explained the purpose of our visit and our intentions regarding the recordings, to which Mr. Mothemana expressed no objections.

We arrived in the village during a time when the playing of *dinaka* music and drums was prohibited. According to the village regulations, *dinaka* music is not permitted during the ploughing and planting season. This prohibition is rooted in the belief that the sound of *dinaka* pipes can summon spirits, which may disrupt agricultural work and result in a poor harvest for that year. Additionally, the villagers expressed concerns that *dinaka* music attracts spectators, causing interruptions to their tasks. They view *dinaka* music as spiritual due to the use of air to produce sound, which is believed to invoke spirits. In contrast, Mothemana explained that *harepa* playing is regarded purely as entertainment and can be enjoyed at any time. However, because he accompanies his *harepa* playing with drums, he sought permission from the village chief to play drums during our visit. The village chief granted this permission, acknowledging our interest in Mothemana's music. During our time there, a village leader visited us and commended our efforts, expressing support for sharing the music with the world and welcoming future visits like ours.

Labson Mahlodi Mothemana was born in 1957 in the mountains of Mmalebogo. Growing up, he observed older men playing *harepas*, and as a boy, he and his friends would craft their own using pieces of wood and wires. This began around 1962 when they would play while herding cattle in the fields near the mountains. Their early morning responsibilities involved guarding the corn against monkeys, as failure to do so would result in trouble with their parents. Skipping school to play seemed inconsequential to them at the time. In 1975, Mothemana's interest in music intensified when his elder brother invited Ernest Rammutla to perform at a party. Rammutla's skilful playing of the *harepa* captivated Mothemana, inspiring him to practise diligently to emulate the captivating sound. Although he initially played on self-made *harepas*, which lacked the authenticity of professional instruments, he persisted until he could play songs proficiently. Their makeshift instruments consisted of a 5L oil can with sticks placed on both ends and wires inserted in the middle. Tuning was achieved by winding the wires on a nail attached to one of the sticks until they reached a pitch resembling that of the older men's playing. One song from 1962, "*ba ntima dikgeru ka ngala, ba mpha mosadi ka bowa*" (They deny me nuts, I go. They give me a wife, I stay), aided in finger coordination. This song, played using only one finger on each hand, served as a foundation for learning other songs, with the rhythm of the lyrics assisting in hand coordination.

Mothemana also had a knack for playing *dinaka* music and dancing, although it was considered a commonplace activity for everyone at the time. Learning to play the *harepa* was relatively easy for him due to his familiarity with the sound and rhythms from playing *dinaka* music and dancing. In 1975, Mothemana and his family relocated from the mountains of Mmalebogo to Buffelshoek. Shortly after,

he ventured to Johannesburg for employment opportunities. He found work in various establishments, starting with hotels in Hillbrow. Later, he transitioned to a florist in Bedfordview before securing a job at FEDBISCO, a potato chips factory in Isando. Unfortunately, he was retrenched, leading him to engage in occasional piece jobs until his return home. While living in Hillbrow, Mothemana remained musically active and frequently commuted to Thembisa, a township on the outskirts of Johannesburg, where he participated in *dinaka* music performances. In 1999, he returned home permanently and formed his own musical group after an accident in Johannesburg forced him into early retirement due to physical limitations.

Mothemana's musical journey with the *harepa* began when his brother, who preferred singing over playing, acquired one but could not play it. Mothemana took the instrument and gradually adapted to playing the genuine *harepa*, aided by his prior experience with a makeshift version. Initially forming a casual ensemble called the Molokoloko group, Mothemana faced setbacks when members left for job opportunities in Johannesburg. Undeterred, he began recruiting and teaching young individuals to dance and play drums. Together, they performed at uninvited parties, eventually receiving invitations to perform formally. Their earnings were pooled and shared annually. Mothemana attempted to teach the youngsters how to play the *harepa*, but the transient nature of their commitment posed challenges. To facilitate learning, he constructed makeshift *harepas* similar to those he used as a child. Unfortunately, only one individual persevered long enough to become proficient. Tragically, this talented protege passed away, marking the end of Mothemana's teaching endeavours.

Throughout this period, Mothemana had never formed a formal musical group, aside from occasional engagements with children for leisure. It was not until 2015 that he established his own group, emboldened by his growing proficiency in playing the *harepa* and the accumulation of a repertoire of songs. Following the same approach used with the children, the group initially performed at events and parties without charge. However, their lively performances quickly garnered attention and admiration from audiences, leading to spontaneous monetary contributions from delighted spectators. As their popularity grew, invitations to perform at various events and celebrations flooded in, including ceremonies such as tombstone unveilings, children's parties, and even requests from shop owners seeking to attract customers by featuring live performances at their establishments.



Figure 17. Mothemana and his group. Photo by Author.

Mothemana tuned his *harepa* using a method akin to tuning *dinaka*, ensuring each note matched the pitch of one *naka*, resulting in a set reminiscent of *dinaka*. Starting from the high note, he followed a specific sequence of notes to achieve this tuning, which allowed the *harepa* to produce a sound similar to a set of *dinaka*. To reinforce the sound and ensure continuity during performances, Mothemana set the strings in twos, ensuring that if one string broke during play, the other would still be functional, allowing uninterrupted performance. In addition to tuning, Mothemana developed the skill to play the melody using both his right and left hands. He could interchange hands depending on the song being played. He explained that this flexibility was not easily mastered by others. Mothemana likened this ability to writing, where some individuals are ambidextrous and can write with both hands, while others can only write with one. Similarly, he could seamlessly switch hands while playing the *harepa*.

Mothemana's *harepa* consists of 27 notes, which he has arranged in a unique style on his instrument, as detailed below. The initial two notes and the final five are solitary, while the intermediate notes are paired. These notes, coupled to the tuning of the *dinaka*, all have names, as will be explained in detail in Chapter 6. This arrangement enhances the instrument's resonance and ensures continuity in performance, as the presence of a backup string allows him to continue playing should one break. To enhance his comfort and facilitate smoother play, he positions the note called *kgomo* (as with the

*dinaka*) identically on strings eight, twelve, and sixteen. The note *Phalola* is positioned in the same way on strings seven, fourteen, and fifteen.

Mothemana's repertoire consists of a blend of original compositions, melodies passed down from elders during his childhood, and traditional *dinaka* music that he used to perform. He adeptly navigates through a variety of traditional songs, including those of *malopo*. During performances at drinking establishments, Mothemana often encounters unfamiliar songs sung by patrons. Intrigued, he quickly joined in, learning and adapting the melodies to his *harepa* on the spot, thus expanding his repertoire. Additionally, Mothemana enjoys the simplicity and purity of playing songs solo, without any accompaniment other than the *harepa* itself.

## 5.4.1 The Songs

### 4.4.1.1 *Mogatša'ntona re nyaka tšhelete* (Wife of our supervisor, we want our money)

This song is a work anthem. After completing their tasks, the workers approach the supervisor's wife to receive their wages. They insist on being paid in rands rather than cents, emphasising their refusal to be shortchanged or cheated out of their rightful earnings.

### 5.4.1.2 *Stepe sa mathari a kgatalala* (The step of the ladies)

This song introduces a new dance style known as *setepe* (step). In this region, most women dance to recorded music played on Western instruments, yet the dance remains rooted in traditional music. Wearing traditional attire, the women perform choreographed movements in unison, known as *setepe*.

### 5.4.1.3 *Mmalebogo ke kgoši* (This is a *dinaka* song) (Mmalebogo is the king)

A traditional song popular with many *harepa* and *dinaka* performers, the song lauds King Mmalebogo, describing him as a benevolent ruler residing among the mountains, recognised as the king of the Bahananwa people.

#### **5.4.1.4 *Thabeng ya Mmalebogo* (Mountains of Mmalebogo)**

In this *dinaka* song, *dinaka* players refrain from singing, and Mothemana adds his own lyrics in accordance with the song's title. In this instance, he opts to incorporate praises honouring the Bahananwa people.

#### **5.4.1.5 *Otla hlakana le tšhwene* (You will meet a monkey)**

The lyrics of the song caution that walking outside at night may lead to encountering a monkey, symbolising encounters with witchcraft and malevolent forces. The song warns of the dangers of bewitchment and advises caution.

#### **5.4.1.6 *Bo botse bo tšerwe ke bana* (My beauty was taken by my children)**

This song reflects on the process of ageing, lamenting the loss of beauty and vitality. The singer expresses that their youthful appearance has faded over time, attributing this change to the responsibilities of motherhood. They describe ageing as an adversary, noting that societal treatment towards them has shifted negatively as a result of their advancing years.

#### **5.4.1.7 *Tšhantšha nkwadu* (I am in charge/I am the head of this house)**

The song portrays a domestic dispute where a man asserts his dominance by claiming ownership over everything in the household, including his wife with whom he is arguing. This type of man is referred to as *Tšhantšha nkwadu*.

#### **5.4.1.8 *Tšheri tšhaba tseleng* (Girl move out of the way)**

This song is about discipline, which is not achieved through physical punishment; rather, it stems from a change within the individual's heart. Consistent guidance and instruction, without resorting to violence, can lead to learning and personal growth over time.

#### **5.4.1.9 Mmapula wa lekala (mmapula o hlapela ntlwaneng) (Mmapula of lekala)**

There are numerous renditions of this song featuring varying lyrics. In Mothemana's version, the focus is on Mmapula's disrespectful behaviour, particularly her pursuit of older men. He warns her to stay away from their group, asserting that they are not in her age demographic. He emphasises their maturity and resilience by likening them to steel and the hardness of sorghum (*moroko*).

#### **5.4.1.10 Ba ntima dikgeru ka ngala, ba mpha mosadi ka boa (They deny me nuts, I go. They give me a wife, I stay)**

Mothemana admits to not fully understanding the true meaning of the song, but according to a literal translation, it suggests that denying him nuts from a marula tree would lead to his departure, whereas offering him a wife would prompt his return. He recalls playing this song during his early experiences learning to play the *harepa*. Although he never acquired the skill to play *dipela*, he observed individuals in his village who were proficient in playing it. Despite not receiving formal instruction, he gained an understanding of how to construct *dipela* instruments. In his youth, Mothemana played a jews harp, a skill he learned from an elderly man who crafted them using wires. Unfortunately, Mothemana regrets the loss of this instrument. He learned to play various instruments through being taught with this particular song.

#### **5.4.1.11 Babirwa ga ba tšee sa motho (The Babirwa people do not take anything from people)**

This song serves as a tribute to Mothemana's tribe, the Babirwa. He asserts their heritage as descendants of the Ndebele people and emphasises their self-reliance, stating that they are capable of accomplishing tasks independently without relying on others.

#### **5.4.1.12 Mogolo o pelopedi (An elder is patient)**

This song celebrates the wisdom and patience inherent in older individuals. It highlights how years of experience have endowed them with profound knowledge and a deeper comprehension of life and human interactions. This insight enables them to approach others with greater patience, extend forgiveness, and offer second chances.

Mothemana proved to be the last *harepa* instrumentalist that I interviewed and, despite his advanced age, was the youngest of the research participants. It was very clear that the art of *harepa* playing is being kept alive by this group of aged musicians and that this research was very timeous in capturing, what may be, a dying art. In the next section I synthesise the performance practises shared by these performers.

## 5.5 Shared approaches to performance

All *harepa* players removed the chord bridge from their instruments because it interfered with their playing and was not utilised in their music. Additionally, they removed strings to allow for more effortless playing or grouped strings in pairs to enhance the instrument's volume. Of all the musicians, only Morukhuladi experienced an autoharp performance and attempted to play it traditionally but found it incompatible with the style of traditional music.

Sekiba and Mothemana, who accompany their *harepa* performances with drums and vocalists, have adapted their instruments with pickups to amplify the sound. Leveraging his knowledge of musical instruments, Sekiba's son sourced pickups from old guitars at a musical instrument repair shop. He then fitted these pickups into the *harepa* and added a jack connector, enabling connection to a PA system. Mothemana, on the other hand, not only added guitar pickups to his *harepa* but also integrated a complete guitar control board, complete with volume and tone knobs, granting him greater control over the instrument during performances.

The introduction of amplification techniques has allowed these musicians to enrich their performances with additional elements of traditional music, such as drumming and group singing. This technological adaptation has facilitated their participation in venues typically reserved for *dinaka* players, reaffirming the *harepa's* role in Basotho ba Lebowa traditional music. This feature attracted audiences who could now hear the dexterity involved in producing music on the instruments. In this case, the concept of a passive audience, something that is alien to traditional African performances, emerges. The focus is on the display of dance routines and the skilful rendition of song and dance. During these performances, the audiences become "spellbound" as they watch from the periphery of the performance instead of participating (Mashao and Setati, 2014, p. 24). Preliminary research shows, however, that this is not always the case. While conducting this research, I examined how the

musicians successfully engaged the audience, moving beyond merely leaving them "spellbound," as noted by Mashao and Setati (2014).

## 5.6 Individual Approaches to Performance Attire

Moshi has never contemplated the significance of attire for public performances, primarily because he does not view himself as a performer. His musical engagements are restricted to personal enjoyment and intimate family gatherings within his home. Conversely, Morukhuladi, while not adhering to a specific performance attire, consistently chooses to wear a suit for public appearances. This choice is not driven by a desire to cultivate a performer's image but stems from an intention to present himself respectfully to his audience. Interestingly, this attire mirrors what he wears for church and other congregational settings. In contrast, Sekiba and his group demonstrate a deliberate selection of varied attire for their performances. Sekiba donned a cowboy hat and tailor-made shirts, underscoring the personalised and contextual nature of performance attire choices among musicians. Sekiba together with his ensemble, they opt for a coordinated wardrobe of grey trousers and matching T-shirts featuring the group's logo and name, establishing a cohesive visual identity during their performances. Their act, characterised by playful engagements with water, necessitates a mid-performance change into a second set of costumes. The group's alternative costume, described as traditional attire is in reality shirts with African prints rather than authentic traditional garments. While traditional wear often evokes images of animal skins, the reality within contemporary performative contexts, including among traditional groups like the *dinaka*, leans towards adaptations such as quilted garments with Scottish influences. This evolution in costume choices reflects a nuanced dialogue between cultural heritage and contemporary identity expression.

Mothemana, in alignment with the aesthetic adopted by Sekiba's group, dons a shirt with African prints, complemented by a distinctive hat crafted from animal skin, complete with a tail. This attire is also mirrored by a cadre of young boys who perform alongside him, signifying uniformity within the group. The women within his ensemble embrace their traditional regalia, which includes *Semafahlana*, a garment akin to a shirt designed to cover the upper torso. For waist adornment, they wear *Sephešane*, resembling a large bangle, beneath which *ntepa* is positioned to provide frontal coverage and *mose* for the rear. Other women instead put on a dress called *yele*, a more modern dress code that would then replace *ntepa* and *mose*. Arm decorations consist of *diganka* (bangles), available in various colours, while *sekuelo*, a type of cloth, is used for head coverage. For performances involving

dance, *ditšhwatšhwadi* (leg rattles) are added, enhancing the auditory experience, with *maseka* (copper or silver bangles) worn on the hands and occasionally on the feet, contributing to the visual and sonic elements of their cultural expression.



Figure 18. Sekiba on the left wearing his performance attire and Mothemana on the right wearing his performance attire. Photos by Author.

## 5.7 Spirituality and Music: An Exploration of Personal, Cultural, and Theoretical Perspectives

As Jung suggests, spirituality encompasses the core of religious beliefs, including our belief in ourselves. It arises from our intelligence, personality, self-awareness, and volition, representing our ability to connect with forces beyond our immediate perception, enhancing our actions and thoughts (Hays, 2005). This research delves into the undeniable significance of spirituality, examining the unique spiritual connections each participant shares, primarily through music. Yob (2010) expands the definition of spirituality, acknowledging it as a fundamental human capacity manifesting in various forms, from silence and ecstasy to individual and communal experiences. This broad spectrum includes music as a rich expression of spirituality, underlining the intricate relationship between spirituality and music beyond traditional religious confines.

The narratives of my participants offer vivid insights into this relationship. For instance, Morukhuladi speaks of a divine voice guiding his life decisions and musical journey, instructing him to resume playing the *harepa* after a break. This voice, while influential, doesn't direct his artistic choices, underscoring spiritual guidance that is deeply personal yet not dictatorial in his creative expressions. His experiences raise intriguing questions about the physical manifestations of spiritual power,

reflecting Clair and Storr's view that spirituality encompasses an inward condition marked by a belief in a higher entity (Hays, 2005).

Similarly, Daniel Moshi's experiences echo Morukhuladi's, albeit through the ancestral voices guiding him in dangerous situations and personal loss. Moshi's connection with his ancestors, facilitated through *malopo* songs highlights music's role in fostering spiritual dialogue, healing, and community cohesion, as detailed by Lebaka (2018). This cultural practice of the Basotho ba Lebowa showcases music's power in sustaining spiritual connections and communal harmony. Mothemana's account further illustrates the collective spiritual beliefs within his community, particularly around the use of *dinaka* music and drums. Due to their spiritual significance, the abstention from playing these instruments during the ploughing season underscores the communal respect for spiritual traditions and their impact on daily life and practices. Conversely, Sekiba's experience presents a tension between personal spirituality and communal or institutional norms. His transition from playing *dinaka* and *harepa* music to focusing on hymns at home reflects the challenges of navigating personal spiritual expressions within broader societal and religious expectations.

Carr (2008) critically examines the instrumentalisation of music for spiritual purposes, cautioning against diluting music's artistic essence and spirituality's profound nature. This critique invites reflection on how music and spirituality are intertwined within educational and social settings, presenting opportunities and challenges in fostering authentic expressions of spirituality through music. The spirituality and music nexus offers a complex tapestry of individual, cultural, and theoretical reflections. This exploration reveals the multifaceted ways in which spirituality is experienced, expressed, and understood through music, highlighting its significance in personal journeys, cultural practices, and broader societal discussions.

## Conclusion

The journey of these four musicians offers profound insights into the significance of early immersion in music, the evolution of individual styles within a shared tradition, the interplay between spirituality and musical practice, mentorship and cultural imposition, resistance, and subversion. From a young age, Morukhuladi, Sekiba, Moshi, and Mothemana were enveloped in the rich tapestry of *dinaka* music, laying the foundation for their musical journeys. This early immersion allowed them to absorb the fundamental elements of music, from instrument tuning to playing techniques, rhythm

comprehension, and artistic nuances. Their experiences parallel the insights shared by Dargie (1986) during his interview with Xhosa bow player, Nofinishi Dywili, highlighting the universal process of musical enculturation that begins even before birth. This is further supported by Levitin (2009), who brings to attention that infants by the age of 9 months, exhibit sensitivity to distinct characteristics of the scales in their own musical culture.

Despite their shared background in *dinaka* music, each musician developed a distinct style that reflected their unique interests, experiences, and inspirations. Morukhuladi's compositions emphasise vocal music and lyrical depth, while Sekiba remains rooted in *dinaka* traditions, incorporating signature sequences and infusing original compositions with *dinaka*'s distinct sound. Moshi's music is heavily influenced by the melodious *dipela*, enriching his *harepa* playing with its tonal qualities, while Mothemana's journey with the *harepa* encompasses diverse genres within Bahananwa music.

Spirituality permeates the lives and music of Morukhuladi and Moshi, guiding their artistic paths and offering divine inspiration. Both men attribute their musical gifts and guidance to spiritual voices, whether perceived as the voice of God or ancestral spirits. Despite this spiritual influence, they acknowledge the necessity of dedicated practice and commitment in honing their skills, underscoring the transformative power of discipline and perseverance in musical mastery. Sekiba and Mothemana's musical experiences diverge from the spiritual realm yet remain deeply rooted in cultural traditions and communal practices. While spirits may not guide them, their engagement with *malopo* ceremonies and other communal rituals underscores the integral role of music in social cohesion and cultural expression within their communities.

My interactions with Morukhuladi and Sekiba further illuminate the significance of mentorship and knowledge transmission in musical traditions. By seeking guidance, tuning instruments, and receiving lessons directly from these musicians, I deepened my understanding of the *harepa* and forged personal connections that transcended the bounds of formal interviews. Their mentorship can only be effective if they continue to use the familiar tools they have always relied upon. It is essential that orality as a means of transmission remains a central practice in the Bahananwa community. The exchange of instruments and the challenge to pass on knowledge to future generations symbolise a commitment to preserving cultural heritage and ensuring its continuity in an ever-changing world.

Finally, the missionaries' impact on the musical landscape of sub-Saharan Africa during the colonial period reflects the complex dynamics of cultural imposition, resistance, and subversion. Through the

promotion of Western musical practices and the suppression of indigenous traditions, missionaries reinforced colonial power dynamics while inadvertently sparking forms of cultural resistance and adaptation among local populations. In essence, the journeys of Morukhuladi, Sekiba, Moshi, and Mothemana offer a multifaceted exploration of music's role as a cultural touchstone, spiritual conduit, and dynamic expression of individual and communal identity. Through their stories, we gain a deeper appreciation for the transformative power of music in shaping lives, bridging communities, and preserving cultural heritage across generations.

In the next chapter I analyse the music performed and shared by these musicians, identifying the links between the music of the Bahananwa and the current performance of the *harepa*. These integrated systems proffer valuable data to develop further insight into the practice of this enculturated instrument.

# Chapter 6

In this chapter, I focus on the tuning methods of the Bahananwa in comparison with Western musical tunings. I analyse a selection of songs by the participants to demonstrate the challenges that arise when interpreting African music using Western systems. In this discussion, I will focus on the challenges related to the tuning, transcription, and representation of Bahananwa music.

## 6.1 Analysis

### 6.1.1 Western Musical Tuning Systems

From a Western musicological perspective, tuning is characterised by a high degree of precision and boasts a rich historical lineage dating back to the era of Pythagoras (Anderson, 1983). The Western tuning system, as we currently recognise it, has evolved significantly over centuries in pursuit of a standard or, more accurately, a standardised process. This evolution has encompassed various systems, including Pythagorean tuning, Just temperament, Wolf-tone, Quarter-comma Meantone, Well-temperament, Meantone temperament, and the widely adopted equal temperament.<sup>11</sup>

Halewood (2015, p. 4) explains that equal temperament finds its foundation in an unacknowledged compromise, that, as he articulates, "rests on the standardisation which is the hallmark of the tuning

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<sup>11</sup> **Pythagorean tuning** employs a system where the frequency relationships between all musical intervals adhere to a 3:2 ratio. This ratio, known for creating the "pure" perfect fifth, is preferred due to its harmonious sound and ease of manual tuning, underlining the esteemed role of the number 3 in music. Echoing Novalis, "The musical proportions strike me as especially precise natural proportions." This approach can also be viewed as adjusting the syntonic temperament, where the generating interval is the 3:2 ratio, corresponding to the natural perfect fifth, roughly 702 cents broad. **Just intonation**, also known as pure intonation in music, refers to tuning musical intervals based on whole number frequency ratios, like 3:2 or 4:3. An interval tuned in this manner is considered pure and is referred to as a just interval. In music theory, the term "**wolf fifth**" (the Procrustean fifth or imperfect fifth) describes a highly dissonant musical interval covering seven semitones. More precisely, this term is applied to an interval from a particular tuning method, the quarter-comma meantone temperament, which was prevalent during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The **quarter-comma meantone temperament**, or 1/4-comma meantone, emerged as the most pervasive meantone temperament during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and was occasionally adopted after that. Within this tuning framework, the perfect fifth is slightly reduced by one-quarter of a syntonic comma (81:80 ratio), compared to its pure form in Pythagorean tuning (with a frequency ratio of 3:2). The resulting frequency ratio is calculated as  $\frac{3}{2} \times (\frac{80}{81})^{1/4}$  = the fourth root of 5, approximately equal to 1.49535, translating to a fifth spanning 696.578 cents. **Well temperament** (also good temperament, circular or circulating temperament) is a type of tempered tuning described in 20th-century music theory. The term is modelled on the German word *wohltemperiert*. This word also appears in the title of J. S. Bach's famous composition "Das wohltemperierte Klavier", The Well-Tempered Clavier. As used in the 17th century, the term "well-tempered" meant that the twelve notes per octave of the standard keyboard were tuned so that it was possible to play music in all major or minor keys that were commonly in use without sounding perceptibly out of tune. **Meantone temperaments** are classified based on the portion of the syntonic comma used to adjust the fifths. For instance, the most widely used version of the quarter-comma meantone adjusts the fifths by 1/4 of a syntonic comma. This adjustment means that stacking four-fifths yields a just major third, a syntonic comma flatter than the major third in Pythagorean tuning. Similarly, the third-comma meantone uses 1/3 of a syntonic comma to temper the fifths, with three fifths equating to a just major sixth (equivalent to a just minor third), again a syntonic comma below the Pythagorean equivalent.

system of Equal Temperament". This compromise erodes the claims of equal temperament to both rationality and universality. This relentless pursuit of standardisation entailed inevitable trade-offs, notably concerning particular sound qualities such as overtones. Equal temperament eventually gained prominence due to its capacity to enable musicians to perform in different keys while maintaining proportional consistency in sound. All keys are meticulously and evenly tuned in equal temperament by subdividing an octave into twelve uniformly sized parts. J.S. Bach was among the first composers to have adopted equal temperament in his music. According to Lehman (2005), the evidence supporting the assumption that Bach may have used equal temperament rather than unequal temperaments in his compositions includes the analysis of Bach's handwritten title page and his music itself. The temperament diagram found on Bach's title page, along with the spirals and letter 'C' used by Bach to convey information about temperament, suggest a deliberate and integral approach to tuning. Additionally, the 1722 Bach temperament, when played and tested by various musicians, was found to have a smooth and equal effect in a musical context unless closely scrutinised with the technical skills of a keyboard tuner. Furthermore, scholars such as Rasch (2017) and Lindley (1997) have dismissed the idea of unequal temperaments in Bach's compositions, indicating that Bach's music demands a temperament shape other than what would be required for unequal tuning. These factors contribute to the argument that Bach may have favoured equal temperament in his compositions.

Mhlambi and Michael (2022) elucidate this phenomenon in the context of southern Africa by drawing on the context of piano tuning, noting that:

The specific, somewhat 'adjusted' temperament of piano tuning initially suppressed the diversity of tonal systems in Europe through industrial standardisation. Subsequently, it was imposed upon the musical practices of southern African communities and other colonised societies during the colonial era. As a result, the natural tuning systems of colonised populations' music were deemed incorrect. This judgement served as a rationale for devaluation and a means of suppressing non-Western musical traditions.

Tuning in the African musical context diverges significantly from Western tuning practices. In the Western tradition, a relentless pursuit of an unchanging, ideally perfect tonal quality characterises the tuning process, with any deviation from this precise pitch regarded as being out of tune. Conversely, African tuning methods are notably variable, influenced by a spectrum of factors, including the performer's emotional disposition, the specific performance environment, the material composition of the instrument, meteorological conditions, and other salient factors discussed later. Indian classical

music showcases a distinct musical framework that operates independently from the Western tuning system, incorporating a 22-*shruti* scale.<sup>12</sup> *Shrutis* act as finely differentiated steps along a vast musical scale, where each increment represents a subtle sound variation and microtonal shift. Within the Indian classical music tradition, *shrutis* are established benchmarks, yet they elude the precise numerical standardisation found in Western tuning practices. This *shruti* system grants Indian classical music its characteristic versatility, enabling performers to convey a wide range of emotions and the distinct essence of each *Raga*.<sup>13</sup> Unlike Western music's fixed tuning patterns, each *Raga*'s tuning in Indian classical music is customised to its unique emotional and sonic palette. This approach allows for a more nuanced expression of each *Raga*'s individuality, with specific rules and intonation requirements tailored to it. The intricacies of intonation in *Raga* music are not mere technicalities but are central to capturing and expressing the unique character of each *Raga*.

During my engagement with the musical traditions of my research participants, I came to a realisation that challenged my approach to appreciating Sesotho sa Lebowa and other forms of traditional music. I had been employing a Western-oriented auditory perspective to assess and draw conclusions about this music, which, upon reflection, was fundamentally flawed. An instructive revelation occurred during my interactions with a distinguished Ugandan musician and multi-instrumentalist, Albert Bissaso Ssempeke, who hails from a royal court musical lineage. Our musical collaborations often centred around an instrument known as the *amadinda*, a traditional xylophone from Uganda. The particular instrument we were playing was crafted by the renowned ethnomusicologist Professor Andrew Tracey, from whom I acquired my knowledge of *amadinda* music. This form of music is tuned to a pentatonic scale, much like many other Ugandan instruments such as the *enanga* harp, the *endingidi* fiddle and the *endongo* lyre.

Interestingly, each time I performed alongside Ssempeke, he would remark that the instrument was discordant or out of tune. My perplexity stemmed from the fact that, from my perspective, it conformed perfectly to the pentatonic scale. Nevertheless, Ssempeke insisted that it did not meet what he considered the general correct standards. Occasionally, he would suggest shifting to an alternative key, only to assert that such a shift sounded incorrect as well. Consistently, we found ourselves returning to the original key, as the alternative keys he was accustomed to playing on his instrument in Uganda did not align. Rather than delving into the reasons behind Ssempeke's

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<sup>12</sup> The *shruti* or *śruti* represents the tiniest pitch interval perceptible to the human ear and producible by a vocalist or musical instrument. This notion is mentioned in ancient and medieval Sanskrit literature, including works such as the *Natya Shastra*, *Dattilam*, *Brihaddeshi*, and *Sangita Ratnakara*. The *Chandogya Upanishad* references the division of the octave into 22 segments (Ramanathan 2009).

<sup>13</sup> *Raga* is a melody pattern in Indian classical music.

objections to the tuning, I often attributed it to his idiosyncratic auditory perception. It was only during a visit to Bochum that I, firmly rooted as I was in my Western-based comprehension of the pentatonic scale, encountered a similar phenomenon.

During my research trip in Bochum, while attentively listening to the musical renditions of my research participants, I detected what I perceived to be a tuning discrepancy. As a musician and sound engineer, I was accustomed to employing tuners to ensure precise pitch accuracy. The absence of such devices in their musical practice led me to speculate that this might be the source of the perceived discordance. In an effort to investigate further, I presented my *harepa* instrument to Mr Morukhuladi, asking him to configure it identically to his instrument to facilitate joint performances and mutual learning. Following my request, he duly returned it with tuning which I personally deemed wrong. This divergence from my understanding of what constituted correct tuning prompted me to explore the intricacies of the tuning systems employed by the participants.

Upon returning to my residence at Mmata BnB in Bochum, I meticulously tuned the *harepa* to a pentatonic scale using an electronic tuner, being confident in the accuracy of my tuning. However, when I resumed my musical collaboration with Mr. Morukhuladi the following day, he promptly shook his head and asserted that the instrument was still off-key. He proceeded to retune it, reinforcing the notion that his auditory perception differed significantly from mine. A similar experience unfolded during a subsequent session with Mr. Sekiba retuning my *harepa*, leading me to recall Ssempeke's long-standing assertions regarding tuning discrepancies.

Historical accounts from earlier scholars, such as Tracey (1958) and Kubik (1960), had already recognised the regional and multifaceted nature of tunings and scales in southern Africa, especially concerning pentatonic scales. Tracey's words underscore this complexity,

Our problem, therefore, in studying the scales of African peoples is to discover what series of notes are acceptable and commonly used in different regions, within various tribes and circumstances, to note their similarities and dissimilarities and, from the empirical data obtained, to determine if there is a sufficient number of common factors between them which would justify our making certain generalisations on African scales and modes (p.15).

Van Khe provides further input on the matter of pentatonic tuning. He states that "the formation varies from country to country and sometimes from composer to composer," (1977, p. 77)

emphasising that the pentatonic scale is not tethered to a specific pitch but derives its essence from the individual's perception and cultural context.

In the course of an email exchange with Dave Dargie in October 2023, he expressed a parallel perspective derived from his research experiences. Dargie asserted that African music theory diverges fundamentally from the cent-based system characterising Western music theory.<sup>14</sup> Instead, it is underpinned by auditory perception. When an African musician endeavours to construct a musical scale, two primary systems come into play. The first is predicated on aural considerations, while the second is rooted in the principles of natural sound production. Dargie further illustrates his point by drawing upon the natural sound production of Xhosa bows, specifically the musical bows of *uhadi* and *umrhubhe*. He observes that the tonal qualities generated by these bows result from the overtones of the string. In the case of the *uhadi*, these overtones accumulate to create chords. Dargie emphasises that when playing a scale on the *uhadi*, there is no need to calculate cent values; instead, one simply adjusts the calabash in increments while playing, and the notes naturally align in a sequence governed by the vibrating string's inherent properties. It is crucial to acknowledge that while the overtone series produced by the wire of an *uhadi* constitutes a fixed sonic tuning system, the choice of the starting fundamental note hinges on the player's auditory perception and vocal range. Essentially, the tuning of an *uhadi* represents a blend of these two core systems.

Furthermore, Dargie provides an example from Ovambo (or Aavambo) singing in Namibia, wherein he highlights the role of auditory perception. He notes, "Using the ear, Ovambo musicians have devised a seven-note scale with equal spacing. When considering cent values, the 1200 cents of an octave are divided by 7, resulting in seven steps, each spanning slightly over 171 cents" (Interview 2023).

Boahen and Annin (1993) hold congruent views concerning the *gyill* xylophone originating from Ghana, explicitly focusing on the intricacies associated with tuning log xylophones. They expound on the inherent complexities of this tuning process, attributing it to variables such as the resonance of the wood and the selection of resonators. The process of curing the wood for the required notes is so lengthy that it can take up to six years for the wood to be ready. The *gyill* maker must tune the instrument based on the wood's response to achieve the desired note, which will never be exact. This precision depends on the wood's reaction during tuning and the maker's ear. Consequently, achieving

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<sup>14</sup> The cent serves as a logarithmic scale unit that quantifies musical intervals. The twelve-tone equal temperament system segments an octave into 12 equal semitones, each containing 100 cents. Musicians commonly use cents to denote minor intervals, assess the accuracy of intonation, or evaluate the magnitude of similar intervals in different tuning systems.

identical pitches on two xylophones becomes challenging, thereby reinforcing the importance of auditory perception and adherence to the traditional tonal aesthetic in scale construction. In the instance of Blacking's investigation, wherein he focused on the Venda ocarinas, specifically the *zwipotolio*, he conducted multiple tuning assessments on these instruments. His observations revealed that, "In almost every case, the tunings for each ocarina exhibited substantial variations with each performance, occasionally differing by as much as 220 cents. On only thirteen occasions did identical fingerings produce the same sound" (1959, p. 18). Notably, the musicians involved did not discern these fluctuations in pitch. Their primary concern lay in the precision, fidelity of the music and the way the music reaches and affects the audience rather than the pitch variances.

Bleibinger (2023) discusses a similar issue concerning Graham Hyslop's (1974) perspective on tuning the kizaramo marimba in Tanzania. Hyslop argued that exact pitch or frequency, as understood in Western music theory, was not strictly adhered to, with deviations of up to 50 cents considered normal. Based on this understanding, he assumed that the pentatonic scale would consist of C–D–F–G–A/B-flat notes.

During an interview on 14 September 2023, Andrew Tracey reiterated these sentiments, emphasising that "the tradition and the feeling of scale being right is something you learn when small or even when you're bigger, but it's music you know and when you hear that sound you say, ah that sounds right". He further expounded, stating, "It must sound right, and what makes it right is not mathematics or accurate measuring of tuning. It's your own memory and your tradition which you share with the people that you make that music with".

In Sesotho sa Lebowa music, the tuning practices are grounded in the venerable *dinaka* music, the oldest form of music in Basotho ba Lebowa culture (Mapaya, 2014). When music is predicated upon a specific reference point and is consistently adhered to by a community, it may rightly be considered a system. Tracey shared with me,

If there is a system, if you can find enough examples to show that there's a system which is shared by different people or even by one musician, if he has a system, then you can describe it. If you have a system, if you can talk about it and if you can discuss it with him and he agrees with you, then there's a system. If there isn't a system, memory and experience tell you what's right (interview, 2023).

Another pivotal element influencing African tuning is that of overtones, as articulated by Kubik (1960). In examining Ugandan xylophones, particularly the *amadinda*, Kubik describes the complexity inherent in each xylophone key and the abundance of overtones that further complicate the task of measuring these keys. For musicians, identifying the fundamental tone among several competing overtones becomes a matter of preference. Dargie (2023) extends this discussion by expounding on tuning single-note instruments such as the *uhadi* bow. He observes that achieving the five-note pentatonic scale involves selecting three fundamental overtones that constitute a major chord. Additional overtones can be derived by altering the fundamental tone of the string through methods such as touching or holding it. This process is exemplified in the transformation from a whole string producing a C major chord to the production of a D major chord, with the option to select the open fifth chord, comprised of the tones D and A. These five tones - C, D, E, G, and A - harmonise the listener's perception effectively, thus establishing the classic pentatonic scale, which may be refined to create more equal intervals through auditory judgement. In the context of *dinaka* and *harepa*, overtones become perceptible as the notes are played in unison. Striking the notes simultaneously, or when they blend, elicits the resonance of these overtones, thereby enriching the overall auditory experience. *Harepa* musicians, for instance, perform notes and allow them to resonate while subsequently playing other notes until the sound naturally fades or they reiterate the note. This practice plays a crucial role in building chord structures and ensuring a fluid connection of sound as the notes intertwine. This phenomenon is equally discernible in *dinaka* music, where the players collectively execute long notes in a hocketing manner, thereby generating chords as the notes interconnect.

Chambers (2018) and Mapaya (2010, 2014) concur on the fundamental characteristics of *dinaka* pipes, emphasising that they are traditionally crafted as a collection of seven distinct notes. Notably, the number of pipes can be expanded or customised according to the preferences and requirements of the musical ensemble or community employing them. However, despite the presence of seven pipes, the tonal output of the *dinaka* ensemble consists of a pentatonic scale, thereby closely resembling the conventional Western pentatonic scale. This five-note scale is augmented by the inclusion of two notes that serve as octaves of the primary pipes within the ensemble. Mapaya (2010) draws parallels between the *dinaka* scale and the Western minor pentatonic scale, shedding light on the musical affinities between these seemingly disparate traditions. An important aspect to consider in the context of *dinaka* music is the regional variability in tuning, a point emphasised by Tracey (interview, 2023). This regional diversity implies that the specific tuning of *dinaka* pipes may exhibit variations from one geographical location to another within the broader Basotho cultural landscape.

Consequently, establishing a uniform or standardised system of tuning for *dinaka* pipes becomes a formidable challenge, given the intricate nuances and regional idiosyncrasies that influence the tuning practices.

During an interview with Tracey, he articulated a significant perspective on the criteria for musical correctness and the formation of musical systems. Tracey emphasised that the essential criterion for the correctness of music is not based on mathematical precision or meticulous tuning measurement. Instead, he emphasised that the subjective evaluation of musical correctness is intrinsically tied to one's individual memory and the shared cultural tradition with the community of musicians with whom one collaborates. Tracey's assertion highlights the profound role of memory and cultural heritage in shaping a musician's perception of musical sound and its alignment with established traditions. Assmann and Czaplicka (1995) introduce the distinction between communicative memory, rooted in everyday communication and recent events, and cultural memory, which encapsulates knowledge and experiences passed down across generations, shaping group identity and behaviours. Apaydin (2020) and McDowell (2016) emphasise the dynamic and often politicised processes surrounding cultural heritage and memory. They highlight how these elements are not static relics of the past but are actively constructed, interpreted, and sometimes contested within communities. This aligns with Assmann and Czaplicka's notion of cultural memory as a collective concept, which is inherently tied to the evolution of societal values and identities. Apaydin stresses the ethical implications of altering or destroying cultural heritage and memory, advocating for community-led initiatives in heritage preservation. This perspective underscores the impact that changes in cultural heritage can have on communal identity and memory, resonating with Assmann and Czaplicka's view of cultural memory as essential for group unity and identity.

McDowell (2016) and Viejo-Rose (2015) delve into the complexities of memory's role in shaping heritage and identity against political and territorial ideologies. They discuss how memory, whether official, unofficial, public, private, collective, or emotional, serves as a negotiable force that shapes narratives of the past to serve present and future needs. This exploration complements Assmann and Czaplicka's conceptualisation of cultural memory as transcending individual experiences to incorporate broader historical and societal contexts. Viejo-Rose's examination of the vocabulary and cognitive studies related to memory and heritage signals a growing interdisciplinary interest in understanding how memory functions at individual and collective levels. This mirrors the underlying premise of Assmann and Czaplicka's work, suggesting a continued expansion of research into the cognitive and social dimensions of memory concerning cultural heritage. The combined insights

present the critical nature and urgency of gathering information from participants while they can still recall details about the *harepa*. Through my interactions with them over my research, I have observed that the information they provided remained consistent.

Closer to home, Tracey (interview, 2023) alluded to the notion that within this framework of shared memory and tradition, a form of tacit knowledge exists—a collective reservoir of understanding and expertise (interview, 2023). When this inherited knowledge is consciously applied, it imparts a distinctive identity to a specific sonic experience. This identity, rooted in shared memory and tradition, can be regarded as constituting a systematic approach to music. It signifies a coherent and structured framework through which musicians navigate and evaluate the correctness of their musical expressions. Tracey's insights, (ibid) emphasise the importance of memory and cultural tradition in determining musical correctness. Moreover, his reference to the transmission of tacit knowledge within a community underscores the role of shared memory and tradition in shaping musical systems that imbue a particular sound with a distinctive cultural identity. Tracey (ibid) observed that Chopi musicians employ the memory of a particular song as a fundamental method for tuning their instruments. They repetitively perform this song, adjusting their instruments until the resulting sound precisely corresponds to the memorised rendition of the song. This underscores the pivotal role of memory as a paramount resource within the realm of Chopi music. This act of memorisation may be seen as the ancestors passing their knowledge on to the younger generation of musicians and was apparent in the musical interactions that I was witness to. The memories of my participants were spectral, partial, and imbued with symbolic meanings which are special or unique to each of them. They were very particular about the sound that they produced, despite not needing to theorise that this was an act of tuning. Through their form of transmission, the memories of the ancestral sound had taken on new life and indeed, new memories, as seen through the re-memorisation of the *dinaka* and *dipela* music as *harepa* music.

In the course of my research, I discerned this noteworthy dimension of musical tuning in the context of the *harepa* instrument, particularly concerning its relationship with the *dinaka* and *dipela* traditions. A recurring theme among the *harepa* players I have engaged with is their tuning practices, which are intricately linked to the *dinaka* and *dipela* traditions. An overarching pattern emerges, where *harepa* musicians commonly initiate their musical journey with the *dipela* tradition before subsequently transitioning to the *harepa*. This musical trajectory underscores the profound influence of *dinaka* and *dipela* on the tuning and musical development of *harepa* players. It also highlights the interconnectedness of musical traditions within this cultural milieu. Further exploration of these tuning practices and the interplay between *dinaka*, *dipela*, and *harepa* promises valuable insights into the dynamic evolution of musical traditions within the Basotho ba Lebowa culture.

### 6.1.2 Names of *Dinaka* Notes/Pipes

In the context of *dinaka* musical tradition, the five constituent pipes within the *dinaka* set are systematically assigned names corresponding to their functional roles and specific tuning. These designations elucidate the hierarchical arrangement of these pipes within the ensemble. The sequence of pipe names, in ascending order, commences with the *phalola* pipe, which assumes the pivotal role as the lead or starting pipe, followed sequentially by the *kgomo* (cow), *sereko*, *phetudi* (response), and *tateledi* (follower) pipes. Notably, within this tuning system, the concept of octaves plays a crucial role in further delineating pitch distinctions.

Each pipe is associated with an octave designation, reflecting a nuanced understanding of pitch among *dinaka* musicians. The higher octave of the *Phalola* pipe is referred to as *Phalolana* (small *phalola*), signifying its diminutive or smaller status relative to the primary *Phalola*. Similarly, the higher octave of the *kgomo* pipe is denoted as *kgongwana*, where the term *kgongwana* conveys the notion of a small cow and emphasises the relative pitch elevation. Conversely, the lower octave of the *kgomo* pipe bears the name, *mmamogolo wa kgomo*, translating to the big mother of cow, further highlighting the octave-based distinction. Analogously, the lower octave of the *Sereko* pipe is designated as *sereko se se golo*, emphasising the big or lower pitch quality associated with this particular pipe. It is important to note that the *phetudi* and *tateledi* pipes are typically played without octave distinctions. As mentioned earlier, the vocabulary of these pipes reflects an intriguing facet of African musical terminology. As elucidated by Tracey (interview, 2023), African languages typically lack specific terms denoting high and low pitches in the conventional sense. Instead, African musical cultures often employ a magnitude concept of pitch, wherein a low note is construed as a large note, while a high note is perceived as a small note. This nuanced perspective on pitch differentiation is evident in the terminology of the *dinaka* pipes, thereby exemplifying the indigenous understanding of pitch magnitudes.

The *harepa* instrument exhibits a noteworthy parallel with *dinaka* regarding note nomenclature and functional attributes. The names assigned to the notes of the *harepa* correspond with those of *dinaka* and serve similar musical functions. I conducted measurements in cents, explained below, to explain the tuning systems employed by the three musicians I interviewed. These measurements enabled a quantitative assessment of the specific tuning system applied in *harepa* performance.

### 6.1.3 Cent-based Tuning

The utilisation of cent-based tuning methodology was initially formulated and elucidated by Ellis (1884, p. 570; 1885, p. 437). Ellis explained the concept of the cent as a logarithmic unit of measurement, particularly suited for assessing musical intervals and facilitating comparisons between intervals within disparate tuning systems. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, a standard equivalence has been established within Western tunings, whereby 100 cents correspond to one semitone. The cents are determined within and by the Western standardised system. This equivalence aligns with the twelve-tone equal temperament system, which subdivides the octave into precisely 12 semitones, each spanning 100 cents.

The measurements of the tonal systems for this research were conducted in accordance with Hugh Tracey's tuning forks at ILAM. This was achieved by employing methodologies Tracey devised for quantifying the tuning of African instruments in cents. It is important to note that this cent-based tuning system, while highly valuable, is not without limitations. Its precision is based on various mutable factors, including environmental conditions, the emotional disposition of the performer, and the nature of the occasion, among others. Nevertheless, these tunings consistently adhere to a discernible pattern or style, which may be characterised as a Basotho ba Lebowa tuning system. Once the musical performance is underway, the distinctive sound unmistakably identifies itself as characteristic of the Basotho ba Lebowa tradition. The following table presents a detailed account of the intervals between notes, expressed in cents.

The following tunings in cents constitute measurements obtained from *dinaka* pipes featured in recordings of two distinct groups, as documented by Paul Chambers. Chambers (2018) conducted extensive research across various locales within the Limpopo province, encompassing the recording of diverse *dinaka* groups. These recordings encompassed rehearsals, educational lessons, and live performances, all of which were subsequently archived at the International Library of African Music (ILAM) for scholarly inquiry. The present study focuses on the tuning measurements conducted on two groups featured in Chambers' recordings, specifically the Magongoa CCV (2016) and the B Sekhaolelo group (2017).

As previously emphasised, the *dipela* and *harepa* musical instruments are tuned in accordance with the *dinaka* pipes. The deep analysis of these recordings aim to assess the degree of accuracy and proximity between them. It is essential to reiterate that southern African tuning practices

predominantly rely on auditory perception and exhibit regional variations. Thus, this analysis does not intend to posit uniformity in the measured values. Instead, the study seeks to underscore that, despite observable differences, the inherent musical identity is consistently maintained within these regional variations. Another pertinent objective is to emphasise and detail the distinct deviation of these tunings from Western musical standards.

The measurements presented in the tables below were obtained by applying Hugh Tracey's measuring system, initially devised for African Music Research, ILAM's precursory title, where tuning forks were employed as the primary measurement tool. These tuning forks, when struck, emit an audible sound, which is quantified in Hertz. The process involved my listening attentively to each note generated by the recordings of the instruments, followed by identifying the tuning fork with a specific frequency that emitted a sound matching the perceived tone. Figure 19 presents the comprehensive measurements for the collection of tuning forks utilised in this study.

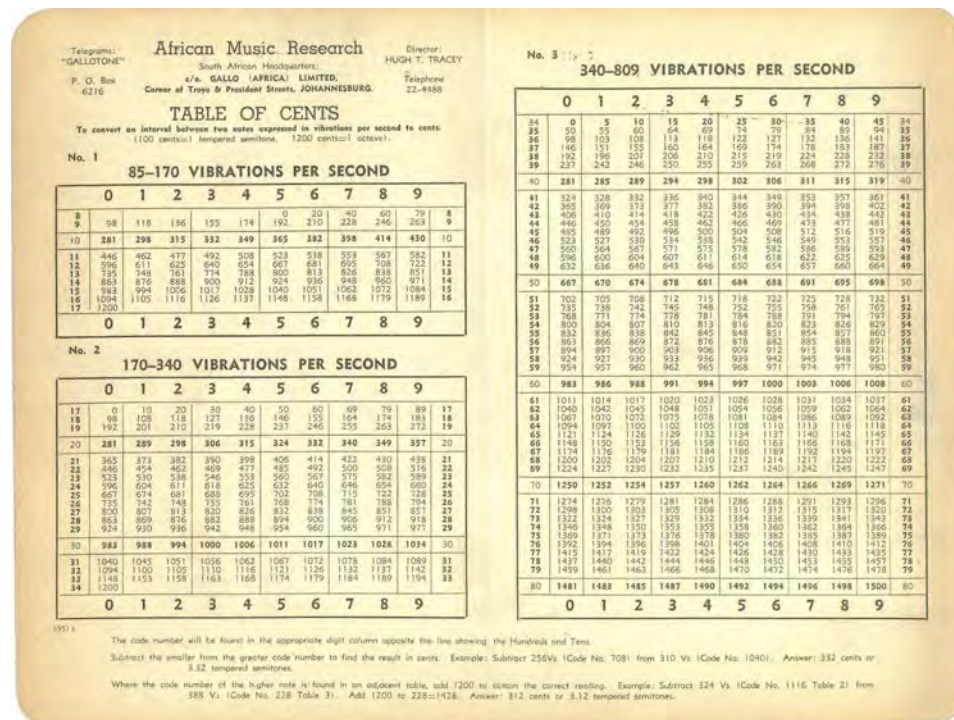


Figure 19: Table of cents by Hugh Tracey for African Music Research (ILAM).

The recorded frequency data from Chambers' tracks is documented in the initial column of the analysis tables, denoted as Hertz, which are presented below. I used the reference chart above to convert the Hertz values into their corresponding representation in cents. This conversion process facilitated the determination of the musical intervals, which are highlighted in orange and denote the scale of the instruments used. Further analysis entailed the calculation of cumulative intervals, extending from the

initial note to its octave. This process is repeated using my own field-recordings of *harepa* music, performed by my research participants. The following are tunings of Magongoa CCV *dinaka* group.

Tuning 1

Hertz	Cents	Interval in cents	Cumulative intervals from 204Hz
408	1515		1200
		275	
348	1240		925
		257	
300	983		668
		275	
256	708		393
		204	
228	504		189
		189	
408 (204)	315		0

Figure 20: Table compiled by Author.<sup>15</sup>

The following are tunings of B Sekhaolelo *dinaka* group.

Tuning 2

Hertz	Cents	Interval in cents	Cumulative intervals from 248Hz
496	1854		1200
		322	
412	1532		878
		272	
352	1260		606
		277	
300	983		329
		170	
272	813		159
		159	
248	654		0

Figure 21: Table compiled by Author.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> 204 is the lowest note or what we would call *do* in the western diatonic / tonic solfa scale.

The highlighted column represents the spacing between cumulative intervals.

<sup>16</sup> 248 is the lowest note or what we would call *do* in the western diatonic / tonic solfa scale.

The following are tunings of John Morukhuladi's *harepa* taken on two different occasions

Tuning 1

Hertz	Cents	Interval in cents	Cumulative intervals from 344Hz
688	1220		1200
		308	
576	912		892
		204	
512	708		688
		294	
432	414		394
		204	
384	210		190
		190	
344	20		0

Figure 22: Table compiled by Author.<sup>17</sup>

Tuning 2

Hertz	Cents	Interval in cents	Cumulative intervals from 232Hz
464	538		1200
		223	
408	315		977
		179	
368	136		798
		330	
304	1006		468
		193	
272	813		275
		275	
232	538		0

Figure 23: Table compiled by Author.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> 344 is the lowest note or what we would call *do* in the western diatonic / tonic solfa scale.

<sup>18</sup> 232 is the lowest note or what we would call *do* or the tonic in the western diatonic / tonic solfa scale.

The following are tunings of Mr. Sekiba's *harepa* taken on two different occasions

Tuning 1

Hertz	Cents	Interval in cents	Cumulative intervals from 220Hz
440	1646		1200
		291	
372	1355		909
		218	
328	1137		691
		299	
276	838		392
		157	
252	681		235
		235	
220	446		0

Figure 24: Table compiled by Author.<sup>19</sup>

Tuning 2

Hertz	Cents	Interval in cents	Cumulative intervals from 220Hz
440	1646		1200
		310	
368	1336		890
		199	
328	1137		619
		274	
280	863		417
		209	
248	654		208
		208	
220	446		0

Figure 25: Table compiled by Author.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> 220 is the lowest note or what we would call *do* or the tonic in the western diatonic / tonic solfa scale.

<sup>20</sup> 220 is the lowest note or what we would call *do* in the western diatonic / tonic solfa scale.

The following are tunings of Mr. Moshi's *harepa* taken only on one occasion.

Tuning 1

Hertz	Cents	Interval in cents	Cumulative intervals from 276Hz
552	2038 (838)		1200
		300	
464	1738 (538)		900
		206	
412	1532 (332)		694
		312	
344	1220		382
		169	
312	1051		213
		213	
276	838		0

Figure 26: Table compiled by Author.<sup>21</sup>

The following are tunings of Mr. Moshi's *dipela* taken only on one occasion

Hertz	Cents	Interval in cents	Cumulative intervals from 304Hz
608	2206 (1006)		1200
		218	
268	1988 (788)		982
		250	
232	1738 (538)		732
		320	
400	1418 (218)		412
		158	
352	1260 (60)		254
		254	
304	1006		0

Figure 27: Table compiled by Author.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> 276 is the lowest note or what we would call *do* or tonic in the western diatonic / tonic solfa scale.

<sup>22</sup> 304 is the lowest note or what we would call *do* or the tonic in the western diatonic / tonic solfa scale.

Examining the analysis tables, it is clear that there are no consistent similarities in the tuning of the instruments. This underscores the fact that each musician tunes according to his ear. However, despite these differences, the music is still recognisable as Bahananwa music due to its distinctive sound rather than exact tuning. Musicians are not concerned with these tuning variations; they are aware that their instruments are tuned to different keys and will adjust to one key when playing together. This phenomenon is also observed in other musical styles, such as the Xhosa *uhadi* bow music, as noted by Dargie (interview, 2023), and the Ugandan *amadinda* xylophone, as discussed by Kubik. This challenges Tracey's assertion (interview, 2023) that this cannot be considered a system since no two musicians tune exactly the same way. It is important to adopt a new perspective that maintains the integrity of music without imposing limitations, much like the utilisation of the Indian 22-*shruti* scale in classical Indian music, which grants performers the flexibility to place notes and have the music still recognised as a coherent system (Ramanathan, 2009).

#### **6.1.4 Relative Pitch**

Among the tunings presented in the above tables, one can see that some exhibit closely spaced intervals while others do not. Each musician relies exclusively on their auditory acuity and the diversity in the tunings of Basotho ba Lebowa instruments underscores a fundamental distinction from Western musical traditions. This variation in pitch or relative pitch shows that, in contrast to Western art forms, the paramount concern in Basotho ba Lebowa music lies in the preservation of its stylistic integrity, the artist's emotional state, the prevailing meteorological conditions, and an array of other contextual factors including age. Within this perspective, musicians have traditionally not felt compelled to consistently tune their instruments to an identical pitch unless performing within a group. In fact, Blacking's (1959) observations revealed that the musicians he recorded did not even perceive the disparities in pitch; to them, it remained consistent.

Blacking discusses this variability in pitch issue as related to Venda ocarinas and the importance of relative pitch rather than exact pitch in Venda music. He mentions that the pitch of ocarinas can vary due to factors like changes in temperature or the player's mouth position, making them helpful in testing pitch-consciousness and musical preference. Venda boys were observed to be particular about the relative pitch of ocarinas when playing duets, adjusting the pitch by altering the mouth position. Blacking also emphasises the preference for specific harmonic patterns in Venda music and the importance of pairing instruments that sound well together for duets. Tests were conducted with Venda musicians to explore their ability to reproduce pitch and their musical taste in sound patterns. The text emphasises the significance of overall sound patterns in Venda music rather than isolated

tones or intervals. Additionally, he discusses the average tunings of different ocarinas based on tests with Venda informants, showing variations in scales accepted by the musicians.

This approach aligns with Moelants, Cornelis, and Leman's (2009, p. 489) contention that "African music does not follow a fixed tone scale". They further contend that "Pitch organisation in the music of sub-Saharan Africa does not rely on a fixed theoretical framework" (ibid). They emphasise the absence of standardised tuning systems or culture-specific classification systems. This viewpoint is shared by Tracey (Interview, 2023) and Dargie (Interview, 2023). Dargie underscores the pivotal role of auditory perception over Western measuring instruments when engaging with traditional tuning methods. He reinforces this argument by offering an illustration involving the Xhosa *uhadi* bow, as played by the renowned musician, Nofinishi Dwili. Dargie contends, "When Nofinishi or another player began performing on the *uhadi*, sometimes, initially, the bow player did not employ a precisely measured whole tone between the two fundamental pitches. However, once the vocalists joined in, assessing the intervals solely by ear, the bow player would make adjustments to align with the intervals perceived by the singers". This observation exemplifies the primary reliance on auditory acuity in traditional tuning practices. It brings to attention the flexible and adaptive nature of African musical traditions.

Johnston (1975, p. 775), conducted measurements of the tuning of a Tsonga *Muhambi* xylophone and proceeded to juxtapose this tuning against that of Western instruments. The analysis showed that among all the notes studied, only one note precisely matched Western tuning standards. However, this did not necessarily imply conformity with the Western scale. In contrast, the remaining notes exhibited deviations, either registering as sharper or flatter, relative to Western equivalents, such as those found in my analysis. These findings underscore the incompatibility of applying standardised Western measurement standards to African musical instruments. Such an approach is ill-suited due to the intrinsic disparities between these two tuning systems, resulting in incongruent tuning outcomes. This reiterates the observations drawn from my own experience when I attempted to retune Murukhuladi and Sekiba's *harepas* to conform to a Western pentatonic scale. Mr. Murukhuladi's response, expressing that the retuning was incorrect, underscores a crucial point. The observed deviations are not rooted in the absence of suitable tuning apparatus but, rather, they are reflective of the musician's profound familiarity with and reliance on auditory perception.

#### **6.1.4.1 Tools for Analysis of Pitch**

It is my contention that in a scientific study of musical pitch in an African context, determining an instrument's tuning with tuning forks is more sympathetic and realistic than using other more technological approaches. Tuning forks rely heavily on the listener's auditory skills, how the individual perceives the sound, and then how it is matched with the different forks. This method mirrors how musicians traditionally tune their instruments. It is influenced by various factors such as weather conditions and the individual's mood at the time. Nonetheless, the benefit of using tuning forks lies in the ability to discern the correct pitch among potential overtones, which may obscure the true note. Dargie (Interview, 2023) observes that African music theory diverges from the cent-based system, in favour of auditory perception. In constructing a scale, an African musician may opt for either an auditory-based method or one focused on natural sound production. He iterates, "For me, dealing with African music, I must try to align with African musicians' methods. Hence, my emphasis on using the ear". Thus, for me, tuning forks are preferred for pitch determination as they connect with the human auditory experience of music.

#### **6.1.4.2 Digital Tuning Application**

While technological tools such as pitch-detecting apps and electronic tuners offer precision, they also present challenges that still require human interventions. These devices capture all sounds, including harmonics, thereby complicating the isolation of the intended note. I have chosen to incorporate these technologies into my research to compare their effectiveness against traditional ear-based tuning methods. This test was conducted using a tuner application (app), Ableton Live 10 Lite software, and the tuning forks where I analysed Morukhuladi's instrument. This app indicates the note's tuning in cents relative to the standard Western tuning of 440Hz, showing the note's precise alignment with the Western musical scale. However, when I strummed Morukhuladi's instrument, app became confused and it was impossible to read the results. I had to intervene and retune my own *harepa* where I was able to dampen the other notes in order to register a single outcome. The app captures and reflects all sound frequencies played, complicating the identification of the specific note being played. In contrast, the human ear naturally isolates the dominant frequency when a note is struck, simplifying the determination of the note. In addition, the readouts all fluctuated, often indicating multiple positions for a single note—a discrepancy not encountered with the human ear, but often found in, for example, woodwind instruments. However, the tuner can still be effectively utilised by the human ear, much like tuning forks are used with the human ear to discern the note

being played. Below is a demonstration from the app of the tuning for the sampled five notes of Morukhuladi's *harepa* as transferred onto my own instrument.



Figure 28. Single note tunings taken from the tuner app in Ableton Live 10 Lite.

### 6.1.4.3 Outside Factors Influencing Tuning

It is noteworthy to mention that all four *harepa* players under consideration are elders, with the oldest among them having surpassed the remarkable age of one hundred and two years. Considering their advanced age, it becomes imperative to account for the physiological changes that accompany ageing, including a gradual decline in auditory sensitivity and alterations in the perception of sound. These age-related factors inevitably exert an influence on the way they engage in the tuning of their instruments.<sup>23</sup> In my interactions with the participants, I noticed their diminishing hearing, requiring

<sup>23</sup> Age-related hearing loss (ARHL) emerges not merely as a sensory impairment but as a complex phenomenon interwoven with the fabric of ageing itself. It reflects the cumulative wear and tear of life's audiological experiences, mediated by genetic predispositions and environmental exposures. The reduction in audibility of high

me to repeat myself or raise my voice for effective communication. Ageing has also impacted their vocal abilities, which is especially notable in Morukhuladi. He shared that he previously could effortlessly alter his voice to represent different characters in his songs, such as women or children. Now, he finds this challenging. Despite these changes, his ability to tune and play his *harepa* remains unaffected. Ageing has impacted the other participants in various ways as well. For example, Sekiba, who once played his *harepa* music with a penny-whistle, cannot continue due to his breathlessness while playing. Consequently, he has shifted to playing only the *harepa*.

Hearing impairment in musicians is not only limited to age-related issues, Woolford et al. (1988), Vaisberg et al. (2019), and Jain and Nataraja (2019) collectively investigate the multifaceted impact of environmental and physiological factors on musicians' auditory health and performance. Woolford et al. focus on the prevalence of hearing impairment among orchestral musicians, highlighting noise exposure, ototoxic drugs, and lifestyle choices as contributing factors. They advocate for preventive measures like sound level monitoring, improved venue acoustics, and optimised seating arrangements to preserve hearing. Vaisberg et al. delve into the challenges faced by hearing-impaired instrumentalists, noting their adaptive strategies in response to gaps in musical information and advocating for greater accessibility to musical experiences. Jain and Nataraja examine the effects of fatigue on auditory perception and working memory in musicians, revealing their resilience to fatigue-related declines in specific memory tasks. Alain and Zendel (2014) discuss the benefits of lifelong musical training for combating age-related hearing loss, underscoring the enhancement of auditory processing and cognitive skills. Together, these studies emphasise the importance of adaptive strategies, preventive measures, and the benefits of musical training for musicians to maintain auditory health and performance without prioritising specific instruments or musical activities.

Nonetheless, despite the idiosyncrasies arising from the absence of precise measuring tools and the influence of age-related auditory changes, a striking authenticity permeates their musical performances. Upon attentive listening, the distinctive resonance of their music unequivocally

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frequencies, difficulty in speech understanding in challenging acoustic environments, and impaired sound localization highlighted by Li-Korotky (2012) underscore the nuanced ways in which ARHL affects daily living, making it not just a matter of reduced hearing sensitivity but a multifaceted erosion of auditory processing capabilities. Liu and Yan (2007) extend this narrative by elucidating the genetic and environmental scaffolding that underpins presbycusis. Their emphasis on oxidative stress and the genetic basis of ARHL underscores a crucial philosophical point: the inevitability of ageing and the potential for genetic legacy to shape our sensory experiences. The dialogue between genes and the environment, as seen through the lens of presbycusis, serves as a microcosm for understanding the broader phenomena of ageing and disease susceptibility. Bowl and Dawson (2019) enrich this conversation by integrating the socio-psychological dimensions of ARHL, such as social isolation, comorbidities, and its association with cognitive decline. These elements paint ARHL not just as an audiological issue but as a significant factor influencing the quality of life and mental health of older adults. This perspective prompts a re-evaluation of hearing loss, urging us to consider it within the broader constellation of ageing-related challenges. Huang and Tang's (2010) discussion of noise exposure as a contributing factor to ARHL accentuates the theme of environmental influence on health. It reflects how environmental interactions, such as chronic noise exposure, can impact our well-being. This notion serves as a reminder of the delicate balance between human beings and their surroundings, emphasizing the need for harmony in preserving health.

confirms its alignment with the Basotho ba Lebowa musical tradition. This mode of tuning facilitates the smooth transition between different musical keys while preserving the sonic coherence, as exemplified during Mr Morukhuladi's performance. Notably, he seamlessly transitioned to an alternative key without the need for retuning, as evidenced in his renditions of the songs *Masepala* (Municipality workers) and *Comrade*, which I will discuss later on in this chapter.

## 6.1.5 Musical Analysis

### 6.1.5.1 Transcribing Basotho Musical Traditions: Challenges and Innovations in Notation

I have chosen to use a five-line staff to transcribe Basotho Lebowa instruments' pitches to underscore the challenges encountered when applying Western transcription methods to Basotho ba Lebowa music. It is essential to mention that the notation does not align with standard Western pitch designations. Instead, they convey the sounds produced by instruments characteristic of the Basotho musical tradition, such as the *harepa* or a tuned set of *dinaka*. As discussed, Basotho ba Lebowa music is rooted in a pentatonic scale, whereas the five-line staff is fundamentally structured for a heptatonic system. This adaptation has the deliberate aim to enhance comprehensibility for individuals trained in Western musical notation.

It is crucial to emphasise that the use of the staff in this notational system analysis presents the pitch as relative and not exact, following the traditional Basotho ba Lebowa approach. Furthermore, it is recognised that the pitch employed in Basotho ba Lebowa music diverges significantly from the Western tonal system. Consequently, the interpretation of Basotho music necessitates a translation process, where listeners transform what they hear into a familiar or accustomed framework, potentially compromising the accuracy of sonic fidelity. Tracey (Interview, 2023) emphasises that when we listen to the music of Africa, it is important not to impose Western interpretations, as the Western tonal system cannot establish a universal standard for how music should be perceived and understood worldwide. Keeping this in mind, the root note in African music does not necessarily have to be a *do*; it can be any of the notes within the context of the music.

Previously, it was noted that the tuning of the *harepa* is influenced by the tuning used for *dinaka* pipes, with *harepa* musicians often adopting similar note names as those found in *dinaka* music. Thus a pitch an octave higher may not sound identical to its counterpart because it is tuned in relation to the preceding note, making it distinct from the octave below or above. Despite this discrepancy, the pitch

is still recognised as the same note. Through my research, I have identified two predominant methods of note placement or hand position, on the *harepa*: the standard approach and the musician's preferred note placement. In the standard approach, notes are arranged sequentially from the highest to the lowest, with some musicians choosing to double note placement while maintaining this order. This sequence is primarily utilised by Sekiba and Moshi, whereas Morukhuladi employs it alongside the non-sequential style.



Figure 29. Standard *harepa* note placement

The alternative note placement method is tailored to the individual player's comfort and aims to facilitate easier playing. This approach generally maintains the sequential order of notes but allows for modifications at the musician's discretion, optimising playability and introducing unique variations into their music. When I first encountered Morukhuladi, his *harepa* was set up in a non-sequential manner, a customisation he prefers in order to simplify his playing and enhance the distinctiveness of his performances.



Figure 30. Sequence of strings on Morukhuladi's *harepa*

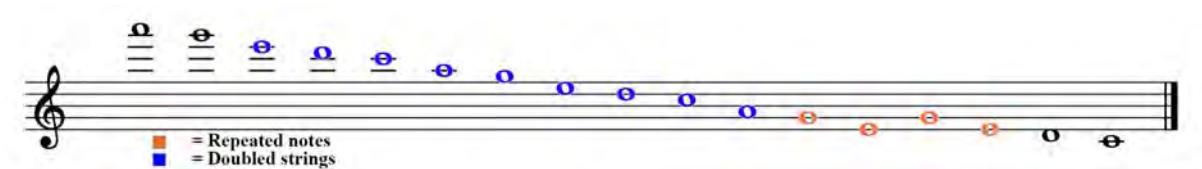


Figure 31. Sequence of strings on Mothemana's *harepa*

### 6.1.5.2 Body Position for Playing

The orientation of the *harepa* demands attention due to the unique instrument positioning on the lap, contrasting with the autoharp which is often held on the chest. It is either rested on a flat surface such as a table or held in the lap, with the higher pitches positioned nearer to the player and the lower pitches extended away. This arrangement is the reverse of the typical positioning for Western string instruments, such as guitars or violins, where, even when placed on a table, the lower notes are situated closer to the musician, and the higher notes are on the far side. This reversed layout can be perplexing for musicians trained in Western traditions, as for them it is like playing an instrument in reverse.

### 6.1.5.3 Analysis of Songs

For this section of the musical analysis, I have chosen to focus on three songs: *Makgowa a Makhibidu* played by Daniel Moshi, and *Masepala* and *Comrade*, both of which Morukhuladi performs to highlight certain musical elements. *Makgowa a Makhibidu* serves as an introductory piece or the opening song in the Bahananwa *dinaka* tradition, marking the commencement of a musical set. This practice is also embraced by Moshi and other *harepa* players, who begin their performances with this song. Unlike in *dinaka* music, where the song is instrumental and lacks lyrics, *dipela* and *harepa* musicians create their own words for the piece. The identity of the song is more about its musical arrangement than the lyrical content, although the lyrics often carry strong messages. For example in Moshi's rendition, the lyrics are as follows: "I will not drink milk, for if I do, I will vomit. They removed a fly that had died in it". The song critiques the injustices perpetrated by white individuals forcing black people into undesirable and morally wrong actions. Moshi uses the metaphor of refusing to drink milk tainted by a dead fly, symbolising his rejection of these forced actions after recognising their true nature.

#### 6.1.5.4 Analysis of *Makgowa a Makhibidu*


<b><i>Makgowa a Makhibidu</i></b>	
Daniel Moshi	
Sehananwa	English
<p>Call: College! Response: See (x2)            Call: <i>Mphuralleng</i> Call: <i>Ntebelleng</i>            Call: <i>Makgowa a makhibidu</i></p> <p><i>Iyelele we! Iyelele we!</i>  <i>Iyale iyalela</i>  <i>O mokuromela makgabeng!</i>  <i>Iyale iyalela, Iya he!</i></p> <p><i>Nna nkase je mmeleke</i>  <i>Ge nka o ja nka hlatša</i>  <i>Iyo ba ntšhitše ntšhi maswing</i>  <i>Iya le, Iya lela</i></p> <p><i>Iyelele we! Iyelele we!</i>  <i>Nna nkase je mmeleke</i>  <i>Nna oa tseba ge nka o ja nna nka hlatša</i>  <i>Iyale iyalela</i>  <i>mukurumela wa makgabeng</i>  <i>Tšwela ntle re go bone</i>  <i>Na oa tseba Motho wa motho ke morara</i>  <i>Iyale iyalela</i>  <i>Na oa tseba kgokgothi ya senapa</i>  <i>Iyale iyalela</i></p> 	<p>Starts off with a poet shouting in a call and respond. “College” and they respond by saying “See”. (x2)            Look back, Look at me and they do.            Makgowa a Makhibidu (red white people)</p> <p><i>Iyelele we! Iyelele we!</i>  <i>Iyale iyalela</i>            Mokurumela of Makgabeng  <i>Iyale iyalela, Iya he!</i></p> <p>I will not drink this milk            If I drink it, I will vomit            Iyo, they removed a fly in the milk  <i>Iya le, Iya lela</i></p> <p><i>Iyelele we! Iyelele we!</i>            I will not drink milk            You know, if I drink it, I will vomit  <i>Iyale iyalela</i>            Mukurumela of Makgabeng,            Come out, let us see you            (a sotho proverb)  <i>Iyale iyalela</i>            (Sotho proverb)  <i>Iyale iyalela</i></p>

Figure 32. *Makgowa a makhibidu* song by Daniel Moshi

Moshi's approach to the *harepa* composition stands out from that of the other three players, primarily because he actively plays the *dipela*. His instrument is missing a large amount of string as he did not choose to place more than one octave. He mentions a shortage of strings on his *harepa*, restricting his play to a single octave with only nine strings. Moshi's technique is deeply influenced by his *dipela* playing style, facilitating seamless transitions between the two instruments. His *dipela*, as shown in the diagram below, features twelve notes, arranged on a pentatonic scale akin to *dinaka* pipes, and spanning two octaves with two repeated notes. Unlike the others, Moshi plays single notes with each hand and sometimes uses two fingers on one hand to produce a chord-like sound. He performs all his songs in a single key, which, based on my observations, may stem from his background as a *dipela* player, given that the *dipela* is also typically played in one key.



Figure 33. Moshi's *dipela* on the left and *harepa* on the right. Photos by Author.

Another contributing factor might be the limited number of strings available in the area. Regrettably, I was unable to sample his instruments due to his refusal to participate in a second interview, as mentioned in Chapter 5. The song is set in a 6/8 time signature, a rhythm extensively prevalent in Basotho ba Lebowa music. It is fair to suggest that this time signature is foundational or perhaps the primary rhythm employed in their musical tradition. Moshi performed all his songs using a falsetto

voice, a technique he has favoured since his youth and continues to employ. He particularly enjoys singing songs traditionally performed by women, using falsetto to emulate their vocal style.



Figure 34. Trancription showing the structure of Moshi's playing *Makgowa a makhibidu*. Transcription by Author.

### 6.1.5.5 Analysis of *Mmasepala*


<b>Mmasepala</b> John Morukhuladi	
Sehananwa	English
<i>Kera wena Masepala, o re tshwarele</i> <i>Mmasepala wa Mosotho, o re tshwarele</i> <i>O sek'a bua ka sekgowa, ore tshwarele</i>  <i>Mmasepala wa Mosotho, o re tshwarele</i> <i>O sek'a bua ke sekgowa, ore tshwarele</i> <i>O buwe le rena ka Sesotho, o re tshwarele</i> <i>Ka sekgowa re ka se go kwe, o re tshwarele</i>  <i>Rena are tsebe sekgowa, o re tshwarele</i> <i>Re bona ka wena o tshoga, o re tshwarele</i> <i>(aah ah ah ah)</i>  <i>Le toloki ga re e rate, o re tshwarele</i> <i>Tše dintšhi a ka re roga, o re tshwarele</i> <i>O ka re roga ka sekgowa, o re tshwarele</i>  (aah ah ah ah) 	I am talking to you Municipality, forgive us A Mosotho municipality worker, forgive us Do not speak in English, forgive us  A Mosotho municipality worker, forgive us Do not speak in English, forgive us Speak to us in Sesotho, forgive us In English we won't hear you, forgive us  We don't know English, forgive us We just see you laughing, forgive us (aah ah ah ah)  We don't like the interpreter, forgive us You might swear at us, forgive us You could be swearing at us in English, forgive us (aah ah ah ah)

Figure 35. Lyrics of Masepala song by John Morukhuladi

*Masepala* was composed as a response to the actions of leaders and politicians. Morukhuladi explains that during election campaigns, politicians approach voters speaking in their native language, making numerous promises. However, once in office, they often neglect the needs of the people and prioritise their own interests. Additionally, when addressing the public, these leaders switch to speaking English, even among individuals who do not understand the language. The song urges municipal workers to

forgive the community, as many have not received formal education and struggle to comprehend English. Instead, it encourages leaders to communicate in Sesotho, a language familiar to the community.

In *Masepala*, employing a Western musical paradigm for reference and mentioned before, the tonic note *do* metamorphosed into *so* utilising the shifting root. This divergence from Western pentatonic conventions significantly maintains aural harmony and cohesion, illustrating the distinctive sonorous quality inherent in this African tuning approach. In the musical piece he vocalises primarily in the key of C, but upon closer examination, one discerns that his singing might just as well align with the key of G. The transition from *mi* to *do* within the highlighted transformation might be deemed unachievable within the confines of the Western musical scale. Yet, the unique tuning of the *harepa* facilitates this seemingly impossible shift, allowing the two notes to conform to the specific key being employed. Thus when transcribing the music onto the Western staff, should we choose to assign the *do* as an F, we then find ourselves in the key of F. However, this would, as explained above, alter the musical notes played. On the *harepa*, this note merges into a single tone that does not correspond to either E or F on the Western scale but when placed in either of those keys, with the corresponding note patterns afterwards, it does not sound true to the recorded piece.

Altering a note in Western staff notation impacts our auditory perception of the song, leading to a dilemma. When we transcribe music this way, one modifies the original sound of the song, transforming it into something it was never meant to be. One may advise listeners not to anticipate the exact sound outcome, but visually they are essentially given with a misrepresentation of the song. This means that for full appreciation of the song we should not refer to any rendition based on the Western staff notation. With this in mind, below are two illustrations showing the representation of *Masepala* in staff notation, which changes the anticipated perception of its sound through visual interpretation and its auditory experience from a Western viewpoint.



Figure 36. Example of *Masepala* in the key of C displayed with the note E chosen as the representation of the ambiguous note. Transcription by Author.



Figure 37 QR code for the MIDI-generated sound of the notation

While listening to the recording, I found myself uncertain about the notes I was hearing—whether they were an E or an F. After consulting with two colleagues, Gareth Walwyn and Sylvester Apolis, both experts in African music transcription, they shared my indecision. This uncertainty led me to employ both examples to illustrate my point. In the first example provided in Figure 36, I opted for the note E. As shown in the staff notation above, this choice results in a highlighted C chord. This makes the chord progression resolve to a C, establishing it as the tonic of the song.



Figure 38 Example of *Masepala* in the key of C displayed with the note F. Transcription by Author.



Figure 39 QR code for the MIDI-generated sound of the notation

In this instance (Fig. 38), I selected the note F, and as depicted in the staff notation above, this leads to a F chord emerging. Consequently, the chord progression resolves to an F, positioning it as the subdominant of the song. One might contend that this note does not traditionally belong in a pentatonic scale. However, it is crucial to emphasise that this decision stems from our collective uncertainty about identifying the exact note being played. The additional notes we found ambiguous were B and C. Should I illustrate the impact of these notes on the song through staff notation, we would be faced with roughly four different combinations. Bleibinger (2023) encountered a similar challenge in 1998 and 2006 while learning to construct and tune a marimba in Bagamoyo, Tanzania. He observed that the tuning of the notes was an approximation rather than an exact pitch or frequency in the Western sense, with deviations of up to 50 cents being considered normal. This

variation depended entirely on the instrument maker. Additionally, Bleibinger noted that when he returned to Bagamoyo in 2006, the tuning had changed from how it was in 1998.



Figure 40. QR code for the recording made of Morukhuladi's instrumental version of the notated example.

#### 6.1.5.6 Analysis of *Comrade*

The composition of *Comrade* serves as a reaction to community members exploiting their political connections to incite violence against innocent individuals by branding them as *baloyi* (witches). The lyrics confront this issue directly, stating, "You comrade are inciting violence against people, labelling them witches. Before targeting others, begin with your own mother; she is the witch". The song promotes reflection before action, cautioning that hasty decisions could lead individuals to commit injustices themselves.

Similar to both of the examples already presented, this is also set in a 6/8 time signature. In the chord progression described, the left-hand employs two fingers to play a sequence of two-note chords, thereby creating the illusion of fuller chords. These notes are struck on the first and fourth beats of each bar, providing a consistent base that remains unchanged throughout the song as well as a syncopated feeling. The right hand delivers the melody, complementing the chordal foundation laid by the left hand. Beyond contributing to the harmony, the right hand plays the melody or fragments of it, along with various embellishments within the song. At times, it even replicates the singer's non-melodic vocalisations in a melodious manner. The way the vocalist performs the song epitomises the liberation he experiences from his confinement to a specific musical key. Listening to him, it is almost as though he is simultaneously singing in two keys, with both seamlessly transitioning within the *harepa's* playing pattern. In addition, similarly to *Masepala*, the shifting root is used with, *re* transmutes into *la*, *mi* transposes to *do*, *so* transfigures into *re*, and *la* assumes the identity of *mi*.


<b>Comrade</b>	
John Morukhuladi	
<i>Sehananwa</i>	English
<i>Kere Comrade, wena comrade</i>	I say, you comrade
<i>Wena o tseba Baloi, wena o tseba Baloi</i>	You know who the witches are
<i>Kere wena o tseba Baloi</i>	I say you know who the witches are
<i>Gape batswadi ba lena ba tsoga bošego ba a loyana</i>	Your parents wake up at night, they are witches
<i>Kere comrade, wena comrade</i>	I say, you comrade
<i>Wena o koba Baloi, ebile o fiša Baloi</i>	You are chasing the witches and you are burning
<i>Kere o fiša babangwe o šia mmago, o a loyana</i>	I say you are burning other and leave your mother,
<i>yena o a loyana, kere o a loyana</i>	she is a witch. Yes she is a witch
<i>kere re dutše le yena, kgale re mo tseba, oa loyana</i>	We live with her, we've known her for a long time
<i>yena oa loyana</i>	She is a witch, she is a witch
<i>kere o mmone ga botse le mmone a tshega, oa loyana</i>	Look at her well, you see her laughing, she is a witch
<i>comrade, wena comrade</i>	Comrade, you comrade
<i>kgala mmamolebogi, kgala mmamolebogi</i>	Reprimand Mmamolebogi, reprimand Mmamolebogi
<i>kere mosadi yo ebile o utswa masea</i>	That woman even steals babies
<i>kere mosadi yo ebile o utswa masea</i>	I say that woman steals babies
<i>kere batswadi ba bana ba tlo mmolaya</i>	Their parents will kill her
<i>kere batswadi ba bana ba tlo mmolaya</i>	I say their parents will kill her
<i>kere mohla a swarwang, ba tlo mmolaya</i>	I say, the day they catch her, they will kill her
<i>comrade, botša Mmamolebogi, botša Mmamolebogi</i>	Comrade, tell Mmamolebogi, tell Mmamolebogi
<i>kere ke bone a utswa lesea a tloga</i>	I say, I saw her, she stole a baby and left
<i>kere a boa ga bedi a utswa lesea</i>	She came back twice and stole the baby
<i>kere nase le gona o tšere lesea</i>	Today also, she stole a baby
<i>ba tlo mmolaya, ba tlo mmolaya</i>	They will kill her, they will kill her
<i>kere mmotše ga botse, ba tlo mmolaya</i>	I say tell her, they will kill her
<i>gape hatswadi ha hana ha tlo mmolaya</i>	The parents of the children will kill her
	

Figure 41. Lyrics of Comrade song by John Morukhuladi

In this piece, Morukhuladi showcases his ability to shift the melody from the higher to the lower notes with his right hand, while his left hand continues to articulate chords in the higher octaves. The left hand, following the pattern established previously, uses two fingers to form a two-note chord in inverted fifths, this time situated in the higher octaves of the *harepa*. These chords are consistently struck on the first and fourth beats of each bar, establishing a steadfast harmonic pattern that does not vary throughout the composition. The right hand, meanwhile, is responsible for the melody, enriching the harmonic texture established by the left. Morukhuladi has expressed a preference for varying his hand roles across different pieces, alternating between the melody in higher and lower octaves to produce distinct sonic effects. In this particular song, he opts primarily for the upper registers, steering entirely clear of the lower notes.

The song, *Comrade*, presents its own unique challenges, distinct from those encountered with *Masepala*, which also requires careful consideration. In this initial example (Fig. 42), assuming the decision to utilise the note E rather than F, the song is set in the key of E minor pentatonic, with E acting as the tonic. The lower instrumental section (now executed with the right hand) also revolves around E, establishing it as a minor tonic. This transcription showcases the E minor pentatonic scale in relation to the G major pentatonic, albeit without the inclusion of F or F#, indicating that a transcription lacking a key signature would be equally acceptable.



Figure 42. Example of *Comrade* in the key of E minor pentatonic. Transcription by Author.



Figure 43. QR code for the MIDI-generated sound of the notation

In the following example (Fig. 44), the song is set in the key of F minor pentatonic which relates to A Minor, with F acting as the tonic. The variability in the vocal melody occasionally hints at an A minor

pentatonic scale, yet predominantly, it aligns with F minor pentatonic. This variation in singing introduces the potential for another key, reinforcing Tracey's assertion that the idea of a fixed root note or *do* is not applicable in most African music.



Figure 44. Example of *Comrade* in the key of F minor pentatonic. Transcription by Author.



Figure 45. QR code for the MIDI generated sound of the notation

These choices underscore the disparity between Western musical notation and the inherent sound of the music, as the same note changes have no effect on the actual sound produced by instruments. Thus, whether notated using E or F, the live sound remains unchanged, highlighting the limitations of Western notation in accurately capturing the essence of the music.



Figure 46. QR code for the recording made of Morukhuladi's instrumental version of the notated example of *Comrade*.

This scenario illustrates the critical nature of decisions within the Western tonal system, which necessitates precise choices that ultimately affect the music's essence. The outcome of the sound differs from its intended purpose due to these key determinations—whether it is perceived to belong more naturally in E or F, each decision alters the sound's final presentation. This underscores the importance of adopting a notation system that clarifies these distinctions without compromising the music's actual sound. The discussion on the relevance of key in music suggests that the actual key

might not, after all, be so crucial, emphasising the need for a more adaptable system that more faithfully represents the music's true character.

Adopting the above perspective of transcribing opens the possibility for four additional transcriptions, each offering a distinct auditory interpretation of the song. This underscores the importance of identifying a representation that most accurately captures the song's essence while minimising misleading cues that detract from its intended sound. This complexity prompts me to ask two pertinent questions: why should we transcribe using staff notation in the first place, and what alternative approaches could we consider?

### **6.1.6 To transcribe or not to transcribe, that is the question: Navigating Cultural Representation in African Music Transcription**

As I embarked on the task of transcribing the music of these artists, I encountered the challenge of determining the most appropriate method for transcription. This process prompted me to reflect on the broader issue of decolonisation and the irony of employing the very systems that have historically delegitimised African traditional music as part of the broader project of colonial oppression. My aim was to develop a transcription method that could accurately capture the essence of what I was hearing. In this dissertation, my objective is not to devise a definitive method for transcribing African music. Instead, I aim to explore and articulate the implications of using one system to assess another. While I initially utilised Western notation in an attempt to document and interpret the music on paper, this approach inadvertently shifted the music away from its original trajectory. It was through numerous conversations with a colleague that the concept of sampling emerged as a potential solution.

Sampling is a tool that many musicians are using in their music making. It has been around since the start of hip-hop in the 1980s and may have existed even before. It forms a foundational element in many music genres, notably in hip-hop, electronic music, and pop. It allows artists to connect with and reinterpret existing works, bridging past and present musical expressions. The technique serves not only as a form of musical quotation or homage but also as a creative tool for exploring new sonic landscapes. Sampling can evoke nostalgia, convey cultural references, or simply provide a sonic texture that enriches a new composition (McLeod and DiCola, 2011; Laderman and Westrup, 2014). Sampling in the field of music refers to the technique of taking a portion, or sample, from a sound

recording to use it in a new piece of music. This process can involve lifting a segment from a song, such as a melody, rhythm, speech, or even ambient sounds, and reusing it in a different musical context or composition. The sampled segment can be altered in various ways, including changing its pitch, tempo, or duration, and can be looped or layered with other sounds to create a new composition (Rodgers, 2003; Madiba, 2019).

For my transcriptions, I captured recordings of the participants producing individual notes from each string on their instruments. These recordings were imported into Ableton Live's Drum Rack without any alterations. The notes were then set up to be activated via MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface), a protocol that facilitates communication and synchronisation between digital musical instruments. This method enabled me to utilise the staff notation transcriptions to activate the corresponding notes in Drum Rack, accurately reproducing the specific notes played on the *harepa* by the participants. In this context, staff notation serves merely as a means to initiate the playback of sampled notes, yet it is not the only method available. Alternatives such as the "piano roll" feature in software offer a different approach. It utilises blocks to represent notes. These blocks can be accurately positioned on the desired notes. Additionally, the "piano roll" proves beneficial in aligning notes with the rhythm, facilitating a placement that closely mimics the original song's sound. The example below illustrates that sampling provides a superior auditory representation, as already presented above, of the music when compared to traditional staff notation.



Figure 47. QR Code of *Masepala* with notes sampled from Morukhuladi's *harepa*.



Figure 48. QR Code of *Comrade* with notes sampled from Morukhuladi's *harepa*.

### 6.1.7 Drum Analysis in Sekiba and Mothemana's Music

Drums occupy a pivotal role in the musical landscape of Sekiba and Mothemana's music. Although they occasionally perform the *harepa* as a solo instrument, it is more common for them to integrate it with a collective of drummers and dancers. Their *harepa* playing style mirrors Morukhuladi's, and delving into their technique would echo previous discussions. Thus, this analysis will concentrate on the drums and dances essential to their music creation.

Sekiba and Mothemana employ a drum set like those used in *dinaka* music, bearing identical names to the *dinaka* drums. Despite regional variances in drum names, the ensemble of drums and their playing techniques largely remain consistent. The ensemble includes a bass drum known as *kiba* or *sekgokolo*, traditionally covered with cowhide on both sides and played with a rubber hosepipe. However, some musicians opt for their fists. Alongside this, two smaller drums named *dithopana* are played by a single individual. *Dithopana* drums are tuned to a higher pitch than the other drums, with each *dithopana* being about two tones apart, according to the player's preference. The player uses sticks to play *dithopana*. The *kiba* and *dithopana* are crucial for sustaining the song's rhythmic foundation, providing musical stability.

The lead drum, known as *kaedišo* or *Phoesene* (Poison borrowed from English), stands out for its distinctive role. Through the use of open palms, the player engages with the drum, employing a technique that emphasises the natural acoustics of hand-to-drum interaction. Unlike the repetitive patterns characteristic of other drums, the *Phoesene* commands the dancers' movements. A proficient *Phoesene* player can inspire dancers to perform energetically and execute acrobatic steps (Chambers 2018). In the absence of dancers, the *Phoesene* player is responsible for crafting improvisational patterns that enrich the musical arrangement. Mothemana enhances the rhythm with leg rattles, matching the *kiba* drum's beat, adding an extra layer of texture when he dances without playing the *harepa*. This practice, prevalent in *dinaka* music, sees dancers using leg rattles to accentuate their movements. Mothemana's group also incorporates a shaker, varying its patterns to suit each song. This focus on drums and dance underlines their integral role in Sekiba and Mothemana's music-making process, showcasing their performances' traditional and communal nature/character.

I will concentrate on two predominant drum patterns that recur in many of Sekiba and Mothemana's performances. Similar to *dinaka* music, these patterns are among the most frequently observed.

### 6.1.7.1 Drum Pattern 1

Sekiba and his group have not used shakers in their music. This is a sixteen-pulse beat. The *kiba* provides a restrained yet unwavering bass line, around which the *dithopana* intricately intersperse, augmenting the rhythmic texture of the piece. These interventions accomplish more than mere temporal alignment; they precisely demarcate the smallest divisions of rhythm within the piece, thereby shaping its overall metric organisation.

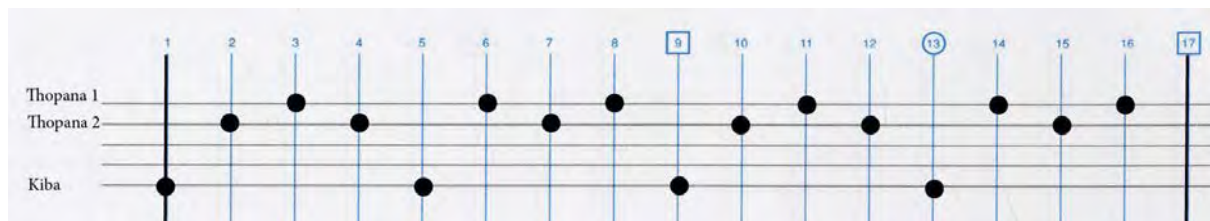


Figure 49. Pattern played by Sekiba's group. Transcription by Author.

Although Mothemana's group adheres to the same rhythmic pattern as that of Sekiba's ensemble, a notable differentiation lies in their use of shakers. These instruments are rhythmically executed on every alternate pulse of the pattern, starting on the second pulse, a detail exemplified in (Figure 49). This enriches the sonic complexity of their performance.

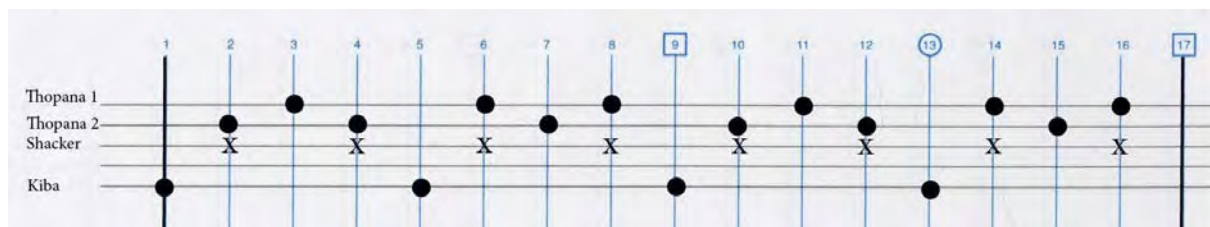


Figure 50. Pattern played by Mothemana's group. Transcription by Author.

### 6.1.7.2 Drum Pattern 2

Below are examples of a twelve-pulse rhythmic framework divided into four triads of pulses. This structured rhythm establishes the primary pattern or style for the dance sequences, where dancers synchronise their choreography with the specified beats and the intermediary rhythms in alignment with the *Phoesene* musician's rhythm. Within Sekiba's group, the *dithopana* instrument accentuates the second pulse with a high tone, or *thopana 1*, introducing a descending feeling to the pattern.

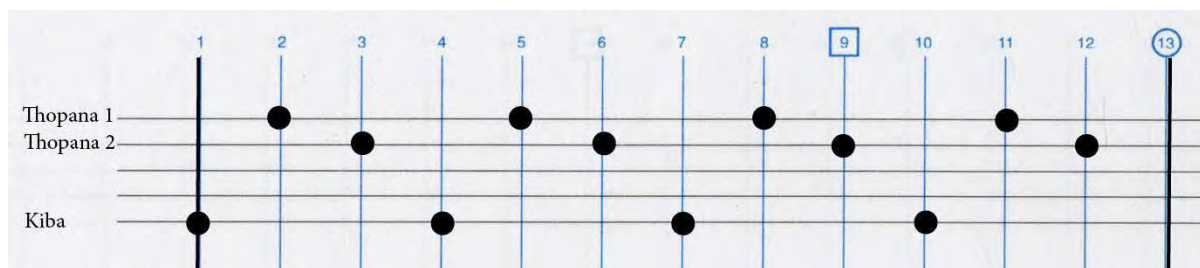


Figure 51. Pattern 2 played by Sekiba's group. Transcription by Author.

Mothemana's group performs the established rhythmic sequence with a distinctive twist: the *dithopana* player opts for a lower tone, or *thopana 2*, on the second pulse, crafting an ascending order. This alteration effectively introduces a variation while retaining the pattern's original integrity. Such variations are often seen in *dinaka* groups, where one version may serve as a variation of another, showcasing the rhythmic versatility within these performances. The shaker, consistently striking on every second beat, adds a layer of rhythm to the ensemble's execution.

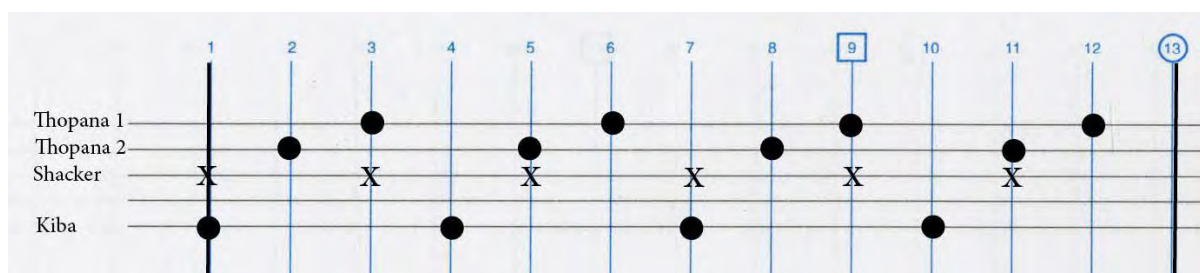


Figure 52 Pattern 2 played by Mothemana's group. Transcription by Author.

These specific rhythmic patterns emerge exclusively within the body of songs I recorded of Sekiba and Mothemana. However, a broader exploration of Basotho ba Lebowa music, particularly genres like *dinaka* and *kiba ya basadi*, reveals the presence of other popular rhythmic structures characteristic of Basotho ba Lebowa's musical tradition, as evidenced by the findings presented in Chambers (2018).

## Conclusion

Exploring the *harepa* music of these artists reveals a defiance of colonial and missionary influences; evident not only in the tuning of their instruments, their playing styles, and the compositional style of

their songs but also in the use of a missionary imported instrument to play deeply traditional Basotho ba Lebowa music. Each musician preserves particular aspects of cultural identity, ensuring their music consistently embodies the distinctive Basotho ba Lebowa essence during their performances.

This chapter has served as a pivotal journey into the heart of one particular African musical tradition, emphasising the unique tuning systems that define the rich sonic landscapes of the continent. It has illuminated the intricate challenges and problematic nature of employing Western tuning paradigms to interpret African music, particularly the Bahananwa tradition. The inherent flexibility and context-dependent nature of African tuning systems underscore the limitations of Western methodologies in capturing the full essence of these musical forms. Through a detailed examination of the *harepa*, alongside personal encounters with musicians, the text in this chapter emphasises the vital role of auditory perception over technological aids in tuning practices. The use of tuning forks within the framework of the cent-based tuning system was used to determine its efficacy in transcribing the music of the Bahananwa people. Samples from Paul Chambers' research were carefully measured with results showing the unique and personal nature of tuning from this culture.

The three examples of attempts to transcribe *harepa* musical excerpts clearly show that Western staff notation cannot present a true reflection of the tonal system employed by the Bahananwa people. It is my hypothesis that this is true of many musical traditions of Africa. The exploration of sampling as a potential solution to the sonic representation of African music offers a promising avenue for capturing its auditory richness. However, the chapter has also identified a significant gap in the visual documentation of these traditions. This discrepancy underscores the need for innovative approaches that honour African music's auditory depth and cultural significance while seeking more accurate visual representation methods. The insights gathered from this investigation advocate for a broader musicological perspective that embraces the diversity and complexity of global musical traditions. It challenges the musicological community to rethink standardisation practices and to develop more culturally sensitive frameworks for understanding and documenting music across different cultures.

In conclusion, this chapter calls for a continued dialogue and research effort aimed at bridging the gaps between different musical traditions. It emphasises the importance of developing methodologies that are both respectful and reflective of the cultural contexts from which these musical forms arise. As we move forward, it is crucial to foster an inclusive approach that values the unique contributions of each musical tradition to the global tapestry of sound.

# Epilogue

## Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

In this thesis, I aimed to document and explore the *harepa* instrument and its repertoire as it exists today in Bochum, Limpopo. My objectives were to transcribe and analyse this music to comprehend the transformation and enculturation processes within traditional music and uncover new insights into musical change and transmission. Additionally, I sought to record and describe the musical history of my research partners John Morukhuladi, Albert Sekiba, Daniel Moshi and Labson Mothemana. I enhanced the understanding of how knowledge about a music repertoire can be developed through participatory research methods. I examined how Christianity and colonialism have influenced the northern parts of South Africa, particularly by introducing the *harepa*, and how this has influenced the evolution of musical styles. This work also emphasises that, despite regional variations, the inherent musical identity of the Bahananwa remains consistent within the context of tuning systems, cultural sound affiliations and contextualisation. This research emphasised and detailed the distinct deviations of these elements from Western musical standards, which are generally used to plot musical systems.

Within these research parameters the main goals of the research were:

1. To document the *harepa* instrument and its repertoire as found in Bochum, Limpopo.
2. To transcribe and analyse the music to understand transformation processes in traditional music and how these could lead to the development of new insights into the analysis of the aesthetics of musical change and musical transmission.
3. To document and amplify the musical history of my research partners.
4. To understand how knowledge relating to music repertoire can be developed through participatory research methods.
5. To understand how Christianity and colonialism unfolded in the northern parts of South Africa through the introduction of the *harepa* and how this underscored the development of musical style.
6. To underscore that, despite observable differences, the inherent musical identity is consistently maintained within these regional variations.
7. To emphasise and detail the distinct deviation of these tunings from Western musical standards.

In this chapter, I consider the themes presented in this introduction as well as the goals articulated above and how they both integrate as findings of this research.

## 7.1 Research Approach

This study was completed using various research methodologies from which to approach the study of the *harepa* music tradition of Limpopo province. These included practice-led research, oral history, ethnography and engaged ethnomusicology. These methods were selected for their effectiveness and synergistic potential to enrich understanding of this culturally significant tradition. As a sound engineer at the International Library of African Music (ILAM), my deep-rooted connection to *harepa*, reinforced by professional exposure to archived recordings, guided the selection of these methodologies.

The practice-led approach enabled an immersive experience in learning and performing *harepa*, providing insights into the musical tradition's subtleties. Having the opportunity to play the instrument myself and learning from each of my research participants enabled me to embody the performance intricacies and idiosyncrasies which are inherent to the practice of the *harepa*. My stringing of the instrument, as advised by the musicians, was a starting point in understanding the cultural significance of the tuning systems as well. Watching and learning through participant observation and following culturally sensitive cues were important to the learning process. I felt at some point that I was re-discovering a sonic landscape that I had already known. As a Mosotho wa Lebowa I entered this space with cultural capital, understanding community rules and norms. I recognised the music and expected to play it easily, but because of my further education which was from a western perspective, it came as a surprise to me that this was not the case. Thus, the immersive experience was vital to my full understanding of the approach to music making. Taking lessons from the musicians and listening to their stories about their musical journeys enhanced this experience and allowed for greater insight into the history of the *harepa*.

The use of oral history as a methodology captured the living memories of musicians, giving access to knowledge passed on through generations and emphasising the importance of oral traditions in cultural preservation. The participants were, in general, excellent story tellers. This ancient form of archiving music knowledge proved a vital tool in collecting data. Through various interviews, where stories relating to their lives and more were shared, I extrapolated important information which has

formed the backbone of the historical time-line presented in this research. The memories of the musicians may have changed some of the facts over time, however, along with an historical ethnographic research approach which was secondary, I knit together enough data to form a coherent view of the time-line of the arrival of the *harepa* into the Bahananwa community. Thus, an ethnographic approach made an important contribution which encompassed a comprehensive view of the social and cultural contexts surrounding *harepa* music and allowing for detailed observations of musical interactions within the Basotho ba Lebowa community.

As outlined in Chapter 4, it is imperative to clarify the identity of the Bahananwa people. This necessitated a discussion on Sesotho sa Lebowa and its various dialects. Within Sesotho sa Lebowa, the Sepedi or Pedi dialect has achieved predominance, which took place during the period when missionaries endeavoured to transcribe Sesotho sa Lebowa into a written language. Consequently, a common misperception arose, leading many to refer to Sesotho sa Lebowa broadly as Sepedi, which can generate confusion, especially when addressing different dialects within Sesotho sa Lebowa. In fact, while I was analysing and writing this thesis, I started out using the label, Sepedi, to refer to the musical styles that I was talking about. However, as the research continued, I became aware of the confusion regarding the language and how this would impact the findings of this research. I needed to ensure that it was clear to which community I was referring. Thus, it is essential to clarify that when discussing the Bahananwa, I referred to Basotho ba Lebowa, not Bapedi, to avoid conflating these distinct identities.

Another important aspect from which I gained a lot of insight was the engaged approach to this project. Engaged ethnomusicology emphasised ethical research practices, focusing on positive contributions to the community's cultural and social well-being. In my interactions with the musicians, I assumed the role of a "cultural broker," as described by Madiba (2019, p. 11), and found myself compelled to intervene in some of their challenges. Chapter 3 details a particularly disconcerting incident involving a man who recorded these musicians and subsequently registered their music with SAMRO for his personal gain, an action that left me profoundly shocked and convinced of the need to assist them. The musicians expressed significant disappointment and sadness each time they recounted this episode, which initially led them to be wary of me. I suspect that such experiences contributed to Mr. Moshi's reluctance to continue working with me, fearing that I might replicate the unethical practices of previous researchers. It is crucial that our research not only advances our careers but also confers tangible benefits on the subjects of our studies (Thram, 2009).

## 7.2 Synthesis of Cultural Musical Interactions

The research detailed the history of the Bahananwa and the colonial tensions that erupted continuously. These ruptures had an impact on the cultural sensitivity with which the people led their lives. Hounded by the Boer forces for decades before the war of 1894, the Bahananwa fiercely defended their way of life and choice of cultural manifestations, including musical performance and tradition. This strain was compounded by the profound cultural and musical interchanges between Western missionaries and the Basotho ba Lebowa, revealing a complex web of influence, adaptation, and resistance. The imposition of Western musical norms was not merely a process of cultural dominance. Rather, they also sparked a significant, albeit complex, form of cultural hybridity within the indigenous communities. The introduction and adaptation of the *harepa*, originally a European instrument introduced into Basotho culture, exemplifies this hybridity.

The blended methodological approach to this research fostered a nuanced understanding of the *harepa* tradition, setting the stage for further analysis in subsequent chapters. The research contributes to academic literature on enculturated musical traditions and adds new materials which are vital to the preservation and appreciation of Basotho ba Lebowa's musical traditions. Insights gathered from the fieldwork guided further discussion and analysis, positioning the *harepa* as a crucial element of cultural identity and continuity in the Limpopo province. These insights were collected through systematic observation of the participants as they tuned their instruments, which revealed a distinctive and consistent pattern of tuning. Furthermore, the musicians have successfully transferred *dinaka* and *dipela* music onto the *harepa* without compromising the integrity of Bahananwa music. This adaptation has endowed the *harepa* with a unique identity within this community, something mentioned by all of the participants. The *harepa* has become a symbol of both the imposition of an alien culture and the resilient agency of the Basotho ba Lebowa people to redefine their cultural and musical identity. The thesis traces this development and the evolution of the autoharp, a European instrument, into a culturally accepted Basotho ba Lebowa artefact. Resetting the basic design, the performers reinvented the instrument to represent the sounds of their own culture. Based on the musical traditions found in the Limpopo area, specifically relating to the Bahananwa, the *harepa* is now thought of as a traditional instrument in the region. This powerful enculturation lies at the heart of this research and manifests through not only the science of the instrument but also the musical and sonic analysis presented. The design of the *harepa* enabled Bahananwa musicians to easily modify the instrument by disassembling certain parts, rearranging the order of the strings, and retuning in a non-Western, anti-hegemonic, fashion. These features significantly facilitated the process of enculturation

of the *harepa* within their musical tradition. Many other Western instruments, such as flutes and pianos, possess fixed notes and designs, which likely pose challenges in modifying them to replicate the distinctive sounds characteristic of Bahananwa instruments.

As discussed in Chapter 4, cultural hegemony refers to the dominance of specific cultural beliefs, values, and practices imposed by a ruling or influential group over others in society (Lears, 1985). This dominance is maintained through the control of cultural institutions such as education, media, and religion, which shape societal norms and ideologies to uphold the status quo (Gramsci, 2020). This process marginalises or suppresses alternative cultures and perspectives. In response, the Bahananwa people developed a new approach to their musical output, blending indigenous sounds with hegemonic influences, demonstrating cultural hybridisation and a form of resistance. In the process, they rendered the hegemony from outside less effective. While it appears as if the impact from outside was universal, the various tunings and the restructuring of the instrument allowed the Bahananwa people to respond in creative and culture-specific ways which have little to do with acknowledging influence from the outside. Enculturation, or cultural hybridisation, occurs when two or more cultures merge, creating new practices or artefacts, exemplifying the dynamism of cultural exchange (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). This blending has been extensively discussed in various chapters in this thesis, specifically relating to musical enculturation and the clever combination of sound and organology from which the *harepa* developed.

The role of Christian missionaries' in this cultural interchange was dualistic. It was characterised by an oppressive hegemony which resulted in the unintended preservation of local traditions. By promoting Western musical standards, missionaries inadvertently contributed to cultural resistance among the Basotho ba Lebowa, who adapted these influences to fit their cultural narratives. This dynamic interaction underscores the complexities of cultural hegemony and resistance drawing attention to the nuanced ways marginalised communities navigate external influences. Indeed, the musical compositions that were analysed in Chapter 6, demonstrated an interesting remembrance of the hardships experienced by the Bahananwa despite the many years that had passed since that type of oppression. All the research participants not only performed traditional Basotho ba Lebowa musical pieces but also composed works that reflected the horrors of the past and the hardships the people had to endure. These lyrics, as presented in the chapter, describe these memories.

However, it was not only the development of the instrument that brought insight into this research. The musicians themselves added important unique data from their own lived experience. The research

participants who were the knowledge bearers of this project were chosen due to their involvement in *harepa* music in the Bochum area of the Limpopo. John Murukhuladi, Albert Sekiba, Daniel Moshe and Labson Mothemana contributed to the data in important ways. Despite all playing the instrument and all belonging to Sehananwa culture, their approaches to performance and composition were varied. These differences added a vital layer of research information to the project. The diverse techniques employed by the participants in strumming or playing the instrument were significant, as they underscored a unique auditory phenomenon: despite variations in technique, the resultant sounds were consistently similar. As detailed in Chapter 6, this occurred regardless of differences in tuning, instrument layout, and the musical pieces performed. This uniformity in sound can be attributed to the participants' cultural upbringing and the deep-seated internalisation of their music. Their approach to tuning is not governed by precise scientific measurements or the exact pitch of the notes, but rather by an intuitive feel for the music and its traditional execution. This intrinsic consistency amidst apparent disparities emerged as a pivotal discovery in my research. In addition, correspondence and interviews with Dave Dargie and Andrew Tracey enhanced the analysis of the music immeasurably. Their insights and experience relating to the musical approach to analysis of African music guided the findings in Chapter 6, which have contributed greatly to the new knowledge produced by this research.

### **7.3 The Role of Documentation and Preservation Efforts**

The efforts of the Tracey family and other researchers and musicians (Chambers, 2018; Dargie, 1986; Kubik, 1985; Mbande, 2021; McConnachie, 2021) to document and preserve indigenous musical traditions are crucial. These efforts help maintain a tangible link to the past and serve as a vital resource for future generations. Such documentation is essential for sustaining the cultural heritage and ensuring its transmission beyond oral traditions, especially in the face of globalisation and cultural assimilation. This research contributes to this body of archival knowledge, adding a contemporary perspective which makes the historic archival recordings currently held at ILAM that much more valuable. Having access to both past and present recordings of the *harepa* music, allowed for important insights into the preserved tonal system, cultural approach and context of the musical tradition.

## **7.4 Implications for Ethnomusicology**

The findings from this thesis challenge existing paradigms in musicology that relate to the science of tuning systems, particularly in understanding non-Western music traditions. The case of the Basotho ba Lebowa illustrates the limitations of applying Western tuning systems and musicological frameworks to African music, which often encompasses a broader and more context-dependent auditory and cultural richness. Having presented evidence of the difficulty in representing the music of the Basotho ba Lebowa via Western transcription methods, this research contributes to the growing awareness of the importance of a flexible approach to sonic analysis for research purposes. Kubik (1985) and Tracey (2023), among others, have previously raised this issue and developed their own transcription methods to address the problem relating to tuning. There is no doubt that all music can be analysed and that the complexities of musical traditions around the world vary greatly. However, this study clearly shows that the Western approach to transcription and analysis, used extensively to record and document music around the world, is not adequate to capture the true essence and musical nuances present in all indigenous based sound systems, without fundamentally changing them. As outlined in Chapter 6, debates around this issue (Blacking, 1959; Kubik, 1985; Dargie interview, 2023; Tracey interview, 2023), despite continuing for decades, have never been resolved. Thus, this research contributes to this discussion and I believe, adds new knowledge relating to taking a generative step towards the development of cultural sensitivity in music analysis. Importantly, this thesis finds that a quantitative approach to the analysis of the tuning system of the Bahanawa did not capture correct data and that understanding the qualitative contextualisation of the musical tradition was imperative to fully grasp the structure. This finding may have profound implications for further research into tuning systems in particular and scientific research in general as a quantitative approach is usually thought of as rigorous and definable. This research proves otherwise.

## **7.5 Future Research Directions**

There is a pressing need for further research into African tuning systems that extends beyond the confines of traditional musicological approaches. Future studies should explore the broader implications of cultural interactions that are not limited to colonial contexts but are ongoing in the era of globalisation. Additionally, research into African studies should aim to incorporate more indigenous methodologies and perspectives, fostering a more inclusive and representative musicological discourse. The importance of this finding cannot be confined to this thesis and it is my

recommendation that the overall African knowledge systems are further researched to add inclusive studies on the arrival of the Christian missionaries and the advent of the denunciation of indigenous knowledge systems. In addition, this thesis can aid future research and ethnomusicologists as an example of enculturated musical process and analysis. Dissemination on the research relating to the tuning systems as enhancement for the teaching and learning of music theory and analysis at universities will aid those who are struggling to incorporate African musical contextualisation in their teaching practices (McConnachie, 2016).

## Conclusion

This thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between cultural imposition and adaptation, highlighting the resilience and creativity of the Basotho ba Lebowa in the face of colonial influences. As we move forward, we must continue exploring these complex cultural narratives, ensuring that the voices and traditions of marginalised communities are acknowledged and preserved in our global cultural heritage. Despite the fact that playing the *harepa*, much like the *dipela*, are not attractive to the future generation, this study shows that the deeply embedded musical culture of people remains sonically rooted in their narratives and it is these sounds that carry their traditions into the future. With the rise of digital techniques such as sampling, sound modeling and the use of AI together with instrument modifications, there is an opportunity to revitalise the harepa among younger audiences by presenting it on contemporary platforms, much like what has been achieved with traditional instruments such as the mbira and the uhadi bow.

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### Email Correspondence

2023, October 08 - Professor Dave Dargie

2023, October 09 - Professor Dave Dargie

# Addendum

## #1, Discography

### **CR0373-ABC10496**

Title Kxakanchane Majobo

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Composer not specified

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Year: 1947

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: TP0083-ABC789

Format: 00:02:10

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: N. Sotho

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### **CR0368-ABC3693**

Title: Mnamkuruane

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Composer not specified

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Subject: Popular music--Africa

Subject: Dance music

Date: 1945-00-00

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: CR0368-ABC3693

Description: Traditional song accompanied by the autoharp, rattle and stick

Format: 00:02:45

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: Pedi

Rights: International Library of African Music

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**TP0083-ABC789**

Title: Kxakanchane Majobo

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Composer not specified

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Subject: Popular music--Africa

Subject: Africa, Sub-Saharan

Date: 1947

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: TP0083-ABC789

Description: Indigenous music

Format: 00:02:10

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: N. Sotho

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**TP0085-ABC791**

Title: Mama Keri

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Composer not specified

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Subject: Popular music--Africa

Subject: Field recordings

Subject: Africa, Sub-Saharan

Subject: Africa South Africa city not specified f-sa

Date: 1947

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: TP0085-ABC791

Description: Indigenous music

Format: 00:02:10

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: N. Sotho

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#### **TP0088-ABC794**

Title: Kobi

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Year: 1948

Identifier: TP0088-ABC794

Format: 00:02:10

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: N. Sotho

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#### **CR0373-ABC10495**

Title: Yoyoyobabee

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Composer not specified

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Subject: Popular music--Africa

Subject: Africa, Sub-Saharan

Date: 1945-00-00

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: CR0373-ABC10495

Description: Traditional song accompanied by the autoharp, rattle and shaker

Format: 00:02:43

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: Pedi

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**CR0368-ABC3692**

Title: Monyakane

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Subject: Popular music--Africa

Subject: Dance music

Date: 1945-00-00

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: CR0368-ABC3692

Description: Traditional song accompanied by the autoharp, rattle and stick

Format: 00:02:41

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: Pedi

Rights: International Library of African Music

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**TP0082-ABC788**

Title: Kaeva

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Subject: Popular music--Africa

Subject: Dance music

Date: 1947-00-00

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: TP0082-ABC788

Description: Traditional song accompanied by the autoharp, rattle and stick

Format: 00:02:41

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: Pedi

Rights: International Library of African Music

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#### **TP0084-ABC790**

Title: Mateko wa sekolopate

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Subject: Popular music--Africa

Subject: Dance music

Date: 1947-00-00

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: TP0084-ABC790

Description: Traditional song accompanied by the autoharp, rattle and stick

Format: 00:03:38

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: Pedi

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#### **TP0086-ABC793**

Title: Bana-Kgatla

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Subject: Popular music--Africa

Subject: Dance music

Date: 1947-00-00

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: TP0086-ABC793

Description: Traditional song accompanied by the autoharp, rattle and stick

Format: 00:02:45

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: Pedi

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### **TP0087-ABC792**

Title: Le pesha or lephera

Creator: Tyson's Autoharp Band

Creator: Tracey, Hugh

Subject: Popular music--Africa

Subject: Dance music

Date: 1947-00-00

Identifier: Hugh Tracey Commercial Records, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa

Identifier: TP0087-ABC792

Description: Traditional song accompanied by the autoharp, rattle and stick

Format: 00:02:44

Publisher: International Library of African Music

Language: Pedi

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## #2, John Morukhuladi Songs

<b>Bana baka etlang mono, nna kea tsamaya</b>	
<p>bana baka etlang mono, nna kea tsamaya etlang mono ke le botše, nna kea tloga letla no šala le di bona, nna ke tsamaile</p>	<p>My children come here, I am leaving Come here let me tell you, I am going You will have to deal with problems while I am gone.</p>
<p>le borotho le kase boje, nna kea tloga le tla no šala le sokola, nna ke tsamaile ba tla no šala ba le tshega, nna kea tloga</p>	<p>You will not even eat bread, I am going You will be left suffering while I am gone They will laugh at you, I am going</p>
<p>batamelang ke le rome, nna kea tsamaya atamelang ke le rome, nna kea tloga mpiletšeng Rasekgela, nna kea tsamaya nkatamele ke go botše, nna kea tloga atamelang ke le botše, nna kea tsamaya</p>	<p>Come let me send you, I am leaving Come let me send you, I am going Please call Rasekgela for me, I am going Come let me tell you, I am leaving Come let me tell you, I am going</p>
<p>ntheeletše ke go botše, nna kea tloga o tla no šala o ba botša nna ke tsamaile ba tla no šala bago sola, nna kea tloga ba tla no šala bago sola, nna ke tsamaile</p>	<p>Listen to what I say, I am leaving You will have to tell them, I am leaving They will blame you, I am going They will blame you while I am gone</p>
<p>bana baka etlang mono nna kea tsamaya etlang mono ke le botše, nna kea tloga letla no šala le di bona, nna kea tsamaya</p>	<p>My children come here, I am leaving Come here let me tell you, I am going You will have to deal with problems while I am gone.</p>
<p>le borotho le kase boje, nna kea tloga le sekolo le ka se tsene, nna kea tsamaya ba tla no šala ba le tshega, nna kea tloga theeletšang ke le botše, nna kea tsamaya</p>	<p>You will not even eat bread, I am going You will not even go to school, I am going They will laugh at you, I am going Listen let me tell you, I am going</p>
<p>nkatamele ke go botše nna kea tloga o tla no šala o ba botša nna ke tsamaile ba tla no šala bago sola, nna kea tsamaya ba tla no šala bago sola, nna kea tloga</p>	<p>Come closer let me tell you, I am leaving You will have to tell them, I am going They will blame you, I am going They will blame, you I am leaving</p>

<p>ntheeletše ke go botše, nna kea tsamaya  ka nnete a ke ake, nna kea tloga  ntlele le merwalo yaka, nna kea tsamaya  seke ka šia merwalo, nna kea tloga</p>	<p>Listen, let me tell you, I am going  I am not lying, I am going  Bring my luggage, I am leaving  I must not leave my luggages, I am going</p>
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<b>Thabakgone</b>	
Sione sione, Thabakgone	Zion Zion, in Thabakbone
Sione sione, Thabakgone	Zion Zion, in Thabakbone
Atamelang sione , Thabakgone	Come to Zion in Thabakgone
Atamelang Ko Thabakgone	Come to Thabakgone
Sione kua Podungwane, Thabakgone	Zion in Podungwane, Thabakgone
Sione kua Podungwane, Thabakgone	Zion in Podungwane, Thabakgone
Etlang reyeng Sione, Thabakgone	Let us go to Zion in Thabakgone
Ke morafe sione ko Thabakgone	Zion is a nation in Thabakgone
Sione sione, Thabakgone	Zion Zion, in Thabakbone
Sione sione, Thabakgone	Zion Zion, in Thabakbone
Sione sione, Thabakgone	Zion Zion, in Thabakbone
Ke ra wena sione, Thabakgone	I am talking about you Zion in Thabakgone
Ke ra wena sione ko Thabakgone	I am talking about you Zion in Thabakgone
Sione kua Podungwane, Thabakgone	Zion in Podungwane, Thabakgone
atamelang Sione, Thabakgone	Come to Zion in Thabakgone
atamelang sione ko Thabakgone	Come to Zion in Thabakgone
Sione kua Podungwane, Thabakgone	Zion in Podungwane, Thabakgone
Sione kua Podungwane, Thabakgone	Zion in Podungwane, Thabakgone
Ke ra wena sione, Thabakgone	I am talking about you Zion in Thabakgone
Ke ra wena sione ko Thabakgone	I am talking about you Zion in Thabakgone
Sione kua Podungwane, Thabakgone	Zion in Podungwane, Thabakgone

<b>Mokgotse</b>	
Mokgotse we!	My friend
Mokgotse we!	My friend
Mokgotse we, Ke rile ke go botša ware kea akela	My friend, when I told you, you said I am lying
Nke o bone,	See now
nke o bone o šašitše mahlo okare o moloi	See now, you have your eyes out like a witch
yonna yo! O tomotše mahlo okare o segwagwa	Now you have your eyes out like a frog
Mokgotse we!	My friend
Mokgotse we!	My friend
Mokgotse we, Ke rile ke go botša ware kea akela	My friend, when I told you, you said I am lying
Yonna nna yo! Ke rile ke go botša wa re kea akela	Oh no!, when I told you, you said I am lying
nke o bone o robotše jwaleng okare o moloi	Now look, you are sleeping in shebeens like a witch
nke o bone o robotše jwaleng okare o a loya	Now look, you are sleeping in shebeens like a witch
iyo nna iyoo o letše o tlenngwe	You slept bound
iyo nna iyo wa lala ka diboots	You slept wearing boots
Mokotse we!	My friend
Mokgotse we, ere ke go botše	My friend, let me tell you
Nke o bone, o šetse o otile	Look now, you lost weight
Iyo nna iyo, o šetse ka ditšhika	Now we can even see your veins

<b>Soko</b>	
Sokodi'a soko, mpsanyana tše di sokola bjang	Suffering, these dogs are suffering like this
Sokodi'a soko	Suffering
mpsanyana tšela, mpsanyana tše di sokola bjang	Suffering, these dogs are suffering like this
Soko, Soko, soko, soko	Suffering
mpsanyana tše di sokola bjang	these dogs are suffering like this
mpsanyana tše di sokola bjang	these dogs are suffering like this
soko sokodi'a sokolo	suffering

**Segwagwanyane bolwetše bo bo fetša batho**

<p>Segwagwanyane bolwetše bo bo fetša batho, re a makala</p> <p>Owa ba bona le bo nurse baya sione bo rapela</p> <p>Ke ba ngwaletše le bo nurse kua sepetlele re tla no fihla</p> <p>`baragwana ya bo nurse kua sepetlele re tla no fihla</p> <p>Oya mpona ke kolobetša ke dikolobe ke a leboga</p> <p>Oya mpona ke kolobetše, ke kolobetše kea leboga</p> <p>Kea go botša wena moloi, wena satana o tshwenya batho</p> <p>Kea go koba wena sathane emela kgole rea rapela</p> <p>Kea go koba wena sathane emela kgole rea rapela</p> <p>Kolobetšong!, thapelong!</p> <p>Kea go bitša wena Morena koba sathane rea rapela</p> <p>rea go koba wena sathane emela kgole rea rapela</p> <p>kea go botša Senwabarwana kua Bochum re atametše</p> <p>kea go botša Senwabarwana kua Bochum re atametše</p> <p>owa se bona sekontiri kua Bochum re a leboga</p> <p>owa se bona se a namela sekoroleng re lebogile</p> <p>owa se bona se nameletše .....ba leboga</p> <p>hey kua gaKobe ba a leboga, le kua Morosi ba lebogile</p>	<p>Segwagwanyane, this disease is finishing people. We are amazed</p> <p>You see, even the nurses are going to Zion</p> <p>I wrote a letter to the nurses at the hospital, we will go there</p> <p>Baragwanath of the nurses at the hospital, we will get there</p> <p>You see I have been baptized by the pigs, thank you</p> <p>You see I have been baptized, thank you</p> <p>I am tell you witch, you satan, you are making people suffer</p> <p>I am chasing you away you satan, stay away we pray</p> <p>I am chasing you away you satan, stay away we pray</p> <p>Baptism!, prayer!</p> <p>I am calling you Lord, chase away satan we pray</p> <p>I am chasing you away you satan, stay away we pray</p> <p>I am telling you that Senwabarwana in Bochum we are close</p> <p>I am telling you that Senwabarwana in Bochum we are close</p> <p>You see the tare road at Bochum, thank you</p> <p>You see see it getting on sekoroleng, thank you</p> <p>Can you see it on, thank you</p> <p>At Ga-Kobe they say thank you, even at Morosi they say thank you</p>
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**O oretše letšatši (Tšatši mmawe)**

Ngwan'a Ngoato oa lwala, o oretše tšatši mmawe	Ngoato's son is sick, he is sitting in the sun
Ngwan'a Ngoato oa lwala, o oretše letšatši mmawe	Ngoato's son is sick, he is sitting in the sun
Ngwan'a Ngoato oa lwala, tšatši mmawe	Ngoato's son is sick, tšatši mmawe
Matšokotšane oa lwala, tšatši mmawe	Matšokotšane is sick, tšatši mmawe
O be a šoma toropong, tšatši mmawe	He used to work in town, tšatši mmawe
Toropo ya Brakapane, tšatši mmawe	The town of Brakpan, tšatši mmawe
Mošomo o fedile, tšatši mmawe	He was retrenched, tšatši mmawe
Ngwana o boa le malwetši, tšatši mmawe	The boy came back with diseases, tšatši mmawe
Ngwana o makatša dingaka, tšatši mmawe	He is confusing the doctors, tšatši mmawe
Eya thebatheba phuana, tšatši mmawe	His head is soft like a child, tšatši mmawe
O tsene pitša tše dikgolo, tšatši mmawe	He entered the big pots, tšatši mmawe
Ngwana o palela dingaka, tšatši mmawe	doctors cannot heal him, tšatši mmawe
Ngaka e bile dia tšhaba, tšatši mmawe	Traditional doctors are running away, tšatši mmawe
Ngaka e bile dia tšhaba, tšatši mmawe	Traditional doctors are running away, tšatši mmawe
Go šala ngaka tša sekgowa, tšatši mmawe	The modern doctors remained, tšatši mmawe
Le tšona ebile dia tšhaba, tšatši mmawe	They also are running away now, tšatši mmawe
Ebile ba bitša baruti, tšatši mmawe	They now called pastors, tšatši mmawe
Ebile ba bitša baruti, tšatši mmawe	They now called pastors, tšatši mmawe
Oa balabala mathekga, tšatši mmawe	Mathekga is complaining now, tšatši mmawe
Bolwetse ba tala ga a fole, tšatši mmawe	This disease is not getting healed, tšatši mmawe
Bolwetše bo nale ditsehele, tšatši mmawe	This disease is problematic, tšatši mmawe
Bolwetše bo nale ditsehele, tšatši mmawe	This disease is problematic, tšatši mmawe
A re bagešo ga ba nthate, tšatši mmawe	He said, my family does not love me, tšatši mmawe
Le bona mola ke fokola, tšatši mmawe	They see that I am suffering, tšatši mmawe
o oretše letšatši	He is sitting in the sun
Eyy o oretše letšatši mmawe	He is sitting in the sun, tšatši mmawe

**Bua nnete**

<p>Welele we!          Modimo waka etla o bone          Etla o bone mahlomola          Welele we! Lefase le swere bothata          Iyonnana iyo, banna ba rwele dithunya          Welele we! Ba thuntšhana ba sa fetše</p> <p>Monna wa pelo kemang          Welele we! Monna ke yena Jesu          Welele we! Jesu wa Nazaretha          Welele we! Etla ka mono ore thuše          Iyonnana iyo o re bušetše bophelong</p> <p>Welele we! Welele we!          Jesu wa Nazaretha          Ey eyi eiye ha          Bua nnete!          Eee wena bua nnete          Botša moruti          Wena botša moruti          Lesa go senya ey          Wena lesa go senya          Lahla sethunya          Wena lahla sethunya          Lahla mphaka          Tsotsi lahla mphaka</p> <p>Tshepa Modimo          Tsotsi tshepa Modimo</p>	<p>Welele we!          My God please come and see          Come and see the sadness          Welele we! The world is carrying problems          Men are carrying guns          They keep shooting at each other</p> <p>Where is a man with a heart          That man is Jesus          Jesus of Nazareth          Come down and help us          And take us back to life</p> <p>Welele we! Welele we!          Jesus of Nazareth          Ey eyi eiye ha          Tell the truth          Eee you tell the truth          Tell the pastor          You tell the pastor          Stop the crime          You stop the crime          Throw away the gun          You throw away the gun          Throw away the knife          You throw away the knife</p> <p>Trust God          criminal trust God</p>
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**Batho ba sekgowa**

<p>Welele welele we  Kera lena batho ba go tseba sekgowa  Kera lena batho ba go tseba sekgowa  Iyonna we le thantše kudu le koba difeme yonna  Difeme di ile moše wa mawatle  Le tsene dikolo, mešomo e kae?  Sa lena fela go šetse go utswa  Iyonna iyo, le utswitše kudu la utswa dithunya  La utswa dithunya la fetša Basotho</p> <p>Modimo weee!  Modimo wee!  Modimo etla o bone mehlolo  Iyonna iyo, rena batho ba baso rea makatša  Re tšea ditšhelete ra reka dithunya  Re reka dithunya, re fetša batswadi  Malapeng a mangwe ra tšea dithoto  Dišopong tša bona tšea ditseka  Tseleng tša bona ra tšea koloi  Tseleng tša bona re tšea koloi yonna  Re tšere koloi, re tšea koloi</p> <p>Oka e bona e tsene tseleng  Oka e bona e tsene tseleng  Iyonna iyo, wa feta go rena sethunya sa thunya  Wa wela mo fase ra tšea setseka  Re tloga mowe go šetse lefela</p> <p>Sa botse ke eng pele ga Modimo yonna iyo  Modimo Ntate o tlo re betha  O tlo re betha, o tlo re betha</p>	<p>Welele welele we  You people who know modern things  You people who know modern things  You think you are clever, you are chasing away firms  Firms have gone back overseas  You went to school but where are the jobs?  All you do is steal  You stole many things, you also stole guns  You stole guns now you are finishing people</p> <p>God  God  God come down and see what is happening  We black people are surprising  We take our money and buy guns  We buy guns and kill our parents  In other families we take their belongings  In their shops we take the money  On their roads we take their cars  On their roads we take their cars  We took a car, we are taking a car</p> <p>See it when it enters the road  See it when it enters the road  You pass us and a gun goes off  You fall on the ground, we take the money  We leave only when there is nothing left</p> <p>What good is it before God  God our father will punish us  He will punish us, he will punish us</p>
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**Bahananwa**

<p>Bahananwa ba mmaswene a re buwe                  Ke le botše hananwa we oale duma                  Nke le bone hananwa go nale dikolo                  Ke le botše college e butšwe kwa.....                  Nkabe ke tseba go ngwala, ke le botše, ke ngwalele                  Morena Tshwenyeng                  Ke mmotše lefase la gešo le a....                  Nke le bone, lefase le jewa ke sejwale                    Kgophane moradia kere o tshwara ke podile o ile kae                    Tsatsankane šewane, kera wena oyang ko hananwa                  Ke go botše o dumediše Morena Mphatla                  O mmotše, pula ya medupe e etla                  Se a lepelela segwagwa                  Ke le botše, se bona dinoka di tletše                  Kua gešo ga mmalebogo, ke le botše                  Koša e binwa ke batswetše                  Batswetše ba bina kgodumarotse                    Praise singing: ke Bahananwa ba mmatšhwene'a                  leruri. Bahananwa bahana tšhwene                  Tšhwene senaiwa mmele, Ka makopong go a sala</p>	<p>Bahananwa of mmaswane let us talk                    Have you seen? There are schools at hananwa                  I tell you, they have opened a college                  If I knew how to write, I would write to Chief                  Tshweneng                  And tell him our nation is                  Come see, this nation is being swallowed by                  civilization                  (Praising)                    You who is going to hananwa                  I tell you, greet Chief Mphatla                  Tell him, heavy rains are coming                  The frog is crying                  I tell you, it sees the full rivers                  I tell you, my home Mmalebogo                  A song is sung by.....                  They dance kgodumarotse                    Praise singing:</p>
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**Ditlabakelo**

Ditlabakelo, ditlabakelo, iyonna iyo	Tools, tools
Ditlabakelo	Tools
Re tlile go bona ditlabakelo	We are here to see the tools
Wena nkutwa o a makatša	You Nkutwa are surprising
Hey wena Nkutwa ditlabakelo tša basadi di kae?	Nkutwa where are the tools of women
Oreng wa tšea wa di fa banna?	Why did you give them to men?
Banna le bona batho ba aba sele	Men are silly people
Hey lena banna le tlile la siya, la wiša dipasa	Hey men!, you came here and dropped your IDs
Iyonna iyo, le tlile go swarwa	You will be arrested
Iyeiye we ba tlile go le swara	They will arrest you
Motswala wa nkutwa iyo a le kwe	Nkutwa's causin, you don't listen
Motswala wa nkutwa oa makatša	Nkutwa's causin, you are full of surprises
Ditlabakelo tše o di išitše kae?	Where did you take the tools
Goreng wa tšea wa di fa banna?	Why did you give them to men?
Iyonna iyo, iyonna iyo	Iyonna iyo, iyonna iyo
Iyonna iyo, iyonna iyo	Iyonna iyo, iyonna iyo
Re tlile go bona ditlabakelo	We are here to see the tools
Re tlile go bona ditlabakelo	We are here to see the tools

**Wa nhlanamela**

Na wena ngwanyana o mphapharihla oa nhlanametše  
 hey wena ngwanyana o mphapharihla oa  
 nhlanametše

o nhlanametše, o bone babangwe wa nhlanamela  
 o bone babangwe wa tloga le bona wa nhlanamela  
 hey wena ngwanyana, ema ke go botše

atamela mono,

nke o ntshware, ntshware ka dinoka

oka se ntshware, o ka se ntshware o nhlanametše

wa nhlanamela, o nhlanametše, o nhlanametše

wa nhlanamela

Ngwan'a lena o nhlanametše

Ngwan'a lena o nhlanametše

O nhlanametše, o bone baba botse a nhlanamela

O bone ba ba botse a tloga le bona a nhlanamela

O nhlanametše, onhlanametše

O bone ke lwala a nhlanamela

O bone ke lwala a tloga le bona a nhlanamela

Hey wena ngwanyana, hey wena ngwanyana

Ema ke go botše, atamela mono

Nke o ntshware, ntshware ka letsogo, ntshware ka  
 letsogo

O sek'a ntshwara jwalo

O kase ntshware o nhlanametše

o nhlanametše, o nhlanametše

wa nhlanamela

o bone ba ba botse wa nhlanamela

o bone ba ba botse wa tloga le bona wa nhlanamela

o bone di "tie" wa tloga le tšona wa nhlanamela

o nhamametše

You girl are twisted, you are denying me

Hey you girl you are twisted, you are denying me

You deny me, you saw others and deny me

You saw the others and left with them, you deny me

Hey you girl, let me tell you

Come closer

Hold me, hold me by my hips

You wont hold me, you wont hold me, you deny me

You deny me, you deny me, you deny me

You deny me

Your daughter is denying me

Your daughter is denying me

you saw the handsome ones, you deny me

You saw the handsome and left with them, you deny  
 me

You deny me, you deny me

You saw that I was sick and you abandoned me

she saw that I was sick and she left with them, she is  
 denying me

hey you girl, hey you girl

let me tell you, come closer

hold me, hold me with your hand, hold me with your  
 hand

don't hold me like that

you won't hold me, you are denying me

you are denying me, you are denying me

you have denied me

you saw the handsome ones and denied me

you saw the handsome ones and left with them, you  
 deny me

<p>ngwan'a lena o nhlametše</p> <p>ngwan'a lena o nhlametše</p> <p>o nhlametše, o nhlametše</p> <p>a nhlametše</p>	<p>you saw the nice things and left with them, you deny me. You deny me</p> <p>your daughter is denying me</p> <p>your daughter is denying me</p> <p>she is denying me, she is denying me</p> <p>she has denied me</p>
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<b>Go nale phošo</b>	
Banana ba gešo ba ile borwa, go nale phošo	Our girls have gone south, something is wrong
Banana ba gešo ba ile borwa, go nale phošo	Our girls have gone south, something is wrong
Ba tlogetše bana, ba šetše le Koko ba nale tla	They left their children, the children are left with grandparents, there is hunger
Ba tlogetše bana, ba šetše le Koko ba nale tla	They left their children, the children are left with grandparents, there is hunger
Hey banale phošo, hey banale phošo	They are wrong, hey they are wrong
Ba tshwana le bašemanyana ba bona, ba nale phošo	They are just like their boys, they are wrong
Ga ba rekele ba naba bona dijo, ba nale phošo	They don't buy their children food, they are wrong
Esale ba tsena ka monga'a seloko, ba nale phošo	They left without returning, they are wrong
Ba nale phošo, hey ba nale phošo	They are wrong, they are wrong

## Dumela

Eyy dumela dumela, dumela Malesela	Hello, hello, hello Malesela
Dumela ngwan'a kgaetšadi yaka	Hello son of my brother
Dumela ngwan'a kgaetšadi yaka	Hello son of my brother
Dumela malesela	Hello Malesela
Eyy murur'u phekalešo ngwan'a kgaetšadi	???
Oho oo	Oho oo
Ey motswala mphe molomo	My causin give me your mouth
Motswala mphe molomo sek'a tšhaba motho,	My causin give me your mouth, don't be afraid
Sek'a tšhaba motho, tla ko tlhanamela	Don't be afraid of anyone, I wont deny you
Ey mmamotse wa kua maruwe, Sek'a ntshwara	Mmamotse from Maruwe, don't touch me
Sek'a ntshwaratshwara tla ko kgarametša	Don't touch me I will push you
mme nna kea kgarametša, mme nna kea kgarametša	I will push you, I will push you
eyy dumela Mmakomana, ngwan'a kgaetšadi	Hello Mmakomana, daughter of my sister
dumela Mmakomana, dumela Malesela	Hello Mmakomana, hello Malesela
ey motswala mphe molomo, sek'a tšhaba motho	My cousin give me your mouth, don't be afraid
sek'a tšhaba motho ke tla go hlanamela	Don't be afraid of anyone or I will leave you
ey Mabotse wa kua Marue sek'a ntshwara	Mabotse from Marue, don't touch me
sek'a ntshwaratshwara tla ko kgarametša	Don't touch me I will push you
mme nna kea kgarametša, mme nna kea kgarametša	I will push you, I will push you
ey Mosotho o ja korong	A Mosotho eats sorghum
Mosotho o ja korong ngwan'a kgaetšadi	A Mosotho eats sorghum daughter of my sister
Dumela ngwan'a kgaetšadi yaka	Hello son of my brother
Dumela dumela Malesela	Hello, hello Malesela
Dumela dumela Malesela	Hello Malesela
Dumela Mmakomana ngwana kgaetšadi	Hello Mmakomana daughter of my sister
hmmm	hmmm

### #3, Albert Sekiba Songs

Makgowa a ma khibidu	
lyelele Ahe mampopu we matšhaba Mpopu ngwanake re tloge Mabele re tla lema pele  Mma ejang le ntime Keyo ja gabo mokgotse Mokgotse motho wa ditaba Kere a kgabakgaba makgaba Gape kere a kgabakgaba makgaba Gape ge tšatši le wela  Gape ditšhuana di bapane, gape ditlo gopotšana go lela ge ose mosadi bommago ba kae ge ose mosadi bopapago ba kae gape le batswadi ba rena ba ile ba ile .....	lyelele Come Matšhaba Come my child let us go We will plough the fields later  Mother when you eat don't leave any for me I will eat at my friend's place My friend the one with a lot to say (Clan praises)  The orphans have gathered They will remind each other to cry If you are not a women then where is your mother? If you are not a woman then where is your father? Even our parents left They left  (Clan praises)
A kgabakgaba makgaba, a gana tšatši le wela	(Clan praises)

**Wa tsoga bošego**

Iye, o tla hlakana le tšhwene	Hey you will meet a monkey
Iye, o tla hlakana le selo	Hey you will meet a thing
Mampaule ke ngaka	Mampuale is a sangoma
Mampaule ke ngaka	Mampuale is a sangoma
Ke ngaka ya mošemanyana	He is a boy sangoma
O tshwere ka tladi hananwa	He hits with lightning
Blouberg Makgabeng,	Blouberg Makgabeng
Thabeng e tala le selemo	Green mountain even in summer
Gape le marega eya makatša	Even in winter it is surprising
Selemo ba o kga morogo ka matla	In summer they pick a lot of vegetables
Mampaule ke ngaka	Mampuale is a sangoma
Mampaule ke ngaka	Mampuale is a sangoma
Ke ngaka ya mošemanyana	He is a boy sangoma
O swere ka tladi hananwa	He hits with lightning Bahananwa
Wa tsoga bošego	You wake up at night
Eyi, wa tsoga bošego	Hey you wake up at night
Eyi Mampaule ke ngaka	Mampuale is a sangoma
Gapa mampaule ke ngaka	Again Mampuale is a sangoma
Ke ngaka ya mošemanyana	He is a boy sangoma
O swere ka tladi hananwa	He hits with lightning
Blouberg Makgabeng,	Blouberg Makgabeng
Thabeng e tala le selemo	Green mountain even in summer
Gape le marega eya makatša	Even in winter it is surprising
Selemo ba kga morogo	In summer they pick a lot of vegetables
Bašemanyana lea tshwenya, ge ke bolela lea tshega	Boye you are problematic, when I talk you laugh
Le ntšhatola phalafala, nakana ya Mokopane	You make me a horn, horn of Mokopane

<b>Soko</b>	
Soko, mpyanyana tše di sokola bjang	Suffering, these dogs are suffering
Soko	Suffering
Nna kea swa ke swela mahala	I am burning, I am burning for nothing
Soko	Suffering
Seketlelo sa go tla marotho	A dish full of bread

<b>Ba nwele lentsene (Letlaputla)</b>	
Ba nwele letlaputla, ba Makgabeng	They drank beer, of Makgabeng
Ba nwele lentsene	They drank beer
Iyoo, Nna nka se new bjala	I will never drink beer
Ke re go bonwa a bo ntage	When I drink it I do not get drunk
Rramokone motswal'ake	Rramokone my cousin
Etla keno re bolele	Come here let us talk
Etla keno re bolele ditaba	Come here let us have a conversation
Taba ke tša ba bedi	Discussion for only two people
Wa bo raro ke mpheane	The third one is not welcome
Weledi walela	Weledi welela
Maditsela mokateng	
Tau e ka moja tseleng	A lion might eat him along the way
Mafoko a hloka misi	These words need...
Weledi wa lela	weledi welela

<b>Morwakwakwa (composition of Ernest Rammutla)</b>	
Setimela se namela dithaba	The train is climbing the mountains
Morwakwakwa o šomela.....	(Morwakwakwa) Son of Kwakwa works for.....
Germiston ke ga rakgolo	Germiston is my grandfather's place
Johannesburg kea bomalome	Johannesburg belongs to my uncle
Setimela se namela dithaba	The train is climbing the mountains
Sea nkgathla sea thurumologa	It impresses me, it is stretching

<b>Michael ga a kgone go raloka</b>	
Michael ga a kgone go raloka O swara batho ka nthla tša metšekelo	Michael does not know how to play with others He holds people by tips of their dresses

<b>Lorry ea duma (Ernest Rammutla)</b>	
Lorry ea duma Hlapang ka pela rea tloga Korie linkane Nna re ikela dipolaseng ka nnete Rea go bona bo Mmamasele dikgarebe Tekelaine mekgotheng Sekoti se kwele dikgau Mokone wa ntšhi dikgolo ke le botše	Lorry is idling Wash quickly we are going Let's go to Linkane We are truly going to the farms We are going to see Mmamasele, the ladies Tekelaine in the bushes The village has heard ..... (clan praises)

<b>Sekwakwalala sa Rrammutla</b>	
Tša go kgatša nkwe a digo Wa se bona sekwakwalala Tša go kgatša nkwe a digo Tša go kgatša nkwe ka letlapa	The ones that hit a tiger are not there Do you see sekwakwalala The ones that hit a tiger are not there The ones that hit a tiger with a stone

<b>Sehanyanya (Sehananwa)</b>	
Ngoako ke Sehanyanya	Ngoako is Sehanyanya

## #4, Daniel Moshi Songs

<b>Ke lantlha re bona Mogalakwena</b>	
Oh iyeleiyele	Oh iyeleiyele
Iyaya oye iyaya	Iyaya oye iyaya
Ke lantlha re bona mogalakwena	It is the first time to see Mogalakwena
Oh iyeleiyele	Oh iyeleiyele
Iyaya oye iyaya	Iyaya oye iyaya
Ke lantlha re bona mogalakwena	It is the first time to see Mogalakwena

<b>Pholwana tše pedi di a lwa</b>	
Iyonna we iyalela	Iyonna we iyalela
Iyo dipholwana tše pedi di a lwa mmawe!	Two bulls are fighting, oh mother
Ke Nkwana le Mmamabolo iyo batho	It is Nkwana and Mmamabolo, oh people
Iyelle iyalela	Iyelle iyalela
Iyelle iyalela	Iyelle iyalela
Iyo dipholwana tše pedi di a lwa mmawe!	Two bulls are fighting, oh mother
Iyelle iyalela batho	Iyelle iyalela batho
Iyo dipholwana tše pedi di a lwa iyo batho	It is Nkwana and Mmamabolo, oh people
Iyo dipholwana tše pedi di a lwa iyo batho	It is Nkwana and Mmamabolo, oh people
Nkwana le Mmamabolo iyo batho	It is Nkwana and Mmamabolo, oh people

<b>Dietla dikoloi tša makgowa</b>	
Dietla dikoloi tša makgowa	The white man's cars are coming
Dietla dikoloi tša makgowa	The white man's cars are coming

<b>Mošiti a je boswa</b>	
Oja we hai a	She is eating
Nswiti o ja boswa	Nswiti is eating poridge

<b>Kgakgantšhane ba kome</b>	
Oyilele we wolele Tša Mmampo dia mpalela Ngwan'a ngaka o a lwala  welele Tša Mmampo dia mpalela Ngwan'a ngaka o a lwala mmawe welele oh iyele iye  ngwana ngaka o a lwala, amo iše dingakeng  Ngwan'a ngaka o a lwala mmawe welele	Oyilele we wolele Mmampo's issues defeat me A child of a healer is sick  Welele Mmampo's issues defeat me A child of a healer is sick, mother welele oh iyele iye  A child of a healer is sick, they must take him to other healers A child of a healer is sick, mother Welele

<b>Makgabeng a mmasewela</b>	
Bomma ba a mpitša	My mother is calling me

<b>Mmapula</b>	
Iyelele walela Mmapula wa Lekale Ga se nna thaka ya gago	Iyelele walela Mmapula of Lekale I am not your age mate

<b>Konkoriti</b>	
Iyo welela Konkoriti Dumela cheri	Iyo welela concrete Hello girl

Instrumentals

**Otlaba wa tšhaba wa tlogela polasa**

**Seakaki**

## #5, Labson Mothemana Songs

<b>Mogatša'ntona re nyaka tšhelete</b>	
Re nyaka tšhelete mogatša ntona	Wife of supervisor we want money
Re nyaka tšhelete mogatša lekgowa	We want our money, wife of a white man
A re nyake sente, re nyaka ranta	We don't want cents, we want rands

<b>Stepe sa mathari a kgatalala</b>	
Stepe sa mathari we	The step of the ladies
Stepe sa mathari a kgatalala	The step of the ladies of Kgatalala

<b>Mmalebogo ke kgoši</b>	
Mmalebogo ke kgoši	Mmalebogo is a king
O ja sagage oa feta	He eats only his own and passes on
Thobela ke go lotšha	Thobela is a greeting
Mmalebogo ke kgoši kua thabeng	Mmalebogo is a king there at the mountains
Mmalebogo ke kgoši kua hananwa	Mmalebogo is a king at Hananwa

<b>Thabeng ya Mmalebogo</b>	
Mmapelo o ja serati	The heart chooses for itself
Sekgethelwa ga a se rate	If you choose for it, it denies it
Kgomo ya go se gamiwe, welele	A cow that is not milked, welele
Thaba tšela tša Mmalebogo....	The mountains of Mmalebogo
Madiba ke a bo kubu le bo kwena	The wells belong to the hippos and the crocodiles

<b>Otla hlakana le tšhwene</b>	
Ge o tsamaya bošego o tla hlakana le tšhwene	If you walk around at night, you will meet a monkey
Ba mo loile! Ka go tsmaya bošego	They bewitched him because of walking around at night
O ithlokomele! Otlo hlakana le tšhwene	Watch yourself, you will meet a monkey

<b>Bo botse bo tšerwe ke bana</b>	
Manaba!	Enemies!
Nna ake sale botse	I am no longer beautiful
Botse botšerwe ke bana	My beauty is taken by my children
Iyo manaba, ba ntebelela ka mo morago	Enemies, they look at my behind
Manaba dilo tša bona	Enemies, their things
Ba mpotapota bo tsotsi	The thugs surround me
Iyo manaba	Oh enemies

<b>Tšhantšha nkwadu</b>	
Batho ba ke baka ba	These people are mine
Bana ba ke baka ba	These children are mine
Basadi ba ke baka ba	These women are mine
Dikgogo tse ke tsaka tse	These chickens are mine these
Dikgomo tše ke tšaka tše	These cows are mine these
Dilo tše ke tšaka tše	These things are mine these
Tšhantšha nkwadu	(I am) Tšhantšha nkwadu

<b>Tšheri tšhaba tseleng</b>	
Tšheri tšhaba tseleng	Girl move out of the way
Samboko a se lae, motho o laya ke pelo	A sjambok does not guide, a person is guided by the heart
Tšhaba di maketše	The nations are amazed

<b>Mmapula wa lekala (mmapula o hlapela ntlwaneng)</b>	
Mmapula wa lekala	Mmapule of Lekala
Mmapula ngwanaka	Mmapula my child
O sek'eba wa re batamela, a se rena thaka tša gago	Don't come closer, we are not your age mates
Nna re tšhipi, e kगतla enngwe	We are steel that squashes the other
Rena re moroko	We are like sorghum
Mmapula wa lekala	Mmapula of Lekala
Mmapula ngwanaka	Mmapula my child

**Babirwa ga ba tšee sa motho**

Babirwa, a re tšee sa motho

Babirwa people do not take from other people

Babirwa, a ba tšee sa motho

Babirwa people do not take from other people

Le ko re tšwang a re tšee sa motho

Even where we come from we did not take from people

**Mogolo o pelopedi**

Mogolo o pelopedi

An elder is patient

Iyelele we, welele we

Iyelele we, welele we

Iyoo kea lwala

Iyoo! I am sick

Ke nyaka ngaka nka lapa

I need a doctor, I am tired