

BASOTHO ORAL POETRY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY

(VOLUME 1)

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that **BASOTHO ORAL POETRY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY** is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

WM Tšiu

Date

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all the poets engaged in the revival and maintenance of the Basotho oral literature. My hope is that their oral products will continue to flourish and become one of the richest in the African heritage.

SUMMARY

Largely based on material recorded during an internationally sponsored inter-university research tour through the Sesotho speaking area of southern Africa in August 2000, this thesis explores the state of the Basotho oral poetry, the *dithoko* 'praise poems', the *difela* 'mine workers' chants' and the *diboko* 'family odes' at the beginning of the 21st century.

Unlike the classical *dithoko* which were inspired by the wars or the battles in which the Basotho fought as well as cannibalism, those composed at the beginning of the 21st century are inspired by socio-economic and political situations of the poets. Lack of wars has resulted in the poets turning the praising to their chiefs and themselves. Changing socio-economic conditions inspired the *difela* compositions. The *diboko* though still a living tradition among the rural Basotho are not adhered to by some who are affected by modernism.

Performance of the three oral genres has shifted from the natural settings such as the battlefield, working parties, traditional courts, assemblies, etc., to organized annual festivals such as Morija Arts & Cultural Festival which constitute the Basotho's 'popular culture'. The subject-matter and themes of the *dithoko* have shifted from warfare to traditional chiefs, current heroic deeds of the poets, current political situations and religion. The *difela* are characterized by inclusion of new subject-matter. The *diboko* still play an important function as carriers of the names of the ancestors, the tribal idiosyncrasy of the clan and the history associated with the clan's establishment.

The three Basotho oral genres demonstrate an emergence of a new phenomenon whereby one genre penetrates another, a phenomenon which may be called 'migration of texts'. The last chapter explores the insights emanating from the entire research, and discusses suggestions on what should be done to ensure that the Basotho oral genres are maintained and improved. The video footage of the poets recorded at various places of the Free State and Lesotho have contributed to the success of the research.

The thesis serves as a contribution to the Basotho's dynamic oral poetry on which scholars will hopefully do further research in the near future.

KEY TERMS

Thoko 'Praise poem'

Dithoko 'Praise poems'

Sefela 'Mine workers' chant'

Difela 'Mine workers' chants'

Seboko 'Family ode/Clan praise'

Diboko 'Family odes / Clan praises'

Seroki 'A poet'

Diroki 'The poets'

Mosotho 'A Mosotho'

Basotho 'The Basotho'

Performance

Subject-matter

Theme

Penetration/migration

Oral genres

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and scope of study: Statement of need

The aim of this study is to investigate and explain the characteristics of Sesotho oral poetry as composed and performed at the beginning of the 21st century, a need that was both created and at the same time made possible to fulfill by the advent of modern video and other technologies.

Oral poetry in Sesotho is a broad concept capturing a basket of oral genres the investigation of which would have been too broad for this purpose. A selection was therefore inevitable. Based on the material at my disposal (see 1.2.1), it was decided to focus the investigation on the *dithoko* 'praise poetry', the *difela* 'mine workers' chants' and the *diboko* 'family odes' with the view to their performance shortly before and at the turn of the 20th century.

Several studies do exist on the genres selected, however, most of these are representative of the time of their publication, and do not account for the state of the art at this important juncture – the beginning of the 21st century. To date it appears that no research has been done on the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko* of the Basotho with particular reference to their nature and characteristics at the beginning of the 21st century (2000). My attempt in this direction is aimed at closing the gap which appears not to have been addressed as yet by scholars of African literature.

In addition, there is an urgent need for a synchronic overview of these oral genres as they are being performed and understood at this moment in history. Our focus will of necessity be against the background of and with reference to the origin and historic development of these genres for which consultation of existing sources - both texts and scholarly studies - was indispensable. Aimed this way, there is a comparative imperative underlying this study. From the beginning of the 21st century, looking back at oral poetry over a period of two centuries (our earliest records), we are compelled

to compare whether, and if so, how the selected genres were shaped according to the times, life experiences and competencies of their makers, the performers.

1.2 Research Methodology

This will be dealt with as follows.

1.2.1 Data collection

In the year 2000 members of the Department of French and African-American Studies, at the Ohio State University embarked on a project of compiling a series of documentary videos on oral poetry in Southern Africa, a project sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities of the United States. The aim of the project was to produce multi-media programs which could be used to create educational material and CD-ROMS for the learning and tuition of the students in the department, as well as for the preservation and further development of live performances of oral poetry. Their plan, to a large extent, coincided with my interest in Sesotho oral poetry as outlined above. It was therefore opportune for me to be part of an inter-university program with specific reference to the recording of oral poetry in Sesotho.

Towards the end of August 2000 a team consisting of Professor Abiola Irele (principal investigator, Ohio State University), Professor Chris F Swanepoel (project consultant, University of South Africa), Professor 'Makali Mokitimi (co-consultant, National University of Lesotho), Reverend William M Tšiu (co-South African consultant, Unisa), Mr Hannes Smal (camera 1, Unisa), Mr Alan Coleman (educational technologist, Ohio State University) and Ms Judy Jooste (camera 2, Unisa), left Pretoria on a ten day tour during which performances of oral poetry were recorded on video tape at various venues in the Sesotho speaking area.

The consultants succeeded in recruiting knowledgeable impresarios who assisted in selecting six venues representative of the Sesotho speaking area. On their part, the impresarios succeeded in recruiting a group of all in all 33 poets from their respective regions. The venues that were selected were the Basotho Cultural Village, on the outskirts of Qwaqwa; Thabana-Tshowana, on the foothills of the Drakensberg in

Qwaqwa; three venues in the Kingdom of Lesotho, namely, 'Melesi Lodge, near Thaba-Bosiu, the capital of the founder of the Basotho nation, Moshoeshoe 1; Morija Museum and Archives, situated on the premises of the old mission station; and at Matsieng, the home of the kings. The sixth recording at Schoonplaats, Lekoa, in Southern Gauteng, was done later at the beginning of February 2001. During the tour, live performances of 33 *diroki* performing the *dithoko* and the *difela* (mine workers' chants), some containing fragments of the *diboko*, were recorded. At all the venues performances were interspersed with choral music items, *mekorotlo* (war dances), *mangae* (songs sung by male initiates), *mekgibo* (women's shoulder dances) and *ndlamo* dances (of Nguni origin performed by young men). Audiences consisting of men, women and children graced the occasions and participated spontaneously. The recording events thus indeed became half-day festivals of their own kind. On 1 September 2000, on the eve of our departure from Lesotho, the team paid a courtesy visit to His Majesty King Letsie III at his Royal Palace in Maseru. The King gave his blessings to the project in a recording to which we shall return at a later stage in Chapter 6.

Back home the Ohio State University team left after we had agreed on the way the video material (video tapes) would be edited and reproduced into accessible multimedia productions. The Unisa consultants and the camera team under the auspices of the sound and video production unit at Unisa produced a set of six video tapes representative of the recordings at the six centres. About a year later the Unisa consultants returned to the different centres where a full set of these recordings were handed over to each of the impresarios or their representatives, the intention being that the sets be made freely accessible to the poets, aspiring poets, *mekgatlo ya dihoba* (oral performance associations), academic institutions in the regions, researchers, and interested members of the public. Professor Irele returned from the USA and Professor Mokitimi joined us as we revisited the Palace for the presentation to King Letsie III. We also agreed to appoint Professor J.M. Lenake, formerly Professor of Sesotho in the Department of African Languages at Unisa to transcribe and translate into English the texts of all oral recordings. He eventually produced a text of about 300 pages.

After their return to Columbus, Ohio, Professor Irele and Mr Coleman embarked on the production of a prototype of this Sesotho praise poetry project which was soon made accessible on the worldwide web at <http://aaas.ohio.state.edu/praisepoetry>. It was also envisaged that several scholarly studies should flow from the vast amount of material that now became available. It is hoped that this thesis will in part answer to that vision. Yet to follow is a book containing the transcribed poems, their translations and annotations.

When I embarked on the research it was decided to make use of the data in my Master's dissertation completed in 2002 on the *diboko* (family odes of the Basotho), since the fragments that were recorded on the research tour were not sufficient for the overview we had in mind with this thesis.

1.2.2 Data Analysis

The data analysis entailed viewing of and listening to the video tapes, a process that required numerous repetition. This was necessary in order to fully see, hear, understand and digest the performances of the various *diroki* (poets). This process was supplemented with the reading of the Sesotho transcriptions and their English translations as well as consulting various relevant oral and written sources on the three genres.

In order to facilitate the comprehensive overview, which we have envisaged in the opening (see 1.1) and also to be faithful to our experience of the performances as presented, inclusive vantage points constituting the chapters have been preferred instead of dealing with each of these genres in separate chapters. When it came to the elucidation of the vantage points, it was again necessary to make a selection of the poets and performances since the handling of all 33 poets would have led to a product of unmanageable magnitude. The same would have been the result if we had to use all poems recited in full. Again, we selected the most appropriate segment in a particular section. All selected poets and their poems are captured in the Appendix together with the English translations.

The investigation will commence with the discussion of the conditions that inspired the origin of the three oral poetic genres and exerted pressure on their further development. These pressures are not necessarily similar for the three genres. While the *dithoko* were mainly inspired by politico-economic power struggles, such as wars and the chase and related consequences, such as cannibalism, the *difela* drew their origin from major socio-economic developments that led to the migrant labour system operative between Lesotho and South Africa during the late nineteenth and entire 20th century up to this date. The *diboko* on their part, originated from the need of the different Basotho clans to know themselves and to preserve their identity; self-knowledge found expression in remembering the history of the clan and the line of descent from far-away and handing it down to contemporary generations. Some pressures on the texts are indeed of an overriding nature, such as, the arrival of the missionaries in Lesotho, and in particular, their influence on religion, civilian life and book education, referred to as literacy; early, intermediate and contemporary political developments in Lesotho and the southern African region. Others are the rise of modernism during the 20th century, as well as the introduction of modern media, such as newspapers, radio and television as well as present day communication technologies. These will be dealt with in Chapter 2.

A central vantage point overriding the three genres is performance where, with the history of two centuries behind them, generic shift was inevitable. The need to establish the nature of such a shift will force us to juxtapose the material of our contemporary investigation (see 1.2.1) with the material contained in earlier studies on the different genres (see 1.2.2). The poet, his/her text, use of voice, gestures, deportment and accoutrement, the role of the audience, and overall consumption of the performance, will be sharply in our focus in Chapter 3.

From the beginning of the 21st century, looking back, the subject-matter that inspired the genres, and the themes that gave rise to them are additional vantage points where the contours of generic shift are likely to be observed. As can be expected, the different times in which the poets lived had tremendous influence on the subject-matter and themes of their compositions. The role of factors such as the advance of Christianity, various other religions, modernism and changing societal values affecting survival of the oral genres, will be the vantage points dealt with in Chapter 4.

This approach enabled us to recognize a recent development, namely, the migration of these genres in the same performance from the same poet - an interactive cross-over, from the one to the other, whereby the text of the one oral genre is being penetrated by the other(s). One genre thus becomes part of the other resulting in what may be called 'migration', 'hybridization', or sometimes, mutual interpenetration of texts. As the poets of earlier generations passed away, those of latter generations continued with their compositions albeit in different situations and vastly different times. Migration, although inevitable, is nevertheless significant, especially how it is realized in the performance of an individual poet. This will be the subject of Chapter 5.

Explaining the outcomes of the vantage points in the chapters mentioned will enable us to conclude on the state of the art in various respects as Basotho poets make their way into the long road of the century that lies ahead. In addition to wrapping up the findings, we will be obliged to reflect on the emerging alternatives we have observed, at least of performances and presentations as well as the future of these genres as separate expressions of oral creativity. This will be our endeavor in Chapter 6.

1.3 Theoretical Underpinning

From a theoretical point of view, this study roots itself in what has become known as 'oral tradition', 'orality' and 'oral poetry' generally - three complementary concepts, each however representing their own field of interest as well as a narrowing down of interest for our purpose. The concept *oral tradition* has been usefully defined by J. Ki-Zerbo (1990: 54) as being "a testimony transmitted verbally from one generation to another. Its special feature is the fact that it is verbal in the manner it is transmitted". Finnegan (1991: 2) draws our attention to the fact that oral traditions,

...have all resulted from having been formulated in given historical circumstances, expressed in specific settings, used and transmitted by particular people and for particular purposes.

She goes on to say (ibid.),

There are many parties who have contributed to the creation, formulation and transmission of any oral tradition, and to the fixing of the 'oral texts' in which these traditions are so often represented. These include people in the past and the present, sometimes with multiple and contradictory purposes between them, and interacting with complex historical purposes. Amidst these many participants I shall be concentrating here on the role of just one set of actors: the researchers. This leads us into a discussion of the processes commonly lying behind the recording, transcribing and presentation of 'oral texts' – the various stages, that is, by which oral performances become crystallised and disseminated as written texts. Researchers have played a significant role in how these resultant texts – often dubbed the representatives of 'oral tradition' – are perceived as 'old' or alternatively, as 'innovative'; a role which, until recently has received insufficient attention.

Acknowledging myself as being implicated by Finnegan's view, I prefer to take a humble and objective position, particularly with due respect to the poets and the material contained in their oral renditions. It is necessary to note that most of the poets on their part responded to their recollection and presentation of the tradition handed down in their poems. Thus, oral tradition is not only reliant on human memory, but on the salient interpretation when handed down from generation to generation.

It is generally agreed that the concept *orality* refers to a state or a stage in human communication where the latter takes place by way of speaking and listening – a mouth to ear transmission (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1990: 972). Irele (1990: 252) quotes Walter Ong as saying,

Orality is characterized by short memory, homeostasis in memory, speaker and listener sharing a site, hence shared tribalism, transience of textuality, poorer transmission, intimacy, direct social control,

paratactic and non-cumulative, narrativity, adjectival description, types as narrative personae.

While taking cognizance of this view of primary orality we have to note that both the researcher and some of the poets we have recorded – share an advanced stage of literacy which enable them free access to and traffic between the two modes of information technology. The handling of the oral poetic texts will again be with due respect to the state of orality during performance, while I shall be obliged to take an advantage of access to literacy as I have done.

Following from the above, the concept *oral poetry* denotes either the reservoir of poetry that has come to be recognized as poetry conceived and delivered orally, or present day poetry similarly rendered from memory. In our forthcoming elucidation, however, we are likely to observe how this formal distinction has been straddled by a number of poets who composed their poetry through the process of writing while being faithful to the parameters that mark the oral genres we have selected.

The tension that we as ‘literates’ experience when considering concepts such as oral tradition, orality and oral poetry interestingly links up with what Brown (1995: 1) refers to as ‘the pressures of the text’. He (ibid.) asks,

Is the text applying pressure or is it rather the victim? Is pressure on texts to do with the status of orality as represented as text, or on the definition of text which might be expanded to accommodate the scriptless occasion of oral performance, or is the pressure on the nature of an orthography that can transcend the absence of cultural and contextual signifiers in the traditional materials of text...

Pressure in our preferred understanding refers to the factors that impacted and continue to impact on the poets, and therefore affect the latter’s oral composition, the text, mainly its subject-matter and theme. Pressure even extends to changing performance environments, and indeed the circumstances of delivery (cf. memory slip).

With all these said, we are faced with the challenge to obtain clarity on our understanding of the concept *text* in this context. Here an oral text refers to a poem uttered by the mouth, conducted and delivered by the spoken word; or the vocal expression during the delivery. When writing about oral poetic texts as the case will be in this treatise, we would like to suggest that the oral texts should continue to be viewed according to the process during which they were created, which is oral.

We are now ready to introduce the subject-matter underlying this thesis, namely, the Basotho and their *dithoko*, *difela* and *diboko*.

1.4 The formation of the Basotho nation

As far back as 1780 Dingiswayo, chief of the Umtetwa, engaged in a scheme of subjugating all the independent peoples of the surrounding country on the east of the Drakensberg and uniting them under his sole authority (Ellenberger, 1912: 117). In this way he succeeded in defeating the Amakwandini and other people including the Amazulu of Senzangakhona. When he died, the famous King Shaka took over and fought all the tribes from Delagoa Bay to the Umzimkulu during the early decades of the nineteenth century.

In his attacks Shaka overpowered and subjugated every tribe without regard for age or sex. The tribes fled and threw themselves in turn on those weaker than themselves. Among these was the powerful chief Zwibe who slew Dingiswayo. Shaka attacked the Amangwane who lived on the eastern slopes of the Drakensberg. These in turn attacked the Amahlubi. The Amahlubi fell upon the Batlokwa of Mmanthatisi, a widow acting as regent for her son Sekonyela. The latter fled westwards. The communities which were attacked by the Amangwane, Amahlubi and Batlokwa were uprooted, and these subsequently uprooted others with the result that every inhabitant of what is now Lesotho and the Free State was caught up in a struggle for survival. Sanders (1975: 29) describes the situation by saying,

Warfare was no longer cattle raiding in the fields by small groups of enterprising warriors, but invasion by starving hordes which swept into the villages, killing indiscriminately, setting fire to the huts and seizing

both stock and grain. Many fled from the area completely, most of them taking refuge in the Cape Colony. Others survived by hunting and gathering, and became known as the Makaota, 'The Lean Ones'. Others, more wretched and degraded still, turned to the horrors of cannibalism, but thousands must have died of starvation, and thousands more were killed in battle.

This period, roughly 1822-1833, during which the various clans of the central plateau of the sub-continent were alternately invaded and ruined by successive invasions, was known as the *Lifaqane* in Sesotho. Says Ellenberger (1912: 117) in defining this concept:

The word *Lifaqane* is of Setebele origin, and denotes a state of migration. It is used here as describing the struggles of wandering tribes accompanied by their families, flocks and herds, as distinct from the ordinary expeditions of inter-tribal warfare in which as a rule only the fighting men took part.

These invasions were precipitated by the Mahlubi of Pakalitha; by the Amangwane of Matiwane; by the Batlokwa of Manthatisi; by the Matebele of Moselekatse; by the Amazulu of Shaka; and the Griquas and Korannas from the west.

It was during this period that the designation *Matebele* was given to the people living on the east of the Drakensberg, namely, the Amazulu, Amaswazi, Amahlubi, and many others.

The first inhabitants of Lesotho were the people of three small clans from the banks of the Tugela, namely, the Maphetla, the Mapolane and the Baphuthi. The Maphetla, (Ellenberger, 1912: 21) previously known as Amateza of the tribe Amazizi, who were troubled by their more powerful neighbours the Amahlubi, crossed the Drakensberg mountains during or about the year 1600 on their way to Lesotho. This clan came to be called the Maphetla or Pioneers because it was they who opened the road to the "new country". These were later followed by the Mapolane and later by the Baphuthi.

Along with these were other small groups that followed suit and were collectively called the Matebele.

According to Hammond-Tooke (1974: 73), these groups were followed by the tribes of Basotho stock, Baphuthing, Makgolokwe, Basia, Batlokwa, Bafokeng, Bakwena, Bahlakwana, Dihoja, Bataung and others. All these tribes lived peacefully and undisturbed until 1822 when the period known as *Lifaqane* roughly began.

At the end of the Lifaqane by 1833, Moshoeshoe, then head of the Bamokotedi, a small remnant of the Bakwena, with great political wisdom, accepted all stray and diverse people who came to him for protection since 1824. Based at his stronghold Thaba-Bosiu, Moshoeshoe built up a great nation extending his rule, and founded what we today know as the *Basotho* nation (Schapera, 1946: 59). This is indicative of the philosophy of Moshoeshoe which was *Kgotso e aha setjhaba* 'Peace is the mother of nations' (Sanders, 1975: 59).

1.4.1 The name '*Basotho*'

Since the eighteenth century (cf. Ellenberger, 1912: 34), the Bapeli were in touch with their neighbours, the Amaswazi (Swazis). These used to laugh at the breech-cloth of the Bapeli, and the trouble they took to make one of the three ends pass between the legs and join the other two in a knot behind, thinking their own fashion of a *mocha* or sporran, made of jackals' tails or the dressed skins of rock-rabbit, more dignified. So, they called the Bapeli *Abashuntu*, a derivative of the verb *uku shunta*, "to make a knot". This designation, though bestowed in derision, was adopted with pride by the Bapeli, and later by other tribes similarly clothed, and was the origin of the present term, *Basotho*. Professor Thapelo Selepe in an oral communication argued that the term Basotho originates from the word, *sootho* 'brown' which referred to the Basotho as *ba sootho* 'the dark brown ones' owing to the colour of their skin. The whole adjective, *ba sootho* 'the brown ones' with the elision of one of the vowels, 'o', formed a plural noun, Basotho or a singular noun, Mosotho, to refer to these people. The prefixes Ba- and Mo- in this case refer to human beings. Monyane Mathibeli from Diepkloof, Soweto, also orally explained that the name, Basotho, originates from the word, *lesôtô*, which according to Mabile and Dieterlen (1961:

468) means 'a leg of a tanned skin used to tie the *thari* on the back of a woman. Since the tanned skin was soft, it was also worn by the Basotho men as a short loin garment, *tsheha*, to cover their private parts. Since the prefix *le-* in *lesôtô* indicates that the latter refers to an object, it was necessary to change *lesôtô* to *mosôtô* so that the prefix *Mo-* should indicate human beings. The word originally pronounced *Mosôtô* came to be used and pronounced as *Mòsóthó* in the singular form and *Basóthó* in the plural. With an element of acceptability in all these theories, it appears that there is no agreement among the *Basotho* on the origin of the name.

Ellenberger (1912: 31) further states that Mathulare, daughter of the Bafokeng chief, who was married to chief Tabane of the Bakgatla, became the mother of the founders of five great tribes - viz. the Bapeli, Makgolokwe, Maphuthing, Batlokwa and the Basia. These may be called the first Basotho because they were the first to bear that name.

The term, *Basotho* (cf. Matšela and Moletsane, 1993: 1) is to-day inclusively used to refer to people who are the inhabitants of Lesotho. They may be the Basotho, the Zulus, the Xhosas, etc. It is also used to refer to people of African origin, who have accepted Basotho culture and language, irrespective of where they live, in or outside the boundaries of Lesotho. These may thus be referred to as the Basotho of Qwaqwa, of Bloemfontein, Matatiele, KwaZulu-Natal or Gauteng, etc.

1.5 Historical origin of the oral poetry of the Basotho

The discussion on the historical origin of the oral poetry in this context will be confined to the three oral genres, *dithoko*, *diboko* and *difela* selected for this study.

1.5.1 Historical sketch of the *dithoko*

The Basotho nation was established during the first half of the nineteenth century when the founder Moshoeshoe 1 reconstructed and unified branches of numerous Sotho-Tswana tribes who lived in and around what was to become known as the Kingdom of Lesotho. The new nation also included remnants broken down from Nguni groups who were forced into the territory as a result of the Difaqane. These

wars started at about 1821, and lasted for more than a decade and had a great impact on the lore of the nation.

Lestrade in Schapera (1946: 2) defines a praise poem (*thoko*) as,

...a type of composition intermediate between the pure, mainly narrative, epic, and the pure, mainly apostrophic, ode, being a combination of exclamatory and laudatory apostrophizing.

This kind of poetry (*thoko*, from *ho roka*, 'to praise', 'to extol') was composed and transmitted orally in performance. According to Swanepoel (1990: 264) available records of oral poetry go back only about one-and-a-half century and mainly reflect the history of that period. However, there can be little doubt that the tradition had existed a long time before. In giving a reason for this state of affairs, says Swanepoel (1990: 264),

This is reflected in the fact that the state of the art at the time of the first recordings not only showed a remarkable variety, or institutionalised significance, but also a skill that cannot be associated with any form of apprenticeship.

According to Swanepoel (1991: 2), the earliest praises of Basotho chiefs, of which we have record in book form, are those of Peete, Makoanyane and Moshoeshe's own cattle-raid poem (cf. Mangoaela, 1921:1-10). These were inspired by personal feats during local cattle-raids and other adventures. Moshoeshe's cattle-raid poem originates from about 1810. So skilfully did he execute the cattle raid on Monaheng, a neighbouring chief that he for life acquired the name Moshoeshe (the Barber) which originated from his popular poem (Guma 1967: 152),

*Ke nna Moshoeshe Moshoeshe wa ha Kali,
Lebeola le beotseng Ramonaheng ditedu;
Le ho hola, ha di eso hole,
Di ya sala, di hola maisao.*

I am Moshoeshoe, Barber of Kali,
Shaver who's skinned off Ramonaheng's beard;
And as for growing it hasn't grown yet,
It remains to grow in years to come.

The publication of the oral compositions of the Basotho, in particular, oral poetry, started shortly after the arrival of the missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Mission Society in 1833. Their first publication in Sesotho dates back to 1837, only four years after their arrival. The first written records of poetry in Sesotho disclose a number of what Swanepoel (1990:265) refers to as 'salient features'. The appearance of Casalis' *Études sur la langue séchuana* in 1841 was the first emergence of the proofs. With this also emerged the fact that the first published poems were French translations without the original Sotho. In this publication Casalis included praise poems such as *Toko de Goloane*, *Chant de guerre de Moshesh*, *Toko de Makoiane*, *Toko de Coucoutle* as well as eight short animal praises. In this case, Casalis left out the original Sesotho versions and included substantial explanatory notes on concepts which might have been foreign to French readers (Swanepoel, 1990: 266).

According to Swanepoel (ibid.), the missionaries introduced poetry in western mould; yet they themselves set the example of including samples of oral poetry in their writings, thereby encouraging the recording of oral poetry. Casalis devoted no less than 50 pages of his work to what he called 'Poesis des Bassoutos'.

Swanepoel (1990: 266) remarks that the first missionaries made useful observations regarding composition, performance and transmission of the oral poetry, and, in the process, added their evaluative comments as well. Their observations are useful especially if one takes into consideration that it was at a period during which contact with other cultures was limited to the few missionaries, some traders, officials and farmers.

A view often held by some is that the missionaries often viewed the Basotho oral poetry with contempt. The following view by Casalis in Swanepoel (1990: 267) however proves that the first generation of missionaries did appreciate and realize some originality in the Basotho poets' compositions of the *dithoko*:

What is attractive about the pieces of poetry contained in the following pages is their novelty. Composed by bards whose genius has never had any guide but nature, their originality cannot be contested.

While referring to a lack of some poetic devices, Casalis marvels at the general qualities and nature of this poetry of sweet passion composed by people still not literate, and which presupposes an advanced culture. Casalis in Swanepoel (ibid.) remarks,

The artifices of verse are unknown to the Africans. Their poetry, while not entirely devoid of rhythm, shows no methodical arrangement whatsoever of feet or metre, and still less rhyme. It is distinguished from ordinary speech by a heightening of sentiment, metaphor, ellipsis, and by that device, sometimes intense and energetic, sometimes melancholic and innocent, which is peculiar to the language of passion. These pieces generally celebrate hunts or wars. It is not surprising that the poetry of sweet passion, the creation of which presupposes an advanced culture and civilization, is all but unknown to a still not literate people.

Writing before the middle of the 19th century, Casalis mentions that the hero extolled in a poem is nearly always its author, and that the performance of the poems was a means of recounting his exploits. Furthermore, it was a means through which a hero communicated deeds of heroism to others, and by extension, transmission of history from mouth to mouth. Explains Casalis in Swanepoel (1990: 267),

The hero of the poem is nearly always its author. Returning from battle, he washes himself at a nearby river and then very carefully stores his spear and shield in the back of his hut. His friends surround him and ask him to recount his exploits. His telling is grandiose; he is carried away by the intensity of his feelings, his expression becomes poetic. He seizes upon the most recent experiences; these are repeated to the enraptured author, who reflects on them and joins them together in his

long hours of leisure; after the passing of two or three months his children will know the toko by heart and thereafter it will be repeated at ceremonies of the tribe.

Recitation of praise poems is, in a sense, a transmission of the people's history. This is confirmed by Finnegan (1970: 143),

Praise poetry is also a vehicle for the recording of history as viewed by the poets.

To the Basotho, who for centuries were not exposed to the culture of reading and writing, the importance attached to their praise poetry, especially war poetry cannot be overemphasized. Comments Bereng (1987: 121),

But the first and the most original Sesotho poetry is that which is related to war. This is the poetry of a people's survival. It is a poetry for the nation-building and for fatherland. It is a poetry whose function is to tie a people together reminding them of their origins with a vision for tomorrow.

The missionaries played an important role in making possible that the Basotho oral poetry as well as other compositions such as idioms, comes to print. The birth of the missionary journal *Leselinyana la Lesotho* served as a major step in the direction of storing both the literary and modern texts of the Basotho. Explains Swanepoel (1990: 269),

The appearance of the first issue of the missionary journal, *Leselinyana la Lesotho* (Little light of Lesotho) on 3 November 1863, marked the beginning of a vital period in the cultural history of the Basotho. Although established to further the aims of the Protestant mission, it gradually became an invaluable storehouse of literary texts, both oral and modern. There many texts were printed for the first time, often in serialized form. It eventually developed a special column which served as a forum for sharing ethical, literary and linguistic views. The praise

poems and idioms that were published were often accompanied by substantial explanatory notes, while the vast amount of historical accounts often included praise poems (*dithoko*) as well. By this time the missionaries encouraged Basotho collectors and poets to publish. Mention can be made here of Azariel Sekese's transcriptions of *dithoko* such as those of Moshoeshe 1 between 1893 and 1906, and Mangoaela's *Lithoko tsa marena a Basotho* (Praise poems of Basotho Chiefs) which started as a series on 21 November 1919 until 10 June 1921.

Casalis above sketched a classical performance of *dithoko* which continued for roughly a century and a half since as we shall see in Chapter 2. Basotho heroes of World War 1 (1914-1918) were still praised in the same classical style. What will also become clear as our treatise unfolds is the central role of Mangoaela's collection of praise poems referred to in the above quotation. In fact the poems collected herein can be viewed as representative of a *canon* of the praise poetry tradition in Sesotho. Indicative of its status is the fact that it served as fountainhead to two prominent scholarly works on *dithoko*, namely, D.P. Kunene's *Heroic Poetry of the Basotho* (1971) and Damane and Sanders' *Sotho Praise-Poems* (1974) both published in the series, the Oxford Library of African Literature. Kunene's work is a major contribution to our understanding of the structure of the praise poem in Sesotho, while Damane and Sanders' presents a detailed annotation and translation of the poems of 18 Basotho heroes.

1.5.2 Historical sketch of the *difela*

The discussion of *difela* 'chants of the migrants', popularly known as *Lifela tsa litsamaea-naha* 'songs of the walkers across the mound or country side' (cf. Mokitimi, (1998: 8) can best be understood against the background of the experiences of the artists who composed them, as these experiences are reflected in their compositions. Migrant workers can be defined as workers from other countries such as Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique, who are recruited for work in the South African mines for a particular period at the end of which they have to return to their countries. With the discovery of diamonds near Hopetown in 1866, and gold in Witwatersrand in

1886, the mining industries opened up opportunities for Basotho men to come to South Africa where they sold their labour. During this period a new form of poetry called *difela tsa ditsamayana* emerged and was recited by them on their journeys to the mining industries and back to their villages in Lesotho.

The distance between these villages and the mines was long and the journeys were initially undertaken on foot and lasted for several weeks. It was on these journeys that some of these poems were first composed and chanted, and some were chanted during leisure hours or when these men were on leave at home. Later on when journeys were taken by train or busses, the miners still continued to compose and chant their *difela* (cf. Mokitimi, 1991:1 and Swanepoel et al., 1996:63).

The contents of *difela* reveal many problems and hardships often encountered by an exploited class of migrant workers (Mokitimi, 1991:1). The hardships reflected in the *difela* are those experienced at home in Lesotho and in a foreign country, South Africa. This poetry is composed as the result of economic needs and brings to light strong political comments on its resultant social hardships. Says Mokitimi (1991:1),

...their composition and transmission has been brought about by economic, social and historical changes of capitalism and imperialism. The poets express and expose the economic and social evils of exploitation and dehumanization of migrant mine labourers. They are therefore, poems of protest and condemnation of the system that exploits these workers.

As a result of low wages they earned at the mines, lack of transportation and distance to their homes, the migrant workers were often forced to spend the whole period of their contract away from their families, and visitation by their families was equally difficult if not impossible. Says van der Wiel in Goldman (1987: 12),

According to one survey 67% of mine workers from Lesotho never visit their families during the length of their contract.

So painful was the situation of the mine worker, that Goldman (1987: 12) comments,

In essence, the migrant is lost to his family for a period of six to twenty-four months. Visitation of the miner by his family is generally out of the question.

One of the clauses of the Lusaka Charter was not applicable to these miners, namely, the principle that people have a right to a stable family existence - the rights to marry, to raise children, and to provide them with adequate support. The migrant labour system seriously violated these fundamental human rights, and resulted in miseries of economic, emotional and sexual nature. Murray (in Goldman 1987:13) comments,

A system in which large numbers of men spend long periods away at work, leaving their wives and children at home, generates economic insecurity, material disharmony, material and emotional misery and problems related to sexual morality and legitimacy of children irrespective of the cultural definition of these matters.

The fact that the average miner spent quite a number of years away from home means that he was absent during the most important period of his marriage as well as during the growing period of his children. Gordon (in Goldman 1987: 13) explains that,

...migration tends to occur when a man is in his twenties, thirties and forties. These findings point to the migrant's being absent during the critical years of his marriage and during the years when his children are growing up.

This situation has had a major and negative impact on traditional patterns of Basotho social and cultural life. At the base of this impact is a fundamental paradox,

A man's absence as a migrant labourer is a condition of his family's survival. But his absence also undermines the conjugal stability from which his family derives its identity (Murray in Goldman 1987:14).

The oscillating system of migration had the effect of exacerbating the problems of the migrant workers. Wives left alone at home for a long period of time were equally liable to fall into temptation like men in the urban hostels who formed intimate relationships with girls and women in the cities, resulting in bigamies and prostitutions, and other social evils such as homosexuality, drunkenness, etc. Many of these men developed new commitments which made it increasingly difficult for them to save and to send money home. Coplan (1990: 255) in agreement with Kunene (1971: 4), paints a poignant picture of the *difela* where he says,

Lifela are most often egocentric, reflecting the male migrant's existential self-concept as a contemporary hero in the traditional Sesotho mould, an ordinary man confronting extraordinary dangers in an alien place, exiled from the home, family, and community he is (thanklessly) fighting to preserve. Like black American bluesmen they sing of love affairs and faithlessness not marriage, doubt and danger not certainty, wage labour not agriculture, trains and trails not home and family.

Problems mentioned so far, should serve as a bird's-eye-view of the difficulties experienced by the oscillating Basotho migrant workers, and these then served as basis for the inspiration of the composition of the *difela tsa ditsamayana* (songs of the inveterate travellers).

This self-imposed predicament is well captured by Coplan (1994:102) where he says,

The theme of travel is of course made emblematic in the generic name for migrants' songs, *sefela sa litsamaea-naha le liparola-thota*. While the best English gloss for this phrase might be "songs of the country rambler," one informant tried helpfully to explain it as the songs of "those who have seen the places and the spaces in between the places." Structure is extemporaneous and concatenated in *sefela*, and since no sequential or chronological relationship between episodes is required, traveling becomes the main experiential and thematic principle of textual progression. The poet crosses and recrosses boundaries in space, time and narrative structure as the migrant

transcends and restructures the boundaries of Basotho social organization.

Coplan's view is confirmed by an example of the *sefela* by Francis Nkoli (Appendix No. 8) where the latter in lines 23-38 relates the experiences of his illness (boils) while he was at the Soweto suburb of Dlamini. In the next lines, 39-51 he relates his experiences with his parents at home in Lesotho. In the next lines, 52-63, he is among the Thembus in the Cape where he consulted a healer, Mrs Radebe, and where he experienced difficulty with the Xhosa language spoken there. From there he relates in lines 64-80 his visit to the Batswana in Bophuthatswana and his surprise at the funny manner in which the Tswana language was spoken. In the next lines, 81-85, he relates about the fat young girls at his home village in Lesotho. While his *sefela* reflects his experiences as an experienced traveller, it also has among others the following order of structure,

Dlamini→ *Home*→*Cape*→*Bophuthatswana*→*Home*.

As we shall see in the chapter on performance, the *difela* are vastly different from the *dithoko*. The latter are clearly declamatory in delivery while the former are spoken in a softer songlike chant.

1.5.3 Historical sketch of the *diboko*

The use of this oral art form has been in existence from as far back as the origin of the Basotho nation and beyond. The words, *seboko* the singular form, and *diboko* the plural, are derived from the verb stem, *ho boka*, meaning "to praise", "to give thanks" or "to salute". Every clan or family is distinguished by a particular name known as *seboko*. Damane and Sanders (1974: 1) followed the view of Dieterlen and Mabilie (1912: 393) in terms of a *seboko*, by saying,

Each of the Basotho groups had its own name, which was usually formed from that of one of its chiefs, past or present, or from that of the animal or object which it revered as its totem.

The study of this art form shows that apart from being used to distinguish a family or clan from the other, the various names are derived from different sources. Names such as Bahlakwana and Makgwakgwa are examples of names derived from historical incidents related to the establishment of a clan or family. For instance, the Makgwakgwa clan, according to Ellenberger (1912: 72), used to erect a strong fence or screen made of interlaced branches of trees around the baskets in which they kept their grain to protect it from thieves and wild beasts, and this fence was called *lekgwakgwa*. It was for this reason that the clan came to be called *Makgwakgwa*.

Clan names such as Bakwena (The Crocodile clan) and Bataung (The Lion clan), are examples of names derived from animal emblems, commonly called totems. Other clan names are derived from names of the founders of the clans. These are names such as Basia (from Mosia), Batlokwa (Motlokwa), Makgolokwe (Mokgolokwe), and Maphuthing (Mophuthing).

Among the Basotho clans or tribes, cleavages were among the main causes of clans separating themselves from their parent clans and forming new ones with their new leaders. Matšela and Moletsane (1993: 3) summarise causes for emergence of various clans, by saying,

Hangata leloko le hlahile ka baka la phapang e hlahisoang ke ho tlolea ha molao oa moetlo, kapa tlhaho e sa tloaelehang, kapa ka qabang e malebana le lefa (leruo), kapa takatso ya ho itaola ha monyane/moena, a lahla moholoane ke hona; kapa ka mabaka a mang, kamoo 'mole (kapa neano ea taba) o supang kateng.

Usually a tribe/clan came into being because of difference caused by violation of the law of culture, or an unusual birth, or conflict related to inheritance (wealth), or desire for independence by a younger brother, therefore abandoning his elder brother; or through other reasons, according to oral tradition.

The Basotho, especially those of old, believe that in some mysterious and inexplicable way, they derive their existence from these totems which they view as

sacred. Apart from this, they also believe in the existence of the Invisible One. The sacredness of the totems emanates from the fact that they, as tangible, represent and symbolise the so-called “Modimo wa kgale” (the God of old) to whom they address their prayers and thanks for the benefits enjoyed. Some even have superstitious beliefs regarding these animals. In this respect says Ellenberger (1912: 241),

if anyone found the animal which represented his coat of armour dead in the field, he would approach it backwards, open the cranium, take out the brain and anoint his eyes with it for fear of being struck blind should he neglect his duty.

This belief therefore helps strengthen the unity between Basotho and their totems. As for the sacredness of these totems, their stock (Ashton, 1952: 13) bears its mark as a sign of protection. The Basotho put it on their shields, on their domestic utensils, on their skin mantles; they swear by these animals, and by them they conjure *dithotsela* ‘evil spirits’.

It is commonly believed that the Basotho originated from a hillock known as Ntswanatsatsi. The Afrikaans name is Tafelkop, and it is regarded as the place where the sun rises or the place of the rising sun. It is said to have been surrounded by tall reeds, and to this day in consequence thereof, a reed or its substitute is usually erected outside a hut in which there is a newly born baby. To the vast majority of the Basotho, Ntswanatsatsi is a mythical place whose exact geographical location is unknown, except for the fact that it is said to be somewhere in the East, in the direction from which the sun rises. In view of this wide-spread belief, it is interesting to note that according to Ellenberger, this place lies mid-way between Frankfort and Vrede in the Free State, and not far from the borders of Lesotho. Some say Tafelkop lies just off the N3 between Villiers and Warden in the Free State (Guma, 1967: 4; Wells, 1994: 23).

It was at this mythical place where different tribes were each given a totem name as a distinguishing mark from other tribes. The strong unity between Basotho and their *diboko* can be attributed to this belief, as well as the fact that the totem name is not

only used as a clan name, but also as a metaphorical eulogie in which the attributes associated with the animal are believed to be bestowed upon the clan members.

Both composition and recitation of this art form serve as a vehicle for preservation and transmission of information about the reciter's clan or family, ancestors, origin, history, culture or philosophy. The following recitation of the Bafokeng, by Moipone Mofokeng, from Mzimbhlophe, in Soweto, serves as an example:

*Ke Lehowana la boTlalane,
Ke motho wa Mahase a Mpewana,
Ke hasa dikgomo,
Ke hasa le batho,
Ke hasa le dipudungwana naheng,
Ke ngwana tau ya Matsebela,
Nong ha e ntje, mmane e mpone,
E tshaba ha e tla tshwehla molomo!*

I am a descendant of Howana, of the family of Tlalane,
Descendant of Mahase, son of Mpewana,
I scatter the cattle,
I scatter the people too,
I scatter even the small black wildebeests in the veld,
I am a young lion of Tsebela descendants.
A vulture does not eat me, lightning having struck me,
Fearing it would ooze from the mouth!

The reciter says she is a descendant of the ancestors, Howana, Tlalane, and Mahase, son of Mpewana. Courage and valour as virtues of prowess are extolled by the reciter as characteristics of this clan. This is attributed to the scattering of the cattle, the people as well as the black wildebeests as they are attacked by this group. This is further confirmed by reference to herself as a young lion. If a member of this clan may happen to die as a result of being struck by lightning, his/her corpse is not devoured by a vulture, the reason being fear of oozing fat and blood from its mouth (clan members are proud of being fat). This is the spirit of heroism manifested

by members of this clan. It is against this view that the *diboko* may be regarded as oral carriers of part of the people's history, culture and origin. Patrick Bereng, from Maseru explains verbally that,

Mokgwa wa Basotho wa ho boloka diboko ke mokgwa wa ho boloka setso sa bona. Ka baka la ho se tsebe ho bala le ho ngola, ba ne ba boloka nalane ya bona ka ho e kenya kelellong.

The Basotho custom of preserving the family odes was the way of preserving their culture. Because they could not read or write, they preserved their historical background by committing it to memory.

The actual authors of this art form, as it is the case with most oral art forms, are not known. The composition was the collective legacy of the chief together with his men at the village court '*kgotla*'. From there, each man would teach his children the recitation of his particular *seboko*.

Nowadays *diboko* as a genre of oral poetry is still a living oral art form and a heritage of the Basotho. The importance attached to it lies in the fact that it maintains a link with the ancestors whose names and history are remembered in their recitation (cf. Tšiu, 2001: 58,163).

1.6 Conclusion

The aim, scope and need have been stated; data collection and mode of analysis have been explained. The Basotho and their oral art forms have been introduced. The time has come to address the pressures on the texts in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

PRESSURES ON THE ORAL POETRY OF THE BASOTHO

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore and explain a number of critical pressures that played a role on the Basotho as a nation as well as on the composition of their oral poetry. Among these are the politico-economic power struggles such as the wars they had to fight, a related consequence, namely, cannibalism, the coming of the missionaries which influenced worship, the direction of the emerging new civilization and education. Major socio-economic developments, the rise of modernism as well as communication technology will now be discussed.

2.2 Politico-economic struggles

Moshoeshoe 1 fought many battles in order to retain his sovereignty. This came at a price. Numerous wars against enemies nearby and further afield were his fate. We shall deal with five of the famous battles in Basotho history and consider their impact on the *dithoko*. These are:

- The battle of Oetsi (*Ntwa ya Oetsi*): 1856 - 1857
- Senekal's war (*Ntwa ya Senekale*): 1854 - 1858
- The Seqiti war (*Ntwa ya Seqiti*): 1865 - 1868
- The Gun war (*Ntwa ya Dithunya*): 1880 – 1881
- The First World War: 1914 – 1918

The content of this oral art form is mainly to extol the virtues and great deeds of heroes in wars, as well as to preserve a record of events. Says Bereng (1987: 120),

Thus when we speak of a war poem as a praise poem we mean that the poet praises his own side and not the side of the enemy. Another characteristic of a Basotho war poem is its function as a record of events. These poems contain important historic notes which while may be kept in a biased language - propagandist language, nevertheless,

preserve the aspirations of the people at the moment as well as the events as they occurred. As a record, a war poem can tell why the war was fought, can say how the war was fought. And again, in the whole narration names of people play the most important part because war is about individuals, the people.

What follows is the discussion of some of the wars in which the Basotho took part, and each particular war discussed will be followed by an example of a few lines from the poet's *thoko* to show how the *dithoko* compositions were inspired by war or chase. The wars may be unpacked as follows:

2.2.1 The battle of Oetsi (*Ntwa ya Oetsi*) 1856 – 1857

According to Laydevant and Tjhokosela (1963: 68), at the beginning of 1856 the Boers were aware that Oetsi, chief of the Makgolokwe, still continued to attack the farms of the White farmers, and was reluctant to repay the things that he captured illegally. One Boer council approached him and requested him to restore 1, 700 head of cattle and 300 horses he had taken possession of. This council forcefully entered Oetsi's village, captured the cattle and put the village on fire.

Despite this punishment, the Makgolokwe under the leadership of Oetsi continued to steal cattle and horses belonging to the Boers. The Free State authority then sent the governor, J.M. Orpen, to be in charge of the Boers. Orpen's council fought and defeated the Makgolokwe and drove them as far as possible from their village. Moshoeshoe thereupon intervened and requested that the battle be halted (Laydevant and Tjhokosela (1963: 68).

In the following lines, the poet, Mopeli Mokhachane, in *Mangoaela* (1921: 21) alludes to the incident of the driving out of Oetsi and the Makgolokwe:

*Ke pela, ke hloela, thak'a Lelaka la Rasenate.
O lutse qhooeng, a thetsa maoatla,
A re: "Khoeli ke ela," ho Senekane;
O itse a sa shebile,*

*A mo hotetsa ka leshala sebono:
A k'u utloe motsu, mo-hlola-lintoa;
Ke ho qala u hapeloe ke Basotho!
U n'u re ho ja tsa Oetsi, oa lemala!*

He is a rock-rabbit, a spy, a comrade of Lelaka of Rasenate.
He sits on a summit, deceiving the fools,
Saying to Senekal: 'There is a moon':
While looking at it
He set fire to his buttocks with burning fuel!
Do feel the sting, instigator-of-wars,
It's the first time your cattle have been plundered by the Basotho!
By devouring Oetsi's you formed a habit!

According to Damane and Sanders (1974:100), Lelaka la Rasenate (Lelaka of Rasenate) refers to chief Letsie. By sitting on a summit and deceiving the fools, he is cleverer and plays hide-and-seek with fools like Senekal, the Commandant-General of the Free State in 1858. Whilst the Boers were under the false impression that the relationship between the Basotho and the Boers was normal, the Basotho strike again by setting fire to their buttocks, that is, by stealing their cattle and their horses. The poet is pleased that the Boers should feel the pain of losing their cattle, and he regards Senekal as *mo-hlola-dintoa* 'instigator-of-wars', the cause of conflict or war between the Basotho and the Boers. In line 7, as if plundering is justified, he poses a question whether it is the first time that plundering by the Basotho has taken place. In line 8, he alludes to the devouring of Oetsi who was destroyed in the Battle of 1856-1857. Damane and Sanders (1974: 101) comment,

Oetsi was chief of the Kholokoe, and until 1856 he and his people lived in the area which is still known as Witsies Hoek. In 1856 the Free Staters swept off much of their stock and drove Oetsi and many of his followers into Lesotho.

The explanation above confirms how this *thoko* composition was indeed inspired by the war between these parties.

2.2.2 Senekal's War (*Ntwa ya Senekale*) 1854 - 1858

Senekal's war began in May 1858 and took its name from the O.F.S. Commander F. Senekal. It was another war fought between the Boers and the Basotho (Haliburton 1977: 162). The conflict was caused by the dispute about the boundary determined by Major H. Warden. The Boers did not want to evacuate the areas assigned for the Basotho while the latter equally refused to evacuate areas assigned for the Boers.

According to Haliburton (1977: 162), the second cause of the conflict was the continuing stock-theft by the Basotho. The situation deteriorated to such an extent that President Hoffman eventually visited Moshoeshoe at Thaba-Bosiu to discuss the matter as Moshoeshoe's subchiefs, Posholi, Jan Letele, Lebenya and Oetsi were directly responsible for the thefts. President Hoffman ended his discussion with Moshoeshoe by advising that the continuing stock-theft would lead to unavoidable war.

The new Governor, Sir George Grey (Leoatle, 1944: 81) wanted to have the conflict solved as he was aware that the British Government was no more willing to involve itself in the problems between the Boers and the Basotho. He therefore called a gathering of the two parties at Smithfield in 1855. An agreement between Moshoeshoe and the President of the Free State stated the following (Leoatle, 1944: 82):

1. *Mosotho ea eang Frei Stata e ka khona a be le pasa e tsoang ho morena kapa ho moruti.*
2. *Basotho ba ratang ho tsoma Frei Stata e ka khona ba fumane tumello ho Landdrost.*
3. *Marena e ka khona a n'o tšoara masholu a kenang Lesotho.*
4. *Masholu an'o romeloa Frei Stata le lintho tse utsoitsoeng. Kapa, ha a sa romeloa, ho eketsoe tefo hane holim'a se utsoitsoeng; litefo li honyelle ho e'so fete likhoeli tse peli.*
5. *Basotho ba senyang mapolasing ba hle ba tebeloe hang hang feela.*

6. *Tsekisano ea naha eona e n'oa lokisoa ke Mopresident le Moshoeshoe.*
7. *Ha ho le-Buru le ka bang le tšimo Lesotho ka ntle ho tumello ea morena.*

1. A Mosotho going to the Free State must be in possession of an identity document signed by the chief or the religious minister.
2. The Basotho who want to go for hunting in the Free State must have permission issued by the Landdrost (Magistrate).
3. The chiefs must detain all thieves entering Lesotho.
4. Thieves must at all times be sent to the Free State together with proof of theft, or if this is not done, their fine should be increased four times what they have stolen. Fines must be paid within two months.
5. The Basotho committing crimes on the farms should be chased away immediately.
6. Any conflict pertaining to land should be resolved by the President and Moshoeshoe.
7. No Boer shall have a right to own a farm in Lesotho without permission from the chief.

Peace from this agreement did not last long as stock-theft continued. The Boers complained to President Boshoff who requested Moshoeshoe to repay 1604 heads of cattle stolen by his people. Moshoeshoe did not return the full claim and the Boers only got 393 heads of cattle complaining that the rest were but calves and others, sickly. Moshoeshoe then wrote a letter of complaint to the Governor informing him that the sending back of the cattle was a mere ploy to invite war the aim of which was to have more of the land belonging to the Basotho (Leoatle 1944: 83).

According to Leoatle (1944: 85), Moshoeshoe was to fulfil the following, failing which, there would be war:

1. *E khona Posholi le Lebenya ba laeloe ka thata ho lefa, ka khoeli e le 'ngoe, lintho tsa ma-Buru tseo ba li sentseng.*
2. *Ho hle ho felisoa bosholu hang feela, 'me Posholi le Lebenya ba tlosoe haufi le meeli.*
3. *Ho phethisoa ka ntle ho tieho litefo tsa lipere tseo ho neng ho lumellanoe ka tsona mohla-monene.*
4. *Ho hlonaphuo moeli oa Major Warden, ho fihlela ho ka ba ha boela ha lokisoa moeli oo bocha, ka kutloano.*

1. Posholi and Lebenya should be instructed to repay during the period of one month all the damage they have caused the Boers.
2. Stock-theft was to be eradicated immediately. Posholi and Lebenya should be removed from areas near the boundary.
3. There should be immediate repayment of horses previously agreed upon.
4. The boundary as set by Major Warden should be respected until a new agreement is reached regarding the boundaries.

According to Leoatle (1944: 85), when it became obvious that Moshoeshoe was not fulfilling the expectations, war was declared on 19 March 1858 in Bloemfontein. The Basotho were besieged at Beerseba on 23 March where 30 of them died and 3000 head of cattle were captured. Part of the war took place near Matelile and Khilibiting where 16 Boers and 16 Basotho were killed. The Boers later called this place Hellspoor as a result of the fierceness of the battle at that place.

At Mokhethoaneng another fierce battle ensued with the killing of many Basotho and 17 Boers (Leoatle 1944:87) and then at Matsieng the Boers made a horrifying discovery. Says Leoatle (1944:88),

Ma-buru ha a fihla Matsieng a bona ntho e ileng ea hlaba lipelo habohloko: a bona litopo tsa maBuru a neng a bolaoe Matelile li anehiloa li bile li retliloe, 'me ho nkiloa litho ho setla manaka. Ma-Buru a halefa hampe, a ba a hlasela metse eohle e hona moo; esita le motse

*oa Morija ba o senya ba mpa ba hlonepha kereke le ntlo ea Moneri
Maeder feela.*

The Boers on arriving at Matsieng saw something which made their hearts sore indeed: they saw the bodies of their fellow Boers killed at Matelile lying around in the open, and some body parts removed for purpose of making medicines. Out of anger and retaliation they attacked and destroyed the surrounding villages including Morija. They however spared the church and Mr Maeder's house.

According to Haliburton (1977: 3), President Boshoff of the Free State requested the Governor Sir George Grey (on behalf of Britain) to intervene in the war between Moshoeshoe and the Boers. This step resulted in the Treaty of Aliwal North on 29 September 1958. Since the O.F.S. and the Transvaal were preparing to unite into one state in order to make a common war against Moshoeshoe, the latter was persuaded to sign this agreement whereby claims for compensation on both sides were waived and the Basotho accepted the Warden Line with some modifications in their favor, in the south. The Basotho lost the right to hunt in the O.F.S.

Chief Masopha's poet, inspired by the war, declaims (in Mangoaela, 1921: 42),

Pina u ka phokoloa Mokhethoaneng,

.....
Pina u etsoa letsatsi le khahlile,

.....
Hlomellane oa Lioli, Masopha

Hlomella ba Senekane lehlaka,

Ba re ba ea nokeng, ba ee ba lla!

You're a warsong that's begun at Mokhethoaneng,

.....
You're a song which is sung when the sun is fierce,

.....
.....
Supplier of arms to the Hawks, Masopha,

Plant the reeds on the people of Senekal,
So that when they go to the river they go crying!

The song the poet is referring to was sung at Mokhethoaneng which according to Damane and Sanders (1974: 124) is a mountainous area on the bank of the Caledon, close to Cathcart's Drift. Mokhethoaneng is the place where the Boers under the leadership of Senekal and Pretorius were engaged in a fierce battle with the Basotho. Reference in line 2 to a song sung when the sun is fierce, metaphorically refers to the fierceness of the war. The poet in lines 3 to 5 exhorts Masopha whose regiment was named *Lioli* 'the Hawks', to stab Senekal's men with a spear, a 'reed', and so drive them backwards across the Caledon River. This extract appears in a poem of 70 lines in Mangoaela's collection.

2.2.3 The Seqiti War (War of the cannon) 1865 – 1868

The Seqiti war was fought between the O.F.S. and the Basotho between 1865 and 1868 (Haliburton, 1977: 162). It became popular by the intermittent roar of the cannons which distinguished this conflict from any other that the Basotho had known before, and for this reason they named it, according to Sanders (1975 : 284), 'Seqiti War', or 'the War of the Cannon's Boom'. Explains Leoatle (1944: 108),

E bitsoa Ntoa ya Seqiti ka baka la ho qititsa ha dikanono, tse neng di dikile Thaba-Bosiu kahohle, ka matsatsi a mangata.

It is called War of *Seqiti* on account of the stamping sounds of the cannons which completely surrounded Thaba-Bosiu for many days.

The Seqiti war was declared on 9 June 1865 (Leoatle 1944: 99) and the Commandant-General of the Free State forces, Jan Fick, attacked Maboela, the home of Mopeli on 14 June 1865, where about fifty of the Basotho were killed.

According to Sanders (1975 : 285 - 295), Posholi, Moorosi, Lebenya and others sent 3,000 of the warriors on June 19 into the Caledon River District where they destroyed farm buildings and killed about thirteen burghers, and returned with more

than 100,000 sheep and several thousand head of cattle and horses. On June 26 the Basotho paid a friendly visit to the Newlanders of Carolus Baatjie, but treacherously murdered every man and boy among them. As they returned home with their booty they were intercepted by Fick's commandos and were deprived of almost all the stock they had taken. This is where at least a hundred of the Basotho were killed.

Leoatle (1944: 80) relates that Moshoeshoe wrote a letter to President Brand in which he suggested that the High Commissioner be invited to act as mediator between the Boers and the Basotho. Brand declared that he would end the war on the following conditions: if Moshoeshoe agreed to hand over nearly all his arable land, if he evacuates Thaba-Bosiu and surrenders all the arms and ammunition, if he will be ruled in future by a Free State magistrate, and if he pays 10,000 head of cattle and 5,000 horses within four days. As Moshoeshoe indicated no willingness to address these issues, fighting therefore continued.

At Thaba-Bosiu, according to Leoatle (1944: 83-84), Moshoeshoe was experiencing one setback after another which included the steady destruction of his people's crops. The heaviest of them was to learn that his son, Molapo had surrendered to Fick's attack. It was then that the Treaty of Mpharane was concluded, by which he was allowed to retain that portion of his land which lay between the Maloti, the Caledon and the northern Phuthiatsana, and was obliged to dissociate himself from the rest of the Basotho and become a Free State subject under a Free State magistrate at Leribe.

Time had arrived when Moshoeshoe seriously needed peace. Accompanied by his brother, Mopeli, Moshoeshoe negotiated peace with President Brand. On 3 April 1866 an agreement was signed, which was known as the Treaty of Thaba-Bosiu or *Khotso ya Mabele*, 'the Peace of the Millet' (Sanders, 1975: 295). Moshoeshoe agreed to respect the Treaty as set out; to deliver 3,000 head of cattle by 11 April; and to accept the boundaries determined by the Commandants. Moshoeshoe's people were allowed to keep their arms.

Chief Lerotholi's poet, inspired by the Seqiti war, declaims the following (Mangoaela, 1921: 30),

A le tloheng batho ba Majoro,

.....

Ke bo-Borane ho tllloe ka lekoebe,

Ba tlile ka lekoebe ho Ramohato.

.....

Ha e na linaka, e thula ka phatla,

Na e re e ka betana le ea Thesele?

.....

Ba tsoe ba hlola ba re senyetsa peo

Ba senya peo ea rona masimong!

Won't you go away, you people of the Major,

.....

It is Brand and his men who has come as if in anger,

They have come as if in anger to the father of Mohato.

.....

It (the bull) has no horns; it butts with its forehead,

Does it think it can wrestle with the bull of Thesele?

.....

For they keep on destroying our seed,

They're destroying our seed in the lands!

The people to whom the poet is appealing to abandon war and move away, are referred to as people of the Major, who, according to Damane and Sanders (1974:138), were under the leadership of Major Warden, the British Resident in the Orange River Sovereignty until 1852. *Borane*, mentioned in line 2, who came in anger and ready to wage war against Moshoeshoe, was President J. H. Brand of the Free State from 1864 to 1888 (Damane and Sanders, 1974: 138). The poet in lines 4 and 5 uses metaphorical language as he compares Brand's and Moshoeshoe's warriors to bulls fighting against each other. Brand's men are like a hornless bull which only butts with its forehead, and therefore cannot successfully wrestle with

Moshoeshoe's warriors. Reference to seed destroyed in the lands, in lines 6-7 alludes to the incident during which the Boers burnt the Basotho crops during the war. Say Damane and Sanders (1974: 139),

During the 1865-8 war the Afrikaners tried to reduce the Sotho to submission by a scorched earth policy.

2.2.4 The Gun War (*Ntwa ya Dithunya*) 1880 - 1881

The war called *Ntwa ya dithunya* 'The gun war' took place between 1880 and 1881. It was precipitated by the demand of the Cape government for voluntary disarmament by the Basotho. Sir Henry Bartle Frere, the Cape High Commissioner, was behind the idea of enforced disarmament on all the tribes under the rule of the Cape Colony. Mr Gordon Sprigg, the Cape Premier, held a *pitso* 'summit' in Maseru on 16 October 1879 which was attended by most of the Basotho chiefs, where, according to Haliburton (1977: 56) Sprigg told the crowd that,

Basotho were like children who might become excited and join in an unintended rebellion.

Added to the disarmament issue, was also an announcement that the hut tax was to be increased, as well as measures to deprive the Basotho of Moorosi's country which had been part of Lesotho since 1871. In 1880 chief Letsie drew up two petitions, protesting against a move towards disarmament. He sent one to Cape Town and received an unfavorable reply, and the other to the Queen whose reply indicated no willingness to interfere.

On 21 May 1880 the Disarmament Proclamation or the Peace Preservation Act was issued. Some of the chiefs such as Jonathan and headsmen such as Tukunya took the side of the government and handed in their arms. But other chiefs, Joel, Masopha and Lerotholi stood firm against disarmament. The chiefs who supported the Disarmament Proclamation, and headmen like Tukunya, were attacked. The major period of the war between Cape troops and the Basotho 'rebels', was from September 1880 to April 1881. The Cape troops were unsuccessful and could not

crush the rebellion, and ultimately had to abandon the expensive struggle. Finally the Cape government passed what was called the 'Disannexation Act' according to which any further attempt to exercise control over the Basotho, was abandoned. The government shifted that responsibility to Britain (cf. Haliburton, 1977: 43).

This war again became the inspiration for several *dithoko* compositions. The following lines from Mangoaela (1921: 96) constitute part of a *thoko* based on the experiences of the Basotho during the Gun war of 1880-81:

Enoba o a bona, Mabekebeke!
Ha o bone o bone, Mabekebeke,
Dithunya ha di shebisana melomo.
Monga pere e putswa a robala;
O robaletseng, ngwana Lekgowa,
Hara medupe ya pula e ena?

I hope you have seen, Mabekebeke!
If you have looked you have seen, Mabekebeke,
The guns, when they pointed their mouths at each other.
The rider of the grey horse went asleep;
Why are you sleeping, you white man's Child,
Amidst the steady pouring of rains?

Mabekebeke in the poem refers to Sir Bartle Frere, the High Commissioner of the Cape who, according to Swanepoel (1991: 3), was nicknamed as such because of his glittering medals. *Dithunya ha di shebisana melomo* 'The guns, when they pointed their mouths at each other' depicts the fierceness of the war while the poet takes us right into the heat of the battle. *Monga pere e putswa a robala* 'The rider of the grey horse went asleep' refers to the death of the Afrikaner warrior Willem Erasmus who was personally shot by chief Maama. The battle took place *Hara medupe ya pula e ena* 'Amidst the steady pouring of rains'. This poem was most probably composed by chief Maama himself as the following lines clearly indicate (Damane and Sanders, 1974: 154). Of the shooting of Erasmus, the poet declaims (Mangoaela, 1921: 96),

*Ka otle Khooa, ka le lahla fatše;
Motho o oele ka mahlong a pere,
A oela ka mahlong a pitsi ea me, a Koloboi;*

I hit the white man, I dropped him down;
A man fell before the eyes of the horse,
He fell before the eyes of my horse, Koloboi;

With these lines the warrior poet triumphantly responds to the pressure in his dual role.

2.2.5 The First World War (1914 – 1918)

According to Damane (1963: 64), Germany was ruled by Kaiser Wilhelm II since 1890. It had been his intention to bring other countries under his control, and in June, 1914, when Prince Francis of Austria was murdered by the people of Serbia, Germany joined hands with Austria in order to fight these people. Russia was instructed by Kaiser Wilhelm II to minimize the number of its soldiers, and when Russia did not respond, Kaiser decided to declare war against Russia. France, an ally of Russia, supported Russia. England had no alternative but to join the war because if France is attacked by Germany, the German soldiers had to travel through Belgium, which the world countries, including Britain, had agreed that it would not be disturbed. When Germany decided to traverse the Belgium country by force, Britain joined the war in order to protect Belgium.

Since Lesotho at that time was under the protection of Britain, it was called upon to support its protector. Says Gill (1993: 166),

Once begun, the war affected large parts of the non-European world, and Basutoland was no exception. More than 3000 Basotho supported Britain in its war effort against Germany by joining the South African Native Labour Corps.

According to Damane and Sanders (1974: 234), neither Chief Lerotholi Mojela nor any other member of the Corps was allowed to take an active part in the fighting. They fulfilled a supportive role. On his return to Lesotho after the war, Chief Lerotholi Mojela was awarded a medal for Meritorious Service.

Alluding to this war, the poet uses the following lines (Mangoaela, 1921: 226) in a poem composed in honour of Chief Lerotholi Mojela,

Naledi e tshweu-tshweu ya Ramatheola
E tshweu-tshweu ya Ramakhobalo,
Ya habo Jonathane le Mofoka!
Mohla ntwā ya Fora, mawatleng,
Ngwana morena a etswa sehlabelo,
A etswa se monko o monate!
Pure white star of Ramatheola,
Pure white star of Ramakhobalo,
Of the family of Jonathan and Mofoka!
At the time of the war of France at sea,
The child of the chief was made a sacrifice,
He was made a sacrifice with sweet-smelling savour.

Reference to Mojela as a pure white star in line 1 is made because Mojela was noted for his light complexion (Damane and Sanders, 1963: 235). Ramakhobalo in line 2 refers to the name of his father, and Jonathan and Mofoka in line 3 refer to his brothers. *Ntwā ya Fora* 'The War of France' mentioned in line 4 indeed refers to the First World War (from 1914 to 1918) in which France was involved. The sacrifice mentioned in lines 5 and 6 carries figurative meaning, and refers to a deed of sacrifice done by Griffith, the Paramount Chief, by allowing Lerotholi Mojela, the son of his younger brother, to take part in the war (Damane, 1960: 65). Continuing to praise Chief Lerotholi Mojela, the poet says,

Leholimo ho batho ba Mojela,
Mohla le qalang ho betsoa letolo,
La heno, Maama le Seeiso,

*La habo Jonathane le Mofoka,
La benya, la o chochometsa 'mane;
'Mane oa tlali o tšele maoatle!*

Heaven to the people of Mojela,
When the lightning first began to shine,
Of your family, Maama and Seeiso,
Of the family of Jonathan and Mofoka,
It shone and left a flashing trail;
The flash of lightning crossed the seas!

In line 1 Chief Lerotholi Mojela is referred to as 'heaven' indicating that he is a refuge for his people. Lines 5-6 allude to his participation in the war overseas. Participation in World War 1 was Chief Lerotholi Mojela's claim to fame. Damane and Sanders (1963: 235) say,

When we visited Tebang in November 1968 everyone whom we consulted assured us that Lerotholi himself was not the composer of these praises, but no one could remember the *seroki's* name.

The following constitute some of the *dithoko* inspired by the wars/battles in which the Basotho took part:

Four poems composed in honour of Chief Masopha are the following: His role in the 1860 battle against the Thembu, *Ntwa ya Thepung* (cf. Damane, 1963: 29-32); two poems for his role against the Batlokwa in 1848 (cf. Mangoaela, 1921: 38-41 and 47-50); and one for his role in the 1854-1858 war of Senekal (cf. Mangoaela, 1921: 41-47).

In honour of Chief Lerotholi, four poems have been composed, namely, his role in the Seqiti War of 1865-1868 and the Gun War of 1880-1881 (cf. Damane, 1963: 39-42, 66-69 and Mangoaela, 1921: 69-75); and his role in the battle against Moorosi (cf. Mangoaela 1921: 75-76).

Two poems composed in honour of Chief Maama were inspired by the Gun War (1880-1881) and the battle of Moorosi (1878) (cf. *ibid.* p. 96 -102 and 102-105).

The 1835 *Ntwa ya Kobo* 'The battle of Kobo' was composed in honour of Moshoeshoe 1 (cf. Mangoaela, 1921: 7-8). Two poems were dedicated to Chief Tlelima Hlalele for his role in the battle of Berea (1852) and the Batlokwa battle (1848) (cf. Mangoaela, 1921: 52-54 and 54-55).

From the few examples above it is obvious that the composition of the Basotho *dithoko* were mainly inspired by wars or battles in which the Basotho took part and that one or more *dithoko* were composed in honour of one and the same person.

A further indication of the impact of the wars selected here emanates from the fact that no less than five poems in Mangoaela's poems were inspired by *Ntwa ya Senekale*, 17 by the *Ntwa ya Seqiti* and 22 again in Mangoaela's collection by *Ntwa ya dithunya*.

2.3 Cannibalism

Cannibalism as an act of a human being eating the flesh of other human beings became rife during the times of the Difaqane. From small beginnings it spread over the whole country between the Orange and the Vaal, depopulating the land, and bringing to an end all friendly intercourse between tribes and villages. Murder and robbery were common and people were not free to move about except in large and armed parties. Even then, if the party were not large, it would probably prefer to travel by night to avoid enemies. But even at night the man-eaters lay in wait, and more often than not, succeeded in capturing the caravans.

Arbousset in Ellenberger (1912: 94) gives this vivid hair-raising description of the cannibals,

These cannibals (Maja-batho) were black and stout, resembling Bechuana in speech and appearance. Their hair was long and frizzled, and they kept it greased with human fat. Their bodies were smeared

with red ochre; their huts were covered with reeds and thatching grass; their villages were large and built in a circle. They drank much thick milk, and ate the flesh of their fellows as a delicacy. They even seem to have devoured the flesh of those who died.

Cannibalism (ibid. p. 217-8) is a sort of mental aberration brought about by the pangs of hunger, which render a man incapable of realising the horror of it, or of anything except his own suffering and misery. Those who were addicted to it formed themselves into secret associations, as much to justify themselves as to encourage each other. These associations were numerous, and each had a leader who was the most ravenous and bloodthirsty of the lot.

The first Basotho to have set an example of eating human flesh were offshoots of the Bakgatla of Tabane who had conquered and intermarried with the Bavenda. They, knowing the practice of the Bavenda, and rendered desperate by the loss of their cattle and crops, did not hesitate to adopt it. They hunted their fellow-creatures, caught them in traps, and declared all they caught to be prisoners of war. The Maiyane tribe followed an example of the Bakgatla who, it is believed, were driven to cannibalism by the cynical taunt of the Bamokotedi tribe, who, after robbing them of all they had, shouted after them, *Tsamayang le yo ja batho!* 'Go and eat people!' It is reported that Moshoeshoe later admitted that he and his people were to blame for this. Arbousset in Ellenberger (1843: 366) reports that Moshoeshoe even expressed his regret in the presence of Rakotswane's cannibals in August 1843, when he said, "We, the masters of the country, did drive you to live on human flesh, for men cannot eat stones. You ate my father, but before that I had eaten yours [meaning all their means of subsistence]. Oh, let it all be forgotten!"

On one of his missionary excursions with Moshoeshoe and his entourage in 1840, Arbousset (ibid., p. 68), in the presence of the cannibals, discussed the issue of cannibalism on which Rakotswane, Moshoeshoe's vassal and one of the cannibals' chiefs, gave the following cause for the atrocities related to the pandemic:

Hunger was the first cannibal. It devoured us. Although we were numerous, we were without cattle, without millet, there was little game

in the plains, and the plains were occupied by our enemies. What was to become of us? Each one ate his dog, then the sandals he was wearing on his feet; next his old antelope kaross; finally his leather shield...After six or eight days of suffering our limbs seemed to grow bigger, the joints would swell, our heads became drowsy, our bodies in general and particularly our necks became numb; terrible dysentery forced everyone to leave the cavern frequently; and outside a hyena would take us and drag us to her cubs. Those who were courageous enough to go hunting or gathering were liable to become the prey of ferocious beasts, which in those days of general famine waited for us, and finding us weak, would feed on our limbs, in the fields, and also at home, like animals possessed. It was then that we started to rush upon people and began to devour them.

Many tribes were driven to man-eating as a result of hunger and the ravages of wars; the Bamaiyane, the Bafokeng of Ratjotjose, the Makakana, the Mazizi, cannibals at Mohale's Hoek under the leadership of Motlejwa and Raboshabane, the Baramokgele on the Kwakwatsi (Rhenoster River), the cannibals of Mahlapahlapa near Harrismith, the Bakgatla whose chief was Rakotswane, a voracious man-eater who ruled over several villages of cannibals, and many others. Arbousset in Ellenberger (1912: 219) gives the following description of Rakotswane:

Rakotswane was a very strong man of gigantic stature, whose fierce eyes were hidden under dark, bushy eyebrows.

Acts of cannibalism can be described as brutality, madness, torture, atrocity and were devoid of any sense of human instinct. Ellenberger (1912: 222) describes the situation as follows:

Cannibalism as practised by the Basotho was indeed madness. All human instinct, all reason, fellowship, intellect, everything in fact which raises the human being over the brute beast, became extinct or obliterated. They practised cruelty for its own sake and the pleasure it gave them, torturing their victims in a friendish manner before

dispatching them. Children were butchered or roasted alive under the eyes of their parents, or vice versa; women in the presence of their husbands. They would bind the hands of captured people, and drive them before them as they would cattle. If any one resisted, he was killed and eaten at once, to save the trouble of driving him. The women of the cannibals were just as blood-thirsty. They would frequently accompany their husbands on the man-hunt, so as to miss no part of the feast.

It also happened that when people were captured, the fat ones were eaten first, and the lean ones were forced to eat the flesh in order to fatten them. They killed their victims as they would the sheep, giving the usual twist of the neck before cutting the throat. Sometimes a young woman would be spared for sexual purposes. If no victims could be found, wives and children were eaten, but owing to superstition, not as a rule by their own husbands or fathers. It was thought better to exchange them for others.

A man called Mokapakapa, a victim who was lucky to have escaped from the cannibals, relates the story (Ellenberger, 1912: 223) how he became a cannibal, and lived for four years on human flesh. He was running away with his family from an enemy, travelling by night to escape observation of the cannibals, when the party fell over a cord stretched across a path. Immediately the man-eaters were upon them, bound and gagged them, and drove them to their lair with shouts and blows, after the manner of cattle-drivers. On their arrival they were received with shouts of "Food! Food!" the children being alluded to as "tender lambs", and their mothers as "cows," the servants as "oxen". The following is a poetic song (written in old Sesotho) that the cannibals used to sing while dancing around a victim (Ellenberger, 1912: 223-4):

Re malimo, re ya batho.

(We are the cannibals, we eat people.)

Re o ya, re ya batho.

(We eat thee, we eat people.)

Re ya bokoana ba ntja,

(We eat the brain of a dog,)
Le ba ngoana e monyenyane.
(And that of a little child.)
Re ya menoana ea batho.
(We eat the fingers of people.)
Re ya senyabela sa motho.
(We eat the fat of mankind.)
Moswangswanyane wa madimo,
(Thou toy of the man-eaters,)
O molakatswana.
(Thou delicious morsel.)
Pshang! pshang! thaka tsa me!
(Strike! Strike him down, my comrades!)

Arbousset in Ellenberger (1912: 224) further relates how the cannibals used to sacrifice human victims to the Shades (gods) for the benefit of their growing crops. A fat young man of short stature was generally chosen for the purpose. He was either bound or made drunk with beer, and taken to the fields. There, as they said, he was sacrificed for seed. His blood, having been allowed to coagulate in the sun, was burnt together with his brain and frontal bone, with the flesh appertaining thereto. The ashes were scattered over the field, and the rest of the flesh eaten.

The cannibals depicted above do not seem to have been in dire need of proper food. They possessed growing crops and had seed to grow. They must have had grain to make beer; and there are other indications that human flesh had peculiar attractions to those who had tasted it. Though at first they took it from necessity, they later adhered to it from choice. The wife of Makara, for instance, after having been ransomed, returned to the man-eaters, of whose diet she had partaken during her stay with them.

When the missionaries arrived in Lesotho in 1833 cannibalism was still practised as it existed largely as a result of the wars that devastated the country between 1820 and 1830 (cf. Germond, 1967: 145). In the course of his travels, Arbousset was able to judge the extent of the country where it was in vogue. He estimated the number of

cannibals between the Orange River, the Drakensberg, and the Vaal at from 7,000 to 8,000. In his estimation, he records that the number of victims between the worst years of 1822 and 1828 and the subsequent years could make 300,000 (cf. Ellenberger, 1912: 225).

Cannibalism discontinued during the period of the sojourn of the missionaries in Lesotho as a result of the Christianisation and 'civilisation' brought to the Basotho. Moshoeshoe played a major role by his offer of a means of subsistence to the cannibals. Says Germond (1967: 145),

The cannibals ceased their depredations about the time of the arrival of the missionaries in Basutoland. By bringing the remnants of these tribes together, Moshoeshoe contributed not a little to arresting the evil. He made use of threats and he gave the culprits a means of subsistence. To-day it is possible to travel in safety and nothing is heard of the cannibals.

Cannibalism similarly inspired the composition of oral poetry such as the following *thoko* by Mosoansoanyane (in Mangoaela, 1921: 231),

*Mosoansoanyane, mo-khatla-kotsoana,
Mo-khatla-pulutsoana-ea-'Mashale!
Raletsapo, hlaba tšoinyana letlele,
Lerumo la hanella makopong!
Tšoinyana ea hlatsa lihoete, Potlaki;
Oa mo thonya, mora oa Mokhatla.*

Mosoansoanyane, he of the Khatla clan, the white-sprinkled-one,
He of the Khatla clan, the grey one of 'Mashale!
Raletsapo, stab the white-faced one using a broad spear with a short handle,
The spear refused to come out of the forehead!
The white-faced one vomited the wild carrots, Potlaki;
You chose your victim, you son of Mokhatla.

According to Mangoaela (1921: 231), Mosoansoanyane was one of the cannibals who lived at the place called *Malimong* 'The place of the cannibals'. Mosoansoanyane belonged to the Bakgatla clan. The animal the Bakgatla originally took as their emblem was the monkey '*kgatla*', but later replaced it with an eagle '*lenong*', perhaps by virtue of better and more impressive qualities of an eagle (Tšiu, 2001: 75). Reference to his clan is mentioned in line 1. The fact that he is *kotsoana* 'the white-sprinkled-one' already instills fear. In line 2, he is referred to as one of the Bakgatla clan members, and as belonging to 'Mashale, probably his father or leader of a group of cannibals to which he belonged. In line 3, he addresses himself to Raletsapo, probably one of his friends, and instructs him to stab the victim, *tšoinyana* 'the white-faced one' indicative of the fact that the victim is white-faced because of fear, using a broad spear with a short handle so that it may penetrate deep into the forehead. The fact that the spear refuses to come out of the forehead indicates the force applied in the stabbing. As a result of the stabbing, the victim vomits wild carrots commonly eaten during the times of hunger, and in particular, by those who did not eat human flesh. In the last line, he draws attention to the fact that he chose who the victim should be.

From the above example, it should be noticed that the experience of those who turned to cannibalism, inspired the oral composition of their *dithoko* the contents of which reflected their experiences. In a sense, the cannibals saw themselves as heroes over their victims, and felt worthy of heroic oral poems. Coplan (1994: 1ff) explains how cannibalism metaphorically reappears in the creation of the *difela* by stating,

The image of the cannibal, the human being who prospers by devouring his own kind in an ultimate zero-sum game is a resonant and fearful symbol in Basotho historical consciousness.

Coplan (ibid. p.7) continues,

At the mines, "cannibal" (*lelimo*) is a metaphor both for the earth itself, which consumes the miners in its belly, and for overeager black team

leaders (boss boys) and white miners, who push black workers to the point of exhaustion in their gluttony for power and high pay.

2.3.1 The missionaries: Religion

The missionaries of the P.E.M.S. (Paris Evangelical Mission Society), Eugene Casalis, Thomas Arbousset and Constant Gosselin, took up their residence in Lesotho and settled at Morija in 1833 (cf. Gill, 1993: 75). Their first impression about the Basotho was that the latter were essentially without God, and without hope in the world, and that their civilisation was infinitely inferior to their own. The missionaries viewed the latter as illiterate and barbaric. Their mission was therefore to evangelize them by replacing the ancestor religion and culture of the Basotho, not only with Christianity, but also with the colonizers' culture. To achieve this, they established schools which were primarily an instrument of Christianization through which the converts could be able to read the Bible. Says James Stewart in Kunene (1971: xii),

If missionary education communicated no other power than ability to read the Bible, it would still justify itself.

The missionaries sought peacefully to undermine the foundations of the old Basotho, and replace them with Western Christian ones. In recognising the integral and re-inforcing nature of the homestead (Gill, 1993: 81), they requested their converts to move towards the mission stations as their new places of residence. The intention was to sever as many ties as possible with the "unhealthy" influences of the "pagan" villages. Later, however, converts were encouraged to stay in their villages in order to act as "leaven".

The missionaries pressed upon Moshoeshe to bring about many reforms if his intention was to bring 'civilisation' to his people. Among others, Moshoeshe had to make innovations regarding burial rites. When a Mosotho died it was customary to tie the corpse in the foetal posture, the chin resting on the knees; to sacrifice animals to enable the deceased to join the ancestral shades; and, if the deceased was a relative of a chief, to bury him in the wall of the cattle kraal. It was considered essential to perform these ceremonies in the appropriate manner, lest the shade of

the deceased should torment his descendants. For the missionaries it was important to step in and liberate the Basotho from fear of the dead. When Mmantsane, Moshoeshoe's senior surviving wife, died, Moshoeshoe gave an instruction that she, like Casalis' first-born child, be buried according to Christian rites in the Christian cemetery near the village. He is also reported (Thompson, 1975: 92) to have told his father, Mokhachane, that when he died, he too, would be buried in the Christian manner.

In 1840 Moshoeshoe repudiated another fundamental custom: the initiation rites, in which adolescent Basotho were inculcated with traditional values. He ceased to convene initiation schools for his sons and the people of Thaba-Bosiu. He therefore abolished the rite of circumcision not only for all his family, but all who were placed under his influence. He declared himself very openly on the subject of initiation, and on one occasion he even instructed several pious individuals to snatch from those immoral ceremonies one of his children who had been taken there secretly (Thompson, 1975: 92).

Another question addressed by Moshoeshoe was that of polygamy. Convinced by the teachings and arguments of the missionaries, Moshoeshoe eventually took a bold step in his attempt to eradicate polygamy among his people. The significance of this is that he led his people by example. He announced at a *pitso* 'assembly' that his baptized senior surviving wives, Mmasekgonyana and Mmamosebetsi were no longer his wives as he had divorced them. However, their home is still under his control and that his people will still assemble as usual to cultivate the fields that have been assigned to them. This statement was met with strong opposition by Ramatsheana, the king's councillor, whom the people threatened to kill as a result of his opposing view.

Moshoeshoe took a strong public stand against the killing of supposed witches. It was at a special *pitso* that he explained his name Lepoqo [dispute], namely, that he received it at the moment when people were fighting in his father's village about a person who was accused of witchcraft. He further explained that he had never killed any person except on the battle-field. He then repudiated accusation of a person on a basis of witchcraft. This was as a result of an incident in which a woman named

Mmamothepane, a relative of Moshoeshoe, was dispossessed of a field on the grounds that her immediate chief, Mojakisane died after she cursed him.

These four changes - the adoption of Christian burial customs, the cessation of initiation schools, the grant of divorces to baptized women, and the repudiation of the killing of witches - shook Sesotho society to the core.

Many of the Basotho customs were found to be in conflict with the teaching of the Bible. The gospel preached by the missionaries was that of nineteenth-century evangelism, with strong emphasis, not only on the everlasting love of God, but also on the unquenched fires of Hell. Partly because of its intrinsic content and the norms of European society which had been grafted on it, this gospel was incompatible with almost the entire body of the Basotho custom. Some of these customs included marriage cattle as payment for *lobola*, polygamy, ancestor worship, witchcraft, divination, rain making, burial customs, and cattle raiding. Sanders (1975: 123) explains,

Initiation, which was regarded as barbaric and ridiculous; the payment of marriage cattle, which was thought, at the least, to reduce women to a state bordering upon slavery; polygamy, which was clearly opposed to the teaching of the New Testament and introduced so many harmful jealousies into Sotho homes; the reverence shown towards the *badimo*, the ancestral spirits, which was held to be inconsistent with the worship of the one true God; witchcraft, divination, rainmaking and burial customs, which were dismissed as mere superstition - all these were weighed in the balance and found wanting. Festive gatherings and dances, the drinking of strong beer, cattle raiding, and *the chanting of praise-poems, these too were frowned upon and discouraged.*

[emphasis added].

It was clear that accepting Christianity on this basis meant that a Mosotho had to give up almost everything dear to him. It is also important to note that the missionaries frowned upon the *dithoko* 'praise poems', and their chanting was discouraged. This meant that the performance of the *dithoko* among the converts

was negatively influenced. Among the Basotho, almost every aspect of culture went hand in hand with the chanting of oral poems. So, destroying culture meant destroying oral poetry. Oral poetry, in a sense, has been part and parcel of Mosotho's daily life.

This situation precipitated the revolt of 1880 between Basotho custom and Christianity, which, according to Ashton (1952: 8), caused much damage to much of the old Basotho culture.

The prejudice of the missionaries towards the Basotho culture in general, was also inculcated into the minds of the Basotho who eventually looked at their own culture with contempt. It is ironic to realize that the prejudice with which oral tradition and culture of the Basotho were looked at, appear to have been implanted in the minds of some of the Basotho authors. For instance, Azariel Sekese, in his book, *Mekgoa ea Basotho* 'The customs of the Basotho' begins his discussion well on the importance of oral tradition for the next generations. He continues to explain how the Gospel helped to awaken the Basotho from the culture of heathenism and darkness of sleep in which they used to be. He says the following about the missionaries (1953: iii),

Ba re bontšitse tebetebe ya bohetene, moo Morena, Modimo o mohau, o ba tsekileng teng ho morena wa lefifi ka Evangeli. Basotho kaofela, ba baholo le ka bana, re na be re hlobotse, re hloka dihlong; motšoare ho rona e ne e ka bosiu. Eitse hoba re ipone hobane re hlobotse, ra ba le lihlong, kajeno re qalile hanyenyane ho apara le ho hlobola bonyamatsane.

They have shown us the depth of heathenism, where the Lord, the graceful God, has rescued us from the king of darkness through the Gospel. All of us, old and young, were naked, and without shame; daylight to us was like night-time. When we realized our nakedness, we began to be ashamed of ourselves, and now we have gradually begun to dress properly whilst undressing our bestiality.

The general view of associating culture with heathenism, greatly contributed to the Basotho's gradual alienation from their culture and oral tradition. About six years after the arrival of the missionaries in Lesotho, the influence of their religion impacted so strongly upon the Basotho converts that it resulted in weakening the latter's attachment to some of their customs, such as, war dances and polygamy. Sanders (1975: 125) confirms this in saying,

By 1839 war dances were no longer held at Morija and Thaba Bosiu, and a few polygamists had renounced all wives but their first.

By the year 1843 Arbousset (in Sanders, 1975: 123) could claim that:

Circumcision falls into disuse: polygamy is no longer so strong. People hardly believe anymore in sorcerers and rainmakers, and the cult of the false gods [i.e. the ancestral spirits]...is abandoned more and more.

Christian religion which systematically enforced beliefs contrary to the Basotho's, became a stumbling block to the practice of culture and the maintenance of oral tradition, in particular, oral poetry. In this way, this religion exerted pressure on this oral art form which is the backbone of the Basotho's oral heritage.

The introduction of Christian religion by the missionaries exposed the Basotho to a new way of life where the roles of traditional figures such as kings, chiefs and tribal religious leaders, among others, had either to change, be forsaken or replaced. This led to the disintegration of the Basotho society. In this way Christian religion contributed to the decline in the maintenance of oral poetry among some of the Basotho. It may be said that Christian religion as advocated by the missionaries did exert considerable pressure on oral poetry of the Basotho, especially on those who became the converts of the new religion. Despite the realities of the Christian influence, considerable resistance continued and the poetry succeeded to survive. Fortunately, the onslaught on the Basotho traditional religion was counteracted by the political and military onslaughts on the country which on their part required both wisdom and heroism which served as the backbone and wellspring of the heroic poetry.

2.3.2 The missionaries: 'Civilization'

The various tribes that Moshoeshoe brought together to form the Basotho nation were, at the time of the arrival of the missionaries in 1833, viewed by the missionaries as barbaric, illiterate and as people devoid of 'civilisation' (Tšiu, 2001: 158). This state of affairs necessitated the need for the missionaries to 'uplift' the Basotho by inculcating the principles of what may be called 'civilisation', that is, knowledge including basic knowledge about God, protection, advancement, better living conditions, better economy. In order to understand this need, as well as the difficulty facing the missionaries, Dieterlen (1933: 14) paints a picture of Moshoeshoe's people where he says,

Bothata bo sa le boholo mona, hobane batho bana ba sa le morao haholo, ha ba tsebe letho, 'me ho hloka kelello ha bona ho ba sitisa ho amohela litaba tse ncha; nka ba tšoantša le liphōkō tse balehelang mahaheng a matšo ha letsatsi le qala ho chaba. Hape ba na le lipelo tse thata-thata, tse hanang hore ba amohele thuto ya Evangeli hobane e loantšana le mekhoha le meetlo ea bona ea khale.

There is still difficulty here because these people are still very backward, they don't know anything, and their lack of wisdom makes it difficult to accept the new teachings; I can compare them to the owls that flee to the dark caves when the sun begins to rise. Again, they have unyielding hearts which prevent them from accepting the teaching of the Gospel because it is in conflict with their old customs and culture.

The main reason behind Moshoeshoe's decision to invite the missionaries to Lesotho was his belief that the latter would impart to his chiefdom the advantages of European 'civilisation' and also render it safe from the prevailing attacks from his neighbours, especially the Kora, a Khoi people who for centuries had lived along the lower Vaal and Orange rivers. Moshoeshoe (Gill, 1993: 78), at the very least, hoped to acquire guns through the missionaries and thus prevent the depredations of the Kora, or conversely, to establish diplomatic ties with those powers which could control the Kora. In addition, he no doubt wanted to understand these white men

and their 'civilisation'. To him it was not only Christianity which stirred his imagination, but also the European way of life as a whole, *Sekgowa*. Comments Sanders (1975: 126),

He seems genuinely to have believed that as a result of the missionaries' teaching his people would abandon *Sesotho*, their own way of life, and adopt *Sekhooa* instead.

The missionaries were happy to work towards this transition, but their emphasis was different. For them Christianity came first and foremost; it was the only foundation upon which political stability and advancement rested. To them, 'civilisation' meant a total replacement of the Basotho culture with their own. Confirms Sanders (2000: 127-8),

These young idealistic Frenchmen - they were still in their early twenties - were determined to replace the Basotho's culture with Christianity and 'civilisation'.

In about five years after the arrival of the French missionaries, a small but growing number of the Basotho who accepted the new teachings, included Moshoeshoe's relatives and some councillors. A vigorous group of 'traditionalists' led by Moshoeshoe's father, Mokhachane, and councillor Makara, openly opposed the missionaries (cf. Ellenberger, 1912: 7). Tension between the missionaries and the traditionalists over issues such as polygamy, initiation ceremonies, marriage by cattle and burial practices, were brought to a head in 1848 as a result of the "war-booty controversy".

In a war between the Basotho and the Batlokwa of Sekonyela in October 1848 (Laydevant and Tjokosela, 1963: 55), large Batlokwa herds and flocks were taken as war booty by the victorious forces of Moshoeshoe. The missionaries told their Christians that the seizure of these animals was against the teachings of Christ and that the booty would have to be returned. As the war had been greatly supported by all Basotho, who saw themselves as having patiently endured numerous unprovoked attacks by the Batlokwa, this rebuke by the missionaries led to a serious

revolt. Most of the Christians from chiefly lineages left the church, never to return. It was only then that the missionaries saw clearly for the first time that the nation could not be won over to the teachings of Christ through the conversion of its leaders.

Although the missionaries in their attempt to 'civilise' the Basotho had good intentions, they erred in taking for granted that every cultural aspect of the targeted people was heathenism and therefore had to be challenged. This they did without taking into account the damage they caused to the image and culture of the Basotho. Wells (1994: 28) supports this view in saying,

The missionaries' aim of bringing 'Christianity and Civilisation' to the Basotho also had many destructive effects. Their uncompromising attitudes to activities they considered 'pagan' greatly undermined the integrity of Sesotho culture and gave rise to new divisions where few had existed before. Nearly all aspects of Sesotho life were challenged, from the institution of *bohadi*, to *lebollo*, to belief in the *balimo*.

Moshoeshoe was nevertheless supportive of the missionaries as his support was based not only on the material and diplomatic advantages brought by the missionaries, but also on the missionaries' deep loyalty and affection to him.

The new 'civilisation' was not confined to the Gospel, but was extended to all aspects of the Basotho's daily life experiences. These included aspects such as new agricultural methods, seeds for crop and other vegetation, trees and improved livestock; new building techniques, alterations to the practice of worship, attitudes to family life, and ethics; different ideas and practices related to health and healing; as well as literacy and a more abstract form of education. The missionaries also gave advice on how to deal with political issues, to diplomatically negotiate peace with governments such as those of the British, the Afrikaners and the Kora (Gill, 1993: 80). De Clark (2000: 51) gives a more comprehensive description,

Like their colleagues of other societies, PEMS missionaries saw themselves as the bearers not only of their god's message, but also of European civilisation. This included technical innovations (the plough;

dikes; mills; and the skills of reading and writing), domesticated plants (wheat, potatoes, fruit trees) and animals (pigs, cats, ducks, geese and turkeys), foodstuffs (salt and sugar for instance), architectural and clothing styles resembling those of their society, and social institutions (for example Christian funerals and weddings, monogamy, schooling, refraining from practices they regarded as superstitious, sedentary life, their own concept of hygiene).

Although the missionaries sometimes distinguished between Christian message and European civilisation, they did regard their own culture as being the most compatible with Christianity. Dumas (in De Clark 2000: 51) states,

...we have to remember that we have come not only to convert these tribes to Christianity, but also to bring civilisation to savages, to inculcate in them the ideas of order and industry, which while attaching them to the ground, make them more worthy to be called Christians.

To the missionary, the introduction of new foods was also aimed at introducing the Basotho to a wider market economy. Says Eldredge (1993: 68),

The French missionaries introduced several new foods to the BaSotho after their arrival in 1833. Of these they promoted wheat the most aggressively because they believed that the cultivation of wheat for exchange with their European neighbors was the best way to integrate the BaSotho into the regional market economy, and so to achieve a higher "degree of civilization".

The missionaries introduced several other foods which proved successful when grown in Lesotho, and which the Basotho readily adopted into their diet. Potatoes were successful from the outset, and their use spread throughout the country, as they also did well in the mountains. Fruit trees were also an important contribution of the missionaries. In addition to wine shoots for grapes, they brought cherry, peach, orange, fig and apple trees (cf. Eldredge, 1993: 69).

'Civilisation' as envisaged by the missionaries, and as supported by Moshoeshoe, was intended to bring about a total change to the whole culture of the Basotho. This would of necessity also impact on the oral heritage, oral poetry in particular, since many or all the various aspects of the Basotho culture are accompanied by oral poetic recitation of some kind. Many of those who became converts practiced syncretism; they professed to be true converts who had turned their backs against backwardness associated with their former way of life, whilst at the same time they secretly adhered to the very things they professed to have abandoned.

'Civilisation' of the Basotho did improve during the the centuries that followed until the beginning of the 21st century. What we realise now is that oral poetry, despite the long emergence and the negative impact of 'civilisation', is still a living oral art form among the Basotho.

2.3.3 The missionaries: Literacy

It is common knowledge in African literary study that the exposure of the Basotho to the culture of writing and reading is attributable to the arrival of the missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Mission Society (PEMS). Their advent is also associated with the introduction of literacy among the Basotho. The missionaries soon started to establish schools which primarily served as instruments through which the converts could be enabled to read the Bible.

Moshoeshoe believed that the European's access to culture and the arts would further develop his people. Many Basotho regarded literacy as extraordinary and, some of them at least, even magical. This perception is obvious in Casalis's (see De Clark, 2000: 83) account of Basotho pupils' first successes:

One fine morning, ten or twelve of our scholars discovered that they could, without any help, make out the meaning of several phrases which they had never read before. This circumstance caused a tremendous sensation. The diviners declared that we must have transformed the hearts of their countrymen by means of some potent charm. [...] seizing an opportunity when we were all together, his father

also being present, he [Moshoeshoe] turned the conversation on the subject of reading. "Lies! Lies!" cried the stubborn old man [Moshoeshoe's father, Mokhachane]. "I will never believe that words can become visible." [...] he [Moshoeshoe] desired one of our best readers to withdraw. "Now," said he, "think of something, and tell it to this white man; he will draw some marks on the sand, and you will see." The marks being made, the village scholar was called, and very soon made public the thoughts of his sovereign; the latter, more than stupefied, covered his mouth with his hand, and looked from one to another present as if to assure himself that he had not been transported to an ideal world. At length, after having exhausted all the interjections of his language, he burst forth into a torrent of invectives against his subjects and family, for not having informed him of the miracles that were being performed in his country.

Some of the Basotho viewed reading and writing as religious activities, and this probably gave these activities an extraordinary magical status sometimes even in the case of people who were already familiar with them. This, in turn, led to an increased interest in the Christian message. Arbousset (in De Clark, 2000:98) quotes a Christian named, Sepitla who, in 1839, reportedly told a friend at Morija,

The truths of the gospel are surprising, astonishing and do we really know where they stop? As for me, I am going to go back to the alphabet; I think that there must be something behind a, b, c, that I have not as yet managed to discover.

Arbousset explicitly stated that Sepitla was a resident of Morija. It is clear from the quotation that not only was the man a Christian, but also that he had attended reading classes. He might even have been able to read. His attribution of magical powers to the letters themselves was merely a personal opinion, however, and may not have been widely shared.

The work of evangelism, the creation of new congregations, discipleship, and leadership training went hand-in-hand with the founding of schools. In those days

“education” and “Christian instruction” was almost one and the same thing because all teachers were trained with the sole purpose of leading exemplary lives and of teaching their students to do likewise. The Christian schools inculcated what was seen to be a new and better way of life, as well as the retention of all that was uplifting and edifying within the history and culture of the Basotho nation. It should be noted that the founding of schools catered for both parents and children, with children attending them during day-time, and parents at evening time. According to Ellenberger (1912: 13), ‘education’ was seen first and foremost as a method of instilling Christian values and attitudes, and secondly, as a means to literacy and numeracy, a basic knowledge of the modern world, and practical skills.

The missionaries realized that the Sesotho language was a mixture of the Sekwena (Bakwena culture) of the ruling clan, the Sefokeng of the original Basotho who first occupied the land, and Setlhaping (Setswana), a form of Setswana. One of the first foundations they laid regarding the Sesotho language was therefore the standardization of the written Sesotho [1906], which resulted from the unification of the various clans constituting the Basotho nation as well as the strengthening of their identity. Says Wells (1994: 28),

Moreover, the standardisation of written Sesotho under the missionaries had a powerful unifying effect on the succeeding generations of the diverse clans that constituted his nation and helped confirm a Basotho identity.

The introduction of the mission’s printing operations at Beersheba became an important tool for effective distribution of reading material. Adolphe Mabile, a missionary from the second generation, who came to Lesotho and who had been presented with his own printing-press by a well-wisher, began printing the church newspaper *Leselinyana la Lesotho* ‘The Little Light of Lesotho’ at Morija in 1863.

Apart from the work of translations undertaken by the missionaries, the printing of books, the publication of oral compositions of the Basotho, in particular, oral poetry, started with the arrival of the missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Mission Society.

Their first publication in Sesotho dates back to 1837, only four years after their arrival. Explains Swanepoel (1990:269),

The appearance of the first issue of the missionary journal, *Leselinyana la Lesotho* (Little light of Lesotho) on 3 November 1863, marked the beginning of a vital period in the cultural history of the Basotho. Although established to further the aims of the Protestant mission, it gradually became an invaluable storehouse of literary texts, both oral and modern. There many texts were printed for the first time, often in serialized form. It eventually developed a special column which served as a forum for sharing ethical, literary and linguistic views. The praise poems and idioms that were published were often accompanied by substantial explanatory notes, while the vast amount of historical accounts often included praise poems (*dithoko*) as well. By this time the missionaries encouraged Basotho collectors and poets to publish. Mention can be made here of Azariel Sekese's transcriptions of *dithoko* such as those of Moshoeshoe 1 between 1893 and 1906, and Mangoaela's *Lithoko tsa marena a Basotho* (Praise poems of Basotho Chiefs) which started as a series on 21 November 1919 until 10 June 1921.

It should be noted that literacy among the Basotho grew rapidly until the beginning of the 21st century. A large percentage of the Basotho had already obtained a basic degree of literacy before the middle of the previous century. Knowledge of reading and writing today in fact does not militate against Basotho's performance of oral poetry. Literacy and oral art forms exist as parallels, and complement one another. (See our approach to this aspect in 1.3).

2.4 Early, intermediate and contemporary political developments in Lesotho

A full survey of political developments in Lesotho falls outside the scope of this thesis. What we do find necessary however is to note in summary the possible viewing of political developments in Lesotho according to three broad periods, namely, early, intermediate and contemporary. This will enable us to attach some

historical foundation when dealing with the three selected oral poetry forms. Each of these periods brought in their wake new political dispensations and subsequent challenges to the population and its creative minds alike, including the creators of oral poetry. These periods also each introduced new legislation – developing from fairly loose structures in the early period to a more structured system with the laws of Lerotholi under colonial rule in the intermediate period, through to the highly regulated democratic political and legal systems in contemporary times.

Under early political developments we understand the formation of Lesotho as a nation state since 1824 and include the entire reign of Moshoeshoe 1 until his passing in 1870. This was a major period for the flourishing of oral poetry and the establishment of the canon of classical *dithoko* inspired by warfare and the onslaughts on the sovereignty of the nation.

Intermediate political developments in Lesotho refer to the post-Moshoeshoe era which was characterized by the reign of several generations of paramount chiefs in the colonial era and came to a close with the independence of Lesotho on 4 October 1966. In this period the classical *dithoko* initially continued to flourish, especially before and after the turn of the 19th century. Its continuation also experienced the emergence of three major challenges to its survival; the slow disappearance of warfare that served as its enabling factor; the equally slow fading of historical memory of poets as we shall see; and the emergence of a ‘rival’ oral poetic form, the *difela*, after the discovery of diamonds and gold in South Africa in the second half of the 19th century.

Contemporary political developments in Lesotho include the rule of several Prime Ministers (Leabua Jonathan) and/or military rulers (Metsing Lekhanya), alongside the maintenance of the Kingdom in this era, first under Moshoeshoe II, and presently King Letsie III. This was a major period for the development of the *difela*, while the slow fading of historical memory with regard to *dithoko*, continued.

New world orders thus forging their way into Basotho life over a period of nearly two centuries, of necessity exerted immense pressures on oral poetry – the subject-

matter, performance, and survival as texts - as we will indicate in subsequent chapters.

A significant feature of recordings on which this research is based, is the dearth in *dithoko* of direct dealings with party-political leaders of the contemporary period, although in the poems of 'Machopho there are veiled references to tension that might ensue between the Kingdom as institution and party-politics.

2.5 Modernism: major socio-economic developments

Migrant labour stands as one of the causes of transformation in the Sesotho society. As early as the 1820s, the Basotho people were working on the white-owned farms in the Cape colony. With the discovery of diamonds and gold in South Africa during the latter half of the century, large numbers of Basotho began migrating in ever increasing numbers in search of work. In South Africa they settled in big cities, met people from various backgrounds and found themselves exposed to modernism: the thought and action characteristic of modern life; sympathy with or the exercise of thought and action characteristically modern; a usage, practice, or quality characteristically modern, that is, pertaining to present times (Webster, 1993: 1452).

Exposure to urban and industrial life (cf. Tšiu, 2001: 158) offered an opportunity of encountering people with various backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and languages, such as *fanakalo*, *tsotsitaal*, Zulu, Afrikaans, English, etc. These coupled with a manner of dressing characteristic of the big cities, did exercise some influence on the migrant workers who, on their return home, regarded themselves as 'civilized' people with 'modern' culture, and who have turned their backs against anything backward and heathenist. This attitude discouraged their contribution to the maintenance of their oral art forms such as *dithoko*, *difela* and *diboko*. Some, who grew up in the environment of industrial cities, and who have therefore lost contact with their original place of birth, Lesotho, find the recital of these oral art forms and any historical knowledge pertaining to them, to be of no serious value. Some are of an opinion that the multilingual nature of the industrial environment does not

necessitate the need for either the recital of these art forms or any knowledge associated to them.

The missionary stations of the mid-19th century attracted traders, selling a variety of cheap manufactured goods from Europe and the Cape. These and the demand for seasonal labourers on white farms in the Eastern Cape and the Free State precipitated a transition to a cash-based economy. The discovery of diamonds in Kimberley in 1868 and gold on the Witwatersrand Reef in 1886 encouraged the movement of able-bodied men to migrate to these places to sell their labour. The effects of such massive migrations of adult men on Lesotho's social fabric was devastating not only in terms of depriving Lesotho of able labourers in their productive years, but also in terms of inhuman experiences they had to go through in an alien environment as well as their family life.

One would expect that the migration of Basotho men to the mines would exert pressure on the Basotho oral art forms, such as poetry, that is, the decrease or total alienation from their practice of cultural oral art. In the mines, however, migrant labour offered opportunities for cultural mixing and exposure to new performative styles, and the division of people ethnically according to the apartheid system tended to consolidate or even create notions of cultural identity based on ethnic or geographical origins. At the same time, the geographical distance between the migrant labourer and Lesotho added to the internal reconstruction of Sesotho culture as a means of defining one's identity in an alien environment. As noted by Wells (1994: 304),

the migrant worker must leave Sesotho society in order to perpetuate it.

Absence from Lesotho, instead of distancing all the Basotho men from their oral genres, to some strengthened that relationship and revitalised their culture even more despite their existence and confrontations in a foreign environment. Notes Coplan (1992: 53),

Migrant workers and their women, without whose labour Lesotho cannot survive, are producing aural genres which do not simply

preserve but enlarge and revitalise Sesotho [culture] in direct confrontation with the social forces that threaten it. Migrant performers do not cast aside historical Basotho culture but root themselves deeply within it.

Preservation, enlargement and revitalisation of Sesotho culture in terms of oral art forms, and, in particular, *dithoko*, *diboko* and *difela*, characterised the 20th century.

2.6 Media: Radio and Television

Introduction of modern media, such as the radio and television, has not only benefited the listeners in terms of sports coverages, news, religion, dramas, etc., but has played an important role in enlarging the scope of the performers, in particular, the Basotho poets. Since its introduction in 1960, the radio has been an important medium through which the people accessed information in their own languages. One of the Sesotho programs by the SABC *Lenaka la motheo* 'The horn of foundation' has become popular among the Basotho because it affords a platform to discuss issues related to the Basotho's oral art forms and culture. The role played by *Seea-le-moea sa Lesotho* 'Radio Lesotho' is equally important. The name of the program - "Horn of foundation" - is suggestive, and means an attempt of the Basotho to go back to their roots. This actually emphasizes the importance of reviving their culture as well as their oral art forms. This is important because of the fact that the Basotho are no more confined to their country Lesotho, but are scattered all over South Africa where the radio is able to reach the listeners.

This program also affords the poets an opportunity to recite their oral poems telephonically. These recitations, among others, include *dithoko*, *difela tsa ditsamayanaha* 'songs of the country travellers', *diboko* 'clan praises' and *dilotheo* 'riddles' which are directly broadcast. The value of this is that through this medium the poets are able to both exercise their talents and enlarge their scope to as many listeners as possible. At the same time, a large number of the listeners are entertained. This program is therefore meant to be a means of maintaining and reviving the foundation of the Basotho culture. Telephonic performance on radio,

however, has its own shortcoming, namely, lack of visual performance. In this case, listeners are dependent on what they hear only.

Television has emerged as a vital and effective technological appliance used to transmit events, information and performances of oral art forms. The complete performances including audiences, ululations, etc., are easily captured and permanently stored for future usage. This is also applicable to performances captured through audio-visual machines. Television and audio-visual machines are today important media, used not only in terms of permanently storing the Basotho oral poetry performances, but accelerating and enhancing the revival and maintenance of these oral art forms. In fact, it largely assisted the research team as outlined in the introduction of this thesis, subsequently also enabling me to embark on the research for this study.

2.7 Conclusion

The pressures on the poetry had both positive and negative influences. The wars the Basotho fought in as well as cannibalism did inspire the composition of the *dithoko*. Although the teachings of the missionaries was intended to uplift the living standard of the Basotho in terms of 'civilization', religion and literacy, and exerted a negative influence on the culture of the Basotho, the oral art forms of the latter, the *dithoko*, in particular, continued to thrive. Literacy produced a major opportunity for recorded texts to be preserved. Literacy also brought in its wake a rival with the development of written poetry, and modern literature in general. Modernism produced a strong challenge to the maintenance of purely oral and traditional art forms.

The discovery of gold and diamonds in Kimberley and Witwatersrand during the latter period of the 19th century gave birth and marked the beginning of a new oral art form, the *difela*, a most significant development. Modern technology in fact extended the life of oral forms in various ways. The video camera, for instance, is a powerful instrument to capture performance – the theme of our next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

BROAD CONTOURS OF GENERIC SHIFT: PERFORMANCE

3.1 Introduction

Discussion in the previous chapter was on various factors that exerted pressure on the Basotho oral poetry, namely, praise poetry (*dithoko*), mine workers' chants (*difela*) and family odes (*diboko*), from the 19th century and even before that, until at the beginning of the 21st century, the year 2000. In this chapter, focus will be shifted to the performance of these genres in which their classical performance and their performance in August-September of the year 2000 will be compared to see whether or not there has been any generic shift. In the discussion, various aspects that constitute performance will be taken into account, namely, the performer - his/her voice, gestures, facial expressions, and accoutrement; the text - its elasticity and spontaneity, its nature as instantaneous, contemporaneous, transient, and its effect; the audience - in a participatory role in terms of their gestures, voices, whistling, ululations and involvement generally.

Discussion on performance of *dithoko and difela*, in particular, will be based on the video tapes of poets recorded at various places in Qwaqwa, Lekoia in Southern Gauteng and Lesotho. These live performances were recorded at *mekete* 'festivals' which were indeed organised events, other than the case had been in the distant past, and were enabled by the research project referred to in Chapter 1. Performance of the *diboko* was not directly part of these recordings. Nevertheless, their discussion will be based on my Masters dissertation (2001).

For better understanding the performances of the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko*, as three distinct genres of oral poetry, characteristics of the three will be discussed, and these will be followed by discussion of their performances which will include simultaneous comparisons of their respective earlier classic forms and their current forms at the beginning of the 21st century.

3.2 Characteristics of the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko*

The definition of the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko* entails an attempt to explain the nature and characteristics of the three genres so that a clear understanding of these can be achieved. This explanation is basic to our understanding of how each one of these is performed as each performance is relative to its genre. The discussion will therefore be as follows:

3.2.1 Characteristics of the *dithoko*

By *dithoko* in plural form is meant “praise poems”. The singular form is *thoko* which means “a praise poem”. The word *dithoko* is derived from the verb stem, *ho roka* meaning, “to praise”, “to salute” or according to Wells (1994: 5), “to eulogise”. Also derived from the same verb stem is *seroki* (*a poet*) and *diroki* (pl. poets). Therefore, traditional *dithoko* of the Basotho have always been understood as oral poetic compositions largely inspired by war or any other heroic deeds of a hero worthy of such honour.

According to Lenake, Swanepoel, Selepe and Tšiu (1996: 62), the *dithoko* constituted one of the finest arts among the various African peoples of Southern Africa, such as, the Basotho, the Bapedi, the Batswana, the Amaxhosa, the Amazulu, the Amaswazi, the Vhatsonga, and the Bavenda. Among the Basotho, in particular, this oral art form was mainly inspired by the wars they have been involved in and the deeds of heroism that occurred in battle.

Since the Basotho were not as yet exposed to the culture of reading and writing, the composition of their *dithoko* served partly as a medium through which events of their history and heroism were preserved and transmitted to the next generations. Sanders (2000: 146) during his interviews of the Basotho on their *dithoko*, records the following,

We asked many people why they liked them so much, and were told that it was because they were full of history, because they were the

poetry of war and commemorated great warriors, and because their language was so beautiful.

In Mangoela (1921: 118) chief Joel Molapo in the following extract is praised for his uncompromising resistance with his men during the Gun War which took place between September 1880 and April 1881,

*Mahaeletse oa Mohato, Khokotla oa Mokhachane,
Seforo sa maqheku, sa banna le ka bana,
Sa batho ba setseng marakong!
Le hoja u se be bohale, Khokotla ea Moshoeshoe,
Motse oeno o ka be o le sieo.*

Mohato's Protector, you Mokhachane's Tough Warrior,
Fortress of the old, of the men and of the children,
Of the people who remain at the ruins!
If you hadn't been brave, you Moshoeshoe's Tough Warrior,
Your family's village wouldn't be here.

However, the video footages of the *diroki* recorded in August and September 2000 evince that the subject matter of the praise poems, unlike in the past, is not confined to the chiefs, warriors, the wars or chase, despite the fact that the mode of performance is still the same. The idea of self-praise and self-heroism has however still been maintained.

The chanting of the *dithoko* was and is still done in the presence of an audience as the whole performance is done with the intention, not only to entertain, but to inform an audience something about the chief, the hero, his exploits, his bravery, his genealogy, his ancestors, as well as any historical information that has to be conveyed to an audience. This is the reason why the *dithoko* were commonly chanted at *dipitso* 'assemblies' usually before business was conducted, but sometimes afterwards as well, and at *matsema* 'work-parties', as the people rested after labouring on the chief's land (Damane and Sanders, 1974: 24-25). On occasions such as these, the *seroki* had to apply every means, such as his weapons,

his gestures, his facial expressions, and has to move around and gesticulate to show how he fought and killed his enemies at the battle or at war. He does all these in order to carry his performance effectively across. Words alone cannot accomplish this, but poetry and gesticulations do. Says Finnegan (1970: 15),

...the bare words can *not* be left to speak for themselves.

Okpewho (1985: 7) shares the same view and compares oral poetry performance with a stage play as he says,

Oral poetry performance may be usefully compared to a modern stage play, in which a performer has to support his words with the right movement of his body or control his voice so as to make an effective impression.

Performance is, as Foley (1993: 278) states, the enabling event, and the tradition that carries the performance, the enabling referent.

An audience does not constitute an assembly of passive listeners, but each one becomes involved in the making of the scene. The whole performance becomes a participatory exercise as the performance is accompanied by occasional ululations by women, and whistling by men. These happen where an audience feels that their excitement is beyond measure. The whole scenario is further characterised by interjections from the chief himself as he is being praised or comrades-in-arms, saying 'O tseba nna! O tseba nna!' (You know me! You know me!), 'Ke ne ke le teng! Ke ne ke le teng!' (I was there! I was there!). The atmosphere in this whole performance is that of emotion and excitement.

Among the Basotho, the composition of a *thoko* was meant for both the ear and the eye. It was intended to be listened to, and for the physical performance to be seen by the audience. The *thoko* was not intended to be read. It was recited at a level and pitch of the voice much higher than normal to ensure that each one of the people congregated together is able to hear. It was declaimed at a much faster pace than

normal speech and in a lively manner as the praising of the chief or a hero necessitated that kind of recitation that carried information of bravery and heroism.

In the video tape containing the interview held at Morija Museum and Archives between Prof. Mokitimi, Rev. Tšiu and the *diroki*, various aspects of the art of poetic recitation were discussed (see Interview in the Appendix, no's 34 & 35). On the question whether or not the compositions are written down before they are recited, the responses differed; the poetess, 'Machopho, for instance, does write all her recitations and types them. The same is applicable to the poet, Moeletsi. However, both of them declaim their *dithoko* without reading from their papers. Mokhele, though he knows how to read and write, does not write down his recitations, but does some thinking and preparation in his memory to ensure that his recitation follows a particular order. He (Appendix no. 34, point 6) says,

Hantlentle nna ke tseba ho ngola. Ntho tsa ka ha ke di etsa, ha ke di ngole fatshe, ke di beha ka hlohong, mme ke a tseba hore ha ke tlosa leoto le letshehadi, mane moo le fihlang le hata teng, ke tla be ke fihla ke kenya le letona, mme ke dula ke ntse ke qobokisa jwalo hore ha ke tloha horeng ho itseng, ha ke tloha mona, ke ya hokae, ho fihlela ke etsa lethathamo lena la ka, ho fihlela ke utlwisisa hore hantlentle na le nepahetse, feela ke le bolokile ka hlohong, ke sa le beha fatshe.

Actually, I know how to write. When I do most of my things, I do not write them down, I put them in my memory, and I know that when I move my left foot, there where it touches the ground, I will put in the right one, and I keep it that way, so that when I move from one point, I move to the next, until I create this long list of mine, and until I understand clearly whether it is correct, but keeping it in memory, and not writing it down.

Based on the video footage recorded in August and September 2000 as explained above, an element of preparation and sometimes even writing down of the *thoko* characterise some of the Basotho *diroki* in the 21st century. This is contrary to the

practice common to the classical *diroki* who were not exposed to any culture of literacy.

During the process of recitation, it is common for the *seroki* to compose “on his feet”. This, according to Moeletsi, happens when the word or an idea comes to his mind, which agrees perfectly with what he is saying at that particular moment. By using this word or idea which becomes part of his composition, he is able to prolong his recitation to about four or five hours. This is why the customary ending of the *dithoko* is characterised by the expression, *Ya kgaola, ya ya!* ‘There it cuts off and leaves!’, meaning that the recitation itself has not come to an end, but has been temporarily brought to an end. In his own words, Moeletsi (Appendix no. 34, points 13 & 15) explains,

Feela mantswe ao a etsa hore o kgone ho etsa dithoko tse nkang dihora tse nne kapa tse hlano o ntse o ithoka feela. Ke mokgwa ona o utlwang ha re ithoka re ntse re re, “Ya kgaola, ya ya!” Ke hore re a di kgaola, ho lekanya nako... mme ha ke bona hore nako e tla fapana le tshebetso, ke tla di kgaola...

But such words make it possible to compose the *dithoko* which take four to five hours of continuous recitation. That is why when we recite we keep on saying *Ya kgaola, ya ya!* (There it cuts off and leaves!). This means that we only cut the recitation because of the limitation of time... and when I realize that time will not be on my side, I cut them...

During the course of the interview a question was posed as to why the same expression is sometimes commonly used by various poets during the course of their performances. This happens when the *seroki* is fascinated by that particular expression and therefore incorporates it in his or her composition. Although this should not be regarded as a rule, it does however reflect the fact that the *seroki* is part and parcel of the other *diroki*. Moeletsi (Appendix no. 34, point 34) aptly explains this phenomenon,

*Ntho e etsahalang ke hore dithoko di tshwana le tlhaho. Dithoko di tshwana le bosotho. Mosotho le ha a ka ruteha, Mosotho le ha a ka rua, Mosotho le ha a ka futsaneha, o tswala Mosotho. **Seroki se tswalwa ke seroki se seng.** Mme o kgahlilwe ke lentswe le leng ka hara puo ya dithoko. Ha re mametse ntate mona ha a ntse a ithoka, o itse “Nna ha ke mangmang, ke se mosadi.” Ntho eo e buuwa ke diroki tse ngata haholo mona Lesotho hobane ke thoko e tlang ho ba batona. Mme (o supa Mmachopho) o ne a ke ke a tjo jwalo hobane yena o ne a ka e beha ka tsela ya hae hobane ke motho wa mme. Jwale o tla fumana hore mono ba fihla ba wela nthong e le ngwe kaofela (emphasis added).*

What happens is that the *dithoko* are like nature. The *dithoko* are like Sothoism. Whether a Mosotho is educated, whether a Mosotho is rich, whether a Mosotho is poor, he begets a Mosotho. **A poet is begotten by another poet.** A person is impressed by a particular word in the language of the *thoko*. I heard one of the *diroki* chanting here, say, “*Nna ha ke mangmang, ke se mosadi.*” (I, myself, am not so and so, because I am not a woman). That expression is said by too many *diroki* here in Lesotho because it is a *thoko* directed to the male poets. The woman (pointing at Mrs Chopho, the poetess) would not have said that because she is a woman; she would at least put it in her own way as a woman. Then you will find that they all use the same expression (emphasis added).

Since the classical *dithoko* were largely inspired by war or wars in which the performers actually took part, the oral performances of such performers were characterised by strong feelings of emotion, especially fury, resulting from their personal experiences. The *seroki*, Moeletsi (Appendix no. 34, point 34), during our interview with the *diroki* at Morija, alludes to the emotions characterising the performance of the *dithoko* as inspired by war. He says,

...dithoko ke dintso tsa ntwana. Ke ntho ya kgalefo...Enwa wa dithoko o halefile, o a hlabana.

...the *dithoko* are compositions mainly inspired by war. The *thoko* is something of emotion...The reciter of a *thoko* is full of emotion; he is in a fighting spirit.

This emotion of the fighting hero is reflected in his great speed of delivery. This is confirmed by Monyane Mathibeli, from Diepkloof, Soweto near Johannesburg, who verbally says,

Ha o roka morena, ha o a tshwanela ho etsa diphoso, wa tsamaya o kgikgiritisa. O tshwanetse ho roka ka potlako jwalo ka ha o ne o lwana ntweng!

When you praise a chief, you must not make mistakes by stumbling. You must praise with speed in the same way that you fought in the battle.

The nature of information conveyed in the recitation itself therefore largely accounts for the manner of delivery, and this is reflected also in the poet's facial expressions and gestures. But in many of the *dithoko* recorded in August 2000, the emotion, especially of fury, was not high. Some *diroki* were not speaking at the pitch of their voices. This can be attributed to the fact that these *diroki* have not participated in any war or battle whatsoever, but have performed only at the festivals where they were not highly emotionally charged. Sometimes the nature of their subject matter (Moeletsi's subject-matter was his birth) does not necessitate high emotions. The performance of the *diroki*, recorded on video tapes in 2000, differed from that of the classical *diroki* whose performances were directly inspired by their actual experiences in the wars they fought in. Dieterlen and Kohler in Kunene (1971: xii) relate the following about the classical heroes,

He leaps forward, parades in front of his friends, his head held high, his eyes large and staring, his face contorted, his voice raised in pitch, making violent gestures; he declaims his praises but without varying the intonation of his voice, and with such a stream of words that it is difficult

to understand all the words.

Casalis in Swanepoel (1990: 267) adds the following about the manner in which the classical poet declaimed his *thoko* immediately after his exploits,

His friends surround him and ask him to recount his exploits. His telling is grandiose; he is carried away by the intensity of his feelings, his expression becomes poetic. He seizes upon his most recent experiences...

The following extract is from a classical *thoko* from Mangoaela's compilation, **Lithoko tsa marena a Basotho** (1957:182), where the composition was inspired by the battle in which Chief Griffith attacked chief Mocheko of the Baphuthi people in December 1897. We find the following in lines 231-234:

231. *Hobane ka mona, ha Nte, ha re lumeliso,*
232. *Tlali e otlala metse ya bahanyetsi,*
233. *E otlala metse ea baikhohomosi,*
234. *E otlale ka Mocheko, mafikeng;*

231. Because here, at Nte's we are not greeted anymore,
232. The lightning strikes the opponent's villages,
233. It strikes the villages of the proud ones,
234. It has struck at Mocheko's, among the rocks;

The village, Nte, mentioned in line 231, occupied by Chief Mocheko of the Baphuthi people, was attacked by Chief Griffith in December 1897 (see Damane and Sanders 1974: 222-3). The attack was caused by Mocheko's theft and slaughter of a stray ox belonging to one of Griffith's men. All attempts by Griffith to have a meeting with Mocheko on the matter fell on deaf ears. In line 232, the lightning mentioned is a metaphor referring to Chief Griffith's heroic attacks. The opponents and the proud ones mentioned in lines 232 and 233 refer to Mocheko whose village, Nte, was situated among the rocks. The formulaic repetition of the words, *e otlala* 'strikes', *e otlala* 'strikes' and *e otlale* 'has struck' in lines 232 – 234 convey the speed, the fury and the

destructive nature of Griffith's attack. Lines, such as these, declaimed by a Mosotho soldier who literally has experienced the battle, will more likely be recited as explained above, namely, with grandiose, intensity of feelings, with his voice raised in pitch, and with violent gestures.

The video footage of the *diroki* recorded evinced that the *dithoko* on these occasions were not in all respects declaimed like the classical ones. For instance, the *seroki*, Mokolane Mosikili (Appendix no. 9), recited his poem in a voice slightly raised for the audience to hear. The speed of recitation was normal, and the audience could understand every word from his mouth, and he made very little use of body movements. His manner of recitation can be attributed largely to the contents of his *thoko*, which are about God's creation, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and life after death, as in the following lines,

9. *Ke roka Modimo, Morena wa marena.*
10. *Mmopi wa batho,*
11. *Modimo, Ntate, Moetsaditjhaba.*
12. *Ramasedi, mmuso wa mahodimo,*
13. *O buse letsatsi, o buse maru.*
14. *O di buse, e be tsa hao,*

9. I am praising God, the King of kings,
10. Creator of the people,
11. God, the Father, Maker-of-the-nations,
12. The Light, kingdom of the heavens,
13. May you govern the sun and the clouds,
14. May you govern them, to be yours!

The same is applicable to the *thoko* as recited by Qekise Moeletsi, which was about his own birth.

Among the Basotho, memorisation of a piece of a recitation does not play a significant part in the composition of his *thoko*. The *seroki* composes 'on his feet'. As Okpewho (1985: 28) puts it, 'there is an impromptu, unplanned character in the text

of his poetry.’ The *seroki* composes in the process of his recitation. The implication of this is that the text of his recitation is instantaneous, immediate and direct, which means that it takes place “on the spur of the moment”. It is also contemporaneous, that is, it takes place at the same time the *seroki* is performing and the audience is participating. It is also transient or fleeting, meaning that the performance will not be the same next time. There is an interesting paradox here, for, despite the fleetingness of the oral delivery, more information is produced as a result of the presence of the non-verbal elements - the situation, gestures, facial expressions, etc.

The impression sometimes created, that oral composition of a piece of a recitation such as the *thoko*, takes place without any prior preparation at all, is not entirely true and correct. ‘Machopo’s *dithoko* recitations are prepared beforehand. This is confirmed by her statement (Appendix no. 34, point 3) during the interview held at Morija, namely, that she does preparations before she recites her *thoko*, writes it down and types it before she recites it. The fact that her voice was not raised high, and was reciting in the normal speed of talking, confirms her statement. The same practice is also followed by other poets such as Qekise Moeletsi. This means that the recitation of this nature (by ‘Machopho or Qekise Moeletsi, for instance) is not necessarily composed “on the spur of the moment” but that the same recitation can be repeated elsewhere. Unlike the classical *dithoko* characterised by impromptu and unplanned character of their texts, some of the *dithoko* recorded in 2000, demonstrate a trend characterised by preparation, writing down and typing before recitation.

The language of *thoko* is highly figurative, and the style allusive. Sometimes the language may be archaic and lofty, which may need interpretation even to local listeners. An example of this is the frequent use of metaphors comparing the person praised to ferocious animals. Also common in the *dithoko* is the inclusion of the names of the ancestors with whom constant association is maintained. Compare in Mangoaela (1921: 227) the following extract from a *thoko* composed for Chief Lerotholi Mojela who led a detachment of Basotho soldiers to fight on the side of the Allied Forces during the World War 1:

Koena, Qibi ea heno, Seeiso,

*Ea habo Nkoebe le bo-Maama,
Ea habo Thaabe le bo-Sekhobe,
Ea habo Peete le Mokhachane,
Ea habo Moholobela le Theko,
Ea habo Masopha le Lepolesa,
Ea habo Sempe le Mohlakana.*

Crocodile, Otter of your home, Seeiso,
Of the house of Nkoebe and Maama,
Of the house of Thaabe and Sekhobe,
Of the house of Peete and Mokhachane,
Of the house of Moholobela and Theko,
Of the house of Masopha and Lepolesa,
Of the house of Sempe and Mohlakana.

In this extract, *Kwena* 'Crocodile' and *Qibi* 'Otter' are metaphors formulaically used to compare Lerotholi Mojela, one of Seeiso's elder brothers, to water animals which can dangerously attack their enemies unexpectedly. According to Damane and Sanders (1974: 237), Seeiso, Nkoebe, Maama, Thaabe, Sekhobe, Theko and Lepolesa were all paternal uncles. Moholobela (son of Seeiso), Sempe (son of Nkoebe) and Mohlakana (son of Lerotholi) were all cousins. Masopha mentioned here is probably Masopha II, the grandson of Moshoeshe's son, Masopha.

The same technique is also applicable to many of the *dithoko* performed by the Basotho poets recorded in 2000. For instance, the *seroki*, Arston Mphou (Appendix no. 31, lines 24-30) at Matsieng says the following in his *thoko*:

24. *Ngwana morena, tjhee ke se mereto sebata,*
25. *Ke lesea le moruthu, Mokwena,*
26. *Ke ngwana wa ntlokgolo, ngwana wa beng,*
27. *O bonwa ka ditshobotsi,*
28. *O tshwana le Seeiso le Lerotholi,*
29. *Le Thesele le Peete le Mokhachane,*
30. *Ho a ipaka o tswalehile Mokwena,*

24. Child of the king, yes, it is a striped beast,
25. He is a warm baby, Mokwena,
26. He is the child from a senior house, masters' child,
27. He is seen by physical appearance,
28. He resembles Seeiso and Lerotholi,
29. And Thesele, and Peete and Mokhachane,
30. It is evident he is a thoroughbred, Mokwena,

In praising the birth of King Mohato (King Moshoeshe II) the poet uses figurative language, *se mereto sebata*, 'a striped beast' in line 24. The phrase *mereto* is taken from the Sesotho proverb, *Ngwana tadi o tsejwa ka mereto*, literally meaning, 'a mouse's child is known by the stripes', meaning 'a child takes after his parent'. By physical appearance, and also fighting skill, he resembles his ancestors, Seeiso and Lerotholi, as well as Thesele (another name for Moshoeshe), Peete (Moshoeshe's grandfather) and Mokhachane (Moshoeshe's father) in lines 28 and 29.

The above discussion highlights main features that characterize the *dithoko* as an oral poetic art form as well as the changes that have taken place in the performance between the classical *dithoko* and the *dithoko* at the beginning of the 21st century.

The next discussion highlights the characteristics pertaining to the *difela*.

3.2.2 Characteristics of the *difela*

The *difela* are popularly known as *Difela tsa ditsamayanaha* or *Difela tsa diparolathota* (Songs of the travellers). Unlike the *dithoko*, this kind of poetry originated much later than the *dithoko*, during the latter part of the nineteenth century as a result of the discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa. The *difela* therefore constitute a genre specific to the experiences of the migrant mine workers. Migration of the Basotho men to the lucrative places of South Africa was necessitated by Lesotho's major loss of agricultural land to the Free State, and this created an economic necessity.

Basotho men had to walk long distances on foot to the mining areas where they sold their labours. It was during these long walks to and from the mines that the composition of the *difela* began. According to Wells (1994: 266), the *difela* were sung partly for entertainment, and partly as a means of defining their own identity in a system that soon became exploitative and dehumanising. The composition and transmission of the *difela* took place in a situation which Mokitimi (1998:1) describes as follows,

their composition and transmission has been brought about by the economic, social and historical changes of capitalism and imperialism. The poets express and expose the economic and social evils of exploitation and dehumanisation of migrant labourers. They are, therefore, poems of protest and condemnation of the system that exploits these workers.

Coplan (1994: 71) highlights another aspect,

The development of *sefela* was in part a response to the increasing autocracy and self-aggrandizement of the Basotho chiefly class under British colonial "protection". *Lifela* were composed, not in praise or protest of bureaucrats, but in support of the migrants' own identity and status as citizens of an autonomous polity, in which commoners might still attempt to hold their leaders socially accountable.

Continuing a little later Coplan (1994: 72-73) adds,

Lifela (songs) emerged from the migrants' awareness of their dependent position in both a changing system of local relationships and the political economy of South Africa, in which they often felt more like livestock themselves, then like livestock farmers.

Qekise Moeletsi (Appendix no. 34, point 40) describes the composition of *sefela* as '*lekomo*' (grumble, complaint) in which a poet grumbles about various negative experiences of his life, either at work in the mines or at home in Lesotho. During the

interview held with the *diroki*, this time at Matsieng, Arston Mphou (Appendix no. 35, point 2) described the *difela* as *seoma*, that is, language spoken by those who have been to the Goldfields (cf. Mabile and Dieterlen, [1961] 1988: 339). Unlike *dithoko*, the language of the *difela* is easy to understand because difficult figurative concepts are avoided as much as possible. Compare the following extract from the *sefela* recorded at Huntersville in September 2000, as composed by Francis Nkoli (Appendix no. 8), originally from the village of Marakabei, in Lesotho:

23. *Lemong se fetileng sena,*
24. *Ka kgwedi ya Julae,*
25. *Ke kile ka kena kereke,*
26. *Ke ne ke le matsoku pela Tlhamini,*
27. *Ke ne ke le moposetola e motelele,*
28. *Ke ntse ke mathaka ka lethopa,*
29. *Le Basione ba ne ba ntlwaetse.*
30. *Utlwang jwale ha ke fetohela dikano,*
31. *Jehova o a hana wa mahodimo,*
32. *O re ho nna:*
33. *'Monna, ha eba o tlile kerekeng mona,*
34. *O tlile ka nnete, o hlapantse,*
35. *Ke ne ke kopa o kereke, o be motelele'.*

23. This past year,
24. During the month of July
25. I once belonged to a church,
26. I was all over covered in red ochres near Dlamini,
27. I was a tall apostle,
28. Running around suffering from boils.
29. And the Zionists were accustomed to me.
30. Listen now, when I turn against my oaths,
31. Jehova is adamant, He of the heavens,
32. He says to me:
33. 'You man, if you have come here to church,
34. You have truly come, and have sworn an oath,

35. I request you to be a church member and be tall’.

In this extract the poet relates in simple language his experiences in Soweto, and how during the month of July he joined a church. He purposely prefers to use the English word ‘July’ instead of the Sesotho *Phupu* as the people in Soweto where different languages are spoken, will easily understand the month he is referring to. He joined the church seeking healing for the boils he was suffering from, and as a result, his body was covered in red ochre. All this took place in one of the townships of Soweto called Dlamini which he pronounces ‘Tlhamini’. He held a high position in the church, and as he was tall, he stood out as a tall apostle. Other church members with him, the Zionists, who prayed for the sick, knew him and accepted him well.

The *difela* are narrative in style; they need an audience to listen to them; they are orally recited and their composition is done whilst the poet is on his feet. They are not actually spoken, neither are they actually sung, but they fall somewhere between speech and song. This is the reason why a scholar like Coplan (1986: 269) describes them as “*melodic recitative poetry*” or “*musical poetry*” (Coplan, 1987a: 32). However, they differ in terms of tone and contents. The *difela* are regarded as song-like whilst the *dithoko* are spoken. The composition of the *difela* must be seen against the background of composers’ feet serving like a guitar and background for harmonious singing of these songs. Wells (1994: 267) explains this as follows,

Lifela are conceptualised as being sung because they originated within the regularly repetitive rhythmic framework of walking, as migrants made their way on foot to the urban centres. The actions of the feet served as background framework in which the poetry of the lifela was located. Though nowadays they are generally recited stationary, this conceptualisation still remains.

Contrary to the classical *difela* which were commonly chanted by the Basotho men walking to and from the mines in South Africa, accompanied by regularly repetitive rhythmic framework of walking, the *difela* chanted at the beginning of the 21st century are chanted stationary as the journeys are no more taken on foot. This is confirmed

by video footage of the *diroki* recorded at all centres during our research tour. This is also alluded to and confirmed by Qekise Moeletsi (Appendix no. 34, point 40) during the interview with the *diroki* where, referring to competitions on this art form, says,

Moo ekareng dimmaeneng, merafong, dikomponeng, moo ba nang le ho dula ka Meqebelo ba sa ya mesebetsing, ba hlile ba hlodisana ka tsona.

At places such as the mines, the compounds, where they sometimes don't go to work on Saturdays, they actually compete with these things.

The *sefela* is chanted in a clear voice, and the words are uttered slowly enough for the audience to hear, and the syllables, contrary to our spoken language, are of the same monotonous tone and pitch. It's only here and there where the tone and pitch change. Poetic devices commonly used in the *dithoko*, such as, formulaic parallelisms and repetition of phrases, and metaphors, are also employed to maintain the smooth rhythmical chanting. Use of these poetic devices serves as a signal that this genre has still a relationship with the *dithoko* and that it is still part of the age-old oral poetic tradition. Pheka Setlaba, recorded at Morija performed his *sefela* by uttering words clearly for the audience to hear, and used the same monotonous tone. He also used, inter alia, the following parallelism as one of the formulaic devices to enhance his performance,

9. *Taung e ne e le Monare,*
10. *Tajane e ne e le Mohale,*
11. *Kerefise a behwa Phamong,*
12. *Nkoebe a rongwellwa Sebapala,*

9. At Taung it was Monare,
10. At Tajane it was Mohale,
11. Griffith was placed at Phamong,
12. Nkoebe was sent to Sebapala,

Lines 9-10 and 11-12 constitute parallelisms of grammatical structure. Repetitions in these lines are aesthetic in that additional words or phrases are brought in as incrementing phrases to advance the narrative. Taung, Tajane, Phamong and Sebakala, are the places he is familiar with as an extensive traveller.

Whilst the *difela*, like the *dithoko*, make extensive use of narration, the former, in doing so, however, creates an atmosphere of closer contact with the audience. This happens with the introductory greetings which sometimes include a request at the audience to keep quiet. This introductory formula sometimes includes the poet's self-introduction. Compare the following extract from the *sefela* composed by Francis Nkoli (Appendix no. 8):

1. *Bontate, tholang le mmamele,*
2. *Le fateng ditsebe, le utlwe mokgosi,*
3. *Ditabeng tseo ke tla di bua,*
4. *Ke bua nnete.*
5. *Le ntse le botsa ke hahile kae,*
6. *Ke hahile ha Marakabei,*
7. *Kwana Mantshonyane.*
8. *Fateng tsena tsa maboloukomo,*
9. *Ke moo ke dulang, morena Sello.*
10. *Ke dula le Nnuku le Mahlapane,*
11. *Banana ba heso ke ba batelele,*

1. Fathers, keep quiet and listen to me,
2. And clean your ears to hear the shout of alarm,
3. In what I am going to say,
4. I speak the truth.
5. You keep asking where I live,
6. I live at Marakabei,
7. Yonder at Mantshonyane.
8. At these blue gum trees,
9. That's where I live, chief Sello.
10. I live with Nnuku and Mahlapane,

11. My sisters are the tall ones,

In line 1, the singer maintains a personal contact with his audience and requests his listeners, the fathers, to listen to him. The request to clean the ears by using small sticks (match sticks) is indicative of paying attention to the singer, and it is an expression commonly used in the *difela*. In line 2 he calls for their attention by removing anything that may be an obstacle. He refers to what he is going to say as *mokgosi* (shout of alarm), as this marks the importance of what he is going to say. In lines 3 and 4 he mentions the truthfulness of what he is about to say. An expression of this kind is commonly found in many of the *difela*. He introduces himself in lines 5 and 6 stating where he originates from, namely, Marakabei, the district of Mantshonyane (line 7) where there are blue gum trees (line 8). In line 9, he refers to himself not as an ordinary man, but as chief Sello, worthy to be listened to. In lines 10 and 11 he mentions members of his family, his two sisters, Nnuku and Mahlapane.

Learning of the art of performance of the *difela*, like the *dithoko*, takes place through imitation. The one learning the art must start by listening to others first before embarking on his own composition, and as he progresses, he builds upon the foundation set by others. As a person who travelled to various places in Lesotho, Pheka Setlaba, recorded at Morija Museum and Archives, was inquisitive in asking questions on the art, and was therefore taught by many people at places he visited. He (Appendix no. 34, points 24 and 26) explains how he learned the art of performing his *sefela*,

Ha ke fihla Leribe mane, ke fihla Koenaneng, ke re "Mono ke ha morena mang?". "Ke ha morena nnyeo! Mane ke ha morena nnyeo!" Ke tla lekanya metse eo. Ke tla bua. Moo ke sa fihlang teng, kgale ke sebetsa. Ke ile ka rutwa ke batho ba bangata ba habo Leribe kwana, ba re "Wena monna, nna ke tjena..." Jwale ba re ruta hore ke be ke nke tsa ka, ke di kopanye le tsa bona. Tse ding ha se tsa ka, ke di fuwe ke batho.

When I arrive there at Leribe, for instance, at Koenaneng village, I say, 'who is the chief at this place?' 'The chief of this place is so and so, and

the chief at that place is so and so'. I will commit the names of the villages to memory in this manner. Then I will be able to recite. Where I have never been, remember I have long been employed. I was taught by many people from Leribe, who said, 'You man, I am like this...' Now, they teach us so that I am able to have those that are mine (*difela*), and I incorporate theirs into mine. Some (*difela*) are not my original compositions; they have been given to me by other people.

Moeletsi (Appendix no. 34, point 40) explains how one learns the art of performing the *sefela*, and describes an environment conducive to learning it as well as its hereditary nature. He says,

Ntho ena ya difela, ha se ha bonolo e ka tsejwang ke motho ya ituletseng mane thabeng. O tla di tseba ha motho wa difela a ka di etsa hangata pela hae. Moo ekareng dimmaeneng, merafong, dikomponeng, moo ba nang le ho dula ka Meqebelo ba sa ya mesebetsing, ba hlile ba hlodisana ka tsona. Ke mona moo hangata o fumanang lentse kapa moelelo o le mong. Batho ba difela ba bangata haholo ba atisa ho phekola mputulu (thokolosi) e patetse motseng; ke hobane ba hlodisane ditabeng, mme kaofela ha bona, ditaba tsa bona di ba tsamaisitse mathateng a bileng a etsa hore ba qetelle ba iphetotse dingaka, ho batla bophelo. A tsietswa ke thokolosi a le kaekae, a tswa bosiu a baleha, kapa yena a hlola thokolosi. Ba bang ba ntshwa ke ditshitshidi, di ba loma ka matlung. Ke dintho tseo e leng nnete, ba bua ka tsona, ba ile ba di nka ho bao ba neng ba le ka pele ho bona. Ke hore hantlentle e hlile e a futseha.

This thing, the *difela*, is not easy to be known by a person sitting alone there on the mountain. He will know them if the *difela* reciter can perform them many times before him. At places such as the mines, the compounds, where they sometimes don't work on Saturdays, they actually compete with these things. This is where you sometimes find a word or a meaning which is common. A large number of the *difela* reciters usually help exploit away a *mputulu, thokolosi* (from the Zulu

'*mpundulu*', a mysterious being supposed to appear at certain places) attacking a village. It is as a result of the fact that they have competed in what they said, and all of them have gone through the same difficult experiences which eventually made them decide to become traditional doctors in order to make a living. Somewhere he was attacked by a *thokolosi*, he went out at night and escaped for dear life. In some cases, he defeated the *thokolosi*. Others ran out of the houses as a result of the bed bugs biting them. These are true experiences, and they talk about them, and have taken them from those who were before them. Actually this is something hereditary.

The above discussion has highlighted the distinguishing features of the *difela* as well as the difference in terms of the chanting between the classical *difela* and those composed later in August and September 2000, namely, that whereas the former were chanted accompanied by rhythmic repetition of feet, the latter are chanted stationary. This can clearly be ascribed to a change of venue and performance site.

The next discussion looks at the distinguishing features of the *diboko* 'family odes' or 'clan praises'.

3.2.3 Characteristics of the *diboko*

The use of the *diboko* as an art form has been in existence as far back as the origin of the Basotho. The words, *seboko*, the singular form, and *diboko*, the plural, are derived from the verb stem, *ho boka*, meaning "to praise", "to give thanks" or "to salute". Every family or clan distinguishes itself by a particular name, known as its *seboko*. This particular name was usually formed from that of one of its chiefs, past or present, or from that of the animal or object which it regards as its totem (cf. Damane and Sanders 1974:1).

The Basotho, especially those of old, believe that in some mysterious and inexplicable way, they derive their existence from these totems which they view as being sacred. Apart from this, they also believe in the existence of the Invisible One. Therefore, the sacredness of the totems emanates from the fact that they, as

tangible, represent and symbolise the so-called “Modimo wa kgale” (The God of old) to whom they address their prayers and thanks for the benefits they enjoy.

The *diboko* are short poetic recitations which are memorised, and which children are expected to know from an early age, as they contain information about the progenitors from whom the reciter believes to have descended as well as the clan to which he/she belongs. These *diboko* convey some historical information, culture, philosophy, tribal idiosyncrasy, or a particular incident related to the establishment of the family or clan.

The composition of the *seboko* shows that it is consciously an art, as there is a conscious striving for literary effect and effort to attain a richer, evocative, more emotive, and a more memorable use of language. It exhibits arrangements usually characteristic of poetry - an exalted figurative language, repetitions, formulaic and manner of delivery which, like the *dithoko*, is often faster than normal speech.

Although the *diboko*, like other oral art forms, are meant to be recited before an audience, this is not the case at all times, as they may also be recited in the absence of the audience. This happens when a reciter alone prayerfully appeals to his or her ancestors. More often than not, the *seboko* in this case is not recited in its entirety, but takes a truncated form, such as, *Bakwena ba ka!* ‘My Crocodile ancestors!’ which means, ‘To you, my ancestors, I am appealing for help in my present situation!’

The following is an example of the *seboko* of the *Batshweneng* ‘The Baboon clan’ (Tšiu, 2001: 88),

*Ke tla thella jwang,
Ke le Motshweneng,
Wa ha Kgiba le Kgamadi,
Motshweneng, leleme le letsho keng?
Leleme le letsho ke ho koma ditlhare!*

How will I pay homage?
Being one of the Baboon people,

Of the house of Kgiba and Kgamadi.

You member of the Baboon people, why is the tongue black?

The tongue is black through swallowing herbal medicines!

The reciter owes his origin to his ancestors, Kgiba and Kgamadi. *Leleme le letsho ke ho koma ditlhare* 'The tongue is black through swallowing herbal medicines' is a statement alluding to the historical incident from which the Batshweneng (The Baboon people) originated. According to a legend, the barren wife of a chief was made to conceive by physical contact with the body or skin of a baboon. It was by reason of this incident that the clan took the baboon for its name. The child born was named Motshwene, and the clan, previously the Bakwena (The Crocodile people), was then called the Batshweneng.

This oral tradition has been maintained among the Basotho as they did not have any other means through which part of their history, culture, national characteristics, philosophy, the names of their progenitors, could be preserved for new generations. The introduction of Christianity and other religions, modernization, industrialization as well as the culture of literacy, may have impacted negatively on the maintenance of this oral tradition because lately, including the year 2000, some of the Basotho are not able to recite their *diboko* as it was the case in the past. However, those who have become victims of these influences are in the minority (cf. Tšiu, 2001:163).

The performance of the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko* constitutes the subject of the following discussion.

3.3 Performance of the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko*

As an enabling event (Foley, 1993: 278), performance can be described as a rendition of a composition of a piece of an oral art form by a performer or performers either in a face-to-face situation with or without an audience. Also see Bauman (1975: 290) and Fine (1984:62 ff.).

Although there is a close relationship between the *dithoko*, *difela* and *diboko* as parts of oral poetic compositions, they, however, differ in terms of their performance. These

differences are attributed to their different contents, aims and contexts in which they are performed; they constitute different structures of creativity. Here we shall be examining the circumstances surrounding the performance of these genres so as to understand how their artistic characteristics are realized within the only context which make them meaningful, namely, before an audience. These circumstances which all constitute their performance are discussed under the following sub-headings:

3.3.1 The Poet (*seroki*)

According to Finnegan (1977: 170) a poet can be anyone in the community. Anyone who produces a *thoko* may be regarded as a *seroki*, but not necessarily as a professional *seroki*. To be a successful one, a *seroki* of good repute, a *seroki* laureate, has to be endowed with certain natural talents, such as, a sweet voice, a good memory, given the length of his repertoire, good command of language, and natural impressive ability to express oneself. To be a *seroki* of good repute, one has to listen to the other *diroki* performing the art a number of times before one can start imitating them and composing one's own *thoko*. During the interview held with the poets at Morija, Qekise Moeletsi (Appendix no. 34, point 34), expressing his view on the importance of learning, imitating and composing, on the part of the young emerging *diroki*, says,

Ntho e etsahalang ke hore dithoko di tshwana le tlhaho. Dithoko di tshwana le bosotho. Mosotho le ha a ka ruteha, Mosotho le ha a ka rua, Mosotho le ha a ka futsaneha, o tswala Mosotho. Seroki se tswalwa ke seroki se seng.

What happens is that the *dithoko* are like nature. The *dithoko* are like Sothoism. Whether a Mosotho is educated, whether a Mosotho is rich, whether a Mosotho is poor, he begets a Mosotho. A poet is begotten by another poet.

By listening to the *dithoko* laureates performing the art, and composing your own upon their foundation, is how the new *diroki* emerge. Mokhele Thulo, an interviewee

at Morija compares this to a teacher at school, teaching the children how to sing, and bringing about some changes in order to make his own new composition. He argues,

O a bona nthwena hantlentle ha eba o le motho wa Mosotho, o tseba ho etsa mohlala, o ka e tshwantsha le titjhere sekolong. Ha se hangata ha a bintsha bana ba sekolo, a nkang dipina tsa kgale, tsa nako tse fetileng. Le yena o a qapa. Ke ka moo ereng hosane o utlwe a se a bina pina e nngwe, e ntjha, o sa tsebe hore o e nka hokae (Appendix no. 34, point 27).

You see, this thing, if really you are a Mosotho who knows how to make an example, you can compare it to a teacher at school. It is not common that the teacher, when teaching the children to sing uses old songs. He himself composes. This is why tomorrow you hear him singing another song, a new song, and not knowing where it comes from.

The *seroki*, as performer in the oral poetic compositions, plays an important role because without his rendition an oral piece cannot materialize. The particular talent determines the degree of success of the performance as a whole. Rendition of an oral art form, the *thoko*, the *sefela* or the *seboko*, entails the voice, the gestures and facial expressions, the accoutrement, the audience, and the text. These are discussed as follows:

3.3.1.1 Voice

The voice is the foundation of any oral performance as it is through the voice that information can be transmitted to the audience. The recitation of the Basotho *thoko* is done with the pitch of the voice being a bit higher, the sentences flowing faster than in normal speech. The higher pitch is only enough to ensure that the audience at the performance are able to hear the recitation. This was the case with all the *dithoko* and the *difela* poets whose performances we recorded in 2000.

The recitation of the *dithoko* by Qekise Moeletsi and 'Machopho, in particular, were even more like ordinary speech as they narrated the contents of their poems. This did not however compromise the liveliness and seriousness of their poetic renditions.

During the course of the recitation there are often here and there ululations and interjections such as, 'O tseba nna!' (You know me!) or 'Ke ne ke le teng!' (I was there!), which may make some of the phrases difficult to understand especially when the listener is not near the poet. The gestures accompanying the recitation make up for the missed and unheard phrases. In a case like this the *seroki* applies every means, such as his weapons, his gestures, his facial expressions, and moves around as he performs in line with the contents of his recitation. The *seroki* does all these in order to carry his performance effectively across.

Whilst all the *diroki* used body movements such as the hands and feet, the manner of usage differed, as these depended on each performer. For instance, Tutubala Tšoene walked a few feet to the right and then to his left during the entire recording of his performance, and sometimes would increase the pace and looked like he was running. George Mofoka made very little movement of his feet and hands. Qekise Moeletsi and 'Mampho Chopho made almost no movement except a few movements of their hands. Whether the performance of any part of a *thoko* is accompanied by body movements or not, the voice and its clarity is paramount since it carries the performance across. This is confirmed by the Sesotho radio program *Lenaka la motheo* 'The horn of foundation' where the *diroki* telephonically recite their *dithoko* and *difela* compositions which are broadcast live. These compositions, despite their lack of accompanying body movements, still maintain their liveliness and lasting impression on the listeners.

The importance attached to the voice cannot be overemphasized. Through the voice, the *seroki* not only entertains his audience, but conveys the message to his audience, conveys information about the chief, the hero, his exploits, his bravery, his genealogy, his ancestors, as well as any historical information of importance. This is the reason why the *dithoko* were commonly chanted at *dipitso* 'assemblies' usually before business was conducted, but sometimes afterwards as well, and at *matsema* 'work-parties', as the people rested after laboring on the chief's land. The much faster

pace than normal speech and lively manner reflect the speed of fighting in the war or the battle, bravery, blood and heroism.

The *sefela*, on the other hand, is a poetic composition in which the performer relates various painful experiences of his life, both at home, in Lesotho, and in the mining cities of South Africa. These experiences are narrated in a normal voice by the poet mourning about the difficulties he went through. Qekise Moeletsi (Appendix no. 34, point 34) explaining the difference between the *thoko* and the *sefela*, especially in terms of voice usage, says,

Boholo ba dithoko, phapanong le difela, ke hore hape dithoko ke dintho tsa ntwana. Ke ntho ya kgalefo, athe difela ke lekomo, motho wa teng o a komakoma, o llela mehlolo le mathata ao a kileng a a fumana bophelong ba tsela. Enwa wa dithoko o halefile, o a hlabana.

To a large extent, the *dithoko*, in differing from the *difela*, are the things of war. *Thoko* is something of emotion (fury) whereas the *difela* constitute *lekomo* (grumbling), a person reciting a *sefela* is grumbling, and cries over the miracles and the difficulties he experienced in life. The reciter of a *thoko* is full of inspiration (fury); he is in a fighting spirit.

The nature of information enveloped in the recitation itself therefore accounts for the manner of delivery, and this is reflected also in the poet's facial expressions and gestures. The *thoko* of Joshua Makara (Appendix no. 12) includes the following in lines 49 -54:

49. *Nna ere ke lwana motho wa boPetje,*
50. *Ke lwana jwalo ka poho ya mmofu,*
51. *Hobane ha ke lwana ke kgophola marole,*
52. *Ngwana Makara.*
53. *Matabolaletswalo, tswalo Mohodisathaka Letshabisa,*
54. *Tswalo le fihla mothong.*

49. When I fight, person of the Petje family,

50. I fight like a holstein,
51. Because when I fight, I raise dust,
52. Child of Makara.
53. The frightener, the fear with which Letshabisa's contemporary grew up,
54. Fear grips a person.

The need to recite the *dithoko* with great speed is necessitated by the hero's deeds of bravery where he compares himself to things which are known by their swiftness. Damane (1977: 16) gives the following information,

Ha ea rokoang e le mohale oa 'nete; lithoko tsa hae li phetoa ka ho latellana ho potlakang liketso tsa hae tsa bohlabano. O tšoantšoa le lintho tsohle tse potlakang tšebetsong ea tsona, tse kang letolo, leholiotsoana, nkoe, tlali le tse ling.

If the one being praised is a real hero, his poems relate in a speedy manner his acts of bravery. He is compared to all the things which are speedy by nature, things such as thunder, whirlwind, leopard, lightning and others.

The manner of recitation of many of the *dithoko*, as confirmed by the video footage still exhibits the same speed of recitation which is perpetuated by the same feelings of bravery and heroism whether or not the *seroki* took part in any war or battle. Whatever the contents of his *thoko*, the element of bravery still surfaces as every *seroki* is expected to maintain the age-old oral poetic tradition of the forefathers. Mphutlane Mofokeng (Appendix no. 4), declaiming his *thoko ya bafo* 'commoners' praise poem', praises himself in the entire *thoko*, and says, among others,

167. *Banna ba heso, ha ithoka lefekefeke la marumo,*
168. *Kgaitsemi ya Makgala le Ntaoleng,*
169. *Ntata Malefetsane, hlokofoala feela monna e molelele,*
170. *O hlabe motho ka lerumo mpeng,*
171. *Lerumo la hao la hanella moqaqeng.*
172. *Masapo a mabedi thekeng mona ho motho,*

173. *Ke moo lerumo la ngwana Mantshi le fasitseng teng,*
 174. *Mphutlane, hata motho ka seeta phiong mona,*
 175. *O tshware lerumo ka matsoho a mabedi,*
 176. *O le hlekehle, o tseke ho le ntsha.*
167. Comrades, now he praises, he who is the stabber with spears,
 168. The brother of Makgala and Ntaoleng,
 169. Malefetsane's father, be furious, you, tall man,
 170. And stab him with a spear in the stomach,
 171. Your spear stuck in the bones,
 172. Two bones in the waist of a person,
 173. That's where the spear of Mmantshi's child is stuck,
 174. Mphutlane, trample someone on the kidney with your shoe,
 175. And hold your spear with both hands.
 176. Shake it and try to pull it out.

Addressing his comrades in line 167, he proudly refers to himself in the third person as *ha ithoka lefekefeke la marumo* 'he praises himself, the stabber with spears'. He proudly mentions his family members, namely, his sisters, Makgala and Ntaoleng in line 168 as well as his son, Malefetsane in line 169. Addressing himself in line 169 as *hlokofala feela monna e molelele* 'be furious, you, tall man' he actually instils fear in those listening to him. In lines 170-172 he relates how he engages in a battle or fight - he stabs with so much force on the stomach that the spear goes through two bones at the same time, and therefore remains stuck. Here he proudly refers in line 173 to his great ancestor, Mantshi, from whom his Bafokeng clan is believed to have originated. During his entire performance, Mphutlane's voice is strong and even intimidating, and he stands tall and forceful as he faces the audience. In lines 174 – 176 he tramples his victim with his shoe on the kidney, and shakes his spear using both hands in order to pull it out.

The element of bravery and heroism also comes to the fore in the performance by Qabanyane Mothai (Appendix no. 10). Though he has never participated in war or battle, he declaims the following about himself:

18. *Ke lengau le leholo haholo,*
19. *Kgale ke theosa le lefatshe lena,*
20. *Ke se ke bile ke kgutla le Secunda,*
21. *Le Amerika kwana ke se ke kgutla teng,*
22. *Mafatsheng a ka ntle kwana,*
23. *Ke se ke kgutla Olanto,*
24. *Mosambike kwana ke kgutla teng,*
25. *Potoketsi, teropong ya teng, Maputo.*

18. I am a very big leopard,
19. For a long time I've traversed all this country,
20. I have even been to Secunda,
21. Even America I have already been there,
22. To those countries outside there,
23. I have been to Orlando,
24. Mozambique, I have already been there,
25. The Portuguese, from its city, Maputo.

The *seroki* in line 18 conveys his heroism and hard work to make ends meet by comparing himself to a very big leopard which has to run all over in search of its victim in order to satisfy its stomach. He is a person who has travelled extensively. This is a distinguishing mark which conveys his heroism because few men have had that privilege (line 19). Already he has been to Secunda (line 20), and America (pronounced *Amerika* in line 21), and even the outside countries (line 22). He also has been to Orlando (pronounced *Olanto*), which is one of the townships in Soweto. He has also been to Mozambique '*Mosambike*' (line 24) and, in particular, Maputo, the capital and the largest city of Mozambique. The *seroki* refers to Maputo as the capital of *Potoketsi* 'Portuguese' on account of the fact that the city, Lourenço Marques, renamed Maputo after independence, was founded by the Portuguese. The element of bravery and heroism as explained in these lines as well as in the entire *thoko* consisting of 140 lines does not emanate from any experience in actual war or battle, but from experiences he went through in life, experiences which distinguish him as a hero in his day-to-day struggle for survival. This is an example of a *thoko ya bafo* 'commoners' praise poem' where the *seroki*, not being inspired by

war or battle, praises not the chief or any warrior or hero, but himself. What is more, he makes use of narrative material derived from the *sefela* – moving from one place to another although he might not have been there at all.

The two examples above confirm the statement that whereas the composition of the classical *dithoko* were mainly inspired by war, those composed and recorded in 2000, are inspired by day-to-day experiences of the *seroki*, and that in both cases, the element of heroism on the part of the *seroki* is still maintained.

Qekise Moeletsi (Appendix no. 34, point 34) describes the *sefela* as '*lekomo*' (grumble, complaint) as we have seen, in which a poet grumbles about various negative experiences of his life. These may include experiences both in his workplace at the mines and at home in Lesotho. Arston Mphou, interviewed at Matsieng (Appendix no. 35, point 2) describes the *sefela* as *seoma*, meaning 'language or poetry of those who are coming back from the Goldfields' (cf. Mabile and Dieterlen, [1959]1988: 3390). Since the literal meaning of *seoma* is a very big ox which walks slowly, *seoma* is figuratively used to indicate the oral poetic composition which is chanted at a slow pace and almost subdued voice. The following extract from the *sefela* chanted by Pheka Setlaba (Appendix no. 18), relates part of the idle manner in which migrant workers spend their free time.

*Ke dumela tameneng re lokisetsa methepa,
Mabelete re a qhautsa feela,
Nthwana tse tswetsweng ke dibiri.
Ha ho na letho bashana beso.*

I agree, at a drinking party we prepare for ladies,
The wild ones we catch easily,
They are born amid beer drinking sprees.
I do not have much to say, my fellow men.

In this *sefela* the poet relates his experiences at the drinking parties which serve as places where they meet women. It is where they easily find their partners, those who, under normal circumstances, it is not easy to win their love. He refers to them as

those who, from their birth, are accustomed to drinking sprees. He narrates every experience and concludes by saying he does not want to pursue the matter any further.

The above extract of the *sefela*, like many others, confirms the view that the *difela* still constitute a poetic genre the aim of which is to narrate the various experiences of the mine workers. The narration of the *sefela* is recited at the normal pitch of the voice as well as the normal speed. The tone which to a large extent remains the same differs as it is sometimes seldom raised after a few lines of recitation. In Francis Sello Nkoli's *sefela* (Appendix no. 8) recorded at Huntersville, the raising of the tone could be observed in the 77th line where he says,

77. *Nna ehlile ha ke Mosotho eieeeee!*

77. I am actually not a Mosotho in reality!

The word *eieeeee* is taken from the Afrikaans word 'eie', meaning 'mine', in English. Using the word in this context the *seroki* means that he is not entirely a Mosotho but a Motswana born in Botswana. He satirically confirms this in lines 64 and 65 where he says, *Ho betere ke boele Botswana/Ke moo ke tswalwang*, 'It is beter I return to Botswana/That's where I was born'. The tone in this line is the same except for the tone in the pronunciation of the expression *eieeeee!* (in reality or truly!) which is a raised high long note usually found at the end of a song.

Coming now to the *diboko*, in more cases than not, they are recited usually to a very small audience. It may in fact consist of one, two or only a few members where the reciter identifies him/self. The reciter's voice in this case is of a normal pitch but its modulation is guided by the contents of the short text.

Significant of the recitation of the *diboko* is that it is not the domain of men only. Females including girls participate as well. Thus a large variety in the use of voice occurs. The following is an example of the *seboko* recited by a woman, Lebohang Mosikili of Qwaqwa (Tšiu, 2001: 87),

*Ke thelleleng
Ke le Lekgolokwe, Lekotswana,
Lehlaba-kgoho-ka-lemao-ka-sebonong,
O isa mokgorong ha Kgwadi,
O re: 'Bona, morena, ke hlabile!'
Ke monate wa nku o fella mono!*

Why should I pay homage,
Being a Kholokwe, a-white-sprinkled-one,
Piercer-of-a-chicken-with-a-pin-in-the-anus,
And takes it to the court at Kgwadi's,
And says, 'Look, chief, I have slaughtered!'
It is the deliciousness of the mutton ending there!

Lebohang belongs to the Makgolokwe. The characteristic idiosyncrasy of the clan was to give to their chief the first fruits of their harvest from the land. This was also applicable to any food the clan produced. Lines 3 – 6 refer to the common incident where they would slaughter a chicken and take it to their chief, Kgwadi, and address him in the following words, 'Look, chief, I have slaughtered!' This *seboko* was recited by Lebohang in the normal pitch of the voice. What was significant was the speed of recitation which was much faster than ordinary speech.

Another example which follows is the *seboko* recited by a young girl, Pontšo Kotsane of Leribe (Tšiu, 2001: 86),

*Ke thelleleng,
Ke le Letebele la ha Miya,
La ha Sekelemanane,
Kobo di pedi, ngwana Kgojane,
Tsa bola hloho,
Tsa bola bokalakata,
E nngwe ke ya ho apesa boroko,
E nngwe ke ya ho apesa bosudu*

Why should I pay homage,
Being a Ndebele of the house of Miya,
Of the house of Sekelemané,
Blankets are two, child of Kgojane,
They were rotten on the head,
They were rotten on the separated head from the neck,
One is meant for sleeping,
The other for covering farting (air from the bowels)!

According to the informant, Johannes Miya (ibid., p. 87), this clan praise is that of the Baphuthi clan whose totem is the *phuthi* 'the duiker'. The ancestor from whom the clan believed to have descended was Miya. The clan experienced difficulties and had to move from place to place looking for shelter among other clans. This group had to hide its identity because of fear of being identified with the Ndebeles of Pakaditha who were causing chaos and destruction during the Difaqane wars. Reference to *Kobo di pedi* 'Blankets are two' alludes to the dual identity of these people; on the one hand, they had to masquerade as people different from the Matebele, on the other, they had to cover *bosudu* 'the farting'. Where these people could find shelter for the night, they used to cover their bodies and heads with blankets to prevent farting. Since they commonly ate samp, their breaking of the wind (farting) was usually accompanied by a loud sound which they feared would reveal their true identity.

This clan praise was recited by Pontsho in a normal voice. The speed of recitation was faster than normal speech. In both cases above the reciters were not exhibiting as in front of an audience although boastful and proud.

The above discussion has shown the distinction in terms of voice usage in the performance of the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko*. The next aspect of performance of these genres is the gestures and facial expressions.

3.3.1.2 Gestures and facial expressions

Gestures, facial expressions as well as the movement of feet are referred to by Okpewho (1992: 46) as 'the histrionics of the performance' or the 'paralinguistic resources', that is, the movements demonstrating an action contained in the text. These movements serve as instruments that give impact to the realization of the performance. They also give physical demonstration of the recited text. Gestures as demonstrated during the process of recitation are almost unavoidable, especially when one takes into consideration the kind of contents the *seroki* is conveying at that particular moment. Information related to experiences in the battle or war is such that the *seroki* cannot do otherwise but accompany it with relevant bodily gestures that help to convey it. One of the important functions of gestures accompanying speech is to help convey information to a listener. Information is not only conveyed, but must be understood by the members of the audience. Therefore, in using body language (gestures) the *seroki* ensures that the information he is relating does get across to his audience in a lively and impressive manner. Says Kendon (1994: 194),

Sometimes a gesture is used... to make the expression more complete or more vivid and more attractive to others.

Gestures and facial expressions are important devices that form an integral part of the realization of oral poetry as a work of art. These are not mere embellishments that can easily be done away with. Says Finnegan (1970:3),

In fact, all the variegated aspects we think of as contributing to the effectiveness of performance...play their part in the delivery of unwritten pieces - expressiveness of tone, gesture, facial expression, dramatic use of pause and rhythm, the interplay of passion, dignity, or humour, receptivity to the reactions of the audience, etc., etc. Such devices are not mere embellishments superadded to the already existent literary work - as we think of them in regard to written literature - but an integral as well as flexible part of its full realization as a work of art.

In the video tape recorded at the Basotho Cultural Village, Joshua Makara commences his recitation by first taking off his *modianyewe* 'Basotho grass hat' from his head and putting it on the ground, and quietly raising his hands high up as an indication to his audience to keep quiet as he is about to recite the Basotho prayer. His introductory words which convey the same message as customary Basotho words, *Tsie lala! Tsie lala!* 'Sleep, locust! Sleep, locust!' are framed differently as in the following fashion,

*Le hle mpe le thole hobane jwale re a rapela, hobane thapelo ya rona
Basotho ke ena...*

You kindly now keep quiet because we now pray, as our prayer as the Basotho is this...

The removal of the *modianyewe* from his head is understood by his audience as an indication of respect. He frowns, keeps down his head as a mark of respect to his addressees, and closes his eyes during the course of the prayer as he directs his prayer to his ancestors, Jesus and the great God whose hands have holes. This is the prayer he does on behalf of the audience, and the latter are expected to close their eyes as well. He says (Appendix no. 12, lines 1-11),

*Modimo o motjha, rapela wa kgale,
Wena Jeso, Lesedi, wa Rammoloki,
Rammoloki, atla di maroba,
Di maroba, Tlatlamatjholo.
Tlhahlametsi o hlapa diatla,
Tlhahlametsi o hlapa diatla,
Tse tswileng tshotsamo,
Tsa ho bopa masea,
Malekeleke, lengope, lefadi,
Ebe le fatuwe ke Modimo?
Ha le fatuwe ke Modimo le batho.*

New god, pray to the old one,

To you, Jesus, the light, the Redeemer,
 The Redeemer, the hands have holes,
 Have holes, the carrier of loads,
 The commander of the waters washes his hands,
 The commander of the waters washes his hands,
 Which have developed blood blisters,
 The ones that create babies,
 Spear-carrier, donga, young miner,
 Has it (donga) been dug by God?
 It has not been dug by God and the people.

This prayer, with eyes now open, is followed by the entire recitation of his *thoko*. In lines 66 - 71, for instance, there is an increased movement of hands and feet which reflect the contents of what he is relating. The following is an extract,

66. *Banna ba Hlwahlweng ba ntlhoile,*
 67. *Esita le Patuwe ba ntlhoile,*
 68. *Nna ke hlouwe, Tsietsi ngwana Habasise,*
 69. *Le Mmapiloko ha a sa mpatla,*
 70. *Le Tafita wa Mosedinyane le yena*
 71. *O re ha a sa mpatla.*

66. The men of Hlwahlweng hate me,
 67. Even at Patuwe they also hate me,
 68. I am hated, Tsietsi, child of Habasise,
 69. Even Mmapiloko hates me,
 70. David of Mosedinyane himself
 71. Also says he has nothing to do with me.

As the *seroki* recites line 66 he suddenly raises his voice and becomes more emotional and faster in his recitation. He uses the knobkerrie in his right hand and points away from himself as if pointing towards the district of Hlwahlweng where his enemies live. In lines 67 -71, he raises both his hands, the knobkerrie on his right, and the shield on his left, whilst moving to and fro, and lowers his shoulders, to

indicate the degree of desperation caused by hatred from so many people around him. These gestures also convey the message that he is hated because he is a hero.

The degree to which the gestures are used during the process of recitation of the *thoko* is determined largely by the nature of the contents. From the video tape recorded at Morija, Qekise Moeletsi recites a *thoko* in which he relates his own birth, and as a result, there is very little of gestures he uses. The only movement of feet is when he turns around as he addresses the audience around him, and the limited use of his right hand to emphasize a few points here and there. He says the following (Appendix no. 11),

31. *Le (lesea) fihlile le lla ka ho halefa,*
32. *O finne difeisi ekaka o a lwana,*
33. *Feela o bonahala a tletse bohale,*
34. *O seriti le ka ho rateha,*
35. *O bonahala a tla ba le nnete.*
36. *Utlwang jwale ba mo reha lebitso,*
37. *Mme Mmamaswenkane a mmitsa Mahetlankwe.*

31. It was born crying and angrily,
32. He is making fists as if fighting,
33. But he appears to be full of wrath,
34. He is dignified and lovable,
35. It seems as if he will be trustworthy,
36. Now, listen when they gave him a name,
37. Mother Mmamaswenkane named him The-leopard's-shoulders.

Though the *seroki* is holding a knobkerrie in his hand, an indication of a Mosotho warrior, he does not use it during the recitation. The slowness of his recitation is attributed to the contents of the recitation itself, namely, an account relating his birth, and also the fact that his poem was prepared beforehand, written down and memorised. He was therefore "reading" his own composition which he afterwards showed us a copy of. However, the richness of his voice and the clarity of his speech were the tools that helped carry his message effectively across. The ululations that

accompanied his *thoko* are an indication that his recitation had left an impressive mark on the minds of an audience despite minimal use of gestures on his part. Performance of this nature constitutes part of our contemporary changing oral tradition observable at the beginning of the 21st century. Says Opland (1983:236),

Tradition is not a lifeless thing. It alters and adapts to new social circumstances.

Among the *diroki* we have recorded on video tape in August 2000, we have none who carried a spear and gesticulated by way of imitating a warrior by striking the ground with his spear, an action commonly known as *ho tlala* (traditional prancing), which was common among the Basotho during the earlier centuries. Monyane Mathibeli verbally explains as follows:

Bahale ba nnete ke bane ba neng ba bitswa 'mateatshwene'. Ke ba seng ba kile ba bolaya motho kapa batho ntweng. Hantlentle ke bona ba tshwanetseng ho bolotsa. Jwale potso ke hore mora wa hao o tla lekiswa ke mang ha e le mona mateatshwene a se a le siyo. Ke mang ho banna, motho ya seng a kile a bolaya motho ntweng? Kajeno ha e sa le mmannete hobane ha re sa na mateatshwene mehleng ena. Ke banna bana ba mateatshwene feela ba lokelang ho tlala le ho re bontsha ka moo ba ileng ba bolaya banna ba direng ka teng; ba bang bona ha ba a lokela hohang ho etsa jwalo.

The real heroes are those who were called 'mateatshwene' (Mabille, 1979:199 'those who have struck a monkey'). They are those who have killed one or more people on the battlefield. In reality, they are the ones who have the right to initiate others. Now the question is who is going to set an example, now that such men no more exist? Who among men is there who has ever killed someone on the battlefield? What is happening nowadays is no more reality, because we no more have such men. It is only such men who killed on the battlefield who have the right to demonstrate by physical movements of their bodies how

they killed their enemies on the battlefield; as for others, they do not at all have that right.

This view (see Damane and Sanders 1974: 27) is shared by Guma (1967:152-153) who gives the following dramatic description,

In reciting his praises, the reciter jumps forward from the assembled gathering brandishing his spear, and stops in an open space where he can be seen by all. He then starts his praises in a high voice, moving to and fro all the time, occasionally stabbing the ground with his spear to indicate the number of victims killed in battle.

Gesticulations and other body movements are not a new phenomenon characterising the *dithoko* performance in 2000. They have been part and parcel of the performance of classical *dithoko* as well. This can be deduced from the description by Dieterlen and Kohler in Kunene (1971: xii) where they say the following about the Mosotho warrior as a *seroki*,

...and when he reaches the end of his long poem, he engages in several wild capers, his feet kicking up the dust around him, sketching with his hand the gesture of a warrior hitting his enemy with a spear.

The general statement can be made, namely, that although gesticulations and other body movements have been, and still are, part of the Basotho *dithoko* performances, the manner of their usage is however largely determined by the contents of the *dithoko*.

The preceding discussion has shown that the recitation of the *dithoko* is largely accompanied by physical movements of the body which serve to enhance the contents of a *thoko*, their emphases as well as their dramatization. The performances of the *diroki* recorded in 2000 still evince continuation of the use of physical gestures although traditional prancing (*ho tlala*) as an indication of how the reciter killed his victims, is seldom used as it was the prerogative of only those who had actually killed their victims in the battle.

Contrary to the *dithoko*, the recitation of the *difela* is not accompanied by any significant physical movement of the body parts, such as the hands, feet and facial expressions. The *difela* are normally recited stationary, except when the reciter is walking. Perhaps, it is because they are to a large extent narrative that there is no much need for them to be accompanied by gestures. Pheka Setlaba (Appendix no. 18) recorded on video tape at Morija chants his *sefela* with minimal movement of hands. He uses them only as an indication of some of the villages he passed through on his journey to Maseru and to South Africa. During his chanting, it was as if he was wearing a smile on his face. His face looked happy and reflected enjoyment of himself as he related not only knowledge of the many villages, but also his experiences in some of them. His chanting identifies him as one of the men singing what Wells (1994: 265) refers to as ‘songs of the inveterate travellers’. For instance, some of the villages mentioned in this song are the following,

95. *Ke batla ke siya bokgotsing ba ka,*

96. *Ke fihla Thabatšoela,*

97. *Ke bua mona ha mme ‘Makoli,*

98. *Ha Fobase pela ha Potlaki,*

99. *Ha Letšoara ke fetile feela*

100. *Ha Tang ka feta mohwalotso*

95. I nearly left out my son’s in-laws,

96. I arrived at Thabatšoela,

97. I refer to this place at Mrs ‘Makoli,

98. At Fobase next to Potlaki’s,

99. At Letšoara’s I just passed,

100. Also at Tang’s I passed unnoticed,

In this part of the song, he mentions his relations, his son’s in-laws, Mrs ‘Makoli, at the village Thabatšoela. Other villages include Fobase, not far from Potlaki, as well as the villages headed by Letšoara and Tang, which he silently passed on his way.

It should be noted that concerning body movements, the earlier *difela* composed immediately after the discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa, were chanted accompanied by the rhythmic repetition of feet when men and young boys were walking between Lesotho and South Africa. Later on, with the extension of the railway line to the administrative headquarters at Maseru in 1906, the *difela* were chanted stationary in the trains, and nowadays they are still performed stationary at the mining compounds, national festivals, organised festivals such as Matsieng, 'Melesi Lodge, in Thaba-Bosiu, Morija Museum and Archives, and Huntersville, in Lekoa, where the *diroki* of this art form were recorded.

There exists similarity in the performance of both the *difela* and the *diboko* in that their recitations do not necessitate use of gestures. The non-usage of gestures in the *diboko* can be attributed to their brevity, their verbatim recitation as well as their purpose which is mainly identification. The following *seboko* of the Batlokwa is quoted from my M.A. dissertation (2001: 186), and was recorded on tape without any gestures or facial expressions,

*Ke thelleleng,
Ke le Motlokwa wa ha Mmanthatisi,
Wa ho nyela mokopu wa Mmamohato,
Ngwana tshela a badimo!*

Why should I pay homage?

Being a descendant of Motlokwa of the house of Mmanthatisi,

One who excreted on the pumpkin belonging to Mmamohato,

Child of the great ancestors!

The observation from the preceding discussion is that performance of the *dithoko* including the classical *dithoko* is accompanied by usage of gestures and facial expressions which supplement the contents of the texts. The body movements which accompanied the performance of the *difela* immediately after the discovery of gold and diamonds were the feet movement as men and young boys were walking from Lesotho to the South African mining areas and back. Later performances which took

place in the trains were stationary. The *diboko* are by their nature are not accompanied by body movements.

Performance of an oral poetic art form cannot be confined to gestures and facial expressions as discussed so far, but includes other aspects such as the accoutrement which will form the subject of our next discussion.

3.3.1.3 Accoutrement

The attire or the accoutrement of the performer constitutes part of the general spectacle in which the dramatic performance of an oral poetic art form such as the *dithoko*, takes place. The accoutrement serves as a visual resource that enhances not only the general spectacle in the face-to-face contact between the *seroki* and the audience, but the effectiveness of the recitation. Says Okpewho (1992:48),

But in the oral performance the words are frequently given this physical demonstration and in many cases depend on this demonstration for their effectiveness.

Effectiveness of the words spoken by the *seroki* at the public gathering is enhanced by his visual accoutrement which helps create a mood of excitement on that particular occasion. This was the case at various places where recordings of the *diroki* took place in August and September 2000. For instance, Morabaraba Lehloha, recorded at Matsieng, performed his *thoko* wearing a blanket, holding a knobkerrie in his right hand, and a hat in his left and at the back of his head was hanging white beads attached to his hair, which gave an impression that he was a traditional healer. At Thabana-Tshowana, Mphutlane Mofokeng declaimed his *thoko* wearing a leather hat made from a gazelle hide, a blanket made from gazelle hides sewn together, and holding in his right hand a long stick decorated with white beads in the middle. Joshua Makara, at the Basotho Cultural Village, was wearing a blanket commonly worn by the Basotho, holding a knobkerrie in his right hand, a small shield in his left, and hanging on his right wrist was a short tail of an ox. Sello Rapeane recorded at 'Melesi Lodge, Thaba-Bosiu, was wearing a maroon blanket with black dots making it look like a leopard, a pair of brownish colourful trousers, holding a knobkerrie in his

right hand, and a small shield in his left. In all these instances, the performance of the *diroki*, including the movements of their knobkerries, hands, shields and gesticulations, created an atmosphere of excitement which was accompanied by ululations and whistling. The mood was not only created and enhanced by words and actions on the part of the *diroki*, but their visual accoutrement. Confirms Finnegan (1970:5),

A particular atmosphere - can be conveyed not only by a verbal evocation of mood but also by the dress, accoutrements, or observed bearing of the performer.

In this case, the verbal content now represents only one element in a complete operalike performance. The accoutrement of the *seroki*, his warriorlike appearance, facilitate the audience's forming of the mental images of the heroic actions on the battlefield; it is as if the whole drama takes place in full view of their eyes, hear the terrific sound of the guns, the swords and the grenades, as in the following extract from chief Maama's poem in Damane (1963:7),

*Garenate li qhoma, khabo li tuka,
Li tuka li bonahatsa malakabe;*

Grenades bursting, fires blazing,
Blazing, pointing their licking flames

The audience visualise the heroic scene of the battlefield which the *seroki* effectively uses as the foundation of his composition. Aptly says Swanepoel (1991:5),

The realistic scenes of the battlefield would gradually make way for an eloquence of a different kind. As the thunder of war faded into the distance, the objects and sounds of nature held the poet's attention and became the vehicles of his heroic effusions.

Monyane Mathibeli verbally gives the following outfit of a Mosotho warrior,

Seroki se ne se aparwa jwalo ka ha ho ne ho aparwa ke batho bohle. Feela ka baka la ho ithaburanya le ho itsokotsa ha se roka, ho ne ho tshwanela hore moaparo wa sona o be bobebe, o dumele hore a ithaburanye. Jwale o ne a aparwa setipe. Setipe ke letlalo la phoofolo, le sehilweng jwalo ka tshea hore le theohe ka morao, ke hore le kwahele mokokotlo le letheka hantle. Ka pele o tenne tshea e ditwai. Ena ke tshea e ntseng e tshwana le tse ding, empa lehlakoreng mona, diqholong mona e na le matlalo a dipela, kapa nkwe, kapa phoofolo efe kapa efe e ratehang. Ke tsona tse etsang hore e theohe, e yo fihla mangoleng. Jwale he, ka pele o tenne seshoba se entsweng ka malanthebile, e leng hore letlalo lena le sehuwe hantle, le entse seshoba mona ka pele, e leng dikarolwana tsa letlalo tse sehuweng metjeketla jwalo ka menwana ena ya ka. Ke ntho e kang ditjoko tse etsang seshoba se bonolo pakeng tsa dirope mona. Hlohong ba ne ba rwala katiba ya letlalo e ahilweng ka dithupa tsa mohlwane. Katiba ena e entse ntho e kang rontabole, mme ka hodimo ho behilwe dikgabiso. Letlalo le thata le teng ka hodima dithupa tsena tsa mohlwane. Ho na le mabantanyana a tshwereng katiba hore e se ke ya wela fatshe hobane jwale o ya ntweng. Ke ntho eo kajeno re e bitsang 'helmet'. Seroki ha se roka, ka letsohong le letshehadi se tshwere thebe le kotsana. Ka letsohong le letona motho enwa o tshwere lerumo le sabole. Lerumo le betswang le entswe ka lehlaka, mme motsu wa lona o entswe ka tshepe e bitswang lethose.

The *seroki* used to dress like all other people. But because of his movements during the process of recitation, it was necessary that he should be dressed lightly so that his movements are not impeded. Now he would put on a tippet. A tippet is an animal's hide, cut like a short loin garment so that it is wrapped around his back to cover spine and the waist. In front, there is a loin garment with wide drawers. It looks like other common loin garments worn by every man, except that on the sides, near the hip bone, it has leathers of rock-rabbits, or leopard, or any other animal. All these make the loin garment hang down to the knees. Here in front, he has a bundle made of leathers of various

colours, and these strips of leathers are hanging down like these fingers of mine. The leather strips form a soft bundle here between the thighs. On the head they used to put on a leather hat on which was spread some sticks of the olive tree. This hat formed something like a rondavel on which there were decorations. A hard animal hide covers the sticks of the olive tree. There are leather strings holding the hat firmly on the head, as you prepare yourself for the battle. This is what we today refer to as a 'helmet'. When the *seroki* performs, he has on his left hand, a shield and a short knobkerrie, and on his right hand, an assegai and a sword. An assegai meant to be thrown at the enemies is made of a reed whose front pointed part is made of copper.

It should be noted that the description above, constituted the general mode of dressing common to every Mosotho man. The only difference is that the warrior, who in most cases was a *seroki*, was distinguished by the weapons he carried.

During the video recordings of the *diroki* performances 2000, it became apparent that most of the traditional accoutrement worn by the *diroki* as well as most of their weapons were no more used. Nevertheless, the *diroki* tried to maintain the oral tradition of the past by using ordinary modern blankets, blankets made from animal hides, shields, knobkerries, hats made from animal hides, *modianyewe* hats (Basotho grass hats), etc.

Qekise Moeletsi chanted his *thoko* wearing a blanket and holding a knobkerrie. Sehloho Lahalehale at Huntersville recited holding a long stick in one hand, and a folded blanket, on the other. Joshua Makara, recorded at the Basotho Cultural Village, recited with his accoutrement consisting of a blanket, a knobkerrie, pieces of animal hides around his wrists, and a typical Basotho small shield. At Matsieng, Arston Mphou was wearing a blanket and the Basotho grass hat, and holding a long stick in one hand. All these served to enhance their performances by making them lively and more dramatic, and assisted the audience in a more concrete manner to visualize information recited, and maintain an oral traditional link with their ancestors which is so important to the Basotho. This has become common at the Basotho festivals.

Unlike the *dithoko*, the chanting of the *difela* does not necessitate any form of special accoutrement. The artists may chant them wearing their ordinary clothes, their working outfits or the blankets. The wearing of blankets by the Basotho whilst chanting the *difela* is more of a coincidence than the rule, as the wearing of the blankets among the Basotho is a way of life. The artist, Pheka Setlaba chanted his *sefela* wearing a blanket, not necessarily as an effort to dramatise his performance, but as a normal practice among the Basotho men in Lesotho.

The recitation of the *diboko*, like that of the *difela*, does not need any special accoutrement as precondition for its performance. They may be recited alone by the performer, or in any face-to-face situation between two or more people. They are, in fact, family odes, largely used for family purposes than public renditions. This is how this oral art form has been used since the establishment of the Basotho as a nation.

The preceding discussions have explored and compared the role of the accoutrements in the performance of the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko* in the past and at the beginning of the year 2000. It must be observed that, given the festive nature of modern performance, the participants did dress up so to speak, the aim being to preserve tradition and to give vent to the opportunity provided by these occasions. They participated by performances such as *mokgibo* 'women breast dance', *ndlamo* 'young men's dance of Nguni origin', *mangae* 'songs sung by boys or young men at the circumcision', *mokorotlo* 'men's war-dance' as well as choral music rendered by a choir. Performances of this nature usually form part of Basotho festivals held annually.

Another aspect that forms part of oral performance is the role of the text, which is our next discussion.

3.3.1.4 The text

By the text we mean the orally created text, the actual recitation from the mouth of the performer which is delivered by word of mouth, and which forms an important part of the oral performance (which appeals to our imagination and emotions). For

purposes of our discussion, we are interested in the texts of the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko*, as genres of oral poetry, which forms part of oral literature defined by Nandwa and Bukenya in Okpewho (1992: 4) as follows,

Oral literature may be defined as those utterances, whether spoken, recited or sung, whose composition and performance exhibit to an appreciable degree the artistic characteristics of accurate observation, vivid imagination and ingenious expression.

By virtue of their oral nature, the texts of the *dithoko*, *difela* and the *diboko* evince characteristics peculiar to oral art forms. Compositions and recitations of the *dithoko* and the *difela* are spontaneous, that is, immediate and direct, and 'on the spur of the moment'. The classical reciter does not have time to prepare himself by first committing his recitation to memory before he can perform, but delivers his impromptu recitation while he composes during the course of his recitation. Even during the delivery of memorized performances the dictates of the next line is upon the poet (after Albert Lord) and thus a sense of being impromptu and therefore exposed cannot be excluded. Due to some reasons, such as memory failure, some structural changes sometimes take place, and necessitate an application of improvisation during the process of recitation. As a result of this, more often than not, the process of elasticity or adaptability sets in whereby the resultant improvised version may become longer than the authentic one.

The spontaneous composition and recitation of the *dithoko* and the *difela* means that the text produced is unique and unstable, and may therefore differ from previous ones in terms of a number of deviations, such as, extensions, additions, omissions, displacement, truncations and improvisations of some parts. Swanepoel et al. (1991:7-8) explain the instability of the oral text as follows:

In oral literature there is not a fixed text, since each performance constitutes a unique experience both to the performer and an audience. This implies that the performance of the same story, poem or song constitutes a variant of the first original: some parts may be extended,

others may be abridged or left out; new parts may be included, and some may change their position.

Another characteristic peculiar to the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko* is the contemporaneousness of their performances. Explains Swanepoel (1995: 11),

(it is)... contemporaneous and live, i.e. happening while the performers recite, sing or chant; and audience not only watch or listen, but participate as well.

This also means that performance is transient or fleeting. This further means that performance cannot be exactly repeated. There is an interesting paradox here, for, despite the fleetingness of the oral delivery, it produces more information than written words, as reality is that the non-verbal elements, such as the situation, the gestures, the facial expression, etc., contribute to the significance of the message. The non-verbal elements are missing in the written text and must be made up for; and the only means the writer possesses is the written word (cf. Swanepoel, 1994:147, and Ong, 1982: 261).

Since oral art forms are fundamentally delivered by word of mouth, it is important that the performer ensures that there is a certain appeal both to what he is saying and how he is saying it. The performer of the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko* must also have skill, mastery of the language, eloquence and ability of expression in order to deliver an effective text that will excite his audience and leave an indelible mark on their minds. What now follows is the subject-matter from a *thoko* recited by Joshua Makara (Appendix no. 12), recorded at the Basotho Cultural Village in August 2000.

The recitation is about Makara himself and his heroic deeds. In the first 11 lines, Makara commences by reciting a Basotho prayer. He addresses himself to *Jeso* 'Jesus', *lesedi* 'light', and *Rammoloki* 'Redeemer', *Tlhahlamatjholo* 'The commander of the waters' or 'the Creator' whose hands have holes and have developed blisters because of moulding babies.

Lines 12 to 20 constitute his self introduction as the son of Letjhesa, descendant of a Swazi parent. In lines 13 and 14 he proudly refers to himself in the third person, and uses a technique called parallelism in which the sentence structure is the same. The following representation serves as an explanation of the kinds of parallelism we observe:

	<u>Predicate</u>		<u>Relative</u>		<u>Identifying copulative</u>
	↕		↕		↕
13.	<i>Ho bua</i>		<i>ya tswetsweng</i>		<i>ke Letjhesa,</i>
	↕		↕		↕
14.	<i>Ho bua</i>		<i>ya tswetsweng</i>		<i>ke Letsitsi,</i>
	↕		↕		↕
13.	He talks		one begotten		by Letjhesa,
	↕		↕		↕
14.	He talks		one begotten		by Zizi (people),

By belonging to the Mantsi clan of the Bafokeng and mentioning his ancestors, Petje and Mmope he refers to himself as an independent and invincible fortress. From lines 28 to 39 he uses an extended metaphor where he compares himself to a dangerous mamba when teased. He compares himself to a yellow-billed kite which roams about, ready to strike when necessary. From lines 40 to 59 he describes his physical appearance as being black and ugly like that of a baboon. Here he uses parallelism as,

41. *O feta tshwene tsa bosiu,* (He is worse than the night baboons,)
 42. *O feta tshwene ka bobbe,* (He is worse than the baboons in ugliness,)

In line 61 he is like lightning, and he uses speed when fighting. From line 66 to 70 he metaphorically refers to himself as a witch which escapes miraculously when cornered. From lines 71 to 80 he relates how he is hated by everybody, including his friends. This hatred is engendered by his provocative nature (line 84). From line 81 to 123 he gives a description of himself as *sephoqo* 'a stupid person' who has taken

after his grandfather Petje and his ancestors, Mathebe and Radipitsi. In the closing lines he mentions that on seeing his enemies, he turns red, becomes angry and is ready to spill blood. In the last line he closes his recitation by using the closing formula, *Ya kgaola, ya ya!* 'There it cuts off and leaves!'

As it is usually the case with the *difela* artists, Phetla Setlaba, for example, demonstrates his geographical knowledge of the villages in his country, Lesotho, and also his experience as a singer of the 'songs of the inveterate travellers' (Wells, 1994: 265). Line 31 shows that he is relating the experiences of his journey, for he says *Nqechane nka feta mohwalotso* 'At Nqechane I simply pass unnoticed'. From line 32 to line 60 he mentions a string of villages that he passed, including the shop, at Mafa's place, and the Paris church of Samaria. He even mentions in line 62 his intention, namely, *Ha o ka mamela ke mathaka feela* 'If you can listen well, I just glide over the place names'. From line 113 he mentions the places outside Lesotho, as he says, *Utlwang ha ke tshelela Kopanong* 'Now, listen to me when I cross over to the Union', i.e. Republic of S. A. Some of these places are,

- 114. *Ha Ohimone hodima noka,*
- 115. *Matlapeng ha Dibenyane,*
- 116. *Ha Mmamafa Letamong,*
- 117. *Ke bua ka Mmuela ha Koloboi,*

- 114. At Onimone on the river banks,
- 115. Matlapeng at Dibenyane,
- 116. At Mmamafa, near the dam,
- 117. Then I can mention Mmuela at Koloboi's,

The regular use of an expression *Le thole lerata banna ke bue* 'Men, keep quiet that I may talk' as in line 126, marks the commencement of a new section. At some of the places he mentions, he even explains his experiences. For instance, from line 146 to line 153, as he mentions the Mafeteng camp, at Seitlheko's, he remembers the drinking parties there, and how they easily 'catch' the drunken ladies during the spreeing hours. On the plateau, he is welcomed at Mrs Mmampho's house where he drinks tea while still in bed, and is sent delicious food (eggs) while working on the

fields. Although this place is commonly struck by lightning, he, despite that, managed to escape unhurt. He concludes his *sefela* with the closing formula, *Ke sa buile ho lekane ditjhaba!* 'I have said enough, dear nations!'

The text of the *seboko*, though brief, is not only informative in its transmission of the families' historical origin, but also evinces that it is consciously an art and therefore appeals to the emotions of the audience. The following is an example of the *seboko* of the Basia as recited by 'Mampho Mokoteli of Clarens,

1. *Ke thelleng,*
2. *Ke le Mosia, ke le Motobatsi,*
3. *Motho wa Mantsha-thebe-di-ome,*
4. *Di-se-nna-di-omela-mokgwabo-tlung!*

1. Why should I pay homage,
2. Being a descendant of Mosia, being a descendant of the porcupine People,
3. He of the Take-out-the-shields-to-dry-out,
4. And-should-not-dry-out-in-the-wet-places!

Mosia, mentioned in line 2 refers to the ancestor from whom the clan members believe to have originated. The reciter belongs to the clan whose totem is the porcupine. Referring to her clan she uses a compound word, *Mantsha-thebe-di-ome*, 'Take-out-the-shields-to-dry-out', as a technique to refer to the characteristic nature of her clan, namely, that since the Basia were warlike people, their shields used to drip blood of their victims day in and day out, and therefore had to be taken out in order to get dry in the sun. The phrases in line 2, *Ke le Mosia, ke le Motobatsi*, 'Being a descendant of Mosia, being a descendant of the porcupine People' constitute parallelism. Of significance is also the poem's formulaic commencement with,

Ke thelleng,
Ke le Mosia, ke le Motobatsi,

This is almost similar to the commencement of 'Manthofela Mopeli's *seboko* which we will consider a little later. The opening there is *Ke thelleng ke le Motebang wa Napo a Mosito ...* 'Why should I pay homage, being a descendant of Motebang, son of Napo, son of Mosito...'

The smooth, fast and skillful recitation of this *seboko* as containing the ancestor name and the tribal idiosyncrasy of the Basia clan, appeals to the ears of any Mosotho listening to it.

The important factor in the composition of the genres, the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko*, is the role played by oral-formulaic composition. The American scholars, Milman Parry and his successor, Albert Lord, contributed a great deal to the nature of formula in the composition of oral genres. Their insights emanated from their investigation of the living tradition of oral poetry in Yugoslavia where *guslars* in local coffee-houses improvised their epics to the accompaniment of one-stringed *gusles*. They discovered that the salient feature of the composition of the oral forms is the formula which Parry in Swanepoel (1991: 6) defined as,

a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea.

The definition cannot be applied to African languages since the latter lack in metre. This situation, as a result, necessitated the rephrasing of the definition of the formula. For Southern Sotho, Swanepoel (1991: 8) rephrased Parry's notion of the formula as "a group of words" operating under "the same metrical conditions". His definition runs:

One prefers to view it as a dynamic compositional device consisting of either a word or a group of words fairly regularly employed in performance to express an essential idea, and consequently creating recurring rhythmic conditions.

This modification consists of two points of departure. Firstly, Swanepoel speaks of rhythmic conditions instead of metrical conditions. Secondly, he extends the

requirement of a phrase to cover also single words as formulas. The idea of a word needs further elucidation. Indeed he later attends to this (1991: 8) and states:

Word, in the sense of one lexical item, on the face value, doesn't seem to fit the idea of a 'formula', which is generally taken as consisting of more than one word. In this poem (Griffith, *mohale wa Lerotholi*), however, the 'word' we have in mind, represents a concept which does in fact refer to a 'phrase' serving as a poetic contraction or abridgement. These include eulogies, metaphors and appellations of various kinds and origin, with multiple semantic significance. In this sense one lexical item could resemble formula.

In other words, formulas can be words, phrases, clauses and sentences. According to Swanepoel (1991:6), comparative proofs of Parry and Lord revealed the following as other characteristics of the formulas,

the oral poet creates out of formulas rather than words; that new formulas are created on the model of others; that the technique of narration seems to be based on an "elaborate special language", the elements of which were larger than the words of normal speech.

Lord in Swanepoel (1991: 7) advances reasons for the role of formulas in saying,

The repertoire of formulas enables the poet to create in performance, for the "need of the next line is upon him even before he utters the final syllable of a line". There is urgency. To meet it the singer builds patterns of sequences of lines which we know of as the 'parallelism' of oral style.

It should be observed that, that is not only parallelisms, but repetitions as well, that are typical of oral poetry. The repetitions are the result of a pattering of formulas whilst the various kinds of parallelisms are the outcome of a specific placing of formulas in paragraph units. Of importance is that the formula serves both as a

device for oral composition and as a vehicle for meaning. For instance, Sello Rapeane (Appendix no. 1) at Thaba-Bosiu in 2000 chanted a *thoko* in which he said the following,

33. *Mora Mojela seokamelabatho,*
34. *Mohlang le qalang ho benya letolo,*
35. *La habo Maama le Seeiso,*
36. *La habo Jonathane le Mofoka*
37. *Le ile la benya, la o sohlometsa mmane,*
38. *Mmane wa tladi.*
39. *O tshela mawatle, tladi,*

33. Son of Mojela, towerer-over-his-people,
34. The day the lightning flashed,
35. The one of Maama and Seeiso,
36. The one of Jonathan and Mofoka,
37. It flashed and let go the lightning,
38. The man-made lightning,
39. Crossed the seas, the lightning,

These lines are composed of the statement (line 33), development or body (34-38) and conclusion (line 39). Line 33 introduces Lerotholi Mojela who according to Damane and Sanders (1974: 234) was the son of Mojela. Reference to him as *seokamelabatho* 'towerer-over-his-people' is a deverbative eulogie which refers to his greatness and heroism as he participated in the First World War. He was as a result awarded a medal for Meritorious Service and was regarded as a model chief by the Government of Lesotho. His rule was characterized by peace and stability. Lines 34-38 constitute the body in which his authority over 1,400 Basotho men who served in France in the Native Labour Corps is compared to the flashing lightning. Maama and Seeiso were his cousins, and Jonathan and Mofoka, his brothers (ibid.).

The large group which participated in the war is referred to as man-made lightning which Swanepoel (1991: 10) calls 'lightning eulogie'. Line 39 is an ending in which reference is made to their crossing the seas on their way to France.

The structural patterning in lines 35 and 36 constitutes the following parallelism,

<u>Possessive qualificative</u>	<u>Noun</u>	<u>Conjunction</u>	<u>Noun</u>
<i>La habo</i>	<i>Maama</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>Seeiso</i>
<i>La habo</i>	<i>Jonathane</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>Mofoka</i>

in which Lerotholi Mojela as 'lightning' is associated with his family members. The repetition of the possessive qualificative, *La habo* 'The one of' functions as a means through which further names are included. There is a discontinuous-line repetition because the verb stem, *benya* in line 34 is discontinued in lines 35 and 36, but continues in line 37 where it forms an oblique-line repetition pattern. Since *mmane* and *tladi* in lines 37 and 38 are synonymous in meaning, an oblique-line repetition pattern is formed, from right to left. The ending word, *tladi*, in lines 38 and 39 also forms an oblique-line patterning, from left to right. Another example is found in the *thoko* (Appendix no. 6) chanted by Sello Nthuloane, also recorded at Thaba-Bosiu, who says,

Makatolle wa Pheta le Moshoeshoe,
A katolla dikgoro di katilwe,
Di bile di batelwa di etswa bothata,
Ho thwe ho kwalwa ka bona Barwanyana,
Ho kwalwa ka bona Barwanyana ba Chere.

The one who digs open of Pheta and Moshoeshoe,
Digs open the passes that were closed,
That have been stamped and made firm,
They were even closed with the wretched little Bushmen,
To be closed with Gert's little Bushmen themselves.

In the first two lines, repetition patterns centre around the verb *katolla* 'to dig open'. The vertical line repetition pattern is made by the noun *Makatolle* 'The one who digs open' and its cognate verb *katolla* 'to dig open'. This repetition emphasizes the

difficult task the hero, Masopha, encountered to by-pass the Bushmen who had guarded the passes leading to their allies, the Batlokwa who were Basotho's rivals. A horizontal-line repetition pattern is made by synonymous words *batela* 'stamped' and *etsa bothata* 'to make firm'. This reflects how securely the passes were guarded. In the last two lines there occurs an oblique-line repetition pattern of *ho kwalwa* 'to be closed'. This word is repeated from right to left. This is an emphasis and it also brings to the climax how secure the passes were guarded by the Bushmen who were under the leadership of Gert. The importance of a repertoire of formulas is that it enables the poet to create in performance.

The formulas (in our examples clearly contained in various repetition patterns) are not confined to the *dithoko* compositions, but to the *difela* as well. The following is an example of a formula in the *sefela* chanted by Mahlomola Thamae (Appendix no. 2) recorded at Thaba-Bosiu,

128. *O a tseba le ke le shebe ka hodima sephoko sele, le bone,*

129. *O a tseba ka hodimo ho teng mabitla a teng?*

130. *Ke bua ka mabitla a bafu,*

131. *Batho ba seng ba itjhweletse.*

132. *Ke bua ka mabitla a marena a maholo,*

133. *Batho ba seng ba shwele kgalekgaleng.*

128. *You know, you should look on top of that hill, and see,*

129. *You know, on top of it there are graves,*

130. *I refer to the graves of the dead,*

131. *People who are already dead,*

132. *I refer to the graves of the great chiefs,*

133. *People already dead long long ago,*

Lines 128 to 133 are characterized by a statement, its development and a conclusion. Lines 128-9 constitute the statement where the *seroki* calls on his audience to look on top of the hill where there are graves on the mountain, Thaba-Bosiu. The phrases *O a tseba...* 'You know...' at the beginning of the two lines, form a parallelism typical of the *difela*. The poet uses the phrase in order to engage his

audience into the conversation. The development is found in lines 129-132 where he further mentions whose graves they are, the graves of the great chiefs, including King Moshoeshoe. The last line, 133, is the conclusion in which the poet mentions that the graves are of people who died a very long time ago.

Patterns of repetition consist of a word, or a group of words, which according to Swanepoel (1983:8) are “regularly employed in performance to express an essential idea, and consequently creating recurring rhythmic conditions”. Repetition of the word, *mabitla* “graves” is found in the expression *mabitla a teng* ‘there are **graves**’ (line 129), *mabitla a bafu* ‘**graves** of the dead’ (line 130), *mabitla a marena a maholo* “the **graves** of the great chiefs” (132). Though the word *mabitla* is not used in lines 131 and 133, the same sentiment is conveyed in the expressions, *Batho ba seng ba itjhweletse* and *Batho ba seng ba shwele kgalekgaleng*.

The *diboko* ‘clan praises’, though short and intended to be memorized word-for-word, are also characterized by the use of formulas. The following is an example recited by ‘Manthofeela Mopeli from Morija, Lesotho (Tšiu, 2001: 182-183),

Ke thelleng,
Ke le Motebang wa Napo a Mosito,
Maila-ho-ngwathelwa,
Batho ba sa jeng *sengwathwa,*
Ba jang polokwe kaofela,
Ba jang ha meriti *ho thea,*
Ho thea e menyane ya diotlwana!

Why should I pay homage,
Being a descendant of Motebang, son of Napo, son of Mosito,
Abstainers-from-being-given-food,
People who do not eat a piece of bread,
Who eat the whole round bread,
Who eat when the shadows fall,
When they fall, those small ones of the courtyards!

Recitations of the *diboko* are more often than not introduced with the formulaic expression, *Ke thelleleng?* ‘Why should I pay homage?’ The recitation consists of the response (line 2) in which the names of the progenitors, Motebang, Napo and Mosito, and the clan or tribe to which the reciter belongs, are mentioned. In some cases, the totem names are provided. The purpose with this information is to introduce the reciter and to distinguish him/her from other clans that might have originated from the common clan or tribe. The narrative part or the body (lines 3, 4 and 5) mentions the characteristics of the clan. The third line of the extract commences with a compound noun, *Maila-ho-ngwathelwa* (free translation: Those-who-abstain-from-being-given-food), which is a deverbative eulogie here. Due to pride, members of this clan did not like to be given food by others as they viewed this as degradation. According to their culture, they did not even eat food prepared the previous day. The fact that they had enough to eat is conveyed by the phrase *Ba jang polokwe kaofela* ‘Who eat the whole round bread’. Note that members of this clan ate their meals when the shadows were still short, that is, at noon, because they had abundance of food available and ready.

The fourth and the fifth lines constitute an antithesis of ideas. Whilst the fourth conveys a negative idea, that is, people who do not eat a broken piece of bread, the fifth conveys a positive one, that is, people who eat the whole round bread. (Remember, bread in those days was prepared in the form of round balls). Note that **ba sa jeng** in the fourth line, and **Ba jang** in the fifth, form a right-to-left oblique line repetition pattern. The fifth and sixth lines both commence with **Ba jang**, and therefore constitute a vertical-line repetition in which the third line conveys an idea of the quantity of bread (food) eaten, whilst the fourth conveys an idea of the time at which this takes place. This can be shown as follows:

6. **Ba jang** (Who eat).....
 ↓
 7. **Ba jang** (Who eat).....

Performance involves on the part of the performer an assumption of accountability to an audience for the way in which communication is carried out, above and beyond its referential content. From the point of view of the audience, the act of expression on the part of the performer is thus marked as subject to evaluation for the way it is done, for the relative skill and effectiveness of the performer's display of competence. Additionally, it is marked as available for the enhancement of experience, through the present enjoyment of the intrinsic qualities of the act of expression itself. Performance thus calls forth special attention to and heightened awareness of the act of expression, and gives license to the audience to regard the act of expression and the performer with special intensity.

The kind of audience listening to the recitation and performance at any given moment is an important factor governing the performance. If, for instance, the audience consists of children, it is obvious that the performer will have to ensure the appropriateness of his recitation to the children as his/her audience. He will, inter alia, have to simplify phrases that may not be understandable due to their figurative nature, change his topic so that it appeals to his audience, and avoid any kind of offensive language that may be unsuitable to his hearers. Says Okpewho (1992:59),

... the truth remains that in the oral performance the nature of the audience is an important consideration in the choice of subject and sometimes of style.

Also to be taken into account is the nature of the audience gathered at a particular context. Performance of a *thoko* before the audience gathered at a funeral or at a graduation party, at *matsema* 'work-parties', at *dipitso* 'national assemblies' must be such that it suits the occasion. One of the *diroki*, Joshua Makara, recorded in 2000, commences his *thoko* by saying the prayer of the Basotho, and he does this by first removing his grass hat from his head, and closing his eyes, thereby displaying an act of reverence towards both his ancestors who are the givers of life, and the audience gathered on that "sacred" moment. See his prayer under point 3.3.1.2.

Performance of any oral art form, including the *dithoko* in particular, is participatory in that the audience participates in the production of that oral poetic composition in various ways, namely, by laughing, humming, interjections with verbal phrases, clapping of hands, whistling, stamping of their feet, rhythmic movements and other forms of paralinguistic behaviour (Kgobe, 1995: 6). Participation of the audience in this way, though it takes the form of brief interjections here and there, constitutes a compressed kind of language, pregnant with meaning, and saying more than one can imagine. In the video footage of the *diroki*, Joshua Makara, Qekise Moeletsi, Sehloho Lehalehale and Pheka Setlaba, to mention but a few, at various stages during the recordings, the audience expressed their mode of aesthetic appreciation in the form of interjections with verbal phrases, whistling, ululations as well as jumping around the performer. For instance, recitation by Qekise Moeletsi (Appendix no. 11) was accompanied with ululations and whistling at a point where he said,

- 155. *Makwala a pheresela ke ho ithoma,*
- 156. *Batshepuwa ba dikela ka mangope le maralla,*
- 157. *Morena a sala powaneng a itlhophere,*
- 158. *Batshepuwa ba dikela ka mangope le maralla,*
- 159. *Motho a mathe borikgwe a bo tshwere thekeng,*
- 160. *A bokolla a poreisa letshollo,*
- 161. *Ho se le mala ho tshollisa batho,*
- 162. *Ho mpa ho tshajwa Moses wa Mmamoferefere Qekise.*

- 155. The cowards rush to the toilets,
- 156. The trusted vanished into dongas and behind hillocks,
- 157. The king was left alone stranded,
- 158. The trusted vanished into dongas and hillocks,
- 159. A person would run holding his trousers on the hips,
- 160. Crying and praising a running tummy,
- 161. Without any diarrhoea to cause that,
- 162. The reason being fear of Moses of Mmamoferefere Qekise.

The *seroki* here demonstrates the height of his fearful heroism. His presence as a hero causes the cowards to suffer from diarrhoea, avoid being near him, and for dear

life, vanish into the dongas and the hillocks. The whole figurative description is aimed at demonstrating his heroism, an aspect highly peculiar in the *dithoko*. In the last line, he states the reason for all this behaviour, and does so in a highly pompous manner by referring to himself in the third person, and perhaps as a god, namely, the fear of Moses of Mmamoferefere (his mother) Qekise.

The participation of the audience by way of ululation, whistling, interjections, etc., means that the *seroki* himself, in a sense, becomes a listener who has to make some adjustments and improvisations to his recitations in order to satisfy the expectations of his audience. In other words, his recitation will have to be according to the wishes of the people before whom he is performing. Says Fine (1984: 77),

Likewise, we must recognize that any performer is simultaneously his or her own audience, monitoring and adapting the performance to his or her conception of how the performance should sound and look.

Whilst the recitation of the *seroki* is meant for and about the audience, namely, to entertain, imbue and impress them so as to earn praise, admiration, and so on, we, nevertheless, have to realize that his aim is also to elevate his status as a hero and to create the spirit of identity with the people before whom he is performing. The people, on the other hand, express their approval of this by responding positively by way of ululation, whistling, interjections, etc. This is confirmed by Whitaker in Bell et al. (1991: 245) in saying,

... clearly, praises serve to build the self-esteem of the praised individual, creating a sense of identity and worth in that person.

Self-esteem of the *seroki* is vicariously the self-esteem of the nation as the *seroki* is part and parcel of the nation with whom he identifies. The *seroki*, when reciting, is indeed the mouthpiece of the audience.

The audience in the recitation of the *thoko* forms part of the performance. The *dithoko* recited telephonically by individual *diroki* on the weekly Sesotho radio program called *Lenaka la motheo* 'The horn of foundation' cannot really be fully

realized because of lack of audience participation despite the advantageous wide coverage the radio has. Nevertheless, an audience is still there, listening, although invisible and unable to participate. The advantage the radio has is that the message is able to be transmitted to a large audience which benefits by listening to the program.

Participation of the audience during the performance of the *difela* is however restricted. Perhaps the reason for this is that the *difela* are regarded as solo chants which do not need any disturbance from the audience. The involvement of the audience to listen attentively to the experiences of these mine workers' chants is characterised by the regular use of expressions, such as, *O tlo mamele ka makgethe, o utlwe!* 'Listen attentively to what I say!' Pheka Setlaba's *sefela* is characterised by common usage of *Banna, le thole lerata ke bue feela!* 'Men, keep quiet so that I may talk openly!' This gives an impression that his listeners are men, as the mining compounds in the cities mainly accommodate men. The audience at the *difela* festivals most of the time also include fellow singers. The reference to *banna* (men) above is often replaced with *Bontate* 'My fathers'. In other cases they will be addressed directly, like in *Le thole jwale, ke tle ke le jwetse* 'Be quiet now, so that I can tell you...' Other examples of hortatives with which fellow singers are addressed are *dikempolara* 'gamblers', *dikeleme* 'skelms/cheaters', etc.

The audiences at the various places visited in August and September 2000, differed in terms of their composition. At the Basotho Cultural Village, members of the public consisted of men and women as well as choirs from Mampoi High School which consisted of male and female students. At Thabana-Tshowana, the audience was made up of men, women and a group of small boys who performed the *mokorotlo* 'the war-dance'. At Matsieng, it consisted of a number of men who performed the *mokorotlo*. At Morija Museum and Archives, there were men and women who performed the *mokgibo* 'the breast dance' as well as a group of young men who performed the *ndlamo* dance. At 'Melesi Lodge the *mokete* was introduced by a team of riders with their horses, and led by the local chief. They were showered with a praise poem by Lekunutu Sello as they triumphantly entered the arena adding the best of the nation's horseriding culture and tradition to the occasion. At Huntersville,

there was a group of men, women and children as well as members of the adult and girls' choir.

The audience does not play a significant part in the recitation of the *diboko*, except listening. It may consist of one, two or more people. The recitation may also be done in the physical absence of an audience, namely, when the reciter communicates with his or her ancestors. This has been the case since the establishment of the Basotho as a nation.

3.4 Conclusion

The classical *dithoko* were orally recited without any prior preparation, any writing of them down or any memorisation. The opposite is however the case with some of the *diroki* recorded in 2000, who did prior preparation, wrote and typed their compositions and even memorized them.

Since the *dithoko* of old were closely associated with war, their performance was accompanied by high emotions, especially of fury, the speed of recitation was faster than normal speech and the tone and pitch of the voice was higher. Some of the *dithoko* recorded in 2000 were characterized by the speed, the tone and pitch of their voices, being nearer to that of normal speech.

The *difela* are narrative in style. The *seroki* "composes on his feet". His voice is clear, the tone and the pitch are normal as in ordinary speech. The *difela* employ a closer involvement of the audience in terms of listening attentively.

The participation of an audience by means of whistling, ululation, jumping, interjections, etc., is a characteristic feature of the *dithoko* performances at all times. On the significance of the act of women when at the end of a *seroki*'s performance they will come forward and throw him with a blanket or any other clothing, explains the informant, Teboho Koekoe who knows much about the Basotho culture,

*Ha banna ba itokisetsa ho ya ntweng, dithoko tsa bahale di ne di etswa,
mme basadi ba ne ba didietsa ka sepheo sa ho kenya moya wa bohale*

dipelong tsa bona hore ba lwantshe dira tsa bona ka matla ba ntse ba hopola hore ba siile ba malapa a bona morao - basadi le bana. Le kajeno ketso ena ya basadi e sa boetse e kgothatsa diroki jwalo ka bahlabani hore seo ba se etsang ba se etse ka matla.

When men prepared themselves for the battle, heroic praise poems were chanted, and women ululated with the intention of instilling the spirit of heroism in men so that the latter should face their enemies and fight with bravery whilst taking into account their family members left behind - women and children. Even today, the role of women in this respect is still to inspire and encourage the poets as warriors to do their best.

The preceding discussion will now be followed by that on broad contours of generic shift: subject-matter.

CHAPTER 4

BROAD CONTOURS OF GENERIC SHIFT: SUBJECT- MATTER

4.1 Introduction

Discussion in the previous chapter was on the performance of the Basotho oral poetry, namely, the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko*, where in each comparison was made between their performance from the 19th century and even before that, with those recorded at the beginning of the 21st century, in the year 2000.

In this chapter focus will be on their subject-matter and the themes during the 19th century and at the beginning of the 21st century, a vantage point that will enable us to determine whether or not there has been any shift or change in terms of their subject-matter and themes. The discussion will be introduced by conceptualizations of both subject-matter and theme. For the discussion of this chapter, examples of the classical *dithoko* and the *difela* will respectively be taken from Z.D. Mangoaela's anthology, **Lithoko tsa marena a Basotho** (1921), J.K. Ratau's **Khirimpana** (1955), as well as the transcriptions of the video recordings of the *difela* poets. The discussion on the subject-matter and theme of the *diboko* will be based on my M.A. dissertation (2001).

4.2 Subject-matter and theme

Subject-matter in an oral poetic composition such as *thoko*, *sefela* or *seboko* refers to what the actual material the *seroki* is declaiming, chanting or praising, and constitutes the backbone on which the oral composition is dependent and without which it ceases to be what it should be. Some writers prefer to call it content. The importance attached to it is that it serves, inter alia, as a determining factor whether the oral genre is a *thoko* 'a praise-poem' a *sefela* 'a mine worker's chant' or a *seboko* 'a family ode'. Subject-matter, for instance, the hero/es, the enemy, the battlefield, etc., constituting the *thoko*, is such that all its different aspects the *seroki* narrates, are

closely related and therefore constitute parts of the particular narration, event or praising which the *seroki* conveys to his/her audience. The poetess 'Machopho (Appendix no. 34, point 18) when interviewed at Morija in 2000 verbally refers to this in her statement that,

...*dithoko di na le ntho eo di hlileng di e tobang ho bua ka yona,*

...the *dithoko* have actually something they are specifically referring to and talking about,

This therefore makes it quite easy to understand the theme in a *thoko* than it is the case with the *difela* where the subject-matter commonly consists of aspects of divergent nature and sometimes not even related and netted together by the underlying fact that it is a *traveller* who is narrating. Theme on the other hand refers to the message the *seroki* wishes to convey, that is, the reason for composing an oral art form. Therefore, theme is based on and emanates from the subject-matter. In other words, the *seroki* uses the subject-matter in order to convey his/her theme. Each of the Basotho oral genres is characterized by its particular subject-matter which distinguishes it from other oral genres.

Subject-matter in the classical heroic *dithoko* was mainly the heroic deeds of the chiefs or warriors in the wars or battles in which they took part. Therefore, among the Basotho, this oral art form was mainly inspired by the wars in which they fought against groups such as the Mahlubi, the Batlokwa, the Mangwane, the Boers and the English, etc. According to Kunene (1996:10) the traditional *diroki* chanted their *dithoko* to exalt themselves about their heroic exploits in which they bravely sacrificed their lives in fighting the enemies. In these compositions, they also informed their audience how they fought in the battle, the number of those they might have killed, the difficulties they encountered, etc. Damane (1960:3) alludes to the subject-matter of the classical *dithoko* where he says,

Empa, mokhoa o mong e ne e le oa ho ithuta, melomong ea bao ba baholo ba sechaba, lithoko tse rorisang liketso tsa bonatla, tsa bahlabani ba marena le ba bafo, lintoeng tseo ba ipontšitseng bohale le

ho hloka letsoalo, ha ho lla koto le lerumo, bahlankana ba tiisa hore ke tsatsi la bofelo; esita le mehleng ea ha ho loanoa ka lithunya.

But, another method used was that of learning, from the lips of those great ones among the nation, the poems praising the heroic deeds of the warriors of the chiefs and their subjects, in the wars in which they demonstrated their valour and fearlessness among the sound of the knobkerrie and the spear, where young men truly believed that the last day has dawned, even in the days when the battle was fought with the guns.

It should be noted that all these three genres are in part conceptualized by the subject-matter and themes. Subject-matter and themes in many of the *dithoko* are conveyed through what Swanepoel (1983: 24) calls 'typical praise effusions', 'explanatory or anecdotal interspersed with sections'.

The *difela*, being travellers' chants are indeed what Wells (1994:298) calls, 'travelogues'. The subject-matter of the *difela* reveals the problems and hardships often encountered by an exploited class of migrant workers as the result of the migrant labour system. Says Mokitimi (1998: 1),

The poets express and expose the economic and social evils of exploitation and dehumanization of migrant mine labourers. They are, therefore poems of protest and condemnation of the system that exploits these workers.

The *difela*, best known as *difela tsa ditsamayana*, literally translated 'songs of the invertebrate travellers', are an oral genre in which the migrant labourers recount their experiences when leaving their fatherland to earn a living on the South African mines and in the industries (Swanepoel, 1990: 273). These experiences often form their subject-matter. Explains Coplan (1987: 21),

The texts of *lifela* often recount the journeys taken through Lesotho on the way to the mines, describing each village, its poetic and medicinal

specialists, its natural features, and the name and personal qualities of its chief.

Swanepoel (1994: 178) adds aspects constituting the subject-matter of the *difela* in saying,

As reflections of the singers' experiences, they relate aspects of their journey, of conditions in the mine and at the compound; the singers' longing to go home, their disappointments when discovering that home is not what it used to be.

However, my research leads me to a conclusion that the subject-matter of the *difela* cannot be easily limited to certain experiences. There is a growing tendency to create and include new subject-matter in the *difela*. The dynamic and flexible nature of the *difela* allows the "singers" not only freedom to add material to enrich their compositions, but also deviation from compositions of earlier decades which were confined to the singers' journeys to the mines, on foot and by train, experiences at the mines, and at home in Lesotho. The themes in most of the *difela* reflect difficulties encountered by singers as wayfarers, and their struggle to preserve their identity.

Unlike the *dithoko* and the *difela* which are oral compositions of individual *diroki*, the *diboko* are short poetic recitations composed by the ancestors of the various clans and meant to be recited word-for-word by each member belonging to each clan, a collective cultural expression. The subject-matter constitutes information about one's clan or family, the progenitors, origin, culture and philosophy. The message or theme is identification of a member according to his/her clan.

4.2.1 Subject-matter and theme of the classical *dithoko* vs 2000 *dithoko*

In order to manage or handle the subject-matter discussed from the examples cited, use will be made of what may be called *segmentation*, that is, a method according to which a group of lines having bearing on a particular aspect of the subject-matter will

be grouped together, and the parts so identified will be referred to as segments of either the *thoko*, the *sefela* or the *seboko*.

The following example of the classical *thoko* from Mangoela's **Lithoko tsa marena a Basotho** (1921: 66-69), entitled *Ntoa ea Seqiti* (The Seqiti war 1865 – 1868), composed in honour of chief Lerotholi for his role in the war between the O.F.S. Boers and the Basotho, can be broken down into the following segments:

Lerotholi's Seqiti war poem

The fatherland is going

In lines 1-10 the *seroki* relates the fierceness with which Lerotholi engages in the battle to save the fatherland, Lesotho, from being taken by the Boers. He says in line 6,

Ua bona fatše leno lea ea.

You see that your fatherland is going.

The expectation is that the Boers would retreat from the approaching warriors of Lerotholi. The *seroki*, referring to the Boers, makes the following plea in line 9,

A le tloheng batho ba Majoro,

Won't you go away, you people of the Major,

Batho ba Majoro (people of the Major) refer to all the white people who at that time were under Major Warden, the British Resident in the Orange River Sovereignty until 1852 (Damane and Sanders, 1974:138).

Gun and cannon sounds

Lines 11-40 refer to the sounds of the guns and cannons indicative of the fierceness of the battle. The war was characterized by flashes of lightning and of blazing fires as the war caused destruction even on the mountains. Says the *seroki* in lines 11-12,

*Lehohoretse le tsamaile moo,
La hohoretse lipheo, la chesa.
Ya sala eka li beetse thabeng,*

The sweeping bird of lightning has gone there,
It swept along its wings and it burned.
It seemed as if the lightning had nested in the mountains,

It was at a time like this that President J.H. Brand tried to intervene. He was the President of the Free State from 1864 to 1888 (ibid. p.138). This is referred to in line 21,

Ke bo-Borane ho tliloe ka lekoebe,

It is Brand and his men who have come as if in anger,

President Brand and his men had no alternative but to retreat because,

Sefako sa linehella se matla; (line 23)

The destructive hail is strong;

The attack by Lerotholi and his warriors is metaphorically likened to the strong hail that beats the enemies and forces them to draw back. The further sound of guns and cannons are referred to in line 35,

Rata le lla le bapile le thaba,

A noise resounding near the mountain,

This, according to Damane and Sanders (1974:139), alludes to an incident which occurred in November 1868. Some Boers, who had apparently been stealing horses, were detected in a gully. Lerotholi and about fifty of his men gave chase, and

pursued them as far as the mountain, Kolo. Lerotholi was wounded and fell from his horse; two of his men were killed; and one of the Boers was killed.

Lerotholi, the saviour from God

In lines 41-49 Lerotholi is referred to as a man whom God has allowed fighting and whose warriors are ready to engage in any possible war in order to save the Basotho, the Nguni and the Kwelela tribes (lines 48-49) which formed part of Lerotholi's people.

Arbortive intervention by Theophilus Shepstone

At the outbreak of war (Damane and Sanders 1974:140), Lesaoana, the child of Lerotholi's uncle, invaded Natal and captured a large number of cattle belonging to the Boers. Theophilus Shepstone, Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, mentioned in line 53, tried to intervene but failed. Moshoeshoe, instead of compelling Lesaoana to surrender his booty, tried to raise the fine by a public appeal. This caused much bad feeling among the Basotho, and in particular between Letsie and Lesaoana. This subject-matter is alluded to in lines 52-54 and 58,

*Re bone ka Ramosoeu ho khathatsa!
Ramosoeu o batla sethaba-thaba,
Ho ntšitsoe khomo, ha lia lekana...,
Tsa mo qabanya le ngoan'a rangoanae.*

We saw that Shepstone was giving us trouble!
Shepstone is seeking a public appeal,
Cattle have been paid but they don't suffice,
They embroiled him with the child of his uncle.

The subject-matter in the *thoko* discussed above, is the fatherland, Lesotho, the Seqiti war, literally, the war of the cannon sounds, the sounds of the guns and the cannons, Lerotholi as saviour of his people, and the intervention by Shepstone, which all convey the theme, the saving of Lesotho from the Boers.

Another example of a classical *thoko* is the following composed in honour of

Lerotholi Mojela (1895-1961) who did not actually take part in the fighting but led a detachment of the Basotho soldiers to fight on the side of the Allied Forces during the First World War in 1914-1918. The subject-matter in this *thoko* of 177 lines in Mangoaela (1921: 226-230) can be segmented as follows:

Lerotholi Mojela: World War 1 (1914-1918)

A hero emerges

In this long segment, lines 1-108, the *seroki* relates the involvement of Chief Lerotholi Mojela in the war. At the outbreak of the war in France, Lerotholi Mojela was made a sacrifice (line 5) with a sweet-smelling savour as he took a chance on his life by taking part in the war whose results would not only be acceptable to the Basotho, but would make him emerge as a hero of high standing. When he and his men left for France, they first went to Cape Town and Algoa Bay. Line 13 in which the *seroki* compares the speedy departure of Lerotholi Mojela and his men to a foreign war says,

Ea betsoa, ea lebisoa Kapa le Bay;

It was fired, it was sent towards the Cape and the Bay (i.e. Algoa Bay);

The *seroki* suggests that so fearsome a warrior was Lerotholi Mojela that Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, on hearing that he was being sent against him, begged with tears in his eyes. This is in lines 28-30,

Lekena le 'Musu, le ntšoarele!
Ntšoareleng, Marena, ke fositse,
Ke fahlile 'musu ka lehlabathe!

Lekena and Government, forgive me!
Forgive me, Chiefs, I've erred,
I've besmeared the Government's eyes with sand!

Lerotholi Mojela's desire to see his soldiers engaging in war is mentioned in lines 40-

41,

*Na o kile a latella ntoa,
Esita Europe a e latelle!*

Indeed he once followed the war,
He followed it even to Europe!

Lines 86-87 inform us that the journey of Lerotholi Mojela and his soldiers to France was by sea,

*Sekepe a nka sa 'Muso le Seeiso,
Se mona se seholo sa ntoa.*

He took the ship of the Government and Seeiso,
This great one, the warship one.

On his return from France, Lerotholi Mojela, in July 1920, during a session of the Basutoland National Council, received the Medal for Meritorious Service from the Resident Commissioner (Damane and Sanders 1974:239). The *seroki* alludes to this in lines 94-95,

*A bitsoa Maseru, Meja-Metalana,
Teng a fihla a nehoa korone.*

He was called to Maseru, to Meja-Metalana,
On arrival, he was given a medal.

Lerotholi Mojela's placing at Tebang

After his return from France, Lerotholi Mojela was placed as chief at Tebang where old people were proud to be under his protection (lines 109-129). Says the *seroki* in line 129,

(Maqheku) A kena tenteng ea lehlabula,

(Old people) They entered a tent in summer,

Blessings of his rule

In lines 130 to 134, the blessed rule of Lerotholi Mojela is referred to in highly figurative language. Calling all to enjoy the safe and peaceful rule under Lerotholi, says the poet in lines 132-133,

*Barui le mafutsana, phuthehang,
Tlong kapele le tshabele moriting!*

Rich and poor, gather together,
Come quickly and shelter in the shade!

Dispute with Molapo

According to Damane and Sanders (1974:234) the dispute between the brothers, Lerotholi and Molapo, arose over succession. There was no surviving male in the first four houses of their father, Mojela. Lerotholi was the senior son in the fifth house, and Molapo the senior in the sixth. Molapo who had been his father's favourite, claimed that Mojela's marriage to Lerotholi's mother had been invalid, and that Lerotholi should be regarded as the adopted son. After many meetings, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council gave its decision in June 1928 in favour of Lerotholi. In lines 135-154 the *seroki* advises Lerotholi to proceed cautiously, and not to take precipitate action against those who had opposed him in the chieftainship dispute. He alludes to these *Makaota* 'stray people who live by hunting and gathering' who have returned to their allegiance to Lerotholi, in line 149,

Ke ana a khutlile Makaota!

They're here, the Makaota have returned!

Basutoland National Council

According to Damane and Sanders (1974:141), lines 155-157 allude to Lerotholi Mojela as a member of Basutoland National Council which met in Maseru where

members would sit and make laws:

*Ka mehla h'a ea Maseru o beisa pere;
Ka mehla h'a khutla oa e tšoara;*

When going to Maseru he races his horse;
Always, when returning, he restrains it,

Positioning near the borders of Lesotho

Lines 158-163 relate the positioning of Lerotholi which is near the borders of Lesotho. The compound word, *se-thiba-liheke* 'the-guardian-of-the-gates' in line 159 explains part of his responsibilities as chief. He is on the boundary at the Caledon (line 160), he guards the gates in the west (line 161), and those of Wepener (161).

Fairness of complexion

This is related in lines 164-168 where his light complexion is compared to *lehlabathe* 'sand', *linaleli* 'the stars', and *mafube* 'the dawn'.

First World War again

In lines 169 to 172 the *seroki* once again recounts the destruction caused by the First World War. Comparing Lerotholi to a bullet, the *seroki* says,

*Ea qhoma, ea chesa lira tsa 'Muso,
Likepe ea li etsa marantha,*

It exploded and burnt the Government's enemies;
Of the ships it made splinters,

Lerotholi Mojela as "light"

Lines 173-177 constitute an exclamatory stanza in which Lerotholi Mojela is depicted as "light" of the rulers, the mighty chief, the lord, and the master.

The above segments of the subject-matter have been effectively used to convey the theme which is the laudation of the hero and warning against the destruction of war.

Based on the two above examples of the classical *dithoko*, the general statement can be made, namely, that the subject-matter is relative to the experiences of the praiser or the one who is praised. Nevertheless, there are instances where the *seroki* may exaggerate the events and thereby distort their veracity. For instance, in Lerotholi Mojela's *thoko*, in lines 28-30, the truthfulness of the following assumed to have been spoken by Kaiser Wilhelm II, is questionable,

Lekena le 'Muso, le ntšoarele!
Ntšoareleng, Marena, ke fositse,
Ke fahlile 'muso ka lehlabathe!

Lekena and Government, forgive me!
Forgive me, Chiefs, I've erred,
I've besmeared the Government's eyes with sand!

The exaggerations commonly found in the *dithoko* sometimes sacrifice accuracy for the sake of satire, eulogy and aesthetic excellence. Confirming this, Damane and Sanders (1974: 59) give the true nature of the *dithoko* in saying,

They (the *lithoko*) are not historical narratives, but poetry with historical allusions.

Discussion (*Power and ideology*)

The traditional cultural state of affairs during the times of the *diroki* was such that the political power rested in the hands of the chief. The one praised was mainly the chief, and little or nothing was said about the role played by the warriors themselves who sacrificed their lives in the battles or wars they fought. Compare the *thoko* on *Ntoa ea Seqiti* 'The Seqiti war' composed in honour of Lerotholi's role against the O.F.S. Boers, and the fact that Mangoaela decided to refer to his anthology of the *dithoko* as **Lithoko tsa marena a Basotho** 'Praise poems of the Basotho Chiefs'. The ideology of power is still significant in the case between Britain and Lesotho during World War 1 (1914-1918) where many of the Basotho men had volunteered to go and fight on the side of Britain, their Master, as the latter had requested its colonies to come to its rescue by fighting the Master's war not on home ground but elsewhere. The

relationship of power and subservience thus characterize the subject-matter of many of the Basotho *dithoko* compositions.

Economic situation

According to Kunene (1971: 1) the wars fought by the Basotho were not inspired by economic need, or starvation, or anything of the kind, but the test of strength, of manliness, of daring; it was done in the pursuit of honour. I however disagree with this statement. My contention is that during the classical period the Basotho engaged in wars mainly for economic reasons. They fought and captured heads of cattle, a number of horses and sheep from their neighbouring tribes for the same reason. The Basotho fought in the war of Senekal (1858), for instance, because they were not satisfied with the Warden boundary according to which they would get a small share of the land, their economy. Mangoaela conveys the same sentiment in the preface of his praise poetry anthology, **Lithoko tsa marena a Basotho** (1988 [1921]: vi) where he says,

Basotho e bile batho ba lintoa, ba phetseng ka lerumo joale ka lichaba tsohle tsa South Africa, e ne e se sechaba sa makoala. E bile sechaba sa bahale, sa banna ba tsebang ho loanela se-sa-bona.

The Basotho have been people of war, whose existence was the spear just like the other tribes of South Africa; they were not a nation of cowards. They have been a nation of heroes, of men who knew how to fight for what-belongs-to-them.

What-belongs-to-them was their property, the land, the foundation of their economy. Economic advancement in the form of cattle-raiding and land acquisition were the primary reasons for the Basotho's engagement in wars or battles, whilst the test of strength, of manliness, of daring, the pursuit of honour, was but the secondary reason. Moshoeshoe after raiding all the cattle belonging to Ramonaheng, he composed poetic lines in which he said, *Ke nna Moshoeshoe, moshwashwaila wa ha Kadi, Lebeola le beotseng Ramonaheng ditedu*. 'I am Moshoeshoe, the shaver of Kadi's, the Razor that has shaved Ramonaheng's beards'. Like a razor that shaved the beards, he swept all the cattle belonging to Ramonaheng.

Social situation

The *diroki* were part and parcel of the society to which they belonged, and their oral composition, especially the subject-matter and themes were not confined to the poet's comrades-in-arms, but had a general bearing on the society. The subject-matter served as a vehicle through which their heroic activities on the battlefield were reported to the society in a highly poetic form. It served also as a means whereby part of the history of the nation was preserved from one generation to the next. The various places such as the *dipitso* 'the national assemblies', *matsema* 'work-parties' served as platforms where the heroic events pertaining to the society were related. It was from these social gatherings where heroic warriors were born because the spirit of heroic fighting was profoundly inculcated in the younger generation.

We now turn to the examples of the *dithoko* recorded on video tape in August 2000 where we look at their subject-matter and themes to see whether or not they have shifted from those of the classical *dithoko*. The first example is chanted by Mofoka Rasetla (Appendix no.14) at 'Melesi. His *thoko* composed of 65 lines may be regarded as being closer to the classical *dithoko* as the subject-matter of the *thoko* which was mainly about the hero, who in this case, is King Letsie III (Mohato), the ruling monarch. The *thoko* can be segmented as follows:

Mofoka Rasetla

***Church sacrament* (Lines 1-9)**

In his introduction the *seroki* mentions the name of the hero he is praising, namely, King Letsie III, and warns him to guard against the church sacrament which may be poisoned and used as a ploy to endanger his life under the pretext that it is *madi a Jesu* 'the blood of Jesus'.

Fear of death and the Lesotho churches

In lines 10-17 fear of death by the *Majakane*, that is, those who have accepted a foreign religion, Christianity, is the subject-matter the *seroki* is relating, and is stated as the truth prophesized long ago by chief Seeiso, grandfather to king Letsie III. Since then Seeiso turned against the Roman Catholic Church for its alleged 'blasphemy' as well as the church of the Paris Evangelical Mission Society for its

stand against the use of *bohadi* cattle (marriage cattle) in the Basotho marriages. Conflict with the Roman Catholic Church started when chief Seeiso, having more than twenty wives, was told that in order to be accepted into the Roman Catholic Church he would have to give them up except his senior wife, 'Mabatho who was a Protestant (cf. Damane and Sanders, 1974:243).

A cow to milk

A plea that king Letsie III should show mercy to his subjects by buying for them cows so that every time they milk them, they should think of him as a generous king is conveyed in lines 18-36.

Letsie III reminded of his father's advice

(Mohato) Letsie III in lines 37-48 is reminded of what his father, Bereng, said before his death, namely, that the Basotho should always be aware of death which may strike unexpectedly.

The ancestor of King Letsie III

Remembrance of Letsie III's great grandfather, Kerefise (Griffith) is brought to the attention of Letsie in lines 49-65. It alludes to the conflict occasioned by Kerefise in 1926 (ibid., p. 242-3) when he, contrary to the Basotho custom, announced to the British authorities in Maseru that his successor would be Bereng, and not the rightful successor, Seeiso, because he believed that the latter was not his biological son. Nevertheless, Seeiso finally became his father's successor and mysteriously died after a reign of only a year. The poet as an old man who knows much from the experiences of life, advises his king, Letsie III, to rule with utmost care and to guard against possible physical harm that may be inflicted upon him.

Like it was the case in the classical *dithoko*, the *seroki* praises his hero, who, in this case, is the King of Lesotho, Letsie III. The hero is in the forefront of his oral composition, and this is effectively conveyed through the subject-matter. The enemies he is fighting against are not those encountered on the battlefield, but Lesotho churches and their teachings which, like poison, pose a threat to him and his nation as a whole. He must ensure that he gains victory over 'these enemies'. This *thoko* differs also from the classical ones in that it involves a hero who does not fight

on the battlefield. The subject-matter discussed above conveys the theme, 'learning from the past political experiences, one should guard against physical harm'.

The next example is a *thoko* chanted by the *seroki*, Qekise Moeletsi (Appendix no. 11) from Bela-Bela village, in Lesotho. His *thoko* is 163 lines long, and the following segments constitute the subject-matter:

Qekise Moeletsi

Birth of Qekise

In lines 1-10 the *seroki* relates his birth. He was selected as an angel among other angels (line 2). His birth was accompanied by unusual happenings; the sun jumped and hid behind the clouds, there were sounds of thunder, darkness covered the space (lines 4-6). Women were in confusion as they went up and down and mingled at the door of the house. These happenings were a sign to demonstrate that a hero was born. These happenings remind one of Jesus Christ whose birth was accompanied by the emergence of the star from the East.

An old Shangaan woman's prayer

Lines 11-19 constitute a prayer by the old Shangaan female, mother Maswenkane, together with the Lobedu people of chief Ntwane. They prayed Jehovah to bless the baby born and to give it dignity, wisdom and heroism.

God's answer

In lines 20-27 God answered their prayer and offered them a snake with four colours, a snake which nobody knew what kind it was. Some thought it was a *marabe* 'mountain adder', some likened it to *tlatlametsi* 'a brown house snake', some thought it was the *masumu wa dithako* 'the rinkalls of the ruins', and the Bapedi call it *thamahasebata* 'a brown hyena'. In guessing what a snake it was, the *seroki* says in line 25,

Banna ba re ke qoane e hlooho di tharo,

Men say it is an adder with three heads,

The very fact that the snake was strange and unknown, points to the fact that the one born was a hero.

Birth reported to the local chief

News of the birth was reported to the local chief (lines 28-35). The baby is described as crying and angry (line 31), making fists as if to fight (line 32). However, the baby gives an impression that it will be dignified and lovable (line 34). The description points to the fact that the baby has characteristics of a hero in the making.

Naming of the baby

The naming of the baby is related in lines 36-51. The old lady, mother Maswenkane named him *Mahetlankwe* 'The-leopard's-shoulders'. The baby's mother, Mmamoferefere, thinks the name is appropriate because the birth was accompanied by the respect shown by the heavenly stars disappearing when the baby was born, the moon hiding behind the clouds, the sun rising and following the baby. She names the baby, 'Moeletsi', literally, 'Advisor' (line 45) because the baby will be her advisor. The whole Lesotho will know that the baby born is *selwana-le-mathata* 'the fighter-against-hardships'.

Grandmother's wish for the baby

Mmamotinkane's wish for the baby is expressed in lines 52-63. Her prayer is that God may spare her grandchild. Qekise is referred to as wisdom that grows like a tree under whose shadow the family will find rest. In lines 58-60, says the *seroki*,

*(Bohlale) ba mela teng e se e le sefate,
Sa hola sa okamela mohlwa,
Ya eba se moriti o monate,*

It (wisdom) grew there as a tree,
Which grew up and towered over the lawn,
And became the one with pleasant shade.

Qekise kills those who offend him

The *seroki* is defined in lines 64-80 as a hero who retaliates and kills those who

offend him. Comparing himself to a house snake, he struck another house snake above the eye, and the blood flowed towards the graves to inform the ancestors. This figurative language becomes clearer in lines 74-80 where the struck house snake means a person whom he, Qekise, killed. Qekise's heroism is expressed in lines 74-75,

*Yaba ba kolohana ho ya teng,
Ba fumana setopo moya o fedile.*

Then they followed one after the other going there,
They found a corpse only, the soul gone.

Qekise's heroism

Lines 81-106 give a description of the *seroki's* heroism. He is a beast, a wild dog and a hyena with sharp teeth, in lines 81-83. He, as a wild dog is attacked by dogs including the puppies. In attacking the dogs, he became angry and shook his bristling hair, got hold of a head and broke it into pieces, pulled the flesh out and left the bones (lines 90-92). His manner of fighting is so dangerous that it is accompanied everywhere by havoc and destruction. For instance, in lines 102-105 it is said,

*Thokolosi le tsona tsa ngaya hara motse,
Dipodi tsa ikgama ka diropo bosiu,
Makgomo a phethola mekwallo,
A hasana a ya kena masimong,*

Even the thokolosis (mysterious beings) cried in the village,
Goats choked themselves with ropes in the night,
Cattle broke the kraal gates,
And ran helter-skelter until in the fields.

Christian name-giving – doves in church

Qekise's father prayed and asked God for a Christian name to use at the baby's baptismal. Whilst at a church, and standing in a queue behind the minister, doves entered the church flying to and fro, bringing the name Moses, Qekise's other name.

Like Moses, his 'Israelites' whom he shall free from bondage (poverty), are his family members. This is related in lines 107-123.

Qekise's courageous wife

The courage of Qekise's wife is related in lines 124-144. Qekise will stand by his wife, Mmabuang, in all the difficulties. Mmabuang is a Ndebele of the Mthimkulu people (tribe). She is a big tree not to be chopped. In line 141-144 people are marveled by her bravery and cannot understand how she got married to a beast like Qekise. In lines 143-144 the *seroki* says,

*O botha le tau selaong,
O nna a e pholla mohlahleng,*

She lies with a lion at its den,
And brushes it on the mane.

Qekise is a 'jackpot'

In lines 145-151, the *seroki* regards himself as a 'jackpot'. A lady fortunate to win Qekise's love has really got a treasure not easy to find. Many ladies who had great expectations to win his love, and who were well-dressed (line 147), were disappointed because a jackpot is got by means of love and honesty (line 150), and Moses (Qekise) does share his love not with a stupid lady (line 151).

Qekise's fearsomeness

In the last lines, 152-163, the *seroki* relates the fearsomeness of Qekise. He is handsome and tidy because he washes his hands before he goes for his meals. As a hero he makes thunderous noises which make people run helter-skelter. For instance, the following are said in lines 155, 159-162,

*Makwala a pheresela ho ithoma,
Motho a mathe borikgwe a bo tshwere thekeng,
A bokolla a poreisaka letshollo,
Ho se le mala, ho tshollisa batho,
Ho mpa ho tshajwa Moses wa Mmamoferefere Qekise,*

The cowards rush to the toilets,
A person would run holding his trousers on the hips,
Crying and praising a running tummy,
Without any diarrhoea at all to cause that,
The only reason being fear of Moses of Mmamoferefere Qekise!

Qekise's *thoko*, with strong religious undertone, namely, his birth, Christian name-giving, baptism and God's answer, as well as his heroic character, convey his belief that God has intentions with his life in this world as a hero who, like Moses of old, is destined to save his family from economic bondage of poverty. This theme is conveyed by the subject-matter of his *thoko*.

Discussion

Qekise Moeletsi was born in a rural country, Lesotho, where various villages are each under the supervision of a local chief to whom matters affecting the village members are reported, such as, in this case, the birth of Qekise. The duty of the local chief was to record the birth and to announce it officially to the community. This is confirmed by line 47 which says, *Lesotho la utlwa ka pale mangolo a balwa* 'Lesotho heard the story when letters were read'. Announcement of the birth was of so great importance that letters were circulated to the whole population of Lesotho. During his birth the inhabitants of Lesotho still adhered to some of their cultural practices, for instance, the distinguishing of oneself according to the clan or tribe to which one belongs. The family of Qekise originates from the Matebele people whose ancestor is Mthimkulu (line 134).

The naming of Qekise as Moeletsi (Advisor) and reference to him as *selwana-le-mathata* 'the fighter-against-hardships' is an indication of the poverty under which his parents lived. His parents expected from him to fight the economic hardships by keeping the wolf from the door in order for them to survive economically. He will be their advisor who will offer the best solution in their poor economic situation. His name, Moses, truly represents one who is expected to liberate his family from the oppressive Egypt of poverty. Qekise was born in a Christian family and was given a Christian name, Moses, his baptismal name. Apparently, his parents belonged to the Roman Catholic Church which commonly refers to baptism as *lhatsuo* 'the washing'.

According to Qekise, line 116, the church is at *Kweneng e sekgutlong ha Matšekha* 'Kweneng village in the gorge at Matšekha's place' in Lesotho.

Whilst the subject-matter of the classical *dithoko* mainly referred to incidents associated with war or the raiding of the enemy's cattle, that of the *thoko* composed by Qekise and chanted in August 2000 demonstrates an example of a 21st century *thoko* whose subject-matter is the hero's birth and heroic deeds. In this sense, Qekise's *thoko* may be viewed as similar to the classical *dithoko*. The difference is that heroic deeds in his case are not derived from the battlefield, but from difficulties of life which he boldly confronted and overcame. This is an example of the *dithoko* called *Dithoko tsa bafo* 'Commoners' praises'.

In reciting his *thoko*, Qekise deviated from the declamatory style (elevated voice and the higher pitch) which normally characterise the chanting of the *dithoko*, in particular, the classical ones. This deviation can be ascribed to his composition which was prepared beforehand, written down and recited from memory. This he did to ensure that his subject-matter follows a predetermined order.

The next example is a *thoko* composed and recited by 'Mampho Chopho (Appendix no. 5). In her *thoko* she praises Chief Leshoboro Seeiso, the brother of King Moshoeshoe II. The subject-matter does not refer to war or battle because chief Leshoboro has never been involved directly or indirectly in any war or battle. The following segments constitute the subject-matter of her *thoko*:

'Mampho Chopho

Birth of Leshoboro

The *seroki* in lines 1-28 relates the unusual events associated with the birth of Leshoboro, who is the chief of the district, Likhoele, at the time of the composition of the *thoko*. According to Gill (1993: 186), Leshoboro and Constantinus Bereng, King Moshoeshoe II, were sons of chief Seeiso, the former being the son by Seeiso's second wife, and the latter, by his third. Leshoboro's birth was preceded by a dream in which the ancestors revealed the birth to his grandmother, 'Maseeiso. The grandmother dreamt seeing a pure white blanket flying towards her (lines 6-8).

Before it reached the ground, she snatched it, and interpreted the experience as a prophecy signifying the birth of Leshoboro. The day he was born was the day he left Zion, the paradise of the Creator (lines 13-14), where he was with Jesus and the angels. Unusual was that he was born with a star on his chest, two on his head, and when his hair was shaved, all these disappeared (lines 16-18). Message regarding the birth was sent to the authorities at Matelile. Griffith Lerotholi's wives expressed their love and appreciation by planting according to tradition three reeds, two in front of the house, and one at the back, to signify the birth of their grandson (lines 25-28).

The placing of Leshoboro in Likhoele district

The *seroki* in lines 29-90 relates that all were informed about the arrival of Leshoboro as chief at Likhoele, and the *seroki* states in line 34 that she was present on that occasion. Representing the government of Lesotho was Lerotholi Mojela who informed the local councillors that he had been sent by Amelia 'Mantšebo Seeiso, Seeiso's senior widow, who became the Regent for her infant son in 1941-1960 (Damane and Sanders, 1974: 243), to present the young chief to the people at Likhoele district (lines 38-42). The main plea is expressed in line 45 where she says,

Le mo jakise le be le mo phedise,

You should honour him and live with him peacefully,

Lerotholi Mojela's further plea is that the people at Likhoele should know that the young chief is an orphan, who grew up the hard way, and is given the reigns after his father's death (lines 46-48). These lines allude to the dispute that had prevailed in 1926 between Seeiso (father to Leshoboro and King Bereng) and his brother, Bereng (after whom King Bereng was named) pertaining to succession on the throne after the death of Griffith Lerotholi, their father, in 1939 (Damane and Sanders 1974:242-243). When Griffith, inspired by his conviction that Seeiso was not his natural son, announced to the British authorities in Maseru that his most senior son was Bereng, Seeiso protested. Most of the chiefs present at a family council voted in favour of Bereng for fear of offending Griffith. But after the death of Griffith in 1939, Seeiso's claims were upheld by an overwhelming majority. His reign was only for a period of one year. According to Haliburton (1977: 159), on his death his senior widow,

'Mantšebo, became the regent for his infant son, Bereng who later became the King of Lesotho.

When Leshoboro arrived to take reigns at Likhoele, those who had been against his father, Seeiso feared that he would retaliate. This group includes even members of his family. Lines 54-57 convey the following:

*Matona ohle a tshaba ho araba,
Ha ke le jwetse nnete ke sa e botse,
Hwa ba ha tshaba le ba ntlo yabo,
Ba nyatsa ha ba abelwa Leshoboro.*

All the councillors feared to answer,
Let me tell you the truth, without having to ask someone,
Even his family members feared to speak,
Partly, because they opposed Leshoboro being imposed on them.

Many of those present at the summit welcomed Leshoboro, among them were Tladi Chopho, the husband of the *seroki* (line 64) and Mafa Mofokeng (line 69). The representative, Lerotholi Mojela then assured the people that he, the council of 'Mantšebo, Leabua Jonathan who was to become the first Prime Minister of Lesotho, and Khabasheane Masopha, have strongly advised him not to rule harshly.

Griffith's wives mourn the rule in Lesotho

This is related in lines 91-116. Griffith's wives, 'Maseeiso and 'Mabofihla, who are Leshoboro's grandmothers, mourn the state of affairs in Lesotho, communism (line 94), the harsh rule of their grandsons (line 100), and the cracking up of the country which was already taking place (line 103). 'Maseeiso prays for the intervention of the ancestors, King Moshoeshoe 1, Griffith (Leshoboro's grandfather), and Seeiso (his father).

Independence of Lesotho

Events pertaining to the independence of Lesotho are related in lines 117-169. One of his highlights as chief was Leshoboro's journey to the Cape and overseas. The

first part of his journey to *Bolomo* (Bloemfontein) was by car. Here he met people of different nationalities, Chinese girls, Indians and 'Hebrews' (lines 118-125). Leshoboro was sent by his brother, Constantinus Bereng Seeiso (who was proclaimed on 12 March 1960 as Moshoeshe II). The poetess, 'Machopho, mixing up names, says that chief Leshoboro was sent to King George or King Edward VII of Britain to negotiate the independence of Lesotho. According to Sanders (2000: 110) it was Leabua Jonathan who in June 1966 negotiated the independence of Lesotho in London. This was finally attained by the Basotho National Party on 4 October 1966 (Gill, 1993: 212 & 216). The new flag of Lesotho was hoisted on that day. In lines 160-161, says the *seroki*,

*Jwale hwa hlongwa le folakga ya Lesotho,
Yaba Lesotho kajeno le a ipusa.*

Then the flag was hoisted in Lesotho,
And Lesotho became independent.

The celebration of the independence was accompanied by the sound of a cannon which caused the people to run and disperse in all directions, and some were scattered even over the hillocks (line 157-158). The *seroki* concludes by giving chief Leshoboro Seeiso a new name in lines 166-167,

*Ke pere e moetse wa gauta,
Re e palama ha re leba kgotsong.*

He is a horse with golden mane,
We ride it when we move to peace.

The subject-matter has been effectively used by the *seroki* to convey the theme directed to Lesotho leaders, namely to take heed, to look out for pitfalls and to rule the country with authority. 'Machopho, was not actually chanting, but was telling. She was not using the declamatory style. In a sense, she was narrating with little body movement. Her rendition sounded like a historical chronicle. In this sense, she was deviating from the way according to which the *dithoko* are performed. Contrary to the

classical *dithoko* in which the chief or the hero is extolled for the part he took in war or battlefield, the opposite is the case here because the hero, chief Leshoboro, though extolled for his unusual birth, his role as chief at Likhoele and in the attainment of independence for Lesotho, there is no reference at all to war or battle. In fact, chief Leshoboro, unlike the chiefs and heroes in the classical *dithoko*, has never been involved in any war or battle. 'Machopho's aim is to relate part of the fairly recent political history of Lesotho to her audience, with the intention that it will be remembered and passed on from the present generation to the next, as it also involves events that should be avoided, in order for Lesotho to be a peaceful country worthy of the memory of Moshoeshoe 1, the founder.

The *thoko* which now follows is one composed and chanted by Mphutlane Mofokeng. His performance style, especially his gestures, facial expressions, his accoutrement as well as the subject-matter in which he praised himself as a hero, was very close to the performance in the classical *dithoko*. The only difference was that his subject-matter did not have any reference to war or battle. The subject-matter consists of the following segments:

Mphutlane Mofokeng

Introduction

In lines 1-5 he calls on the audience to keep quiet when he introduces himself as child of Mmantshi of the tribe of Kgolokwane.

His chiefs

He mentions in lines 6-9 the names of the chiefs under whom he is serving, namely, Lekunutu Mmota, chief of the Batlokwa at Tsheseng, and chieftainess Mmathokwana Mopeli of the Bakwena at Phuthaditjhaba.

He is an eloquent seroki

He compares his eloquence to a fighting hero who appears swiftly before an audience. This he relates in lines 10-19.

He extols his village chief, Leabua

The village people at Thabana-Tshowana have plenty of food to eat, such as, pumpkins, maize and sweet-cane. He asks for forgiveness from the chief for praising him after many of the eloquent *diroki* have already spoken. He is therefore emotionally touched as a result. These he relates in lines 20-32.

Heroic deeds

The *seroki* relates his heroic manner of fighting in lines 33-58. He stamps his feet on the ground, looks on both his right and left, and the enemies scatter in all directions. He says the following in lines 35-50,

*Ba batlang ho tseba Mphutlane,
Tswelang ka ntle bana ba Basotho,
Le phahamise letsoho le letona,
Le letona la malahlela,
Le letshehadi la matshwarathebe,
Lona le le tlohele.
Ka lona le tla mmona Mofokeng,
Hara mpa ya bosiu madimo,
Ha bana ba robetse ba kgona,
Ba bile ba kgakgathisa mahanana.
Banna o kwatile ngwana wa Nqabe,
O tula ka leoto fatshe,
O hetla ka nqena le ka nqena,
Diphoofofotswana tse nyenyane, Basia,
Ba sa tla baleha,
Le hona ba sa tla matha lebelo.*

Those who wish to know Mphutlane
Come out, children of the Basotho,
Raise the right hand,
The right hand one, the throwing one.
The left one, that holds a shield,
That should be left alone,

Through it you will see the Mofokeng,
In the middle of the night, the cannibals,
When children are asleep and snoring,
Snoring heavily through the nose,
People, he is angry, child of Nkabe,
He stamps his foot on the ground,
He looks this side and that side,
Small animals, the Basia,
Will flee and run fast.
They will indeed run very fast.

His fearsomeness

The eloquent *diroki* as well as the traditional doctors keep wondering at the source of his bravery. He has been advised by his Kgolokwane people to discontinue running after the witches who are the most feared people. In fighting an enemy he pushes him against the courtyard wall and then jumps over him. Like lightning it does not take him long to defeat his enemy. These are related in lines 59-86.

Association with his ancestors

In lines 87-110 he associates himself with his ancestors who are the constant source of his power. He feels it is better to discontinue being a *seroki* as those with whom he enjoys competing, are all dead. He mourns the death of his relatives who were the professional *diroki*. He calls on the ancestors to pay them a visit as this might revive the oral poetic art that does not exist anymore. Mphutlane and others have founded at Thabana-Tshowana a 'School of *dihoba*', that is, a school where young Basotho warsong dancers are taught traditions of old, such as *mokorotlo* 'war-dance' and the chanting of praises. These young poets, we were informed, perform before audiences at organized festivals.

Heroic deeds

Heroic deeds are related in lines 111-186. He arrives at the village towards sunset, and finding everybody at rest, walks around bravely, and nobody is brave enough to challenge him. He likens himself to storms which cause havoc wherever they come. Unlike warriors who stab with their spears, he pushes the battle using his knees,

meaning that the whole regiment facing him draws back. He is proud to mention the names of his family members, namely, his sisters, Makgala and Ntaoleng, as well as his son, Malefetsane. When stabbing an enemy, his spear remains firmly held by the bones so that he has to use both his hands to shake it to and fro in order to remove it, resulting in the enemy's brain flowing out through the ears and the blood through the nostrils.

The above segments constituting the subject-matter have been effectively utilized to convey the theme which is 'though he may not have fought in war or battle, he is a hero who is able to overcome the obstacles facing him'. It should be noted that Mphutlane Mofokeng is an inhabitant of a village, Thabana-Tshowana, in the rural area of Qwaqwa, in the Free State province. In his *thoko*, he praises himself and draws attention to his heroic deeds. Praising himself, his gestures, facial expressions, accoutrement - which consisted of a leather hat made from a gazelle hide, a blanket made from gazelle hides sewn together, and in his right hand a long stick decorated with white beads in the middle - reminded one of the old classical style of the *dithoko* chanting in the best tradition of the canon. The only difference was his subject-matter which contrary to the classical *dithoko* did not emanate from war or battle in which he was involved. Mphutlane's poem and performance is an act of imagined war with himself at the centre of attention. He does not see himself as being on the margin of society or as being one looked down upon, but as steadfast and full of confidence. Like the classical *dithoko*, his declamation conveys a very strong sense of power, not directed at the chief, but at himself. He disregards the margin, but puts himself in the middle of the universe.

The next example of the *thoko* also recorded in August 2000 was chanted by Mokolane Mosikili (Appendix no. 9). His *thoko*, composed of 180 lines, has the following segments:

Mokolane Mosikili

Calling for attention

In the introductory lines, 1-10, the *seroki* calls on the audience to keep quiet as he praises God, the Father. In line 9 he says,

Ke roka Modimo, Morena wa marena.

I am praising God, the King of kings,

God rules over His creation

The rule of God as creator of man, the sun, the sky, the fish of the sea, is related in lines 11-25 where, among others, the *seroki* says in line 15 and 24,

*Ditlhapi tsa lewatle metsing di o mamele,
Modimo o bopile Atama le Efa,*

The fish of the ocean in the water should be under your control,
God created Adam and Eve,

Origin of sin

The origin of sin is related in lines 25-34. The perfect creation of God was spoiled by Satan. Line 27 says,

Ba mpa ba ekwa ke morena mautla,

They were however betrayed by Satan,

Prayer for help

Prayer for help from God is related in lines 35-41 where the *seroki* ends with the words,

O re jarele mefokolo, Ntate ya matla ohle,

Bear our weaknesses, our omnipotent Father,

Crucifixion of Christ

The crucifixion of Christ is related in lines 42 – 73. Christ came to this world to show the true way of heaven, but the people, especially the Jews, turned against him and crucified him on a hill, at Golgotha. They put nails through his hands and feet, made

him wear a crown of thorns, and stabbed him with a spear. Wounded, he died the painful death for the sins of others, not his. Says the *seroki* in line 72,

Bonang Mora Modimo ha a eshwa lefu le sehloho,

See how the Son of God dies the cruel death,

The last day

The last day (lines 74-83) will be characterized by the sounding of the heavenly trumpets when God will choose those who belong to his Kingdom. This will be the day on which those with many sins will feel lost. That day will be so terrible that the *seroki* in line 76 says,

Lefatshe le tuka, dithaba le mafika di hlena,

The earth is burning, the mountains being red hot,

God's punishment

Punishment of God is related in lines 84-107. It takes the form of great hunger, poverty, many diseases and bodily pains, to such an extent that one will remember his God. Says the *seroki* in line 91,

Modimo o re otlile ka ntho tse ngata,

God has punished us through many things

Prayer for removal of sinful deeds

The prayer that God may remove the sinful deeds of man, in lines 108-116, includes acts such as wickedness (line 112), fighting and lies (line 113), theft and jealousy (line 114). The *seroki* is calling on God's spirit to fill the whole earth and to abide in people's hearts.

Enmity between man and snake

Love and peace among people, and prosperity are spoiled by the existing enmity

between man and the snake (117-134) as the latter has venomous poison that kills.

God's blessings on man

The *seroki*, in lines 135-160, calls on God's blessings, namely, to remove hail and the deluge of water (line 136), to bring September rains (line 137), to allow the Basotho to plant their seeds, to prevent worms from causing damage to the crops and to ensure that the witches discontinue using herbal medicines to awaken the dead from their graves (line 142). The dead are blessed because they have found rest from the temptations of this world and from the devil. We should not judge them as that will be the sole prerogative of the merciful God. Line 158 says,

Yena o tla etsa kahlolo ya nnete, ya lehodimo.

He alone will pass true judgment of heaven.

Welcome to heaven

Welcoming of God's people to the heavenly Canaan is related in lines 161-180. God prepares his people by cleansing them, so that when they leave this world they should be warmly welcomed to the heavenly Canaan by the angels, and find the table ready waiting for them to enjoy their meal, the heavenly manna.

The segments which constitute the subject-matter in the above *thoko* enable us to determine the theme, 'God through Christ offers eternal salvation to sinful people'. This *thoko* is also characterized by the element of power in that the *seroki* does not allow inhibition of any kind at all, but bravely chants what he believes to be the great truths of his Master, and these he conveys with all vigour possible. The Basotho have a proverb that says, *Mohlanka wa morena morena* 'The servant of the chief (is) the chief himself'.

The subject-matter in the above *thoko* chanted by Mokolane Mosikili in 2000 differs from that of the classical *dithoko* discussed earlier. Whilst the subject-matter of the classical *dithoko* was mainly based on and related to war, that of Mosikili's *thoko* is based on and related to God's spiritual salvation of man. The subject-matter on religion, salvation, God's omnipotence and heroism characterize the whole *thoko*.

This 2000 *thoko* indicates a shift in terms of the subject-matter. The element of heroism is however notable in that God is depicted as a hero engaging in spiritual war against the enemy of man, Satan, defeating him and saving man from eternal hell, so that the latter may be welcomed to his heavenly home. It should be noted that Mosikili reveals the influence that Christianity has had upon him. He here conveys a spiritual message through the medium of a *thoko*, an innovation which constitutes a significant deviation from the rule.

The discussion above, brings us to the conclusion that whereas the classical heroic *dithoko* were characterized by the subject-matter and themes related mainly to war and their chase, those composed and recorded in the year 2000, evince a more open accommodation of a variety of matters, issues and themes, mainly based on the *diroki*'s experiences.

This is confirmed by an overview of the subject-matter of the *dithoko* compositions chanted by the Basotho *diroki* recorded on video tape in 2000. In summary the following *dithoko* subject-matter emerged at various places of recordings:

At the Basotho Cultural Village

The *thoko* by Sera Khamokha (Appendix no. 28) mainly calls on all the Basotho to work hard and not depend on other people or tribes for survival. He does not mention anything related to war or chase. The whole *thoko* by Joshua Makara (Appendix no. 12) (see broader discussion 3.3.1.2) constitutes a description of his self-praise and is almost the same as that of Mphutlane in terms of subject-matter and performance. In his *thoko*, Tutubala Tšoene (Appendix no. 19) compares his birth to a long journey. He left his place of creation (heaven) on a Friday and arrived on earth on Saturday. He instils fear to anybody when he coughs or sneezes or expectorates, and the magistrates keep reminding his case because of their fear in dealing with it and finalizing it.

Tshepo Lethunya in his *thoko* (Appendix no. 33) relates the names of his progenitors, namely, the name of his father, Lepheane, the son of Lesia. He originates from the Bahlakwana 'Those who come from yonder' and the Bakwena 'The Crocodile people'. He proudly mentions the names of his sisters, Mantwa and Moleboheng,

whose teeth resemble milk in whiteness. With pride he mentions that he is black in colour and lean in outlook. Semai Moloji (Appendix no. 7) relates the nature of his village, Thibella, known for its many reeds. He further relates the day he saw the raven flying and carrying a man's intestines which hit against the rocks. This reflects what he, as a hero, can do to his enemies. TK Kabai ((Appendix no. 13) introduces his *thoko* by saying the Lord's Prayer *Ntata rona ya mahodimong...* 'Our Father who art in heaven...' and ends it where it says, *Jwalo ka ha e etswa mahodimong* 'As it is done in heaven'. He pays homage to God, *Morena ya ka hodimodimo ho maru*, 'The Lord above the highest skies'. Owing to his light complexion, he refers to himself as *Khaliki e tshweu, ngwana Kabai* 'The white calico, the child of Kabai'. He relates his birth and refers to the Bafokeng people, the tribe to which he belongs, as the people who came from Babilona and Egypt, and who later arrived at the Transvaal. He calls on Mmathokwana, one of the chieftainesses at Qwaqwa, to look after her subjects.

Of the total of 30 *dithoko* recorded in 2000, the above *dithoko*, recorded at the Basotho Cultural Village, constituting 16%, deviate from the classical *dithoko* in that their subject-matter is not based on war or chase.

At Thabana-Tshowana

Thapelo Letjori, a young *seroki* of about 13 years of age, recites a memorized *thoko* (Appendix no. 26) in which he mourns the death of Letsema Matšela, a *mokorotlo* 'war-dance' singer popular among the Basotho, and Mahlathini, a Zulu singer popularly known for his gravel voice. Their death has brought darkness on Lesotho, i.e., the Basotho people. Tumelo Mofokeng, the youngest *seroki* of about 10 years of age was also recorded. His memorized *thoko* (Appendix no. 25) extols Nelson Mandela as a hero who spent 27 years in prison. He calls on the Basotho at Qwaqwa to take a rest and look forward with renewed energy. He further mourns the death of Thabang Rampooane, a popular young S.A.B.C. disk jockey responsible for the Lesedi FM youth program, whose tragic death was caused by *mabidi* 'wheels' (a car accident). James Mofokeng (Appendix no. 15) extols chief Leabua of the Tlokweng district in Qwaqwa. He relates a serious conflict that exists in the family of chief Leabua where the family is against Leabua's bigamous marriage. Leabua's birth is accompanied by a star taking the shape of mist. The *thoko* ends with the *seroki's*

expression of humbleness and readiness to take orders from his chief.

Mphutlane Mofokeng (Appendix no. 4) pays homage to his chief, Leabua of Tlokweneng district in Qwaqwa. In praising himself, he draws attention to his physical appearance and his heroic manner when confronting an enemy. He associates himself with the heroes of the past, who, through death, have departed from this world. See broad discussion in 4.2.1.

The *dithoko* mentioned above and recorded at Thabana-Tshowana, constitute 13% of the total number of the *dithoko* recorded at the identified places. They all deviate from the classical *dithoko* because of their subject-matter which is neither based on war or battle, nor related in any way to it.

At Huntersville in the Vaal

Sehloho Lehalehale (Appendix no. 27) mentions the names of his daughters, Lebohang, Nthabiseng and Ntwetsi. He further mentions that he has three wives. He refers to himself as *Ngwana pelo e telele* 'A kindhearted child' loved and cared for by his chief. Despite his lean physical stature, he is a hero who fights his enemy in such a way that the latter finds himself in an upside down position. Qabanyane Mothai (Appendix no. 10) praises himself as one who has travelled extensively to places such as Secunda, Orlando, Mozambique and even America. His village is Leloko, his chief is Matheadira Seeiso, and he is a proud father of Nkwe and Mmantshadi. He mourns the folly of poverty. Though not learned, he has natural wisdom. Francis Sello Nkoli (Appendix no. 8) praises himself as a reliable subject of chief Sello. Due to poverty he becomes a mine worker in Gauteng. His lean physical stature is attributed to the people's hatred towards him. He became sick whilst at the mines and had to go back home.

The three *dithoko* mentioned above, and recorded at Huntersville, constituting 10% of the total number of the *dithoko* recorded, deviate from the classical *dithoko* in that their subject-matter is not inspired by war or battle or anything of that kind.

At Morija Archives and Museum

Ralebatha Motsamai (Appendix no. 24) introduces his *thoko* by stating that he is not

a hero in a physical battle, but enjoys any possible flames that may erupt. When he left home for work at the mines, an evil sorceress stood outside rubbing her short petticoat around her loins and pronounced a curse wishing him ill-luck at the mines. He remains a man of small stature despite the fact that during his stay at the mines he used to eat delicious food, such as, tomatoes, onions and meat. He pledges his continued allegiance to his village chief. Mokhele Thulo (Appendix no. 17) expresses his love to his wife who belongs to the Bakgatla people. He appreciates the fact that they bore him a wife. He is angry at the people who scandalize his good name at the chief's palace, alledging that he is a thief and a rapist, and therefore unworthy to be given a piece of land.

The subject-matter and theme of the *thoko* composed by the poetess 'Mampho Chopho pertaining to the rule by chief Leshoboro of Likhoele as well as his role in the procurement of Lesotho independence, have been discussed under point 4.2.1. In her *thoko*, recited and recorded in 2000 at Morija, there is hardly any reference to war although there is a strong, if not overwhelming political awareness. Is this perhaps the way the praise poem is forging its way into the future?

Qekise Moeletsi's *thoko* is mainly about his birth. See the discussion of his *thoko* under point 4.2.1. Nowhere does he make reference to war or battle; his *thoko* is a self-praise.

The *dithoko* mentioned above and recorded at Morija, make 13% of the total number of the *dithoko* we recorded. They all show deviation from the subject-matter usually characterizing the classical *dithoko* in that their's are not based on war or battle.

At Matsieng

In his *thoko* Mokheseng Soai (Appendix no. 20) relates the birth of Mohato (Letsie III) during the month of August /September 1963. The new monarch of Lesotho was born at a time when wars were no more fought with sticks but with words. He got married to the daughter of Motšoeneng. The *seroki* uses an expression commonly used by many of the *diroki*, namely, *Ha ke roke Mohato hobane e le mohale, empa ke mo roka hobane e le wa kgotla* 'I praise Mohato not because he is a warrior-in-

war, but I praise him because he belongs to the court'. This is yet another powerful observation of the way the *dithoko* subject-matter might be going. The praises in honour of Letsie III forms part of the shift from war/chase to modernist political issues and governance. The poetess, 'Machopho, did almost the same in her chronicles.

Morabaraba Lehloha (Appendix no. 32) in his *thoko* extols King Constantinus Bereng Seeiso, officially known as Moshoeshoe II who is married to mother Mohato. Since Bereng's death is a mysterious one, the *seroki* calls on the nation to find answers for it from Major General Lekhanya, leader of the military regime in Lesotho; Leabua Jonathan, the Prime Minister, before the death of Moshoeshoe II, as well as the Chieftainness 'Mantšebo Seeiso. When the king returned from overseas he took up leadership of Lesotho and led the country to peace and independence.

Arston Mphou (Appendix no. 31) praises the young Prince Mohato, Letsie III. There were ululations from all corners of Lesotho to announce the birth of the king. War songs (*mekorotlo*) were sung as an indication that they saluted and welcomed his birth. His official installation as the new monarch of Lesotho took place in November. According to Gill (1993:243) the date of the installation was Monday, 12 November 1990. The *seroki* further relates that the church leaders read from the Bible, namely, from Matthew chapter 10, and prayers were said. On this memorable day, the Basotho even addressed themselves to the king and said, 'Chief, Good morning!' (*Morena, dumela!*)

Sello Nthapo (Appendix no. 29) praises Prince Mohato, Letsie III whom he refers to as *Forede* from the Afrikaans word 'Vrede', meaning 'Peace'. During his stay in overseas countries he was taught the ways of running the country as he must maintain peace in Lesotho. King Letsie III, whom we had interviewed on tape and who had blessed our research plan, was trained in England from where he came home to take up his role as king of his country. He calls on all the Basotho to exercise subservience to his rule. Baptist Komello Mahanetsa (Appendix no. 3) praises chief Sempe, a minor village chief, who sent his spies to the camp at Mohaleshoek. On arrival there, telephone calls were made all over Lesotho and even reached the palace of the king. Chief Sempe's wife complains that if Sempe was a powerful chief he would capture the cattle belonging to his enemies. The *seroki* adds

the events concerning the journey by train, namely, that before he left Bloemfontein the train was inspected thoroughly to check whether all the wheels were in order. When the signals (flags) were raised, it left the station pregnant with multitudes of Moshoeshoe's people on their journey to Gauteng. A white man (guard) was angry because the train arrived late at Bloemfontein.

The *thoko* recited by Shekai Ratsatsi (Appendix no. 30) relates the war fought by Kerefise (Griffith), against Masopha. According to Damane and Sanders (1974: 214), Kerefise's forces in combination with the forces of his brother, Letsie II, and the forces of their father, Lerotholi, inflicted a decisive defeat on Masopha on 12 January 1898 at Khamolane plateaux near Thaba Bosiu where Masopha's warriors had erected fortifications. The defeat of Masopha is described in lines 75-76 as,

*Ledimo la Ra-se-okamela-batho,
Le jele bana ba Masopha,*

Giant of the Towerer-above-the-people,
It has eaten (devoured) Masopha's children,

This *thoko* as recited by Shekai Ratsatsi, relating the war of Griffith against Masopha is not his own composition but a recitation of a memorized classical poem from Mangoaela's anthology (Mangoaela, 1921: 175-179).

Lebamang Moabi (Appendix no. 16) recites the *thoko* praising chief Kerefise (Griffith 1873-1939). Although the *thoko* also alludes to the war of Griffith against Masopha on 12 January 1898 (cf. Damane and Sanders 1974:214), it is again not the *seroki's* own composition, but a recitation of a memorized classical *thoko* from Mangoaela (1921:175-178), again signifying an attempt to remember this time-honoured form.

From the discussion of the *dithoko* recorded at Matsieng, the following should be noted:

1. Since Matsieng is the traditional home of the kings, it is not surprising that all the *dithoko* recorded praise the kings, namely, three of them praise King Letsie III, one praises King Moshoeshoe II, and one praising chief Sempe.

2. In all these recitations, the subject-matter is not war, and neither does it hint at it. However, the element of praising the hero (king or chief) is in this respect characteristic of the classical *dithoko*, but political issues concerning the office of the king are clearly visible.
3. Only two of the *dithoko*, i.e., the last two discussed, can be classified as classical *dithoko* in terms of their subject-matter which is war. However, they are not the *diroki's* own compositions but recitations of memorized *dithoko* taken from Mangoaela's anthology, constituting 6% of all the *dithoko* we recorded. Those recorded at Matsieng which deviate from the classical *dithoko* in terms of their subject-matter constitute 16% of the entire recording at various places we visited.

At 'Melesi Lodge

The *thoko* recited by the poetess 'Ma-white Mahlelebe (Appendix no. 21), and dealt with in Chapter 5, point 5.2.2, relates the war fought by Kerefise (Griffith) against Masopha. According to Damane and Sanders (1974:214), Kerefise's forces, in combination with the forces of his brother, Letsie II, and the forces of their father, Lerotholi, defeated Masopha on 12 January 1898 at Khamolane, a plateau near Thaba Bosiu where Masopha's warriors had erected fortifications. As we have seen in this chapter this is a very popular *thoko* in the repertoire of the poets we have recorded. Although the *thoko* by 'Ma-white alludes to the war, it does not constitute her own composition but a recitation of a memorized *thoko* from Mangoaela (1921:175-176). 'Ma-white happened to have had a memory failure during the course of her recitation. She missed a line of her *thoko*, and therefore lost control of the subject-matter, and even failed to improvise by using her own words in order to continue. When failure of memory occurred, she had no alternative but to discontinue. It can also be argued that the subject-matter was to her so important that she felt she would be doing a dishonour to it by using her own words in the *thoko*. Distraction of some kind or stage fright may be another cause of memory slip. Occurrences of this nature truly reflect some of the main challenges of oral poetry performance.

Sello Rapeane introduces his *thoko* (Appendix no. 1, discussed in full in Chapter 5, point 5.3.1) by mentioning his sister, Bokang, and his home village, Kolo, in Lesotho.

Sello relates the role played by Chief Lerotholi Mojela and the Basotho who served in France during the World War 1. On his return to Lesotho he was awarded a medal for meritorious service. The *seroki* further relates Maama's involvement in the Gun war in 1880-1881. Recitation of the *thoko* does not reflect his involvement in war neither does it constitute his own composition, but a recitation of the memorized version. Lethusang Nthuloane's *thoko* (Appendix no. 6) relates Masopha's raid on the Mpondomise and the Thembu (cf. Damane and Sanders, 1974: 116,133), as well as his involvement in the second war with the Boers under leadership of Senekal in 1865. Lethusang as the reciter of the *thoko* taken from Mangoaela (1921: 47-49), has never participated in these events, but has committed the classical *thoko* to memory and recited it word-for-word.

Mahlomola Thamae (Appendix no. 2) mentions the names of his sisters, Mmaphethang and Mmantsho. He is the subject of the chiefs, Peete and Mokhachane. He calls on the Basotho to protect their culture and quotes Psalm 1 in its entirety. As a traditional doctor he is protected against any possible harm which may be inflicted upon him by his enemies. Lekunutu Sello (Appendix no. 22) relates the folly of running after concubines. Some men, when they have illicit love affairs with married women, take advantage of treating their lovers' houses as their own by doing as they like. The crying of the concubine's children is taken seriously as one takes account of the difficult moments he has gone through with his concubine during the course of their love affair. Difficulty arises when an illegitimate child falls ill as there is no one to look after it. The style in which Lekunutu was chanting was that of a *thoko* whereas the subject-matter was that of a *sefela*.

Mofoka George Rasetla (Appendix no. 14) extols Mohato, King Letsie III, who should guard against partaking of the Holy Communion because he might be poisoned by those who say it is the blood of Jesus. Those who proclaim to be the *Majakane*, that is, those who have accepted a foreign religion (Christianity) are afraid of death because it is the theme about which the church preaches at all time. Mohato no more loves the church because the Roman Catholic Church is 'blasphemous', and the church of the Paris Evangelical Mission Society is against the payment of marriage cattle. He calls on Mohato to remember what the latter's late father had said, namely, to respect death. Reference to the Roman Catholic Church as 'blasphemous' alludes

to its stand in the dispute between Griffith's sons, Seeiso and Bereng on the matter of chieftaincy which according to the Basotho custom, the elder brother, Seeiso was to be his father's heir and successor. Say Damane and Sanders (1974: 243),

There was further a complication in that, broadly speaking, the Roman Catholic authorities in Basutoland supported the claim of Bereng, but for reasons which had no basis in Sotho custom.

They also add (ibid.),

When Griffith was first seriously drawn towards Catholicism, he had more than twenty wives, and was told that before he could be received into the church he would have to put them all away except his senior wife, 'MaBatho. She, however, was a Protestant, and Griffith was therefore reluctant to do this.

Paulus Paulo (Appendix no. 23) in his *thoko* relates the incident which prompted King Moshoeshoe 1 to change his circumcision name, Lepoqo, to that of Moshoeshoe, and his arrival at Thaba-Bosiu.

The first three *dithoko* discussed above, can be classified as classical *dithoko* on account of their subject-matter which is war. It should be noted that these *dithoko* are not the *diroki's* own compositions, but classical *dithoko* memorized and recited verbatim from Mangoaela's anthology. They constitute 10% of the total number of all the 30 *dithoko* we recorded during the year 2000. Those recorded at Matsieng, but deviate from the classical *dithoko* because their subject-matter is not based on war, constitute 13%.

The thirty *dithoko* recorded on video tape at various places during the year 2000, showed that 81% of the *dithoko* deviate from the rule, from the classical *dithoko*, in that their subject-matter is not based on war. Only 19% of the *dithoko* are those which can be classified as classical *dithoko* because their subject-matter is mainly war or battle. It has been shown that these are not own compositions of the *diroki* recorded, but memorized *dithoko* from Mangoaela's anthology. Since war or chase

does not form part of the *diroki*'s immediate life experiences, the subject related to war fought is therefore avoided in these *dithoko* compositions. In exceptional cases, as noted above, where reference to war or chase comes to the fore, it is where the classical *dithoko* are memorized verbatim and recited as such.

We now turn to the discussion on the *difela* to report whether or not there has been any generic shift regarding their subject-matter from as early as 1950 to date.

4.2.2 Subject-matter and theme of the *difela* in the 1950's

The earliest available and documented *sefela* written in a book form by Khathatso Ratau was entitled **Khirimpana**, and was published in 1955 by Morija Sesuto Book Depot. Written in poetic style, this *sefela* relates the story of the Lesotho man, Khirimpana, leaving home in search of employment as a mine worker, his experiences at the mines, and his marriage. The events are divided into chapters which constitute broad segments of their own. Ratau has done that to facilitate understanding on the part of the reader. However in order to highlight the finer details of the events, the subject-matter in the 72 (9-81) page book will be divided into further segments as follows:

Khirimpana

Khirimpana's physical appearance when leaving home

Outward appearance of Khirimpana as he leaves for Gauteng is related in pages 9-11. He is an energetic young man, walking fast. On page 9 it is said,

O akofile, ke tšoanelo;

E sa le lekeja-kejana,

O sa tletse sekaja;

He is in a hurry, as it should be,

He is still an energetic young man,

He is full of energy;

He is wearing a blanket which reaches down to the knees. Another blanket is folded in such a way that it is supported on his back by a long stick balancing on one of his shoulders. On his head is the Basotho grass hat. In his hand he is holding his *lesiba*, a musical instrument of the Basotho. Very early in the morning he embarked on his journey to Gauteng. Says the *sefela* on page 11,

*A itekantša mesikaro ka lialla,
A tloha motseng a patile mohoasa,*

He packed his luggage very early,
And quietly left the village,

Singing of songs

Lines 12-23 constitute the *difela* he is singing whilst walking alone and thinking about the unknown place he is going to. His *difela* are the reflections of his experiences from his boyhood to manhood. On page 14, Khirimpana reflects on his boyhood helplessness and dependence on his mother. He says,

*Ke hopola khale-khale,
Ke sa le oa se-hlokomeloa-ke-'m'aso*

I remember the very old days,
When I was the one-looked-after-by-mum.

In his songs, Khirimpana reflects on days when he ate watermelon and pumpkins (page 16), when his father milked the cows (page 17), when he first looked after the calves (page 19), when he for the first time felt he was a man and when he sat among the men at the *khotla* 'court', when he and the men ploughed the fields (page 20), when he first witnessed a horse race, when he first built a kraal for the cattle (page 22). The ending part of his songs is a reflection on his girl-friend he is about to marry. On page 23 he says,

Ke luma e mokhunoana,

ea meno a masoeu-soeu;
ke luma ea mahlo a maphatšoana,
ea lintši li telele,
ke luma ea rama le borethe;
ntsoe u ka re la thomō!

I crave for the light brown one,
With the beautiful white teeth;
I crave for the one with black and white eyes,
One with long eyelashes;
I crave for the one with smooth cheeks;
Whose voice is like a harmonium!

Khirimpana at the Native Recruiting Corporation and the doctor

Khirimpana's reporting at the Native Recruiting Corporation and his examination by the doctor, are related on pages 25-30. After submitting the permission letter from his local chief to the tout, he mentions Mountain Deep as the name of the compound he intends going to. He is then referred to the doctor for examination, after which he is declared medically fit to go to the mine. Says the doctor (page 28),

Ua phela, u ka ea merafong.

You are fit, you may go to the mines.

Before the journey the following day, he and other young men recruited to work in the mines are given supper consisting of porridge and tea.

Journey by bus and train

Khirimpana is part of a group of young men travelling in a red bus from the NRC offices to Fouriesburg in the Free State, where he boards a train to the mines in Gauteng (pages 31-32).

Khirimpana on the train and arrival at the Mountain Deep mine

Pages 33-35 relate how Khirimpana sees the mountains of his home villages

disappearing from sight. Arriving at the destination station in Gauteng, he alights from the train which on page 35 he calls *koloi ya mollo* 'the fire vehicle'. Surprised at seeing the tall buildings and many cars for the first time, Khirimpana walks behind the mine policeman. He is further surprised to see the 'mirror' (the traffic light) which when red, people stop walking, and when green, they are allowed to walk. Eventually he hears the mine policeman (page 35) say, *Re fihlile Mountain Deep!* 'We have arrived at Mountain Deep!'

At Mountain Deep mine

Khirimpana's experiences at the mine are related on pages 37 to 43. His documents are put in order, and he is again examined by a doctor. He is given the necessary mining clothes he is going to use; shoes, jacket, helmet and knee caps. He is taught Fanakalo, a lingua franca spoken at the mines, how to apply First Aid, how to put on his helmet light, and how to work underground. He is fascinated by the lights and the small trains underground. He works so energetically that the chief-boy promotes him to a position of boss-boy. On leisure days he plays *dikarete* 'cards' and *morabaraba*, the game called 'the mill'. He joins a group of *dihobedi* 'miners who sing war dances'. At the end of his nine month contract, he goes back home.

Arrival at home and visit to Seilatsatsi

Khirimpana's arrival at home and his visit to Seilatsatsi, his girl-friend, are related on pages 47 – 57. He is warmly welcomed by his family and promised that the cows (the money) he has been sending home from Gauteng will be used as dowry for his wife. During his visit at Seilatsatsi's home, he gives her earrings as a token of love, and Seilatsatsi gives him a red handkerchief in return.

At Kimberly diamond mine

Khirimpana's four months' experiences at the Kimberley mine are related on pages 59-65. Even at this mine he works so impressively that he is immediately promoted to a position of a boss-boy. He discovers a stone which is later found to be a diamond. He receives an amount of £45 for his discovery, and at the end of his contract, he leaves for home.

Visit to Seilatsatsi and dowry payment

Khirimpana's visit to Seilatsatsi and the paying of lobola cattle are related on pages 67-75. Khirimpana pays Seilatsatsi a visit during which an exchange of presents takes place. As a token of love Khirimpana's presents to Seilatsatsi are *lesapo la gauda* 'a golden bracelet' and *sekhama sa daemane* 'a diamond necklace'. Seilatsatsi gives him *mofolara o motle o mofubedu* 'a beautiful red scarf'. The dowry consisting of 16 head of cattle, £20, ten sheep and a horse, is taken to the family of Seilatsatsi. After a few days, a group of women accompany Seilatsatsi to her in-laws.

Parting of the families

The parting events are related on pages 77-81. The parting of the women who have brought Seilatsatsi to her in-laws culminates with the slaughtering of a wether which on page 79 is called *nku ya tja-bohobe* 'food given to people who have brought a bride to her new home' (Mabille, 1979: 457).

Recorded or documented *difela* composed around 1955 are not available, and therefore it is not easy to make a general statement on the nature of the subject-matter and the themes of the *difela* composed before or around the year 1955. Nevertheless, the assumption can be made that, like the *sefela* in **Khirimpana**, their subject-matter may have been confined to the singers' experiences at home in Lesotho, their journeys to and from Lesotho, their experiences at the mining compounds and reference to their loved ones at home.

Much can be learned from the whole narrative about the experiences of Khirimpana, as divided into various chapters. The narrative indicates the poor economic state of the country, Lesotho, which could not afford to create jobs for its people. It indicates also the general poverty of its inhabitants the result of which forced Khirimpana to join the mining industry as a migrant worker at Johannesburg and later at Kimberley in order to eek out a living, so that he could have cattle with which to marry a wife. The narrative further reveals Khirimpana as one of the singers who are on the margin of society. They are like people in exile because he has to be away from home most of the time in order that his family may survive, and because he is looked down upon as *kwata* 'a rough person' because of bad language which usually characterise the mine labourers' patois.

4.2.3 Subject-matter and theme of the *difela* in the 1980's

The subject-matter and themes under discussion in this section are those taken from different *diroki* whose compositions of the *difela* appear in Moletsane's 1983 publication of **Liparola-Thota: Lifela tsa Sesotho tsa Liparola-Thota le Litsamaea-Naha** (Migrant labourers: Sesotho songs of the migrant labourers and the invertebrate travelers). The *sefela* composed by the *seroki*, Mopapa Molise, will be used as an example of the *difela* composed and chanted in the 1980's. The intention here is to investigate whether or not there was any change in terms of the subject-matter as compared to that of **Khirimpana**. It is the longest in Moletsane's anthology and consists of 1211 lines. The following segments constitute Mopapa's *sefela*:

Mopapa

Mysterious sea fish

Lines 1-49 relate the mysterious sea fish at the Cape ocean, its head being as big as the mountain peak Machache in Lesotho. From its body parts are found the following: glasses from its teeth, spoons from its tongue, bottles from its nostrils, lights from its eyes, *ampi* 'Ambi' a complexion cream used by women to lighten the skin, tables from its shoulders, an aeroplane from its tail, grease from its blood, powder from its bones, and sofas from its lungs, and *Nyooko ea eona joala ba sekhowa* 'bile in European alcoholic beverage' (line 48).

Bloemfontein city streets

Lines 50-170 relate various names of the streets he has been to in Bloemfontein, names such as, *Jokoroutu terata* 'Joko road street' (line 71), *Mokerne terata* 'Morgan street' (line 76), *Oupoto* 'Oudspoor' (line 81), *Heretsoro terata* 'Hertzog street' (line 95) and *Foroterekere terata* 'Voortrekker street' (line 108), *Kereke terata* 'Kerk street' (line 135), *Monyemente* 'Monument' situated on a hill on which was Bloemfontein's old prison. On his way to the black neighbourhood, he passes the Mangaung United football grounds, behind which is the *Poloseteichene* 'Police station' (line 150, 158-9).

Boemfontein Rocklands girls

From line 171-239 the *seroki* mentions a long list of the girls he is familiar with in the black suburb of Rocklands. The *seroki* as one who has travelled extensively and who therefore knows many families mentions the names of the girls as well as those of their fathers. He says, for instance, *Mpolokeng ke ngoan'a Lethena* 'Mpolokeng is Lethena's child' (line 177), *Tina ke ngoan'a Leoatle* 'Tina is Leoatle's child' (line 190), *Paballo oa Edward Monaheng* 'Paballo of Edward Monaheng' (line 227), etc.

Soweto, Gauteng and West Rand suburbs and towns

Some of the places he has been to as a traveller are related in lines 240-289. He has been to *Ranefanteng* 'Randfontein' and *Kurukasetoropo* 'Krugersdorp' (lines 241, 246), *Florita* 'Florida' and *Nyotlelere* 'Newclaire', *Weseberi* 'Westbury'. He has been to Naledi, the last station by train into Soweto, and *Merafi* 'Merafe'. At Phomolong, in Soweto, he was shot behind the ear. He has been to other Soweto suburbs of Mzimhlophe, Midway, *Shawela* 'Shiawelo', Kliptown, Pimville, *Nicefield* 'Nancefield', Orlando, and *Molamolankutse* 'Mlamlankunzi'.

Lesotho villages

Various villages he has been to as an inveterate traveller are mentioned in lines 290-439. His extensive travelling makes it appropriate for him to say in line 291, *Fatše lena joale ke le tseba kaofela* 'Now this country I know it all'. The places mentioned include Makhoakhoeng, the village under chief Tebelo; Butha-Buthe, under chief Mopeli; Qoqolotsi, under chief Makesi; Hleoheng, under chief Motsarapane, and Peka, under chief 'Malihotetso.

Drinking beer with Bloemfontein girls

Lines 440-579 relate the *seroki*'s unfortunate turn of events. These are beautiful girls who on Fridays dress well, wear long stockings, put on beautiful shoes, wear tightfitting clothes, put on 'Super rose cream' on their faces in order to entice the mine workers, men from Lesotho. He relates how he proposed love to a lady called Mary Setlaba and how as lovers they spent some time together drinking beer at Leuma's drinking house where they were joined by another lady, Suzie, Mary's friend. In the middle of the night the two ladies got outside under the pretext of going to the toilet. When he later got outside the house he saw Mary and Suzie with two ruffian guys, Sekipa and Jose. When the *seroki* (Mopapa) saw the two *bucha-naefe*

'butcher knives' he ran as fast as he could for dear life.

Crucifixion of Jesus

The crucifixion of Jesus is related in lines 580-595. The *seroki* gives Matthew, chapter fifteen, verse five, as the Scriptural part explaining the crucifixion. With very long nails, Jesus was nailed on the cross.

Satan's failure to create man, man's first sin

The failure of Satan to create man is related in lines 596-629. He managed to create man's organs, such as the head, eyes, nose, mouth, teeth, eyebrows, etc. He failed to create the pipes through which blood flows, and therefore failed to create a living human being. Satan then found Eve sitting under the tree and advised her to eat of the fruit. The ultimate punishment given Adam and Eve was to live by the sweat of their faces.

Pun as a poetic device

In lines 630-730 the *seroki* deviates from his narrative line and entertains his listeners with a series of satirical punning, a repetition of words having the same sound. Words, in some cases, do not originate from the same root. The use of pun in these cases is deliberate and has a humorous effect on the audience. Pun is used extensively in the following examples: *Utlwang ba ha Lehana e se e le Mahana* 'Listen, those who belong to the family of Lehana (He who disagrees) have become Those-who-disagree', *Ba ha Letšoara ba se ba tšoere* 'Those who belong to the family of Letšoara (He who captures) have captured, *Ba Mapoteng banna joale ba potela* 'Those at Mapoteng (district in Lesotho) now hide behind the corner', *Ha Ralebese ka bona bese la mofuta* 'At Ralebese (village) I saw a different kind of milk', *Ba Qalabane banna joale ba se ba qadile* 'Those at Qalabane have now really begun', *Utloang Taung ba se ba tauoe* 'Listen, at Taung (district) they are already drunk', *Ba Ketane ba reka likhomo le liketane* 'Those at Ketane (literally, Chain) buy cattle and chains', *Ba Khukhune ba khukhuna ke likhukhuni* 'Those at Khukhune crawl, they are the crawlers'.

His family and birth

In lines 731-786 is related the greatness of his family and his extraordinary birth. He associates himself with Khojane Intermediate, the school of the *difela* singers, and

originates from a family of the *difela* singers. His grandmother and father are begotten by expert singers, his wife is an expert in *mokgibo* 'a breast dance', and his brothers are the best dancers. As a traditional doctor he is feared by other traditional doctors as they cannot compete with him. At his birth, before the churches existed, the dogs did not want to bark, complaining of eating only the bones.

Lesotho chiefs and villages

The demarcation of authority in terms of some of the districts of Lesotho and their respective chiefs is outlined in lines 787-819. District Seapala is, for instance, under chief Nkoebe, Phamong under Bereng, Mohale's Hoek under Holiata, Makhalleng under Api, Taung under Moletsane, Maboloka under Tsie and Likhoele, Thabana-Morena under Bofihla, Thaba-Tšoeu under Nkhahle Lebona, Masite under Sekhonyana, Qeme under 'Mantšebo, and Mekhokho under Maama.

War soldier and countries

The countries the *seroki* has been to as a soldier are mentioned in lines 720-859. He has been Tanzania and Congo, Egypt, America and Russia. He fought Hitler and killed an Italian. Though he participated in the war, the 'cattle' captured were taken by the king's ministers instead of men like himself who actually fought in war.

Thokolosi (a mysterious being)

The chasing of the *thokolosi* 'a mysterious being supposed to appear at certain places' is related in lines 860-1050. As a traditional doctor, he chases away the *thokolosi* which has killed many of the mine workers at the mines as well as children of Tankiso, a citizen at chief Mojela's village, Makaoteng. He prepares his herbal medicines and creates the insects that bite painfully, such as, ants, bees, and mosquitoes, which bite the *thokolosi*. The dogs help drive it away until it disappears into the Caledon River.

Apollo II

The sending of *Apolo ya bolebene* 'Apollo, the eleventh' to the moon is related in lines 1051-1211. *Amoseterong* 'Armstrong' was one of the three astronauts who came back carrying stones and soil from the moon.

Composition of the *sefela* by Mopapa Molise as well as compositions of other *diroki* in the same volume show a growing tendency to include new subject-matter to their compositions, and not to confine their compositions as in **Khirimpana**, to their experiences at home in Lesotho, journeys to and from Lesotho, experiences at the mining compounds and their loved ones at home, in Lesotho. This tendency may be attributed to and encouraged by the competitions usually held at the mining compounds where one of the stipulations in the competition rules among the competing *diroki* is that each competitor loses points by repeating what he has said before. Therefore, the more subject-matter the *seroki* includes in his composition, the better are his chances to win. The more the *seroki* is exposed to more and new environments and to learn more about his environment, the more he is able to compose and expand his subject-matter. In addition, the *seroki* may include in his subject-matter creation of non-existent imaginary mental pictures, such as, a mysterious sea fish or true information based on historical events, such as, Apollo II whose astronauts, Neil Armstrong, Edwin Aldrin and Michael Collins landed their lunar module on the moon on 20 July 1969 (World Book Encyclopedia, 1990: 726).

4.2.4 Subject-matter and theme of the *difela* at about 1995

The *difela* now under discussion are from an anthology entitled **Lyrics of Basotho Migrants** (*Difela tsa ditsamayana tsa Basotho*), published in 1995, edited with an introduction by David B. Coplan, and translated into Sesotho by David B. Coplan and Seakhi Santho.

The contents of some of the *difela* composed around 1995 show a further inclusion of new material, as in the following cases: Mareka Likhojane's composition includes *Dikgomo di tshwerwe di jele masimong a batho, di tshwanetse ho patallwa hore di lokollwe* 'The cattle have been taken for being found on peoples' lands and payment should be made for their release' (pages 21-22, lines 218-294); *Boloi ba ba bohweg* 'Witchcraft of my in-laws' (pages 25-26, lines 437-460); *Monate lekeicheneng* 'The pleasure at the location', i.e., where black people live (page 27, lines 491-505). Majara Majara includes *Mosadi ya loyang* 'Woman practising witchcraft' (page 33, lines 143-155), *Ditlhare* 'Herbal medicines' (page 36, lines 266-280), *Okono lekeicheneng* 'Playing an organ (musical) in the location' (page 39, lines 377-400),

and *Ke a kula, ke tshwerwe ke moya* 'I am sick and demon possessed' (page 42, lines 968-978); Rabonne Mariti includes *Diretlo* 'Pieces of meat cut from a living human body' (page 102, lines 1-6) in which he refers to the 1949 incident in which three senior Basotho chiefs were executed for strengthening their political positions by taking pieces of flesh from the still living bodies of their victims (cf. Coplan 1955:114). Hlalele Mabekanyane includes in his composition *Ho ajwa ha masimo ke marena ho ba nang le basadi ba batle* 'The distribution of lands by the chiefs to those having beautiful wives' (page 125, lines 298-315) and *Jwala and Dikereke* 'Liquor and Churches' (page 130, lines 498-518).

Inclusion of new material in the *difela* composed around 1995 demonstrates an increasing dynamic and flexible nature of the *difela*, namely, that their composers were not only free to add material to enrich their compositions, but deviate from the earliest compositions which were confined to the *diroki*'s journeys to and from the mines, etc.

4.2.5 Subject-matter and theme of the *difela* at about 1998

The *difela* discussed under this heading are taken from Mokitimi's **Lifela tsa Litsamaea-naha poetry: A literary analysis** (Songs of the migrant workers poetry: Tlhophollo ya dingolwa) published in 1998. Some of the *diroki* have included further new subject-matter in their compositions. The *seroki*, Serame Thuhloane, includes *Bomadimabe ba ho se tsebe ho ipalla* 'The folly of illiteracy' (page 106, lines 20-30) and *Setlhare sa boforomane* 'The herbal medicine for position of foremanship' (page 107, lines 100-123); Moroba Moroba includes *Qabang le ntata kgarebe* 'Quarrel with girl-friend's father' (page 120, lines 90-149). Ngoan'a Tooane Motsoafi includes *Ho lemala, ditoro and mollo wa dihele* 'Physical injury, dreams and the fire of hell' (page 149, lines 220-253).

The fact that the *difela* compositions include new subject-matter confirms the growing creative ability on the part of the Basotho *diroki*. It should be noted that in many of the compositions, some subject-matter is common among the composers. There is common reference to *Terene* 'The train' in Coplan (1995: 17-18, 35), Mokitimi (1998: 126, 127, 142, 143), Moletsane (1983: 23, 31, 57); *Lengolo le tswang ho mme*

Lesotho 'Letter from mum in Lesotho' (Mokitimi, 1998: 105, 120, 123, 135) and Moletsane (1983: 19); *Tlala lapeng* 'Hunger at home' (Mokitimi, 1998: 119) and Moletsane (1983: 19); *Thokolosi* or *Mpotolo* from the Zulu word, *Impundulu* 'A mysterious being appearing at certain times' (Coplan, 1995: 24-25, 124, 143,147), Mokitimi (1998: 106, 131,153), Moletsane (1983 : 31, 55,126); *Fariki* 'A pig' (Coplan, 1995: 40), Mokitimi (1998: 123-124) and Moletsane 1983: 31 and 75), etc. The tendency to use common concepts is attributed to the *diroki*'s absorption of material from other *diroki* in order to compose their own. Confirming this, the *seroki*, Rabonne Mariti in Coplan (1995: 101) says, 'We are all thieves' (*Re mashodu kaofela*). Perhaps Mphafu Mofolo's view about the nature of the *difela* songs aptly explains some of the fictitious, though humorous, subject-matter that forms part of the compositions. He explains (in Coplan, 1995: 69),

Most of the events I recite about are things I have met with, difficulties and tragedies I have experienced. I combine them with events I have heard about, or grabbed from others...A good *sefela* should be about faraway places that people are not familiar with. The more places he describes the more people admire a performer: it should be a traveler's account.

Common usage of the same subject-matter may also emanate from the *diroki*'s regular competitions commonly held at the mining compounds on Saturdays or on holidays where the *diroki* compete in terms of the excellence of the *difela*.

4.2.6 Subject-matter of the *difela* in 2000

The *difela* now under discussion are part of the performances of the *diroki*, Francis Sello Nkoli, Phetla Setlaba, and Baptist Mahanetsa, recorded on video tape at Huntersville, in southern Gauteng; Morija Museum and Archives; and Matsieng respectively during August-September 2000. The intention is to highlight any similarities and/or differences that may exist in comparison with the subject-matter of the *difela* composed during the earlier years. The subject-matter of the four recorded *difela* is discussed as follows:

Francis Sello Nkoli's sefela

Francis' *sefela* composed of 142 lines is constituted by the following segments:

Introduction

Lines 1-7 constitute an introduction in which he calls on his audience to keep quiet and to listen to the truthful rendering of what he is saying.

Family

He describes the nature of his village and mentions the names of his sisters as well as their beauty in lines 8-12.

His father's cattle

How he decides to look after his father's cattle which are not properly looked after is related in lines 13-22.

His suffering from a boil (lethopa)

In lines 23-55 he relates how he joined a church because he sought healing for a boil (*lethopa*) he was suffering from, and how he later became an alcoholic and a dagga smoker.

Visit to the healer

Visit to a healer among the Bathembu and the Batswana, as well as his difficulty in understanding their languages, are related in lines 56-81.

Village girls (dithope)

The fat and beautiful girls of his village are described in lines 82-100.

Mature traditional doctor (ngaka)

A description of himself as a mature traditional doctor healing people from a prevalent disease is described in lines 101-106.

Jesus and Adam's sin

In lines 107-129 is related the death of Jesus Christ and the origin of sin from Adam

whose father owned big cars such as the microbusses.

Mourning of the migrant workers

The mourning of the migrant workers dying far from their homes is related in lines 130-142.

The segmentation demonstrates how the *seroki* uses his freedom and gift of the gab to compose and improvise on any material of his choice. His entire composition does not mention anything pertaining to the train or his experience in the mine, a feature very common in many of the *difela* of the past.

Phetla Setlaba's *sefela*

His *sefela* composed of 171 lines relates the various Lesotho districts or villages and their respective chiefs, such as, *Kerefise a behwa Phamong* 'Griffith was placed at Phamong' (line 11), *Nkoebe a rongellwa Sebapala (Quthing)* 'Nkoebe was sent to Sebapala (Quthing)' (line 12). During the course of his singing, he mentions some of the places he passed through, such as, *Ha Mafa lebenkeleng*, 'At Mafa's shop (line 47), *Banna, kerekeng ya Samaria ya Fora* 'Yes, at the Samaria Parys church' (line 55), *Ke bua ha Mapofu lebenkeleng, ha kgowa le bitswang Ramaqele* 'I mean at Mapofu's near the shop, at a white man's called Ramaqele' (lines 102-103). These are preceded by his statement in line 3, *Mohlang ho qalwang ho ajwa marena...* 'The day the chiefs were selected'... As an invertebrate traveller, *setsamayanaha*, his *sefela* is characterized by usage of phrases, such as, *Ha Montšioa ke fetile feela* 'At Montšioa I merely passed' (line 41), *Ha o ka mamela ke mathaka feela* 'If you can listen well, I just glide over the place names' (line 62), to draw the listener's attention to the fact that he actually passed at the places he is referring to during the course of his travels.

Unlike many of the *difela* composed of various subject-matter, this one is purposely confined to the naming of Lesotho villages/districts and their respective chiefs, and therefore reflects an incredible degree of memory on the part of the *seroki* and his uniqueness in deviating from the common way in which others compose their *difela*.

Baptist Komello Mahanetsa's sefela

Baptist's *sefela* which is brief and in which there is rapid movement from one reference to the other, is constituted by the following segments:

The villages

In lines 1-3 he mentions the places he passed through.

Train causes destruction

A poor farmer's animals are killed by a fire caused by burning coals from the train in which the migrant worker is travelling. These are related in lines 4-9.

The villages

Villages, circles in town, business areas, he passed through during his travelling, such as Masianokeng, *Masinoto* 'Mazenod' and Maseru, are mentioned in lines 10-30. In mentioning the places that he passed through, he uses expressions, such as, *Ha Tlali pela Sekhonthari* 'At Tlali's near the Secondary School' and *Pela selakga sena sa ngwaneso Masopha* 'Near this butchery of my brother, Masopha' to indicate to his listeners who are familiar with Lesotho, the exact area where Tladi's house is situated, namely, near the well-known Secondary School. It is as if he is giving his listeners the exact address of Tlali's residence. Referring to Masopha's butchery he uses the demonstrative *sena* 'this' as if he is pointing at it, to indicate with exactitude the one he is referring to. In lines 25-26 he refers to *Ka hodima sehlabo ho dula morena Tšotetsi/Lesole le mona le ntseng le le tseba* 'On top of the plateau is the residence of chief Tšotetsi/This soldier with whom you are always familiar' to indicate to his listeners a well-known and familiar personage in their community. This *sefela* is not based on any fictitious rendering of subject-matter, common in many *difela* compositions, but reflects a factual account of the actual places the *seroki* has passed through on his journey as a real *separolathota* 'an invertebrate traveller'. In order to entertain his audience and maintain a link with the oral *difela* tradition, he relates an incident commonly mentioned in the *difela*, namely, the damage caused by burning coal from the coal train, which results in the death of the *difarelane* 'merino sheep', *mmutlanyana* 'rabbits' and *Majerese* 'Jersey cattle' (lines 5-7).

In summing up the preceding discussion, the following observations can be made: Firstly, whilst the earliest *difela* were characterized by subject-matter largely confined to the *diroki*'s journeys to and from the mines on foot and train, their experiences at the mines, their loved ones at home in Lesotho, as in the published **Khirimpana** (1955), latter year *difela* demonstrate an increasing tendency to include new subject-matter, and this tendency which, inter alia, includes religion, is observable right through the past decades until the year 2000. Secondly, the tendency to include new subject-matter in the *difela* is in line with Ribonne Marite's view, as stated above, namely, that the more places the *seroki* describes the more people admire his performance as a traveller's account. Thirdly, some subject-matter constituting the *difela*, such as *terene* 'the train', demonstrates a more common usage in many of the *difela*, which reflects an attempt to maintain the age-old oral tradition of the compositions as well as an experience truly affecting the *diroki* on their journeys to and from the mines in the *Makgoweng* 'The white men's area'. This common usage may also be attributed to the borrowing of material from other composers in order to enrich one's own composition. Fourthly, the style demonstrated in one of the *difela* composed and recorded on video in 2000 exhibits a complete uniqueness on the part of the composer, in that the *seroki* does not include various materials to compose his *sefela*, but rather confines his entire composition to a single theme, namely, the Lesotho villages and their respective chiefs. Fifthly, whilst some materials in the compositions reflect a true account of the *seroki*'s experiences, some are fictitious in cases where the composer's intention is to entertain his audience. This may be viewed as a reflection of the *diroki*'s enhanced creativity and mastery of Sesotho, despite the fact that many cannot read or write. It is also a case where accuracy is sacrificed for the sake of satire, eulogy and aesthetic excellence.

4.3 Subject-matter of the Basotho *diboko*

The *diboko* 'clan praises' are short poetic compositions the subject-matter of which is the names of the progenitors from whom members of the various Basotho clans believe to have descended, as well as the totem names, the cultures, philosophies, the tribal idiosyncracies, and the historical incidents associated with the establishment of clans. These poetic compositions are memorized and recited word-for-word as a means through which each member identifies himself or herself and

through which part of the history of the clan is preserved. The role played by the *diboko* is best echoed by Ntaote in Tšiu (2001: 58) where he says,

Perhaps the most important aspect embodied in the praise poems (*diboko*) is that of linking the new generation to the past by way of preserving the names of their remote ancestors [emphasis is mine].

The Bafokeng tribe has a proliferation of various clans, each having its own particular clan praise associated with the clan's tribal characteristic. The following (ibid., p. 61) constitutes the *diboko* (clan praise) of one of the Bafokeng clans:

1. *Ke thelleleng,*
2. *Ke le Mofokeng wa ha Maotwana-finyela,*
3. *Maoto a makaalo ka dinaledi,*
4. *A kaalo ka jwang ba tshaane, molelengwane,*
5. *Ke Mofokeng wa ha Mokgadi a Motlalane,*
6. *Mofokeng wa ha Manti a Mmope!*

1. Why should I pay homage,
2. Being one of the Bafokeng, the-small-Footprints-contract,
3. Feet are as many as the stars,
4. Feet are as many as eragrostis, the long one,
5. I am one of the Bafokeng of Mokgadi, son of Motlalane,
6. One of the Bafokeng of the house of Manti, son of Mmope!

The clan name, **Mofokeng**, appears in lines 2, 5 and 6. The names, **Mokgadi**, son of Motlalane, and **Manti**, son of Mmope, in lines 5 and 6, are the ancestors from whom the clan members believe to have originated. The name, **Manti**, was also known as Makara (cf. Matšela and Moletsane, 1993:9).

Matela Matobakele, from Fobane, in the district of Leribe in Lesotho, a Mosotho who knows much about the history and origin of the *Bafokeng ba Maotwana* 'The Bafokeng clan, the Footprints-ones', to which he belongs, gives a verbal explanation of the incident that gave rise to their clan name. He relates that Motanyane and

Makara, sons of the Bafokeng chief, Mmope, were brothers by different mothers. Makara's mother was famous for the clay pots she used to make, and was also a traditional doctor, *morokapula* (a rain-maker), as a result of which she was able to amass herds of cattle. On the contrary, Motanyane's mother was poor.

Conflict between the sons began when chief Mmope died, and was occasioned by the question of inheritance. Motanyane, though the elder, could not lay claim on the wealth, for it belonged to Makara and his mother; and Makara, though wealthy by virtue of her mother's cattle, was the younger. Motanyane, together with a handful of followers, left the village, stealing a large number of cattle belonging to Makara. When they reached a sandy river at Mohobollo, at Leribe, they crossed it facing backwards and, though few in number, intentionally ensured that they left as many footprints as they could, to create an impression that they had gone in the opposite direction, and that they were many in numbers.

The expressions, *Maoto a makaalo ka dinaledi* 'Footprints are as many as the stars' and *A kaalo ka jwang ba tshaane, molelengwane* 'Are as many as the long eragrostis (*tshaane* grass)' point to this fact. This is how the clan known as *Bafokeng ba Maotwana* 'The Bafokeng, the small Footprints' or *Ba Maotwana-finyela* 'Those of the contracting footprints' came to bear the name.

The preceding explanation confirms the statement that the Basotho diboko convey the names of the ancestors from whom members of the clan believe to have descended as well as the historical incident associated with the establishment of the clan.

Another example is the clan recitation of the *Batshweneng* 'The Baboon people',

1. *Ke tla thella jwang,*
2. *Ke le Motshweneng,*
3. *Wa ha Kgiba le Kgamadi,*
4. *Motshweneng, leleme le letsho keng?*
5. *Leleme le letsho ke ho koma ditlhare!*

1. How will I pay homage,
2. Being one of the Baboon people,
3. Of the house of **Kgiba** and **Kgamadi**,
4. You member of the Baboon people, why is the tongue black?
5. The tongue is black through swallowing herbal medicines!

The *Batshweneng* 'The Baboon people', like the *Bahlakwana* 'Those who come from yonder' originally belonged to the *Bakwena* 'The Crocodile' group. According to a legend, the barren wife of the Bakwena chief, was made to conceive by physical contact with the body or skin of a baboon. It was by reason of this incident that the clan took the baboon for its name. The child born was named Motshwene, and the clan, previously the Bakwena, was then called the Batshweneng (Tšiu, 2001: 88).

The Batshweneng people who venerate the baboon owe their origin to the ancestors, Kgiba and Kgamadi (line 3), the latter being the grandson of Kgiba's uncle, (Tsholo II). *Leleme le letsho ke ho koma ditlhare* 'The tongue is black through swallowing herbal medicines' (line 5) are phrases alluding to the historical incident from which the Batshweneng clan originated.

From the two examples discussed above, it can be observed that the names of the ancestors from whom the clan members believe to have descended as well as an incident associated with the establishment of the clan, constitute the subject-matter of the clan praise recitations.

The intention with the Basotho *diboko* has always been to recite them word-for-word as carriers of the clan's ancestors and historical origin. In the latter years, including 2000, it has emerged that some of the Basotho have decided not to recite their *diboko* in their entirety, the main reason being some sections of their recitals militate against their Christian principles and modernism and are therefore socially unacceptable. The following *seboko* in Tšiu (2001:187) as recited by 'Malenka Matšoele, from Mahloenyeng, in Lesotho, is such an example:

1. *Ke thelleng,*
2. *Ke le Motlounng wa ha Sekgwane,*

3. *Motho wa boPhori, wa boMoeletsi,*
4. ***Motho ekare a ithoma, a rota,***
5. ***Sebono sa futha,***
6. ***Ke nna motho wa ho nya ha monate!***

1. Why should I pay homage,
2. Being one of the Elephant people of Sekgwane's house,
3. One of the family of Phori and Moeletsi,
4. **One who, when excreting and passing water,**
5. **The anus became painful,**
6. **I am the person who enjoys excreting!**

Reference to excreting, passing water, and the anus, in lines 4, 5 and 6 carries subject-matter regarded as unacceptable, and is therefore omitted from some of the recitals. Some members belonging to this clan are content to recite only the names of their ancestors. Another example in which truncation of some parts takes place is the following *seboko* (ibid., p. 188) recited by Paseka Selila, from Kholokoe in Lesotho:

1. *Ke thelleleng,*
2. *Ke le Lemphane,*
3. *Motho wa kgomo e tshwana,*
4. *Ya ho ema thoteng,*
5. *Motho wa Maletlapa-ha-le-ribollwe,*
6. *Ekare o le ribolla, motho a hlaha,*
7. ***Motho wa Mamosonotsokotsa,***
8. ***Motho wa Mannywana,***
9. ***Motho wa Mamalebe!***

1. Why should I pay homage,
2. Being member of the Mphane clan,
3. One belonging to the black bovine,
4. Which stood on the veld,
5. One of the-Stone-should-not-be-turned-up,

6. If you may turn it up, a person would appear,
7. **One of Those-who-shake-the-private-parts,**
8. **One of People-of-the-female-sex-organ,**
9. **One of People-of-the-small-tongues!**

In this *seboko*, only lines 1-6 which contain the name of the ancestor, Mphane (line 2), the clan name, Mphane clan (line 2) and the characteristic nature of the clan members which is likened to a black bovine (lines 3-6), are retained.

It can be noted from the discussion above, that the *diboko* being short poetic compositions recited verbatim from generation to generation, contain and convey the names of the ancestors from whom the clan members believe to have originated as well as the clans' tribal characteristics. Some parts in some of the *diboko* recited during the latter years including 2000 are however omitted because of their offensiveness which militates against modernism, Christian and other religious principles and societal values.

4.4 Conclusion

The subject-matter of the classical *dithoko* is mainly related to the wars or battles in which the Basotho warriors fought. Composition of their *dithoko* was a means through which they praised themselves or their chiefs for their heroic deeds on the battlefields. The wars, it may be said, inspired the composition of their *dithoko*. In contradiction to this, the *dithoko* composed in 2000, at the beginning of the 21st century, appear to be almost silent about the wars or battles as these do not form part of *diroki's* experiences, and therefore cannot be regarded as inspiring their *dithoko*. Instead, some of the *dithoko* recorded contain material of a different nature, such as, religion and contemporary governance issues.

Subject-matter on the earliest *difela* is very limited. The book, *Khirimpana*, written in poetic *sefela* style, and published in 1955, gives an indication of how the *difela* subject-matter might have been like. An assumption is that the subject-matter of the *difela* must have been confined to the journey on foot or by train, experiences at the

mining compounds, hardships underground, and longing for the loved ones at home in Lesotho.

The *difela* published in the 1980's reveal a growing tendency to include new material as well as subject-matter which are common in many compositions. This trend is also observable in the 1995 and 1998 published *difela*. The 2000 compositions reveal a growing degree in terms of the *diroki*'s ability to include new material as well as their unique style of composition.

The *diboko* of the Basotho contain the names of the ancestors from whom members of the clans believe to have originated, the tribal idiosyncrasies, the philosophies and the historical events associated with the establishment of each clan. With the advancement of Christianity, various religions and modernism, some Basotho have decided to discontinue reciting their *diboko* in their entirety because they contain subject-matter which they feel is offensive and therefore militates against modernism, Christian and religious principles and societal values. This truncation of parts of their *diboko* results therefore in some subject-matter especially related to historical establishment of their clan, missing.

CHAPTER 5

MIGRATION OF THE ORAL GENRES

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the discussion will be on the genre transition affecting the three genres, whereby one genre becomes part of the other resulting in what we may call 'the hybridization of an oral genre'. In order to understand the reason for the occurrence of the oral poetic transition, one has to remember that the performance of the *dithoko* and the *diboko*, in particular, originated as early as the time of the establishment of the Basotho as a nation. The composition of the *difela*, on the other hand, originated at a later period.

With the introduction of the *difela* poetry, the *diroki* entered a new era. The situation in which they lived before, namely, the rural type in which most of the time they gathered around their chiefs, and fought in the battles and the wars, gave way to the modern type of life where many men had to live away from their country, their families and their chiefs, in search of work in South Africa for economic survival. As the *diroki* of the earlier period passed away, the *diroki* during the latter generation continued with the oral composition albeit in a different situation and in a different era. Some of the *diroki* became specialists who concentrated largely on the oral composition of the *dithoko*, others on both the *dithoko* and the *difela*, whilst others, on the *difela*. Where this kind of situation prevails, it is not easy to keep and maintain each of the different oral genres under discussion in its pure form.

My "discovery" of the substantial migration of one oral genre to the other, or quotations from one genre in the other, as will be demonstrated in the discussion of this chapter, may be attributed to the following reasons: Firstly, memorization of the *dithoko*, especially from Mangoaela's anthology, has been part of the Sesotho language syllabus during my earlier years of attending Secondary school. Quite a number of the *dithoko* I know word-for-word, especially those composed in honour of the prominent chiefs such as Maama which have left an indelible mark on my

memory. Secondly, my “discovery” was facilitated by making comparisons of the *dithoko* as chanted on the video tapes and the transcriptions. Careful comparison makes it possible that one becomes aware of quotations, repetitions or migrations from one poet’s recitation to the other. All these quotations and repetitions found in the various *dithoko* and *difela* transcriptions of the recorded performances as well as the written anthologies, I wrote them down in my separate notes, grouping them according to where they belonged, such as for instance, the same quotations appearing in the different *dithoko* and *difela*. This I did ensuring that each quotation/repetition is accompanied by information pertaining to the source from which it was quoted. This approach facilitated much of my work during the writing of the chapter.

Two aspects which we have observed and which will be useful here are *quotation* on the part of the *diroki* in 2000 either from Mangoaela’s *dithoko* anthology (1921) or Moletsane’s *difela* anthology (1983) and *migration* from one oral genre to the other in one and the same performance, again by some of the *diroki* in 2000. When I came upon the possibility of the former (quotation or citation) I used the subject-matter or contents as a guide to go and search for it in either the one or the other of the anthologies mentioned. References to a well known leader or a historical incident further enabled me to trace the hero or poet, whatever the case may have been. Upon finding it, I then incorporated the finding in my consideration of the entire text by the relevant *seroki*. As for migration of one genre to the other, again I was guided by the subject matter – more than the style of performance because, as we shall indicate, this could be misleading. In contents a heroic praise is clearly different from the songs of travel we have encountered, and it is possible to ‘tell them apart’ so to speak.

The discussion on the migration of the oral genres, the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko*, will be directed to the investigation of quotation or citation from the canon, and interfacing or inter-genre transition, whereby one genre runs into another.

5.2 The *dithoko* (the praise poems)

Among some of the *dithoko* performances recorded in 2000, the following emerged:

5.2.1 *Dithoko* compositions including lines from the classical *dithoko*

During the course of the chanting of their *dithoko* compositions, some of the *diroki* (the poets) included extracts from the classical *dithoko*. For instance, Semai Moloi at the Basotho Cultural Village, chanted a *thoko* (Appendix no. 7) consisting of 54 lines, in which he praised himself as a hero. He mentions the name of the village he comes from, Thibella, popularly known for its many reeds. Among the destructions of war he witnessed, was the day he saw a raven flying and carrying a man's intestines which it repeatedly and violently threw against the stones. He is always called in by men from his village whenever the safety of his village is at stake. In three instances, lines 20-22, 28-30 and 49-51, he uses the same extract quoted from a classical *thoko*:

*O re ha o bone, o bone, Mabekebeke,
E ne e le thunya tsena
Di shebisana melomo.*

He says, when you have seen you have seen, Sparkling Soldier,
It was these guns
As their mouths pointed at each other.

The extract is from a *thoko* composed by Maama, and inspired by the *Ntwa ya Dithunya* 'The Gun War' or 'War of Disarmament' of 1880-81 in which Maama took part. The Cape High Commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere, was nicknamed *Mabekebeke* 'Sparkling Soldier' by the Basotho because of his glittering medals (Swanepoel 1983:3). The extract in Mangoaela's anthology, **Lithoko tsa marena a Basotho** (1921:96) in lines 10-12 is as follows,

*Enoba ua bona, Mabekebeke!
Ha u bone u bone, Mabekebeke,
Lithunya ha di shebisana melomo.*

I hope you have seen, Sparkling Soldier!
If you have looked you have seen, Sparkling Soldier,
The guns, as they pointed their mouths at each other.

By including this extract, apparently known by a large number of his audience and the Basotho in general, Semai finds no better words to express his heroic character and the spirit in which he fights his enemies, than these. Using this extract reflects his close association with the heroic ancestors of the past. Declaiming his *thoko* whilst holding a long stick symbolizing a knobkerrie/spear in his right hand, wearing a blanket, and putting on a leather hat made from a gazelle hide on his head, confirmed the *seroki's* attempt to associate himself with the old oral tradition. Furthermore, this extract serves as a quotation that adds flavour and authenticity to his entire performance. The repetitive usage of these words is like a refrain which leaves an indelible mark on the minds of his listeners.

Another example of a *thoko* in which an extract from a classical *thoko* is used, is by the *seroki*, Mokheseng Soai (Appendix no. 20) whose chanting was recorded at Matsieng. He praises Prince Mohato (Letsie III) who was officially installed as Lesotho's new monarch on Monday, 12 November 1990 (Gill, 1993: 243). Soai commences by paying homage to Mohato, and praising him for his light complexion which is like that of his grandfather, Seeiso. He further relates that Mohato was born at a place between Masite and Morija, in Lesotho. It was a memorable day because the sun appeared as a round ball and the mist covered the ground. Prince Mohato married to a girl from the *Batshweneng* 'the Baboon clan', and is not praised for any physical war he was ever engaged in, but for belonging to the *kgotla* 'the court', that is, for being a king by birth. The war he engages in is the one fought through oral negotiation. In line 33-35 Soai includes an extract quoted from a classical *thoko* composed in honour of Lerotholi Mojela for the role he and the Basotho men played in France in the Native Labour Corps during the World War 1 in 1914-1918. The words he uses are the following,

33. *Ferenekulo ya lapa la Seeiso,*
34. *Mohla a qalang ho tswa mohlehlolong*

35. *Ya hoballa ya etsa malakabe.*
33. The stray bullet of the Seeiso house,
34. When first he was taken from the bandolier,
35. It was seen from afar, making flames.

In Mangaola's anthology (1921: 226), the exact words read as,

10. *Ferene-kulo ea bana ba Letlama,*
 11. *Ke kulo ya Bereng le Seeiso.*
 12. *Mohla e qalang ho ntšoa mohlehlolong*
 13. *Ea betsoa, ea lebisoa Kapa le Bay;*
 14. *Ea hoballa, ea etsa malakabe,*
-
10. The stray bullet of the children of Letlama,
 11. It is the bullet of Bereng and Seeiso.
 12. When first it was taken from the bandolier
 13. It was fired, it was sent towards the Cape and the Bay;
 14. It was seen from afar, making flames

The *seroki* does not use the quotation in its entirety, but merely makes a selection of those lines that he feels are necessary for him to reach his goal. He therefore omits lines 11 and 13, and substitutes the expression, *lapa la Seeiso* 'the Seeiso house' for *bana ba Letlama* 'the children of Letlama' in line 33 so that it should read, *Ferenekulo ya lapa la Seeiso* 'The stray bullet of the Seeiso house'. He prefers the expression, *lapa la Seeiso* because Seeiso is the grandfather of Letsie III, whilst *bana ba Letlama* (*Griffith*) refers to a rather more remote ancestor, Letlama (*Griffith*), who is the great grandfather of Letsie III. In the classical *thoko*, lines 10-14 refer to 1400 Basotho men who, recruited to France by Britain during World War 1, worked on the side of Britain since Lesotho was at that time a British colony. They are referred to as *Ferenekulo* 'The stray bullet' because they were outsiders, people who were not part and parcel of the war dispute, but who were merely called in to participate in the rescue of Britain.

The same lines as used by the *seroki* appear to have been given another meaning, namely, that when time was ripe for the young King Letsie III to get married, *Mohla a qalang ho tswa mohlehlolong* 'When first he was taken from the bandolier', girls were looking up to him for marriage, including white girls (lines 37-39). He eventually choose for himself a marriage partner, 'a foreigner', a girl from outside Lesotho, who belongs to the Batshweneng clan in the Free State.

The Basotho have a saying, *Nonyana e ahela ka tshiba tsa e nngwe* 'A bird builds its nest by using another's feathers'. It is common that the *diroki* compose their *dithoko* by sometimes using expressions borrowed from the other *diroki*, and in some cases such expressions may be from the classical *dithoko*. Such usage adds flavour to the oral composition, authenticity to the contents of the *thoko*, and brings the audience closer to what constitutes an important element of the Basotho culture, namely, renewed maintenance of contact with the ancestors. This constitutes a further demonstration that the legacy of the past oral tradition is still maintained by the modern *diroki* who have access to a rich fountain of resources by way of the classical *dithoko* either in stable texts as in Mangoela's anthology or in oral form, as memorized and transmitted from the past generations.

The tendency among some of the *diroki* we recorded during 2000 was to chant memorized *dithoko* and then add a few lines of their own compositions. This is discussed under the following sub-heading:

5.2.2 Sizable memorized classical *dithoko* extracts including the *diroki*'s own compositions

The first *seroki* in this category, an old man, Lebamang Moabi (Appendix no. 16) chanted a classical *thoko* composed in honour of Chief Griffith, relating his campaign against Masopha and his decisive defeat of the latter at Khamolane, a plateau near Thaba Bosiu on 12 January 1898 (Damane and Sanders, 1974: 209, 214).

The events that led to the war, (Ibid., p. 209), revolved around chief Masopha's failure to accept the authority of the paramount chief Lerotholi. Chief Masopha constantly defied Lerotholi's orders and ruled as if he was independent. Towards the

end of 1897, one of Masopha's subjects, a certain 'Malibili, ran away from her husband and fled to the Free State. At her husband's request, her local chief, Moeketsi, Masopha's son, followed her up with an armed band and arrested her, but was then arrested himself by the Free State authorities. He was tried and sentenced to imprisonment with lashes, but before these could be inflicted, he and one of his accessories in the disturbance, Maboka, escaped and took refuge with Masopha. The Free State authorities requested that the men be surrendered to them. This would have been possible in the case of Maboka, who was a resident of the Free State, but not in the case of Moeketsi, who was a resident of Lesotho, for there was no extradition agreement between the two countries. Lagden, the Resident Commissioner, demanded that both men be handed over to him: he would then send Maboka back to the Free State, and he himself would try Moeketsi. Masopha refused.

Lagden then called upon Lerotholi to enforce obedience, and the latter began mustering his regiments. In an attempt to avert the crisis, Masopha handed over Maboka, but Moeketsi's surrender was demanded too. Eventually, on 4 January 1898, the battle was joined at Khamolane, near Thaba Bosiu, where Masopha's warriors had erected fortifications. On 12 January 1898 Masopha was defeated.

Lebamang Moabi (Appendix no. 16) relates in his memorized *thoko*, the events of this war. The classical *thoko* in the anthology of Mangoela (1921: 175-178) consists of 94 lines. In lines 1-5, the warriors of Griffith were so ferocious and large in number that they are compared to a deluge, hail and rain. Lines 6 to 12 relate the initial defeat of Letsie, Lerotholi's elder son, by Masopha, before he was joined by other forces of his father on 10 January 1898. This is confirmed by lines 11- 12,

*Sa re, ngwana morena o dihetse,
Ho setse Toi, mora Teele*

And said, the child of chief Letsie is overthrown,
Toi, the son of Teele, has remained.

where Toi, a Hlakwaana counsellor stood firm by Letsie when the latter was overthrown. When the fugitive from the battle reported about the defeat of Letsie, so angry was the elder brother, Griffith that he and the Matlama regiment (the Binders) prepared themselves to fight to the bitter end. Lines 19-20 say,

*A re, Letlama, qhanolla dipere di fule,
Ntwa boholo ke ya hosasa.*

He said, Letlama, off saddle the horses to graze,
The main battle is tomorrow.

In lines 31-35, it is mentioned that Griffith, though younger than Letsie, managed to save his brother from the danger of the battle. In lines 36-48, the battle was so fierce that many of Masopha's followers perished. This is mentioned in lines 38-39,

*(Lerumo) Le jele bana ba Masopha,
La ba ja, la ba abela dinonyana,*

(The spear) It ate the children of Masopha,
It ate them and apportioned them to the birds (the vultures),

Speaking on behalf of Masopha, the *seroki* mourns the defeat as well as the loss of his people. He conveys this metaphorically in lines 62-64,

*Ba balehile ba ntshiya thoteng,
Ke le mma bona, ka utlwa bodutu,
Ka kokomala, ka fetoha moopa (nyopa).*

They fled and left me on the plains,
Being their mother, I felt hurt,
I shrank and turned into a barren woman,

In lines 71-88, the *seroki* discontinues narrating the events of the battle, but continues with his composition in which he mourns the difficult conditions in which

Lesotho men work under the supervision of the Boers. They work underground as if they are mice, and dig huge rocks (lines 73-74). He further calls on his brother, Sehlabo, to return to Lesotho, and stop making himself attractive by combing his woolly hair. He mourns the difficulty faced by young brides in Lesotho with no food to give to their children because their husbands engage in immoral behavior with prostitutes.

The *thoko* as discussed above is characterized by the following repetitions:

Lines 6-12 are repeated in lines 22-28, and lines 6-7 in lines 29-30. Lines 31-35 are repeated in lines 49-53, and lines 60-64 in lines 66-70. Lines 36-41 are repeated in lines 89-95 where line 91 has been omitted. Lines 84-88 are repeated in lines 101-105. Repetitions during the course of the recitation may be attributed to, among others, the distractions resulting from ululations made by women who constituted part of the audience, and the fact that the *seroki*, being very old, became more easily a victim of memory failure, and was subsequently easily distracted from his memorized *thoko*. Repetition of the lines can be viewed as a problem-solving technique whereby the *seroki* trying to remain faithful to the text, found the repetition technique a better option of remembering the lines rather than that of improvisation. Nevertheless, the chanting of the classical *thoko*, rich with heroic deeds of the forefathers, demonstrates close association with the past, as well as an attempt to preserve the important oral tradition. Ntaote in Rapeane (1992:28) is not far from the truth in saying,

Perhaps the most important aspect embodied in the praise poems is that of linking the new generation to the past by way of preserving the names of their ancestors **and their heroic deeds** [emphasis added].

The linking of the new generation to the past is important because it is inspired by the Basotho's strong belief that a nation without culture dies.

During the recordings of the *diroki* performances at 'Melesi Lodge near Thaba Bosiu, the poetess, 'Ma-white Mahlelebe recited the same *thoko* recited by Lebamang Moabi, namely, the classical *thoko* composed in honour of chief Griffith, after his decisive defeat of Masopha at Khamolane (Damane and Sanders, 1974: 209, 214).

Her recitation (Appendix no. 21) consists of 25 lines. The first 13 lines are chanted word-for-word as in Mangoaela's anthology (1921: 175-176). From line 14 to 25 she continues with her own composition in which she compares the Basotho men who go to the cities in search of employment to the warriors of Griffith who adjusted their baggage straps in order to engage in war. In line 18 she says,

Ke bale ba itekanya mesikaro ho ya botekatse,

There they are, adjusting the baggage straps towards prostitution,

She mourns the Basotho men who, instead of doing something worthwhile, waste their energy by running after the city girls. She calls on these men to return from the Boers (line 22) as they will be contaminated with the diseases such as HIV and AIDS, and metaphorically, destruction of their own families and social life. She satirically congratulates those who are lucky to recruit these handsome men with strong body physique to work for them.

Participation of 'Ma-white marks a new era in which women emerge and take their rightful place as *diroki* in a domain which among the Basotho has always been confined to men only. Another popular poetess worthy to be mentioned here is 'Machopho who composes, types and chants her own compositions (See 'Interview' in the Appendix no. 34, point 3). This further demonstrates that women, like men, also possess the talent and ability to chant the *dithoko* in public.

Another example of a classical *thoko* which the *seroki* includes in his composition is by Sello Lethusang Nthuloane. His *thoko* (Appendix no. 6) consists of 105 lines and is characterized by the introduction made up of lines 1-8 where he expresses his sadness as he remembers his father who is no more alive. From line 5, *Makatolle wa Pheta le Moshoeshoe* 'One-who-digs-open of Pheta and Moshoeshoe', to line 55, *Qoboko ke mosetla wa Dioli*, 'Qoboko is the striker of the Hawks (Diodi) regiment', the entire extract constitutes 51 lines memorized word-for-word from Mangoaela's anthology (Mangoaela 1921: 47-48).

According to Damane and Sanders (1974: 115), lines 5-55 relate to the *thoko* composed in honour of chief Masopha (1822-98), the third son of Moshoeshoe in his senior house, after his most celebrated exploit which was his assault on the Batlokwa of chief Sekonyela on the mountain stronghold of Marabeng in 1853. With extraordinary courage, chief Masopha managed to force his way to the summit up a narrow and heavily guarded pass. So difficult was the guarded pass that *Bongata bona bo di hlwele ka mathoko*, 'These multitudes have ascended them at the sides' (line 10). Lines 13-40 relate the fierce heroism of Masopha in the war. Masopha went to Moshoeshoe to ask for permission to raid the Mpondomise and the Thembu. Moshoeshoe refused, but instead offered him some cattle of his own. These were the cowards' cattle, not because Moshoeshoe was a coward, but because they had not been captured in war. Masopha was far from satisfied with them, but took them as food for his journey over the Drakensberg. According to Damane and Sanders (1974:133), there is a pun here. The word *makoala*, 'cowards', was also the name of a man whom Masopha had just 'eaten up' on Moshoeshoe's orders for killing a man accused of witchcraft or adultery. So fierce was the battle with Sekonyela that Masopha commanded his Diodi regiment in lines 31-32,

*Ya re, 'Bahlankana, le ba hlabe ka marumo,
Le ba hlabe le ba abela dinonyana'.*

Saying, 'Young warriors, stab them with the spears,
Stab them and apportion them among the birds'.

Lines 35-55 allude to Makhabane, Moshoeshoe's brother, who earlier had been killed in the raid on the Thembu in 1835. Victory over the Thembu was therefore revengeful.

In lines 56-96 the *seroki* relates and praises the birth of King Moshoeshoe II of Lesotho, whose mother, 'Mantšebo became Regent for her young Moshoeshoe II. Women who were ululating whilst men were singing the war song, brought news of the birth to Chief Seeiso Letsie, the father.

In the concluding lines, 97-105, the *seroki* composes his own lines in which he draws attention of his audience to his situation, namely, the poverty he finds himself in, the blackness of his skin and the death of both his parents. He does not have relatives or anyone who has mercy towards him.

From the preceding discussion, it can be concluded that some of the *diroki* recorded in 2000, demonstrate a tendency to chant memorized classical *dithoko* in which they include their own compositions. Retaining the classical *dithoko* in their chanting reflects the importance attached to the heroic deeds and the war experiences of the past heroes as well as the need to ensure that this history is kept alive in the people's memories, remembered and transmitted to the new generation. Inclusion of their own composition reflects the fact that the classical *dithoko* are regarded as the foundation of oral tradition upon which their own compositions are built. This further reflects the view that oral tradition is not static but dynamic, and as such has to adapt to the changing situations and times of the poets. Inclusion of their own compositions affords the *diroki* an opportunity through which they express the state of their minds in the face of the socio-economic situation they find themselves in (cf. Lethusang Nthuloane above).

Chanting the heroic memorized classical *dithoko* constitutes a vicarious reliving of the past and brings about a feeling of being part and parcel of the past heroic experiences of the forefathers. It also serves as a means through which past events afford the *diroki* renewed energy to face their current situation with bravery like their ancestors, the heroes of the past, did. Their ability to achieve all these is made possible by good memory as demonstrated by the *diroki* during the recordings of their oral performances.

Apart from incorporating memorized classical *dithoko* into their compositions, some of the *diroki* demonstrated a further tendency to include expressions commonly used in the *difela*. In some cases, even larger sections of the *difela* were used not in the *dithoko* but in the *difela*. These features are discussed as follows:

5.2.3 *Dithoko* compositions including lines from the *difela*

The *seroki*, T.K. Kabai declaimed his own *thoko* consisting of 57 lines at the Basotho Cultural Village (Appendix no. 13). His *thoko* is characterized by the following:

The first 4 lines constitute an introduction in which he addresses himself to the Basotho, the blanket-wearers. In lines 5-12 the introduction is followed by part of the prayer found in the Bible, Matthew 6:9-10. This is followed by lines 13-21 in which mention is made of the emergence of the various stars, Jupiter, Orion and Venus. He draws attention to himself and his birth in lines 22-29 where line 22, *Ke rata ho bua ka mokgwa ke ona...* 'I want to talk in this manner...' is commonly used in the *difela*. Praising himself for his light complexion, he refers to himself as *calico e tshweu*, 'a white calico'. Relating his birth, he says he left heaven on a Friday, flew in the sky and arrived on a Saturday. He recites his clan praise, namely, as a Mofokeng from the house of Tshela in lines 30-39. The origin of the Bafokeng clan until they eventually arrived at the Transvaal is related in lines 40-45. Line 46 is a repetition of line 22, *Ke rata ho bua ka mokgwa ke ona*, 'I want to talk in this manner'. In lines that follow, 47-53, he relates a conspiracy of the village men who out of jealousy for his calico complexion want to assassinate him. The same expression (lines 22 and 46) is repeated in line 54, and is followed by his appeal to chieftainess Mmathokwana of Qwaqwa to reign peacefully over the Basotho nation.

The expression, *Ke rata ho bua ka mokgwa ke ona*, 'I want to talk in this manner' three times, in lines 22, 46 and 54, is used to call the attention of the audience because it is in all cases followed by information which the *seroki* carries across. The expression conveys an impression that the *seroki* is using the language commonly used in the *difela* compositions, though each *seroki* coins them slightly differently. For instance, in Moletsane's *difela* anthology, **Liparola-Thota** 'The Country-Travellers' (Moletsane 1983: 86-91), the *seroki* uses an almost similar expression, *Mokhoo 'na ke chong*, 'The manner why I actually say' four times in lines 22, 32, 77 and 205. Another example with almost the same meaning, and commonly used in the *difela* is *Oa tseba ke tle ke o joetse*, 'You know, let me tell you' (Moletsane, 1983:29-35) where it has been used 18 times in a single *sefela* text.

Kabai's expression, *Ke rata ho bua ka mokgwa ke ona*, 'I want to talk in this manner', in the *thoko* chanting, serves to convey the message that he is a man of two worlds;

he is a man who has power because he represents his chief and has authority on behalf of his chief to say what he wants; but he is also an outcast, a poor mine worker, a man rejected and looked down upon by his society, but nevertheless, a man who has travelled extensively, a country traveller, who has experience and who is a *kgeleke*, 'an experienced singer', worthy to be listened to. His use of the *sefela* expression also serves as a means to avoid monotony by using an expression from another oral genre in order to maintain the attention of his audience.

The next example is the *thoko* chanted by Tutubala Tšoene at the Basotho Cultural Village (Appendix no. 19). His 33 lines *thoko* is characterized by the following:

In the introduction, lines 1-6, Tutubala praises himself as a man who has travelled extensively and is familiar with many parts of the country. He compares his birth to a journey on which he left the place of heaven on a Friday and arrived in this world on a Saturday. His place of origin is *Matebeleng*, 'the Ndebele place' (line 7), known as Makibinyane.

Fear experienced by all men he confronts is related in lines 10-15 where even the magistrate himself fears to find him guilty in the court of law, but instead keeps on postponing his case. This fear is aggravated by the shortness of his bodily stature and the darkness of his complexion.

In lines 16 to 33, the contents are those commonly found in other *difela* compositions. He relates how he, on a particular day, went out to the veldt to relieve himself, and found his grandmother's pig, *hokihoki ya nkgono*, lying on the ground. He whispered into its ears, saying, *Kajeno o a bitswa, o yo tjhanela matlotlo lebaleng*, 'You are called today to go and sweep the treasures on the courtyard'. The pig thanked him, but arriving at home, it ran away instead. This entertaining narration commonly forms part of the *difela* compositions. For instance, the *seroki*, Justice Ratiea, in Moletsane's anthology also refers to a *hokihoki*, a word derived from the English 'hog', meaning 'a domesticated pig' (Moletsane 1974:32). Though the wording is not the same as in Tutubala Tšoene's composition, the narration is equally entertaining to the audience. Justice, in lines 127-144 relates that on the day of the feast, the *hokihoki* was called and driven home. Along the way, it asked (lines 131-2),

*Ha le nqhoba ka ona mokhoa ona
Molato e be e se e le eng ke tle ke tsebe.*

If you drive me in this manner
What actually is the fault so that I may know.

The girl answered the *hokihoki* and said the latter should not worry as it is going to find the treasures at the courtyard, i.e., yesterday's dregs. When those who drove the *hokihoki* were closer to the village, there appeared from out of the house a man holding a spear; he stabbed it dead.

The *dithoko* by Tutubala Tšoene and T.K.Kabai, discussed above, demonstrate a new phenomenon emerging at the beginning of the 21st century, namely, that some of the *dithoko* show tendency of penetration by another oral poetic genre, such as, the *difela*. This penetration is made possible by the fact that the *diroki* have equal mastery of both oral poetic genres. Our belief is that oral poetic penetration of this nature is purposely done to reflect the *diroki's* two separate existences, firstly, their rural life as subjects under their chiefs, as men confined to the chanting of the *dithoko* in which they largely praise their chiefs; secondly, as men who have travelled extensively to the cities of South Africa, migrant workers who are often rejected and looked down upon by their society, but who despite that, aim at defining their own identity in a system that is exploitative and dehumanizing. It should be observed that inclusion of the *difela* in the *dithoko* recitation is done, in addition, to entertain the audience.

The preceding discussions have been about the *dithoko* and their penetration by another oral genre, the *difela*. We now turn to the *difela*, and explore how they are affected and/or penetrated by both the *difela* and the *dithoko*.

5.3 The *difela* (mine workers' chants)

The following discussion attempts to show that some of the *difela* compositions incorporate lines quoted from the *dithoko* as well as lines from the other *difela*.

5.3.1 *Difela* compositions including lines from the *dithoko* and *diboko*

Some of the *difela* compositions chanted and recorded in 2000 included lines from the *dithoko*. For instance, Mahlomola Thamae (Appendix no. 2) chanted a *sefela* of 248 lines. The first 17 lines constituted his introduction which was a *thoko* 'praise poem'. In the first two lines, he calls on the audience to listen to him, and he uses the usual words commonly used in the *dithoko*,

*O! Thea tsebe, o mamele,
Thea tsebe, o mamele, semamedi,*

Oh! Open your ears and listen,
Open your ears and listen, you, the listener,

In lines 5-17 he praises himself as a warrior of the house of Mmaphethang, and who is feared by all he confronts. He mentions the place where his chief lives, namely, at Thaba Bosiu. He further calls on his fellow comrades to follow his example by also acquiring new names (see example in a *thoko* by Mokhele Thulo in the Appendix no. 17, lines 4 – 8).

The *sefela* continues from lines 18 to 248. In lines 18-40 he refers to the gathering at Thaba-Bosiu where the recordings were done, and expresses the importance of such an invitation. We, the recorders who have extended an invitation to them, have done so because we want to hear more about Sesotho and its culture as there is much to gain in Lesotho (line 40). Line 38 says, *Di re di rata ho tla tla utlwa Sesotho hantle?* 'They say that they want to listen carefully to Sesotho?'

In lines 41-109 he makes an appeal to the audience to refrain from forsaking their culture. Though short in stature, he is a hero who causes physical injury to his opponents. He is an earnestly praying person of the Paris church in Lesotho, and quotes word-for-word the entire Psalm 1:1-6 in lines 95-109.

From line 110 to 186 he recites his clan praise of the Bakwena. He relates the graves of the great chiefs including that of King Moshoeshoe. A traditional doctor tried to

cause him physical harm but failed. He does not know his mother as she died when he was still very young.

Those who remain at home in Lesotho while others go to work outside Lesotho, do a lot of various duties, including the digging of furrows, the carrying of the sick children to the doctors as well as the safety of the cattle during the absence of their owners. All these are related in lines 187-213. In lines 214-247 he relates the folly of running after girls and concubines because in this way many young men spend their energy and receive nothing worthwhile in return.

A few points should be noted regarding the performance by Mahlomola Thamae. He closes his chanting in the last line, 248 by using *Ya kgaola, ya ya!* 'There it cuts off and leaves!' This closing expression is commonly used in the chanting of the *dithoko* as an indication that the chanting has actually not come to an end, but is temporarily suspended because of time. Moeletsi Qekise (Appendix no. 34, point 15), referring to this ending formula during an interview after the recording, confirmed the statement in saying,

Ke mokgwa ona o utlwang ha re ithoka re ntse re re 'Ya kgaola, ya ya!' Ke hore re a di kgaola, ho lekanya nako.

That is why when we recite we keep on saying *Ya kgaola, ya ya!* 'There it cuts off and leaves!' This means that we only cut the recitation because of the limitation of time.

Though Mahlomola was chanting the *sefela*, he took it that his *sefela*, like a *thoko*, has to be temporarily cut because of the time limit. On the other hand, he may have used the expression peculiar to the *dithoko* purposely to close his chanting since he started his chanting with a *thoko*. During the whole process of chanting he was slowly moving around, to and fro, wearing a blanket which matched his pair of trousers, and he was holding a knobkerrie and wearing a Basotho grass hat, *modianyewe*. He was actually introducing a new innovation to the chanting of the *difela* because the latter are normally chanted stationary, and no importance is normally attached to the kind of accoutrement used.

Also to be observed is that there was no change in his voice when he changed over from the *thoko* to the *sefela*. The pitch of the voice and the speed of reciting were the same throughout the entire chanting. In other words, the style of chanting was that of the *thoko* whereas the contents were those of the *difela*. This is another innovation he introduced to the chanting of the *difela*.

The transition from the introductory part, the *thoko*, to his main composition, the *sefela*, was done smoothly and purposely to indicate that the *thoko* to him is basic, and is the foundation upon which his whole *sefela* chanting is based. This is an indication that one form of an oral poetic genre may penetrate another and therefore be sacrificed in order to form a new unified oral poetic composition.

5.3.2 Switching between two genres (*thoko*→ *sefela*→*thoko*→*sefela*)

The discussion in this respect concerns the chanting by the *seroki* Sello Rapeane, also recorded in 2000 at 'Melesi Lodge. His recitation (Appendix no. 1) is the longest among those recorded during our visit. It consists of 613 lines, divided in lines as follows: *Thoko* (1-196), *sefela* (197-218), *thoko* (219-266), *sefela* (267-346), *thoko* (347-366), and *sefela* (367-613). The contents can best be discussed according to the switches as demarcated:

***Thoko* (lines 1-196)**

The *seroki* starts by greeting his audience and introducing himself as belonging to the *Batloung* 'The Elephant people'. His home village is Kolo, near Tswaiing, in Lesotho. These are related in the first 16 lines. From line 17 to line 120 he chants a memorized *thoko* composed in honour of Chief Lerotholi Mojela (cf. Mangoaela 1921: 226-230). Lerotholi Mojela was, according to Damane and Sanders (1974:234), given a limited authority over the 1,400 Basotho men who served in France in the Native Labor Corps during the First World War (1914-1918). Neither he nor any other member of the Corps was allowed to take an active part in the fighting. On his return to Lesotho he was awarded a medal for Meritorious Service, and shortly afterwards, in 1921, he was placed as chief at Tebang, within his father's ward.

Because Lerotholi was noted for the lightness of his complexion, he is referred to in line 17 as *Naledi e tshweutshweu ya Ramakhobalo*, 'The bright bright star of Ramakhobalo'. Lerotholi sacrificed his life and the lives of the Basotho men by participating in the war in which they supported England. On his return to Lesotho after the war, he received a medal and was crowned chief (line 70).

Lines 121 to 165 constitute another *thoko* altogether, namely, one composed in honour of chief Rafolatsana Letsie for his role in the *Ntwa ya Dithunya* 'Gun war' / 'War of Disarmament' of 1880-81. It could not be established with exactitude whether this Letsie refers to Chief Letsie II (1869-1913) because the name, Rafolatsana, is not known. If lines 121-165 refer to chief Letsie II, then he was involved in the Gun war as Damane and Sanders (1974: 7) allude to his involvement in saying,

The Sotho's loathing was universal, but their response to the Government's demands varied from chief to chief. Even under Moshoeshoe they had been far from united, and Letsie was now totally incapable of exercising any over-all control.

Though chief Letsie supported the disarmament by the Government, the battle he is known to have engaged in was against those who were against the disarmament, such as, Lerotholi, Maama, Seeiso, Bereng, Theko, etc. The battle was fought at Likhoele, near Lerotholi's village (Damane, 1960: 36). The *seroki* has poetic licence to praise his chief as if the latter was actively involved in a war. A similar case is that of Chief Lerotholi Mojela in the World War 1 (1914-1918).

The following (lines 125-127) allude to Letsie as not being a man of war,

*Naledi ya se mo lateng a eme,
Ha o mo lata jwalo wa boSeeiso,
Le tla hata tau maro e bothile.*

The star not to be challenged while standing,
When you challenge him, Seeiso's brother,

You will tread on the sleeping lion's claws.

From lines 166 to 196 the *seroki* recites memorized lines from another *thoko*, namely, one composed in honour of chief Seeiso (cf. Damane and Sanders, 1974: 261-262). In these lines he relates the visit of chief Seeiso to the Union of South Africa, particularly a visit to Tlelaka (line 174) who, according to Damane and Sanders (1974: 261) was Sir Henry Clark, the High Commissioner in the Union from 1935 to 1940. Theko Makhaola, the son of Griffith's brother, was part of the delegation, and his responsibility was to look after chief Seeiso, especially his clothes, blankets and the way he dressed generally. Chief Seeiso's main reason for the visit was to request protection of Lesotho from Britain (lines 181-3).

In the next lines, 197-218, the *seroki* discontinues with the chanting of a *thoko*. He changes over to the chanting of the *sefela*.

Sefela (lines 197-218)

In these lines, he entertains the audience by relating what he does with his hat as well as the various parts of his body. For instance, he says (lines 201-205),

*Hobane hlooho ka yona ke sa tla rwala katiba,
Mahlo ka ona ke sa tla shadima naha,
Ditsebe ka tsona ke sa tla mamela,
Ha e le molomo ka ona ke sa tla pepeta,
Seledu ka sona ke mela ditedu.*

Because the head I use to wear a hat,
Eyes I use to survey the country,
Ears I shall use to listen attentively,
As for the mouth I shall talk continuously,
With the chin I grow beards.

He concludes by calling on the train, *lefokolodi*, 'the millipede' to carry him because its feet are *tosene*, dozen in number and do not wear off.

***Thoko* (lines 219-266)**

In lines 219-266, he continues chanting a *thoko*, this time, in honour of chief Sempe Nkoebe. Mangoaela (1921: 245) entitles it, *Ntoa ea Masopha le Lerotholi* 'The battle of Masopha and Lerotholi'. This battle was occasioned by chief Masopha's defiance to the authority and the paramountcy of chief Lerotholi. See this battle fully explained under 5.2.2 above.

In line 220, Sempe, likened to a hailstorm accompanied by heavy rains, causes destruction when confronting his enemies. He is praised as the rays of the sun and as a big lake from which his people find warmth and drink. The *seroki* calls on him to reign warmly over his subjects. Sempe takes his weapons, the shields and the spears, and is accompanied by his regiment, *Diphakwe*, 'The vultures' (line 247). He is a man of few words, and his mouth is always covered by his blanket because he is not a talkative person but a man of action (line 252). The praising of Sempe ends in line 258.

From line 259 to 266, the *seroki* joins lines from a *thoko* composed in honour of chief Lerotholi after his role in the *Ntwa ya Seqiti* 'The Seqiti war', the war fought between the O.F.S. and the Basotho between 1865 and 1868 (Haliburton 1977:162). This war is called as such because of the sounds of the cannons which characterized it. These few lines are memorized from Mangoaela (1974:66-67), and relate the war in which Lerotholi fought to save the land of the Basotho from the Boers whose leader was President Brand. Mention of *batho ba ha Majoro*, 'the people of the Major' in line 265 refers to the English forces led by Major Warden, British Resident in the Orange River Sovereignty who joined forces with the Boers to fight the Basotho (Damane and Sanders, 1974: 138).

In the next lines, 267-346 the *seroki* continues with the chanting of the *sefela*.

***Sefela* (lines 267-346)**

The *seroki* entertains his audience by relating about a rock which, whilst rolling, is asked where it is going to. It replies by saying it is going to see the vultures dancing. Then, there is a vulture dancing whilst carrying a human skull. He further mentions the various villages in Lesotho that he passes through on his way to *Saelane*, 'Saailand'. This reveals a broad knowledge of the places as well as their various chiefs. The *Russians* and the *tsotsis* are mentioned in line 316. The 'Russians' are Basotho men found in the big cities, and who form groups, wear typical blankets, and carry wooden sticks. The *tsotsis* are young men who are popularly known for stabbing people with knives. The *seroki* has not agreed to be influenced by life in the big cities. He has not changed his way of living; he is still a Mosotho who behaves well. The year, 1990, brought him sad news, when, in block 9, the hostel in which he was living, he received a letter informing him about the death of his father's brother. He further mentions that people in Gauteng die through murder.

The *seroki* recites a *thoko* in the next lines, 347-366.

***Thoko* (lines 347-366)**

The few lines recited at this point are memorized verbatim from Mangoaela (1921: 177-178). They form a *thoko* composed for Chief Griffith. Mangoaela entitles it, *Ntoa ea Khamolane, ha Masopha*, 'The battle at Khamolane, at Masopha's'. It is the battle at which chief Lerotholi and his sons, Griffith and Letsie inflicted a decisive defeat on Masopha on January 12, 1898 (Damane and Sanders, 1974:214). In the extract, Lerotholi is praised and compared to lightning and thunder that dwells below the rocks on account of his village, Phamong, which was situated on a mountainous area. So fierce was the battle that each of Griffith's warriors, such as, Rangwane and Tapole (line 362-3) had killed an opponent. The defeat of Masopha was so devastating that the *seroki* metaphorically says in lines 359-360,

*(Lerumo) la eja bana ba Masopha,
La ba ja, la ba abela dinonyana,*

(The spear) devoured the children of Masopha,
It devoured them and apportioned them to the birds,

The next lines which conclude the chanting, 367-613, constitute the *sefela*.

***Sefela* (lines 367-613)**

In capturing the attention of the audience, the *seroki* commences by asking who has ever seen a car with black wheels (the train) or found the green eggs of a stork (lines 367-376). He relates in lines 377-395 the policemen who came to him carrying books (tax documents) and demanding tax payment from him. His response was that he does not pay any tax, but carries a wooden stick (a pistol) which causes the white man to cry and run until he falls into the furnace.

He mourns (lines 396-411) the men who allowed the tired Bushman to escape and jump into the water carrying his assegais. Difficulties drove him out of his house. He further mentions that he detests the church, and loves drinking his delicious coffee and sorghum beer. He is a poor man, an axe left outside the house, dripping blood mingled with human hair.

His experiences in a train are related in lines 412-434. In the train the migrant workers caused all sorts of troubles for him, saying such words as, 'Where is this little crawling baby going to?' After that, the *lerwana*, 'red ant' (the white ticket examiner) came in demanding the train tickets. Says the *seroki* in line 421,

La re ho nna, halo, tekete, ngwana Mosotho!

And said to me, hello, produce your ticket, Mosotho child!

His response was that he did not have any ticket, tax documents nor any chicken provision because he was in a hurry when he left Lesotho. He was ready to hit the white man when he realized that the latter was about to insult him. The vagabonds from Lesotho felt pity for him and offered to pay for his fare otherwise he would have been thrown out of the moving train.

His experiences on arriving at the mine compound are related in lines 435-466. The arrogant white man showed him where he should store his belongings. The foreman of the Deep mine gave him the documents, a spade and a pickaxe handle saying that every evening he would be an underground worker. Very soon he was promoted to a position of an induna, and would supervise the Basotho, the Shangaans and the Portuguese. Eventually when he left work, he did not actually need payment, but he needed a pass because when dusk arrived, he feared the police in the mine galleries. He left the mine because of daily injuries and deaths.

In lines 467- 492, he relates the herbs he was grinding and mixing together in order to attain a higher position at the mine. He further remembers the woman who was grinding herbs. The one called, *phephetho*, 'drive-them-away' she ground as she swallowed it. She woke up early in the morning, waved the arm of a dead person, and spoke, saying that those on their journey to the mines as well as those already at the mines, should not return home but die at the mines, and those who by chance may return home, should come home with bare hands (with no money).

Different tribes he met at the mines are related in lines 493-506. They used different terms for Sesotho words. For instance, for *ho tsamaya*, 'to walk', they used *ho fampa*; for *ho matha*, 'to run', they used *ho tsotsoma*; for *mahlo*, 'eyes', they used '*maihlo*'. The mining areas which are responsible for killing many of Moshoeshoe's people are referred to by the Basotho as *Mahabadibaka*, a compound word meaning 'Places-striven-to', and *Mabolalasonke*, 'Those-that-kill-us-all' by the Xhosa', and *Hebalebase*, which according to the Shangaans, means a foreman chosen by the people, and does not receive any remuneration for the duties he performs because he is not officially regarded as such by the company.

In lines 507-511, he keeps wondering at the white men's 'puzzle' whereby a "tin" fastened to the mineshaft is able to carry the workers down to the depth of the earth while the chains make a musical sound.

His contact with women who bewitch is related in lines 512-529. Together with the women were five Basotho men, three Xhosas and ten Tswanas. When he greeted

the women who had tattoos on their buttocks, they said they would bewitch, kill and put him on the path towards the fountain so that every time they pass that place they would scold him as one who died as a result of his own evil deeds. He pleaded for mercy as he only wanted to know their time schedule. In response they said, at four o'clock they are on their way, and at five, they are already at home.

In lines 530-566 is related his experiences at the mines, including his joining as a mine worker. He worked at Kimberley and at St Helena Deep mine, where the shaft foreman was indeed 'Satan'. An underground worker sustained an injury and the foreman was told to strangle and kill him. Work was made difficult by the foreman as the wagons had to carry heavy stones. This resulted in injuries sustained by many of the workers. When he decided to join as a mine worker, he reported at the NRC (National Recruiting Company) offices at Mafeteng, where he found the clerk carrying documents. He then signed the forms, and left for the Gauteng mine, through the Wepener border.

His experiences with the train and the injury he sustained are related in lines 567-598. He found the train waiting at *setaleng*, 'the stable', i.e., the platform. Its shepherds, *badisa ba yona* 'the ticket examiners or the guards' were in black suits. The train was given *dihlopha*, 'fodder' but it was not really eager to eat. The Government's 'cow' declined food. It just stared. He saw men tapping it on the ankles so that a loose wheel should be discovered and fixed.

The guard (ticket examiner) had two flags in his hands, one red and the other green. The green one signified *khwela*, a Zulu word meaning 'get on', 'board', and the red one, *topa*, 'stop'. In front of it was written, *pasopa*, an Afrikaans word 'pas op', meaning 'beware'. On the side was written, *O a sala*, 'You are left behind', and on the wheels were written, *Semetjhe*, 'Smatch', meaning 'Danger'.

At the Central mine he sustained an injury when he was trapped by a rope on a toe. The screaming white man ordered the winch to be switched off, saying someone has been injured and is already dead. But the *seroki* replied, saying that he is still alive, and his only injury is the broken knee-cap. Instead of being taken to the hospital, his wound was painfully treated with salt.

As a poetic singer no other singer can surpass, is related in lines 599-606. All the other singers should come together and give him the white man's liquor, because it is only when he is drunk that they would be able to surpass him.

His resistance to death is related in the last lines of his composition, lines 607-613. In order to lay him into the grave, he should be taken to *thota-e-a-wela*, 'the-veldt-is-sinking', and be thrown into a deep hole, 12 ft deep. Care should however be exercised because he, the sly one, may wake up, and the bones of the dead will continue to trouble them.

As discussed above, the performance by Sello Rapeane, consisting of 613 lines, is structured according to the order, *thoko*→*sefela*→*thoko*→*sefela*. Transition from either the *sefela* to the *thoko*, and from the *thoko* to the *sefela*, was smooth. It was through the contents that one could distinguish the *sefela* from the *thoko*. The tone, the pitch of the voice, the speed of recitation, which was rather normal, all remained the same right through. Contrary to the accepted general opinion held, namely, that the *sefela* is sung, his was not sung, but was chanted in the *thoko* style.

Changing from one oral genre to the other, as observed in Rapeane's chanting, and the length of the performance itself (613 lines), indicate, as shown in the discussion, the degree of ability of the *seroki* in memorization of the various classical *dithoko* he used and retentive memory which contributed to the success of his chanting. The ease with which he managed to switch from the one to the other is attributed to his mastery of the two oral poetic genres, the *thoko* and the *sefela*. Playing with the genres in this way served to make him a prominent performer of the 21st century. His performance succeeded in capturing the attention of the audience because it was unusual and highly differed from the common way of chanting the *thoko* or the *sefela*. The effect of his performance was that at the time he was chanting the classical *thoko* he was taking the audience on the journey to the remote past, and when he switched to the *seboko*, he was taking his audience back to the 21st century. The body language enhanced his overall performance. Switching from *thoko* to *sefela* and back was done smoothly with no slip of memory and no repetition of subject-matter at all. The performer's ability to switch from one oral

genre to the other and back reflected his dual existence as a poet, namely, as a person with power and representative of the chief when chanting the *thoko*, and as a mine worker, a social outcast when chanting the *sefela*. Rapeane's ability to chant 613 is uncommon. It therefore served to make his performance significant.

The intentional and particular choice of *dithoko* from the classical *dithoko* indicates the *seroki's* strong inclination to oral tradition, association with past heroic events, including his ancestors. This sends a strong message to the audience that the classical *dithoko* constitute a firm foundation upon which contemporary oral poetic compositions are based.

During the course of his performance, he was making movements of the feet, backwards and forwards, turning around, etc. He was even making hand movements and prancing. So, another statement can be made, namely, that, though the *difela* are normally chanted stationary, they can still be chanted accompanied by body movements.

The use of the *difela* as part of the chanting of the *dithoko* demonstrates a new phenomenon emerging at the beginning of the 21st century. It further indicates the possibility of what we may call 'migration of texts' in terms of which one kind of an oral genre penetrates another. This blending of forms signals a mixing of fact (*thoko*) with fact and fiction (*sefela*).

The chanting of the *difela* may be characterized by the inclusion of lines from other *difela*. The discussion in this respect will be dealt with in the paragraphs following.

5.3.3 *Difela* compositions including lines from the other *difela*

The tendency among the *difela* poets to use common concepts is attributed to the *diroki's* absorption of material from other *diroki*. Where this happens, the *seroki* does not use the words word-for-word but uses his words whilst making sure that the contents remain more or less the same. Confirming this, the *sefela* poet, Rabonne Mariti in Coplan (1995: 101) says, 'We are all thieves'. The *seroki*, Mphafu Mofolo's view on the nature of the *difela* songs explains some of the fictitious, though

humorous, information that forms part of the *difela* in general. He comments (*ibid.*, p. 69),

Most of the events I recite about are things I have met with, difficulties and tragedies I have experienced. I combine them with events I have heard about, or grabbed from others...A good *sefela* should be about faraway places that people are not familiar with. The more places he describes the more people admire a performer: it should be a traveler's account.

Baptist Komello Mahanetsa (Appendix no. 3) recorded at Matsieng, chanted a *sefela* consisting of 30 lines. In the first three lines,

*Motsekuoa le ha Makhakhe ke fetile feela,
Ha Mpalipali ke kgutla teng,
Ha 'Maliepetsane kgohlong.*

At Motsekuoa and Makhakhe I just passed,
From Mpalipali's I have been there,
At 'Maliepetsane's, at the kloof,

he mentions as a wayfarer the names of the villages in Lesotho that he passed through such as Motsekuoa, Makhakhe and 'Maliepetsane. The expression *Ha Mpalipali ke kgutla teng* 'From Mpalipali's I have been there', in line 2, indicates that it is not the first time he has been to that village. The idea that he is an extensive traveller, especially on foot, is conveyed in these lines. Mention of the places he has been to, and has passed through, is a feature also found in Pheka Setlaba's composition (cf. Appendix no. 18) where the latter says (lines 100-104),

*Ha Tang ka feta mohwalotso,
Ha Theko le Liane Bokaota,
Ha 'Mitia pela Rabuka,
Ke bua ha Mapofu lebenkeleng,
Ha kgowa le bitswang Ramaqe.*

Also at Tang's I passed unnoticed,
At Theko's and Liane's at Bokaota,
At 'Mitia next to Rabuka,
I refer to Mapofu's near the shop,
At a white man's called Ramaqele.

Also as an extensive traveller, Pheka Setlaba passed the villages which are named after the people's names. These are names such as *Ha Tang* 'At Tang's', *Ha Theko le Liane* 'At Theko's and Liane's', *Ha 'Mitia* 'At 'Mitia's, etc.

In the next lines, 4-9 Mahanetsa relates the damage caused by the coal train he was travelling in. He says,

*Terene ya tjhesetsa maqaqana,
Difarelane tsa eshwa,
Majeresi a eshwa a le lekgolo,
Mmutlanyana e tjheletse le naha,
Nkgo di tjhele le jwala ba Sekgowa,
Ditswekere le majwala di qhalane.*

The train burnt the poor Boers' property,
Merino sheep perished,
Jersey cattle, a thousand of them perished,
Rabbits burnt together with the veldt,
Clay pots burnt together with the White man's liquor,
Sugar and liquor scattered all over,

The *seroki*, Mahase Mokhobatau in Moletsane's *difela* anthology (1983: 71) also relates the damage caused by the coal train. He uses different words to relate what he saw. He says the following in lines 143-148,

*Ea lahla leshala thoteng;
Buru le matha melomo e re sehle!
Katiba ea kepisi le e hlanolele*

*Mutlanyana ea chela lilaong;
Khoale tsa chela lithoteng.*

It left a piece of burning coal in the veldt;
The Boer running, and the mouth being very yellow,
The cap hat turned upside down,
The rabbits burnt in their holes;
The partridges burnt in the veldt.

When a burning piece of coal fell from the moving train, the Boer farmer, trying to save his property, was so confused that he wore his cap upside down. Both rabbits and partridges died helplessly as the veldt caught fire. Though the same words are not used by the two *diroki*, the general idea is the same.

In the last remaining lines 10-13, Mahanetsa relates the names of the various villages he has passed. The discussion of these lines is unnecessary because naming of the various villages has been dealt with already. Suffice it to say that mentioning of the places he has passed or has been to, is intentionally done to reflect the *seroki* as both a man of knowledge and an extensive traveller.

Another example of the *sefela* in which some of the subject-matter is also found on the other *difela* is the one chanted by Sello Rapeane (Appendix no. 1). In his long recitation made up of the *sefela* and the *thoko*, and consisting of 613 lines, the parts constituting the *sefela* are lines 197-218, 267-346 and 367-613. In lines 201-209 he mentions the different parts of the body as well as their functions. He says,
88 - 91,

*Hobane hlooho ka yona ke sa tla rwala katiba,
Mahlo ka ona ke sa tla shadima naha,
Ditsebe ka tsona ke sa tla mamela,
Ha e le molomo ka ona ke sa tla pepeta,
Seledu ka sona ke mela ditedu.*

Because the head I use to wear a hat,

Eyes I use to survey the country,
Ears I shall use to listen attentively,
As for the mouth I shall talk continuously,
With the chin I grow beards.

Use of different body parts is also common among a *seroki* such as Seatile Phakane in Moletsane (1983: 13) where in lines 514-517 he says,

Litsebe tsona ke sa tla mamela
Mahlo ka 'ona ke talima naha
Linko tsona ke mina mamina;
Leleme ka lona ke sa tla qaqata.

Ears, as for them I will listen
Eyes, with them I survey the country
Nostrils, as for them I blow the slime;
Tongue, with it I shall chatter.

Not only good command of the language, but a particular style of chanting is displayed to capture and maintain the interest of the audience. In the four lines above, the body parts are mentioned each at the beginning of the sentence, and follow one another according to their arrangement on the human body. This arrangement, the descending order, for poetic reasons, also serves to facilitate memorization on the part of the poet.

In lines 580-581 Sello Rapeane gives a description of what was written on the train. He says,

O a tseba hobane pele ho yona ho ngotswe 'pasopa',
Lephakong ho yona ho ngotswe 'O a sala'
Mabiding ho yona ho ngotswe 'Semetjhe'.

You know, in front of it was written, 'beware!'
On its sides was written, 'You are left behind!'

On the wheels was written, 'Smash (Danger)'.

The description of what was written on the wheels, the sides and the front of the train should not be understood in the literal sense. Sello uses figurative language to emphasize the formidable appearance of the train. He conveys the need to 'beware' of standing in front of it because that would be fatal. The expression, *Lephakong ho yona* 'On its side' refers to the doors on its side through which those who have boarded the train enter, and *O a sala* 'You are left behind' indicates that the train leaves behind those who waste time since it runs on schedule and does not wait too long. The expression, *Semetjhe*, written on the wheels, derived from the English, 'smash' meaning 'to break into pieces with violence and noise' (Barnhart et al., 1990: 1973), refers to the destructive nature of its wheels.

This description is also found in the *sefela* composed by Moroba Moroba in Mokitimi (1998:117), lines 83-87,

*Phatleng ho eona ho ngotsoe pasopa,
Sekopong ho eona ho tuka malakabe,
Ke eo e jere metsi mahetleng mona.
Lephakong ho eona ho ngotsoe palama,
Ka morao ho eona ho ngotsoe ua sala.*

On its forehead it is written "pas op" (take care),
On its head there burn flames,
There it is carrying water on its shoulders,
On its side it is written, "entrain",
On its back it is written, "You are left behind".

Though the description of the train is not word-for-word the same and even adds information on the burning flames on its head and carrying water on its shoulders, it conveys the same concept. The purpose is mainly to entertain the audience, and sometimes the veracity of what is being said is sacrificed for the sake of entertainment.

From the examples discussed above, it has been shown that the chanting of the *difela* is characterised by subject-matter which may be found in the other *difela*. Occurrence of this nature does not necessarily involve verbatim usage, as each *seroki* has the prerogative to use the material according to his/her choice. In addition, this occurrence constitutes mutual penetration of the same oral genre, employed by the *diroki* towards enrichment of their oral compositions. This tendency further confirms the earlier statement by the *seroki*, Mphafu Mofolo, that in composing his *sefela* ‘...I combine them with events I have heard about, or grabbed from others’ (Coplan, 1995: 69).

Another oral genre worthy of discussion is the *diboko* ‘the clan praises’ or ‘the family odes’. The *diboko*, entirely or in part, are commonly used by the *diroki* in the chanting of the *dithoko* and the *difela* with the intention of introducing themselves and expressing their heroic origin. The next discussion will look at genre-transition in the recitation of the *diboko* under the following heading:

5.4 The *diboko* (the clan praises): Genre transition

By genre transition is understood an occurrence whereby one oral genre penetrates another. In the recitation of the *seboko*, this happens when an oral genre, for instance, the *sefela* constitutes part of the *seboko* recitation. The first example of genre transition will be discussed with reference to the *seboko* as recited by Lepekola Sekgwane from the village, Kgubetswana at Clarens in the Free State. Contrary to the length of the *diboko* which are generally short, his recitation consists of 68 lines. The reason for the length is attributed to the inclusion of his own composition of a *sefela* ‘mine workers’ chant’ during the process of recitation (see Appendix no. 36).

During my first meeting with him, I recorded his recital which consisted of 58 lines of which the last was *Feela lekgwaba towe o kgala nameng!* ‘Except that, you raven, you like too much of meat!’ After a couple of weeks, I requested him to recite again. This time, his recitation was the same as the previous one up to line 30, and lines 31-58 were replaced by new lines 31-39. The recitation can be demarcated as follows:

Seboko (lines 1 –2)

Lines 1- 2 constitute the *seboko*. Lepekola belongs to the clan whose totem animal is the elephant. The clan to which he belongs is that of Makgekge, and the ancestor from whom the clan believes to have originated is Sekgwane. According to Ellenberger in Tšiu (2001: 70) the Batlounge (Elephant clan) are an offshoot of the Barolong who venerated the hammer (iron). After breaking away from the Barolong, they later arrived at Thaba-Kgolokwe where they were well received by the Makgolokwe (Kgolokwe people) whose chief gave them land to cultivate. But at the time of harvest, they, remembering their descent from the Barolong, claimed precedence over the Makgolokwe, in eating the first pumpkin. The Makgolokwe refused to recognise this right. The quarrel became a fight in which the Batlounge were beaten, and their chief, Lekgetho was killed. The remnants of the Batlounge therefore had to be on the run for dear life. Their painful and unforgettable experience at the hands of the Makgolokwe is alluded to in their recital. In Moletsane (1993: 38) the entire recitation of the Batlounge of the house of Sekgwane is as follows,

*Ke thelleleng
Ke Motlounge oa ha Sekhoane!
Oa tloho ke o pepe,
Ke u sihletse!
Ke u tlame ka thari ea konyana,
E-be ke matha ka uena.*

Why should I pay homage,
Being one of the Elephant people of the house of Sekhoane!
One of those “Come, let me carry you on my back,
And carry you safely!
Let me bind you with a lamb-skin,
And run carrying you!”

From line 3 to line 30 Lepekola chants the *sefela* in which he alludes to the painful experiences of his clan. This subject-matter can be segmented as follows:

Sefela

Desperation of the Batlounge (lines 3-8)

Line 3 constitutes a cry of desperation and hopelessness occasioned by the killing of their leader, Lekgetho: *Ke tla thella, ke thelle ho mang?* 'I will pay homage, but to whom?' He metaphorically alludes to their painful experience where he refers to himself as *ho hotsho ha maphiri a phirima* 'the black one of the black darkness'. To the Batlounge life has been nothing but blackness and misery. Line 5, *Bata se phoofolo, ngwana Mothetho* 'The wild Beast which is an animal, poor child of Mothetho!' conveys an idea of the reduced state of the Batlounge. They, who were elevated to a higher level and feared by other clans (like elephants), now find themselves reduced to a lower and common level of the clans which are usually on the run.

Comparison of his clan being killed as if they were animals is mentioned in lines 7 and 8.

Appeal to the ancestor (9 – 12)

Lepekola celebrated *mokete wa badimo* 'a feast in honour of the ancestors' with the aim of appealing to his ancestor, his father, Sekgwane, whom he believed to be in heaven, and whom he believed was able to bring an end to his day to day sufferings. In lines 9 and 10 he says,

*Ka ntsha kgomo, ka romela lehodimong,
Ho ntate Motlounge, Sekgwane,*

I sacrificed a bovine and sent a message to heaven,
To my father, Sekgwane, member of the Elephant people.

Cry of shout (13 - 21)

The attack levelled at the Batlounge is likened to a cry of shout that keeps the Batlounge on the run, both during the day and at night (lines 16-17). The apostrophe in line 18 is used to address the Batlounge as *Tshepe towé* 'You Iron' on account of the fact that they originally venerated the hammer/iron. This line conveys an appeal that the continuation of harassment, killing and fleeing of the Batlounge, as inflicted by

the Makgolokwe, may cease. Line 20, *Motho a tipa wa habo, a re ke moditjhaba* 'One hit his brother, mistaking him for a foreigner' also alludes to the punishment of the Batlounq inflicted by the Makgolokwe whereby the former suffered as if they were foreigners.

Lepekola's call to heaven (22 – 30)

Lepekola's call to heaven is an opportunity to escape from the hardships encountered by his clan in this world. On arrival in heaven he found the chief playing the popular Basotho *morabaraba* 'the Basotho mill game' in which the stones are referred to as *dikgomo* 'the bovines'. Heaven is a better place.

Proposal of love to the city girls (31-39)

35. *Batho ke bana ba feta,*
36. *Ke kopane le bana ba le bararo*
37. *E ile yare ke re ho bona, 'dumelang!'*
38. *Ba re 'Ha re sa le banana, re basadi.*
39. *Banna ba rona ba shwetse Jubere!'*

35. Here are the people passing by.
36. I met the girls; they were three in number,
37. When I said to them 'Hallo there!'
38. They said, 'We are no more girls, but women.
39. Our husbands died at Jubere!'

The proposing of love to the local girls is common among many workers in the cities. This is common because they spend months working in the mines before they are allowed to return home to their loved ones in Lesotho. In this case the women responded to his proposal by mentioning that their husbands died in Jubere 'Jouberton', the black residential mining area near Klerksdorp.

Meeting with people speaking various languages

40. *Hae ke tloha ke tswa Betjhwanalente, Batswaneng,*

41. *Basotho bana ba fetotse dipuo,*
42. *Matsoho ba ne ba a bitsa 'mabogo',*
43. *Hloho ena ba ne ba e bitsa 'sekopo',*
44. *Ditsebe tsena ba ne ba di bitsa 'dikgetla',*

40. Leaving home I was from Bechuanaland, from the Batswana,
41. These Basotho have changed languages,
42. The hands, *matsoho*, they used to call them *mabogo*,
43. This head, *hloho*, they used to call it *sekopo*,
44. These ears, *ditsebe*, they used to call them *dikgetla*.

The reciter worked for some time in Bechuanaland where he met people like himself, *Basotho bana* 'These Basotho', the Batswana, who spoke Sesotho in a "strange" manner; they referred to *matsoho* 'the hands' as *mabogo*, *hloho* 'the head' as *sekopo*, and *ditsebe* 'the ears' as *dikgetla*. Meeting people of various tribes and nationalities who speak various languages is common in the mining industry.

Direct speech

This is often used by the poets, as in,

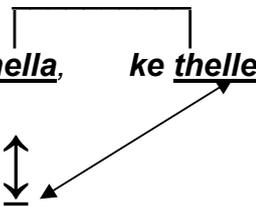
49. *Lekgwaba ke lena le fihla,*
50. *La re: "Helele, Mosotho wa Motlounge!"*
51. *Sekgwane, ntshehele nama, ke lapile!"*

49. Here came the raven,
50. Saying, "Hallo, you *Sotho*, son of *Motlounge*!"
51. Sekgwane, please give me a piece of meat, I am hungry!"

The use of direct speech in the narration of events is a feature common in the poetry of the mine workers' chants. It serves to create an atmosphere of reality to the narration. By mentioning the vulture in the narration he is alluding to one of the Basotho folktales, a feature also common in this type of an oral art form.

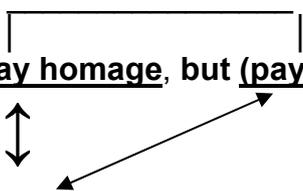
Repetition of phrases:

3. *Ke tla thella, ke thelle ho mang?*



4. *Ke tla thella, ho hotsho ha maphiri a phirima,*

3. *I will pay homage, but (pay homage) to whom?*



4. *I will pay homage, I, the black One of the black darkness,*

The phrase, *thella* 'to pay homage' is used thrice in the two lines. It forms both a horizontal and vertical repetition. The phrase, *Ke tla thella*, 'I will pay homage' constitutes vertical initial linking. It serves to emphasize the point, namely, the paying of homage. The poet finds it difficult to pay homage because he finds himself in a difficult situation where nobody sympathizes with him. He finds himself surrounded by the black darkness of suffering and helplessness.

Praise poetry ending:

The conclusion of the chant is similar to the one usually used in the heroic praise poetry, namely,

38. *Ke Motlounge wa ha Sekgwane.*

39. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

38. I am Motlounge of the house of Sekgwane,

39. There it cuts off and leaves!

to mark the ending of the recitation.

Second recitation

In lines 31-39 of the second recitation, the reciter refers to a lady, a concubine, who fascinates him by her fringe skirt (*thethana*) and her beautiful big buttocks which apparently look as if they are a burden too heavy for her. Furthermore, he mentions with pride that he is popular and well known, since, as he says, his name and surname are on everybody's lips (*mahanong*). These are examples of common issues usually mentioned in the *difela* 'the mine workers' chants'. The last line, however, is an expression commonly used in the performance of praise poetry, namely, *Ya kgaola, ya ya!* 'There it cuts off and leaves!' which is usually accompanied with ululations as an indication that the performance has come to an end.

The two improvisational recitations of the same clan praise were done eloquently on each occasion. This unique manner of a clan praise recital revealed the high level of ability and talent, on the part of this reciter. His earlier statement that he was gifted in both the composition and recitation of the *difela*, accompanied by a concertina, made us truly understand and appreciate his unique approach to his clan praise recitation.

From the above, it can be observed that the recitation of the *diboko* 'clan praises' may also be penetrated by the *difela* 'mine workers' chants' by way of improvisation, through which the resultant genre transition occurs. Ability to bring about genre transition can be attributed to the *seroki*'s personal choice to remain unique and his intention to avoid the common way of reciting his *seboko*. The phenomenon of this nature reflects an attempt on the part of the reciter to unite the different oral poetic genres so that the one serves the other.

However, genre transition as discussed above, is not limited to the *diboko* and the *difela*, but occurs as well in the case of the *diboko* and the *dithoko*, where the recitation of the *seboko* is used as a stepping stone whereby the *seroki* conveys his information. For instance, the *seroki*, T.K. Kabai (Appendix no. 13) recorded at the Basotho Cultural Village in August 2000, chanted a *thoko* in which the following occurred: In lines 32-39 he used the entire recitation of his clan praise which is,

*Ke Mofokeng, motho wa ha Tshele,
Motho wa Malekotwana,
Motho wa Mammulane a Motlatla,
Ya sa nameleng fatshe,
Ya namelang mohaswaneng wa kobo,
Ya hlabang phiyo ka lemao,
A e ise moreneng,
A re, 'Morena, bona, ke hlabile!'*

I am one of the Bafokeng people, of the house of Tshele,
A descendant of Lekotwana,
A descendant of Mmulane, son of Motlatla,
Who does not spread out legs on the ground,
Who spreads out legs on an old piece of blanket,
Who pierces a kidney with a pin,
And takes it to the chief,
And says, 'Look, chief, I have slaughtered!'

The recitation of the *seboko*, 'clan praise' of the Bafokeng, a clan regarded as the most senior among the Basotho clans, includes the name of the great ancestor, Tshele. This particular Bafokeng clan originated from the ancestors, Lekotwana and Mmulane, who was the son of Motlatla. Mention of more than one ancestor reflects the importance the Basotho attach to their ancestors. Since the Bafokeng were not poor, as compared to other clans which slept nakedly on the ground, they had a piece of blanket (an animal hide) on which to sleep. The tribal idiosyncrasy characterizing the Bafokeng clan was in the matter of eating the first-fruits, a custom whereby the senior was the one to taste first (Tšiu, 2001: 79). It was the prerogative of the Bafokeng as a senior tribe to be the first to eat the first-fruits of the year, and any action contrary to this, by any tribe, other than the Bafokeng, was regarded as a serious breach of national etiquette. Lines 37-39 allude to this.

The *seboko*, as recited in the above lines, is then followed by information in which Kabai relates the historical place of origin of the Bafokeng, for instance, *Lona le tlohang lefatsheng la Babilona le Egepeta?* 'You, who originate from the country of

Babilon and Egypt? (line 41), and *Le fihla le emisa lefatsheng le bitswang Teransefala kajeno*, 'And finally encamp at a country called Transvaal today' (line 43). The whole country through which the Bafokeng travelled until they reached the Transvaal, says Kabai in lines 44-45, was not barren. In the chanting, reference to the origin and the ultimate arrival of the Bafokeng at the Transvaal ends in line 45.

As discussed above, it may be observed that the recitation of the *seboko* may be used as a means whereby the *seroki* wants to convey further information in his *thoko*. His crossing over from one oral genre to another constitutes an oral transition, namely, transition from the *seboko* to the *thoko*.

5.5 Conclusion

With the migration of the texts, especially at the beginning of the 21st century, the *diroki*, by exploiting and improvising the texts are able to produce (1) their own *dithoko* compositions in which extracts from the classical *dithoko* are included, (2) memorized classical *dithoko* accompanied by their own compositions, (3) their own compositions which include extracts from the *difela*. The revelation has been brought to light by the video tape recordings of the *diroki*'s performances at various places of the Free State, Lesotho and the Vaal during August 2000.

In some of the *difela* composed and recorded, it has emerged that extracts from the *dithoko* were added. In some *difela* were added extracts from the other *difela*. An unusual discovery we made is that where the *seroki* chants the *thoko*, and happens to include an extract from the *sefela*, he switches smoothly from one genre to another without change of voice, speed or pitch. Another incident of significance which emerged during the recordings in 2000 is that of the performer continuously switching from the *thoko* to the *sefela* and back to the *thoko*, and so on. This reflected mastery of the two oral genres on the part of the performer. Since the *dithoko* sections were all long memorized extracts from the classical *dithoko*, this reflected an exceptional retentive memory and interest of the classical *dithoko* on the part of the performer. It was only through the contents that distinction could be made between parts that constituted the *sefela* and the *thoko*.

In the recitation of the *diboko* 'clan praises', the *sefela* or the *thoko* can be used to create a genre transition whereby what initially was a *seboko* eventually becomes a *sefela* or a *thoko*, a phenomenon we may call 'migration of texts'.

The next chapter explores where Basotho oral poetry stands at the beginning of the 21st century.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

In the preceding Chapters 2 - 5, defining aspects of the oral genres, the *dithoko* (praise poems), the *difela* (mine workers' chants) and the *diboko* (family odes) have been investigated, namely, the pressures that impacted on the texts, in Chapter 2; performance, in Chapter 3; subject-matter and themes, in Chapter 4; and the migration of the texts, in Chapter 5.

The entire aim and purpose of this research and study was undertaken to determine where these oral genres stand at the beginning of the 21st century. The synchronic study undertaken in the four chapters took into account the various periods in which oral poetry existed, from the earliest possible period until at the beginning of the 21st century with the aim to determine whether or not there is any generic shift affecting these oral genres.

The aim of this chapter which is already contained the research topic, *Basotho oral poetry at the beginning of the 21st century* is therefore to come to a stock-taking at a very significant juncture of history – the beginning of the new century. We will foreground the main findings in each of the chapters in order to put forward what I would like to call the emerging of a new oral poetry performance culture among the Basotho, popularly known as 'popular culture', *lehobelo*; also to make some suggestions as to the future of oral poetry in Sesotho in view of the dynamic nature of the three oral genres, under the pressure of current socio-economic and political circumstances at the beginning of the 21st century.

6.2 Wrapping up the findings

The pressures on the text, as discussed in Chapter 2, reveal that the composition of the classical *dithoko* was mainly inspired by wars and battles in which the Basotho fought. For instance, the *seroki*, referring to Senekal's War (*Ntwa ya Senekale*) in

which the Boers were engaged in a fierce battle with the Basotho in 1854 – 1858, declaims in *Mangoaela* (1921: 42),

*Hlomellane oa Lioli, Masopha
Hlomella ba Senekane lehlaka,
Ba re ba ea nokeng, ba ee ba lla!*

Supplier of arms to the Hawks, Masopha,
Plant the reeds on the people of Senekal,
So that when they go to the river they go crying!

The poet exhorts Masopha whose regiment was named *Lioli* ‘the Hawks’, to stab Senekal’s men with a spear, a ‘reed’, and so drive them backwards across the Caledon River.

The emergence of cannibalism during the *Difaqane* period also inspired the composition of oral poetry such as the following *thoko* by the cannibal, Mosoansoanyane (in *Mangoaela*, 1921: 231),

*Raletsapo, hlaba tšoinyana letlele,
Lerumo la hanella makopong!*

Raletsapo, stab the white-faced one using a broad spear with a short handle,
The spear refused to come out of the forehead!

The poet addresses himself to Raletsapo, probably one of his friends, and instructs him to stab the victim, *tšoinyana* ‘the white-faced one’ indicative of the fact that the victim is white-faced because of fear, using a broad spear with a short handle so that it may penetrate deep into the forehead. The fact that the spear refuses to come out of the forehead indicates the force applied in the stabbing.

Past historical circumstances of wars and cannibalism under which the Basotho lived at that time inspired the composition of their oral poetry. The same is applicable to the Basotho poets at the beginning of the 21st century since their oral

compositions are likewise dictated by their circumstances. War, as hot pursuit, does not feature in their compositions anymore. Instead, heroism of the past is making way for a new political awareness. Mokheseng Soai, in praising the current monarch of Lesotho, King Letsie III, born at a time when wars are no more fought with sticks but words, uses the following expression in lines 79-80 of his *thoko* (Appendix 20),

Mohato ha ke mo roke hoba e le mohale

Ke mo roka hoba e le wa kgotla.

Mohato, 'I do not praise him for being a warrior-in-war
I praise him because he belongs to the court'.

This illustrates how the time for wars on the battlefields has passed. 'Mampho Chopho, in praising Leshoboro, her chief, appeals for political peace and stability in Lesotho (Appendix no. 5). Heroism on the battlefield is thus making way for a new political awareness.

Historical developments have affected the *difela* genre as well. The earliest *difela* were mainly confined to and inspired by the *diroki's* journeys to and from the mines on foot and train, their experiences at the mines, their loved ones at home in Lesotho, (cf. **Khirimpana** (1955). The latter compositions demonstrate an increasing number of sources such as religion (e.g. Psalms), new chiefs, emerging villages, shops and businesses, etc. The entire new political and social structure in Lesotho and South Africa affords the *diroki* more room for their compositions (Pheka Setlaba in the Appendix, no. 18).

Although the *diboko* are still remembered by many, some have retreated as well, possibly under the pressure of the tendency among the emergent elite and also the affluent middle-class people to abandon all former "tribal" connections; and so performance of this oral art form has become restricted to those people who still have strong clan/tribal associations and do not feel threatened by the so called "tribal legacy". Shifting has taken place as well. All these contribute to the emergence of what is known as *popular culture*.

Performance of the classical *dithoko* took place at various venues and times, anywhere after the Basotho warriors have returned from the battlefield, at the *matsema* 'working parties', the *dipitso* 'assemblies', and the *kgotla* 'court'. The *diphoqo* 'the *diroki* specialists, whose duty was to guard the village' would announce the arrival of the chief at the court, or any visitor approaching the village. They did all these through the chanting of the *dithoko* (Damane 1963: 8). Even these practices seem to have diminished or disappeared because of the changing modern political situation. Indicative of the shift the recording festival at the Basotho Cultural Village was overseen by a *sebohodi* 'watchman/announcer' who also played the *sekgankula* musical instrument high on the rock near the entrance of the venue. Even natural classical venues have given way for formal organized festivals, such as MACUFE, Mangaung Cultural Festival and Morija Arts & Cultural Festival, which are annual events. The festival at Morija, from the 1st through 3rd October 1999 celebrated 175 years of Lesotho's diverse cultural heritage. There the duties of the *diphoqo* were discontinued and were taken over by uniformed security policemen.

Performances of the *diroki* recorded in 2000, demonstrate that the chanting of the *dithoko*, which among the Basotho has always been the sole domain of men, shows a growing trend that women and young boys emerge as *diroki* as well. 'Mampho Chopho and 'Ma-white Mahlelebe were the women we have recorded. Tumelo Mofokeng and Thapelo Letjori were still under training under the watchful eyes of an expert like Mphutlane Mofokeng. The venues for the performance of the *difela* have changed as well. With the discovery of diamond and gold in 1868 and 1886 respectively, the classical *difela* were composed and chanted on the journeys as the poets walked long distances on foot to and from the mines in the urban areas of South Africa. Those composed and chanted at the beginning of the 21st century, as confirmed by our recordings are performed at many different venues. The mine compound's recreation areas are indeed important sites. At the venues where our recordings took place the *dithoko* and the *difela* occupied equal performance space.

The accoutrement between the classical *diroki* and modern ones differ. The following was the complete outfit of a classical warrior and poet (Arbousset in Ambrose 1991:66),

On his head, three *likhare* or tips of porcupine quills skilfully twisted into spirals, three bladders or amulets, two crane wings and a jackal tail; on the neck, a *khau* or copper gorget and a choker of medicinal twigs; a panther skin flowing from the shoulders; a *lebeko* hanging from the neck; a breastplate of hide; in his right hand, a shield or *thebe* of oxskin, topped by a *mokhele* or thyrus of ostrich feathers, and a molamu or club; and on the legs *likhohlo* or calfskin buskins.

There might have been many variations on Arbusset's description 150 years ago, yet, unlike the classical *diroki*, those recorded in 2000 were dressed differently. Their accoutrement entailed blankets, knobkerries, the Basotho grass hat (*modianyewe*), etc. For instance, at Thabana-Tshowana, Mphutlane Mofokeng declaimed his *thoko* wearing a leather hat made from a gazelle hide, a blanket made from gazelle hides sewn together, and holding in his right hand a long stick decorated with white beads in the middle. The intention with the accoutrement was to maintain the appearance or style of the age-old oral Basotho tradition.

The subject-matter and themes of the classical *dithoko* and those chanted in the year 2000 indicate another difference. Since the classical *dithoko* were inspired by wars and battles, the subject-matter and themes conveyed information to that effect. This is as well the case with the *dithoko* inspired by cannibalism (see examples above). Contrary to this, the *dithoko* recorded in 2000 demonstrate that their subject-matter is not about war or battles, but about socio-political circumstances prevailing during the life of the *diroki*. The *seroki*, James Mofokeng, recorded at Thabana-Tshowana, chanted a *thoko* in which he praised his local chief, Leabua, of the Batlokwa village, in Qwaqwa. The subject-matter, for instance, among the chief's responsibilities regarding local affairs of the village, mentions the following (Appendix no. 15, lines 23-24),

*O hana ho sehela batho meedi,
Le masimo o ba shehetse hodima mafika*

He refused to indicate boundaries to the people,

The fields he has chosen among the rocks.

Extolling the virtues of the kings of Lesotho characterized the subject-matter of a number of the *dithoko* recorded in 2000. Out of 33 poets recorded, one *thoko* was in honour of King Moshoeshoe 1, two in honour of King Bereng Seeiso (Moshoeshoe 11), and 2 in honour of the current King Letsie III.

Unlike the classical *dithoko*, another group conveyed self-praise on the part of the *diroki* recorded in 2000. These poems are referred to by Coplan (1994:76) as *Lithoko tsa bafo* 'Commoners' praises'. The subject-matter in these praises is generally about the extraordinary birth of the *seroki*, hatred by his enemies, heroic manner of fighting his enemy, and any other heroic deed. The number of poems recorded and falling in this category is fifteen, and thus reflects a growing number of the *dithoko* in this category (see the Appendix).

A significant example of the *thoko* differing from the classical ones in terms of the subject-matter and theme, is one chanted by Mokolane Mosikili (Appendix no. 9), and whose theme 'Salvation of the sinner by God through Christ' was conveyed by the subject-matter of religious nature such as the origin of sin, the crucifixion of Christ, God's punishment on the sinner, etc. The composition and the nature of this *thoko* are attributed to the influence of Christian religion which is an indication that the *dithoko* compositions are largely inspired by the historical developments of the times of the *diroki*.

Another overarching finding is the *inevitability of generic shift*, whereby one genre becomes part of another resulting in what we may call 'hybridization' of oral genres. This affects all the genres we have been working with. Whereas these three classical genres maintained their pure form, and were known and accepted according to their particular distinctive features, inter-genre transition or inter-penetration has set in at the beginning of the 21st century. This took place in the following ways:

- 1) It happens in cases where the *seroki* includes *famous lines* from the classical *dithoko* in his composition. This serves to add flavour or authenticity and demonstrates that the legacy of the past oral tradition is still maintained (see Chapter 5).

2) Where *sizable* memorized *dithoko extracts* include the *seroki's* own composition. This phenomenon constitutes a vicarious reliving of the past, and brings about a feeling of being part and parcel of the past heroic times. It also serves as a means through which past events and history are transmitted to new generations. This reflects good memory on the part of the *seroki*.

3) Where the *seroki's* own *thoko* includes *lines from another genre*, the *sefela*, for instance. Use of lines from *sefela* serves as a means to avoid monotony but maintain the attention of the audience. This penetration of one genre by another reflects the *seroki's* equal mastery of both oral forms, and reflects the two separate existences of the performer. Firstly, he/she is a rural subject under the chief and declaiming *dithoko* largely in praise of the chief. Secondly, he/she is a migrant worker often looked down upon by the society, but who nevertheless defines his/her identity in a system that is exploitative and dehumanizing.

4) Where the chanting of the *difela* includes *lines from the dithoko*. This reflects not only the importance attached to the *dithoko* as a foundation of oral tradition but also mastery of both genres as well.

5) Where the performer makes *regular switches* from one genre to another, and so forth. The lines in, for instance, Sello Rapeane's chanting are 613 in number, and have been demarcated as follows: *Thoko* (1-196), *Sefela* (197-218), *Thoko* (219-266), *Sefela* (267-346), *Thoko* (347-366), *Sefela* (367-613). Transition from either the *sefela* to the *thoko* and from the *thoko* to the *sefela*, was smooth. Changing from one genre to another indicates the degree of versatility of the *seroki* as well as his gift of a retentive memory which contributed to the success of his rendition. The intentional and particular selection from the classical *dithoko* anthology indicates the *seroki's* strong alignment with the oral tradition, his association with past heroic events, including his progenitors. This sends a strong message to the audience that the classical *dithoko* constitute a firm foundation upon which contemporary oral performance should be based.

6) *Difela* compositions which include *lines from other difela* is yet another phenomenon characterizing the 21st century *difela*. This is a deviation from earlier *difela* compositions. This is done for the enrichment of their compositions and the selection of information deemed necessary for aesthetic entertainment of the audience.

Genre transition has also affected the *diboko* recited at the beginning of the 21st century. Though they have for centuries been intended for verbatim recitation, genre-transition happens where their recitation is penetrated by the *difela*. In other words, what commenced as a *seboko* ends up as a *sefela*. This reflects an attempt to deviate from the common way of reciting and to convey information in a manner quite entertaining.

The preceding findings, briefly wrapped up in this discussion, constitute the cornerstone of the entire research and study. Our observation, based on the realization that historical developments have played a role on the Basotho as a nation as well as on the composition of their oral poetry, brings us to the conclusion that oral poetry, the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko*, is not static but dynamic, and will therefore continue to subscribe to changing circumstances in the future. Says Wells (1994: 2),

[E]mergent culture refers to recently evolved organic continuities of performance style which have evolved in modern performance contexts...

Another insight emanating from the research is the problem of memory. With the passage of time part of the history of the past is fading from memory. With the absence of wars which inspired the classical *dithoko*, the poets of the new generation now learn the classical *dithoko* by heart or turn the praise into a self-praise, *Dithoko tsa marena di fetohile dithoko tsa bafo*, 'The praise poems of the chiefs have become the commoners' praises'. Though they may not have fought in any war or battle, they nevertheless praise themselves for their heroic fighting skills like the poets of old, the *mateatshwene* 'warriors who have killed their victims on the battlefield' (see Mphutlane Mofokeng in the Appendix no. 4).

Another insight to be mentioned here is the role of memory between the *dithoko* and the *difela*. The chanting of the *thoko* puts more strain on memory because the *seroki* has to be accurate in relating information such as the correct names of the chief he is praising, his family names, the names of his ancestors, the names of the places where the battles were fought, etc. The poet who chants the *sefela*, on the other hand, has less strain on memory because information he is relating may not necessarily be correct or factual. It may even be fictitious because he is more entertaining the audience than relating correct information of events.

Insight emanating from 2000 recordings is the classification of the *dithoko* into the following categories:

- The classical poems chanted word-for-word and in which the chiefs were praised;
- Modern poems composed and chanted in honour of the living chiefs (e.g. Mokheseng Soai, praising King Letsie III).
- Commoners' praise poems (e.g. Joshua Makara).
- Religious poem in which the *seroki* relates the salvation history of the sinner through Christ.

6.3 The Emerging Alternative: Popular Culture

In the light of the findings it is quite clear that history has caught up with time honoured *dithoko*, not only because of the absence of the wars and the battlefields and fighting heroic poets of old (chief Maama). This situation has resulted in the emergence of what is termed 'popular culture'. Annual festivals such as MACUFE, Mangaung Cultural Festival held at Bloemfontein, and Morija Arts & Cultural Festival at Morija have become popular events that have currently attracted the attention and interest of the Basotho, at the beginning of the 21st century. The relative ease and noticeable competence with which the impresarios succeeded in putting together extended programs for our recordings, also indicate to what extent the popular cultural festival has become part of modern cultural expression. The festivals include various forms of Sesotho music, horsemanship, traditional dance, theatre, local

musical instruments, *morabaraba* 'the mill game' competition, *famo* 'sensual women dance' and jazz. Festivals of this nature serve as platforms on which various kinds of oral art forms, including the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko* are performed before audiences. By so doing, oral tradition is revived and inspired in the young generation.

The various forms of traditional compositions of the Basotho constitute a popular culture which Barber (1997: 3) regards as, 'that which truly serves the interests of the people by opening their eyes to the historical conditions of their existence'. The word, 'popular' as used here should be understood in the sense of, that which emanates from and is popularly practiced by the people. Popular culture among the Basotho includes oral compositions such as *mokorotlo* 'war dance', *mokgibo* 'women's breast dance', traditional songs sung by girls and boys; *dithoko*, *difela*, *diboko*, *dithoko tsa makolwane* 'initiates' poems', the *ndlamo* dance of Nguni origin, which has been incorporated as part of the Basotho popular culture. Teboho Koekoe, an experienced Sesotho radio announcer who knows much about the Basotho culture, suggested a comprehensive Sesotho term for 'popular culture' "*lehobelo*" because he argues that oral compositions are generally accompanied by body movements such as *ho hobela* 'dancing'.

Lehobelo performances are not performed with the sole purpose of entertainment. They also carry a message reflecting the situation of the performers as well as their ultimate goal. Fabian in Barber (1997: 6) confirms,

Cultural expressions...are not evidence for how a culture "works" (or functions" or "determines action"); they only show how perceptions, experiences and problems are being "worked out" in an open, never-ending process.

The poet, Mofoka Rasetla, recorded at 'Melesi Lodge chanted a *thoko* in which he was not only entertaining the audience, but warning King Letsie III to guard against the Roman Catholic Church in Lesotho which may endanger his life when the sacraments are being served.

The same is applicable to the *sefela*. The performers' chanting is more than mere entertainment. It is through the *sefela* that the migrant workers "define their identity as men of the world, men of eloquent knowledge, and as human beings facing a socially disruptive and degrading life on the mines" (cf. Wells, 1994:266).

The modern *difela* are not detached from the classical *dithoko*. Concepts of old such as *madimo* 'the cannibals' feature in their compositions where they are used in modern contexts to refer to *bomabalane* 'the male clerks', *bontona* 'indunas', and *diforomane* 'foremen' who in modern times treat them inhumanly, exploit them and make life miserable for them.

Recitation of the *seboko*, like other oral cultural expressions, aims at conveying information regarding origin, ancestors, tribal characteristics and part of the history pertaining to the establishment of the clan. The goal in reciting is to identify oneself (cf. Tšiu, 2001: 61-62).

Popular culture as an alternative to the classical *dithoko* performances reflects revitalization and rebirth where the festivals in themselves become an 'enabling event' for performances of various kinds. The popular cultural festival is an ideal site for adaptation (of traditional genres both in content and style), adoption such as the adoption from neighbouring cultures (cf. the athletic *ndlamo* dance) and alignment of all performable cultural expressions in one festive performance event. It is an ideal site also for new creativity and productivity that popular culture seems to be capable of instilling in its performance that Barber is referring to. Thus the "sociological transformations of the fabric of Sesotho life" (Wells, 1994: 169) was bound to become visible in the oral poetry performance tradition as well.

The dynamic nature of the oral poetic performances necessitates our next discussion.

6.4 The Future of Basotho Oral Poetry

The changes and shifts that have occurred and affected the *dithoko*, the *difela* and the *diboko* with the passage of time indicate that oral genres are not static and will

therefore undergo changes under the pressures of changing circumstances of socio-political nature. Discussion in this respect will be thus under the following.

6.4.1 *Changing socio-economic and political situations: Material*

The changing socio-economic and political conditions in South Africa and Lesotho in particular will be opportunities to be explored by the *diroki* as new material for the themes and composition of the *dithoko* and the *difela*. These will include the official opening of new buildings, official installation of new chiefs, demonstrations by striking workers which are characterized by chanting on the streets; general political elections, leaders of organizations, are some of the events already taking place and which should become the building stones for the creation of new oral poetic compositions in future.

6.4.2 *Emergence of women and young boys as poets*

The chanting of the *dithoko* and the mine workers' chants (the *difela*) has all along been the domain of men only. Perhaps this was occasioned by the fact that the *dithoko*, in particular, were composed mainly with the aim of extolling the chiefs and warriors for their heroic deeds in the wars or battles. However, this culture will have to change in view of the current socio-economic and political situation and the Constitution of South Africa, in which, among others, equality of all people before the law is enshrined. Women, young men and boys should be encouraged to take their respective roles as the new emerging *diroki*.

Out of a total of 33 poets whose *dithoko* performances were recorded on video tape during August and September 2000, only two were women. We are nevertheless optimistic that the number of women taking part in the *dithoko* performances is likely to increase in the near future. At Thabana-Tshowana, one of the *diroki* recorded, Mphutlane Mofokeng, had organized a group of young boys of about 8 to 14 years of age, who performed the *dithoko* and the *mokorotlo* 'war dance'. These boys perform at various cultural festivals. The aim of the group is an attempt to revive the oral tradition of the Basotho. Groups of this nature should be established, not only at Qwaqwa, but in other provinces of South Africa and Lesotho where the Basotho live.

The teaching of the *diboko* should be part of the syllabi at the schools, especially in the teaching of Sesotho as a school subject. This should be done during the early years of the young school-going children. In this way knowledge of this Sesotho oral tradition and the *diboko* in particular will be enhanced, and more reciters will emerge.

6.4.3 Creation of opportunities

Opportunities in the future will have to be created for the revival and maintenance of oral tradition and for the performance of the Basotho oral poetic genres in particular. The South African Broadcasting Corporation and Radio Lesotho play and will still play an important role as platforms for the revival of the Basotho oral cultural products. These instances offer an opportunity for listeners as the radio is able to transcend boundaries of space and time to reach the millions. In this way, more poets will emerge. In addition, permanent storing of oral performances (which these institutions are capable of) will accelerate and enhance the revival and maintenance of the oral art forms.

Popular cultural events should be held more frequently than it is the case at the moment. Practices of the past should be revived and adapted to modern circumstances.

6.4.4 Performing arts societies

The *dithoko* poets do not easily have a platform where they declaim their compositions which usually need attentive listeners and appropriate venues. It is unusual to hear a *thoko* poet declaiming a *thoko* in the bus, taxi or train. It is also unusual for them to engage in *dithoko* competitions. The *difela*, on the other hand, are usually performed in competitive contexts (*liphehisano-khang*), either at the labour recruitment centres, on the buses and taxis that take them to the mines, or on the mine compounds themselves (Wells, 1994: 267). Competitions among the *dithoko* composers, similar to the *difela* ones, should be encouraged.

Competitions held among the Basotho *difela* laureates already take place at the mining compounds. Competitions of this nature among the *dithoko* laureates, if ever held, have not been brought to the best attention of the Basotho nation in general. This is an area that still needs to be developed and explored by the *diroki* themselves, as regular competitions in this oral genre will serve as stimulus towards renewed interest and revival of the *dithoko* which truly occupy central significance in the Basotho oral tradition. At Thabana-Tshowana, in Qwaqwa, and Huntersville, in the Vaal, societies known as *Mokgatlo wa Dihoba* ‘Society of traditional culture’ are in existence. More of these societies need to be established in various provinces of South Africa and Lesotho as well. Formation of societies of both the *difela* and the *dithoko* poets will be beneficial because of the following reasons:

- Societies help ensure that the vocation of the *diroki* is more organized than it is the case at the moment where each individual is on his own.
- Societies attract more members who will prefer to be part of organized institutions which are elevated to a higher level, possibly international standard where they are able to communicate with members of societies in other countries.
- Organized societies are more likely to receive funding from either the government or private institutions. This will benefit the poets financially.
- For organized societies it is easier to find venues and organize regular competitions from which the *diroki*, especially the winners, will benefit financially.
- Competitions will raise the standard of performance and enhance oral creativity on the part of the *diroki*.
- Amateurs joining the societies will be exposed to the techniques of the oral genres, such as, use of a repertoire of formulas, and will in this way produce oral poetic products of high standard.
- Maintenance of the oral genres and oral tradition in general will effectively be perpetuated.
- Orally composed genres will be transcribed into written texts and translated into various languages so that they will be accessible to a large readership (cf. Mangoaela’s anthology, **Lithoko tsa marena a Basotho** ‘Praise-poems of the

Basotho chiefs', 1921, and Moletsane's *difela* anthology, **Liparola-Thota** 'The Country-Travelers', 1983).

6.4.5 Pressures impacting on the future texts

The *diroki* of the 21st century will also be subjected to pressures which will impact on the texts. Kaschula (2002: 24) enumerates various aspects of modern setting as follows,

Oral poetry should be viewed as a 'dynamic' tradition in southern Africa. Urbanisation, the impact of education, the formation of the previously 'independent' homelands, the changing nature of chieftainship, the emergence of black nationalism, the struggle for freedom and independence, the release of political prisoners, the unbanning of political organizations, and the 1994 general elections have all had their effect on the tradition.

Different aspects of modern setting and freedom of speech have positive effects on the texts in that the *diroki* will have both a widened verbal repertoire and more freedom to express it without fear of being labeled 'a communist'.

Socio-economic factors affecting the *diroki* will also have effect on the future texts of both the *dithoko* and the *difela*. The *diroki* are negatively affected by entrenchments largely in the mining industries of South Africa where most of them are employed, and this makes it financially difficult for them to maintain their families. This kind of economic pressure in terms of the need to become self-sufficient, as well as Christianity, which is a form of pressure militating against oral tradition and labeling it heathenism, constitute an inspiration for oral poetic compositions.

Influence of Christianity is demonstrated by common references to parts of the Scripture, such as, the whole word-for-word quotation of psalm 1 and *Ntata rona ya mahodimong* prayer 'Our Father who art in heaven' prayer (see Mahlomola Thamae and T.K. Kabai in the Appendix no's. 2 and 13).

The pressures discussed above will hopefully impact and characterize texts of the *dithoko* and the *difela* as from the beginning of the 21st century.

6.4.6 Role of the government: Revival of oral tradition

The campaign of African Renaissance could involve an attempt to revive and maintain oral tradition of the indigenous people. The late President of Botswana, Seretse Khama, on the need for the celebration of the oral tradition among the Batswana, is quoted by Scott (2008: 95) as having said, "A nation without a past is a lost nation; a people without a past is a people without a soul".

Revival and maintenance of the oral art forms of the past, among the Batswana, is a matter of great importance without which their existence is meaningless. The sentiment is almost similar to the Basotho's statement, *Setjhaba se lahlang meetlo se a timela*, 'A nation that turns its back against culture, dies'. Scott (2008: 95) continues and advances the reason for Kgama's encouragement that oral art forms be celebrated. She says,

By encouraging his people to learn about and celebrate their own unique history and traditions, he helped restore his nation's pride and self-esteem.

It is true that revisiting one's past history and oral traditions brings one closer to one's origin, and therefore truly gives a sense of pride and self-esteem.

6.5 Conclusion

South Africa is engaged in the revival of the oral heritage of its people with diverse cultures through the campaign of African Renaissance which, for instance, has resulted in various languages of its people being given official status. Lesotho, a more rural country, where to a large extent the practice of the Basotho oral heritage is a living tradition, is under the leadership of a King who is strongly in favour of revival and maintenance of oral art forms. At the Royal Palace in Maseru, King Letsie III, on 1 September 2000, responded to the research team's courtesy visit and said,

Ke rata ho qala, ntate, ka ho leboha lona beng ba morero ona, ka tjheseho e kanakana eo le e bontshitseng, le thahasello eo le e bontshitseng, ho hatisa le ho batlisisa difela, dithoko le dipina tsa rona Basotho. Karolo ena ke karolo e kgolo meetlong ya rona, mme ke karolo ya bohlokwa meetlong ya rona Basotho. Mme ke na le tshepo ya hore morero ona o tla sibolla, mme o behe mahlong le dikelellong tsa baditjhaba hore na Basotho ha ba ithoka, na ba ithoka ka sebopelo se jwang, na ba reng ha ba ithoka. Ruri ntate, ke morero oo ke o thoholetsang, o babatsehang, mme e se eka o ka atleha hobane katleho ya ona ke bona e le katleho ya Lesotho le Basotho le meetlo ya rona Basotho. Ntate, ka mantswe ana nka re ruri ke a le leboha, mme ke a le lebohela.

When requested to express his sentiments in English, he said,

I would just like to convey my sincerest and deepest gratitude to you all for the effort that you are taking in this endeavor whereby you are trying to expose and explore that part of our culture which is praise poetry and some songs which are very important and very dear to us as Basotho. And we hope through this project this aspect of Basotho culture will be available and be exposed to the wider global community so that they know what Basotho do and how they do their praise poetry which is, as I have said, so very important in our culture. This project I fully endorse, I fully support and I wish it success in all its aspects, and I would like to thank you once again for all your efforts. Thank you.

The speech of the King highlights, among others, the importance of exposition and exploration of the oral poetic compositions of the Basotho. In the Sesotho version he used an expression, *ho sibolla*, which is usually used in connection with the discovery of precious stones such as gold or diamond. In other words, such recordings of oral compositions would help discover and uncover precious cultural information hidden and encapsulated in the Basotho's oral creations. The king further expressed the need for the availability of those oral art forms to what he called, '*baditjhaba*', 'the

wider global community'. What also came out clearly in his speech, was the dearness of the oral art forms, expressed in such words as, "... so very important in our culture". The sense of closeness, dearness and importance, is attributed to the fact that the oral art forms are not foreign, but are the Basotho's own oral and cultural products, the carriers of their own history, whose 'creators' or composers need to preserve, revive and maintain. His expression of endorsement and support of the project was an indication that he was looking forward to the revival and vibrancy of the oral art forms, indeed, the pride of the nation, which characterized life and culture of the Basotho since their establishment as a nation by Moshoeshe.

It is hoped that this thesis will in part answer to that vision of the King.

***Ya kgaola, ya ya!* 'There it cuts off and leaves!'**

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A SET OF SIX VIDEO TAPES OF THE RECORDED POETS:

1) The Basotho Cultural Village, Free State

Semai Moloji
 Mokolane Mosikili
 Joshua Makara
 T.K. Kabai
 Tutubala Tšoene
 Sera Khamokha
 Tshepo Lethunya
 Malwane Molaba

2) Thabana-Tshowana, Free State

Mphutlane Mofokeng

James Mofokeng

Tumelo Mofokeng

Thapelo Letjori

3) 'Melesi Lodge, Thaba Bosiu, Lesotho

Sello Rapeane

Mahlomola Thamae

Lethusang Nthuloane

Mofoka George Rasetla

Ma-white Mahlelebe

Paulus Paulo

4) Morija Museum & Archives, Lesotho

'Mampho Chopho

Qekise Moeletsi

Mokhele Thulo

Pheka Setlaba

Lekunutu Sello

Ralebatha Motsamai

5) Matsieng, Lesotho

Lebamang Moabi

Mokheseng Soai

Sello Nthapo

Shekai Ratsatsi

Arston Mphou

Baptsist Komello Mahanetsa

6) Huntersville, Vaal

Morabaraba Lehloha

Qabanyane Mothai

Francis Nkoli

**BASOTHO ORAL POETRY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST
CENTURY**

VOLUME 2 (APPENDIX)

by

William Moruti Tšiu

**Submitted in accordance with the requirements
for the degree of**

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in the subject

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at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

PROMOTER: PROF C.F. SWANEPOEL

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PHOTOS: *DIROKI TSA BASOTHO* 'THE BASOTHO POETS'

The Basotho *diroki*, comprising men, women and children, were recorded on video tape at the Basotho Cultural Village; Thabana-Tshowana; 'Melesi Lodge, in Thaba-Bosiu; Morija Museum and Archives, in Morija; Matsieng and Huntersville, in the Vaal, in August and September 2000. Their performances included the *dithoko tsa ntw*a (classical praise poems), *dithoko tsa marena le bahale ba kajeno* (poems of modern chiefs/kings and heroes), *dithoko tsa bafo* (commoners' praise poems), *dithoko tsa borapedi* (religious praise poems), *dithoko tsa makolwane* (boy initiates' poems), and the *difela* (mine workers' chants).



(1) Sello Rapeane



(2) Mahlomola Thamae



(3) Baptist Komello Mahanetsa



(4) Mphutlane Mofokeng



(5) 'Mampho Chopho



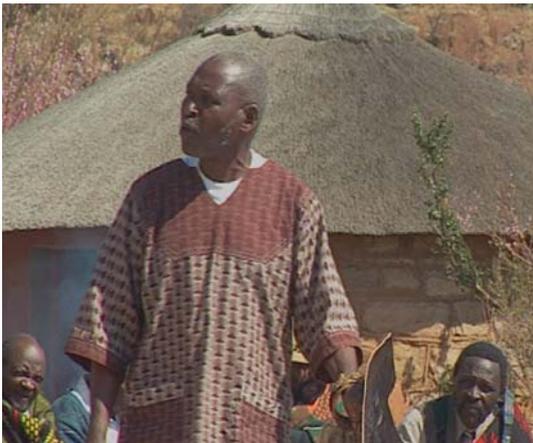
(6) Lethusang Nthuloane



(7) Semai Moloji



(8) Francis Sello Nkoli



(9) Mokolane Mosikili



(10) Qabanyane Mothai



(11) Qekise Moeletsi



(12) Joshua Makara



(13) T.K. Kabai



(14) Mofoka George Rasetla



(15) James Mofokeng



(16) Lebamang Moabi



(17) Mokhele Thulo



(18) Pheka Setlaba



(19) Tutubala Tšoene



(20) Mokgeseng Soai



(21) Ma-white Mahlelebe



(22) Lekunutu Sello



(23) Paulus Paulo



(24) Ralebatha Motsamai



(25) Tumelo Mofokeng



(26) Thapelo Lejori



(27) Sehloho Lehalehale



(28) Sera Khamokha



(29) Sello Nthapo



(30) Shekai Ratsatsi



(31) Arston Mphou



(32) Morabaraba Lehloha



(33) Tshepo Lethunya

APPENDIX

(SESOTHO TRANSCRIPTIONS AND ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS)

PRAISE POEMS (*DITHOKO*), MINE WORKERS' CHANTS (*DIFELA*) AND INTERVIEWS WITH THE *DIROKI*

(1) SELLO RAPEANE ['MELESI LODGE]

1. *Se a dumedisa sebata.*
2. *Nna ha ke ipate ke tlou makgola,*
3. *Phoofolo e mokadi,*
4. *Kgaitsemi ya Bokang,*
5. *Ke phoofolo e robalang e eme,*
6. *Ha phofotswana di robala di bothile.*
7. *O ke ke wa mpona ke bothile le kgale,*
8. *Le ntse le botsana, le sa mpotse,*
9. *Ke ahile kae?*
10. *Ke motho wa Kolo, Thabasehaua,*
11. *Mashai, thaba e hauhela batho,*
12. *Ekaba ka lekgolo la batho.*
13. *Ke ahile koug ka hodima Tswaing,*
14. *Ke mona moo noka a qalang ho teraya,*
15. *E etsa morabaraba.*
16. *Banna ba heso, tholang jwale ke mpe ke le sebele.*
17. *Ke re ke itse naledi e tshwetshweu ya Ramatheola,*
18. *E tshwetshweu ya Ramakhobalo,*
19. *Ya habo Jonathane le Mofoka.*
20. *Mohla ntwala ya Fora mawatlang,*
21. *Ngwana morena o ile a etswa sehlabelo,*
22. *A etswa se monko o monate,*
23. *Moshoeshe a tsota a le hodimo,*
24. *A re Mojela le Letlama ba e etsa kgoba,*
25. *Na ngwana morena o kile a etswa sehlabelo?*
26. *Ferenekulo ya bana ba Letlama,*
27. *Mohlang a qalang ho fihla Bereng,*
28. *Ya betswa ya lebiswa Kapa,*
29. *Leboya ya hoballa,*
30. *Banna ya etsa malakabe,*
31. *Mafutsana re setse morao.*
32. *Dihwaba di e hlabela mokorotlo,*
33. *Mora Mojela seokamelabatho,*
34. *Mohlang le qalang ho benya letolo,*
35. *La habo Maama le Seeiso,*
36. *La habo Jonathane le Mofoka*
37. *Le ile la benya, la o sohlometsa mmane,*
38. *Mmane wa tladi.*

39. *O tshele mawatle, tladi,*
40. *Ho benya ha Makhaola,*
41. *Habo Josefa le Sekhonyana,*
42. *Habo Mojela le Nkoebe,*
43. *Kai Sekodi, Raitela, Ralekena le mmuso,*
44. *Le ntshwarele, ntshwareleng, marena ke fositse,*
45. *Ke fahlile mmuso ka lehlabathe.*
46. *Hobane ke ne ke phekola lefatshe le kula,*
47. *Le ne le tshwerwe ke kgopho le mokaola*
48. *Jwale ke leo le a honyella,*
49. *Mohala wa honyella Matsieng.*
50. *A arabela morena e moholo,*
51. *Hwa ntekatekane, hwa lebelo,*
52. *Radinkela, Mojela Ramatheola,*
53. *A romelle Leken a Ramakhaola,*
54. *Hobane Leken a ke motswadi wa bana ba me,*
55. *Hape Leken a ke thakgisa ha Mokoteli.*
56. *A tsoha ka meso thaka Makonyane a lebella dilemela,*
57. *Ha hlaha tau e tlola ka pelo e bohloko, Leken a,*
58. *A feta ha Mphasa ho se le puo,*
59. *A boka dikgomo ha Raseeiso.*
60. *Sekepe sa nka Mmuso le Seeiso,*
61. *Se mona se seholo sa ntw a,*
62. *Noha ya metsi ra taboha matswalo.*
63. *Tlhapi metsing tsa howa Mokwena,*
64. *Di boka dikgomo ha Raletshabisa,*
65. *Mohlankana wa Qimong.*
66. *Morena o re o utlwile, morena.*
67. *Kulo ya Seeiso ngwana wa kgosi,*
68. *O bile a tsebiswa,*
69. *A bitswa Maseru mejametalana,*
70. *Teng a fihla a nehwa borena,*
71. *Lefufa la beta marena a maholo, bonnyeo le bonnyeo.*
72. *Ha etswa hure: (Hurray) ka lapeng habo Makhobalo.*
73. *Thababosiu ha hwa etswa mokorotlo.*
74. *Mabitla a e bina a dutse,*
75. *Ba re ho ne ho phokola morena Moshoeshoe,*
76. *A dungwelwa ke yena morena Letsie.*
77. *E motsho kodung moshemane ngwana Mohato,*
78. *O tswetse Sehanyata ihlo la lefatshe,*
79. *Morena lehlaku la letonanahadi.*
80. *A hoeletsa ka lentswe le leholo haholo,*
81. *Ha utlwa matona a ntatae,*
82. *Kwebu a utlwa a le ha hae,*
83. *Safiele a bua le Monyaka,*
84. *A re nyathoha o etse jwalo ka Matheola,*
85. *Ke kgale ba ntsha metsanatsana.*
86. *Ba ntsha Bomofoka le Lepolesa,*
87. *Ba beha meraka modima dipere,*
88. *Ba re monongwaha ho tswa Kgolo le Leken a,*

89. *Kgolo ba mo isitse Tebang.*
90. *A re ka pelong a mo siisa botjhabela,*
91. *Monongwaha ha esale Lekena a fihla,*
92. *Maqheku ho iketla a ka Tebang,*
93. *A kena tenteng lehlabula.*
94. *Re neha tau tsa kgale badimong,*
95. *Morena o siya a hlomile sefate,*
96. *O re se makala a matenya,*
97. *Barui le mafutsana phuthehang,*
98. *Tlong kapele le tshabele moriting.*
99. *Wa Makopoi a le badimong,*
100. *O re o se o le leqosa le leholo ngwaneso,*
101. *Eya o tsebise marena Lesotho,*
102. *Hore kgutsana fatshe e a sotleha,*
103. *E sotlwa ke hobane batswadi ba shwele,*
104. *Ho shwele Maama le Seeiso,*
105. *Ho shwele Nkoebe le Lerotholi,*
106. *O hle o qale ka morena Moshoeshoe.*
107. *O tsebise kgoholedi ya Manka,*
108. *Morena wa Peka pela Botha-Buthe,*
109. *Kganyapa kgudu ya bana ba Mojela,*
110. *Hobane nakong ena ke hodimo le lefubedu,*
111. *Lehodimo la sethibadiheke,*
112. *Diheke o thiba tse ka bodikela,*
113. *O thiba tsa bodikela Makaka.*
114. *Mohale wa marumo,*
115. *O bohale, o mosehla moshemane wa Thakajwe,*
116. *Ka bosehla o tshwana le lehlabathe,*
117. *Ka bosweu o tshwana le lehlabathe,*
118. *Ka bosweu o tshwana le dinaledi,*
119. *Bongata bo a hana bo a latola,*
120. *Bo re o tshwana le mafube hantle.*
121. *Thea tsebe o mamele,*
122. *O mamele ho se selomo,*
123. *O mamele ho mohale wa Lerotholi,*
124. *E motsho enwa wa boSejakgosi,*
125. *Naledi ya se mo lateng a eme,*
126. *Ha o mo lata jwalo wa boSeeiso,*
127. *Le tla hata tau maro e bothile.*
128. *Kanono ya dira, mora Letshabisa,*
129. *Ya kena hara Makgowa,*
130. *Ke hore a phasalla, a tlala maralla,*
131. *Ditswekere le majwala di lahlehe,*
132. *Dikofi tsa sala hodima dithota,*
133. *Makoloi a wetse, a wetse ka nokang ka Mohokare,*
134. *Hobane ba tshetse ka nokeng ba se ba tata.*
135. *E ile yare ha ba re ba sheba ka mose dithoteng,*
136. *Ba fumana mehahabo bona e fedile,*
137. *Nonyana di hahaba le lefatshe.*
138. *Ba balehile jwalo, ba ya le thota,*

139. *Ba ya dikela kwana bophirima.*
140. *Wena o ratang ho tseba Raeya,*
141. *O botse ho Kgwabe le Mosaea,*
142. *Bahale ba mosa ba tla le jwetsa.*
143. *Ba re bohale ba Raeya bo tuka kgabo,*
144. *Bohale ba Raeya.*
145. *Ke tlokotsebe sa Mokhachane Chesetsi,*
146. *Thesele noka o e tshela e ntse e tletse,*
147. *Yare ha a fihla ka hare ho Makgowa,*
148. *A hlaba motho ka theko ya lerumo,*
149. *Nonyana tsa mo etsetsa lelobelo.*
150. *Makgwaba a mo hulanya le lefatshe,*
151. *Kokwanyana tsa mo kena ka mahlong,*
152. *Manong a mo tabolaka ditedu,*
153. *Mehakajane ya mo poma leleme.*
154. *Wena o ratang ho tseba Chesetsi,*
155. *O ngolle lewatle, o le botse.*
156. *O tla jwetswa ke bana ba Makgowa,*
157. *Ba re Chesetsi haeso ha a sa rateha,*
158. *Ba re le basadi ba heso ba dutse motshelo,*
159. *Le ha ba lla jwalo ba shebile Lesotho,*
160. *Ere ha ba shadima Modumong,*
161. *Ba re meokgo ya bona e be e se e tswa,*
162. *Ba re banna ba rona ba feletse moo,*
163. *Ba itjeletswe ke tau ya Mohato,*
164. *Thamahane ya ba kwenya le masapo,*
165. *A ba kwenya feela a sa hlafune.*
166. *Ke ne ke le momemuwa,*
167. *Mawatleng kwana ke ne ke tshwere lesira,*
168. *Monyadi a tjhata,*
169. *Lesole ke bolela la Boritheni Seeiso.*
170. *Ke bua ka lona sole la Engelane,*
171. *Mmuso ke bolela wa King George,*
172. *Ke re Prince ya Mokhachane Seeiso*
173. *Morena ha a etela Kopanong,*
174. *O ne a nkile mohlomphehi Tlelaka,*
175. *Phaki o ne a nkile ngwana Rangwanae,*
176. *O ne a nkile Theko wa Makgaola,*
177. *Setebele e ne e le moena wa hae.*
178. *Ba ile ba mo hlopha, ba mo etsa hantle,*
179. *Ba mo hlopha, ba mo apesa dikobo,*
180. *Hobane ba a tseba ho sotha ditaba,*
181. *A re mpoloke mohlomphehi Tlelaka,*
182. *O mpoloke le Basotho ba heso.*
183. *Hobaneng ke re o mpoloke le nta tsa kobo ya ka?*
184. *Makotoko o lelekisa Qhobela,*
185. *Qhobela le yena a mo lelekise,*
186. *Semanyamanyane a ba a kgopeha,*
187. *A be a tsohe a le setebele lerameng.*
188. *Ke mohla re tla tseba,*

189. *Hore banna e mong o ile a tshaba moepa,*
190. *A theosa thope tsa paqa,*
191. *Banna tsa paqa tsa Makgowa,*
192. *Tsa paqa jwalo tsa tlala teropo,*
193. *Tsa hloma eka ho tlilo ferehwa,*
194. *Athe ho a tsekwa,*
195. *Tumahole o ne a tseka borena ba ntatae,*
196. *Borena ba lapeng ha Mmabatho.*
197. *Ke ne ke itseng ho lona?*
198. *Jwale tholang lerata ke mpe ke le sebele,*
199. *Le rata ke mpe ke le jwetse hantle,*
200. *Nna le tle le mpone hantle jwale wa boBokang.*
201. *Hobane hlooho ka yona ke rwala katiba,*
202. *Mahlo ka ona ke shadima naha,*
203. *Ditsebe ka tsona ke sa tla mamela,*
204. *Ha e le molomo ka ona ke se tla pepeta,*
205. *Seledu ka sona ke mela ditedu,*
206. *Molala ka ona ke fasa tae,*
207. *Mahetla ka ona ke apara kobo,*
208. *Diphaka ka tsona ke sa tla laetjha,*
209. *Matsoho ka ona ke sa tla sebetsa,*
210. *Mpeng mona ke thetsa maqheku,*
211. *Letheka ka lona ke fasa borikgwe,*
212. *Serope ka sona ke tshwara motshetshe*
213. *Mangole ka ona ke etsa thapelo,*
214. *Mmomo ka ona ke fasa kausu,*
215. *Maoto ka ona ke nyathela naha,*
216. *Ke itse lefokolodi maoto nkadime.*
217. *Hobane a hao ke tosene (dozen) ha a fele.*
218. *Nna a ka a mabedi a ka taboha ditlhabela,*
219. *Ke ne ke itse sekgohola sa Mokhachane,*
220. *Sempe, sefako se marothodi a dipula,*
221. *Sempe, sekgohala sa nyoloha Sebapala,*
222. *Ngwana morena ke leru Kopano.*
223. *Naledi ya mathula ya Mokhachane,*
224. *Balune ya mora Mohato Sempe,*
225. *Mahlasedi a letsatsi ngwana Nkoebe,*
226. *Mahlasedi a hlaha botjhabela,*
227. *Ekare ha a hlaha a bonesa batho.*
228. *Nahathote tsa utlwa kaofela,*
229. *Ngwana morena ke letsha la letona,*
230. *Ke letsha le ka lekana setjhaba,*
231. *Kwena busa ka mofuthu ho batho,*
232. *O buse ka mofuthu ho batho ba ntatao.*
233. *Kgodumodumo ya mora Mokhachane,*
234. *Ya duma Sebapala,*
235. *Kwena, Diphakwe habo Sejeng,*
236. *Kwena e ahile motse botjhabela,*
237. *Mabapi le motse wa habo Monyane.*
238. *Ekare ha a tloha kgotla Seeiso,*

239. *A utlwa a feta ha Rasetlabathe,*
 240. *A re Sempe utlwa jwale ho a palangwa.*
 241. *O ile a kena tlung ya mosadi wa hae,*
 242. *Seleseng sa moradi wa Lerotholi,*
 243. *A qala ho itlhoma ka dihlomo, Kopano.*
 244. *A nka sethunya a se neha Letlatsa,*
 245. *A jara sabole ya bara ba Motshekga,*
 246. *A bitsa Mmankgodi le moena wa hae,*
 247. *Le Diphakwe di mo hlwele hodimo.*
 248. *Di mo hlwele hodimo kgorong ha ntatae,*
 249. *A theoaha ka kgoro e kgubedu,*
 250. *Ekare ha feta ha Kabi ngwana Bataung,*
 251. *O na sa bue, a sa kholome,*
 252. *Esale a kentse molomo kobong.*
 253. *Le teng ngwana morena a pholla lesasa,*
 254. *Ke ne ke itse Maama, letlaka la Maama,*
 255. *La Lerotholi o a tseba inama,*
 256. *Tlaka la letonanahadi,*
 257. *Hlooho la e kenya ka lehafing,*
 258. *Hobane Qoboko ke lesetla, ke lesututsa.*
 259. *O qhoba ntwala ka mangole,*
 260. *Lekena la Ranneko Mokwena,*
 261. *Tshwara thebe e tiye wa Rasenate,*
 262. *O a bona lefatshe la heno le a ya.*
 263. *Teha Tladi monna wa Makhobalo,*
 264. *O e tehe o e leotse bohale,*
 265. *Ekare le sa tlohe mona batho ba ha Majoro.*
 266. *Le tswa bona o a tseba tladi e sa tswa otlala batho,*
 267. *Ke ne ke itse jwale le thole lerata, ke mpe ke le bolelle,*
 268. *Jwale le teng ke tle ke le jwetse Sesotho.*
 269. *Nna haeso Kolo thabasehuala,*
 270. *Ke utlwile ba re lefikanyane le ile la thetla thabeng,*
 271. *Mmampharwane wa matlala a le botsa,*
 272. *Banna o hobaletse o ya kae lefika,*
 273. *La re ke ilo bona matlaka a kgiba.*
 274. *Tlaka le kgiba ka hlooho ya motho,*
 275. *Le tlala le phethoha tlakanatshowana,*
 276. *Eitse ha di tjeka di epela,*
 277. *Phiri tsena di hula di kena matsabeng,*
 278. *Batho bana boKopela, boThepe.*
 279. *Le bona ba ntse ba tsheha ba le haufi,*
 280. *Ebile ba tsheha ba keketeha ka hara makoloi.*
 281. *Tholang lerata ke mpe ke le jwetse,*
 282. *Le ntse le botsana le sa mpotse,*
 283. *Ke motho wa hlwela-di-bolawe.*
 284. *Ha Ralebana fika le teng ka thoko ho motse,*
 285. *Ha o ya ha Rantedi hodima thota,*
 286. *Thoteng tse tshehla botswalla thuhlo,*
 287. *Ke bua ka Boleka manyarabeng.*
 288. *Ha Mmahodi pela Mahareng,*

289. *Pakeng tsa Boleka le Madimong,*
 290. *Ha Radiopelo ke bana ba Majoro.*
 291. *Ke tshela jwalo noka ya Tswaing,*
 292. *Mokola ke ne ke hopola kwana ha Saelane,*
 293. *Sekgutlong kwana ha Rakgosi,*
 294. *Ke re ha Nkaka moreneng,*
 295. *Ha Maphephe hodima dihlaba*
 296. *Ha Taelo hodima sekoti,*
 297. *Ha Belese ke lekgalong mona.*
 298. *Jwale ntja bohola wabo Bokang,*
 299. *Bohola ba bosiu ba utlwe,*
 300. *Dinokwane di tlohe ka mora matlo,*
 301. *Komakoma moshana e motshwaela,*
 302. *Mojela, bua le Komane,*
 303. *A bue topo tsa batho tsa bolla matlung.*
 304. *A meme Tshedi wa Shale,*
 305. *Wa Tiger, wa dihlaba, wabo Bokang,*
 306. *Le letsatsi o ke ke wa le bona,*
 307. *Koloi tsa rona ngwana Lepekola.*
 308. *Ntsho pata inama,*
 309. *Inama feela ntata Motlatsi,*
 310. *Inama feela tjhifi di fete*
 311. *Ho fete tse lonya sekgolopana*
 312. *Ho fete ba dihele ba mokaola*
 313. *Kwena di fetile Boretsi a omana*
 314. *Ngwana morena o ne a nkile sethunya*
 315. *Ke tsena di ile tsa tjamelana diakgela.*
 316. *Marashea le botsotsi dumelang,*
 317. *Nna ha ke tsotsi ke ntse ke le Mosotho.*
 318. *O hlaba ka thipa ngwana wa teropo,*
 319. *O hlaba ka yona a be a balehe,*
 320. *Ke ne ke itse ho lona diparolathota,*
 321. *Tholang lerata ke mpe ke le sebele,*
 322. *Ke kgale ke bone mehlolo naheng.*
 323. *Ke ne ke itse 1990,*
 324. *Lemo sena se ile sa ntlela ka tse bohloko banna,*
 325. *Ke ne ke le hara malaeta kwana,*
 326. *Ke ne ke le terekeng sa thupa Maokeng,*
 327. *Mohlang ho neng ho fihla Motshweneng wa Mmakgiba,*
 328. *Leleme le letsho ke ho koma ditlhare.*
 329. *Mafethe ngwana e motona,*
 330. *A fihla jwalo a re fa lengolo,*
 331. *Banna ke ne ke le block 9,*
 332. *Ke ne ke ena le namane e tshahlantata Ditaba,*
 333. *O a tseba ke ile ka tlalwa ke pelo wabo Bokang.*
 334. *Ka tlalwa ke pelo ka utlwa bohloko.*
 335. *Pelo e re nyedi, meokgo e seke,*
 336. *Madi a ka a fetoha mahlwele,*
 337. *Ngwanenwa a re fa ka lefu,*
 338. *Ngwanabo ntate, namane e tshahlantata Moetinyana,*

339. *Motho ha a se a utlwile bohloko,*
340. *O a tseba o shwetse matsohong a banna.*
341. *Ke ne ke itseng ho lona diparolathota?*
342. *Le thole lerata ke mpe ke le sebele,*
343. *Aooo! Athe banna le Gauteng kwana e ntse e lwana,*
344. *O a tseba re ne re bolawa,*
345. *Bana ba batho ba bolawa e se ditadi.*
346. *Ke ne ke itse hoba tolo la morena Tjhebi,*
347. *Mohale wa Lerotholi,*
348. *Hobane ke tolo la lapeng ha Mmabatho,*
349. *Tladi e ahile tlasa mafika.*
350. *Tolo le ahile tlasa mafika,*
351. *Tolo la lomong sa Matlakeng.*
352. *O a tseba jwale ya fofa,*
353. *Ya fihla ya dula lebenkeleng,*
354. *Haufinyana le motse wa Senekale,*
355. *Teng e bonwe ke morwa mofubedu.*
356. *Mpimpi le molomo tshwanahadi,*
357. *Lehodimong la Raseokamela batho,*
358. *E re jele bana ba Masopha,*
359. *La eja ba rangwane metswalle,*
360. *La ba ja la ba abela dinonyana.*
361. *Ho pheuwa dikgang,*
362. *Rangwane a rutla ba hae,*
363. *Tapole le yena o rutla ba hae.*
364. *Ba re ho a ikgantshwa ke bana ba Masopha,*
365. *Hoba bana ba batho ba bolawa e se ditadi,*
366. *Ba sitwe ho etsetsa morena Dibe mohale wa Lerotholi.*
367. *Jwale tholang lerata ke le sebele,*
368. *Ho ba ke ne ke itse ha le le banna le le bakaale,*
369. *Mpontsheng e moholo ke bone,*
370. *Ke bone ya tsebang koloi kapa thokwa,*
371. *Koloi ya mabidi a matsho,*
372. *Kapa ya kileng a tholla mokotatsie,*
373. *Mohlomong mahe a teng a matalana.*
374. *Ke ne ke itseng ho lona diparolathota?*
375. *Le tle le thole lerata ke mpe ke le jwetse hantle,*
376. *Ke ile ka re wena o ahileng Qhoweng ha Ratutubala,*
377. *Ha o a bona mapolesa ha a feta mona,*
378. *A matjha a bahlankana.*
379. *A kgwaetse dibuka ka mahafing.*
380. *Ha se dibuka, ke mangolo a kgafa.*
381. *Ke fihlile ho bona ka ba botsa,*
382. *Ka re banna ebe le batlang ke mpe ke le batlise,*
383. *Ba ile ba nkaraba ba se ke ba ntshwetsa,*
384. *Ba re ha re le tjena re batla kgafa.*
385. *Ka re ha eba le batla kgafa le mpe le fete,*
386. *Le pote ho ntate le mo kgafise,*
387. *Nna ha ke kgafe ke tshwara kotjana.*
388. *Ke tshwara molamu o motjha bahlankana,*

389. *Ere ke betse ka ona Lekgowa le bokolle,*
390. *Le be le yo wela ka selakalakeng,*
391. *Ke moo ho dulang ntho tsa ditona.*
392. *Ho dula tau, ho dula tshukudu,*
393. *Ntho ke tsena di nketse mengwapongwapo,*
394. *Banna ba heso ba Malesalesa,*
395. *Le lesitse morwa a se a kgathetse,*
396. *A ba a kena le marumo metsing,*
397. *Mmamphole lelapa a le tswela,*
398. *A tswa a dula ka mora seotlwana,*
399. *Seotlwana sa lengana ke tiile,*
400. *Ke tiile ke hona ho ikgantsha thata,*
401. *Hobane ke nna kgatoutou ya lenaka Selepe,*
402. *Selepe Mokgesi ngwanabo Bokang,*
403. *Selepe Mokgesi ke hana kereke,*
404. *Ke ntse ke thaothela naheng,*
405. *Mokola ke ne ke phoka kofi e monate moroko,*
406. *Ke nna molalane ona wa molalane selepe,*
407. *Ke selepe se letseng thoteng,*
408. *Sa lala se le madi.*
409. *Se le sefubedu ebile se le moriri wa hlooho,*
410. *Selepe se fetile baruti kelellong,*
411. *Le wena ka moso se tla o feta.*
412. *Jwale ka re lefokolodi la dithota mahlabe,*
413. *Terene yabo Jono le Ramoseneke,*
414. *Ke kene ho yona e le hara dithota,*
415. *Dikwata di nketsetsa lenyokonyoko.*
416. *Ba ntse ba re ngwanenwa o ya kae a kgasa,*
417. *Banna ka utlwa bohloko,*
418. *Pelomakwebata ke utlwa bohloko,*
419. *Eitse moo ke batlang ke kokobela,*
420. *Lerwana la kena ho batla dipasa,*
421. *La re ho nna, halo (hullo) tekete ngwana wa Mosotho,*
422. *Ka re tekete ha ke ya e nka, monna,*
423. *Ke tlohile Lesotho ke tatile haholo,*
424. *Ha o bone ke se na le mangolo a kgafa,*
425. *Esita le ona mofao wa kgoho,*
426. *Divitha (vitamins) di tletse mabidi.*
427. *Ka re Bokang didietsa ke le terape kgowa lena,*
428. *Le tloha le nthohaka,*
429. *Melele ya hauha ya ka Lesotho,*
430. *Ya re, 'base mo tlohele re tla o lefa'.*
431. *La re ho nna, kgowa lena,*
432. *'Serotana towe sa seroki, ba o thusitse,*
433. *O ka be o lla tlasa mabidi a terene'.*
434. *Ho a matla mabidi ho feta selemo,*
435. *Nkotong ho yona ke leba,*
436. *Ka kena dikomponeng ke le dibaki,*
437. *Ke botsa lekgowa la mona di behwa kae?*
438. *Dikwata tsa ntshupisa ka pelo tse masoko,*

439. *Mantswe a bona a ntse a ntletse pelong,*
 440. *Santata ya mokoti o moholo,*
 441. *Ka bona e nkakgella dikhwefa,*
 442. *E mpha fotjholo le mofeng wa peke,*
 443. *E re bosiu ke se ke le malaetjha,*
 444. *Ka theoha ka kgwele.*
 445. *Kweteng la tjhafo ka theoha ka kgwele,*
 446. *Ketjhe di fasitse ebile ke laeta ka phatla wabo Bokang,*
 447. *Eile yare ha ke fihla, fatshe la etsa dihaeya,*
 448. *Dikwata di ntjheba lesetoseto,*
 449. *Ka re se tloha se o diha ke se palama,*
 450. *Nna kajeno lena ke se ke le ntona (nduna),*
 451. *Ke phatlaladitswe le diofisi tsohle,*
 452. *Bana ba batho ba dumetse ka lenyele,*
 453. *Ke ne ke batla ke busa ba bang Lesotho,*
 454. *Ho tle ho lluwe Kolone,*
 455. *Ho lluwe Leribe,*
 456. *Ho lluwe habo Matjhakane Mapotoketsi.*
 457. *Le kwana habo Mmaphoka mathuela,*
 458. *Ka re lekgowa mpatele ke a tsamaya,*
 459. *Banna nna ha ke batle patala ke batla pasa,*
 460. *Hoba ha di ya ka monyameng (lefifing) ke a kgwetjha*
 461. *Ke tshaba tse tseka ditonnorong.*
 462. *Madi a batho a entswe papadi,*
 463. *Ho ketwa ka ona teraeng kwana,*
 464. *Ngwana mme o ikentse sehole,*
 465. *O laetjha jwalo o furaletse koloi.*
 466. *Boko ba motho bo kopane le majwe,*
 467. *Kokolofitwe le mmamolangwane di ile tsa phatsama,*
 468. *Tsa tloha dipalong.*
 469. *Setsokotsane se di netse morao,*
 470. *Bolou bo kgannela batho pelenyana,*
 471. *Bo ne bo nkile metsi bo siya basebetsi.*
 472. *Nna ke nkile boya pelong ho katse,*
 473. *Ho mmaborokwane ka nka lesiba,*
 474. *Eile yare moo ke ntseng ke dutse ke sila ditlhare,*
 475. *Ntho e ile ya re qhwakga maballong,*
 476. *Banna le ho e sheba ka se ke ka e sheba,*
 477. *Ke bona ke tla phatsama.*
 478. *Motseng mosadi o teng,*
 479. *Jwale o dutse ka mora ntlo eso,*
 480. *O ntsa di silasila ditlhare,*
 481. *Phephetho o e siletse hanong.*
 482. *O tsoha ka meso ho ya mabitleng,*
 483. *A re majoene mohlang re tsohang re palama,*
 484. *A nke sephaka sa mofu, a se tsoketsoke,*
 485. *A re bana ba batho re shwele Makgoweng.*
 486. *Mohlang ho shweleng wa hae, semetjhe ke seo,*
 487. *O re ba ileng kwana ba ele ruri.*
 488. *Le ba kgutlang ba kgutle ba sa bereka,*

489. *Bana ba batho ba kgutle ba kgashile maoto,*
490. *Ba kgashile matsoho.*
491. *Ke ne ke itse ho lona diparolathota,*
492. *Le thole lerata ke mpe ke le sebele,*
493. *Nna ke ile ka dula le mofuta osele,*
494. *Ke ne ke dula le Matjhakane, Mapotoketsi,*
495. *Ba ne ba re ho tsamaya, ba re ke ho fampa,*
496. *Ho robala ba re ke ho hetlela,*
497. *Ho matha o a tseba, ba re ke ho tsotsoma,*
498. *Matsoho ana ba a bitsa mabohe,*
499. *Mahlo ana ba a bitsa maihlo.*
500. *Ke ne ke itseng ho lona diparolathota.*
501. *Thota e teng ka nqena ka mona,*
502. *Basotho ba re ke Mahabadibaka,*
503. *Maqhotsa ba re ke Mabolalasonke,*
504. *Matjhakane ba re ke Hebalebase,*
505. *Ke thota eo e leng kgale e qetela Moshoeshoe batho,*
506. *Ke ne ke itseng ho lona diparolathota?*
507. *Tholang lerata ke mpe ke le sebele,*
508. *Makgowa, malepa ha se ho a tseba,*
509. *Ba fasisetse lekopokopo tjhafong ya bona,*
510. *Mmadiketane, ke bona ba re tsheretshere,*
511. *Ba tjhaya thong.*
512. *Nna ke ba fumana ka kgohlong baloi*
513. *Batho bana ba ha Katara ba lejwelekgopo*
514. *Basotho ba jaefa ba le bahlano,*
515. *Maqhotsa a jaefa a le mararo,*
516. *Batswana ba jaefa ba le leshome.*
517. *Ka be ke re dumelang basadi, bommanyao sebonong,*
518. *Baloi ke dipelo ba utlwa bohloko,*
519. *Ba re retla o loya Sello, re o bolaye,*
520. *Re be re o behe tseleng e yang sedibeng,*
521. *Etlere ha re feta re o komele.*
522. *Re nne re re halala, ngwana ntja towe,*
523. *Wena o shweleng ka tsa hao.*
524. *Jwale Sello ke ithapella bophelo,*
525. *Basadi bomme le mpe le ntshwarele,*
526. *Ke ne ke botsa theila (tailor) ya lona ke mang*
527. *Ba re theilara ya rona 3.00 o'clock,*
528. *(Four) e otlala ba le tseleng,*
529. *Five e otlala ba le mahae.*
530. *Ke ne ke itseng ho lona diparolathota,*
531. *Nna le ntae, ditsamayanaha*
532. *Batho ba ho tloha mona e le mariha,*
533. *Ngwahola re ne re leba Khomele (Kimberley) Mahalapeng*
534. *Moo re ileng ra fumana bolou (blue) bo kganna,*
535. *Dikolofane tshepe e tshola,*
536. *Tse ding mashaleng,*
537. *Tse ding mashaleng a di fodisa,*
538. *Kompone tsena kgale ke di sebetsa,*

539. Ke se ke bile ke kgutla kwana Sentetipe,
540. Ke moo ke ileng ka fumana mautla teng,
541. Mautla e le foromane ya tjhafo.
542. Motho a lemale lemeneng, ba re mo kwale madi,
543. Ba re Satane a mo kgame a mmolaye,
544. Hoba le ha a jele mosebetsi ha a ke a kwate.
545. Ba re ho a laetjhwa ke morena Satane,
546. Majwe o nka a maholo feela.
547. Koloji di thua matatasela,
548. Mokane wabo Bokang ntsha maphaka Mokwena,
549. A fete hobane maphaka a ntshwa ke mafolatiping,
550. Khathe (card) ya bosiu ke hatisa khathe.
551. Ke ne ke itse hodima mokoti ra fihla ra kwala,
552. Ke hlola ke bolela ka mehla wabo Bokang,
553. Ke re ditouwa efela e le nnete.
554. Mohlang ke neng ke tloha ha ntate, ha Lekeba Moreneng,
555. Ke ne ke leba kampong ela ya Mafeteng,
556. Mokola jwale ke ilo joena, (join)
557. Ke ya NRC hantle.
558. Ke fumana mabalane wa monna,
559. A tshwere dibuka di mo tletse matsoho,
560. A hoeletsa ka lentswe le leholo,
561. A re bashanyana ting le ratang ho ithuta gauta,
562. Phakisang kapele ke tlo le hira.
563. Ka tiya kapele ngwanabo Bokang,
564. Ka tiya kapele ka be ke se ke fihla,
565. Diforomo tsa ntumella ka tsamaya,
566. Ke ne ke tswa ka la Pepenare (Wepener) lesoba
567. Terene ya boJono le Ramoseneke,
568. Ke ena ka setaleng phalafala,
569. Badisa ba yona ba sutu di ntsho,
570. Ke bona ba e akgela dihlopha, e hana le ho ja
571. Kgomo ya mmuso e hana ho ja, e tjamme feela
572. Ke bone ba nkile dihamore banna,
573. Ba e kgolakgola maqaqailana,
574. Ba re lebidi le kgwehlang le hle le sale,
575. Le salle mosalla ruri.
576. Ka kena tereneng ra tsamaya,
577. Masela a mabedi letsohong ho (guard) khathe,
578. Ke le letala le le lefubedu,
579. Le letala le a khwela, le lefubedu le a topa, (stop)
580. O a tseba hobane pele ho yona ho ngotswe 'pasopa',
581. Lephakong ho yona ho ngotswe 'O a sala!'
582. Mabiding ho yona ho ngotswe 'Semetjhe'.
583. O a tseba ke ne ke itseng ho lona deparolathota?
584. Hodima mokoti wa senterale,
585. Hodima mokoti wa senterale ra fihla, ra fola
586. Mokola le ho sebetsa ha ke eso sebetse,
587. Nna motho ka hakwa ke thapo monwaneng,
588. Lekgowa la hoeletsa ka ntswe le leholo,

589. *Banna kwalang wintjhe motho o lemetse,*
 590. *O se a bile a shwele.*
 591. *Nna ka bua ke hona ka pelo e bohloko,*
 592. *Ka re, banna ha ke a shwa ke ntse ke phela,*
 593. *Ntho e mpe ke robehile,*
 594. *Banna aooo! Theleding mona ka hodima lengole,*
 595. *Yaba ba nkenya lempareng ke a tsamaya,*
 596. *O a tseba ke ne ke itse ba nkisa sepetlele,*
 597. *Molekong moo ba ileng ba fihla ba ntlotsa leqeba ka letswai.*
 598. *Nna nke ke ka re Amen le kgale,*
 599. *Ke ne ke itseng ho lona diparolathota?*
 600. *Le bitse dikgeleke di tle kwano kaofela,*
 601. *Etlere ha di bokane mona,*
 602. *Ba tle ba mphe jwala ba Sekgowa,*
 603. *Etlere ha ba bona jwale ke se ke nwele,*
 604. *Mohlomong ke bile ke tauwe haholo, ke bile ke thekesela,*
 605. *Jwale ba qale ho etsa mmino.*
 606. *Jwale ba tsebe ho hlola nna kgaitsemi ya Bokang,*
 607. *Feela ho tloha mona ba nkise thota-e-a-wela,*
 608. *Ba tjheke sekoti se be setelele,*
 609. *Etlere ha se etsa 12 fiti (feet),*
 610. *Jwale ba nkuke, ba nkakgele,*
 611. *Ba nke thaba tsena ba nkwahele,*
 612. *Feela ba hlokomele nna sekeleme nka nna ka tsoha.*
 613. *Masapo a bafu a tlo ba kgathatsa.*

1. He is greeting, the beast,
2. I do not hide myself, I am an elephant, the breaker,
3. An animal with a trunk,
4. brother of Bokang,
5. I am an animal that sleeps standing,
6. While small animals sleep on the ground,
7. You will never see me lying down.
8. You are busy asking yourselves, and not asking me,
9. Where I live?
10. I am from Kolo, the lone hill.
11. Mashai, the mountain that pities people,
12. It may be in hundreds,
13. I live on the slope above Tswaing,
14. This is where the river takes a turn,
15. Creating puzzles.
16. My country men, keep quiet so that I may whisper to you,
17. I should say the bright, bright star of Ramatheola,
18. The bright bright one of Ramakgobalo,
19. Of the home of Jonathan and Mofoka,
20. During the French war overseas,
21. The son of the king was sacrificed,
22. He was made a sacrifice with a pleasant smell.
23. Moshoeshoe above was astonished,

24. And said, Mojela and Letlama are causing trouble,
 25. Since when could a king's child be sacrificed?
 26. The stray bullet of the children of Letlama,
 27. The day he arrived, Bereng,
 28. It was shot and dashed towards the Cape,
 29. And was heard in the North,
 30. Oh! It made flames,
 31. The poor following it.
 32. The warriors singing war songs for it,
 33. Son of Mojela, towerer over his people,
 34. The day the lightning flashed,
 35. The one of Maama and Seeiso,
 36. The one of Jonathan and Mofoka,
 37. It flashed and let go the lightning,
 38. The man-made lightning,
 39. Crossed the seas, the lightning,
 40. Flashing at Makhaola's,
 41. At the home of Joseph and Sekhonyana,
 42. At the home of Mojela and Nkoebe,
 43. Kai Sekodi, Raitela and Ralekena, and the government.
 44. Excuse me, please excuse me, sirs, I have erred,
 45. I have besmeared sand in your eyes,
 46. I was trying to heal the sick world,
 47. Suffering from measles and syphilis,
 48. Now, there it is arriving,
 49. The telegram reached Matsieng,
 50. He responded, the great King,
 51. The one sent, the great runner,
 52. Radinkela Mojela Ramatheola,
 53. He sent Lekena RaMakhaola,
 54. Because Lekena is the father of my children,
 55. Again Lekena is the strength at Mokotedi's ,
 56. He woke up early, peer of Makwanyane, and watched the star rise,
 57. The lion appeared with a sad heart, Lekena,
 58. He passed at Mphasa's without any talk,
 59. Announced his presence to Seeiso,
 60. The ship took Mmuso and Seeiso,
 61. The big war ship,
 62. The watersnake filled us with awe,
 63. The fish in the water applauded Mokwena,
 64. Announcing their presence to Raletshabisa,
 65. Young man from Qimong,
 66. The King says, he has heard
 67. The bullet of Seeiso, child of the King,
 68. He was even informed,
 69. He was summoned to Maseru,
 70. Where he was crowned King,
 71. The great kings were filled with jealousy, so-and-so's.
 72. In the homestead of Makgobalo there was great excitement,
 73. War songs were sung at Thababosiu,

74. The graves sang it quietly,
 75. It is said that King Moshoeshoe was leading the singing,
 76. Seconded by King Letsie,
 77. The young man, son of Mohato is black in the neck,
 78. He begot a giant, the eye of the country,
 79. The king, the very big leaf.
 80. He summoned with a loud voice,
 81. They heard him, his father's councilors,
 82. Kwebu heard the voice while at home,
 83. Safiele spoke to Monyaka,
 84. And said, go down and act like Matheola,
 85. It is a long time that men have been collected from the villages.
 86. Collecting Mofeta, Lepolesa and others,
 87. Allocating cattle posts while on horseback,
 88. Saying, this year Kgolo and Lekena are being sent out,
 89. Kgolo was sent to Tebang,
 90. He quietly said to himself, prospects are good this year,
 91. This year, since Lekena arrived here,
 92. The old people of Tebang are lucky,
 93. They are sheltered in a tent in summer,
 94. We commit the elderly to the ancestors,
 95. The king departed, having planted a tree,
 96. The one with broad branches,
 97. The rich and the poor, come,
 98. Rush to the shelter (shade),
 99. Of Makopoi out there with ancestors,
 100. He says, you are now a chief ambassador, my brother,
 101. Go and inform the kings in Lesotho,
 102. That the orphan on earth is suffering,
 103. It suffers because the parents have died,
 104. Maama and Seeiso have died,
 105. Nkoebe and Lerotholi have died,
 106. Yes, you should commence with King Moshoeshoe,
 107. Inform the shelterer of Manka,
 108. The king of Peka, near Botha-Bothe,
 109. The big watersnake, the last born of the children of Mojela,
 110. For at this moment he is the red heaven,
 111. The heaven that blocks the gates,
 112. The gates he blocks those on the West,
 113. He blocks those on the West, Makaka,
 114. The hero with assegaais is fierce,
 115. He is fierce, has a light brown appearance, the boy from Thakajwe.
 116. In brownness he is like the sand,
 117. In whiteness he is like the sand,
 118. In whiteness he is like the stars,
 119. Many refuse,
 120. And say he resembles the dawn.
 121. Please pay attention and listen,
 122. Listen to the precipice,
 123. Listen to the hero of Lerotholi,

124. This black one, brother of Sejakgosi,
 125. The star not to be challenged while standing,
 126. When you challenge him, Seeiso's brother,
 127. You will tread on the sleeping lion's claws.
 128. Canon of the enemy, son of Letshabisa,
 129. Attacked the Boers.
 130. That is to say, they scattered on the hillocks,
 131. Sugars and beer of various kinds were lost,
 132. Coffees were left behind on the plains,
 133. Wagons fell in, they fell into the river, the Caledon,
 134. Because they crossed the river in a hurry,
 135. And when they tried to look back on the plains,
 136. They found their folk dead,
 137. Birds flying next to the ground,
 138. They fled in that manner along the plains,
 139. And disappeared there in the West.
 140. You, who wishes to know Raeya,
 141. Inquire from Kgwabe and Mosaea,
 142. The kind heroes will tell you,
 143. And say, the heroism of Raeya burns like flames,
 144. Heroism of Raeya,
 145. He is the naughty one of Mokhachane, Chesetsi,
 146. Thesele crosses the river in flood,
 147. And when he got among the Boers,
 148. Hit a person with the handle of an assegaai,
 149. Birds descended upon him,
 150. The crows pulled him around on the ground,
 151. Insects got into his eyes,
 152. The vultures carelessly tore his beard,
 153. Pite crows cut his tongue.
 154. You who wishes to know Chesetsi,
 155. Write overseas and inquire,
 156. You will be informed by the children of the Whites,
 157. And say, Chesetsi out here is not favoured,
 158. They say, even our women no longer conceive,
 159. And even though they cry facing Lesotho,
 160. When they look at Modumong,
 161. It is said they shed tears,
 162. And they say, our husbands ended up over there,
 163. They have been eaten up by the lion of Mohato,
 164. The brown hyena swallowed them with bones,
 165. Swallowed them without even chewing.
 166. I was an invited guest,
 167. Overseas I was holding a veil,
 168. The bride was getting married,
 169. The soldier, I am referring to the British one, Seeiso,
 170. I am referring to him, the soldier of England,
 171. The government I refer to is that of King George,
 172. I refer to the prince of Mokhachane Seeiso,
 173. When the king visited the Union (of S.A.)

174. He was with honourable Mr Tlelaka,
 175. Phaki was with his uncle's child,
 176. He was with Theko, son of Makhaola,
 177. Setebele was his younger brother,
 178. They groomed him well and did him well,
 179. They groomed him and made him wear blankets,
 180. For they know how to put matters correctly,
 181. He said, protect me, Mr. Tlelaka,
 182. Protect me with my Basotho nation,
 183. Why I say, protect me with all the lice of my blanket?
 184. Makotoko is chasing Qhobela,
 185. Qhobela is also chasing him,
 186. So-and-so even got annoyed,
 187. And delivered a blow with a fist on the cheek,
 188. That was the day we knew,
 189. That one of them feared to venture a steep hill,
 190. And descended running like ladies,
 191. Oh! They ran like those of whites,
 192. They ran and were scattered throughout the town,
 193. Imagining that we were up to courting,
 194. But instead there was a dispute,
 195. Tumahole was claiming his father's throne,
 196. The kingship of his home at the Mmabatho.
 197. By the way, what had I said to you?
 198. Now, keep silent so that I may whisper to you,
 199. You want me to inform you accordingly,
 200. You should see me properly, I, brother of Bokang,
 201. Because the head I use to wear a hat,
 202. Eyes I use to survey the country,
 203. Ears I shall use to listen attentively,
 204. As for the mouth I shall talk continuously,
 205. With the chin I grow beards,
 206. On my neck I wear a tie,
 207. On my shoulder I put on a blanket,
 208. With my arms I shall carry loads,
 209. With my hands I shall work hard,
 210. On my stomach I deceive the elderly,
 211. On my waist I fasten my trousers,
 212. On my thigh I display a well ironed trousers,
 213. On my knees I pray,
 214. On my legs I wear my socks,
 215. With my feet I stamp the country,
 216. To the millipede I said, lend me your feet,
 217. Because yours are in thousands, they do not wear off,
 218. Mine are only two and might develop cracks,
 219. I had said, heavy rain of Mokhachane,
 220. Sempe, the hailstorm accompanied by heavy rains,
 221. Sempe, the hailstorm started at Seapala,
 222. The child of the king is a cloud, Kopano,
 223. Star of the pusher of Mokhachane,

224. Baloon of the son of Mohato, Seeiso,
 225. Rays of the sun, child of Nkoebe,
 226. The rays emerged from the East,
 227. When they emerged they lit the people,
 228. Plains were all informed,
 229. Son of the king is a big lake,
 230. He is a lake that is enough for the nation,
 231. Crocodile, reign warmly over your subjects,
 232. Reign warmly over your father's subjects,
 233. Kgodumodumo of the son of Mokhachane,
 234. The crocodile thundered at Seapala,
 235. Crocodile, Diphakwe at the home of Sejeng,
 236. The crocodile has built a village in the East,
 237. Next to the village of Monyane,
 238. When Seeiso left the court,
 239. Found himself passing at Rasehlabathe,
 240. Saying, Sempe, know we are riding,
 241. He then entered his wife's house,
 242. The only daughter of Lerotholi,
 243. And began to arm himself, Kopano,
 244. He took the gun and gave it to Letlatsa,
 245. And carried the dagger that killed Motshekga,
 246. He called Mankgodu and his younger brother,
 247. And the Diphakwe surrounding him,
 248. Surrounding him at his father's passage,
 249. He then descended through a red passage,
 250. And when he passed at Kabi's, son of the Bataung,
 251. He was not talking, he was silent,
 252. He kept covering his mouth with a blanket,
 253. Even then, child of the king wiped off sweat (on the face)
 254. I said, Maama, the vulture of Maama,
 255. The vulture of Lerotholi knows how to bend,
 256. The very big vulture,
 257. Put its head under the arm,
 258. Because Qhoboko is the beater and the pusher,
 259. He pushes a battle with his knees,
 260. Lekena of Ranneko, Mokwena.
 261. Hold your shield firmly, son of Rasenate,
 262. You can see that your fatherland is going,
 263. Forge the lightning, man of Makgobalo
 264. Forge it, and sharpen its keenness.
 265. Won't you go away, you people of the Major,
 266. Since the lightning has just struck people.
 267. I had just said, keep silent so that I may relate to you,
 268. And inform you about Sesotho,
 269. My home is at Kolo, Thabasehula,
 270. I heard that a small rock rolled from the mountain,
 271. The rock lizard asked you:
 272. Heavens, where are you rushing to, you the rock?
 273. It replied, I am going to see the vultures dancing,

274. The vulture dancing whilst carrying a human skull,
 275. Dancing and turning around, the Egyptian vulture,
 276. When they turned and ran,
 277. These hyenas pulling into refuges,
 278. These people, Kopela, Thepe and others.
 279. Near as they were, were also laughing,
 280. Even laughing heartily in their cars,
 281. Keep silent so that I may tell you!
 282. You keep asking one another questions but not asking me,
 283. I am the one to say the spies be killed,
 284. At Ralebona there is a rock next to the village,
 285. When you go to Rantedi's home on the plains,
 286. On the light brown plains near the kloof,
 287. I am referring to Boleka at Manyarabeng,
 288. At Mmahodi, near Mahareng,
 289. Between Boleka and Madimong,
 290. At Radiopelo, it is Majoro's children,
 291. I crossed therefore the river, Tswaing,
 292. Poor me, I was on my way to Saelane's,
 293. There in the kloof at Rakgosi's,
 294. I mean, at Nkaka, at the royal place,
 295. At Maphephe's on the plateaus,
 296. At Taele's up on the highveldt,
 297. At Bolese's is on the pass yonder,
 298. Now, you dog, bark, you, Bokang's brother,
 299. Bark so that those walking in the night may hear,
 300. So that the crooks give way behind houses,
 301. Tell tales seldom, you, young man,
 302. Mojela, speak to Komane,
 303. To speak, for human bodies rot in the houses,
 304. And invite Tshedi of Shale,
 305. Of Tiger on the plateaus, of Bokang's,
 306. Even the sun you will never see,
 307. Our waggons, child of Lepekola,
 308. The-black-one-hide, please bend down.
 309. Simply bend down, father of Motlatsi,
 310. Simply bend down, for the shifts to pass,
 311. They should pass by, the unkind ones of Sekgolopana,
 312. The hellbound ones and the syphilis-infected ones should pass,
 313. Crocodiles should be passed by at Boretsi's while he was scolding,
 314. The child of the king was holding a gun,
 315. Here they were who looked at each other,
 316. The Russians and tsotsi's, I salute you,
 317. I am not a tsotsi but still a Mosotho,
 318. He stabs with a knife, a township child,
 319. He stabs with it and then runs away.
 320. To you, the wanderers, I had said:
 321. Keep silent so that I may rather whisper to you,
 322. For a while I have been seeing wonders in the country,
 323. I had said, the year 1990,

324. This year brought along unpleasant experiences, comrades,
 325. I was among the clever modern young men,
 326. I was in thorn trees district, Maokeng,
 327. The day he arrived, the Motshweneng of Mmakgiba,
 328. The tongue is black through swallowing the herbs,
 329. Mafethe, the male child,
 330. Arrived and gave us a letter,
 331. Oh, comrades! I was at Block 9,
 332. I was with a light brown calf, father of Ditaba,
 333. You know, I got annoyed, son of Bokang,
 334. I got annoyed and was angry,
 335. My heart was emotionally touched, and tears formed,
 336. My blood turned into clots,
 337. This child announced the death,
 338. My father's child, the light brown calf, father of Moetinyana,
 339. A person when injured,
 340. You know, he died in our presence,
 341. What had I said to you, the wanderers?
 342. Keep silent so that I may rather whisper to you,
 343. Oh, comrades! Even in Gauteng people still fight,
 344. You know, we were being killed,
 345. Poor people's were killed as if they were mice,
 346. I had said regarding the lightning of king Tjhebi
 347. The hero of Lerotholi,
 348. Because it is the lightning from the homestead of Mmabatho,
 349. The lightning dwells below rocks,
 350. The thunder dwells below the rocks,
 351. The thunder from the cliffs of Matlakeng (Zastron),
 352. You know, it then started flying,
 353. And came to sit at at the shop,
 354. Near the town of Senekal,
 355. There it was seen by the red Bushman,
 356. The giant with a black beak,
 357. At the heaven of the towerer-above-the-people.
 358. It has devoured us, the children of Masopha,
 359. It devoured the friends my father's brother,
 360. I devoured and gave them to the vultures,
 361. Amid arguments,
 362. Uncle pulled out his,
 363. Tafole also pulled out his,
 364. They said, proud are the children of Masopha,
 365. Because poor people are killed as if they were mice,
 366. And therefore fail to discharge duties for king Dibe, hero of Lerotholi,
 367. Now be silent that I may rather whisper to you,
 368. Because I had said now that you are big men as you are,
 369. Show me the biggest one that I may see,
 370. I may see one who knows a car,
 371. The car with black wheels,
 372. Or someone who once discovered the eggs of a stork,
 373. Perhaps its eggs which are very green.

374. What had I said to you, wanderers?
 375. Be silent that I may rather inform you well,
 376. I had said to you, who lives at Qhoweng at Ratutubala,
 377. Didn't you see the police passing by here,
 378. The young ones, the bachelors,
 379. Carrying books in their armpits?
 380. Those are not books, they are tax documents,
 381. I got to them and asked,
 382. Saying, comrades, what are you are looking for and how may I help you?
 383. They then answered me without any malice,
 384. They said, as we are, we are for tax purposes.
 385. I said, if you are for tax purposes, you better pass on,
 386. And go to my father and make him pay that tax,
 387. I do not pay tax, I hold a stick,
 388. I carry a new stick, young men,
 389. When hitting with it, the white man cries,
 390. And rushes until falling into a furnace,
 391. That is where mighty things live,
 392. There lives a lion and a rhinoceros,
 393. Here are things which have scratched me all over.
 394. Men from my village, those who let go,
 395. You have let a Bushman go free whereas he was already tired,
 396. Until he jumps into the water carrying his assegais,
 397. Difficulties forced him out of his home,
 398. He went out and sat behind a courtyard,
 399. A courtyard made of wormwoods, I can assure you,
 400. I can assure you because I am proud,
 401. Because I am a huge horn, Selepe,
 402. Selepe Mokgesi, brother of Bokang,
 403. Selepe Mokgesi, I detest a church,
 404. I am busy recruiting people to the veldt,
 405. Poor me, I was drinking delicious coffee, sorghum beer,
 406. I am a poor person, a real poor oner, Selepe,
 407. I am an axe that slept overnight in the veldt,
 408. That spent overnight dripping blood,
 409. Being red and even having pierces of human head hair,
 410. Selepe outwitted the ministers in wisdom,
 411. You also will be outwitted.
 412. Then I said, the millipede of the veldt, the train,
 413. The train of John, Ramoseneke and others,
 414. I got into it in the middle of plains,
 415. Migrant workers causing all sorts of troubles,
 416. Saying, where is this little crawling baby going to?
 417. Comrades, I really felt emotionally hurt,
 418. Heart emotionally hurt, I was hurt indeed,
 419. And when I was about to feel better,
 420. A white man came in demanding passes,
 421. And said to me, produce your ticket, Mosotho child!
 422. I replied, the ticket I did not buy,
 423. For I left Lesotho in a great hurry,

424. Can't you see that even the tax documents I do not have?
425. Even the chicken provision, I do not have.
426. The belt is full of handcuffs!
427. I said to myself, Bokang, ululate so that I carelessly hit this white man,
428. He may soon swear at me.
429. The vagabonds from Lesotho felt pity for me,
430. And said, boss leave him alone, we will pay the fare,
431. He said to me, this white man,
432. You bedwetter, the praise singer, they came to your rescue
433. Otherwise you would be crying under the train wheels,
434. Under the strong wheels for over a year,
435. Down at its wheels I looked,
436. I entered the compounds with jacket in my hand,
437. I asked a white man here where do I have to put it?
438. The arrogant ones showed me in an unkind manner,
439. Their expressions are still lodged in my heart,
440. The foreman of the Deep mine,
441. Then gave me the documents,
442. He gave me a spade and pickaxe handle,
443. Saying that that very evening I was an underground worker,
444. Down I went in a lift,
445. In a mineshaft lift down I went by wire,
446. Lifts ready, and even having lights on the forehead, I of Bokang's,
447. When we reached the ground, wonders happened,
448. Mine workers repeatedly looking at me,
449. I said to myself, give way before you lose your position,
450. Today I am already an Induna (foreman)
451. I have been announced in all the offices,
452. And many have accepted quietly.
453. I was a foreman over the ones from Lesotho,
454. There were cries from the Cape (colony),
455. Cries also from Leribe,
456. Cries from the Shangaans from the Portuguese,
457. And even yonder at Mmaphoka's, the diviners.
458. Then I said, white man pay me, I am going away,
459. Yes, in fact I do not need payment, I need my pass,
460. Because when dusk arrives, I retreat,
461. I fear the police in the mine galleries.
462. People's blood has become toys,
463. It is played with yonder at the corners.
464. My mother's child has turned himself into a fool,
465. He loads not facing the waggon (loading ore),
466. Human brains are mingled with stones,
467. The crane and stork had made a mistake,
468. They moved from the poles,
469. The whirlwind has followed them,
470. And the blue smoke driving people forward,
471. It (smoke) had carried water and left the workers behind,
472. I had plucked some hair from the heart of a cat,
473. And a feather from a bird.

474. Where I was sitting and grinding the herbs,
 475. Something broke from the rafters,
 476. You know, I did not even look at it,
 477. Because I thought I would be disturbed.
 478. In the village there is a woman,
 479. Now, she is sitting behind our home,
 480. And busy grinding herbs,
 481. Drive-them-away she ground and swallowed,
 482. Early in the morning she goes to the cemetery,
 483. And say, we the mine workers, the day we are to embark on a journey,
 484. She waved the arm of the dead person,
 485. And said, the poor people, we should die at work,
 486. But the day her own son has died, there's great trouble,
 487. She says, those gone yonder should never return,
 488. And those who return, should return empty handed,
 489. The poor people should return with the legs cut,
 490. The hands cut as well.
 491. I had said to you, you wanderers,
 492. Keep silent so that I may rather whisper to you.
 493. I stayed with foreign people,
 494. I stayed with the Shangaans, the Portuguese,
 495. They used to say 'to walk' is synonymous to *fampa*,
 496. 'To sleep' is synonymous to *hetlela*,
 497. 'To run', you know, they said meant to *tsotsoma*,
 498. The hands they term *maboho*,
 499. These eyes they term *maihlo*.
 500. What had I said to you, wanderers?
 501. There is a plain somewhere this side,
 502. The Basotho term it *Mahabadibaka* (rush to distances),
 503. The Xhosa term it *Mabolalasonke* (the killer of all),
 504. The Shangaans term it *Hebalebase*,
 505. This is the plain that has long been killing the people of Moshoeshoe.
 506. What had I said to you, wanderers?
 507. Keep silent so that I may rather whisper to you,
 508. The whites, good are they in creating puzzles,
 509. They have fastened a tin on their mineshaft,
 510. Here is the chain, I heard it making sounds,
 511. They made musical sound.
 512. I found them in the valley, the witches,
 513. These people from the guitar's, the cruel stone,
 514. The Basotho jive being five in number,
 515. The Amakhosa jive being three,
 516. The Batswana jive being ten.
 517. I said, I salute you, you women with tattoos on the buttocks,
 518. The witches in heart got angry,
 519. They said, Sello, we shall bewitch and kill you,
 520. And then put you on the path to the fountain,
 521. So that when we pass we can scold you,
 522. And say to you, there you are, you, despicable one,
 523. You who died as a result of your own evil deeds.

524. Now, I, Sello, plead for mercy,
 525. Women, mothers, please pardon me,
 526. I was only asking who your tailor is,
 527. They said, our tailor (time) is 3.00 o' clock,
 528. Four strikes when they are on their way,
 529. Five strikes when they are at home.
 530. What had I said to you, wanderers?
 531. As for me, reprimand me, wanderers,
 532. People who left here in winter time,
 533. Last year we went to Kimberley, the barren place,
 534. Where we found the blue driving,
 535. Mine waggons, an iron taking
 536. Others from the hot coals,
 537. Others from the coals to cool off,
 538. For a long time I have worked at these compounds (mine),
 539. I have already been to St Helena Deep mine,
 540. That is where I found Satan,
 541. Satan was a shaft foreman,
 542. One sustained an injury in the deep hole, they said, 'stop the bleeding!'
 543. They said the ravisher should strangle and kill him,
 544. For even if he has lost his job, he doesn't ever worry.
 545. The job is that of loading, says the ravisher,
 546. He accepts only the huge ones,
 547. Waggons crush the cowards,
 548. The Nguni of the Bokang family, make way for the loaders,
 549. The way is made by the ones lining up at a tipi (off loading place),
 550. The night card I have it stamped,
 551. I had said on top of the hole we closed,
 552. I have always said it, son of Bokang,
 553. That witchcraft does exist,
 554. The day I left my father's place, at king Lekeba's
 555. I was on my way to that Mafeteng camp,
 556. Poor me, I was going to join (as a mine worker),
 557. Precisely at the N.R.C.
 558. I found a male clerk
 559. With a lot of books (documents),
 560. He called out loudly,
 561. Saying, you poor boys who wish to learn more about the gold,
 562. Come quickly so that I may hire you.
 563. I made it snappy, child of Bokang
 564. I made it snappy and was on time.
 565. Forms were in order and I left,
 566. I went out through the Wepener border,
 567. The train boarded by John, Ramoseke and others,
 568. Is here waiting in the stable, an animal with a long body,
 569. Its shepherds are in black suits,
 570. They gave it fodder, but it does not even want to eat it,
 571. The government's cow refuses to eat, it simply stares,
 572. Then I saw men holding the hammers,
 573. Tapping her on the ankles,

574. Saying that a loose wheel should remain behind,
575. And remain behind for good.
576. I entrained and we left.
577. There were two flags in the guard's hands,
578. It was a green and a red one.
579. The green one allows her to go, the red one stops her.
580. You know, in front of it was written, 'Beware!'
581. On its side was written, 'You are left behind!'
582. On the wheels was written, 'Danger'.
583. You know what I had said to you, wanderers?
584. On top of the hole, at the central mine,
585. On top of the hole, at the central mine, we arrived and queued,
586. Poor me, even to work I had never worked before,
587. Poor me, I was trapped by a rope on the toe.
588. A white man screamed loudly,
589. People, switch off the winch, someone is injured!
590. He is already dead,
591. But I replied then with a heart full of sadness,
592. And said, people, I am not dead, I am still alive,
593. The serious problem is that I have a broken bone,
594. Oh! My fellow men! The knee-cap just above the knee!
595. I was put on a stretcher and taken away.
596. You know, I thought I was taken to the hospital,
597. In pain that's where they treated my wound with salt,
598. Yes, I will never say, Amen, at all,
599. What had I said to you, wanderers?
600. Summon all the eloquent ones to come here,
601. So that when they are gathered here
602. They should offer me white man's liquor,
603. So that when they realize I am tipsy,
604. Perhaps even drunk and staggering,
605. Then they should start singing,
606. Then they should manage to surpass me, brother of Bokang,
607. But from here they should take me to the-veldt-sinks,
608. And dig a hole, a very deep one,
609. When it is about 12 feet deep,
610. They take me and throw me inside,
611. And take huge stones and cover me up.
612. But they should be careful, I, the sly one, may wake up,
613. The bones of the dead will continue to trouble them.

(2) MAHLOMOLA THAMAE ['MELESI LODGE]

1. *O! Thea tsebe o mamele,*
2. *Thea tsebe o mamele semamedi,*
3. *O mamele mokoko ke ona a lla,*
4. *O lla o kgotsa dithole bongata.*
5. *Ha ithoka lesole la habo Mmaphethang,*
6. *Ke tlhomodi ya tlhoma ngwanabo Mmaphethang,*
7. *Motho ekare a hloma kgomo di balehe,*
8. *Hloma o hlomole wa habo Mmpaphethang,*
9. *Mofutsana ha a na setsha naheng,*
10. *Bahlankana le tlohele ho kgethollaka dibaka,*
11. *Nna habo monna ke hohle,*
12. *Nna ke buswa kwana le kwana,*
13. *Ke buswa ha Peete le Mokhachane,*
14. *Le Thababosiu mokgorong wa kgotla,*
15. *Kerekeng Matsieng.*
16. *Bahlankana ha re keng re ithehe mabitso,*
17. *Nna la ka ke se ke itehile.*
18. *Motho o tloha ha habo a matha,*
19. *O a tseba ke motho mojelathoko le batho,*
20. *Motho o a ja wa habo Mmantsho,*
21. *O a tseba o a ja jwale a siele ba ha Kana!*
22. *O a tseba le teng, thaka tsa ditjhele,*
23. *Ke mohlang ke tla re ho lona thaka tsa metswalle ya ka,*
24. *Ke reng ho lona, thaka tsa ditjhele?*
25. *Tsatsing lena re bitseditsweng moketeng ona,*
26. *Ho a ipakahatsa re marena,*
27. *O a tseba re betsuwe ke meditjhaba,*
28. *Ke a hlapanya re tlile mona lebaleng lena la kajeno*
29. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
30. *Jwale re tlile Thababosiu hantle,*
31. *Re tlile mokgorong wa kgotla Basotho,*
32. *Re tlile jwale ho tla tla tlotlisa setjhaba.*
33. *O a tseba le teng, thaka tsa ditjhele?*
34. *O a tseba mehahaborona e ntse e lla?*
35. *Re kgethilwe jwale ke meditjhaba*
36. *Ho tla ntweng.*
37. *O a tseba le teng, thaka tsa ditjhele,*
38. *Di re di rata ho tla tla utlwa Sesotho hantle?*
39. *Ba re ho bana ba Lesotho taba di matla,*
40. *Taba tsena tse buuwang ka Lesotho ka mona di matla,*
41. *Hobanyaneng sehahaborona re ne re se re se lahlile?*
42. *Ha re boeleng moetlong ditjhaba,*
43. *Le sehahaborona re se ke ra se lahla,*
44. *Ba bang kajeno lena la ka mmasheno,*
45. *Ba bang ba bona ba tena dipotsotso,*
46. *Ba bang jwale ba tena metshetshe*
47. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
48. *Bang jwale ba tena diphazozo.*

49. *O a tseba nna ha ke ipate ke leparakobo,*
50. *Mohlankana e mosehla e mokgutshwane*
51. *Ke kgunong wabo Mmantsho.*
52. *O a tseba le teng, thaka tsa ditjhele?*
53. *Ke kgitlane wa kgitla wa habo Mmaphethang,*
54. *Ke kgitla habedi kgopong tsa motho,*
55. *Ke kgitla motho ke mo reteletsa mmele.*
56. *O a tseba ke kgitla motho jwale mopatammala?*
57. *Modimo le yena o shebile tlaase,*
58. *Tlaase ho yena ho shejwe hodimo.*
59. *Ke moo ba habo ba qalang ba thola mosebetsi.*
60. *Koloi tsa matha ho ya dingakeng.*
61. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
62. *Eitse ha re fihla dingakeng,*
63. *Jwale manese ha se ho sebetsa.*
64. *Ke bone ba ferella jwalo.*
65. *O a tseba jwale dibuka ba di siya morao?*
66. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
67. *Jwale ditlhare tsa bona di be di fele.*
68. *Ngwana lona ke mo otlile mathuela,*
69. *Ke tla mo lefa kgomo e mona eso,*
70. *Ha e na dinaka kgomo ya dihlabeng.*
71. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
72. *Pontsheng kwana ha Makhobalo Theko,*
73. *Mofo o hanne jwale morena a mo roma,*
74. *Nke ke be ka hana morena a nroma,*
75. *Ntaele jwale morena, ke tla phetha.*
76. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
77. *Majamafa a iphetotse madimo,*
78. *Ha ba ja dikgomo ba tima baena,*
79. *Baholwane ke bana ba ntsietsa,*
80. *Hlabang e tshweu le fepe badimo,*
81. *Le tle le bone jwale ha Modimo a thaba,*
82. *Modimo ako utlwe jwale re a rapela,*
83. *Ho wena re rola katiba,*
84. *Re otla ka feise mangoleng mona,*
85. *Jwale motho ke tiisa ke bile ke ikana,*
86. *Ke ngwana Mofora kerekeng kwana,*
87. *Ke wa Mofora Modumathapelo.*
88. *O a tseba tshepe ya lla jwale ka ntle lapeng leso?*
89. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona, thaka tsa ditjhele?*
90. *Bomme le bontate diparolathota,*
91. *Nkang lengolo la Modimo ke lena le ipalle.*
92. *Ha ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona*
93. *Ha ke sa bua ke a lekanya.*
94. *Monongwaheng ona ha ke sa bua ke a porofeta,*
95. *Ho lehloohonolo ba sa lateleng keletso tsa ba kgopo,*
96. *Ba sa tsamayeng tseleng ya baetsadibe,*
97. *Ba sa duleng mokgatlong wa basomi,*
98. *Empa ba ithabela molaong wa Jehova,*

99. *Molao oo ba o nahana motsheare le bosui.*
100. *Jwalo ka sefate se hlomilweng pela metsi a kollang,*
101. *Se behang tholwana tsa sona*
102. *Ka kgwedi ya sona,*
103. *Seo mahlaku a sona a sa foforeheng.*
104. *Sohle seo a se etsang se a mo atla.*
105. *Empa ba kgopo ha ba jwalo,*
106. *Ba jwalo ka mmoko o fefolwang ke moya,*
107. *Le kahlolong ba kgopo ba ke ke ba ema,*
108. *Hobane Jehova a tseba tsela ya ba lokileng,*
109. *Empa tsela ya ba kgopo e fella tshenyehong.*
110. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
111. *Ke bua le lona ditsamayanaha,*
112. *Batho ba shwetsweng ke dipere tseleng.*
113. *Meleko, ntho e mpe e a tshwelwa!*
114. *Hlabang e tshweu, thaka tsa ditjhele.*
115. *O a tseba, hlabang e tshweu badimo ba thabe,*
116. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
117. *Nna ka seboko ke Mokwena,*
118. *Ke tantanyane ya Mokotedi thamaha,*
119. *Ke e dimapa e mora kgosi,*
120. *Ntjanyana ya sejamahlatsa Ramoteretele,*
121. *Ke kolwanyane la sejamokwebe,*
122. *Bahlankana ba phehile dikgang,*
123. *Ba bang ba tlohile mona tshiba di fefowa,*
124. *Dihempe di nqamathelaka mmele.*
125. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
126. *Nna ke re Thababosiu kwana ke a batlahala,*
127. *Thababosiu mokgorong wa kgotla.*
128. *O a tseba le ke le shebe ka hodima sephoko sele, le bone,*
129. *O a tseba ka hodimo ho teng mabitla a teng?*
130. *Ke bua ka mabitla a bafu,*
131. *Batho ba seng ba itjhweletse.*
132. *Ke bua ka mabitla a marena a maholo,*
133. *Batho ba seng ba shwele kgalekgaleng.*
134. *O a tseba le teng le yo kopa tlhomphe,*
135. *Le fihle le boke dikgomo le boke mahlosi,*
136. *Le tle le bone jwale ha Modimo a thaba.*
137. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
138. *Nthapeleng ke seafoma,*
139. *Nthapeleng jwale ke sa dutse fatshe,*
140. *Hobane ha ke ema ha ke sa na borapelo.*
141. *O a tseba ke motho wa moya, ke lakatsa hlomphe,*
142. *Ke radilotjane wa ngakanatsetsele,*
143. *Ekare o le ngaka wa kulelwa?*
144. *Bana ba hao ba kula keng o tjheka?*
145. *O tjheka le poea tebelabaloi?*
146. *O a tseba le teng, thaka tsa ditjhele,*
147. *Batho ba tswile mona tshiba di fefoa,*
148. *Dihempe di nqamathela mmele.*

149. *Ba bang thare tsa bona di tswile di sa sebetsa,*
150. *O a tseba ba re ba ya mpetsa!*
151. *Ba re ba bets a kgereletjhane.*
152. *O a tseba ba bets a ka powa,*
153. *Ba bets a ka monotja.*
154. *Nna ke re eng ho lona, thaka tsa ditjhele?*
155. *O a tseba ke bets a ka nonentsho,*
156. *Ntsho ntekeletsane le sehamelapodi?*
157. *O a tseba motswako wa sona ke mohlanasuping!*
158. *Ho ya kang ke buang ka mokgwa ona?*
159. *Bahlankana, ha re keng re itheheng mabitso,*
160. *Nna la ka ke se ke ithehile,*
161. *O a tseba ke Tlhomohi, rapalla kgama di fete?*
162. *Di fete ka bohlan o le ka botshelela,*
163. *Ka bosupa di ka robana melala*
164. *Nthetheke letsatsi ho dikela.*
165. *Ebeke letsatsi le ka be le sa dikele,*
166. *Le ka be le dikella maqhekwana,*
167. *Dipapatlele re nne re itsamaele,*
168. *Batho ba ho shwelwa ke dipere tseleng.*
169. *Banna, nna ka shwelwa ke beng ka hloka balai,*
170. *Hara methaka e ntse e lawa.*
171. *O a tseba nna mme o shwele ke sa le monyane,*
172. *Ke utlwile ka pale, mangolo a balwa.*
173. *Ho ya kang ke buang ka mokgwa ona, thaka tsa ditjhele?*
174. *O a tseba nna le ka mahlo ha ke eso mmone!*
175. *Eyere jwale ke lora ke ntse ke shebile,*
176. *Ke lora jwale ba re ke yena,*
177. *Ba re ke mme ya tseka la mathe*
178. *Ya motshwana, ya mokgutshwane.*
179. *O a tseba ka bokgutshwanyane o lekana le nna!*
180. *Bang ba re jwale ka bokgutshwanyane o a mpheta.*
181. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona, thaka tsa ditjhele?*
182. *O a tseba le teng metswalle ya ka, thaka tsa ditjhele,*
183. *Hlabang e tshweu le fepe badimo.*
184. *O a tseba ka nnete maru a thibile, pula e a na.*
185. *Lehodimo le sele, jwale le letalana,*
186. *Ke bona eka le ka nna la re ho thea maru.*
187. *Ha ke mahele, ke mabefola,*
188. *Ha ke mosala, ke motsamai,*
189. *Bomosala ke lona beng ba basadi,*
190. *Batho ba ho sala le roka thethana lemeno,*
191. *Ba ntse ba kakalatsaka maqhekwana*
192. *Ditjhebeleng mona tsa diotlwana*
193. *Le se nna le soma disalahae,*
194. *Disalahae tsena di a sebetsa,*
195. *Ba tjheka diforo ka mora matlo,*
196. *Ba pepa le bana ho ya dingakeng,*
197. *Ba thiba dikgomo bosiu di tlotse.*
198. *Ho ya kang ke buang ka mokgwa ona?*

199. *Mpheng o motsho tloutla,*
200. *O a tseba tekete le molamu,*
201. *Ke re o motsho hobane jwale ke a lwana.*
202. *Hobane le teng, thaka tsa ditjhele,*
203. *Ke mohlankana wa Mosotho,*
204. *Mosotho, nna ha ke ipate ke leaparakobo,*
205. *Kobokgwadi mmankgoshepe tata la kgwadi.*
206. *Bahlankana ba e reile lebitso,*
207. *Ba re ke tata le makgwadi,*
208. *Kgubedu yabo morwa, ngwanabo Mmantshadi,*
209. *Morwa, thaka tsa ditjhele.*
210. *Bahlankana ba tjhaile kerepe,*
211. *Ba tsubile kobo thabeng,*
212. *Ba potile terene ka hosele.*
213. *Bahlankana, le lemohileng?*
214. *Le lemohileng?*
215. *Hoba ka dithope o a tseba*
216. *Le lemohile ho roka dinyatsi?*
217. *Bahlankana, le rata dinyatsi le siya dipere.*
218. *Ho ya kang ke bua ka mokgwa ona?*
219. *Pitsi ya ntate sekobamolala*
220. *Pitsi e tshela kapa e sootho?*
221. *Bahlankana ba tjhaile kerepe.*
222. *Re ne re palame, re ile ditabeng,*
223. *Sennonori jwale re ne re qala,*
224. *Re ilo setjha dihlaba.*
225. *Re ne re ile kwana hodimodimo kwana ha Ramatladi.*
226. *O a tseba bofubedung kwana Matebeleng,*
227. *Ho lepoqo ho bapalla makanyane,*
228. *Modikadikweng tshwene di a ratana,*
229. *Ke moo pere tsa bahlankana ba bang*
230. *Di ileng tsa kgathala.*
231. *Ba bang ba bona ba kgutlile*
232. *Ba jarile disale.*
233. *Helehelele bontate diparolathota,*
234. *Re ne re ena le marena a maholo feela,*
235. *Re ne re ena le Seeiso enwa wa Masopha,*
236. *Helehelele bontate ba diparolathota,*
237. *Re ne re ena le Kgwabane mora Theko.*
238. *Ho ya kang ke buang ka mokgwa ona?*
239. *Bashanyana ba re ba ile Tekesele,*
240. *Tekesele ba ilo setjha dihlaba.*
241. *Batho ba kgutlile meeding ya masimo,*
242. *Ba kgutlile meeding ya masimo ba sa setjha,*
243. *Ba bang ba tlohile mona ba kopile tshwarelo.*
244. *Ho ya kang ke buang ka mokgwa ona?*
245. *Setsokotsane sa Mekading, o a tseba*
246. *Mohlankana e motle Mahlomola?*
247. *Mohlankana ya se nang maikutlo.*
248. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. Oh! Open your ears and listen,
2. Open your ears and listen, you, the listener,
3. Listen, here is a cock crowing,
4. It crows, exclaiming on account of the many hens.
5. He is praising himself, the soldier of the house of Mmaphethang,
6. He is the consistent nomad, the brother of Mmaphethang,
7. When a person erects his shed, cattle run away,
8. Erect and dismantle, you of the house of Mmaphethang,
9. The poor has no site in the country.
10. Young men, you should stop discriminating places,
11. To me, man's home is everywhere,
12. I am governed anywhere,
13. I am governed at Peete's and Mokhachane's,
14. Even at Thababosiu at the hut of the court,
15. In church, at Matsieng.
16. Young men, let us give ourselves names,
17. Mine, I have one already,
18. A person leaves home running.
19. You know that I am one-who-shuns-eating-among-other-people,
20. He eats a lot, he of the house of Mmantsho,
21. You know, he eats and then leaves some food for those at Kana's,
22. You know, even then, young men,
23. It is the day I shall say to you, my friends,
24. What should I say to you, young men?
25. Today, being invited to this feast,
26. It is obvious we are regarded as chiefs.
27. You know, we are invited by the nations,
28. I swear, we have come to this ground, today
29. Why am I saying all this?
30. We have come to the real Thaba Bosiu,
31. We have come to the hut of the court, you the Basotho,
32. We have come to honour the nation.
33. Do you know, that even then, young men?
34. Do you know that our relatives are busy crying?
35. We have been selected now by foreign nations,
36. To come to war.
37. Do you know, that even then, young men?
38. They say that they want to listen carefully to Sesotho?
39. They say to the children of Lesotho issues are difficult,
40. Issues spoken here in Lesotho are difficult,
41. Why have we forsaken our culture?
42. Let us return to our traditions, dear nations,
43. Our culture, we should not abandon,
44. Others still, even to date,
45. Some of them wear tight trousers,
46. Some of them now wear tight dresses,
47. Why am I saying all this?
48. Some now wear palazzos,

49. You know, I do not pretend, I am a blanket-wearer,
 50. A light-brown young man, short in stature,
 51. I am brown one of the house of Mmantsho.
 52. Do you know, that even then, young men?
 53. I am one who hits, one of the house of Mmaphethang,
 54. I hit twice on man's ribs,
 55. I hit one and make him turn around,
 56. You know, I hit one hiding my real true colours?
 57. God Himself is looking downwards,
 58. Man's prostrate body is turned upwards,
 59. That is where his family members begin to encounter problems,
 60. Cars ran up and down to consult the doctors,
 61. Why am I saying all this?
 62. When we arrived at the doctors,
 63. You know, the nurses worked very hard,
 64. I saw them rushing to and fro,
 65. You know, they forgot about their books?
 66. Why am I saying all this?
 67. You know, they even ran short of medicines.
 68. I have hit your child half mad, you bone-doctors,
 69. I shall pay with one of our cows,
 70. It has no horns, a cow from the plateau,
 71. Why am I saying all this?
 72. In public out there at Makhobalo Theko's,
 73. A subject refused when sent by the chief,
 74. I can never refuse when the chief sends me.
 75. Now, give me orders my Lord, I shall carry them out,
 76. Why am I saying all this?
 77. The heirs have turned themselves into cannibals,
 78. When they inherit cattle, they do not share with young brothers,
 79. Here are my elder brothers embarrassing me,
 80. Slaughter the white one and feed the ancestors,
 81. So as to see God rejoicing,
 82. God, please listen to our prayers,
 83. Before you we take off our hats,
 84. And humbly touch our knees with our fists,
 85. And then affirm, taking an oath,
 86. I belong to the Paris Evangelical church,
 87. I belong to the Paris church, an earnestly-praying-person,
 88. You know, the bell rang outside our home,
 89. Why do I say all this, young men?
 90. Mothers and fathers, the extensive travellers,
 91. Here is God's Word, take it and read it yourselves,
 92. Why do I have to talk in this manner?
 93. I do not talk, I am merely supposing,
 94. This year I no longer talk, I prophesy,
 95. Blessed are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
 96. Who do not take the path that sinners tread,
 97. Or sit in the seat of scoffers,
 98. But their delight is in the law of Jehovah,

99. That law they meditate day and night,
 100. They are like tree planted by the streams of water,
 101. Which yield their fruit,
 102. In its season,
 103. Their leaves do not wither,
 104. In all that they do, they prosper,
 105. But the wicked are not so,
 106. They are like chaff that is blown away by the wind,
 107. Even on the judgement day the wicked will not stand,
 108. Because Jehovah knows the path of the righteous ones,
 109. But the path of the wicked will perish.
 110. Why am I saying all this?
 111. I am addressing you, the country travellers,
 112. People whose horses died on the way,
 113. Temptations, anything abhorrent is shunned,
 114. Slaughter a white one (chicken), young men,
 115. You know, slaughter a white one, so the ancestors may rejoice.
 116. Why am I saying all this?
 117. By clan name, I am one a Mokwena,
 118. A despised one of Mokotedi, the hyena,
 119. A white-coloured one, descendant of the son of the chief,
 120. A dog that eats vomited food, Ramoteretele,
 121. I am a young initiate who eats hardened cock nails,
 122. Young men are having arguments,
 123. Some of them left here feathers flying,
 124. Shirts sticking on to their bodies.
 125. Why am I saying all this?
 126. I say, at Thaba Bosiu I am needed,
 127. Thaba Bosiu at the hut of the court,
 128. You know, you should look on top of that hill, and see,
 129. You know, on top of it there are graves,
 130. I refer to the graves of the dead,
 131. People who are already dead,
 132. I refer to the graves of the great chiefs,
 133. People already dead long long ago,
 134. You know, you should go there to ask for respect,
 135. You should give thanks and thank the ancestors,
 136. You will then see how God will rejoice.
 137. Why am I saying all this?
 138. Plead with me, I am a diviner,
 139. Plead with me while I am still sitting down,
 140. Because once I stand up I have no mercy anymore.
 141. You know, I am possessed by spirit, I expect an honour!
 142. I am a herbal (plant *Mehernia ovalis*) doctor, a real doctor,
 143. If you're a doctor, why do your family get sick?
 144. Why do your children get sick, whereas you dig?
 145. Also digging *poea* plant, one-which-chases-away-the-witches,
 146. You know, even there, young men,
 147. People came out here feathers flying,
 148. Shirts sticking on to their bodies,

149. Some left their herbs not having effected anything,
 150. You know, they tried to strike (bewitch) me,
 151. And thought they were striking a caricature,
 152. You know, they struck with *poea*,
 153. And struck with *monatja* (stricta plant).
 154. Yes, what do I say to you, young men?
 155. You know, I strike with *nonentsho* (black blesbuck),
 156. *Ntshontekeletsane* (black falling plant) and *sehamelapodi* (Parapodium plant)
 157. You know, its mixture is called *mohlanasuping!*
 158. Why do I have to say such things?
 159. Young men, let us give ourselves names,
 160. Mine, I have one already,
 161. You know, I am the sad one lying down for the hartebeest to pass,
 162. To pass in fives and in sixes,
 163. In sevens they would break one another's necks,
 164. Until sunset,
 165. One would wish the sun not to set,
 166. But would be setting for the old people only,
 167. We, the vagabonds, should keep on walking,
 168. We, whose horses have died on the road,
 169. People, by the way my parents have died and I lost advisors,
 170. Whist my friends are being reprimanded,
 171. You know, my mother died when I was young,
 172. I only heard a story when documents were read,
 173. Why do I say all this, young men?
 174. You know, even with my eyes I have not seen her.
 175. At times when I daydream,
 176. I always dream and people would say she is the one,
 177. With a gap on the front teeth,
 178. The black one, short in stature.
 179. You know, in height I resemble her,
 180. But some say that she was shorter than me.
 181. Why do I say all this, young men?
 182. You know, even then, my friends, young men,
 183. Slaughter the white one and feed the ancestors,
 184. You know, indeed the weather is overcast, rain is falling,
 185. Everything has cleared up and the sky is blue,
 186. It, however, appears as if the clouds will gather.
 187. I am not an untrustworthy one, I am an angry walker,
 188. I am not one remaining at home, I am a traveller,
 189. Those-remaining-at-home, you are the husbands of the wives,
 190. People to remain sewing fringe-skirt seems,
 191. Letting the aged lie on their backs,
 192. In the chimneys here of the courtyards,
 193. You should not mock those who remain home,
 194. Those who remain at home work hard,
 195. They dig furrows behind houses,
 196. They also carry children on their backs to the doctors,
 197. They collect cattle at night when they have jumped the fence.
 198. Why am I saying all this?

199. Give me the black one, the stick.
200. You know, a ticket and a stick,
201. Yes, I say, a black one, because now I am fighting.
202. Because even then, young men,
203. I am Mosotho, young man,
204. Mosotho, I do not hide my identity, I am a blanket-wearer,
205. Dark grey blanket, the coarse skin one,
206. Young men have named it,
207. They say it is a white-spotted tanned skin,
208. The red one like a Bushman, brother of Mmantshadi,
209. The Bushman, young men.
210. Young men have lost,
211. They have smoked dagga on the mountain,
212. They approached the train on the wrong side.
213. Young men, what have you discovered?
214. What have you discovered?
215. For as for girls, you do know,
216. You have discovered praising the concubines,
217. Young men, you love concubines and forget about the horses,
218. Why am I saying all this?
219. My father's horse, the neck-twister,
220. Is the horse light brown or dark brown?
221. Young men have missed a lot.
222. We were on horseback to listen to a case,
223. The spy had started,
224. By examining plateaus,
225. We had gone up yonder at Ramatladi's
226. You know, at red soil out there at the Ndebeles,
227. It is dusty, wild dogs play there,
228. At the merry-go-rounds baboons love each other,
229. That is where some of the young men's
230. Horses got tired.
231. Some of them returned
232. Carrying their saddles.
233. I greet you, fathers, wayfarers,
234. We were with senior chiefs only,
235. We were with Seeiso, this one of Masopha's,
236. I greet you, fathers, you, wayfarers,
237. We were with Kgwabane, son of Theko.
238. Why am I saying all this?
239. Young men had gone to Tekesele,
240. Tekesele to examine the plateaus,
241. People returned at the borders of the fields,
242. They returned at the borders of the fields without examining anything,
243. Some left here after asking for an apology.
244. Why am I saying all this?
245. Whirlwind from Mekading, you know,
246. A handsome young man, Mahlomola!
247. A young man without open opinions!
248. There it cuts off and goes!

(3) KOMELLO BAPTIST MAHANETSA [MATSIENG]

1. *Motsekuoa le ha Makhakhe ke fetile feela,*
2. *Ha Mpalipali ke kgutla teng,*
3. *Ha 'Maliepetsane kgohlong.*
4. *Terene ya tjhesetsa maqaqana,*
5. *Difarelane tsa eshwa,*
6. *Majeresi a eshwa a le lekgolo,*
7. *Mmutlanyana e tjeletse le naha,*
8. *Nkgo di tjele le jwala ba Sekgowa,*
9. *Ditswekere le majwala di qhalane.*
10. *Dibaka tseo ke fetileng ho tsona,*
11. *Ha Tlali pela sekhonthari,*
12. *Ka Popa le Popanyane,*
13. *Ha Mokhou le ha Khoeli,*
14. *Mahlabatheng ke fetile mohwalotso,*
15. *Masinoto le Masianokeng,*
16. *Ha Abia le ha Seoli,*
17. *Sekeleng mona ke fetile feela,*
18. *Fourways ha Ralikoro,*
19. *Seapoint pela letamong,*
20. *Pela selakga sena sa ngwaneso Masopha,*
21. *Kgubetsoana motseng o bitswang Phopholetsa,*
22. *Haufinyana le Difelekoaneng,*
23. *Motsemocha ke fetile feela.*
24. *Ha ntate Tšosane motseng,*
25. *Ka hodima sehlabane ho dula morena Tšotetsi,*
26. *Lesole le mona le ntseng le le tseba,*
27. *Topong se bitswang Matebeleng,*
28. *Ha Senekale motseng,*
29. *Ke bala Maseru toropong,*
30. *Ke fetile feela.*

1. At Motsekuwa and Makhakhe, I just passed,
2. From Mpalipali's I have been there,
3. At 'Maliepetsane's, at the kloof,
4. The train burnt the poor Boers' property,
5. Merino sheep perished,
6. Jersey cattle, a thousand of them perished,
7. Rabbits burnt together with the veldt,
8. Clay pots burnt together with the White man's liquor,
9. Sugar and liquor scattered all over,
10. Places that I have been to,
11. At Tlali's, near the secondary school,
12. At Popa's and Popanyane's,
13. At Mokhou's and Khoeli's,
14. At Mahlabatheng I just passed,
15. At Masinoto and Masianokeng,
16. At Abi's and Seoli's,

17. Here at the circle I just passed,
18. Fourways, at Ralikoro's,
19. At Seapoint, near the dam,
20. Near this butchery of my brother, Masopha,
21. At Khubetsoana, the village called, Phopholetsa,
22. Near Lifelekoaneng,
23. At Motsemotjha, I just passed,
24. At father Tšosane's, I just passed,
25. On top of the plateau, there lives chief Tšotetsi,
26. This soldier whom you know,
27. At the stop called, Matebeleng,
28. At Senekale's village,
29. I count Maseru, at town,
30. I just passed.

(4) MPHUTLANE MOFOKENG [THABANA-TSHOWANA]

1. *Banna tsielala! Banna tsielala!*
2. *Basotho ba mona ba ha Mmantshi,*
3. *Bana ba ha Kgolokwane le lona bana ba Nqabe.*
4. *Tholang lerata Basotho ke thakgisa nkwe,*
5. *Bothakgiso ba nkwe ba batla bo le thata.*
6. *Mphutlane se itaole ngwana Mmantshi,*
7. *O tla laolwa ke morena Leabua,*
8. *Le morena Lekunututu Mmota*
9. *Le Mme Mmathokwana Mopedi.*
10. *Ke hona ba tla ntaola Sefokeng,*
11. *Ke utlwa eka ho phehilwe dikgang,*
12. *Ke banna ba dikgeleke,*
13. *Ba re Mphutlane kokobela ngwana Mmantshi,*
14. *O kokobele dipuo di fete,*
15. *Le hona di fete ka hodima mahetla,*
16. *Dikulo ha di feta ke ya bathong,*
17. *Ke kena jwalo ka letolo bathong.*
18. *Banna Mphutlane ke kgwedi,*
19. *Mathwasane motho wa ha Nqabe.*
20. *Kgwedi e ka thwasa hara mpa ya lehlabula,*
21. *Banna, botala banna diphuleng.*
22. *Ho jewa kgatsela mona ha ntate ha Kgolokwane,*
23. *Ho jewa ntshwe, poone, le mokopu.*
24. *Banna jwale morena Leabua,*
25. *O tle o ke o ntshwarele morena,*
26. *Ke batlile ke dieha ho bua morena,*
27. *Ke bua pelo ya ka e se e le bohloko,*
28. *Bongata ba dikgeleke bo se bo buile,*
29. *Ba boi le ba bohale.*
30. *Le hona ke bua pelo ya ka e se e le bohloko,*
31. *Pelo ha se lefu ha se mmolai,*
32. *Le hoja banna ke lefu,*
33. *Nna nka be ke se ke shwele.*
34. *Banna halala!*
35. *Ba batlang ho tseba Mphutlane,*
36. *Tswelang ka ntle bana ba Basotho,*
37. *Le phahamise letsoho le letona,*
38. *Le letona la malahlela,*
39. *Le letshehadi la matshwarathebe,*
40. *Lona le le tlohele.*
41. *Ka lona le tla mmona Mofokeng,*
42. *Hara mpa ya bosiu madimo,*
43. *Ha bana ba robetse ba kgona,*
44. *Ba bile ba kgakgathisa mahanana.*
45. *Banna o kwatile ngwana wa Nqabe,*
46. *O tula ka leoto fatshe,*
47. *O hetla ka nqena le ka nqena,*
48. *Diphoofofswana tse nyenyane Basia,*

49. *Ba sa tla baleha,*
50. *Le hona ba sa tla matha lebelo,*
51. *Dikatsekatsa tsa ehlwa difate,*
52. *Le hona di sa hetle morao,*
53. *Dintja tsa qata mehatla,*
54. *Tsa potela ka mora matlo.*
55. *O kwatile seafoma motjhesi wa bomme Mmapolo,*
56. *Ke seakgi motho wa ha Nqabe,*
57. *Ke lerumo la hona kgophola moswang,*
58. *Ke motho wa malahleha,*
59. *Wa Mmantshi, Mphutlane.*
60. *Nka lahleha ka hloka babatli,*
61. *Hara makgomo a ntse a batlwa,*
62. *Ekaba ha o batluwe keng monna e motelele?*
63. *Dikgeleke le dingaka mathuela,*
64. *Ba re na ke tshepileng ngwana Nqabe?*
65. *Ka re ke tshepile bana ba ha Kgolokwane Bafokeng,*
66. *Ba itse ha ho le hobe ba tla lahlela.*
67. *Banna ba heso,*
68. *Mmamoshahle wa tsela tsa baloi Mofokeng,*
69. *Mphutlane se nna o ntso o lelekisa baloi,*
70. *Batho ba bosiu ha ba lelekiswe,*
71. *Ke ye ke kgalengwelwe*
72. *Ke bana ba ha Kgolokwane Bafokeng*
73. *Ba re ke mpe ke ba tlohele.*
74. *Lemong sena ke fetohile,*
75. *Mphutlane nna ha ke sa le sefopha, ke Makgahlela,*
76. *Kgahlela motho ka sefuba Nnuku,*
77. *O mo thudisa mokgoro wa kgotla,*
78. *E tle e re ha a re itjhuu!*
79. *Ke mo tlole hodimo.*
80. *Banna jwale ha ithoka lai thekge!*
81. *Utlwa! Ke swalakahla tlalemothwana,*
82. *Letsolo le mona la ha Nqabe.*
83. *Tjhaba di qabane kwana ha ntate la Kgolokwane motseng*
84. *Qwele! Banna ba Kgolokwane,*
85. *Ekaba le tsekang Bafokeng*
86. *Ke mpe ke le namole?*
87. *A ke mpe le kgumame fatshe,*
88. *Jwale ho etsa thapelo,*
89. *Nna ke tsosa bafu ba seng ba robetse,*
90. *Nka ba bala ka mabitso la utlwa:*
91. *Ke bua ka Kabelo le ngwanabo Ntshike,*
92. *Ke bua ka Tani le ngwanabo Mohanwe,*
93. *Mahohodi le ngwanabo Rannuku,*
94. *Ke bua ka Lehopo le ngwanabo Thulo,*
95. *Ntatemoholo Sebatsa le ntatemoholo Senekale,*
96. *Banna Mphutlane ke shwetswe ke beng.*
97. *Ka sala ke teta,*
98. *Ka ba ka sala ke ntse ke lealea sebakeng,*

99. *Bokgeleke ke a bo tlohela,*
100. *Dikgeleke di shwele kaofela mona ha Mmantshi,*
101. *Esita le ho shwa Lefafatsane,*
102. *Ke bua ka Stillwater wa bana ba Mphupe.*
103. *Ke bua ka yena morena Mafafa,*
104. *Ha eshwa Fiveroses kapa Tebelo,*
105. *Ha eshwa ntatemoholo Lesedi kapa Senekale,*
106. *Ntatemoholo Ramohloki Mofokeng.*
107. *Ako mpe o bue le nkgono Mmamohloki,*
108. *Le nkgono Mmanthona le nkgono Mmamoketa,*
109. *Le nkgono Mmatjheafana le nkgono Mmapuke,*
110. *Tlong ho rona bana ba Nqabe,*
111. *Mohlomong ke hona le tla utlwa Bafokeng,*
112. *Bana ba Kgolokwane.*
113. *Banna jwale ha ithoka dimo la Ratlaleng,*
114. *La Raboshabane la eja motho,*
115. *La mo kgaola tshea moqato,*
116. *Moqato wa tshea o be o kgaohe.*
117. *Mohlankana wa sebeta le moepeng,*
118. *Poho e thaba e kgasa ka mangole,*
119. *E hopotse Thabanatshowana kwana moreneng.*
120. *Kwana moo ho busang morena Leabua,*
121. *Ngwana mme Mmamokwena ke fihlile,*
122. *O tle o utlwe ha ke fihla ka hare ho batho,*
123. *Ke fihla ho bona tsatsi le rapame,*
124. *Tsatsi ha le hlahlamela dithaba.*
125. *Basotho ba hana ho bua sekgowa,*
126. *Ba se rata feela e se Makgowa,*
127. *Ka Mmabela Mphutlane ke a hlapanya,*
128. *Le tle le nkutlwe ke tla kwebela.*
129. *Phakisang kapele le ngolle mose sekgutlong,*
130. *Le tsebise Mohau, wa Balankiri wa habo Tshotleho.*
131. *Le mo jwetse hore Mphutlane ke kwatile,*
132. *Mphutlane ke kene ditshwantshong tse kgopo,*
133. *Le ntshwantshe le meya ya difefo,*
134. *Jwale monongwaha Thabanatshowana e na le tlhware,*
135. *Ha e se tlhware ke Mojapela.*
136. *Ra pota thaba ka morao re thoba,*
137. *Re na le Cedrick le Chakela wa ha Lepele,*
138. *Mabanta re ne re a finne mafito,*
139. *Makurusupane a re tlotse mahetla,*
140. *Melamu re tshwere ya mehlware,*
141. *E qaqapeha makgapetla.*
142. *Bahlankana ba re re ithehe mabitso,*
143. *Nna ka re la ka ke se ke ithehile,*
144. *Banna ha ithoka phatshwa!*
145. *Ha ithoka phatshwa thaka dithibakgomo,*
146. *Thaka dijabatho,*
147. *Ke moloeloe o thebe e tjhitja,*
148. *Mpheng thebe ya me ke a tsamaya.*

149. *Ke sa ya kwana morena a ileng,*
150. *Nna nke ke ka sala ha morena a eta,*
151. *A ya mahosana a etile.*
152. *Sutu ena ya bana ba Nqabe,*
153. *Mphutlane nna ha ke hlabane ke a sututsa,*
154. *Ke sututsa ntwā ka mangole,*
155. *Ke lebisa kwana moreneng ho e mosehla,*
156. *Raboshidi morena a di botse.*
157. *Ako fehle mollo ntwā ena o e neele jwale,*
158. *Batho ke bana ba ntutse pelong,*
159. *Ba hlola ba pheile dikgang,*
160. *Ba re ba ka sebetsa sewalowalo,*
161. *Ba ka e beta nkwe tobodi ya bana ba Mmantshi,*
162. *Lona batho ting le tsubang le matekwane,*
163. *Ella hole ke batla ho ithoka.*
164. *Le mo jwetse Mphutlane*
165. *Ha ke a kwata mona moo ke teng,*
166. *Ho teng ke hlabehile.*
167. *Banna ba heso, ha ithoka lefekefeke la marumo,*
168. *Kgaitsemi ya Makgala le Ntaoleng,*
169. *Ntata Malefetsane hlokofala feela monna e molelele,*
170. *O hlabē motho ka lerumo mpeng,*
171. *Lerumo la hao la hanella moqaqeng.*
172. *Masapo a mabedi thekeng mona ho motho,*
173. *Ke moo lerumo la ngwana Mmantshi le fasitseng teng,*
174. *Mphutlane hata motho ka seeta phiong mona,*
175. *O tshware lerumo ka matsoho a mabedi,*
176. *O le hlekehle, o tseke ho le ntsha.*
177. *Motho a ba a tshwarwa ke mala,*
178. *A paqama a tsholla,*
179. *Boko ba mo tswa ka ditsebe,*
180. *Madi a mo tswa ka dinko.*
181. *Mphutlane motho a ka shwa a shwela atleng tsa ka,*
182. *Ke ntse ke tseka ho ntsha lerumo,*
183. *La kgomo e kgophola moswang,*
184. *Banna ba heso,*
185. *Mphutlane ke utlwa eka ke hlabehile,*
186. *Ha ke tsebe morena aka,*
187. *Ke mpe ke itabile ka dinala kgokgothong mona,*
188. *Ke ikgehlebanye majweng,*
189. *Ha ke rata nka ipolaya,*
190. *Ha ke rata nna nka ipolaya.*

1. People silence, people silence,
2. The Basotho of this place at Mmantshi's,
3. Children of Kgolokwane as well as you, of Nkabe,
4. Silence Basotho I am nailing a tiger,
5. The nailing of a tiger is a bit problematic.

6. Mphutlane do not command yourself, child of Mmantshi,
7. You will be commanded by Chief Leabua
8. And Chief Lekunutu Mmota
9. And Chieftainness Mmathokwana Mopeli.
10. They are the ones to command the Bafokeng culture,
11. It seems as if there is an argument,
12. By men of eloquence,
13. Saying, Mphutlane slow down, child of Mmantshi,
14. Slow down that arguments may pass,
15. Yes, they must pass over the shoulders,
16. When bullets pass I charge people,
17. I charge people like lightning.
18. People, Mphutlane is the moon,
19. The renewed one of Nqabe's,
20. The new moon may start in mid summer,
21. Yes, amid the greens, along the valleys,
22. We eat colostrum here at my father's, at Kgolokwane's,
23. We eat amercane, mealies and pumpkins,
24. Oh men, now Chief Leabua,
25. Please excuse me, my Lord,
26. I almost delayed to speak, my Lord,
27. I speak my heart already aching,
28. Many eloquent ones have spoken,
29. The cowards and the heroes,
30. I therefore speak my heart already aching,
31. The heart is not death, is not a killer,
32. Even though it were but death,
33. I would be dead by now,
34. People, oh yes!
35. Those who wish to know Mphutlane
36. Come out, children of the Basotho,
37. Raise the right hand,
38. The right one, the throwing one.
39. The left one, that holds a shield,
40. That should be left alone,
41. Through it you will see the Mofokeng,
42. In the middle of the night, the cannibals,
43. When children are asleep and snoring,
44. Snoring heavily through the nose,
45. People, he is angry, child of Nkabe,
46. He stamps his foot on the ground,
47. He looks this side and that side,
48. Small animals, the Basia,
49. Will flee and run fast.
50. They will indeed run very fast,
51. Cats climbed the trees,
52. Without even looking back,
53. Dogs hid their tails,
54. And disappeared behind the houses.
55. He's angry, the assenting one, paramour of Mmapolo's,

56. I am a body-jerker, person from Nkabe's,
 57. I am the assegaai scatterer of chyme,
 58. I am one of those who get lost,
 59. Of Mmantshi's, that is, Mphutlane.
 60. I might get lost and lack seekers,
 61. Among cattle being looked for,
 62. Why are you not looked for, you the tall one?
 63. The eloquent, doctors and diviners
 64. Ask why are you self-reliant, Nkabe child?
 65. I said I am relying on the children of Kgolokwane, the Bafokeng
 66. They said when it's bad they would step in,
 67. My comrades,
 68. Mmamoshahle of the wizards' ways, Mofokeng,
 69. Mphutlane, stop pursuing the wizards,
 70. The night people are never pursued.
 71. I'm usually reprimanded
 72. By the children of Kgolokwane, the Bafokeng
 73. Saying I should leave them alone.
 74. This year I have repented,
 75. Mphutlane, I am no longer the beater, I am the pusher,
 76. Push a person with your chest Nnuku,
 77. And hit him against the hut of a courtyard,
 78. So that when he says oh!
 79. I jump over him.
 80. Comrades, now he praises, the lightning and thunder,
 81. Listen, inside enters man-made lightning,
 82. Lightning known at Nkabe's.
 83. Nations clash yonder at my father's at Kgolokwane village,
 84. Oh please, children of Kgolokwane,
 85. What could be the matter, Bafokeng
 86. So that I could go in between?
 87. Let me go on my knees
 88. Now to pray.
 89. I wake up the dead who are sleeping,
 90. I may call them by name for you to know,
 91. I refer to Kabelo and his brother Ntshike,
 92. I refer to Tani and his brother Mohanwe,
 93. Mahohodi and his brother Rannuku,
 94. I refer to Lehopo and his brother Thulo,
 95. Grandfathers Sebatsa and Senekale.
 96. Comrades, Mphutlane has lost masters
 97. And remains forlorn.
 98. Until I remained wondering in the veldt,
 99. Eloquence, I wish to let go,
 100. The eloquent are all dead here at Mmantshi's
 101. Even the death of Lefafatsane,
 102. Yes, I refer to Stillwater of the children of Mphupe,
 103. I refer to him, Chief Mafafa,
 104. Yes, died Five Roses or Tebelo,
 105. Died grandfather Lesedi or Senekale,

106. Grandfather Ramohloki Mofokeng,
 107. Please talk to grandmother Mmamohloki,
 108. And grandmothers Mmanthona and Mmamoketa,
 109. And grandmothers Mmatjheafana and Mmapuke.
 110. Come to us, children of Nqabe,
 111. Maybe it's then that you will understand, Bafokeng,
 112. Children of Kgolokwane.
 113. Comrades, now he praises, the cannibal of Ratlaleng,
 114. He of Raboshabana ate a person,
 115. He cut off his loin garment,
 116. The loin garment was cut off,
 117. Young man who overpowers even at uphill,
 118. The bull rejoices while moving on its knees,
 119. On its way to Thabanatshowana at the Chief's place,
 120. Yonder where Chief Leabua governs.
 121. Child of Mmamokwena, I have arrived,
 122. You should see when I arrive among people,
 123. Arriving at them towards sunset,
 124. When the sun approaches the mountains,
 125. Basotho refuse to speak English,
 126. They like it but are no English speakers,
 127. By Mmabela, Mphutlane, I swear,
 128. You should listen when I walk diligently,
 129. Rush and send letters over there at the kloof,
 130. And inform Mohau of Lankiri, of Tshotleho,
 131. Inform him that Mphutlane is cross,
 132. Mphutlane got into cruel pictures,
 133. Compare me to the storms,
 134. Yes, this year Thabanatshowana has a python,
 135. It is not a python but Mojalefa.
 136. We went behind a mountain slipping away,
 137. We were with Cedric and Chakela of Lepele's,
 138. The belts were tied knots,
 139. Braces over the shoulders,
 140. Sticks holding the olive tree ones,
 141. Peeling off barks,
 142. Young men suggested we give ourselves names,
 143. I said I already have one,
 144. Oh! He praised himself, the black-white one,
 145. He praised himself, the black-white one, cattle herder,
 146. Companion of the man-eaters.
 147. I am a wanderer with a round shield,
 148. Give me my shield I am on my way,
 149. I am going yonder where the chief has gone to,
 150. I cannot remain behind when the chief is visiting,
 151. Joining the chiefs on a visit,
 152. Pusher of the children of Nqabe,
 153. I, Mphutlane, do not fight, but I push,
 154. I push the battle by means of knees,
 155. Facing yonder at the light skinned chief,

156. Raboshidi, chief wants report,
157. Strike a matchstick that the war ensues.
158. Here are people sitting on my heart,
159. They argue continuously that
160. They can work swiftly,
161. They can overpower the tiger, fighters of Mmantshi's,
162. You, fellows smoking dagga,
163. Stay clear, I wish to chant praises,
164. Inform him, that Mphutlane,
165. Here where I am, I'm not cross,
166. But actually hurt,
167. Comrades, now he praises, the stabber with spears,
168. The brother of Makgala and Ntaoleng,
169. Malefetsane's father, be angry, you, tall man,
170. And stab a person with a spear on the stomach,
171. Your spear stuck to the bones,
172. Two bones in the waist of a person,
173. That's where the spear of Mmantshi's child is stuck,
174. Mphutlane, trample someone on the kidney with your shoe,
175. And hold your spear with two hands.
176. And shake it and try to pull it out.
177. Yes, someone even had stomach ache,
178. Lied down with a running tummy.
179. Brain oozed through the ears,
180. Blood flew through nostrils,
181. Mphutlane, can a person really die in my hands?
182. All along I am busy trying to pull out the spear,
183. Like a cow scattering its chyme,
184. My comrades,
185. I, Mphutlane, feel like I'm hurt,
186. I don't know, my Lord,
187. I would rather scratch the windpipe with my nails,
188. Cast myself on the stones,
189. Yes, if I like I may commit suicide!
190. Yes, if I like I personally may commit suicide!

(5) 'MAMPHO CHOPHO [MORIJA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES]

1. Ke 'Mampho Chopho,
2. Ke hopola morena ya mpusang,
3. Morena ya hlahang kwena Leshoboro,
4. Pele a hlaha re mmona tshobotsi,
5. O na lorwe ke nkgonwae,
6. A lorwa ke mme 'Maseeiso ditoro tse hlahang badimong.
7. O na lore kobo e tshweu ba lengolo,
8. E tla ho yena e ntse e fofa,
9. Eitse ha e lepella marung,
10. Pele e thetsa mobu a e kapa,
11. Athenyane o porofeta morena.
12. O ne a bontshwa ho fihla ha Lerwala
13. Ke mohla a tlohang Sione hantle,
14. Parateising ya Mmopi wa batho
15. A na le Jesu le mangeloi
16. A tswetswe a na le kgwedi sefubeng,
17. Naledi tse pedi hodima hlooho,
18. Ha a beolwa yaba di a nyamela.
19. Manqosa a romellwa ka Matelile,
20. Ho tlilo tsebiswa Ramatelile,
21. Tau ya hlabathe malwebehla o tswetswe.
22. Hwa thwe setloholwana se teng Matsieng.
23. Modidietsane wa hlaha sebakeng,
24. O no hlaha ho 'Mamakhobalo,
25. Basadi ba Kerefise ho ratana.
26. Ba a hloma a le mararo
27. A mabedi a hlongwa sefahlehong
28. Le leng ba le hloma ka mora ntlo
29. Ha ke hopola morena Leshoboro,
30. Ha a iswa Likhoele re tsebile
31. Ha e ya tla e kgukguna kwenahadi,
32. Re ne re bitswe kaofela ha rona,
33. Ra bitswa Likhoele kgotleng la puso,
34. Le nna ke le teng seemong.
35. Ho no rometswe Lerotholi Mojela,
36. Thabo Mojela ka bitso le leng
37. Ha a fihla Likhoele ngwana kgosi
38. A dula le rona matona a moo.
39. A re ke romeletswe ke mohatsa Seeiso,
40. Ke mme 'Mantšebo hantle,
41. O re ke tle ho lona ke le jwetse,
42. Ngwana morena o tlilo le jaka
43. Le tlilo jakwa ke kwena Leshoboro
44. A ba a bua lentswe le leholo a re,
45. Le mo jakise le be le mo phedise,
46. Le tsebe hore ke kgutsana,
47. O hola ka ho sokola.
48. O nehwa puso ntatae a shwele,

49. *Taba tsa lekunutu sa di tsebe,*
50. *Hoba ngwana a ka sebe le ntatae,*
51. *Jwale yena o tseba tsa rakgadi.*
52. *Ha a fihla Likhoele ngwana kgosi,*
53. *Mohlang oo ho ne ho le bohloko,*
54. *Matona ohle a tshaba ho araba.*
55. *Ha ke le jwetse nnete ke sa e botse.*
56. *Hwa ba ha tshaba le ba ntlo yabo.*
57. *Ba nyatsa ha ba abelwa Leshoboro,*
58. *Ba re mohlomong o tla ba ja mahepu,*
59. *Mohlomong a ba amohe le mofolana wa ntshwe.*
60. *Hoja bahale ba hilile ba a ratwa*
61. *Nna ka Likhoele nka be ke le mokoko.*
62. *Hobane ho ne ho arabe mefuta esele*
63. *Ha araba Mokgatla le Mofokeng*
64. *Mokgatla ke Tladi Chopo ya nyetseng meite ena.*
65. *A re ngwana morena re a mo amohela,*
66. *Feela re bile re etsa dikopo hle,*
67. *A se ke a busa ka mahahapa,*
68. *Borena ke ba ntatae ba tswalo.*
69. *A tlatswa ke Mafa ngwana koloi wa Mofokeng.*
70. *Ramotse ya busang lekhalong,*
71. *A re le nna ke tshwana le Mokgatla ka moelelo*
72. *Ke re ngwana morena re a mo amohela hle,*
73. *A se ke a re busa ka mahahapa,*
74. *Borena ke ba ntatae ba tswalo*
75. *Mora Mojela a buleha molomo Thabo Mojela.*
76. *A re, lona le ratang tau ya marwala*
77. *A ke ke be a busa ka mahahapa,*
78. *Re mo laile a sa le ka Khoaling,*
79. *Kgotleng la 'Mantšebo Seeiso.*
80. *E ne e le nna mora Mojela,*
81. *Re ena le Leabua wa Jonathane,*
82. *Re ena le morena Khabasheane Masopha*
83. *Re itse a se ke be a busa ka mahahapa.*
84. *Jwale matona ohle a qala ho araba,*
85. *Ba re ngwana morena re a mo amohela.*
86. *Ke ha e tla ba kwena fupa metsi ngwanabo Ntšebo,*
87. *Jwale o kge metsi o a didibetse,*
88. *O a behe ka pele ho morena,*
89. *Ka pele ho selala ngwana ntlokgolo*
90. *Ere ha o qala ho bula molomo,*
91. *Mane Maseru Mejametalana,*
92. *O re ke tlile ho wena morena Bereng*
93. *Bokomonisi bona o bo hlaole,*
94. *Bo boele Fora mawatleng kwana.*
95. *Ba sa ntse ba bua bana ba Seeiso,*
96. *Ditsohatsana tsa tloha Matsieng,*
97. *Ke 'Maseeiso le 'Mabofihla.*
98. *Hee, basadi ba Kerefise ho ratana.*

99. *Utwang ha 'Maseeiso a Ila,*
100. *A re joo!... joo! La tla la busa hampe bana ba ngwanaka,*
101. *La busa hampe lefatshe kula,*
102. *Le kula fatshe la mora Mokhachane,*
103. *Le se ntse le taboha ditlhabela.*
104. *O re le ha ho le jwalo arohanang ho lekane Bakwena.*
105. *Tjhee, dipuo tsa lona di kene hodimo,*
106. *Lehodimong la mmopi wa tsohle.*
107. *A re jwale ke le kopela ho badimo ba lona,*
108. *Ke le kopela ho morena Moshoeshoe,*
109. *Ke le kopele le ho Kerefise,*
110. *Ke le rapelle le ho ntata lona Seeiso a le hopole.*
111. *Ba arohana, ba tsamaya Bakwena.*
112. *Jwale a e palama tshumu ngwana kgosi morena ya pusang,*
113. *Ya leba Likhoele ha ntatae.*
114. *A ya kwana besong sa mme 'Malerotholi,*
115. *A ana jwalo ka molao kweneng Pitseng kwana ha Tau,*
116. *Eitse ha a fihla teng Mokwena,*
117. *Moromellwa ke Tau ya Marwala,*
118. *Ngwana a ka romellwa Kapa lewatle,*
119. *A romellwa kwana hole ho batho.*
120. *O ne a palame mmotorokara,*
121. *Ha a fihla ka Bolomo (Bloemfontein)*
122. *Senai o ne a palame koloi ya hae,*
123. *Koloinyana a e neha lefura,*
124. *A kopana le banana ba Matjhaena,*
125. *E ne e le Makula le Baheberu*
126. *Ba mmotsa Mokwena o halefile o ya kae?*
127. *Thabure ho a bonahala o namane ya Kwena,*
128. *A ba araba, a se ke a tshaba,*
129. *A re lona banana le nang ho botsa,*
130. *Ke romelletswe ke morena Bereng,*
131. *O re ke ye kwana ha king George kapa king Edward.*
132. *Yena o fumane lengolo la hae,*
133. *Le reng kajeno e fedile tumellano,*
134. *Ya Moshoeshoe le king George,*
135. *Jwale boipuso bo kgutlele ka Lesotho.*
136. *A e palama he, koloi ya hae,*
137. *Ha a fihla kwana ha king George,*
138. *A bua le yena ngwana Seeiso*
139. *A re king George, ke rongweletswe ke morena Bereng*
140. *Ke mohlahlami wa Motlotlehi Lesotho,*
141. *Ka malapa a borona ho hlahlamana.*
142. *Jwale o itse o fumane lengolo la hao,*
143. *Le reng boipuso ka Lesotho*
144. *Hoba kajeno e fedile tumellano.*
145. *King George le teng a araba,*
146. *A re ke tla o fa ngwananyana,*
147. *Ya bohlanjahlajana bitso la hae ba itse ke Marina,*
148. *Ha a fihla teropong Maseru,*

149. *Ho dihora e ne e le 4.00 o'clock,*
150. *A fihla a jwetsa morena Bereng.*
151. *A re, koloj tje Marina e ya mo tliša,*
152. *Eitse ha a fihla ka Lesotho,*
153. *Ka mona ka Maseru Mejametala,*
154. *Ra bolellwa kaofela Basotho,*
155. *Hore modumo ha o fihla re se ke ra baleha.*
156. *Empa eitse ha kanono e duma,*
157. *Ra tla ra matha, ra phasalla,*
158. *Ra tlala maralla*
159. *Empa re ne re ile ra jwetswa sa pele,*
160. *Jwale hwa hlongwa le folakga ya ka Lesotho,*
161. *Yaba Lesotho kajeno le a ipusa.*
162. *Jwale ha ke diella ditaba,*
163. *Ke re ngwana morena Leshoboro ya mpusang*
164. *Ke re ke mo neha lebitso,*
165. *Ho ba ke badile diapole tsa kgauta.*
166. *Ke pere e moetsi wa kgauta,*
167. *Re e palama ha re leba kgotsong*
168. *Ha re leba kgotsong kgotleng la boitlami.*
169. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. I am 'Mampho Chopho,
2. I am thinking of my king,
3. The king appearing, crocodile Leshoboro.
4. Before he was born, we observed his appearance,
5. His grandmother had dreamt about him,
6. Mrs 'Maseeiso saw him in dreams from the ancestors,
7. She dreamt seeing a pure white blanket like a letter
8. Flying towards her.
9. While hanging in the air,
10. Before reaching the ground she snatched it
11. And that was a prophecy of the king.
12. To her it was a revelation of the arrival of Lerwala,
13. That was the day he left Zion, precisely,
14. The paradise of the Creator of man.
15. He was with Jesus and the angels,
16. He was born with a star on the chest,
17. Two stars on the head.
18. When his hair was shaved, they disappeared.
19. Messengers were sent to Matelile
20. To inform Ramatelile,
21. The lion of the land, the entwiner is born,
22. That the grandson was born at Matsieng
23. Ululation was heard in the air,
24. It came from 'Mamakhobalo,
25. Griffith's wives love each other,
26. They planted three of them (the reeds)
27. Two in front of the house.

28. And the one at the back of the house.
29. When I remember chief Leshoboro,
30. When he was sent to Likhoele we knew,
31. He did not come creeping the big crocodile
32. We were all summoned,
33. Summoned to Likhoele, the local council,
34. And I was also present at the meeting.
35. The one sent there was Lerotholi Mojela,
36. Also known by the name, Thabo Mojela.
37. When he arrived at Likhoele, child of the king,
38. Sat with us the local councillors,
39. He said, I have been sent by Seeiso's wife
40. Mrs 'Mantšebo in person,
41. She says I should inform you
42. That the son of the king will rule you,
43. You will be ruled by the crocodile, Leshoboro.
44. Then in a loud voice he said,
45. You should honour him and live with him peacefully.
46. You should bear in mind that he is an orphan,
47. And grows up the hard way.
48. He is given the reins after his father's death,
49. The secrets he did not know them,
50. Normally the child has to confide to his father,
51. But this one only knows his aunt's.
52. When he arrived at Likhoele, child of the king,
53. That day things were bad,
54. All the councillors feared to answer.
55. Let me tell you the truth, without having to ask someone,
56. Even his family members feared to speak,
57. Partly, because they were opposed to Leshoboro being imposed on to them.
58. Thinking that perhaps he would cheat them,
59. Maybe even deprive them of ordinary sweet cane.
60. If heroes are really welcome,
61. I, at Likhoele, would be proud,
62. In the end foreign tribes answered,
63. It was a Mokgatla and a Mofokeng,
64. The Mokgatla was Tlali Chopho who married this maid.
65. He said, the child of the king, we welcome (him)
66. But at the same time making a plea, please:
67. He should not rule us harshly
68. Kingship is his father's birth right,
69. He was seconded by Mafa, child of Kolo, Mofokeng,
70. The local chief of Lekhalong,
71. Also said I share Mokgatla's opinion in the matter
72. I say, the child of the king is welcome,
73. But please, he should not rule us harshly,
74. Kingship is his father's birthright.
75. Son of Mojela, Thabo Mojela, he spoke
76. And said to you who love the lion of Marwala,
77. He won't rule harshly.

78. We advised him when he was still at Khoaling,
 79. At the Council of 'Mantšebo Seeiso,
 80. I was myself, son of Mojela,
 81. We were with Leabua Jonathan,
 82. We were also with king Khabasheane Masopha.
 83. We stressed that he should not rule harshly.
 84. Then all the councillors answered saying:
 85. The child of the king we welcome,
 86. That was how he became Crocodile withhold water, brother of Ntšebo,
 87. Now you should draw water,
 88. Take it and put in front of the king,
 89. In front of selala, child from a senior house,
 90. And when you start to speak
 91. At Maseru Mejametalana,
 92. Say, I have come to you king Bereng,
 93. This communism you should weed out,
 94. It must return to France, overseas.
 95. While they were still talking, children of Seeiso,
 96. The old woman left Matsieng,
 97. They were 'Maseeiso and 'Mabofihla
 98. Yes, Griffith's wives love one another.
 99. Listen to 'Maseeiso crying
 100. And saying, Oh! Oh!...Now your rule is bad my grandchildren,
 101. You rule badly while the country is sick,
 102. The country of the son of Mokhachane,
 103. It is already cracking.
 104. But she says, nevertheless, separate, it's enough Bakwena,
 105. As for your deliberations, they have reached heavens,
 106. Heavens of the Creator of all things.
 107. He said now I pray for you to your ancestors
 108. I pray to king Moshoeshoe,
 109. I pray to king Griffith,
 110. And to your father, Seeiso to think of you,
 111. Then they parted and left the Bakwena.
 112. Then he rode the white forehead one, son of the king ruling over me,
 113. Back to Likhoele at his father's place.
 114. He went to the hearth of Mrs 'Malerotholi,
 115. And was sworn in at Kweneng, Pitseng, at Tau's.
 116. When he arrived there, Mokwena,
 117. The one sent is the Lion of Marwala,
 118. A child may be sent to the Cape, overseas
 119. Sent overseas far away from the people,
 120. He was driven in a car,
 121. When he arrived at Bloemfontein
 122. He was driven in his own car,
 123. The car was driven fast,
 124. And he met the Chinese girls,
 125. There were also the Indians and Hebrews,
 126. They asked him, the king, where are you going to.
 127. Thabure, it's obvious you are a calf of the Kwena,

128. He replied them without any fear,
129. And said, you girls asking me,
130. I am being sent by King Bereng,
131. And says, I should go to King George's or King Edward's place,
132. He received a letter stating
133. That today the treaty between Moshoeshoe and King George
134. Has come to an end,
135. Lesotho should be independent.
136. He then rode (boarded) his waggon (aircraft),
137. When he arrived at King George's place,
138. Spoke to him child of Seeiso
139. And said, King George, I have been sent by King Bereng,
140. I am one of the descendents of the king in Lesotho,
141. According to the order of seniority.
142. Now he said he received your letter
143. That states that Lesotho should be independent,
144. Because the treaty has come to an end.
145. King George then replied and said,
146. I shall assign to you a clever girl,
147. Her name is Marina.
148. When he arrived in Maseru,
149. At about 4.00 o'clock,
150. He told King Bereng
151. And said, Marina will be brought here by car.
152. When the car arrived in Lesotho,
153. Here at Maseru Mejametalana
154. We were informed, all the Basotho,
155. That when we hear a sound, we should not flee,
156. But when the cannon roared,
157. We ran and dispersed,
158. We were scattered over the hillocks,
159. Despite an earlier warning we had got,
160. Then a flag was hoisted in Lesotho,
161. And Lesotho became independent.
162. Now when I conclude,
163. I wish to say, child of king, Leshoboro who rules me,
164. I say I give him a name,
165. Because I have counted the golden apples,
166. He is a horse with golden mane,
167. We ride it when we move to peace,
168. To peace at the council with a pledge.
169. There it cuts off and goes!

(6) SELLO LETHUSANG NTHULOANE ['MELESI LODGE]

1. *La tjhaba, la mpakela mahlomola,*
2. *Ka beha matsoho phatleng,*
3. *Ka lla ka tshaba ho bitsa ntate le Ramaphohlo,*
4. *Le ha ba mpa ba feletse kgong lenyelenyele.*
5. *Makatolle wa Pheta le Moshoeshoe,*
6. *A katolla dikgoro di katilwe,*
7. *Di bile di batelwa, di etswa bothata*
8. *Ho thwe ho kwalwa ka bona Barwanyana,*
9. *Ho kwalwa ka bona Barwanyana ba Tjhere.*
10. *Bongata bona bo di hlwele ka mathoko.*
11. *Bongata bo ehlwa ka kgorwana tsa basadi,*
12. *Ba re ba ehlwa ha Ntshusumetse.*
13. *Nkau moreneng maobane o be a le ho morena Moshoeshoe,*
14. *A ilo qela dikgomo sehlabeng,*
15. *Ba mo neha tsa makwala,*
16. *Tsa makwala a di hana,*
17. *Tsa makwala a di etsa mofao.*
18. *A bona kgutlo di meriti,*
19. *A bona tsela tse yang Leqhologha,*
20. *Tse yang ha Letsika le Selwanyana.*
21. *Modisa ya hlwelang Bathepung,*
22. *A hlwela makgomo a siye badisa.*
23. *Habahabane wa maja ho sa tjhesa,*
24. *Eitse hola e hotela, e tuka,*
25. *E batla e eba kgabo e kgubedu,*
26. *Ha kena leubane la monga me.*
27. *Ntja ya kena e hlahlile mahlo,*
28. *Ebile e beile meno lepalapaleng,*
29. *Ya re ho kena ya bua le Diodi,*
30. *Ya bua le diqokofa tsa Ratholwana.*
31. *Ya re: Bahlankana le ba hlabe ka marumo,*
32. *Le ba hlabe le ba abela dinonyana.*
33. *Matlaka a kwana Bokone a ya thaba,*
34. *A matsho a dula difateng.*
35. *Malefatsane e motshwana Letsitsa,*
36. *Kgaitsemi ya Mpinane,*
37. *Lwana o lefetse hlooho ya rangwanao,*
38. *O lefetse hlooho ya Makhabane,*
39. *Le bone hee Bakwena,*
40. *Ke e lefeditse hlooho ya Makhabane,*
41. *Ke mmolaile morena wa Bathepu.*
42. *Hlomella wa Diodi Masopha,*
43. *Hlomella ba ha Senekane lehlaka,*
44. *E tle ere ha ba ya mose,*
45. *Ba ye ba le pepile.*
46. *Kwena ya dikwena,*
47. *Ya Peete le Makhabane,*
48. *E tswa kuka dikgomo ditsenene,*

49. *Pakeng tsa Makeleketla le Mangaung.*
50. *Yare ha e le Motati ba mo lahlisa,*
51. *Ba mo etsetsa ntwā e ditlwebelele,*
52. *Sehulanya thaka Radinkeng,*
53. *O hula ntwā ka tlhako tsa morao,*
54. *A yo kena le yona ho Moshoeshoe.*
55. *Qoboko ke mosetla wa Diodi,*
56. *Mohlang a hlahang Tshwanamantata,*
57. *A iswa ka lapeng la batho.*
58. *Eitse ha a fihla a re qii, Mokwena,*
59. *Ra utlwa ka modidietsane, basadi ba phehang ka lapeng,*
60. *Ba o dumela banna mokorotlo,*
61. *Qetellong ho tlile basadi ba le bararo,*
62. *Ba eya ho banna kgotla ho dutswe,*
63. *Moo ho dutseng morena Letsie,*
64. *Ba fihla ba re helehelele ngwana morena,*
65. *Ngwana morena thamaha ya metsing,*
66. *Kwena ha hao ho hlahile mohale,*
67. *Mohale enwa o tswetswe le marumo.*
68. *O hana ha basadi ba mo antsha,*
69. *O tlohile moiteding a raha,*
70. *Ke eo a bokolla mosemeng,*
71. *Jwale ra utlwa ha mme Mmaseeiso a lla,*
72. *Ngwana ke enwa a hana ho anya,*
73. *O hanne letswele la Sebueng.*
74. *Letsie o na be a rola katiba,*
75. *A tankisa ho Modimo hararo,*
76. *A re: Tanki ntate Modimo wa kgotso,*
77. *Le rona re nne re o lebohe.*
78. *Ra jwetswa ke basadi ba Lerothodi,*
79. *Bomme 'Mantšebo basadi ba re,*
80. *Ha e ne e sa le ho Letsie la Moshoeshoe,*
81. *E ne eba ho tswetswe mohale wa ntlo,*
82. *Dinyane la thamaha, tau ya dilepe.*
83. *Kajeno le hodile lehlabaku,*
84. *Ke re ke tshemedi e tshwinyana kwana,*
85. *Tletsī ka tala tsa ho hlaba selemo.*
86. *Eitse di fa pelo, badisa ba tsona ba le mahlomatsho,*
87. *Podi mokgotli wa ho solla le naha,*
88. *Ba tla ba eshwa.*
89. *Tshemedi fitwane ha e tloatlolwe,*
90. *E tlolewa ke barwetsana naheng.*
91. *Bahlankana se nna le ingwaya,*
92. *Kgatsela e tla le phonyoha,*
93. *Bafutsana le itjhebile dinala mohlang ho tshelwa kgolane,*
94. *Kgolane o na re tsena tsa bohadi ha di mathe,*
95. *Di a papaela.*
96. *Mona teng di kgaohanya lesapo,*
97. *Ke re le se ke la ntaha kobo ho taboha lesoba,*
98. *Botsho bona ke bolenke ha bo fele,*

99. *Bosehlana bo tsamaisa boloi.*
100. *Ka shwelwa ke mme, ka hloka barati,*
101. *Ha ke na ba heso ke tshwana le noha,*
102. *Ke kgale ke lobaloba sebakeng,*
103. *Ke lla ke re mang a nkutlwe?*
104. *Sello sa monna se ka pelong,*
105. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. There it rose and plunged me into sadness,
2. I placed my hands on the forehead,
3. And cried fearing to call my father and Ramaphohlo,
4. Although they have ended up in thin air one after the other.
5. One-who-digs-open of Pheta and Moshoeshoe,
6. Dug open the passes that were closed,
7. That were even stamped and made firm,
8. They were even closed with the little Bushmen,
9. They were closed with the little Bushmen of Tjhere
10. These multitudes have ascended them at the sides,
11. The multitudes ascending by the women's little passes,
12. They ascended at the 'push-me-up' passes.
13. Nkau went yesterday to the king, Moshoeshoe,
14. He went to beg cattle from the plateau,
15. They gave him the cowards',
16. The cowards' he refused them,
17. The cowards' he made food for the journey.
18. He saw the valleys in the shadows,
19. He saw the paths that led to Leqholoqha,
20. That led to Letsika's and Selwanyana's.
21. The herdsman who spies among the Thembus,
22. Spied on the cattle, ignoring the herdsmen.
23. The quick-one who eats food that's still hot,
24. As the battle caught light and burnt,
25. And became almost a fiery blaze,
26. In went the falcon of my master,
27. The dog went in with glaring eyes,
28. Laying bare its teeth in its open mouth,
29. Upon entering it spoke to the Hawks (regiment),
30. It spoke to the adorned warriors of Ratholwana,
31. Saying: "Young warriors, stab them with the spears,
32. Stab them and apportion them to the birds,
33. The vultures will rejoice in that land of the Nguni,
34. The black ones that live on the trees.
35. The black Malefetsane, Letsitsa,
36. Brother of Mpinane,
37. Fight and avenge the head of your uncle,
38. Avenge the head of Makgabane.
39. So, you have seen, you the Bakwena,
40. I have avenged Makgabane's head!
41. I have killed the chief of the Thembus!

42. Supplier-of-arms to the Hawks, Masopha,
 43. Plant the reeds on the people of Senekal,
 44. So that when they go to the river they go crying!
 45. They go with it on their backs!
 46. The crocodile of the crocodiles,
 47. Of Peete and Makhabane,
 48. Is from capturing cattle, drove upon drove,
 49. Between Winburg and Bloemfontein.
 50. When at Verkeerdevlei, they made him abandon them,
 51. They came down upon him like a downpour of rain!
 52. The puller, the comrade of Radinkeng,
 53. Pulled the fight with his hind legs,
 54. And brought it to Moshoeshoe.
 55. Qoboko is the striker of the Diodi regiment.
 56. The day he was born, Tshwanamantata (Griffith),
 57. He was taken to the house of Mmabatho (mother of people)
 58. And when he arrived, the Mokwena,
 59. We heard ululations from the cooks in the house,
 60. The men joined with a war song.
 61. In the end there came three women,
 62. Going to the men seated at the court,
 63. Where chief Letsi was also seated,
 64. On arrival they exclaimed, bravo child of the chief!
 65. Child of the king, the lightbrown one from the water,
 66. Crocodile, in your house a hero is born.
 67. This hero is born with the spears,
 68. He refuses when the women suckle him,
 69. He left the birth area kicking,
 70. Then he cried on the grass mat.
 71. Then we heard Mmaseeiso crying,
 72. She announced: Here is the child refusing to suckle,
 73. He refused when Sebueng tried to let him suckle.
 74. Eventually Letsie took off his hat,
 75. And thanked God three times,
 76. And said: Thank you father, God of peace,
 77. We also have to thank you at all times.
 78. We were informed by Lerotholi's wives,
 79. Women like Mother Mmantshebo said,
 80. If it were still at Letsie's, son of Moshoeshoe,
 81. We would be saying that a hero from that homestead is born,
 82. The cub of the brown hyena, the lion of the Dilepe regiment,
 83. Today he is of age, the one with mixed colours.
 84. It is but that butcher-bird,
 85. Butcher-birds that slaughter throughout the year,
 86. And while they were eating, their herdboys being watchful,
 87. Goat, the one that touches all corners of the veldt,
 88. They (herdboys) nearly died,
 89. Tshemedi, woman's inner skirt is not easy to jump over,
 90. It can only be jumped over by young girls in the veldt,
 91. Young men, do not usually scratch yourselves,

92. You will miss colostrum.
93. The poor, you are inspecting your nails the day Kgolane river is crossed
94. Kgolane once said: these dowry cattle do not run,
95. But they run carelessly,
96. Here they leave space between the bones,
97. Please do not make wonder at the hole in my blanket,
98. This blackness shines, it is permanent,
99. Light complexion is associated with witchcraft.
100. My mother died and I had no loving ones,
101. I have no family, I am like a snake,
102. It is long enough that I have been slowly walking away,
103. To whom shall I call and be heard?
104. Man's lament is in the heart.
105. There it cuts off and goes!

(7) SEMAI MOLOI [THE BASOTHO CULTURAL VILLAGE]

1. *Thiba! Thibella! diphatlalla,*
2. *Nonyana di eme , nonyana di hlahe,*
3. *Di hlaha Mopeli, Ramaphulane.*
4. *Ke utlwa le botsa ke ahile kae,*
5. *Ke ahile Thibella kwana, ho ya lehlakeng,*
6. *Hlaka la teng le a makatsa,*
7. *Hlaka la teng le a hola,*
8. *Semai enwa le tle le mo lemohe,*
9. *Semai enwa ke wa madulammoho,*
10. *Le kwana ke yang ha ke yo dula,*
11. *Ke mpa ke kobile sa tsie ho fofa,*
12. *E ne le mohla ke tla bona semetjhe,*
13. *Ka bona lekgwaba le fofa*
14. *Ka mohodu wa motho.*
15. *La tsamaya le o kgatlamanya majweng,*
16. *Ba re pholo di ka kgohlong,*
17. *Badisa ba tsona ba kae?*
18. *Ba setse le yena mmankinki e mokgunwana,*
19. *Ba setse ba eja lenong, letata,*
20. *O re ha o bone, o bone, Mabekebeke,*
21. *E ne le thunya tsena*
22. *Di shebisana melomo.*
23. *Tara a mpa a tswa, a betseha.*
24. *Ho jwang keka towe,*
25. *Ha o tshabe moepa,*
26. *O thula feela!*
27. *O tsamaya o itshwarella ka makala a difate,*
28. *Ha o bone, o bone, Mabekebeke,*
29. *Dithunya tsena e ne le*
30. *Ha di shebisana melomo.*
31. *Phera lena le batla le hlwauwe ka bohlale,*
32. *Haholo le hluwa ke banna ho ya ntweng.*
33. *Ba re phakisa kapele Semai wa ha Kgolokwe,*
34. *Banna ke bao ba hlopha di thata!*
35. *Ba tshwere disabole,*
36. *Ba tshwere marumo*
37. *O mathe sekgwahla,*
38. *O mathe mokoka,*
39. *O qetelle ka ho matha lebelo.*
40. *O re ho jwang, nkeka towe?*
41. *O tshaba moepa, o thulame,*
42. *O tsamaya o itshwarella ka makala a difate,*
43. *O re ha esale ke hoeletsa ka la maobane,*
44. *Nna ntswe la ka le tjhele*
45. *Jwale ke ho memetsa.*
46. *O re esale ke memetsa ka la maobane,*
47. *Hoba thabamonyama e apere mohodi,*
48. *Ke bone haholo e apere kobo e ntle, Selemela,*

49. *O re ha o bone, o bone, Mabekebeke,*
 50. *E ne le ha thunya tsena*
 51. *Di shebisana molomo.*
 52. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. Stop at Thibella the open spaces!
 2. Birds are standing, birds may appear,
 3. They appear from Mopeli, Ramaphulane.
 4. I hear you ask where I live,
 5. I live yonder at Thibella, towards the reed,
 6. The reed there is surprising,
 7. The reed there is a growing one.
 8. This Semai, you should pay attention to him,
 9. This Semai belongs to those-who-live-together,
 10. Even where I am going I am not going to tarry long,
 11. I only bend my legs temporarily like a locust about to fly.
 12. It was the day I saw a 'smash' (great destruction),
 13. I saw a raven flying
 14. And carrying a man's intestines,
 15. While repeatedly throwing them violently on the stones,
 16. They say the oxen are in the gorge,
 17. Where are their shepherds?
 18. They are following the one who takes, the real light brown one,
 19. They eventually ate the vulture, the wild duck,
 20. He says, when you have seen you have seen, Sparkling Soldier,
 21. It was these guns
 22. As their mouths pointed at each other.
 23. The maddened one rather left and fell head foremost.
 24. How is it, you, fellow one?
 25. You do not fear an uphill,
 26. You strike anything!
 27. You keep holding on the tree branches,
 28. When you have seen you have seen, Sparkling Soldier,
 29. These guns, it was when
 30. They pointed their mouths at each other.
 31. This narrow place must be climbed with wisdom,
 32. Mainly it is climbed by men on their way to war,
 33. They said, come quickly, Semai, you of the Kgolokwe people,
 34. There are the men with difficult troops!
 35. They are holding the swords,
 36. They are holding the spears,
 37. You should run swiftly,
 38. You should run steadily,
 39. You should eventually run with great speed,
 40. You say, how is it, you, fellow one?
 41. You fear an uphill, you are slanting,
 42. You keep holding on the tree branches,
 43. You say, you have been shouting loudly since yesterday,
 44. I have really run out of voice

45. Now by shouting loudly.
46. You say, since yesterday I have been shouting loudly,
47. Because the dark mountain is covered in mist
48. I saw it was mainly wearing a beautiful blanket, the star Achernar,
49. When you have seen you have seen, Sparkling Soldier,
50. It was when these guns
51. Pointed their mouths at each other.
52. There it cuts off and leaves!

(8) FRANCIS NKOLI (SEFELA) [HUNTERSVILLE]

1. *Bontate, tholang le mmamele,*
2. *Le fateng ditsebe, le utlwe mokgosi,*
3. *Ditabeng tseo ke tla di bua,*
4. *Ke bua nnete.*
5. *Le ntse le botsa ke hahile kae,*
6. *Ke hahile ha Marakabei,*
7. *Kwana Mantshonyane.*
8. *Fateng tsena tsa maboloukomo,*
9. *Ke moo ke dulang, morena Sello.*
10. *Ke dula le Nnuku le Mahlapane,*
11. *Banana ba heso ke ba batelele,*
12. *Ke ba meriri e meronthlotlho,*
13. *Kgomo tsa ntate*
14. *Ke bona di matha le manamane,*
15. *Jwale di aloha di ya naheng,*
16. *Ke mona moo ke betwang ke pelo,*
17. *Ke betwe ke pelo, ke utlwe bohloko,*
18. *Ho betere ke tlohe, ke mpe ke di latele.*
19. *Ke holetse mafisa ke se kgongwana,*
20. *Motshwari wa kgomo tsena tseso,*
21. *E ne e le motshwari wa teu tsa pholo tsena tseso,*
22. *Ke moo ntseng ke re ho lona, bana ba Modimo,*
23. *Lemong se fetileng sena,*
24. *Ka kgwedi ya Julae,*
25. *Ke kile ka kena kereke,*
26. *Ke ne ke le matsoku pela Tlhamini,*
27. *Ke ne ke le moposetola e motelele,*
28. *Ke ntse ke le mathakaka lethopa,*
29. *Le Basione ba ne ba ntlwaetse.*
30. *Utlwang jwale ha ke fetohela dikano,*
31. *Jehova o a hana wa mahodimo,*
32. *O re ho nna:*
33. *'Monna, ha eba o tlile kerekeng mona,*
34. *O tlile ka nnete, o hlapantse,*
35. *Ke ne ke kopa o kereke, o be motelele'.*
36. *Utlwang ntja mokakalla,*
37. *Mohla ho hlahang manyofonyofo,*
38. *Ke moo ke qalang ho etsa maqiti,*
39. *Naheng ke fihla heso, lapeng,*
40. *Mme le ntate ba ntse ba mpona,*
41. *'Ntjamokakalla, le kwae o ntse o e tsuba,*
42. *Re bona ka hona ho sotheha melomo,*
43. *O a tseba le teng, bana ba Modimo,*
44. *Nke ke ka pata dinto tse jwalo,*
45. *'Mme, ke nnete, o se o mpone,*
46. *Le kwae ke se ntse ke e tsuba, le jwala,*
47. *Ntho tse tahang kaofela di a ntshwanela'.*
48. *Mokakalla, ke qeteletse ka ho tsuba matekwane.*

49. *Ke re, ngwana ntja towe!*
50. *Ke ne ke a tsubela botsetse naheng,*
51. *Ke ne ke a tsubela ka mora dipalo,*
52. *Utlwang teng, mekola.*
53. *Mekola ya omana, ya koriana,*
54. *Ba mpatile maseka bongata,*
55. *Ba re ho nna ke lebe Koloni,*
56. *Koloni, Bathepung kwana,*
57. *Ke yo bona mme Mmakgatebe,*
58. *Ke moo ke fihlang ho bona,*
59. *Bonang Seqhotsa sena nna se a ntlhola,*
60. *Ho betere ke bue Sesotho.*
61. *Sesotho sena le sona,*
62. *Le sona ke ntse ke se tjhakela,*
63. *Ha ke na leshano, ke bua nnete.*
64. *Ho betere ke boele Botswana,*
65. *Ke moo ke tswalwang,*
66. *Batswana le bona ha se ho hlompha,*
67. *Ho matha hona ba ho bitsa 'ho tsotsoma',*
68. *Ho ema hona ba ho bitsa 'ho nyema'.*
69. *Dibono tsena ba di bitsa 'dirao'.*
70. *Ke moo ke dulang Bophuthatswana,*
71. *Mangope ka hodima letamo.*
72. *Nka be ke sa thotha, thaka tsa ntona,*
73. *Batho ba heso ba tletseng mona,*
74. *Bomadimabe ke hobane le sa ntsebe,*
75. *Ntho e mpe le ntse le nrwaka,*
76. *Le ntse le mpitsa Mosotho,*
77. *Nna ehlile ha ke Mosotho eieeeee!*
78. *Le ha o ka mphepa jwang,*
79. *Madimabe o ke ke wa bona ke nona,*
80. *Ke ntse ke latella dibaka.*
81. *Moo ke tlohang, bana ba Modimo,*
82. *Thope tsa heso di nonne,*
83. *O a tseba, ha ba etla le mane ka marikgwe,*
84. *O ka tiya, wa hlapanya,*
85. *Wa re ke bashanyana ba manamane,*
86. *Nka be ke sa thotha, thaka tsa ntona,*
87. *Nko di mafamo, ngwana Motalane,*
88. *Ke kene ka hara tsona,*
89. *Ke fumane ho ntse ho bapalwa diketwana,*
90. *Ke moo ke reng ke betwe ke pelo,*
91. *Kgaitsemi ya ka.*
92. *Ho betere re mpe re itsamaele,*
93. *Thope tsena ke tse nonneng,*
94. *Ke bona ke tse ntle dithopola,*
95. *Ke re ho wena o boele lapeng,*
96. *Ke bona o ntlontlolla, wena mokgonwane,*
97. *Bosesanyane bona ke bo neuwe ke Modimo,*
98. *Nna nke ke ke mo tsekise le kgale.*

99. *Ngwana madi a Bakgatla, ke a tsamaya,*
100. *Taba tse jwalo ke mpe ke di tlohele,*
101. *Nna ha ke sa le ngakana,*
102. *Ke ngaka e tlotseng kwana ha Selepe.*
103. *Ke tlotse moo jwale ba nkwaletse,*
104. *Lefu le qhomme Marasheya mawatleng kwana,*
105. *Le setse le palama dipokolana,*
106. *Le fihlile kwana e se e le bosiu,*
107. *Jehova o a hana, wa mahodimo,*
108. *Mora Modimo o shwele jwang, Basotho?*
109. *O shwele jwang a tliho ahlolwa?*
110. *O ahlotswe hona lefatsheng.*
111. *Bontate, ke ntse ke re ho lona, thaka tsa ntona,*
112. *Sebe se tswetswe le mang?*
113. *Se tswetswe le Atama le Efa,*
114. *Haholo se hlaha ka ho Atama pele,*
115. *Hobane ke yena moqholotsi wa marato a batho,*
116. *A ntsa fatakaka didiba,*
117. *A re banana ba tle ba tlo inwella,*
118. *Mohlang ba nweleng,*
119. *A bone ya kgotsheng metsi ana,*
120. *Jwale a hle a mo tiripe.*
121. *Ho betere o hlo ntjhakele lapeng la ntate,*
122. *Lapeng la ntate ho eme dihale,*
123. *Ho eme tse maphutha melala,*
124. *Kajeno tsa ntate ke tse kgunong,*
125. *Koloi tseso ke tse telele,*
126. *O a tseba ba matha ka mankorobase,*
127. *Le wena o sa tla bo palama.*
128. *Nka be ke sa thotha, thaka tsa ntona,*
129. *Leshano ha le na letho,*
130. *O a tseba ho nna ho tshwana le moqabanyi,*
131. *Mafutsana, dipapatlele, le maoto a matelele,*
132. *Ho a ipaka re tla shwella hole,*
133. *O fiele tsela, morena Moshoeshoe,*
134. *O fiele tsela matlakala,*
135. *Maaoa, re se phele monateng,*
136. *Ha rona kwana Bopeding, ha Ramapulane,*
137. *Nka be ke sa thotha, thaka tsa ntona.*
138. *Ho betere ke mpe ke itsamaele,*
139. *Ke tle mpe ke re Amene, ke re ke phethile,*
140. *Nkang pina ya lona, ke kgathetse,*
141. *Seroki se tla roka se roke,*
142. *Nna ha ke sa le petsana, ke pere,*
143. *Ke pere e mathang baka tse telele!*

1. Fathers, keep quiet and listen,
2. Clean your ears and listen to the shout of alarm,
3. In what I'm going to say,

4. I'm speaking the truth.
 5. You keep asking where I live,
 6. I live at Marakabei,
 7. Yonder there at Mantshonyane.
 8. At these blue gum trees,
 9. That's where I live, chief Sello.
 10. I live with Nnuku and Mahlapane,
 11. My home girls are tall ones,
 12. They have curly hairs,
 13. My fathers, cattle
 14. Are running around with their calves,
 15. Now they leave going to the veldt,
 16. It was then that I lost temper,
 17. I lost temper; I felt grieved,
 18. It is better for me to leave and follow them,
 19. I grew up away from home not being a young cow,
 20. Caretaker of these cattle of my father's,
 21. It was the riem holder of these oxen of our's,
 22. That is where I am saying to you, children of God,
 23. This past year
 24. During the month of July,
 25. I once belonged to a church,
 26. I was all over covered in red ochres near Dlamini,
 27. I was a tall apostle,
 28. Searching for cure of my boil,
 29. Even the Zionists were friendly towards me,
 30. Listen now when I turned against my oath,
 31. Jehovah refuses, He of the heavens,
 32. He says to me:
 33. 'Man, if you have come here to church,
 34. And have come here seriously and have sworn an oath,
 35. I request you to be a true church member and be tall'.
 36. Poor me, the dog laying on its back,
 37. When bad things surfaced,
 38. I began to be a crafty person,
 39. I arrived home on the country side,
 40. My mother and father do see me,
 41. You, dog laying on its back, you still smoke tobacco,
 42. This is proven by the twisting of you mouth,
 43. You know what, children of God,
 44. I will never hide things of that nature,
 45. Mother, it is true you have discovered my sin,
 46. Even tobacco I am already smoking, beer included,
 47. All intoxicating stuff I am a victim of them,
 48. Poor me, I ended up by smoking dagga.
 49. I say, 'child no different from a dog!'
 50. I used to smoke them unnoticed in the veldt,
 51. I used to smoke them behind the trees.
 52. Listen now, my friends,
 53. My friends shouted, the piano players,

54. My wearing many copper bracelets they kept secret,
 55. Saying to me I should go to the Colony,
 56. The Colony, yonder at the Bathepu people,
 57. And consult the woman, Mrs Radebe,
 58. That's where I arrived among them,
 59. Look! This Xhosa language I can't speak,
 60. Better I should speak Sesotho.
 61. Even this Sesotho itself
 62. I am not quite conversant with it.
 63. I am not lying, I am speaking the truth.
 64. Better I should return to Botswana
 65. Which is my birth place.
 66. The Batswana people make too much of respect,
 67. *Ho matha* 'to run', is referred to as '*ho tsotsoma*',
 68. *Ho ema* 'to stand', is referred to as '*ho nyema*',
 69. *Dibono* 'the buttocks', are referred to as '*dirao*',
 70. That's where I live, in Bophuthatswana,
 71. At Mangope's on top of the dam,
 72. I wouldn't have emigrated, peers of the favorite,
 73. My own people full of jealousy,
 74. It is unfortunate you do not know me,
 75. The bad thing is that you are insulting me,
 76. You keep calling me a Mosotho,
 77. I am not actually a Mosotho entirely!
 78. How much you can feed me,
 79. Unfortunately you will not see me getting fat,
 80. I conform to the different places.
 81. Where I come from, you children of God,
 82. Our home young girls are fat,
 83. You know what, approaching from a distance, wearing a pair of jeans,
 84. You can be firm and swear
 85. That they are young boys who look after the calves.
 86. I wouldn't have emigrated, peers of the favorite,
 87. Big nostrils are wide open, child of Motalane,
 88. I am right inside them,
 89. I found them (girls) playing a knucklebone game,
 90. That's when I lost temper,
 91. My sister.
 92. It is better for us to leave the place,
 93. These young girls are fat indeed,
 94. I see the beauty of the abdomen and the hips,
 95. I say to you, go back home,
 96. You disgrace me, you the grumbler,
 97. My leanness is from God,
 98. Never will I complain at all,
 99. Child of the blood of the Bakgatla, I am leaving,
 100. This state of affairs I leave alone,
 101. I am no more an immature medicine man,
 102. I am a mature medicine escaping from yonder at Selepe's,
 103. I have escaped where I was enclosed.

104. Death erupted in Russia yonder on the seas,
105. You remain riding on small freight animals,
106. You arrived there already late at night,
107. Jehovah refuses, He of the heavens,
108. How did the Son of God die, the Basotho?
109. How did he die coming to be judged?
110. He was judged right here on earth.
111. Fathers, I am saying to you, peers of the favorite,
112. Sin, who was born in it?
113. It is born in Adam and Eve,
114. Mainly in Adam first,
115. Because he is the provoker of love among the people,
116. While persistently digging the fountains,
117. Saying the girls must come and freely drink,
118. When they have drunk,
119. He saw one who has fully drunk this water,
120. And immediately tripped her over.
121. It is better that you visit me at my father's house,
122. At my father's house there are the gallant ones,
123. The gallant ones, fat and large,
124. Today my father's (oxen) are the light brown ones,
125. Our family cars are the long ones,
126. You know, they are driving a micro bus,
127. You will take a ride one day.
128. I wouldn't have emigrated, peers of the favorite,
129. Lying does not contain anything,
130. To me it's like a person who quarrels,
131. The poor, the vagabonds and those with long legs,
132. It is obvious we shall die far from home,
133. Sweep the road, King Moshoeshoe,
134. Sweep the refuse from the road,
135. The Bapedi, we should not live in happiness,
136. From our place, Bopedi, at Mapulane's,
137. I wouldn't have emigrated, peers of the favorite,
138. It is better for me to leave,
139. And rather say, Amen, I have fulfilled,
140. Take here your song, I am tired,
141. The singer who will sing should do so,
142. I am no longer a foal, I am a horse,
143. I am a horse running long distances!

(8) FRANCIS SELLO NKOLI (THOKO) [HUNTERSVILLE]

1. *Ha ke ithoke hobane ke le mohale,*
2. *Ke ithoka hobane ke le wa ntlokgolo,*
3. *Ke ithoka jwale mara a se a qabane.*
4. *Kgutlang kapele le theohe,*
5. *Ba ntse ba botsa lebitso ke mang,*
6. *Ke petsana ya madi a morena Sello,*
7. *Ke petsana ya madi, ke buswa hohle,*
8. *Dithabeng tsane tse ka hodimo ho loti,*
9. *Morena o a ntseba,*
10. *Ha ke le siyo hobane ke etile.*
11. *Ha ke fihla hara bana, o ntseba hantle.*
12. *O ntsa re ha le feta moo, le lwana,*
13. *O a tseba ke nnete.*
14. *Ke utlwa ke tshaba sefahleho sa ntja,*
15. *Ha habo ntja ha ho kenwe.*
16. *Poreisi ha e lekane le theko,*
17. *Ke tlohile haeso kwana ke lauwe,*
18. *Ke re ke tliilo sebetsa,*
19. *Mohlankana ke sebetsa, ke sa sebetse,*
20. *Metswalle ya ka e romela, ke sa romele,*
21. *Ho a ipaka jwale hore ke tsherehane.*
22. *Utlwang lengolo la mme ke leo le fihla,*
23. *Ho betere ke mpe ke tlohelle,*
24. *Ke tlohelle mosebetsi,*
25. *Ke yo itulela ka kgutlong sa Lesotho,*
26. *Hobane jwale ho sebetsa ha ka*
27. *Ho a tshwana le ho se sebetse ha ka.*
28. *Bahlankana ba heso,*
29. *Ke moo ke ileng ka tloha,*
30. *Ka nka molamu,*
31. *Ka re ke leleka tlala.*
32. *Ke ntse ke re ho wena, rametlakase, Gauta,*
33. *Setjhaba se tlang le mona se a tshabeha,*
34. *Ho betere re mpe re tlohe mona, re itsamaele.*
35. *Re yo jaka hole, mahabadibaka,*
36. *Moo re sa tsejweng ke motho wa moo, le ya mong,*
37. *Le bomme ba teng ha re fihla moo,*
38. *Re se ke ra ba dumedisa,*
39. *Re tle re bue le bontate,*
40. *Hobane re se re le bohale.*
41. *E ile yare jwale ke robotse, ke hona,*
42. *Ka utlwa ka tshehlana e ntswe le bohloko,*
43. *E ntlhaba ka dinala mpeng,*
44. *E ntse e re "Tsoha! Tsoha! Morena Sello!*
45. *Tsoha kapele! Jwale ho a palangwa!"*
46. *Ka tsoha kapele, ka nka borikgwe,*
47. *Le dieta, ka hla ka akgela.*
48. *Eitse ha ke le tseleng,*

49. *Jwale ke ilo sheba sekoting mola,*
50. *Mahlo a ka a ne a sheba naha,*
51. *Moo ke neng ke bona leshala le ka morao,*
52. *Matsoho a ka a ne a tshaba ho tshwara ditomo,*
53. *Ke mohlankana enwa ya ntseng a mpotsa,*
54. *“O hlokometseng, ngwana phiri towe, ramaubelle?”*
55. *Ke moo ke reng ho yena:*
56. *“Dikgohlela le mamina ke a jarella,*
57. *Ha le mpona ka mokgwa ona,*
58. *Ha ke a ota hobane ke rata,*
59. *Ke otile ke dipuo tsa batho”.*
60. *Mme le ntate ba ne ba ntshepile,*
61. *E ile yare moholakola ka yona kgwedi ena,*
62. *Ha selemo se akana le lehlabula,*
63. *Ka tshwarwa ke mala,*
64. *Ka jowa ke meno, ka ruruha phatla,*
65. *Athe metswalle ya ka e ne e etile.*
66. *Motho wa marumo ha ke robale lapeng,*
67. *Ke ntse ke ithoballa kgateane,*
68. *Ke qetwa ke botsetse,*
69. *Hobane ke a hlora.*
70. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. I do not praise myself because I am a hero,
2. I praise myself because I belong to the big house,
3. I praise myself now as enemies have already quarreled,
4. Come back immediately, come down,
5. They keep asking what my name is,
6. I am a foal of the blood of Sello,
7. I am a foal of the blood, I am ruled everywhere,
8. On those mountains, on top of the plateau,
9. The king knows me,
10. When I am absent because I am on journey,
11. When I arrive among the children, he knows me well,
12. He keeps saying when you pass there fighting,
13. He knows me, it is true.
14. I feel afraid to look face to face at the dog,
15. At the dog's place nobody enters.
16. The price is not of equal value with the purchase,
17. I left my home as one reprimanded,
18. With the aim of coming to work,
19. As a young man working and not working,
20. My friends sending money home whilst I was not,
21. It is obvious that I am in despair.
22. Listen, there arrived my mother's letter,
23. It is better for me to discontinue,
24. To discontinue working,
25. And go and relax at the corner of Lesotho,
26. Because now to work

27. Is the same as not to.
28. Young men of my home,
29. It was then that I left,
30. Taking my stick along,
31. Trying to chase away hunger.
32. I'm referring to you, electricity-owner, the Golden city,
33. The nation coming to you is too great,
34. It is better for us to leave this place,
35. Go and live far away, the strivers-for-places,
36. Where we are not known by anyone,
37. On arriving there and meeting the mothers of the place
38. We did not even greet them,
39. We only spoke to the fathers,
40. Because we are already angry,
41. When I was already asleep and snoring,
42. I heard from a light complexion lady a voice full of pity
43. As she sank her nails into my stomach,
44. Saying, "Wake up! Wake up! Chief Sello!
45. Wake up immediately! Now is the time to ride!"
46. I woke up immediately and put on my pair of trousers,
47. Including the shoes I put on all my clothes,
48. When I was on the road,
49. Just before I arrived at the hole yonder there,
50. My eyes were looking all over the country side,
51. Where I could see the burning coal behind me,
52. My hands were shaky to hold the bridles,
53. It is this young man next to me asking,
54. "What have you noticed, you son of the wolf, the-hoverer?"
55. Then I said to him:
56. "Mucous and slime I carry all together,
57. When you see me in this shape,
58. I am not emaciated because of choice,
59. I am emaciated because of people's gossips".
60. My mother and my father had put their trust in me,
61. It happened year before last in this same month,
62. At the end of spring, just before summer,
63. I suffered from stomach ache,
64. I suffered from tooth ache, my forehead swelled.
65. And my friends were away on visit,
66. Man-of-the-spears, I do not sleep at home,
67. I keep sleeping anywhere,
68. I'm like a wild cat,
69. I'm miserable,
70. There it cuts off and leaves!

(9) MOKOLANE MOSIKILI [THE BASOTHO CULTURAL VILLAGE]

1. *Tholang lerata, tholang dikgosi,*
2. *Dikatiba tsa lona di be matsohong,*
3. *Le thole lerata, ke etsa thapelo.*
4. *Ke roka morena wa marena,*
5. *Ke roka Modimo, Ntate,*
6. *Ke kopa hore dikatiba tsa lona di be matsohong,*
7. *Difahleho tsa lona le di inamise,*
8. *Le thole lerata.*
9. *Ke roka Modimo, Morena wa marena.*
10. *Mmopi wa batho,*
11. *Modimo, Ntate, Moetsaditjhaba.*
12. *Ramasedi, mmuso wa mahodimo,*
13. *O buse letsatsi, o buse maru.*
14. *O di buse, e be tsa hao,*
15. *Ditlhapi tsa lewatle metsing di o mamele,*
16. *Di mpe di etse ya hao, thato Modimo,*
17. *Tshimolohong ka hodimo ho maru,*
18. *Mohla Modimo a qalang mosebetsi,*
19. *Modimo o ile a bopa lehodimo le maru,*
20. *Le tsohle tse ho tsona a di qeta,*
21. *A bopa motho ka letsatsi la botshelela,*
22. *A mo fa le matla a ho busa,*
23. *Modimo yaba o a phomola,*
24. *Modimo o bopile Atama le Efa,*
25. *Searapeng sa Etene a beha ditaelo,*
26. *Ditaelo tsa Modimo di ne di phethahetse,*
27. *Ba mpa ba ekwa ke morena mautla,*
28. *A ba thetsa ka lentswe le monate,*
29. *A re ba je fate sa tsebo ya botle le bobo,*
30. *Sefate sa feiga se a hlabosa,*
31. *Efa kapele a kena sebeng,*
32. *A ba ruta monna wa hae wa mantlha, wa lehopo,*
33. *Ke mohlang sebe re qalang ho se bona,*
34. *Mohlang sebe se qalang ho anela ditjhaba,*
35. *Modimo, Ntate ke etsa thapelo.*
36. *Ka lebitso la Ntate le la Mora le la Moya o halalelang.*
37. *Oho, Ntata rona mahodimong,*
38. *Pelong tsa rona o re hauhele,*
39. *Thapelo tsa rona o di amohela,*
40. *Ntata rona ya matla ohle,*
41. *O re jarele mefokolo, Ntate ya matla ohle,*
42. *Ra na ra hlolwa o romme mora wa hao,*
43. *Wa mahodimo, Jeso wa Modimo,*
44. *A tliile ho re busa,*
45. *A tliile lefatsheng ho tla supa tsela ya nnete ya lehodimo,*
46. *Yaba o bolawa ke batho ba beilweng boholong,*
47. *A bolawa ke baprista le bangodi,*
48. *Ba mmolaya ka sehloho Bajote,*

49. *Ba mo qhoba, ba mo sututsa,*
50. *Ba mo kgothomeletsa pele,*
51. *Ba mo jarisitse sefapano ka mahetleng,*
52. *Ha a fihla thotaneng ya Golgotha kapa ya Lehata,*
53. *Jwale mona ba qala mosebetsi,*
54. *Wa sebe jwale ba hlobola dikobo,*
55. *Ba mo tshwara, ba mo thakgisa,*
56. *Ba mo arola diphaka ha bohloko,*
57. *Ba mo hlaba ka dipekere mahlong le maotong,*
58. *Ba mo hlaba ka lerumo tlasa letswela,*
59. *Hlohong ba mo rwesitse mofapahloho wa meutlwa,*
60. *Meutlwa ya mo hlaba,*
61. *Ba mo etsa maqebaqeba,*
62. *Madi a hae a theosa sefahlehong,*
63. *A keleketla, a etsa diphororo,*
64. *Ha ho le jwalo, dipelo tsa Bajote di ne di thatafetse,*
65. *Ba mo soma, ba mo nyefola,*
66. *Ba nna ba mo nyekoletsa melomo,*
67. *Ba nna ba mo tshwela ka dikgohlala sefubeng,*
68. *Ba re ha e le Mora Modimo a itokolle.*
69. *Ba mo siya teng a le ditlamong,*
70. *A le ditsietsing, mahlomoleng,*
71. *A le dipakeng tsa lefu le bophelo.*
72. *Bonang Mora Modimo ha a eshwa lefu le sehloho,*
73. *Feela a shwela nnete ya hae, a se na molato,*
74. *Mohla letsatsi la bofelo,*
75. *Ha ho le hobe,*
76. *Lefatshe le tuka, dithaba le mafika di hlena,*
77. *Maru a thulana le lefatshe,*
78. *Diterompeta ha di lla tsa lehodimo,*
79. *Modimo a kgetha ba mmuso wa hae,*
80. *A kgetha dinatla tsa nnete tsa lehodimo,*
81. *Bonang, badibe ra lahleha,*
82. *Badibe ba melato e meholo.....*
83. *Ba dibe, ba melato e balwang ka makgolo,*
84. *Rona ba dibe, re etsa thapelo,*
85. *Re ntse re re re tshwarelwe, re bakile,*
86. *Wee! Re ne re sa tsebe re etsa phoso,*
87. *Re ntse re re eka hoja re a bapala,*
88. *Kanthe re etsa dimpe di kgopa Modimo,*
89. *Jwale Modimo ha o kgopeha o a re otlala,*
90. *Modimo o re otlile ka ntho tse bohloko,*
91. *Modimo o re otlile ka ntho tse ngata,*
92. *O re otlile ka tlala le tlhobolo,*
93. *A re otlala ka lefu, ntho e bohloko mmeleng,*
94. *Re tletse malwetse,*
95. *Mmeleng re tletse mahlaba, a a re bolaya,*
96. *Ha re le phateng tsa lefu, re opelwa,*
97. *Re robotse, re hwehla,*
98. *Mahloko a lefu a re aparetse,*

99. *Mmele e hana, masapo a opa,*
100. *A opa, a hlodisa motho boroko,*
101. *Motho a qeta bosiu a tlola,*
102. *Menyaka ya lefatshe lena a e lebetse,*
103. *Motho a hopotse mmopi wa hae,*
104. *A hopotse Jehofa wa makgotla a lehodimo,*
105. *Rabosafeleng, Modimo wa kgotso,*
106. *Modimo o se nang bolekantsho,*
107. *Seabi sa mahlohonolo, Modimo,*
108. *Hara dintho tsena tsohle, moetsi, moetsolli,*
109. *Mpo hase moya, Modimo,*
110. *hase moya, o tlale lefatshe,*
111. *O kenye moya o motjha pelong tsa batho,*
112. *Pelong tsa rona o tlose bokgopo,*
113. *Ba madi, ba dintwa, ba leshano,*
114. *Ba tlohedise boshodu le mona pelong tsa batho,*
115. *Pelong tsa rona, Jehofa wa makgotla a lehodimo,*
116. *O tlose lehloyo.*
117. *Sebakeng sa lona o kenye lerato,*
118. *Setjhaba se phele kgotsong,*
119. *Dikgomo di tswale mafahla,*
120. *Dikonyana tsa dipodi manyowa a fele,*
121. *Phakwe ditsuonyana e di le bale,*
122. *Bonang sehloho sa phakwe baneng ba kgoho!*
123. *Hoka ntwā e teng pakeng tsa noha le motho,*
124. *Ba babedi ha ba na ditumediso,*
125. *Ba hana ha ba kopanya difahleho,*
126. *Ke ntwā ya meno le diatla,*
127. *Noha ka molamu e hlahlathwa hloho,*
128. *Lejwe ka lona e batwa phatleng,*
129. *Noha e shwa ka mminete wa ho qala,*
130. *Noha e loma motho leoto,*
131. *A sitwe ho ema,*
132. *Mahloko a mo titima mokokotlo,*
133. *A phakisa a anela mmele,*
134. *Ruri ke sehloho sa mahlomola a maholo,*
135. *Wee! O mpe o fedise ntho tsena tsohle,*
136. *O fedise difako le dikgohola tsa mariha,*
137. *Dipula di ne ka kgwedi ya Loetse,*
138. *Basotho ba jahella ho lema,*
139. *Re kenya dipeo tsa rona masimong,*
140. *Sesedi le sona se tlohelle dijalo di hole,*
141. *Se se nne se qetela batho lekgaba,*
142. *Baloi le bona ba tlohele meriana,*
143. *Ba se nne ba tsosa batho mabitleng,*
144. *Ba phomole ka kgotso, ka mohau wa Modimo,*
145. *Hobane ba shweleng ba thotse phomolo,*
146. *Ha meya ya bona e etswa masapong,*
147. *E tlama thoto, e fallela marung,*
148. *E eya ho mmopi wa tsohle,*

149. Nama le masapo di sala di phuthwa,
 150. Di phuthwa, di kengwa lekeseng,
 151. Di jarwa, di theolelwa lebitleng.
 152. Meleko ya lefatshe lena e ba tlohetse,
 153. Diabolosi ho bona a fedile,
 154. Ha ba hloke dikgathatso,
 155. Le se ba etsetse kahlolo.
 156. Hobane kahlolo bafu ha ba e newa,
 157. Tshitong tsa bona ho tseba Modimo.
 158. Yena o tla etsa kahlolo ya nnete, ya lehodimo.
 159. O tla etsa kahlolo ka mohau.
 160. Ka ha e le Ramosa, Ramohau.
 161. Modimo ha a ntse a lokisa setjhaba,
 162. A ntse a se hlatswa, a se hlwekisa,
 163. A se lokisetsa ditsela,
 164. Hore mohlang ba tlohang lefatsheng le ka kwano,
 165. Ba eya lefatsheng la pallo,
 166. Lefatsheng la Kanana, la boiketlo,
 167. Moo ho kollang didiba le dinotshi,
 168. Etlere ha ba hlaha ka kgoro ya lehodimo,
 169. Ba hlahe ba le basweu ba re kгаа!
 170. Ba kganya kgotso,
 171. Manyeloi a bona a ba kgahlanyetse,
 172. A tle a hlahe a thabile, ho le monyakanyaka,
 173. Ho le monate,
 174. Ho le monyakanyaka, ho le manyeloi,
 175. Haholo ha ho kgahlanyetswa baeti,
 176. Ba tlang ba hlwekile,
 177. Ba tle ba fumane ditulo di lokisitswe,
 178. Ditafole di tekilwe,
 179. Ba se ba fihla ba eja monateng,
 180. Ba eja manna a lehodimo.
- Amen!

He continues with the second thoko....

1. Tholang lerata!
2. Mohlang Modimo a qalang ho etsa mehlolo,
3. Modimo a qala ka ho loha mehala,
4. A bopa areka, yaba o a e qeta,
5. Yaba e a theoha ka lona tsatsi leo,
6. Areka e ntse e theoha, e leba fatshe,
7. Ya theoha le manyeloi a le leshome,
8. Manyeloi a tsamaya a setjhaka areka ka hohle,
9. A e setjha, a e lekola,
10. A ntse a e lokisetsa ditsela,
11. Ya fihla ya dula lebaleng heso,
12. Ke mohla ke tswetsweng, ngwana Lesoetsa,
13. Ha ke fihla ke re tshethe! Mokwena,
14. Se etswa ka arekeng, selalome,

15. *Ke fihla ke behwa Montsane wa Thokwana.*
16. *Ha utlwahala lerata hara motse,*
17. *Letjeketjeke la banna le basadi,*
18. *Dithope di paqama, tsa ha Tjheketjha,*
19. *Banana ba bina tshidikokwana,*
20. *Bashanyana ba qala ho etsa dithoko,*
21. *Ho ne ho le monyakanyaka, ho le monate,*
22. *Ra bona ha ho thoothelwa maqheku,*
23. *Ditsohatsana, bonkgono, boMmapona,*
24. *Baradi ba Sefale ba a rabaka,*
25. *Ka bona ho thonakwa konyana ya dinku tsa Sesotho,*
26. *Ho latela meetlo.*
27. *Yaba ba e tshwara, ba a e hlaba,*
28. *Jwale basadi dinama ba di tshwara,*
29. *Bobete ba tshwarelletse mohodu le mala,*
30. *Jwale a eja, a keketeha maqhekwana.*
31. *Ba jela dikgotlwaneng ka morao ho matlo,*
32. *Mofuthumaleng wa letsatsi la mariha,*
33. *Ba ntse ba ingwaya,*
34. *Ke mohla ke bonang qaati ya nku e hlola badisa,*
35. *Ba bile ba e totomela thupeng ho ya naheng,*
36. *Hloho ya yona ya hlola banna,*
37. *Mohla ke tswetsweng, ngwana Lesoetsa,*
38. *Basadi sedibeng ba ya ba matha,*
39. *Ba kga metsi a bona, nkgo tsa tlala.*
40. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. Keep silent, keep quiet, you the princes,
2. Your hats be in your hands,
3. Keep silent, I am praying,
4. I am praising the king of kings,
5. I am praising God, the Father.
6. I request that your hats be in your hands,
7. Your faces, you should bend them down,
8. And keep silent.
9. I am praising God, the King of kings,
10. Creator of the people,
11. God, the Father, Maker-of-the-nations,
12. The Light, kingdom of the heavens,
13. May you govern the sun, and the clouds,
14. May you govern them, to be yours!
15. The fish of the ocean in the water should be under your control,
16. They should rather do your will, oh! God!
17. In the beginning above the clouds,
18. When God first started his work,
19. God created the heaven and the clouds,
20. And all that is there, and finished them,
21. And created man on the sixth day,
22. And gave him power to govern,

23. God then took a rest,
24. God having created Adam and Eve,
25. In the garden of Eden He gave instructions,
26. Instructions of God were perfect,
27. They were however betrayed by satan,
28. He lied to them with a sweet voice,
29. He said they should eat the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,
30. The fig-tree is delicious,
31. Eve immediately fell into sin,
32. And even taught her original husband, he of the rib,
33. It was then that we first saw the sin,
34. When sin for the first time covered the nations,
35. God, the Father, I pray.
36. In the name of the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit,
37. Oh! Our Father who is in heaven,
38. In our hearts be merciful to us,
39. To our prayers please listen,
40. Our Father, the Omnipotent one,
41. Bear our weaknesses, our Omnipotent Father,
42. We were defeated though you had sent your son,
43. He from heaven, the Jesus of God,
44. Coming to govern us,
45. Coming to the world to show the true path of heaven,
46. He was killed by people placed in higher positions,
47. He was killed by the priests and the scribes,
48. They killed him mercilessly, the Jews,
49. They drove him, they pushed him,
50. They made him stumble forward,
51. Whilst forced to carry the cross on his shoulders,
52. When he arrived at the small ground, Golgotha or the Skull,
53. They then here began their work,
54. That of sin, as they then took off their blankets,
55. They took hold of him and crucified him,
56. They separated his arms mercilessly,
57. They put the nails through his face and feet,
58. They stabbed him with the spear below the breast,
59. On his head he was wearing a crown of thorns.
60. The thorns pricked him.
61. They caused him many wounds.
62. His blood was flowing from the face.
63. It was trickling down, making waterfalls,
64. Therefore, the hearts of the Jews were hardened,
65. They mocked him, they blasphemed him,
66. They kept twisting their mouths scornfully,
67. They kept spitting phlegms at his breast,
68. Saying if he is the son of God he should free himself,
69. They left him there imprisoned,
70. In difficulties, in sorrows,
71. Being between death and life,
72. See how the Son of God died a merciless death,

73. Dying for his truth, as he was not guilty,
74. On the last day,
75. When it is bad,
76. The earth being in flames, the mountains and the rocks being red hot,
77. The clouds colliding with the earth,
78. When they sounded, the trumpets of heaven,
79. God chose those of his kingdom,
80. He choose the true heroes of heaven,
81. Behold how we poor sinners got lost!
82. The sinners, those whose debts are great,
83. The sinners, whose debts are counted in hundreds,
84. We, the sinners, are praying,
85. We are saying that we should be forgiven, we have repented,
86. Oh! We were not aware of our wrongdoing,
87. It was as if we were playing,
88. Whereas we did the bad which made God to stumble,
89. Now when God stumbles, he punishes us,
90. God has inflicted painful things on us
91. God has inflicted hard things on us,
92. He has inflicted on us hunger and depravation of clothing,
93. He inflicted on us death, a painful thing on the body,
94. We are full of diseases,
95. Our bodies are full of pains which kill us,
96. When we are on the deathbed, groaning with pain,
97. Sleeping and being very ill,
98. Diseases of death clothed on us,
99. The bodies in pain, the bones aching,
100. Aching, He deprived man of sleep,
101. Man spent the whole night jumping around,
102. Forgetting the pleasures of this world,
103. Man thinking of his Creator,
104. Thinking of Jehovah of the heavenly armies,
105. The eternal One, the God of peace,
106. The God without equal,
107. The Giver of blessings, God,
108. Among all these things, the Doer, the Reverser of deeds,
109. Better diffuse the Spirit, Oh! God!
110. Diffuse the Spirit and fill up the world,
111. Put in new spirit in men's hearts,
112. In our hearts remove crookedness,
113. That of blood, fighting and lying,
114. Let theft and jealousy be removed from men's hearts,
115. From our hearts, Jehovah of the heavenly armies,
116. And remove hatred,
117. In its place put in love,
118. The nation should live in peace,
119. In progeny the cattle may increase twofold,
120. The lambs of the goats, be free from tape-worms,
121. The vulture, let it forget the chickens,
122. Behold the cruelty of the vulture on the small ones of the chicken!

123. It is like the feud between the snake and man,
124. Between the two there is no mutual understanding,
125. The worse happens when their faces meet,
126. It is the war of teeth and arms,
127. The snake is bitten on the head with the stick,
128. With the stone it is bitten on the forehead,
129. The snake dies during the first minute,
130. The snake bites a man's foot,
131. Leaving him unable to stand up,
132. The diseases run over his back,
133. And immediately cover his whole body,
134. Truly, it is the cruelty of great sorrow,
135. Oh! You rather please destroy all these,
136. Destroy the hail and the heavy rains of winter,
137. Let there be rains in the September month,
138. The Basotho are in a hurry to plant,
139. We plant our seeds on the lands,
140. May the worm also leave our plants to grow,
141. It keeps destroying the people's green plants,
142. The witches as well should abandon using the herbal medicines,
143. They should discontinue waking up the dead from the graves,
144. They should rest peacefully, through the mercy of God,
145. Because the dead have found rest,
146. When their spirit leaves the bones,
147. When it takes the transport and emigrates to the clouds,
148. Going to the Creator of all,
149. Whilst the bones and flesh are being collected,
150. Are collected and placed in a coffin,
151. Are carried and lowered into the grave,
152. And the temptations of this world, being abandoned,
153. The Satan to them being nonexistent,
154. They no more need any troubles,
155. Do not condemn them,
156. Because the condemnation of the dead they haven't been given,
157. In their sins only God knows,
158. He will make the true judgment of heaven,
159. He will judge with mercy,
160. As He is Father of Goodness and Father of Grace,
161. When God cleanses the nation,
162. Making it clean,
163. Preparing the road for it,
164. So that when they leave the world this side,
165. And go to the promised land,
166. Which is the land of Canaan, of happiness,
167. Where there is the gushing out of fountains and honey,
168. So that when they appear through the gate of heaven,
169. They should appear white, very white!
170. Shining with peace,
171. The angels would welcome them,
172. And appear happily and joyously,

173. In the atmosphere of sweetness,
174. When it is sweet, in the presence of the angels,
175. Especially when the visitors are welcomed,
176. Who come being clean,
177. Should find their seats already prepared,
178. The tables arranged,
179. They arrive and eat the delicious,
180. Eating of the manna of heaven,
Amen!

He continues with a *thoko*...

1. Silence, please!
2. The day God began doing wonders,
3. God began by weaving the ropes,
4. He built the ark by weaving the ropes,
5. It descended on that very same day,
6. While the ark was descending downwards,
7. It descended carrying ten angels,
8. While the angels were searching,
9. He searched and inspected it,
10. Preparing the way for it,
11. It landed on the ground near our home,
12. That was the day on which I was born, child of Lesoetsa,
13. When I landed, Mokwena!
14. Getting out of the ark, the beast,
15. I was made chief of Thokwana,
16. Noises were heard throughout the village,
17. The dancing of men and women,
18. Young girls of Tjheketjha's,
19. Girls playing a game of forming a circle by joining hands,
20. Boys began chanting their praises,
21. It was a joyous and happy occasion,
22. We saw old people making efforts,
23. Grannies such as Mmapona,
24. Daughters of Sefale are walking about,
25. I saw a lamb being chosen from among the real Sesotho sheep,
26. According to culture,
27. They seized and slaughtered it,
28. Then women carried pieces of meat,
29. Blood carried together with tripe and intestines,
30. They then ate laughingly, the old people,
31. Enjoying their meals at corners behind the houses
32. During the warm winter day,
33. Whilst scratching their skins,
34. The shepherds could not wholly eat the sheep's second stomach,
35. And threaded it on a stick on their way to the veldt.
36. Its head was too much for the men.
37. The day I was born, child of Lesoetsa
38. Women went running to the fountain,

39. They drew water and filled the clay pots.
40. There it cuts off and disappears!

(10) QABANYANE MOTHAI [HUNTERSVILLE]

1. *Gauta letsa mangelengele, rako la Nthu,*
2. *O letse mangelengele, pitse di tlohe ka Makgoweng,*
3. *Nna ha ke sa le nkwe,*
4. *Ke nkwe, ke thamahane.*
5. *Ke ntho e kwenyang feela le masapo,*
6. *E kwenya feela e sa hlafune.*
7. *Le ntse le botsana le sa mpotse,*
8. *Le ntse le re lebitso ke mang,*
9. *Lebitso la ka la tswalo ke lena:*
10. *Ke Qabanyane, ngwana Mmachere.*
11. *Ke sebata se marothodi a pula,*
12. *Mohlankana wa dikgang tse telele.*
13. *Mona ke Makgoweng,*
14. *Ha ho hapjwa dikgomo ha ho tshehisane,*
15. *Ho betsanwa ka majwe difahleho,*
16. *Ngwana mosadi e mong a kgathala,*
17. *A tlola mohlala,*
18. *Ke lengau le leholo haholo,*
19. *Kgale ke theosa le lefatshe lena,*
20. *Ke se ke bile ke kgutla le Secunda,*
21. *Le Amerika kwana ke se ke kgutla teng,*
22. *Mafatsheng a ka ntle kwana,*
23. *Ke se ke kgutla Olanto,*
24. *Mosambike kwana ke kgutla teng,*
25. *Potoketsi, teropong ya teng, Maputo.*
26. *Le ntse le botsa haeso ke kae,*
27. *Ke ahile ha Leloko, thabeng,*
28. *Thabeng tse teleletelele,*
29. *Moo letsa le fulang thabeng le sa tsebe,*
30. *Ha le bona morwerwe le a baleha,*
31. *Ehlile Takatso o hlasetse ka sehlabeng,*
32. *Takatso, nnake, ngwana ha Menti,*
33. *Mokone towe, wa habo Paballo,*
34. *Monna wa dihlabeng, wa habo Letlatsa,*
35. *Kwana monna ya mpusang o bolotse.*
36. *Ke buswa ke morena monna.*
37. *Ke buswa ke Matheadira Seeiso, morena Leruma,*
38. *Leruma ke tladi,*
39. *Morena Phoshodi ke tladi ya selomong sa ha Letshaba.*
40. *E hana ha ditsuonyana di fula,*
41. *E nna e di ubella kgafetsa,*
42. *Beng ba dikgoho ha se ho omana,*
43. *Lehlanya le patetse ka dihlabeng,*
44. *Lehlanya le patetse ha habo Gauta.*
45. *Qabanyane, se lle, ngwana Kahlolo.*
46. *Tlhobolo ha esita e hlotse bana ba barui,*
47. *E hlotse banna ba masaka a maholo,*
48. *Esita le boKou toropong ya Maseru ba ntse ba sela,*

49. *Banna ba nang le makoloi,*
50. *Le boraditekesi, boThabiso Tshosane,*
51. *O re o ka etsang Mokone wa Kahlolo?*
52. *Esita e hlotse banna ba masaka a maholo,*
53. *Banna ba metsero dithabeng?*
54. *Tahleho yena enwa wa mma Mabula,*
55. *BoSello Taole hodima dihlaba,*
56. *Banna ba masaka a maholo, boSantu,*
57. *Kakapa ke bua feela ka dihlabeng,*
58. *Nka bina ke kgaohe moya ona,*
59. *Mokola ke inahanela ho tsamaya,*
60. *Nna ke tseba haeso, ha ke a lahleha,*
61. *Nna ha ke nku, ngwana Mmachere,*
62. *Ke katakata, monna dihlabeng,*
63. *Motho wa dithabeng tse telele,*
64. *Haeso ke kwana Thabanaditholo,*
65. *Moo letsa le fulang thabeng le sa tsebe,*
66. *Ha le bona morwerwe le a baleha.*
67. *Ke Phadima, serame se letse metsing,*
68. *Se letse se kgaola batho menwana,*
69. *Ya maoto le ya matsoho.*
70. *Phadima, motho ke enwa selomong.*
71. *Phakisa o bitse ba habo ba tlo mo tseba,*
72. *Ba tsebe setopo, moya o fedile.*
73. *Ngwana motho enwa ke ya jwang,*
74. *Le ha ehlile eka o ntsa tsheha,*
75. *Ke tladi ya motho wa ha Letshaba,*
76. *Le ntse le botsana le sa mpotse,*
77. *Le ntse le re Qabanyane ke ofe hara batho bana,*
78. *Ba ntse ba re sekeleme se teng,*
79. *Sekeleme, ramaqiti, molotsana,*
80. *Le tle le ntjhebe, le ntjhebisise,*
81. *Mahlong mona ke mahonyoko,*
82. *Tsatsi ha le tjhebele sefahlehong mona,*
83. *Ke Mokone o moholo, ngwana Mmachere,*
84. *Kgomo ha di sa tlola, ke kwalletse,*
85. *Mokwallo o motenya, wa lapa la Mothai,*
86. *Empa Gauta o tswetse ledimo la motho,*
87. *Monongwaheng ona o tswetse qibikwehadi, kganyapa,*
88. *Noha towe ya ka Qwading.*
89. *Le Maseru toropong kwana ke upeletswe,*
90. *Ke upeletswe ka ledimo la motho,*
91. *Tjobolo, phakwe, ramaupelle,*
92. *Phakwe e teng selomong sane sa Matlakeng,*
93. *Haeso kwana ho dithotana feela,*
94. *Ke tlohile haeso dikoro di sa helwa, di sa le talanyana feela.*
95. *Empa ha ke bohale haholo,*
96. *Ke mahareng a ntwala le ho baleha.*
97. *Ramo ha e tjhethja e a tshepisa,*
98. *Hobane e ilo nka setime morao,*

99. *Nna ha ke sa le nkwe, ke lengau,*
100. *Ke phoofotswana e bohale haholo,*
101. *Ke mmampetere, ke phofu, ke nare,*
102. *Ke ka nonyana ya metsing,*
103. *Ha le ntse le botsa hore ke mang,*
104. *Nna ke buswa ke morena Leduma,*
105. *Tladi e duma hlaba se duma,*
106. *Tladi e duma ya ha Letshaba.*
107. *Ba ntse ba re ke mang,*
108. *Ya tjehileng morena Leduma,*
109. *Leduma o tjehuwe, nna ke maketse,*
110. *O ile a pheula, a rahaka maraba,*
111. *O ne a etsetsa hore Kerefise a utlwe,*
112. *A tle a utlwe a le Phamong,*
113. *A tle a botse hore ya tjehileng sehodi ke mang,*
114. *Ha e le nong ya Matsole*
115. *E le kgale e eja dipodi tsa batho,*
116. *Kahlolo Monoko o tswa sefateng,*
117. *Tlhaku ya lebele e tswa peong.*
118. *Nna ha ke a tswalwa, ke belehuwe,*
119. *Le morena ya ntswetseng ke morena Molebatsi,*
120. *Bashanyana ba heso,*
121. *Ha e le nna ke tsamaile,*
122. *Ha e le mona ke Niniva, ke tsamaile,*
123. *Nna ha ke a kgathalla ho tshepjwa,*
124. *Ke phakwe, ramaubelle,*
125. *Ke thakadi, ke fata mangope,*
126. *Poho e fata mangope e ngaola,*
127. *E hlaba diolo ke bohale,*
128. *Ke Qabanyane hantle,*
129. *Ntata Nkwe le Mmantshadi,*
130. *Ke leleme-ntlhapedi, thaka Dinare,*
131. *Le hlaba kobo le moroko le kene,*
132. *Le phunye kobo,*
133. *Le kene ho monga yona,*
134. *Nna le ha nka shwa,*
135. *Ke kgale ke kgikgitha,*
136. *Ke dilemo kgale ke theosa le lefatshe lena,*
137. *Kgale ke koloba ke se na jase,*
138. *Le mahlong mona ha o ntjheba ke 'moqhaka',*
139. *Ha ke tsebe ho bala, ke kwalehile,*
140. *Empa ke sebetsa ka bohlale ba tswalo!*

1. Gold, make tinkling noises, you the wall of many noises,
2. And make tinkling noises, horses may leave the White men's areas,
3. I myself am no longer a leopard,
4. I am a leopard, a hyaena.
5. I am a thing which swallows everything even the bones,
6. It swallows without chewing,

7. You keep asking among yourselves but not asking me,
 8. You keep asking what my name is,
 9. My birth name is this one:
 10. Qabanyane, mother Chere's child,
 11. I am a beast with drops of rain,
 12. A young man known for his long arguments,
 13. Here is the White man's area,
 14. When the cattle are captured there are no smiles among people,
 15. People throw stones in the faces,
 16. One woman's child got tired,
 17. He walked over the tracks,
 18. I am a very big leopard,
 19. For a long time I've traversed all this country,
 20. I have even been to Secunda,
 21. Even America I have already been there,
 22. To those countries outside there,
 23. I have been to Orlando,
 24. Mozambique, I have already been there,
 25. The Portuguese, from its city, Maputo.
 26. You keep asking where I come from,
 27. I live at Leloko's village, on the mountain,
 28. On the very high mountains,
 29. Where the grey reebok eats grass unknowingly on the mountain,
 30. When it sees something in the distance it runs away,
 31. Really Takatso has attacked people on the plateaux,
 32. Takatso, my dear, child of Menti,
 33. You Nguni, of the family of Paballo,
 34. A man from the plateaux, of the family of Letlatsa,
 35. Over there my chief is the one circumcised,
 36. My chief is a real man,
 37. My chief is Matheadira Seeiso, chief Leruma,
 38. Leruma is lightening.
 39. Chief Phoshodi is the lightening of the precipice of Letshaba family,
 40. It does not allow the chickens to eat grass,
 41. It comes down now and then,
 42. Owners of the chickens scold too much,
 43. A mad man has attacked on the plateaux,
 44. A mad man has attacked the family of Gauta.
 45. Qabanyane, don't cry, child of the family of Kahlolo.
 46. Poverty is even experienced by children from wealthy families,
 47. It has even won the battle against people with large kraals,
 48. Even people like Kou in Maseru still struggle to make a living,
 49. Men who own cars,
 50. As well as the taxi owners, like Thabiso Tshosane,
 51. What then can you do, the Nguni, son of Kahlolo?
 52. It has even won battle against men with large kraals,
 53. Men with stripes on the mountains.
 54. This Tahleho, he belonging to Mother Mabula,
 55. People like Sello Taole on the plateaux,
 56. Men with large kraals, men like Santu,

57. The great one, I talk without fear at the plateaus,
 58. I can sing until I lose this breath,
 59. The poor one, I think of departing,
 60. I know my village, I am not lost,
 61. I myself am not a sheep, child of mother Chere,
 62. I am a caterpillar, man from the plateaus,
 63. Man from the high mountains,
 64. My home is yonder at the mountain with pointed tops,
 65. Where the grey reebok eats grass unknowingly on the mountain,
 66. When it sees something in the distance it runs away,
 67. I am Phadima, there is frost on the water,
 68. It is the frost that cuts people's fingers,
 69. Of the feet and the hands.
 70. Phadima, here is a person on the precipice,
 71. Come quickly and call his family to identify him,
 72. To know the corpse, without breath,
 73. Child of this person, how is he?
 74. Even when he is as if laughing,
 75. It is the lightening of a person from Letshaba's family,
 76. You keep asking one another without asking me,
 77. You keep saying who is Qabanyane among these people,
 78. They keep saying a crook is present,
 79. A crook, a jealous and a wicked person,
 80. You should look at me, and look carefully,
 81. My forehead is protruding,
 82. The sun does not make shadows on my forehead,
 83. I am a great Nguni, child of mother Chere,
 84. The cattle no more jump over, I have shut,
 85. The thick shutting of the kraal entrance, of the house of Mothai,
 86. But Gauta has begotten a cannibal indeed,
 87. This year he has begotten a big round thing, a water serpent,
 88. You snake from the village Qwading,
 89. Even at Maseru town I have been given drugs against accidents,
 90. I have been given drugs through a person who is like a cannibal,
 91. Widow-bird, a hawk, a charmer,
 92. There is a hawk at that precipice at Matlakeng,
 93. My home place is just small veldts,
 94. I left home when the small wheat was being reaped, when only green,
 95. But I am not too furious,
 96. I am between fighting and running away,
 97. The ram, when moving backwards gives hope,
 98. Because it is going to gather power,
 99. I myself am no longer a tiger, but a leopard,
 100. I am a very dangerous small animal,
 101. I am an antelope, I am a buffalo,
 102. I am like a water bird,
 103. When you keep asking who I am,
 104. I am governed by chief Leduma,
 105. Lightening roars while the plateau roars,
 106. Lightening roars, that of Letshaba's,

107. They keep saying who I am,
108. He who has set a trap for chief Leduma,
109. Leduma is trapped, I am surprised,
110. He had removed and kicked the set traps,
111. He did that so that Griffith might hear,
112. To hear while at Phamong,
113. So that he could ask who has set the traps,
114. However, the vulture of Matsole
115. For a long time has been eating people's goats,
116. Kahlolo Monoko originates from a tree,
117. A grain of sorghum originates from a seed,
118. I myself was not born like an animal, but as a human being,
119. And the chief who gave birth to me is chief Molebatsi,
120. Young boys of our family,
121. I myself have travelled a lot,
122. This is Niniva, I have really travelled a lot,
123. My main aim is not to be trusted,
124. I am a hawk, one-seizing-quickly,
125. I am an ant-bear, I dig the dongas,
126. The bull digs the dongas mewing,
127. Causing damage to the ant-hills out of fury,
128. I am Qabanyane exactly,
129. Father to Nkwe and Mmantshadi,
130. I am a two-tongued, peer of Dinare,
131. Piercing the blanket and the stitch to penetrate,
132. And open a whole on the blanket,
133. And penetrate its owner,
134. I myself, even if I may die,
135. I have long been running heavily,
136. For years I have been traversing this country,
137. I have long been getting wet without an overcoat,
138. And looking at my face you can see I am a stupid person,
139. I cannot read, I am 'closed' (unlearned),
140. But I do things with wisdom from birth!

(11) QEKISE MOELETSI [MORIJA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES]

1. *Ke lena ngeloi le tswetsweng ke Mmamoferefere Qekise,*
2. *Mohlang ke kgethwang hara mangeloi a lehodimo,*
3. *Hodimo la na la sosobanya difahleho,*
4. *Letsatsi la tshetlama la ipata ka morao ho maru*
5. *La duma la kirietsa letolo*
6. *Shwalane ya tshwara, lefifi la kwaela sebaka*
7. *Phirimana ya phirimela,*
8. *Mofufutso, metsi a dinkgo a entse mekoloko*
9. *Basadi ba ferellaka ho se phomolo*
10. *Ba feralla ba fapakana monyako*
11. *Ba qetella ba ikwalla ka tlung ho etsa thapelo.*
12. *Mosadimoholo wa letjhakane Mmamaswenkane,*
13. *Le Balobedu ba Ntwane ba kotsama ka mangole fatshe*
14. *Ba re, wena seabi sa mahloohonolo Jehova,*
15. *Hlohonolofatsa mosebetsi ona,*
16. *O fane ka seriti le ka bohlale,*
17. *O fane ka bophelo le ka bohale*
18. *E se ke ya eba bohale ba ho hlahla*
19. *E be sebete sa bonna le boitjaro.*
20. *Ebile Ramasedi o rera ho ba sitsa*
21. *O ba sitsa ka mosenene o mebala e mene*
22. *Batho ba e tshwantsha ka marabe thabeng,*
23. *Ena ekaka tlatlametsi,*
24. *Ba re ke nthapelle masumu a dithako,*
25. *Banna ba re ke qoane e hlooho di tharo,*
26. *Bapedi ba re ke thamahasebata,*
27. *Ke mokwepa o se o le moholo,*
28. *Tsatsi la tjhaba ba thabile ba kgiba.*
29. *La phahama ba ya hlahisa moreneng,*
30. *Ha thwe ka mona ka ha Meshaka ba thotse leseae,*
31. *Le fihlile le lla ka ho halefa,*
32. *O finne difeisi ekaka o a lwana,*
33. *Feela o bonahala a tletse bohlale,*
34. *O seriti le ka ho rateha,*
35. *O bonahala a tla ba le nnete.*
36. *Utlwang jwale ha ba mo reha lebitso,*
37. *Mme Mmamaswenkane a mmitsa Mahetlankwe.*
38. *Ha se hore ngwana enwa o tla hlola mathata a setho.*
39. *Mme mmamoferefere Qekise a bua ka ho utlwa monate,*
40. *O re hobane le dinaledi tsa lehodimo,*
41. *Di hlomphele bohola ba ngwana enwa,*
42. *Tsa nyamela ha ngwanenwa a hlaha.*
43. *Kgwedi ya ipata ka morao ho maru.*
44. *Tsatsi la tjhaba le mo setse morao,*
45. *Ke mo reha lebitso la Moeletsi,*
46. *E tla ba yena moeletsi wa ka.*
47. *Lesotho la utlwa ka pale mangolo a balwa,*

48. *Hore Mmamoferefere Qekise,*
49. *O fumane Letsatsi ngwana wa lesea,*
50. *O mo rehile lebitso la Moeletsi*
51. *Ke selwana-le-Mathata sa mohlankana.*
52. *Nkgono Mmamotinkane,*
53. *Ya tswetseng Mmamoferefere Qekise*
54. *A re, Johova o mphedisetse setloholo seo sa ka,*
55. *Ke bohla bo hlaha Matatiele,*
56. *Bo tla bo pepilwe ke Mmamoferefere Qekise,*
57. *O bo jatile lapeng ha hae,*
58. *Ba mela teng e se e le sefate,*
59. *Sa hola sa okamela mohlwa,*
60. *Ya eba se moriti o monate,*
61. *Mmamoferefere a dula mohlweg*
62. *A re Tselane ba dule moriting,*
63. *A ba a tseba le ho utlwa le ditsebeng.*
64. *Mesenene e qadile thamaha naheng ya bohla,*
65. *Ya thothometsa ditjhaba,*
66. *Ya fetoha ya phetla mmala o ka dimpeng,*
67. *Ya hlaba mosenene o mong hodima leihlo,*
68. *Madi a matala a bomosenene a phalla,*
69. *A tshella ditlama,*
70. *A theosa a fihla mabitleng,*
71. *A fihla a jwetsa badimo fatshe,*
72. *A re letlaburu la Mmamoferefere le a re ja,*
73. *Le a re qeta.*
74. *Yaba ba kolohana ho ya teng,*
75. *Ba fumana setopo moya o fedile.*
76. *Ba se phutha, ba se etsa hantle,*
77. *Ba etsa eka hoja se tla tsoha se phele.*
78. *Ba se kanyapa ho ya mabitleng,*
79. *Ba se felehetsa ka ho hlwepha mamina,*
80. *Sa bolokwa hampe ho se na le matshediso.*
81. *Sebata sa lapeng habo Keboetse.*
82. *Ke lekanyane le mahloko menong,*
83. *Ke thamaha e meno a bohale.*
84. *Bona dintja di rorela lekanyane,*
85. *Ho bile ho kopanyeletsa le meotlwana.*
86. *La qata mohatla yaka le tla baleha,*
87. *Tsa le bokanela di phamisitse mesela,*
88. *La holla molala le shebile fatshe,*
89. *Tsa ithaburanya di rata ho le loma*
90. *La halefa la thothometsa mohlaha*
91. *La tshwara hlooho la phura hlooho*
92. *La e motsula la e siya masapo*
93. *Ya tsetsela tonki ya baka mahlomola,*
94. *Meotlwana ya phatlalla e hlabile mekgosi,*
95. *E meng ya qata mehatla mathuleng a matlo,*
96. *Ya tloha ya kgutla ya e nkgala feela e sa e thuse,*
97. *Nna phekgenye wa bana ba Matshekga*

98. *Ditjhaba ke di phekgentse mading a mpa,*
99. *Tsa re ho nyokgoloha,*
100. *Tsa kgaphatsa diretse taba tsa senyeha,*
101. *Ha hla hwa eba mahlonoko,*
102. *Thokolosi le tsona tsa ngaya hara motse,*
103. *Dipodi tsa ikgama ka diropo bosiu,*
104. *Makgomo a phethola mokwallo,*
105. *A hasana a ya kena masimong,*
106. *A ripitla tjhakatsa, a roba senkgwane.*
107. *O tsebe ntate o ne a re o ntheha lebitso,*
108. *O a tseba, la mo qaka la mo tsietsa,*
109. *Ka bona a se a dutse fatshe*
110. *A tsheheditse seledu ka letsoho le letshehadi,*
111. *A qetella ka ho etsa thapelo*
112. *A re wena mmusi wa kgotso,*
113. *Ako mphe lebitso la ngwana enwa,*
114. *Ke tle ke mo ise kerekeng ke yo mo hlatswa,*
115. *Ke mona ha re se re le kerekeng Kweneng*
116. *Kweneng yane e sekgutlong kwana ha habo Matshekga*
117. *Re kolohane re letetse moruti,*
118. *Maeba a fihla a kena ka kerekeng,*
119. *A phuphusela a ya kwana le kwana*
120. *Athe a tlisitse Moshe lebitso la Moeletsi*
121. *Ho thwe yena Baisiraele ba hae*
122. *Ke lapa la Mmamomoferefere,*
123. *Qekise o tla le ntsha bokgobeng a le hodise,*
124. *Wena Mmabuang akga letsoho feela o tutubetse,*
125. *Re utlwe ka Moses mathateng,*
126. *Ha mathata le manolo di lwana.*
127. *O tla nne a nka manolo a a beha hodima mathata,*
128. *Manolo a otle feela ho se tshetiso,*
129. *Moeletsi enwa ke setjamele sa boMoferefere,*
130. *Qekise ke leja le didietsang.*
131. *Wa habo Malefane ke sebetsa sa bohlokwa,*
132. *Tsohong la Mmaphato,*
133. *Ke kgaitsedi ya ngwanana,*
134. *Ke Letebele la Mothimokgolo,*
135. *Ke sefate se seholo ha se rengwe,*
136. *Bosweu ke kgubung ya moriti,*
137. *Mmabuang a dutse tjena a e hlanaka,*
138. *O e tshwere ka lebodü ho e hula,*
139. *Ke e ntsho mabefolahadi,*
140. *Yena befola o itshohlometsa hara batho,*
141. *Phokeng kwana ba mo kgotsa sebete,*
142. *Ba re ngwananyana o ratile sebata naheng,*
143. *O botha le tau selaong,*
144. *O nna a e pholla mohlaleng,*
145. *Ke jackpoto ya boMosweu ho tsietsa*
146. *Ya bula hampe, ya tepeletsa makgarebe*
147. *Hoja ho ikitlaelleditswe,*

148. *Ho aperwe thometjhe,*
149. *A bula ka (one) nomoro ya boitshepo,*
150. *Jackpot e tshwarwa ka lerato le ka botshepehi,*
151. *Moses, setjhupete (stupid) a ke ke be a se rate,*
152. *Motho a be motle le ka ho ba le makgethe,*
153. *Ha o ya dijong o ke o hlape le matsoho.*
154. *Kirietsa bohale ba Tebeleng, Qekise*
155. *Makwala a pheresela ho ithoma,*
156. *Batshepuwa ba dikela ka mangope le maralla,*
157. *Morena a sala powaneng a ithlophere,*
158. *Batshepuwa ba dikela ka mangope le maralla,*
159. *Motho a mathe borikgwe a bo tshwere thekeng,*
160. *A bokolla a poreisaka letshollo,*
161. *Ho se le mala, ho tshollisa batho,*
162. *Ho mpa ho tshajwa Moses wa Mmamoferefere Qekise.*
163. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. This is an angel begot by Mmamoferefere Qekise,
2. The day I was chosen among the angels in heaven,
3. Heaven pulled its face,
4. The sun jumped and hid behind the clouds,
5. The thunder roared and sounded,
6. The night fell and darkness covered the space.
7. The evening became dark,
8. Sweat, water carried in the clay pots forming queues,
9. Women went up and down with no rest,
10. They rushed and crossed one another at the doorway,
11. They ended up closing themselves in the houses, praying.
12. An old Shangaan woman, Mmamaswenkane,
13. And the Lobedus of Ntwane knelt on the ground,
14. And said, to you, the Giver of blessings, Jehovah,
15. Bless this work,
16. Render dignity and wisdom,
17. Render life and heroism.
18. It shouldn't be heroism to undo,
19. It should be manly bravery and independence.
20. Then the Almighty decided to offer them,
21. He offered them a cross-marked snake with four colours.
22. Many likened it to a berg adder,
23. But this one is like an aurora snake,
24. They say it is a 'pray for me', the cobra of the ruins,
25. Men say it is an adder with three heads,
26. The Bapedi term it the puff-adder of a beast,
27. It is a full grown mamba.
28. The sun rose, and they were happy, doing breast dance.
29. It rose higher and they went to report at the royal place,
30. It was reported at Meshack's place, a baby is born,
31. It was born crying and angrily,
32. He is making fists as if fighting,

33. But he appears to be full of wrath,
 34. He is dignified and lovable,
 35. It seems as if he will be trustworthy.
 36. Now, listen when they gave him a name.
 37. Mother Mmamaswenkane named him *Mahetlankwe* (Leopard's shoulders)
 38. It does not mean that this child will overcome human hardships.
 39. Mother Mmamoferefere Qekise spoke happily,
 40. She says even the heavenly stars,
 41. Have honoured the greatness of this child,
 42. They disappeared when this child was born.
 43. The moon hid behind the clouds,
 44. The sun rose following him,
 45. I give him the name, Moeletsi (Advisor)
 46. It will be he, my Advisor.
 47. Lesotho heard the story when letters were read,
 48. That Mmamoferefere Qekise,
 49. Has received the Sun, a baby child,
 50. She has given him the name, Moeletsi,
 51. He is the-fighter-against-hardships, the young man,
 52. Grandmother Mmamotinkane,
 53. Who begot Mmamoferefere Qekise, said,
 54. Jehovah, let that grandchild of mine grow.
 55. It is the wisdom coming from Matatiele,
 56. It comes carried on back by Mmamoferefere Qekise,
 57. She has sewn it in her home,
 58. It grew there as a tree,
 59. Which grew up and towered over the lawn,
 60. And became the one with pleasant shade.
 61. Mmamoferefere sat on the lawn,
 62. And called Tselane to join her sit in the shade,
 63. She even had some peace of mind.
 64. Cross-marked snakes provoked the puff-adders in the veldt,
 65. And caused the nations to tremble,
 66. They turned and showed the colour underneath the stomach,
 67. They stabbed another cross-marked snake above the eye,
 68. Green blood from the cross-marked snake flew,
 69. It watered the plants,
 70. And went down until at the graveyard,
 71. And informed the ancestors underground,
 72. Saying, the crusher of Mmamoferefere is devouring us,
 73. And finishing us.
 74. Then they followed one after the other going there,
 75. They found a corpse only, the soul gone.
 76. They prepared it in a proper fashion,
 77. They did as if it will wake up and be alive.
 78. They lifted it and took it to the graveyard,
 79. Accompanied it weeping and in mourning,
 80. It was buried badly without any consolation.
 81. The beast of the family of Keboetse.
 82. He is a wild dog with poisonous teeth,

83. He is the puff-adder with sharp teeth.
 84. Look at the dogs challenging a wild dog,
 85. And even including the puppies.
 86. It hid a tail as if it would run away,
 87. They gathered around it raising their tails,
 88. It stretched the neck facing the ground,
 89. They became violent trying to bite it,
 90. It became angry and shook its bristling hair,
 91. It got hold of a head and broke it into pieces,
 92. Pulled it out leaving only the bones.
 93. A donkey brayed and caused sadness,
 94. Puppies scattered making a big noise,
 95. Some hid their tails next to houses,
 96. It returned, smelled them without offering any help,
 97. I, the kicker of the children of Matshekga,
 98. Nations I have kicked in the pit of the stomach.
 99. As they got nauseous,
 100. They scattered mud and things got worse,
 101. The situation became frightful indeed,
 102. Even the thokolosis cried in the village,
 103. Goats choked themselves with ropes in the night,
 104. Cattle broke the kraal gates,
 105. And ran helter-skelter until in the fields,
 106. Trampling on maize flowers, and breaking young growing grain.
 107. Remember that my father wanted to give me a name,
 108. You know, he was totally bewildered.
 109. I saw him sitting down,
 110. Supporting his chin on the left hand,
 111. He ended up praying,
 112. Saying, to you Ruler of peace,
 113. Please give me a name for this child,
 114. So that I may take him to church to be washed.
 115. And when we were in the church at Kweneng,
 116. Kweneng, the one in the gorge, at the Matshekga's,
 117. Standing in a queue, waiting for the minister,
 118. Doves arrived and got into the church,
 119. They flew to and fro,
 120. They had brought Moses, the name for Moeletsi
 121. It is said that his Israelites
 122. Is the family of Mmamoferefere.
 123. Qekise will free it (family) from bondage, and nurture it.
 124. You, Mmabuang, simply instruct us with your eyes closed,
 125. For us to be helped by Moses in our difficulties,
 126. When hardships and comfort are at war,
 127. He will take comfort and put them on top of the hardships,
 128. The comfort will simply glide without any hindrance,
 129. This Moeletsi is the starrer-in the-affairs of Moferefere's,
 130. Qekise is the eater who ululates.
 131. Of the Malefane's he is an important weapon,
 132. In the hand of Mmaphato

133. Is the brother of the girl.
134. She is a Ndebele of the Mthimkhulu tribe,
135. She is a big tree not to be chopped,
136. Whiteness is the centre of a shadow,
137. While Mmabuang sits and fight,
138. She is holding it by the neck to pull it,
139. It is the black one, the pusher,
140. He, the pusher, simply dashes into people,
141. At Phokeng, they marvelled at her bravery,
142. They say, a girl has fallen in love with a beast in the veldt,
143. She lies with a lion at its den,
144. And brushes it on the mane.
145. He is the jackpot of Mosweu's without question.
146. He began in a bad manner, and disappointed the ladies,
147. Whilst there were great expectations,
148. And people being well dressed.
149. He opened with number 1, the number for self-trust,
150. Jackpot is won by means of love and honesty,
151. Moses, the stupid one he won't love,
152. One should be beautiful by being tidy,
153. When you go for meals, you should wash your hands.
154. Thunder, the Ndebele hero, Qekise,
155. The cowards rush to the toilets,
156. The trusted ones vanished into dongas and behind hillocks,
157. The chief was left alone stranded,
158. The trusted ones vanished into dongas and behind hillocks,
159. A person would run holding his trousers on the hips,
160. Crying and praising a running tummy,
161. Without any diarrhoea to cause that,
162. The only reason being fear of Moses of Mmamoferefere Qekise!
163. There it cuts off and leaves!

(12) JOSHUA MAKARA [THE BASOTHO CULTURAL VILLAGE]

1. *Modimo o motjha, rapela wa kgale,*
2. *Wena Jeso Lesedi, wa Rammoloki,*
3. *Rammoloki atla di maroba,*
4. *Di maroba Tlatlamatjholo (Tlhahlamatjholo),*
5. *Tlhahlametsi o hlapa diatla,*
6. *Tlhahlametsi o hlapa diatla*
7. *Tse tswileng tshotsamo,*
8. *Tsa ho bopa masea.*
9. *Malekeleke, lengope, lefadi*
10. *Ebe le fatuwe ke Modimo,*
11. *Ha le fatuwe ke Modimo le batho.*
12. *Tholang lerata ho bua monna,*
13. *Ho bua ya tswetsweng ke Letjhesa,*
14. *Ho bua ya tswetsweng ke Letsitsi,*
15. *Ehlile e le wa Mantsi,*
16. *Wa Makara Mofokeng.*
17. *Thaka Radinko wa mohlankana,*
18. *Mohlankana wa Petje Mofokeng,*
19. *Tlatlasolle ya bana ba Mmope,*
20. *Ngwana Makara qhobo se itebetse.*
21. *Ha o fihlile qhobong sa Nko,*
22. *O feta qhobo sa bahlankana,*
23. *O feta qhobane boboi ba matona Botjhimama.*
24. *Tjhe, le bona ba feta ba itebetse,*
25. *Ba feta ba tshwere le marumo a ntwana,*
26. *Ba le thunya tsa bona, ba felletse.*
27. *Tlathella selomo sa setona,*
28. *Tlhwane ha e phephetswe ha ebe e leswa,*
29. *Hobane ha eba e phephetswa jwalo,*
30. *E tla baka kotsi ya mahlo ho kgabane tsa bahlankana.*
31. *Ha eshwa tholo, ba tsebang mahlome,*
32. *Ke modisa wa Tshwemo, wa habo dintjeng,*
33. *O disa a eme, o disa ka sethunya ka Seisa,*
34. *O hana ho bona, o putla ka tholo*
35. *A o lahle fatshe, a o solobanye ka tholwana, a lahle.*
36. *Nkgodikgodi wa bana ba Mmope,*
37. *Mautla-a-solla la utla, ka solla kgolokgolo,*
38. *Le na be le utlwa lefotha ho nkgodi*
39. *La ngwanabo Botsejedi e monyane,*
40. *O mo kima, o mobe, o feta ditshwene,*
41. *O feta tshwene tsa bosiu,*
42. *O feta tshwene ka bobedi,*
43. *Ha di mo fihlele.*
44. *Motho o teng wa Hlwahlweng, o motsho,*
45. *Tsebe di setholo, o sitwa ho utlwa,*
46. *O utlwa feela ha a se a kgannwa ka setebele,*
47. *Setebele sa molamu wa letsoho,*
48. *Sa molamu o renngweng ka Hlwahlweng, diphorohlong.*

49. *Nna ere ke lwana motho wa boPetje,*
50. *Ke lwana jwalo ka poho ya mmofu,*
51. *Hobane ha ke lwana ke kgophola marole, ngwana Makara.*
52. *Matabolaletswalo, tswalo Mohodisathaka Letshabisa,*
53. *Tswalo le fihla mothong,*
54. *Motho a ota, a ngongoreha mothwana direng.*
55. *Poho di thobotse mafohla naheng,*
56. *Moholwaneng wa masimo Hlwahlweng,*
57. *Ke moo thita ya poho,*
58. *Di sa tswa hlabaka motho,*
59. *Mme a rapalla e se ka o tla tsoha.*
60. *Ngwana Makara, nong ya Malefane,*
61. *Ya futsa motho ka mmane,*
62. *Nonyane ya ho futsa motho,*
63. *Ka nonyane, nna le motho eo*
64. *Ke na beng ke sa mo otlele ho mo ja.*
65. *Moloi ya loyang ka Hlwahlweng,*
66. *O loya le motshere hara batho,*
67. *Hara dingwetsi le bana ba masea.*
68. *Ha a itsote le maphako ho ota,*
69. *O matha feela ka dikgotswanyana,*
70. *Mooti kokoto ola ke wa dintjeng.*
71. *Thaka Radinko o otile keng?*
72. *Nna ke otisitswe ke ho loya thata,*
73. *Ke tlola ke otlala lai,*
74. *Ehlile ke tlola batho ba re ba mpehetse*
75. *Ke timele, ngwana Letjhesa, Modimo a hana.*
76. *Banna ba Hlwahlweng ba ntlhoile,*
77. *Esita le Patuwe ba ntlhoile,*
78. *Nna ke hlouwe, Tsietsi ngwana Habasise,*
79. *Le Mmapiloko ha a sa mpatla,*
80. *Le Tafita wa Mosedinyane le yena*
81. *O re ha a sa mpatla.*
82. *Empa le teng ba bua nnete,*
83. *Ba re rona ha re nyatse dihole,*
84. *Re nyatsa diphoso,*
85. *Re nyatsa ha o le leqholo, Mokiba.*
86. *Ako bone o se o bile o otile,*
87. *O otile o le masapo tjenana,*
88. *O masapo a metsu mahetleng,*
89. *O kgopo di mpe di patisa mpa.*
90. *Ngwana wa moloi wa Leribe,*
91. *Ha setloholwana sa ngwana Petje,*
92. *Sephoqo se tswetsweng ke lethisa.*
93. *Nna ke tswetswe ke Mmope le Mmatlou,*
94. *Mona ho Phohole, Bafokeng.*
95. *Tswala e sia lehala, hoba teng*
96. *Ha ke a tswala ngwana, ke tswetse sephoqo,*
97. *Ke tswetse selehe, tsebe di thibane,*
98. *Ha se utlwe, sekatana sa ntja.*

99. *Thaka ngwana wa Mashou Thite,*
100. *O ne a tjametse ho tsola,*
101. *O ho qhometse motho wa boPetje,*
102. *O eme ka thoko ho noka o sa kwatile,*
103. *Ke moo a ntseng a ja dirarana teng.*
104. *Jwale moo Mokimo hlooho ya kopana,*
105. *A hlanya a re ke bona noha.*
106. *Ke difate a di ja, a di jelella le mobunyana,*
107. *Fatshe batho ba tlala.*
108. *Thera wa Ramakatsa o ba entse jwang?*
109. *Nna ke tla ba kwenya bokwiditi,*
110. *Ke tla ba hlatsa ba bodile,*
111. *Ba bodile ba nkg,*
112. *Ba se ba bile ba menoha ditshenyane.*
113. *Ngwana Manti a futsa diphoqo,*
114. *Le hona a futsa tsa Mofulathuhlo,*
115. *O futsa Mathebe,*
116. *O futsa Molaba wa poho.*
117. *Moshana wa terowahadi wa Raele sa bona,*
118. *Radipitsi ha a tswalla morena motho!*
119. *A tswala kgabane hara bahlankana!*
120. *Mohale wa Mmope.*
121. *Hoba ha a bona banna, o a fetoha ntate,*
122. *Ekare o bona mara, o ba mafubedu.*
123. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. The new god, pray to the old one,
2. To you Jesus, light, the Redeemer,
3. The Redeemer, the hands have holes,
4. Have holes, the carrier of loads,
5. The commander of the waters washes his hands,
6. The commander of the waters washes his hands
7. Which have developed blood blisters.
8. The ones that create babies.
9. Spear-carrier, donga, young miner,
10. Has it (donga) been dug by God?
11. It has not been dug by God and the people.
12. Silence, the man is talking,
13. He talks, one begotten by Letjhesa,
14. He talks, one begotten by Zizi (people),
15. Actually, he is the real one of Mantsi,
16. He of Makara Mofokeng.
17. Peer of Radinko, a young man,
18. The young man of Petje Mofokeng,
19. Vagabond of the children of Mmope,
20. Son of Makara, the natural fortress is independent.
21. Having arrived at the fortress of Nko,
22. You pass the young men's fortress,
23. You pass a smaller fortress of counsellors at Botjhimama.

24. Yes, they also pass well armed,
 25. They pass carrying spears for war,
 26. And their guns, well armed.
 27. Slippery rock, a huge precipice,
 28. Mamba is never teased if you leave it alone,
 29. Because if it is teased in that manner,
 30. It will cause real trouble to the young men.
 31. The kudu died, the one who knew herbs.
 32. He is the guard from Tshwemo, he from the dog family,
 33. He guards standing, he guards with a gun at Seisa,
 34. He wastes no time, and strikes with a bullet,
 35. Drops you on the ground, rolls you with a bullet, and stops.
 36. Yellow-billed kite of the Mmope children,
 37. The yellow-billed kite ravishes, I roam about yellow-billed kite,
 38. It had smelled the stench
 39. Of his younger brother, Botsejedi,
 40. He is stout, ugly, more than the baboons,
 41. He is worse than the night baboons,
 42. He is worse than the baboons in ugliness,
 43. They do not equal him.
 44. There is someone at Hlwahlweng, he is black,
 45. Ears are deaf, he can't hear,
 46. He only hears when driven by a fist,
 47. The fist of a hand stick,
 48. Of the stick cut at Hlwahlweng among gorges.
 49. When I fight, person of the Petje family,
 50. I fight like a holstein bull,
 51. Because when I fight, I raise dust, child of Makara.
 52. The frightener, the fear with which Letshabisa's peer grew up,
 53. Fear grips a person,
 54. A person gets lean and worried, poor thing from the enemy.
 55. Bulls have covered dry cows in the veldt,
 56. At an unploughed lands of Hlwahlweng,
 57. Where Napier's grass (*thitapoho*)
 58. Has just pricked a person,
 59. He was sprawled on the ground as if he would wake up again.
 60. Child of Makara, lightning of Malefane,
 61. It struck a person with lightning,
 62. A bird (lightning) struck a person,
 63. With lightning even that person
 64. I had not intended to eat.
 65. The wizard who witches at Hlwahlweng,
 66. Witches in broad daylight among people,
 67. In full view of brides and young babies.
 68. He does worry about his emaciated appearance,
 69. He runs around freely with bare ribs,
 70. The lean one, as lean as a dog.
 71. Peer of Radinko, why are you so lean?
 72. I have become lean on account of practising witchcraft,
 73. I jump and strike with lightning,

74. Yes, I jump even where people have set traps in my way,
 75. Facing death, Child of Letjhesa, God saved me.
 76. The men of Hlwahlweng hate me,
 77. Even at Patuwe they also hate me,
 78. I am hated, Tsietsi, child of Habasise,
 79. Even Mmapiloko hates me
 80. Even David of Mosedinyane
 81. Says he has nothing to do with me.
 82. But on the other hand they are correct,
 83. They say that they are not against foolish people,
 84. We are against mistakes,
 85. We are against your provocation, you, Mokiba.
 86. See how emaciated you are,
 87. You are emaciated and skinny,
 88. The bones are protruding on the shoulders,
 89. The ribs are ugly and pressing on the stomach.
 90. Child of a wizard in Leribe,
 91. At the grandchild of Petje's child,
 92. A stupid begot by an uninitiated girl.
 93. I was begot by Mmope and Mmatlou,
 94. Here at Phohole's, the Bafokeng.
 95. To bear children leaves one with anger, because here it is
 96. I have not brought forth a child, I bore a fool,
 97. I bore a stupid, a very naughty child,
 98. He is troublesome, a poor piece of rag.
 99. Peer of child of Mashou Thite,
 100. He was waiting to undress,
 101. He simply rushed to it, child of the Petjes,
 102. He was standing beside the river, angry,
 103. Where he was busy eating frogs.
 104. At that time Mokimo ran mad,
 105. He got mad and said he was seeing a snake.
 106. He started eating trees, eating them together with some soil,
 107. People scattered all over the place.
 108. What has Thera of Ramakatsa done to the people?
 109. I swallow them instantly,
 110. I vomit them rotten,
 111. Rotten and stinking,
 112. And full of worms.
 113. Manti's child resembles fools,
 114. Worst of all, the ones of Mofulathuhlo,
 115. He resembles Mathebe,
 116. He resembles Molaba, the bull.
 117. The boy of their big Raele.
 118. Radipitsi didn't beget a hero for the chief!
 119. He bore a gentleman among young men!
 120. Mmope's hero!
 121. For, when he sees men, he changes, mister,
 122. It is as if he sees the enemies, he turns red.
 123. There it cuts off and leaves!

13) T.K. KABAI [THE BASOTHO CULTURAL VILLAGE]

1. *Lona, Basotho,*
2. *Basotho ba batle, Maaparakobo,*
3. *Bana ba mokgahla wa kgomo,*
4. *Bana ba Basotho, marwalakgweetsa a matle,*
5. *Mokgwa le moetlo,*
6. *Ke hore re role dikatiba,*
7. *Re etseng thapelo, re re:*
8. *“Ntata rona ya mahodimong,*
9. *Bitso la hao le tle le kgethehe,*
10. *Ho tle mmuso wa hao,*
11. *Thato ya hao e etswe lefatsheng,*
12. *Jwalo ka ha e etswa lehodimong....”*
13. *Re bua hona pelo tsa rona*
14. *Di utlwile bohloko, banna.*
15. *Ha re bona marena a rona,*
16. *Pelo tsa rona di qhinyetseha ho tswela pele,*
17. *Re bua ka naledi e ka hodimo ho dinaledi,*
18. *Naledi ya hlaha Botjhabela,*
19. *Tosa ya hlaha pele ho dinaledi,*
20. *Ka morao ha hlaha makolobe,*
21. *Mphatlalatsane ke eo e hlaha,*
22. *Ke rata ho bua ka mokgwa ke ona, ke re,*
23. *Marena a batla le ithehe mabitso,*
24. *A lona a bohlankana,*
25. *A ka ke ana ke a a bolela,*
26. *Ho ithoka calico e tshweu, ngwana Kabai,*
27. *Lehodimong kwana ke tlohile ka Labohlano,*
28. *Ka fofa sebakeng, ka fihla ka Moqebelo,*
29. *Ka fihlela paleising ya morena,*
30. *Mme ke wa ha Lepekola,*
31. *Ke rata ho bua ka mokgwa ke ona,*
32. *Ke Mofokeng, motho wa ha Tshele,*
33. *Motho wa Malekotwana,*
34. *Motho wa Mammulane a Motlatla,*
35. *Ya sa nameleng fatshe,*
36. *Ya namelang mohaswaneng wa kobo,*
37. *Ya hlabang phiyo ka lemao,*
38. *A e ise moreneng,*
39. *A re: ‘Morena, bona, ke hlabile!’*
40. *Le tswa kae, le ya kae, lona Bafokeng,*
41. *Lona le tlohang lefatsheng la Babilona le Egepeta?*
42. *Le nyoloha le ntse le haola thota tsena,*
43. *Le fihla le emisa lefatsheng le bitswang Teransefala kajeno,*
44. *La haola Bafokeng,*
45. *Lefatshe la mehalaopa le ne le le siyo,*
46. *Ke rata ho bua ka mokgwa ke ona,*
47. *Ke re, phaolo, koma mokorotlo,*
48. *Koma e binwang e sa le kaofela,*

49. *Tswela ka ntle motswetse wa lehlabula,*
50. *Banna ba motse ona ba o rerile,*
51. *Ba nkile dikwakwa, ba nkile marumo,*
52. *Ba re le ha o le mosehla, mme o tla mpolaya,*
53. *Dumedisa molekane.*
54. *Ke rata ho bua ka mokgwa ke ona,*
55. *Le bue le mme Mmathokwana sebele,*
56. *Hlokomela setjhaba ke seo!*
57. *Kgotso e rene!*

1. You, the Basotho,
2. The beautiful ones, the blanket-wearers,
3. Children of the bovine hide,
4. Basotho children, beautiful neck-charm-wearers,
5. The custom and the culture,
6. Is to take off hats from our heads,
7. And to pray in saying,
8. "Our father who art in heaven,
9. Hallowed be thy name,
10. Thy kingdom come,
11. Thy will be done on earth,
12. As it is in heaven..."
13. We say this with hearts
14. Already in grief, poor me,
15. When we look at our chiefs,
16. Our hearts continue to break forth,
17. We talk about the star above other stars,
18. The star emerged from the East,
19. Jupiter emerged before the stars,
20. It was later followed by Orion,
21. There emerges the Venus!
22. I want to talk in this manner, and say,
23. The kings want you to give yourselves names,
24. Which are worthy of young men.
25. Here are mine, I mention them,
26. He praises himself, a white calico, child of Kabai,
27. I left heaven on a Friday,
28. Flew in the space, and arrived on a Saturday,
29. Arrived at the king's palace,
30. My mother belongs to the Lepekola family,
31. I want to talk in the manner, here it is,
32. I am a Mofokeng, a descendant of Tshele,
33. One of the family of Lekotwana,
34. One of the descendants of Mmulane, son of Motlatla,
35. Who does not spread out legs on the ground,
36. Who spreads out legs on an old piece of blanket,
37. Who pierces a kidney with a pin,
38. And takes it to the chief,

39. And says, 'Chief, I have slaughtered!'
40. What's your origin, and what's your destination, you, the Bafokeng,
41. You who originated from the country of Babilon and Egypt?
42. You ascend while traversing these veldts,
43. You eventually encamp at the country called Transvaal today,
44. You traversed, the Bafokeng,
45. In a country devoid of barrenness,
46. I want to talk in the manner, here it is,
47. And say, castration, the secret of a war song,
48. A song sung in its entirety,
49. Get outside, a summer confined woman,
50. The village men have conspired against you,
51. They are carrying the battle axes and the spears,
52. Though you are light complexioned and ready to assault me,
53. Salute a farewell to a mate.
54. I want to talk in the manner, here it is,
55. Plead with mother Mmathokwana personally,
56. Look after the nation, there it is!
57. Let peace reign!

(14) MOFOKA GEORGE RASETLA ['MELESI LODGE]

1. *Ha ke bua ka mehla ke ye ke re,*
2. *Rasetla rumo la e ja difariki.*
3. *Ke ye ke re le thole lerata diroki di roke,*
4. *Jwale ke roka selala, se qhobapelesa.*
5. *Ke roka ngwana wa Bereng,*
6. *Ke re Mohato ha o ntse o meselaka ditjhaba,*
7. *O se ke wa ja sakaramente,*
8. *Ba tla o tshella, ba o balaye,*
9. *Ba ntse ba o thetsa ba re ke madi a Jesu*
10. *Oho! Mohato o hopole ditaba tsa ntatao,*
11. *O hopole ditaba tsa Seeiso, ha a se a fallela marung,*
12. *O ne a re Majakane lefu ha se ho le tshaba,*
13. *Ekaba ke hoba ho buuwa ka lona ka mehla kerekeng?*
14. *Ha esale a hlabeha ngwana Tshwana Mantata,*
15. *O re kereke ya Roma ha a sa e batla,*
16. *Roma e nyefola ha kereke ya Fora e hanana le dikgomo manyalong.*
17. *E hanana le dikgomo manyalong, ha esale a hlabeha.*
18. *Le thole lerata ebe tsielala maphaphela,*
19. *A masenya-pina-tsa-batho.*
20. *Ke utlwa le roka marena bongata,*
21. *Le roka le siya Mohato morao,*
22. *Mohato ha etlaba o morena,*
23. *Tlo, o rekele mofo kgoma lebese,*
24. *O rekele ngwana Rasetla,*
25. *E tle ere ha ke e hama ke o hopole.*
26. *Ke nkwe ya maphuphutha ya fatshe la kwano Majakane,*
27. *Ke naledi e tshweutshweu ya Ramatheola,*
28. *Habo Jonathane le Mofoka,*
29. *Mohlang Mohato a fihlang hae, ha mme Mmamohato hantle,*
30. *A re ke thola jwale ke sa bolele,*
31. *Ke thola hobane ke thotse,*
32. *Mohato o amohile Monyesemane leruo.*
33. *Kgome e ntsho ke mahlopha a senya,*
34. *Ke mahlopha a bojella setsheng.*

35. *Ya qamaka, ya thalatsa, ya ka hoja e batla namane,*
36. *Ya mpa ya thola e se e shwele.*
37. *Mohato hopola taba tsa ntatao,*
38. *O hopole taba tsa Bereng hantle,*
39. *O ne a re Majakane lefu o le hlomphe.*
40. *Oho, thamaha kubu,*
41. *Ke kwena tsosa dikubu hara mohlaba e etsang nainai.*
42. *O na teane teng le selahlarungwana,*
43. *Hoba a teane le sona a se botsa,*
44. *Sa mo phetela, sa se ke sa mo thetsa,*
45. *Sa re ngwana morena Letsie ke eo.*
46. *Sa re o tswetswe ke poho thaka Matlama,*
47. *Nthekathekane wa maka wa mashano,*
48. *Phakisa kapele o yo bolela.*
49. *O mpotsetse ho ntata Mmanapo, o mpotsetse ho Lerotholi*
50. *Kerefise o kae?*
51. *Morena o ya shwa, lebitso le sale le rehwa bana ba masea.*
52. *Le ha nka bua kapa ka etsa jwang,*
53. *Nna ke se ke re ke se ke le moholo,*
54. *Ke Rasetla, rumo le a ja difariki.*
55. *Ke bone ha le eja Mmamohatlana kolobe,*
56. *La eja madi a habo Mmatshotleho Rasetla,*
57. *La eja ngwana e monyane,*
58. *Ha ke bua ke re ke se ke le moholo.*
59. *Ke itse ho wena o nkgopole,*
60. *O be o hopole tautshehla,*
61. *Puruma sebata, ngwana morena,*
62. *O kopantse mmala ka hohle,*
63. *O kopantse wa tau le wa nkwe,*
64. *Ke nkwe phuphutha ya fatshe la kwano.*
65. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. Whenever I speak daily,
2. I normally say Rasetla, a spear kills pigs,
3. I normally say be silent to allow praise singers to praise,
4. Now I praise the wanderer driving a pack animal.
5. I praise child of Bereng
6. And say, Mohato, while mixing with the masses,
7. Do not eat the sacrament,
8. The will poison and kill you,
9. Telling lies that it is the blood of Jesus,
10. Oh please Mohato, remember, think of your father's affairs,
11. Remember the affairs of Seeiso when he left for the skies,
12. He said, how much do Christians fear death!
13. Could it be because it is mentioned daily in church?
14. He has been sick, child of Tshwanamantata.
15. He says, the Catholic Church he dislikes it,
16. Roman church blasphemes, the church of Parys refuses lobola,

17. It's against cattle in marriage, he's since taken offence.
18. Keep quiet let there be tranquillity,
19. The inquisitive spoil other people's songs.
20. I hear you praising many a chief,
21. You praise but leave Mohato out.
22. Mohato, to be regarded as king,
23. You should buy your subject a milk cow.
24. Buy the child of Rasetla one,
25. So that when I milk it I should remember you.
26. I am a general tiger of this world, you Christians,
27. I am a pure white star of Ramatheola,
28. At the home of Jordan and Mmowa.
29. The day Mohato arrived home at Mmamohato precisely,
30. Said I should keep quiet and say nothing,
31. I kept quiet because of being quiet.
32. Mohato disowned the British their riches.
33. A black cow is the so-called organiser-and- spoiler,
34. It is the organiser collecting into the yard,
35. She looked around as if looking for a calf
36. But kept quiet already dead.
37. Mohato remember your father's affairs,
38. Remember the affairs of Bereng well,
39. He said, Christians should respect death.
40. Oh hyena, the hippopotamus,
41. The crocodile, awaken the hippopotamus making movement,
42. There he met the coward-from-battle,
43. Meeting him, he asked,
44. The coward told him without lying to him,
45. And said there is the child of Letsie,
46. And said he was begot by a bull, contemporary of Matlama.
47. Someone from nowhere, a liar,
48. Hurry up, go and report,
49. Inquire from Mmanoko's father, from Lerotholi,
50. Where is Griffith?
51. The King is perishing, his name being given to young babies.
52. Even if I may talk or do what,
53. I may simply say that I am old enough,
54. It's Rasetla, the spear is stabbing the pigs,
55. I saw it stab the female shorttail one, the pig,
56. It ate the blood of the sufferer, Rasetla,
57. It stabbed a young child,
58. When I speak I say I am old enough,
59. I said to you you should remember me,
60. Remember also the light brown lion.
61. Roar, the beast of prey, child of the king,
62. You have mixed colours all over,
63. You have mixed that of the lion and the tiger.
64. You are the light, walk stealthily in this world.
65. There it cuts off and leaves!

(15) JAMES MOFOKENG [THABANA-TSHOWANA]

1. *Bana ba Basotho le e shebile le e bone nkwe,*
2. *Naledi e tshela ya motse wa ka Kweneng.*
3. *Morena ke fika la botshabelo Mmusong wa Modimo,*
4. *Ke modisa wa tjhaba sa Basotho hara bahlankana,*
5. *Nkabe ke itse ho lona le thole lerata,*
6. *Le tle le nkutlwe hantle.*
7. *Lemong sena ha ke bue ke etsa diako,*
8. *Jo, tholang lerata bana ba Basotho le mamele*
9. *Molakolako wa ntja tsa Kolane,*
10. *Motho nka tlola pere,*
11. *Ka lakomela batho selailai.*
12. *Laimang kapele bashanyana beso,*
13. *Le bue le Fani le Moeketsi,*
14. *Ba jwetse Phoka, a bue le Sewane,*
15. *A tsebise Nyenye le Sefadi,*
16. *Bahlankana ba ntsheditse dinotshi*
17. *Kgosi e sa tsebiswa.*
18. *Morena o kwatile wa kgutlo sena,*
19. *Monongwaha Leabua o kwatile ho feta marena,*
20. *Lemong sena ha a kwata o hlabehile,*
21. *Monongwaha o kgenne sehloho,*
22. *Ke bona a hana ho bua le Basotho.*
23. *O hana ho sehela batho meedi,*
24. *Le masimo o ba sehetse hodima mafika,*
25. *Batho, thobang dipelo,*
26. *Morena a buse a mpusang.*
27. *Nna ke buswa ke leqhawe la mohlankana,*
28. *Ke buswa ke moholoholo o maoto a leshome,*
29. *Ke buswa ke Leabua monna wa ka Tlokweg.*
30. *Setloholo sa ntate Tsholo wa ha Selebalo Mokwena,*
31. *Banna, jwale mohodi wa phuphutha wa thaba di mahlwa,*
32. *Moya o a bata wa kgutlong sa Qwaqwa.*
33. *Lemong sena ha hlaha lethuela,*
34. *Tshehlong kwana o robile difate,*
35. *Thibella wa etsaka mophula,*
36. *Thabatshweu wa hatsetsa dithorobela.*
37. *Thabanatshowana ho hlongwe folakga,*
38. *Folakga di pedi mmala o mong,*
39. *Ke folakga ya banana le bashanyana,*
40. *Thabaphofung e jarile mohodi ka mahetla.*
41. *Maloti a masweu a kganya lehlwa maphakong,*
42. *Monongwaha matsa a tlola ka lebelo thabeng,*
43. *Mosi ke ola o tlola ropong la thota.*
44. *Bashamane ba ha Qasa Mphosong,*
45. *Sehou ho lona banna ba Madimong,*
46. *Banna ba Tshirela ba kgokgahanya puo,*
47. *Ho lona banna ba Makeneng, mailakoma,*

48. *Ekare ha morena a le roma la hana,*
49. *Bonang jwale Mohloki o kwatile ba thaka tsa ka,*
50. *Lemong sena o rerile lefu metswalle ya ka.*
51. *Ke mona ke bona motho selomong a wela,*
52. *Ka bona setopo moya a fedile,*
53. *Batho bitsang ba habo ba tlo mo tseba,*
54. *Ba tlo nka mofu, ba phuthe masapo.*
55. *Le kolokoteha le ya kae Basotho?*
56. *Monongwaha le siya Qwaqwa e loka,*
57. *Hoba Mokodumela e phakela batho dikobo.*
58. *Ho lona diloralorane tsa bahlankana,*
59. *Le lorang dipholo hodima sehlabo,*
60. *Nna monongwaha ke lorile tjhelete,*
61. *Mokodumela posong.*
62. *Ke lorile three million, bashanyana beso,*
63. *Ke a tiya ke a hlapanya,*
64. *Mohla ke ilo e lata ke ilo nka ponto,*
65. *Ke siye leshome motho wa Mosotho,*
66. *Le tle le qale ho bona ha ke thabisa morena.*
67. *Banna jwale ha ithoka sebetabetane sa mohlankana,*
68. *Motho ka betwa ke pelo ka utlwa bohloko,*
69. *Ke be ke se ke iphopholetsa ditedu,*
70. *Hoba marena a qabane sekgutlong sa Qwaqwa.*
71. *Ke bona ho qabane Leabua le ngwanabo Sefofo,*
72. *Sefofo o hana ha Leabua a nyala sethepu,*
73. *Se nna le lobokana ditabeng, Bakwena,*
74. *Le tla re tshehisa ka mefuta esele.*
75. *Le Matebele ka Natala a tla re tsheha,*
76. *Banna jwale ha ithoka kwete sebatabetane sa mohlankana.*
77. *Motho eo e neng ere mohlang a neng a hlahile,*
78. *Lehodimong kwana ha etsekwa mehlolo*
79. *Naledi ya hlaha marung kwana e entse mohodi,*
80. *Ka bona e iketsa motjhotjhonono.*
81. *Ha le tjhaba le sira batho difahleho,*
82. *Hwa thwe jwale eyang ka Madimong le bone,*
83. *Monongwaheng ona ho tswetswe lekgowa,*
84. *Ho tswetswe mohokadi o motsho morena Moketa,*
85. *Mohlankana eo e reng morena ha a mo roma, a dumele.*
86. *Ke tlola kapele ho potlakela dibaka,*
87. *Leabua ntshepe ke mootlwana,*
88. *O tla nne o thiba ka nna bohaleng,*
89. *Bohale bo teng kwana koting sa Madimong,*
90. *Bo feta ba dikwakwa, dithunya,*
91. *Dikanono di ka duma, di nkubela mahetleng.*
92. *Banna, dikulo ha feta ke a inama, ke ya bathong.*

1. Basotho children, you have looked and have seen the leopard,
2. The yellow star of the Bakwena village,
3. The chief is the rock of refuge in the Government of God,

4. He is the shepherd of Basotho nation among young men,
 5. I would have said to you to keep quiet,
 6. And hear me clearly,
 7. This year I am not speaking but hurrying,
 8. Oh! Keep quiet, children of the Basotho and listen,
 9. The jumping one of the dogs from Kolane,
 10. One may jump from the horse,
 11. And jump towards the people with lightning speed,
 12. Jump quickly, our young boys,
 13. Speak to Fani and Moeketsi,
 14. To tell Phoka to communicate with Sewane,
 15. And inform Nyenye and Sefadi,
 16. The young men have opened up the bee-hive
 17. Without the chief being informed.
 18. Angry is the chief of this region,
 19. This year Leabua is angrier than the other chiefs,
 20. This year he is angry and annoyed,
 21. This year his anger is beyond measure,
 22. I see him by refusing to speak to the Basotho,
 23. He refused to indicate boundaries to the people,
 24. The fields he has chosen among rocks,
 25. People, be calm so that the chief may govern.
 26. Let the chief who governs me govern,
 27. I am governed by a bright young man,
 28. I am governed by the big one with ten feet,
 29. I am governed by Leabua, a man who includes the Batlokwa,
 30. Grandson of father Tsholo, descendant of Selebalo, Mokwena.
 31. Comrades, there goes the mist along mountains covered with snow,
 32. The wind is cold in this region of Qwaqwa.
 33. This year there appeared a diviner,
 34. At Tshelong it broke trees,
 35. At Thibella it caused havoc,
 36. At Thabatshweu it blew fiercely over land,
 37. At Thabatshowana there hangs a flag,
 38. Flags being two with one colour,
 39. It is the flag of girls and boys.
 40. Phofung mountain is carrying mist on its shoulders,
 41. The Maloti are white and there shines snow on the sides,
 42. This year the grey rheboks jump with speed on the mountain.
 43. There is smoke spreading over the plains,
 44. The boys from Qasa, Mphosong,
 45. Sing, you men from Madimong (Cannibals).
 46. Men disappeared and discussed matters,
 47. And you, men from Makeneng, who deny initiation songs,
 48. Can you refuse when the chief sends you?
 49. Look now at Mohloki, he is cross, my comrades,
 50. This year he has decided on suicide, my friends,
 51. Here I see a man fall into a precipice,
 52. I later saw a corpse, the soul gone.
 53. People, inform the relatives to identify him,

54. Take the corpse and gather the bones,
 55. Where are you dashing to, the Basotho?
 56. This year you leave Qwaqwa becoming positive,
 57. Because Mokodumela gives people blankets,
 58. To you dreamers, young men,
 59. Who dream about cattle on the plateau,
 60. I, this year dreamt of money
 61. At Mokodumela Post Office,
 62. I dreamt of three million, comrades,
 63. I really mean it, I can bet you,
 64. The day I go to fetch it I shall take a pound
 65. And leave ten shillings, a Mosotho man,
 66. You will see afresh when I please the chief.
 67. Oh! Now I praise myself, the smart one, the great young wrestler,
 68. I took courage and felt angry,
 69. I ultimately stroke my beard,
 70. For the chiefs have clashed in the Qwaqwa region,
 71. Leabua has clashed with his brother, Sefofo,
 72. Sefofo refuses when Leabua wishes to marry the second wife.
 73. Please do not confuse matters, the Bakwena,
 74. You will make other tribes laugh at us,
 75. Even the Ndebeles in Natal will laugh at us,
 76. Oh! Now I praise myself, the smart one, the great young wrestler,
 77. The young man who when he was born,
 78. Yonder in heaven miracles happened,
 79. The star rose from the clouds covered in mist,
 80. I saw it turn into a comet,
 81. The sun shining and making a shadow on peoples' faces,
 82. Then came a word saying, go to Madimong and see,
 83. This year a white man is born,
 84. A black stallion is born, chief Moketa.
 85. A young man who, when the chief sends him, goes,
 86. I jump quickly to rush to places,
 87. Leabua, bank on me; I am your puppy,
 88. You will shield with me in bad times,
 89. There are bad times at the region of Madimong,
 90. They are worse than battleaxes, the guns,
 91. Cannons may sound and beat on my shoulders,
 92. Oh! When bullets miss me, I jump towards the people.

(16) LEBAMANG MOABI [MATSIENG]

1. *Sekgohola sa Mokhachane, qooane,*
2. *Fako sa ngwananyana wa Nkoebe,*
3. *Se tlohile hae pula ena,*
4. *Fafatsane le entse mohodi,*
5. *Bahlankana ba tshaba ho palana.*
6. *Kwena tsosa maqhubu,*
7. *O yo hlwa kgorong ha Senei,*
8. *O teane teng le selahlamarungwana,*
9. *A fapohela ho sona a se botsa,*
10. *Sa mo phetela sa se ke sa mo swetsa,*
11. *Sa re, ngwana morena Letsie o dihetse,*
12. *Ho setse Toi mora wa Teele.*
13. *A tlalwa ke pelo thaka Matlama,*
14. *A re, ntekatekane wa maka, wa mashano,*
15. *Phakisa kapele o yo bolela,*
16. *O mpotsetse ho morena Bohata,*
17. *O mpotsetse ho ntata Mmaneo,*
18. *O tle o mpotsetse ho Lerotholi hantle,*
19. *A re, Letlama, qhanolla dipere di fule,*
20. *Ntwa bohola ke ya hosasa.*
21. *Letlama, leru la hlaha botjhabela,*
22. *Kwena tsosa maqhubu,*
23. *O yo hlwa Kgorong ha Senei,*
24. *O teane teng le selahlamarungwana,*
25. *A fapohela ho sona, a se botsa,*
26. *Sa mo phetela sa se ke sa mo swetsa,*
27. *Sa re ngwana morena Letsie o dihetse,*
28. *Ho setse Toi mora Teele,*
29. *Kwena tsosa maqhubu,*
30. *O yo hlwa kgorong ha Senei,*
31. *Senaranarane, kwena ya Mabewana,*
32. *Kwena ya Api le Makgaola,*
33. *Motho a ka tswalwa, a hlahlama Letsie,*
34. *Empa a mo lwanetse molamu wa hlooho,*
35. *Kgomphoro ya Matlama a Mokhachane,*
36. *Ntinti e mona e motshwanahadi,*
37. *Ha se ho tshwanelwa ho okamela batho,*
38. *Le jele bana ba Masopha,*
39. *La ba ja, la ba abela dinonyana.*
40. *Mohale wa Matlama wa Mabolalathoko,*
41. *Maboela ho Matlama hoja ho sa qellanwe dikgare,*
42. *Tawana o hlile a kgotsa bohale,*
43. *Topale le yena a tla ka wa hae,*
44. *Kgajwane le yena a tla ka wa hae,*
45. *Banna ba bokana, bana ba Masopha e se dikatse,*
46. *Kerefise ngwana wa Lerotholi ke letolo, Mokwena,*
47. *Kerefise ngwana wa Lerotholi ke letolo, Mokwena,*
48. *Tolo la lapeng ha Mmantshebo.*

49. *Letlama, kwena ya Mabewana,*
50. *Wa habo Api le Makgaola,*
51. *Motho a ka tswalwa, a hlahlama Letsie,*
52. *A mpa a mo lwanetse molamu wa hlooho,*
53. *Kgomphoro ya Matlama a Mokhachane,*
54. *Ya fofa ya kena lebenkeleng haufi le motse wa Senekale,*
55. *Teng e bonwe ke ngakamofubedu.*
56. *Tolo le jele bana ba Masopha,*
57. *Le e ja ba rangwane, metswalle,*
58. *La ba ja, la ba abela dinonyana, qooane.*
59. *Ntinti le Molomotshwanahadi, bahlankana,*
60. *Dinatla, bahlankana ba heso,*
61. *Bahlankana ba tswetsweng ka bohloko,*
62. *Ba balehile ba ntshiya thoteng.*
63. *Ke le mma bona, ka utlwa bodutu,*
64. *Ka kokomala, ka fetoha moopa (nyopa),*
65. *Nna ke tswaletse Maburu, ke a hlomoha,*
66. *Bahlankana, dinatla bashanyana beso,*
67. *Bashanyana ba tswetsweng ka bohloko,*
68. *Ba balehile, ba ntshiya thoteng.*
69. *Ke le mmabona ka utlwa bohloko,*
70. *Ka kokomala ka fetoha nyopa.*
71. *Nna ha ke bua ka Maburu ke a hlomoha,*
72. *Bana ba kena mekoting e se ditadi,*
73. *Ba tjhekana le dipitla tsa Mafika,*
74. *Ba tswaletswe diferene le melele.*
75. *Ke a hana, basetsana,*
76. *Di a ka Mahlatsi di ya ka bohlale,*
77. *Wena Sehlabo, moshemane ya matjato, ngwana wa mme,*
78. *Kgutla, o boele Lesothong leno,*
79. *Lesa ho nna o kama bolepolepo.*
80. *Ya hlwa, ya re ke lepatlelo.*
81. *Ha ke tlola moropotsana,*
82. *Mafube a matha a ya kena lewatleng,*
83. *Tsatsi la tjhaba la mpata hlooho.*
84. *Ngwetsana tse setseng ka Lesotho,*
85. *Tsa lla, tsa baka mohlomola,*
86. *Ha ho dijo ha ho bana lapeng la Motho,*
87. *O na tla fuwa bana ke mang ha monna a phela matekatseng?*
88. *Qooane, Qooane ya metsi, ya Matlama, ya Mokhachane,*
89. *Ntinti le molomotshwanahadi,*
90. *Ledimo la Raseokamelabatho,*
91. *Le jele bana ba batho,*
92. *La eja bana ba Masopha,*
93. *La ba ja la ba abela dinonyana.*
94. *Mohale wa Matlama, mabolalathoko*
95. *Maboela ho Matlama hoja ho pheilwe kang,*
96. *Raeya a tla ka wa hae,*
97. *Tapole le yena a tla ka wa hae,*
98. *Kgajoane le yena a tla ka wa hae.*

99. *Mohale wa Lekena,*
100. *Wa Makena ho Matlama hoja ho phehelwanwe dikgang.*
101. *Ngwetsana tse setseng ka Lesotho,*
102. *Tsa lla, tsa baka mahlomola,*
103. *Ha ho dijo, ha ho bana lapeng la motho,*
104. *Hana o ne a tla fuwa bana ke mang ha monna a phela matekatseng*
105. *Qooane, moeletsi wa Matlama wa Mokhachane,*
106. *O dutse le molomotshwanahadi.*

1. Storm of Mokhachane, the berg adder,
2. Hailstorm of the girl of Nkoebe
3. Left home on a rainy day,
4. Light showers covered in mist,
5. Young men hesitating to ride.
6. Crocodile, cause the waves,
7. And go up through the passage of Senei,
8. There he met the coward.
9. He turned to him and asked,
10. That one told him without hesitation,
11. And said, the child of chief Letsie is overthrown,
12. Toi, the son of Teele, has remained.
13. He became angry, the peer of Matlama,
14. And said, you, the runner, the liar,
15. Go quickly and report,
16. Ask from chief Bohata,
17. Ask from 'Maneo's father,
18. And ask carefully also from Lerotholi.
19. He said, Letlama, off saddle the horses to graze,
20. The main battle is tomorrow.
21. Letlama, a cloud appeared from the east,
22. Crocodile, cause the waves,
23. And go up through the passage of Senei,
24. There he met the coward.
25. He turned to him and asked,
26. That one told him without hesitation,
27. And said, the child of chief Letsie has left his job,
28. Toi, the son of Teele, has remained.
29. Crocodile, cause the waves,
30. And go up through the passage of Senei,
31. The slow couch, crocodile of Mabewana (the true ones),
32. Crocodile of Api and Makhaola,
33. Can a person be born and succeed Letsie,
34. After fighting for him so bravely?
35. Strong mixture of the Matlama of Mokhachane,
36. This Ntinti, the very black one,
37. You are not supposed to rule over the people.
38. You devoured the children of Masopha,
39. You devoured them and apportioned them to the birds,
40. The hero of the Matlama, the singer of praises,

41. Returner to Matlama amid conflicts,
42. Young lion was actually amused by the heroism,
43. Tapole also came with his,
44. Khajoane also came with his
45. Men were gathered, children of Masopha, though not cats.
46. Griffith, child of Lerotholi is lightning, Mokwena,
47. Griffith, child of Lerotholi, is lightning, Mokwena,
48. Lightning of the homestead of 'Mantšebo,
49. Letlama, the crocodile of Mabewana (The true ones),
50. Of Api's and Makhaola's,
51. Can a person be born and succeed Letsie,
52. After fighting for him so bravely?
53. Strong mixture of the Matlama (Binders Regiment) of Mokhachane,
54. It flew and entered the shop near Senekal village,
55. There it was seen by a red doctor.
56. Lightning has eaten the children of Masopha,
57. It devoured those of my uncle, my friends,
58. It devoured them and apportioned them to the birds, the viper,
59. Ntinti and the big black beak, young men,
60. Heroes, our young men,
61. Young men born under difficult conditions,
62. Have fled and left me on the plains,
63. Being their mother I felt hurt,
64. I shrank and turned into a barren woman,
65. I begot children for the Boers, and I mourn,
66. Young men, heroes, our young boys,
67. Young boys born under difficult conditions,
68. Have fled and left me on the plains,
69. Being their mother I felt hurt,
70. I shrank and turned into a barren woman,
71. When I talk about the Boers I mourn,
72. Children get into the holes though not mice,
73. And dig huge rocks,
74. They begot you foreigners and vagabonds,
75. I disagree, young girls,
76. Those who go to the Mahlatsi's do so with wisdom,
77. You, Sehlabo, a dilligent boy, my mother's child,
78. Return and come back to Lesotho, your home,
79. Stop combing wooly hair.
80. There it climbs thinking it's a plain,
81. When I smeared myself with vaseline,
82. Aurora dashed into the sea,
83. The sun shone and hit me on the head.
84. Young brides remaining behind in Lesotho,
85. Cried and caused sadness,
86. There is no food, no children at home,
87. How could she have children when her husband lives with the prostitutes?
88. The viper, the water viper of the Matlama, of Mokhachane,
89. Ntinti and the big black beak,
90. Giant who towers above the people,

91. Has devoured the poor people,
92. It devoured Masopha's children,
93. It devoured them and apportioned them to the birds,
94. The hero of the Matlama, the singer of praises,
95. Returner to the Matlama amid the arguments,
96. Raeya returned with his,
97. Tapole also returned with his,
98. Khajoane also returned with his,
99. Hero of Lekena,
100. Of the Makena among the Matlama amid great arguments,
101. Young brides remaining behind in Lesotho
102. Cried and caused sadness,
103. There is no food, no children at home,
104. How could she have children when her husband lives with the prostitutes?
105. The berg adder, advisor of the Matlama of Mokhachane,
106. Is sitting with the one with a big black beak.

(17) MOKHELE THULO [MORIJA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES]

1. *Banna, mona ho ithoka moshahla!*
2. *Ke moshahla se iname, ha o imama di tla o hata*
3. *Bahlankana ba ntate, ba Letsie*
4. *O itse re ithehe mabitso, morena Letsie*
5. *Ekare ha a re re ithehe mabitso a rona, a bohlankana,*
6. *Wa utlwa motho a ntse*
7. *A re yena ke Mmamaririele wa dijabatho.*
8. *Nna ha ke mmamaririele, ke se mosadi,*
9. *Phatshwa thiba kgomo, thaka ntatae.*
10. *Phatshwa thiba kgomo, le wena o e thibe,*
11. *Banna, morwerwe o thebe e nalana,*
12. *Nneheletse thebe ya me ke a tsamaya,*
13. *Ke sa ya kwana morena a ileng.*
14. *Nna nke ke be ka sala kgosi e tloha,*
15. *Letsie ha a palama ke a tsamaya.*
16. *Le ha e le mofu ngwaneo wa motho,*
17. *E le mofu a itjhweletse,*
18. *Banna, mohau ke ratile ngwananyana wa Mokhatla,*
19. *Mokhatla o ntumetse ke thabile,*
20. *Setshwana sa utswa mahe a dikgoho,*
21. *Tshehlana ya utswa nama letsemeng,*
22. *Setshwana, itlhatswe, moradi wa Joele,*
23. *Jwale e tle ere ha re fihla ka lekgotleng,*
24. *Ba shebe mmomo ho feta ditaba,*
25. *Ba nne ba re ditaba di ntle tsa ngwana wa Telekwa,*
26. *Setshwana, o mosa hara bahlankana,*
27. *Ho ba bang ha a nna a ntse a tsheha.*
28. *Kgothometsi ya motho wa ha Moshoeshe,*
29. *Lekanyane ke lelakabe le ka hodima pere.*
30. *Kgohlo e theoha le dikoqo ha habo Mmatshupo,*
31. *E theoha e a kgothometsa maoka,*
32. *Le boradipere ba sa tla baleha.*
33. *Banna, ya ithoka, nonyana.*
34. *Ya ithoka, nonyana yabo Mmatelekwa,*
35. *Lehwere la maikopela,*
36. *Ho lengwa mohla majwala*
37. *Mohla majwala e ikopolle.*
38. *Ke poho Tinkane ya mokgerane,*
39. *Poho e hlaba lengope ha e lwana,*
40. *Naka, letjhoba la yona le be lefubedu,*
41. *Le betlwa ke badimo bosiu,*
42. *Halala! Ha e ye, ngwana Telekwa,*
43. *Dijo nka ja, ngwana Telekwa,*
44. *Nka ja monatja, ka tsoha ke shwele,*
45. *Ke patane ya pata,*
46. *Ya pata ngwanabo Makhala Sehoroto,*
47. *Sehoroto ke setinkela, ke shwa le matla,*
48. *Ke ntho e patang ka mpeng ho pere,*

49. *Ke selepe ho bara le baradi ba Telekwa,*
50. *Se madi, se ratha ka hohle,*
51. *Ke lerumo la kgomo e ntata Telekwa,*
52. *Kgomo e kgophola moswang,*
53. *Mohau ke lesiba la noko, wa habo Mmatshepo,*
54. *Ke siba la noko, ke hlaba ka hohle,*
55. *Ke nyatsa ha dikgeleke di ntse di ntlwaela,*
56. *Ho moradi wa Thokwana, ka thohothelwa,*
57. *Batshweneng bana ke ba habo mme hantle.*
58. *Kgatsa tsa eshwa mmamanalane,*
59. *Le tse setseng di setse di ntse di hloro,*
60. *Rangwana Tau le Lehlonkana,*
61. *Ngwana madi ka tshwela ka phirimana,*
62. *Hana hara Motsheare ke tshaba ho di ja,*
63. *Ke tshaba molato nthong tsa batho,*
64. *Ke pholo e putswa ya pholo tsa ha Telekwa,*
65. *Ke pholo e putswa, e teng Maroleng,*
66. *E ntse e fula ruta marole,*
67. *Le hwane, ha ithoka mosuwe,*
68. *Hwa ithoka, mosuwe o hlooho e phodileng,*
69. *O manganga, o tsamaisa leqhoko,*
70. *O tsamaya o senya mekete ya batho,*
71. *Ka nnete ke a tiya, ke a hlapanya,*
72. *Le wona ona ke tlo o senya!*
73. *Mohale wa mananya,*
74. *Mohale wa mananya ke pelesa,*
75. *Ke sa nta e nyolosa mokokotlo,*
76. *Ke motho wa leshome la disheleng,*
77. *Wa leshome la disheleng phalafala,*
78. *Wa poreise ha e lekane le theko,*
79. *Rona nama ka Phamong ha re sa e ja,*
80. *Nama e jewa ke bomatshwele a kgotla,*
81. *BoSekhele wa Rampobole,*
82. *Ba nang Tsietsi, ngwana wa Dinono,*
83. *Makhomo kahle, banna ba ka Phamong,*
84. *Banna, ha re ya ntweng,*
85. *Banna ba re sala morao.*
86. *O tlo utlwe meleko.*
87. *Ha re kgutla moo, ba re etella pele.*
88. *Ha re fihla ho morena ba a ntsheba,*
89. *Ba bua tsa ka, tsa bona ba di siye morao,*
90. *Ba re ho morena, motho eo o a beta ebile o a utswa,*
91. *O se ka ba wa mo fa tshimo le kgale.*
92. *Jwale nna ka re ho morena,*
93. *Tjhee, wee, morena Letsie,*
94. *Batho bale ba mpa ba ntshenya lebitso feela,*
95. *Ke bokgutshwanyane ba dikgomo, ngwana Telekwa*
96. *Ke bokgutshwanyane, bo kile ba nkgolwa,*
97. *Kobo tsa ka di taboha qoleng,*
98. *La ithoka lejwe la pitikwe, la habo Ntswaki,*

99. *Pitikwe, lejwe la theteha thabeng*
100. *La tsosa matsa hodima dihlabana,*
101. *La tsosa mesha le matodi di be di hlodise,*
102. *Di fumane ntja e feta thorofeta,*
103. *Jwale mona ke bua mathata,*
104. *Jwale mona ke bua mathaba*
105. *Bahlankana ba ntate, ba Letsie,*
106. *Bahlankana ba ntate, ba Letsie, nkang mahlokwana,*
107. *Le a robelane, le fate ditsebe, le utlwe.*
108. *Tabeng tseo ke tlang ho di bua,*
109. *Ha ke na leshano ke bua nnete,*
110. *Ka nnete ke mohale wa kwebela,*
111. *Mohale wa kwebela, maphopholetsa,*
112. *Motho a ka kwebela ka mofeng wa peke,*
113. *Tladimothwana, tolo la matsoho,*
114. *Nna, tladi ya hodimo e se e kile ya nkuka,*
115. *Eitse ha ke atamela marung,*
116. *Modimo a nthapella, ka kgutla,*
117. *Banna, tolo le a tshabeha la ka Phamong,*
118. *Tolo la teng le nka potsanyana ka mora podi,*
119. *Ke bala kwana ha Siresire le Matekane,*
120. *Ha Seqhwasho, Matebeleng,*
121. *Ke Seqhwasho le Farelane,*
122. *Ke banna ba hlolang ba tsekile,*
123. *Ba tsekisana saka leholo,*
124. *Ke bala ka Thelekeng kwana,*
125. *Ke morena Mahao,*
126. *Thabakgubetswana, ha bana ba Maokgi,*
127. *Semonkong kwana ke morena Leloko,*
128. *Thabanantsho kwana, ha Lepekola Sebaki,*
129. *Sekiring kwana ke Ramashamole,*
130. *Ke bala lesobeng kwana ha Ratjomose,*
131. *Ha habo Khetsi le Motsiba, Lesobeng,*
132. *Ha habo Lephodi le Lekarapa,*
133. *Ha habo Lephdi le Lekarapa, ke bala Hlwahlweng,*
134. *Ha bana ba Nkau,*
135. *Ke kgutla ke bula haeso,*
136. *Haeso ha Jobo, Letsatseng,*
137. *Motseng oo.*

1. People, he praises himself, the strong one,
2. The strong one, do not bend, doing that they will trample on you.
3. Young men of my father, Letsie,
4. He, chief Letsie, said we should give ourselves names.
5. If he says we should give ourselves names, young men's names,
6. You will hear someone saying,
7. He is the-bearded-one, men's eater.
8. I am not the-bearded-one, for I'm not a woman,
9. Black and white one, halt the cow, you peer of my father,

10. Black and white one, halt the cow, and you also must halt it,
11. Oh! The vague one carrying a white and red shield,
12. Hand over my shield for I am going,
13. I am going to where the king has gone,
14. I cannot remain behind while the king is going,
15. When Letsie rides I must go,
16. Although he is the late one, that poor fellow,
17. He is the late one, he is dead.
18. People, Mohau, I've fallen for a Mokgatla girl,
19. The Mokgatla has accepted me, I am delighted.
20. The black coloured one stole fowl eggs,
21. The light coloured one stole meat at a work party.
22. The black coloured one, wash yourself, daughter of Joel,
23. So that when we arrive at the court,
24. They will concentrate more on the legs than on the case,
25. And keep on saying, beautiful is the case of Telekwa's child.
26. The black coloured one is kind among young men,
27. To others she does not usually laugh.
28. Pusher of the Moshoeshoe people,
29. Wild dog is a high flame on top of the horse,
30. The gorge comes down with stumps at Mmatshupo's,
31. It comes down pushing thorn trees,
32. Horse owners are going to flee.
33. People, how great has it praised itself, the bird!
34. It praised itself, the bird of Mmatelekwa's,
35. The sly mamba,
36. Ploughing took place during drinking sprees,
37. During drinking sprees it comes out (the mamba).
38. It is a bull, Tinkane, the thin one,
39. The bull pushes the donga when fighting,
40. The horn, the tail brush becomes red,
41. It was sharpened by the ancestors at night,
42. Halala, ha-ya-haa! Let it go, child of Telekwa.
43. As for food I can eat, child of Telekwa,
44. I might eat poisonous plant and wake up dead.
45. I am the real hider 'cause I hid,
46. I hid the brother/sister of Makgala Sehoroto,
47. Sehoroto is a strong man who dies fighting,
48. I am a thing that hides inside the stomach of a horse,
49. I am an axe to the sons and daughters of Telekwa,
50. Full of blood, chopping on both sides,
51. I'm the bovine spear of Telekwa's father,
52. The cow kicks back the chime ready to fight,
53. Mohau, I am the porcupine feather, he of Mmatshupo's,
54. I am the porcupine feather, I prick in all directions,
55. I detest when the eloquent ones get used to me,
56. To the daughter of Thokwane I got angry.
57. These Batshweneng are my mother's family,
58. Guinea fowls died with their colourful plumes,
59. The remaining ones are sad.

60. Uncle of Tau and Lehlonkana
 61. Child, I spat blood in the evening,
 62. By the way, during the day I fear to eat them,
 63. I fear to cause trouble when things do not belong to me
 64. I am the grey ox among Telekwa's oxen,
 65. I am a grey ox which is there at Maroleng,
 66. Grazing and teaching the young ones,
 67. Yes, he praised himself, the tutor,
 68. He praised himself the clear headed tutor,
 69. He is stubborn and fond of quarrels,
 70. He goes about spoiling people's feasts,
 71. Surely I am firm and even swear,
 72. This one (feast) I shall spoil as well,
 73. The hero, the slow walking one,
 74. The slow walker hero is like a pack animal,
 75. I am like lice going up on one's back,
 76. I am someone with ten shillings,
 77. With ten shillings, an unidentified animal,
 78. Of the price does not equal the object to buy,
 79. We, at Phamong do not eat meat any longer.
 80. Meat is eaten by the masses at the court.
 81. Sekhele of Rampobole and others,
 82. Together with people such as Tsietsi, child of Dinono,
 83. Steady with the cattle, men from Phamong!
 84. When we men go to war,
 85. Other men follow us.
 86. Now you listen to wonders:
 87. When we returned, they were in front,
 88. When we got to the king, they spoke evil of me,
 89. They related mine, theirs they left behind,
 90. They said to the king, our lord, that man is a rapist, he also steals,
 91. You should never give him land to plough,
 92. And I said to the king,
 93. But, please! King Letsie,
 94. Those people are merely blacklisting me.
 95. I am as short like head of cattle, child of Telekwa,
 96. Yes, my shortness has created problems for me,
 97. My blakets get torn at the edges,
 98. He praised himself, the round stone of Ntswaki's,
 99. The round stone rolled from the mountain,
 100. It woke up the rhebucks on the plateaus,
 101. It woke up meerkats and mongooses to peep,
 102. I found the dogs passing in speed.
 103. Now I am going to talk about difficulties,
 104. Now I am talking mountains,
 105. Young men of my father, of Letsie,
 106. Young men of my father, of Letsie, take bits of dry grass,
 107. Break them among yourselves, clean up your ears and listen,
 108. To what I am going to say,
 109. I am not lying, I am telling the truth,

110. Surely, I am the bold hero,
111. The bold hero, the-groping-one,
112. One may walk boldly holding a pickaxe handle,
113. Bolt from the blue, manmade lightning,
114. Yes, man made lightning once struck me,
115. When I was nearing the clouds
116. God pleaded on my behalf, I returned.
117. Oh! How dangerous is the lightning on the plateau,
118. The lightning there kills a kid behind a she-goat,
119. I refer to yonder at Siresire and Matekane,
120. At Seqhwasho, the Matebele area,
121. It is Seqhwasho and Farelane,
122. These men clash continuously,
123. Clashing over a big kraal,
124. I refer to yonder Thelekeng,
125. At chief Mahao's,
126. Thabakgubetswana at Moakgi's children.
127. Yonder at Semonkong dwells chief Leloko,
128. Yonder at Thabanantsho, at Lepekola Sebaki's,
129. At Sekiring dwells Ramashamole,
130. I refer to the pass, yonder at Ratjomose's,
131. The home of Kgetsi and Motsiba, at the pass,
132. The home of Lephodi and Lekarapa,
133. The home of Lephodi and Lekarapa, I refer to Hlwahlweng,
134. At Nkau's children,
135. I refer to my home,
136. Home at Job's, below the mountain,
137. At that village!

(18) PHEKA SETLABA [MORIJA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES]

1. *Tholang lerata le mamele mona,*
2. *Sothong la Mokhachane.*
3. *Mohlang ho qalwang ho ajwa marena,*
4. *Thababosiu mokgorong wa kgotla,*
5. *Mojela a rongwellwa Bokaota (Mafeteng)*
6. *A behwa Tšakholo letamong.*
7. *Letsie a behwa Maboloka, a buse Likhoele,*
8. *Monna wa Mahadima Telile e ne e le Seeiso,*
9. *Taung e ne e le Monare,*
10. *Tajane e ne e le Mohale,*
11. *Kerefise a behwa Phamong,*
12. *Nkoebe a rongwellwa Seapala (Quthing),*
13. *A kgutla a behwa hodima dihlabane,*
14. *Linakeng ke Makhaola,*
15. *Mashai ke Tlelaka,*
16. *Theko o Tlokoeng kwana ha Lelingoana,*
17. *Makhoakhoeng ke Thakabanna,*
18. *Ka Rothe e ne e le Sekhonyana,*
19. *Korokoro ke morena Mofoka,*
20. *Maama ba mmeha Kou Nazaretha motseng o moholo,*
21. *Dikotopong mona Mofoqoi,*
22. *Tleketseng mona Lichachane*
23. *Banna ke Tuma,*
24. *Lekhalong ke Qhoko,*
25. *Mantšonyane ke Khetsi le Motsiba Lesobeng,*
26. *Ntaote o ahile mona Thabana ha Masopha,*
27. *Ha Mohatlane ha Paki ke morena Moeketsi,*
28. *Tsikoane e ne e sa le morena Makokoana.*
29. *O a busa Motsarapane Qoqolosing,*
30. *Ke tau ya Makesi Jonathane ka Leribe*
31. *Nqechane nka feta mohwalotso,*
32. *Ke kena kwana Thakholi thabeng ha ntate ha Motshweneng*
33. *Thabeng e bitswang Matlakeng.*
34. *Banna kampong ya Botha Bothe ha ntate ha Motšoane letsatseng,*
35. *Ka 'Mate ke ya tlohela ha ntate ha morena Selebalo.*
36. *Ke kgutla ke boela Makaoteng.*
37. *Ha ke fihla mohlanapeng ha Radiemere pela Mafeteng,*
38. *Ha habo Mpoi le 'Makena,*
39. *Ha Ramarothola thabeng,*
40. *Ha Lempetje pela Mahosi,*
41. *Ha Montšioa ke fetile feela,*
42. *'Motoli pela Thabanamorena ke bala ha Bofihla le Konoti,*
43. *Ha khobotle le ha Sebili,*
44. *Ha 'Mammako le Kwenane enwa metsi a makgaleng,*
45. *Kganyana kapa nyolosa maliboho,*
46. *Khibiting ke ha Ramatheola,*
47. *Ha Mafa lebenkeleng,*
48. *Ha Kobatšoene ka lesela.*

49. *Ke feta mona ha Mohapi feela,*
50. *Litlhokong ke tlohetse,*
51. *Mathebe ho busa Matlere,*
52. *Pontšeng ha bana ba Lieta,*
53. *Kgutlong kwana ha Lichachane,*
54. *Semakaleng kwana ha Senane,*
55. *Banna kerekeng ya Samaria ya Fora,*
56. *E ka mosenyana ha ntate ha Mokopela motseng.*
57. *Khoaling ya maboella Boleka,*
58. *Banna ka Boleka Manyereleng,*
59. *Ha habo ditjhwatlella dithoteng,*
60. *Motseng ha Mphasa le Mahareng,*
61. *Nka hopola ona wa Mpho,*
62. *Ha o ka mamela ke mathaka feela:*
63. *Ha 'Mantšebo ha Ntja,*
64. *Ha 'Majane lebenkeleng,*
65. *Ha Leutsoa ke fetile feela,*
66. *Le thole lerata ke bue feela:*
67. *Thabachitja nka feta mohwalotso,*
68. *Ke bua ka mabenkeleng Matsieng,*
69. *Phahameng ka hodima Morija,*
70. *Ke bua mona ha Toloane motseng,*
71. *Ha Sekoai ke fetile feela,*
72. *Ha Mabula ka hodima sehlaba,*
73. *Sekhutlong kwana ha Khoboso,*
74. *Mokhele ha ke tloha mona ha Loto,*
75. *Nka theosa Motsekuoa, Tsoaing.*
76. *Ke etsa reisisi teraeng mona:*
77. *Ha Monkhi ke fetile feela,*
78. *Ha Ntsie ke lebenkeleng,*
79. *Ha Mahlatsane ka be ke se ke feta,*
80. *Ke bua ha Pape moriting mona,*
81. *Ke bua mona ha Challa motseng*
82. *Ka Manaleng ke tlotse*
83. *Ka bala ha Nkhabu le ha Petla,*
84. *Nna ke bua kwana ha Nonyane,*
85. *Jwala ha ke sa bo nwa ha Mpalami,*
86. *Ha Piti e se e le ropong la thota,*
87. *Ke bua kwana ha Thulo Sekameng*
88. *Nokeng kwana e ne e le Mofoka*
89. *Motseng o bitswang ha Maja,*
90. *Haeso ha Mokhethi moreneng,*
91. *Ha Boranta pela ha Leburu,*
92. *Ke bua kwana ha 'Matlokotsi, hae,*
93. *Tjhee, ha habo 'Mamotlabola.*
94. *Terene ha ke tloha kwana ha Khoro,*
95. *Ka batla ke siya bokgotsing ba ka,*
96. *Ke fihla Thabatšoela*
97. *Ke bua mona ha mme 'Makoli,*
98. *Ha Fobase pela ha Polaki,*

99. *Ha Letšoara ke fetile feela,*
100. *Ha Tang ka feta mohwalotso,*
101. *Ha Theko le Liane Bokaota,*
102. *Ha 'Mitia pela ha Rabuka,*
103. *Ke bua ha Mapofu lebenkeleng,*
104. *Ha kgowa le bitswang Ramaqele.*
105. *Ha Makintane ke fetile feela.*
106. *Ke bua mona ha Laeleng*
107. *Ke moo ho busang morena Matšosa.*
108. *Ramotse wa teng morena Qhauoa,*
109. *Tebang mona ha Thabo moreneng,*
110. *Fatsheng le ka pela Matšoseng.*
111. *Makhoakhoeng ke ha bana ba Seoli,*
112. *Nna ke bua mona Tšita's Nek,*
113. *Ha eso ha Moqi moreneng*
114. *Utlwang ha ke tshelela Kopanong*
115. *Ha Ohimone hodima noka,*
116. *Matlapaneng ha Libenyane*
117. *Ha Mmamafa letamong,*
118. *Ke bua ka Mmuela ha Koloboi,*
119. *Fariele le Mawela, Bongalla,*
120. *Sekoting kwana ha Ranyana,*
121. *Pele ke Nkete le Ralebese,*
122. *Ke Matlamukele le Manyolosa,*
123. *Nka ya Litšoeneng ha Ramohapi,*
124. *Ke bua kwana ha Jobo moreneng*
125. *Ke moo noka di qalang di sekama.*
126. *Moo Tšakhola e kenang Mohokare.*
127. *Le thole lerata banna ke bue,*
128. *Ke bue mona ha Rathomo feela,*
129. *Ke bua mona ha Patsa Moreneng,*
130. *Qalabane ha Mosheshi,*
131. *Mabalane Hlakoaneng mona ha Simone,*
132. *Mokhele ha ke fihla Mokoallong,*
133. *Hekeng ya heso ya ha Seutloali,*
134. *Ha ke nyolosa dikolong ha habo ngwaneso Mareka,*
135. *Bataung bana ke bana ba ka,*
136. *Ke tloha le bona Mokoatle kwana,*
137. *Nka tswala Leje le Moletsane,*
138. *Ha ke tswetse ba Mokhele ke phethile,*
139. *Mohla ba holang ba tlo mpitsa,*
140. *Ke tsebe ho kgetha morena,*
141. *Ptjemptjete ya Mabola e ka nyolosa dikgohlo,*
142. *Thaka tsa ka di kwana ha Moletsane,*
143. *Le mpone ke se ke le moholo,*
144. *Ke hakahaka, ke nkgaboqheku,*
145. *Botona bo mona ha Raselepe,*
146. *Motsemocha nka feta mohwalotso,*
147. *Ke kena kampong ya Mafeteng ha Seitlheko.*
148. *Ke mang ya reng 'tamene' le 'ntshele?'*

149. *Le jwale bo, ke ba Raseeiso*
150. *Lebaka le etsang ke le bone:*
151. *Ke a dumela tameneng re lokisetsa methepa,*
152. *Mabelete re a qhautsa feela,*
153. *Nthwana tse tswetsweng ke dibiri.*
154. *Ha ho na letho bashana ba heso,*
155. *Nna ha ke tloha kwana Likhoele,*
156. *Kgotleng la puso*
157. *Lelaleng lela la ha Sekoto*
158. *Nka tlola hodima borokgo,*
159. *Ha ke balabala dibaka*
160. *Ka batla ke siya hodima sehlaba,*
161. *Mme 'Mampho a ka nkomanya,*
162. *Mokhele ha ke fihla ke etswa motho,*
163. *Ke phoka tee ke paqame betheng,*
164. *Ke isetswa le mahe masimong,*
165. *Hobane ha ke qeka ke a robala.*
166. *Ho bonahala ke mokgalajwe,*
167. *Ka nnete ke a hlapanya ho a bonahala,*
168. *Ke motho wa Janki le ntatae,*
169. *Ke dula ha mme 'Mamoletsane,*
170. *Ke moo tladi e hlolang e otlile,*
171. *E nka dikola katiba di rwetswe,*
172. *Phakeng tsa ka e se e bile e ahitse.*
173. *Ke sa buile ho lekane ditjhaba!*

1. Be silent and listen here
2. In the Lesotho of Mokhachane.
3. The day the chiefs were distributed,
4. Thababosiu at the hub of the court,
5. Mojela was sent to Bokaota (Mafeteng),
6. And was placed at Tšakholo, near the dam.
7. Letsie was sent to Maboloka to rule at Likhoele,
8. The man for Mahalima Telile was Seeiso,
9. At Taung it was Monare,
10. At Tajane it was Mohale,
11. Griffith was placed at Phamong,
12. Nkoebe was sent to Sebakala (Quthing),
13. He was later also placed over the plateaus.
14. At Linakeng it was Makhaola.
15. Mashai was placed at Tlelaka,
16. Theko is at Tlokoeng, at Lelingoana's,
17. At Makhoakhoeng it was Thakabanna,
18. At Rothe it was Sekhonyana,
19. At Korokoro it was chief Mofoka,
20. Maama was given Kou, Nazareth, the main village,
21. Here at the water pipes at Mofokoqi,
22. At Tleketseng here at Lichachane,
23. At Banna it was Tuma,

24. At Lekhalong it was Qhoko,
25. At 'Mantšonyane it was Khetsi and Motsiba at Lesobeng,
26. Ntaote lives here at Thabana, at Masopha's,
27. At Mohatlane's, at Paki's, the chief was Moeketsi,
28. Tsikoane was still under chief Makokoana,
29. He rules, Motsarapane at Qoqolosing,
30. He is the lion of Makesi, Jonathan at Leribe,
31. At Nqechane I simply passed unnoticed,
32. I touch on Thakholi, on the mountain, at home, at Motšoeneng's,
33. At a mountain called Matlakeng,
34. People, at Bothabotho camp, at Motšoane's below the mountain,
35. 'Mate I leave aside, at home, at chief Selebalo.
36. Now I go back to Makaoteng.
37. When I got to a flat place, at Radiemere's next to Mafeteng,
38. At the home of Mpoi and 'Makena,
39. At Ramarothola's on the mountain,
40. At Lempetje's near Mahosi,
41. At Montshioa I just passed.
42. At 'Motoli near Thabanamorena I can mention Bofihla and Konoti,
43. At Khobotle's and Sebili's,
44. At 'Mammako and Kwenane the water you will find among the aloes,
45. Khanyana or go up towards the drifts,
46. At Khibiting you find Ramatheola,
47. At Mafa's near the shop,
48. At Kobatšoene I let go,
49. At Mohapi's I simply passed,
50. Litlhokong I have also left out,
51. At Mathebe ke chief is Matlere,
52. Pontšeng at the children of Lieta,
53. Yonder at the gorge at Lichachane's,
54. Yonder at Semakaleng at Senane's,
55. Yes, at the Samaria church of the Paris Mission,
56. Just beyond my home, at Mokopela's village.
57. Khoaling at the graze lands is Boleka,
58. Yes, at Boleka, Manyereleng,
59. At the home of wanderers on the plains,
60. At the village of Mphasa and at Mahareng,
61. I can remember the one of Mpho.
62. If you can listen well, I just glide over the place names:
63. At 'Mantšebo's at Ntja,
64. At 'Majane near the shop,
65. At Leutsoa's I simply passed,
66. You keep silent so I may run freely:
67. At Thabachitja I passed unnoticed,
68. I refer to the shops at Matsieng,
69. Phahameng above Morija,
70. I refer to the village, Toloane,
71. At Sekoai's I merely passed,
72. At Mabula's on the plateau,
73. At Sekhutlong yonder at Khoboso's,

74. Mokhele, when leaving the place at Loto's,
75. Further down it is Motsekuoa, at Tsoaing.
76. Here at a turn off I ran very fast:
77. At Monkhi's I just passed,
78. At Ntsie near the shop,
79. At Mahlatsane's I just passed.
80. Now I can mentioned Pape's, the place under the shade,
81. I refer to Challa village.
82. At Manaleng I passed,
83. I count at Nkhabu's and Petla's,
84. I refer to yonder at Nonyane's,
85. I have stopped drinking beer at Mpalami's,
86. Now Piti's place is on the plains,
87. I refer to yonder at Thulo's, at Sekameng,
88. At the river yonder it was Mofoka's,
89. The village termed Maja's,
90. My home village at Mokhethi's, the royal place,
91. At Brand's near Leburu's,
92. I refer to yonder at 'Matlokotsi's, my home,
93. Nevertheless, at 'Mamotlabola's home.
94. The train, when I left Khoru's place,
95. I nearly left out my son's in-laws,
96. I arrived at Thabatšoela,
97. I refer to this place at Mrs 'Makoli,
98. At Fobase next to Polaki's,
99. At Letšoara's I just passed,
100. Also at Tang's I passed unnoticed,
101. At Theko's and Liane's at Bokaota,
102. At 'Mitia next to Rabuka's,
103. I refer to Mapofu's near the shop,
104. At a white man's called Ramaqele.
105. At Makintane I just passed.
106. I refer to this place, Laeleng,
107. Where chief Matšosa rules,
108. The village head is chief Qhauoa,
109. At Tebang, Thabo's royal place,
110. The area in front of Matšoseng.
111. Makhoakhoeng is the place of Seoli's children,
112. I refer to Tšita's Nek,
113. Home, at Moqi, the royal village.
114. Now, listen to me when I cross over to the Union (Republic of S.A.):
115. At Onimone's on the river banks,
116. Matlapeng at Libenyane's,
117. At Mmamafa, near the dam,
118. I refer to Mmuela at Koloboi's,
119. Fariele and Mawela, Bongalla,
120. At the ditch, at Ranyana's,
121. First and foremost it's Nkete and Ralebese,
122. Matlamukele and Manyolosa,
123. Moving to Litšoeneng at Ramohapi's,

124. I can mention Jobo's royal village,
125. Where rivers begin to slant,
126. Where Tšakholo joins the Caledon River.
127. People, keep quiet that I may talk,
128. Talk here about Rathomo only,
129. Talk here about Patsa's royal village,
130. Qalabane at Mosheshi's,
131. Mabalane at Hlakoaneng, at Simone's,
132. Mokhele when I reach Mokwallong.
133. At our gate of Seotloali's.
134. When I move up towards the schools at my brother Mareka,
135. These Bataung are my children,
136. I moved with them from yonder Mokoatle.
137. I brought forth Leje and Moletsane,
138. When I have brought forth the Mokhele's I have done my part,
139. When they are of age they will call me,
140. To come and choose a leader.
141. The backbackiri of Mabola may go up the gorges,
142. My comrades are out there at Moletsane's,
143. You have seen me I am too old,
144. I am forgetful and nearing old age.
145. State of being the chief's counsellor is here at Raselepe's ,
146. Motsemocha I can pass unnoticed,
147. I enter the Mafeteng camp at Seitlheko's.
148. Who can speak of 'drinking place' and 'pour for me?'
149. It is truly that of Raseeiso.
150. The reason for that I have realized:
151. I accept, at a drinking party we prepare for ladies,
152. The wild ones we catch easily,
153. They are born amid beer drinking sprees.
154. There's nothing to worry about, my fellow men,
155. When I left Likhoele,
156. From the government court,
157. At Scott's mill,
158. I can cross over the bridge,
159. When I for now count various areas,
160. I nearly left out the plateau,
161. Mrs 'Mampho might scold me,
162. Mokhele, when I arrive there I am welcome humanly,
163. I drink tea still in bed,
164. I am even sent eggs at the fields.
165. It is clear that when I am polite, I'm offered sleep,
166. It is an accepted fact that I am an old man,
167. I truly assure you, it is obvious,
168. I am a descendant of Janki and his father,
169. I stay at Mrs 'Mamoletsane's,
170. That is where lightning usually strikes,
171. And take off turfs from the owners' hats,
172. On my arms it has made its permanent residence.
173. I have said enough, dear nations!

(19) TUTUBALA TŠOENE [THE BASOTHO CULTURAL VILLAGE]

1. *Ha ithoka monna Matebeleng,*
2. *Monna ya tsamaileng tse telele dibaka,*
3. *Monna ya tswang ho a hole mafatshe,*
4. *Le letelele leeto le tsamailweng.*
5. *Ke tlohile lehodimong letsatsi e le la Labohlano,*
6. *La Moqebelo ka fihla ho lena lefatshe.*
7. *Haeso ke Matebeleng,*
8. *Motseng o haufi le noka,*
9. *Thoteng e bitswang Makibinyane.*
10. *Banna ba bontshitse ho ntshaba nna,*
11. *Ha ke kgohlala, ke thimola, ebile ke mina,*
12. *Magisterata o 'rimanta kheisi' ya ka,*
13. *Tshabo ke ho sebetsana le yona.*
14. *Ke mohale wa ha Ntsukunyane.*
15. *Ho hotsho, ho hokgutshwanyane.*
16. *Monna e mong o teng, e motsho,*
17. *Ha a ile a rongwa,*
18. *Ha thwe a mathe kapele, a ye ka mohlabaaneng,*
19. *Yare ha a fihla ka mohlabaaneng,*
20. *A fumana hokihoki ya nkgono,*
21. *E bile e bothile,*
22. *Banna ba bile ba ntse ba tjheka sekoti lebaleng,*
23. *Basadi ba ekgametsi,*
24. *Ba entse mokoloko,*
25. *Ekare ha ke fihla ho yona,*
26. *Ke e sebela ke re 'Hikohoki ya nkgono,*
27. *Kajeno o a bitswa, o yo tshenela matlotlo lebaleng,*
28. *Tshifa tse setseng ka la maobane!*
29. *Ha tankiswa ke morena Kolobe,*
30. *Eitse ha e fihla,*
31. *Ya bona matlotlo lebaleng,*
32. *Ba re 'e a baleha! E a baleha!'*
33. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. He praised himself, he from the Matebele's,
2. Man who has travelled long places,
3. Man from remote places,
4. The long one is the journey travelled,
5. I left heaven on a Friday,
6. And arrived on Saturday on this earth,
7. My home is the Matebele land,
8. A village near the river,
9. On a veldt known as Makibinyane,
10. Men have demonstrated their fear towards me,
11. When I cough, sneeze or expectorates,
12. The magistrate remunds my case,

13. Fear is to deal with it.
14. I am a hero from Ntsukunyane's house,
15. The black one, the short one,
16. There's a man, the short one,
17. When he has found the need,
18. To quickly go and relieve himself,
19. On arriving there,
20. He found grandmother's pig (hokihoki!),
21. Lying on the ground,
22. Whilst men even busy digging a whole on the courtyard,
23. And women fetching water,
24. Following one another in a line,
25. It's when I stand next to it,
26. Whispering and saying to it 'My grandmother's hokihoki!'
27. You are called today to sweep the treasures on the courtyard,
28. The dregs left over from yesterday,
29. He said thanks, the chief Pig,
30. When it arrived,
31. It saw the treasures on the courtyard,
32. They said, 'Look, it is running away!'
33. There it cuts off and leaves!

(20) MOKHESENG SOAI [MATSIENG]

1. *Tau Tima moshanyana e mona wa ha Mphou.*
2. *Utlwang ha ke dumedisa morena,*
3. *Ke re ofisiri tsa mabewana, Mohato.*
4. *Ka bosehla o tshwana le ba baholo,*
5. *O tshwana le beng, Tshwanamantata.*
6. *Wena o tlohang Matlakeng kwana,*
7. *Phathatha di matata madumela*
8. *A sala a le fela,*
9. *Pakeng tsa Masite le ka Morija,*
10. *Ke moo ho tswetsweng mora wa Seeiso, thwabalapele,*
11. *Hee, thwabalapele ha ke tsoha mora wa Nkhahle,*
12. *Ha ke kgahlwa ke mosamo ke ithoballe,*
13. *Mahakanyele a kgwedi ya Phato, Loetse.*
14. *Ako bone Mohato monongwaheng ona,*
15. *Ba mo tshwasitse,*
16. *Ba mo tshwara Maseru hara teropo.*
17. *O kgahlilwe ke ngwanyana Motsweneng,*
18. *Teropong kwana moo metsi a noka kgaphatsehang kgafetsa,*
19. *Mohokare ha ho sa le dinoha tsa metsi,*
20. *Di shwetse boholo dingaka,*
21. *Ka mo roka, qhaqhameru wa Mokhachane,*
22. *Le kena mose ho Senqu le ka kwano,*
23. *Diroki le a roka le lebale,*
24. *Le roka le siya Mohato morao,*
25. *Jwale morena eo ke ofeng kajeno?*
26. *Athe o benya latsatsi ngwana ntlokgolo,*
27. *Re bona ha o feta lekgothokgotho,*
28. *O re morao kwana batho ke mokoloko*
29. *Tseleng mona, batho metilatila,*
30. *Hoo ka le roka dinyane la thamahane ya Dilepe,*
31. *Nketu wa maratha ka Shakhane,*
32. *Selepe sa banana se leoditswe,*
33. *Ferenekulo ya lapa la Seeiso,*
34. *Mohla a qalang ho tswa mohlehlolong*
35. *Ya hoballa ya etsa Malakabe.*
36. *Mmane wa ya shapa Kapa lewatile,*
37. *Moo bananyana ba Makgowa ba bonya,*
38. *Ba thaba yaka ho tllilwe metjekong,*
39. *Tsatsing lena eka ho tllilo ferehwa,*
40. *Ako bone mohobahoba o tsebe di telele,*
41. *Le hlonametseng, bana ba Basotho,*
42. *Bontata lona e le dijabatho,*
43. *Majarateu ka molala, pelesa?*
44. *O rokwa ke e mosesanyane wa boMphou,*
45. *Poho e hlaha ha Tsilo moreneng,*
46. *Ke re ke ne ke buswa ke morena Makhetha,*
47. *Morena o a shwa, lebitso le sale,*
48. *Le sale le rehwa nthwanadisele,*

49. *Hore nthwana tsa lona di hana ho rongwa,*
50. *Ka mo roka molakolako o mahlo mafubedu,*
51. *Wena o tlohang Mmatlakeng kwana,*
52. *Ke re mahakanyetsi a kgwedi ya Phato, Loetse.*
53. *Thwabalapele ya setsohamorao,*
54. *Ha o kgahlwa ke mosamo o ithoballe,*
55. *Wena mohobahoba o teng Matlakeng kwana,*
56. *Morero ona ke wa bahlanka,*
57. *O a le mema le lona le mo meme.*
58. *O a kgaba ka lona mohla ntwā*
59. *O re mapolesa a Maseru, dumelang!*
60. *Morena eo ke ofe kajeno?*
61. *O re ha le ya ka la bona ha Mohato a feta?*
62. *O re lefatsane la be le entse mohodi,*
63. *Mohla a tswetsweng, ngwana morena,*
64. *Wa Tshwanamantata,*
65. *Tsatsi la hlaha le entse qidikwe,*
66. *Mohodi o hahaba le lefatshe,*
67. *O re bosiu bo seleng,*
68. *Bahlankana moo re matha re hlometse,*
69. *Mmamphoko ya kgomo dijabatho,*
70. *Kgomo di jewa ke mefuta esele,*
71. *Di jewa ke Raeya le Ramosebo,*
72. *O re kgomo ke tseo ka hlabeng sa Qeme,*
73. *O re tsa heno Mohato,*
74. *Matlere o di jele, o di qetile,*
75. *O re monongwaha ona pula e kae,*
76. *Basotho ba mona ba beng,*
77. *Ba beng ba ntse ba tsheha morao kwana,*
78. *Batho ke mokoloko tseleng mona batho, metilatila*
79. *O re Mohato ha ke mo roke hoba e le mohale,*
80. *Ke mo roka hoba e le wa kgotla.*
81. *O re Mohato ntwā ya melamu ha a sa e lwana,*
82. *O re o nkile molamu o mosesanyane wa leqalanyana,*
83. *Ntwā ke e mona ya leleme, Phakane,*
84. *Mokgosi wa motsheare phallang,*
85. *Wa bosiu o ntsha batho matlung,*
86. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. Tau Tima, this boy from Mphou's,
2. Listen when I greet the king,
3. I mean, an officer of the true ones of Mohato,
4. By his light complexion he resembles his elders,
5. He resembles his masters, Tshwanamontata.
6. You who come from Matlakeng, there yonder,
7. The swift one, the subterranean cavities
8. Were left empty
9. Between Masite and Morija,
10. That is where the son of Seeiso was born, the early bird,

11. Yes, early bird, when I wake up, son of Nkhahle,
 12. If I am pleased by a pillow I may sleep,
 13. The plants, crataegefoliums of the months, August and September.
 14. Please look at Mohato this year,
 15. They have hooked him,
 16. They hooked him at Maseru in the middle of the town,
 17. He has been attracted to a Motshweneng girl,
 18. In town where river water is abundant,
 19. Caledon River hardly has any watersnakes,
 20. They died mostly on account of doctors.
 21. I praise him, the demolisher of forests of Mokgatjhane,
 22. It enters on the other side of the Orange River and this side,
 23. Praise singers, you sing praises, but forget,
 24. You praise leaving Mohato behind,
 25. Now, who is that king today?
 26. Yet he shines like the sun, child of the senior house,
 27. We see you passing hurriedly,
 28. Saying, behind you people are making a procession,
 29. Here, on the road, there are files of walking people,
 30. Yes! I praise him, the young of a hyena of the Dilepe regiment,
 31. Nketu of Maratha and Shakhane,
 32. The axe of the girls is sharpened,
 33. The stray bullet of the Seeiso house,
 34. When first it was taken from the bandolier,
 35. It was seen from afar, making flames.
 36. The lightning flash reached the Cape at the sea,
 37. There the white girls smiled,
 38. They were happy as if there would be a dance party,
 39. This day as if there would be proposals,
 40. Just look at the tall one with big ears,
 41. Why are you sad, Basotho children,
 42. Whilst your fathers are man-eaters,
 43. The riem-carriers with their necks, pack animals,
 44. He is praised by the slender one of Mphou's,
 45. The bull is from Tshilo's, the royal place,
 46. I say I was governed by king Makhetha,
 47. The king dies but his name remains,
 48. Remains given to useless small things,
 49. Your small things refuse to be sent.
 50. I praise him, the vagabond with red eyes,
 51. You, who is from Matlakeng, yonder,
 52. I say, the plants, crataegefoliums, of the months, August and September.
 53. The early-sleeper, he-who-wakes-up-late,
 54. If you are attracted to a pillow, you may sleep,
 55. You, the tall one with big ears, at Matlakeng,
 56. This meeting is meant for the young men,
 57. He is inviting you, and you should invite him as well,
 58. He prides himself on you in times of war,
 59. He says, the police in Maseru, I greet you!
 60. Who is that king today?

61. He asks, did you not see when Mohato passed?
62. He says, light rain was accompanied by mist.
63. The day he was born, child of the king,
64. He of the king, Tshwanamantata,
65. The sun appeared as a round ball,
66. The mist covering the ground.
67. He says during last night,
68. Young men, we were running fully armed,
69. The uninitiated cow, the man-eater,
70. Cattle are eaten by foreign nations,
71. They are eaten by Raeya and Ramosebo.
72. He says, there are cattle on the Qeme plateau,
73. He says, those of your family, Mohato,
74. Matlere has eaten and finished them,
75. He says, this year where is the rain?
76. The Basotho who belong to the masters,
77. They usually laugh yonder at the back,
78. People are great masses along the way.
79. He says, Mohato, I do not praise him for being a warrior-in-war,
80. I praise him because he belongs to the court,
81. He says, Mohato does not fight stick war anymore,
82. He says, he is carrying a thin cane stick,
83. The war is this one fought by means of a tongue, Phakane,
84. The day call invites you to rush,
85. The night one drives people out of their homes.
86. There it cuts off and leaves!

(21) MA-WHITE MAHLELEBE [‘MELESI LODGE]

1. *Ke sekgohola sa Mokhachane qoane,*
2. *Fako sa ngwananyana Nkoebe,*
3. *Haholo ngwananyana Lengau,*
4. *Se tlohileng hae pula ena,*
5. *Fafatsane le entse mohodi,*
6. *Bahlankana ba tshaba ho palama.*
7. *A bua le Matlama ka la maobane,*
8. *A re lalang le itekanya mosikaro,*
9. *Re tla palama e sa le madungwadungwana,*
10. *Ha kgoho di theoha dikalaneng.*
11. *Sa palama fako sa Mokhachane,*
12. *Sa tshela Maphutseng le Makhaleng,*
13. *Tsela sa nka ya Thabanamorena,*
14. *Ngwana morena ha se ho tshabeha.*
15. *Helehelele Mohale wa Makoanyane,*
16. *Thesele hetla morao,*
17. *O bone ha Basotho ba itekanya mosikaro,*
18. *Ke bale ba itekanya mosikaro ho ya botekatse,*
19. *O, mme mohatsa Lesotho, Thesele,*
20. *O setse tenteng,*
21. *Jwalo ka nta tsa bohloko.*
22. *Kgutlang Maburung le thola mahloko,*
23. *Ho lehlohonolo wena mophaki wa batho,*
24. *Batho ba batle ditjotjela.*
25. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. The thunderstorm of Mokhachane, the berg adder,
2. Hail of the girl of Nkoebe,
3. More especially the girl of the Leopard,
4. Which left home amid the rain,
5. Light rain drizzling amid a mist,
6. Young men fearing to ride.
7. He had spoken to the Matlama regiment the previous day,
8. And said, spend the night preparing your loads,
9. We shall ride very early in the morning,
10. When the fowls get off their perches.
11. He rode, the hail of Mokhachane,
12. He crossed Maphutseng and Makhaleng,
13. The road, he took the one to Thabanamorena.
14. How fearful is the child of the king,
15. Bravo! The hero of Makoanyane,
16. Thesele, look back and see,
17. When the Basotho are adjusting the baggage straps for a journey,
18. There they are preparing themselves to go to prostitutes,
19. Oh! Mother of Lesotho, Thesele,
20. Remains behind in a tent,
21. Like the lice that cause pain,

22. Return from the Boers, you will be contaminated with diseases,
23. Lucky are you, you who recruit people,
24. Handsome men, men of strength.
25. There it cuts off and goes!

(22) LEKUNUTU SELLO [MATSIENG]

1. *Motho ke eo a bokolla letswapong thabeng.*
2. *Hee, banna motho ke eo a bokolla letswapong thabeng,*
3. *O a howa, o a memetsa,*
4. *Haufinyane le ntlo ya Ntshabe Moroho,*
5. *Batho phakisang kapele le tlo bona,*
6. *Motho ke eo a nyanya nkgonwae,*
7. *Motswele o mong o se a bile a o qetile.*
8. *Bahlankana ba batjha re le bone,*
9. *Bahlankana ba batjha re le bone,*
10. *O reka lefitori o se na pere, le fepa dinyatsi,*
11. *Banna le fepa dinyatsi le time dipere,*
12. *Ha o bone pere tsa lona ha di le maqholonyane,*
13. *Nyatsi e tshwana le kgomo ya mafisa.*
14. *Batho ba hlokgang botshepehi,*
15. *Motho a ka tloka a o hlalla bosawana,*
16. *Kgomo ya mafisa ekare hoja o e hama,*
17. *O e pukutla, monga yona a fihla,*
18. *A re o tlilo lata kgomo ya hae.*
19. *Ngwana o entse molato lapeng ha nnyeo.*
20. *Hee, mosadi a ntwela poulelo,*
21. *Banna mosadi a ntwela poulelo,*
22. *A re ke shwe ke pelo, ke be sehojana,*
23. *A tla nna tsebe ho qaboha, a thathika le diotlwana.*
24. *Hara tsona le diotlwana, nenene a poreisaka boloi.*
25. *Kgongwana le mmeile kae?*
26. *Banna ba bang ha se banna,*
27. *Ha a boka o a tella,*
28. *Ntlo ya motho o sa e etsa ya hae.*
29. *Banna o sikwa jwalo ka ngwana leseae,*
30. *O ntsa batla dipompong kgafetsa.*
31. *Monna ha a lwana o a tebela,*
32. *O nka kwakwa, a nke selepe.*
33. *Ntate mphetole ke be ngwanana,*
34. *Etlere ha ho palangwa ke itshalle,*
35. *Ke sale ke o phehela dikgojwana.*
36. *Ke be matswele a mabedi sefubeng,*
37. *Etswe le tsikitlane e tla be ntshwanela.*
38. *Ngwana o botsa mmae koma,*
39. *Ebile ha a batle koma, o feteletse,*
40. *Feta maotong moo o e qamake,*
41. *Tlase mmethe oo wa ka wa koro,*
42. *Feela o bone o se ke wa qhala moroto*
43. *Hobane Diau ke enwa, o tla o bolaya.*
44. *Ngwana nyatsi ha a lla,*
45. *Banna, wa nyatsi ha a lla ke a hlabeha,*
46. *Ke kgale ke phela le mmae bothateng,*
47. *Dithita hara mangana, hara thupa di kopane mmoho,*
48. *Ho kopane matshohlo le koditshana,*

49. *Ho kopane mokeankwe.*
50. *Etswe sekgaupane ke ngwana matsheo*
51. *Ngwana ha a se na ntatae Thulo,*
52. *Hana ha a kula ho ye ho etswe jwang?*
53. *Ngwana ya siuweng ke Modiehi,*
54. *Marapo dithapo,*
55. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. There is a person crying below the mountain,
2. Hey! Men, there is a person crying below the mountain,
3. He is calling, he is shouting,
4. Near the house of Ntshabe Morocho,
5. People, rush and come to see,
6. There is a person suckling from his granny,
7. The other teat he has already finished.
8. Young men, we have seen you,
9. Young men, we have seen you.
10. You buy a *lefitori* (Sotho blanket) having no horse, you feed concubines,
11. Men, you feed concubines and deprive horses,
12. That is why your horses are lean,
13. A concubine is like a loan cow
14. Unreliable people.
15. She may at times reject you without any reason.
16. A loan cow, it may happen that while milking her,
17. Getting enough milk, the owner arrives,
18. And say he has come to fetch his cow.
19. A child has caused trouble at someone's homestead,
20. Hey! A woman has bewitched me through jealousy,
21. Hey! A woman has bewitched me through jealousy,
22. And said, I should die of heartache, and be a cripple,
23. So that she can move around and visit at courtyards.
24. Among various courtyards she would praise witchcraft.
25. Where have you placed Kgongwana?
26. Some men are not real men,
27. When he has a concubine, he is spiteful,
28. Somebody's home he turns into his.
29. People, he is cuddled like a baby,
30. And demands sweets constantly.
31. When the husband objects, he is driven away,
32. He takes a battle-axe and an axe.
33. Dad, turn me into a girl,
34. So that when people go on horseback I should remain behind,
35. Remain cooking dry mealies for you.
36. Have two breasts on the chest,
37. The fringe skirt will also fit me.
38. The child asks taboo from the mother,
39. But she does not need taboo, she is spoilt.
40. Pass at the feet there and look around,
41. Under that bag of mine, of wheat,

42. But be careful not to spill the urine,
43. Because here is Diao, he will kill you.
44. When the concubine's child cries,
45. People, when he/she cries I am disturbed,
46. I have lived with his mother through difficulties,
47. Grasses among plants, among woods mixed,
48. Mixed with new sorghum and mountain kuni bush,
49. And also *moteankwe* (all herbs from timber).
50. An illegitimate child is born out of wedlock,
51. A child who has no father, Thulo.
52. By the way, when he is sick, what happens?
53. A child left behind is Modiehi (the slow one)
54. *Marapo, dithapo* (straps, robes)
55. There it cuts off and goes!

(23) PAULUS PAULO [’MELESI LODGE]

1. *Bukeng ya hae moruti Motsamai,*
2. *A re, efela lebitso lena,*
3. *Le tshwantsha modumo wa thipa.*
4. *Kutang ditedu le re shweshwe,*
5. *Yaba ho tloha mohlang oo,*
6. *Moshoeshoe ha a sa bitswa ka bitso la Lepoqo,*
7. *O se a bitswa ka la Moshoeshoe.*
8. *Jwale a tshela Mohokare,*
9. *A kena Maseru a ntse a matha,*
10. *A bona lerallana, lona a fihla a dula,*
11. *Teng a etsa motse.*
12. *Ho lona a fihla a le reha Thaba Bosiu,*
13. *Hobane e ne e re ha shwalane e tshwara,*
14. *A re, phirima moreneng, shwalane e tshware re ba bolaye,*
15. *Nthwana tsena di tsuwe ke badimo.*
16. *Ho thwe ka tshwarwa ka ditsebe ha di utlwe,*
17. *Le nkotle ka majwe diakgela,*
18. *Hobane le ka melamu le tshaba ho ba otl.*
19. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. In his book, Reverend Motsamai,
2. Says, indeed this name,
3. Symbolises the sound of a knife.
4. Shave your beards and make a shaving sound,
5. And from that day,
6. Moshoeshoe is no longer called by the name of Lepoqo,
7. He is called Moshoeshoe.
8. Then he crossed the Caledon River,
9. And entered Maseru running.
10. He saw a hill, there he sat down,
11. There he made a village
12. Which he termed Thaba Bosiu,
13. Because when night approached
14. He would say, let there be darkness so that we can kill them.
15. These young things are forsaken by the ancestors,
16. We try to hold them by the ears, but do not listen.
17. Hit me with stones, you, stone throwers,
18. Because with sticks you fear to beat them up.
19. There it cuts off and goes!

(24) RALEBATHA MOTSAMAI [MORIJA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES]

1. *Ke a le dumedisa marena, bontate le bomme,*
2. *Mafumahadi, metswalle, Ralebatha Motsamai,*
3. *Tseketseke e se na le mohopolo.*
4. *Mohlang ho tswetsweng enwa wa ha Seeiso,*
5. *Ke le nthwana e mpe, ke le mahlo a mafubedu.*
6. *Tsatsing leo ntate o na itse ke mpe ke lahlwe,*
7. *Yaba mme o re sehole ho mma sona se setle,*
8. *Ngwana le ha a le mobe ha a ke a lahlwe,*
9. *Mohlomong ke tswetse kgeleke.*
10. *Ngwana eo wa ka mohlang a holang mona,*
11. *O tla nthekela kobo tse mmala o motle.*
12. *A nthekela qibi le letlama, mmate ya tsona tiamaqhekwana,*
13. *Dikobo di ntle kwana kgoweng lane,*
14. *Empa seamane e baleha le manamane.*
15. *Ke bone e dikela kwana Tshwanamakgulo.*
16. *Seemane ako mathe o e hanele bahlankana ba teng,*
17. *Ba tla e tebela boLehoko le Leanya.*
18. *Ba re e fula hampe Dikwekweng kwana tshwanamakgulo,*
19. *Ya tloha ya dikela letlapeng ha Ramonyane thoteng tse telele.*
20. *Le teng bahlankana ba teng ba e lelekile,*
21. *BoPhera le Moeti ba re re fula hampe*
22. *Meeding ya masimo a batho.*
23. *Phasemane e baleha le manamane,*
24. *Phasemane ya seleka le moepeng,*
25. *Le teng bahlankana ba teng ba e lelekile,*
26. *BoPhera le Moeti ba re e fula hampe*
27. *Meeding ya masimo a batho.*
28. *Hoja ho ya ka ho sebetsa ha ka,*
29. *Nna dikgomo nka be ke di rekile.*
30. *Saka la ntate nka be ke le tlatsitse sepame,*
31. *Nka be ke kganna sa tse kgubedu.*
32. *Jwale ke dulela seakgi makgoweng kwana*
33. *Le banana ba hlotsweng ke lenyalo.*
34. *Ba tloha habo bona ba louwe tshebetso,*
35. *Dipelesa di a bofa tsa ha Masopha!*
36. *Boholo ba tsona di kgathatsa Matsieng,*
37. *Nna eitse ke hlaha kwana Mankweng,*
38. *Ka bona dithaba tsa heso ka ho hlahlamana:*
39. *Ka bona Tsikwane, ka bona Mathebe, ka bona Thabanantlenyana.*
40. *Ka bona le marena a leshome*
41. *A kwana Kgobotle le Thabanamorena,*
42. *Silwe ke Thabanamorena.*
43. *Nna ha ke ithoke hobane ke le mohale,*
44. *Empa pelo ya ka e thabela malakabe.*
45. *Ke motwaitwai o thebe e molala,*
46. *Ke otle motho ka theko ya lerumo,*
47. *Ke mo otle ke mo senya tshobotsi,*
48. *Le mehahabo e ke ya mo tseba*

49. *Hoba le mehaeso ha ke e rate.*
50. *Ako mpitsetse meditjhaba,*
51. *Ke tsebe ho tla ithoka selekgwaba*
52. *E mona wa habo Modiehi.*
53. *Ke noha, noha ya diotlwana,*
54. *Ntjhwanthi loting kwana ba e bitsa manyonyoba.*
55. *Sebata manyonyoba sa ipata mmala,*
56. *Ha se utlwa sebata lengau,*
57. *Ke bua le wena morena Bereng*
58. *Ha e le Masopha o na itse o mo tshwarele*
59. *Yena le ho lwana o ne a sa lwane,*
60. *O ne a mpa a bua le badisana,*
61. *O ne a bua le Masopha le Moeketsi*
62. *Kwana dipakeng tsa ha Molala le Monate,*
63. *Thope tsa teng di siuwa ke matswele.*
64. *Maqheku ha le llela ho shobela,*
65. *Le ntse le re le ka iswa ke mang botjheng*
66. *Nna ha ke ho tsebe ho kgoba motho*
67. *Motho o boptjwa ke modimo wa hae*
68. *Le ha ke le mobe ha ke a ipopa,*
69. *Ke le motsho ke le mahlo a mafubedu*
70. *Hoba sehole ho mmasona se setle.*
71. *Mahlo a matala a marole a makgwadi*
72. *Ka bokgwadi a fetwa ke a kgwadi ena ya heso,*
73. *Nna kgwadibe tipe sa robala naheng,*
74. *Ka tsoha ka meso ke ilo se lata,*
75. *Ka fumana botsho bo otlane le Bolese*
76. *Ka kena ka hare ka qollaka thokwa*
77. *Botsho ba nkapara, ka tsamaya.*
78. *Pholo e ntsho e ema ka hodima dihlabana*
79. *Ka utlwa hore tlhatlhobong e ne e kgutle*
80. *Ka etsa bosawana,*
81. *Mohlankana towe, o lesawana la baruti,*
82. *Tsa hao o tsamaya o di siya.*
83. *Petsana tsa batho ekare hoja pitsi e sa rate ho botha*
84. *Tsamatsamaya hoba o dibaka*
85. *Jwale o kentse poho masakeng a batho*
86. *Jwale e letse e kgobokela meketa*
87. *Ke poho ya habo Tinkane,*
88. *Ho mekgerane poho e hlaba tse ding monateng*
89. *Tsa mekgerane tsona e a di bolaya.*
90. *Moya o hlahile kwana ntshopata.*
91. *Wa fihla nkong tsa matsa o phodile*
92. *O ntso hatsetsa mangau le dipere*
93. *Ba bang ba ntse ba re, besa morena!*
94. *Ha o bone motho o motle ke ho hlobola kobo.*
95. *Mohla banna re tsohang re palama*
96. *Mohla banna re yang makgoweng kwana*
97. *Mosadi ya loyang a kgothala,*
98. *A tswela ka ntle a ngwaya thethana*

99. *A ngwaha mafitwane a re,*
100. *Mokgoweng kwana dilemela di sale di kgutla*
101. *Ba mona ba se hlole ba eya.*
102. *Ako role dieta o kene kgabong,*
103. *Hobane kgale re di kgotlakela diretse rona banna ba batsamai.*
104. *Ke mokoko o motona, o Radiengwane*
105. *O mokalo ka thaba tse pedi tsa ha Kgolokwe*
106. *O kaalo ka Mohlohe le Mohlongwana*
107. *O hlahang ntlheng kwana hare ho motsheare o moholo*
108. *Moo teng ho lebelletsweng kgomoatsana tsa Basia*
109. *Ha akwa le ntse le re kgomo muu!*
110. *Se lla kwana moreneng, ha e lla motsaneng kwana*
111. *Ho a reneha.*
112. *Le kwana re yang ke kgomo e kgunwana,*
113. *Kgomo eka ikgama boladu.*
114. *O sa mpotsang o bona poho di se di qabane?*
115. *Mosi o ka thunya nakeng la nare*
116. *Tsa pona le tsa Matjhabenyane,*
117. *Letsokotsoko ke lang moo sakeng*
118. *Ke la methaka ho tsekwa metjhediete.*
119. *Hao o kwatetseng, wa thaka?*
120. *Wa nkwatela thaka bahlankana ba mona ba ha Tomo*
121. *Nna ha ke lwane ke mpa ke namola ntwá*
122. *Ke thaka Hobiane le Dibe*
123. *Wa ha Madimabe tlapeng kwana ha Madimatle.*
124. *Ke thaka Mokebo monna wa Molete*
125. *Ha ke ntse ke re bothaka nna ha ke bolele ba tswalo*
126. *Ke mpa ke bolela ba ho qhaneha.*
127. *Empa morena o a a rata matjholotjholo*
128. *Hobane nna morena o rata ha re palame*
129. *Ka mehla ke hlola ke romellwa Matsieng*
130. *Ho ntse ho thwe Mokutu ha o ka nkela Matsieng*
131. *O fete habo Jeso le mangeloi.*
132. *Ba tloha haeso kwana tshwanamakgulo,*
133. *Ba tloha haeso ba sa ngollwa mangolo.*
134. *Ba na ba kgutla Matsieng kwana mangolo a se a balwa*
135. *Ho ntse ho thwe paki ya motho ke leleme la hae.*
136. *Ha ba na dikgomo banna ba ha Makhabane.*
137. *Ha ba na dikgomo le bona ba hama dipere.*
138. *Mohla banna re yang kwana Lejweleputswa,*
139. *Ke tlama se bodila sa habo Rantahli wa bo tse tjitja,*
140. *Mankane re hetla e matshwao pelesa,*
141. *Re bile ra thiba Mokebisa a bua,*
142. *Ke bua ka motho ya kileng a etsa mohlolo,*
143. *Ya kileng a hasa ka ho kwalla batho,*
144. *Nakong eo re neng re kwaletswe le beng ba basadi,*
145. *Jwale beng ba meqekwa ba ntse ba rata ho tlola,*
146. *E ne e le banna boNteuteu, boLesenyeho, Mosikaphalla,*
147. *Le poto ke bua ka dikwefa Borantjantsho.*
148. *Monna e mong a ntse a re, nna ke nyetse moqekwa,*

149. *Ke a boulela, ke se ke bile ke tshaba ho sebetsa tjhafo.*
150. *Ke bona eka ke tloha ke e shwa,*
151. *Ke siya sethole sa me se nonne se le mafura.*
152. *Ntata Nneko ka tla ka omana.*
153. *Ka omana ke sa tloha moreneng,*
154. *Mohlang oo morena le matona ba ne ba itse ke thole,*
155. *Ha ipaka ke se ke tletse bohale.*
156. *Saemane, di otle di tle di eme,*
157. *Hobane ha di hlabana di tla diha mosehlelo.*
158. *Ke Kgwading ha maboella, Boleka diphogwaneng kwana,*
159. *Ke morena masetlela, Thabanalesoba ke kwana ha Peete,*
160. *Ba re Dikgakeng kwana ke morena Motshwene*
161. *Ha habo Mahlomola, Nkwepe, Dikgang le Tladi e mona e motsho*
162. *Eo ka mehla o sa e tlole e hlola e kgannelwa mane pele.*
163. *Mmane wa tladi ha se ho tshabeha,*
164. *Bang ba re o otlile kwana ha Jopa pakeng tsa Penya,*
165. *Le Rantsane.*
166. *Moo teng ha e a rotha e fafaditse feela.*
167. *Ha e le modumo wa theosa le Tshwanamakgulo.*
168. *Athe Padime a utlwa a ntse a poteletse,*
169. *Ka ditsebe o se a utlwile, ka mahlo ha e eso bone.*
170. *Etswe bongata bo ne bo tiisa bo ana,*
171. *Bo re kwana ha Jopa le Penya e se e hlekile.*
172. *Ba re ke moo e neng e ipapalla teng.*
173. *Ngwana madi a Matebeleng ka hlora,*
174. *Ke le ditsietsing kwana mahlomoleng,*
175. *Kapa ke hobane ke se wa kwano?*
176. *Ke reheletswe ka dintja.*
177. *Etse ha di mpona di rora feela di bothile,*
178. *Motho wa nama ya ntja,*
179. *Ntsho ya habo Moliehi hoeletsa*
180. *O hoeletse makwala a ye meriting ya matlo*
181. *Ba le basading kwana balotsana,*
182. *Hobane jwale ke e thatathata.*
183. *Ngwana wa Seeiso ke pelo ya senna,*
184. *Ke ka tshetleha lejwe, ke ka pitikwe motho wa ha ntjana,*
185. *Le ntse le botsa nna ke otile keng,*
186. *Le ha o ka mphepa jwang le jwang ke hlotse ke dula Thema,*
187. *Lekeisheneng moo anyanese e kgabellwang nameng.*
188. *Ho teng ke mpa ke le kgopo di mpe, ngwana wa Thulo,*
189. *Monongwaheng ona Kgopolo e tswetse mafahla,*
190. *A bile a mabedi a makotswana.*
191. *Marole teng a botha ha Mmabotle,*
192. *Pitikwe di e hlabana monateng,*
193. *Ke tla be ke tsamaye ke yo jwetsa Tanki,*
194. *Yena a tsamaye a yo jwetsa ntate ka masimong,*
195. *Ba tle ba yo hlahloba letebele ntwakgolo ke ya hosasa*
196. *Ntwakgolo ke ya hosasa ke tla tsoha hosasa ka madungwadungwane*
197. *Nakong eo tshwanafike la mane le nyenyelepa,*
198. *Nonyane ya mokgerane.*

199. *Le ka duma la ka lerunyana, ba re sehole jwale tshomaru*
200. *Ba re dikgomo di ntlong Botha-Bothe.*
201. *Ke tsa kgutsana ya boMohato,*
202. *Le no ja le di siye masapo,*
203. *Hoba mohla ke nyolohang ke tla di batla,*
204. *Ke sa siye letho nna nthwana ya lehakwe,*
205. *Ha le a tseba ho hapa la hapa tsa lehakwe lekwankwetla,*
206. *Manyekwane o hlaile kwana ha Thekotshweu,*
207. *Kgomo ha di yo, o sa tla be a yo di batla,*
208. *Nna ke tswetswe le dikgabane tsa bahlankana,*
209. *Wa habo Ketsi Leabua, ke tswetswe le Mookho le Moliehi,*
210. *Ke tswetswe le mahaqasi a banana.*
211. *Ha poho di se di qabane bosiu ha nke ke ye.*
212. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. I greet you, chiefs, fathers and mothers,
2. Mothers, friends, Ralebatha Motsamai,
3. An idiot with no sense of direction.
4. The day he was born, this one of Seeiso's,
5. As an ugly thing, with red eyes,
6. That day my father had suggested I be thrown away,
7. My mother said, a cripple is beautiful to the mother,
8. Though ugly a child is never thrown away.
9. Who knows, maybe I have begotten a singer,
10. This child of mine, the day he is grown up
11. Will buy me blankets with beautiful colours,
12. Buy me the Basotho otter and 'binder' (blankets) and 'get-strong-old people'.
13. Blankets are beautiful at that white man's shop,
14. But Seamane runs away with her calf,
15. I saw it disappearing yonder at the grazing veldt,
16. Seemane, run and stop it, young men are there,
17. Young men will chase it away, Lehoko and Leanya,
18. Saying it does not graze properly at Dikwekwe, the green veldt.
19. It left and disappeared behind the rock at the open Ramonyane plains.
20. Even there, young men at that place have driven it away,
21. Phera and Moeti say it is grazing badly,
22. Between the boundaries of the people's lands,
23. Phasemane runs away with the calves,
24. Phasemane that runs fast even at steep places.
25. Even there, young boys at that place have driven it away
26. Phera and Moeti say it is grazing badly,
27. Between the boundaries of the people's lands,
28. If it were according to my service,
29. I would have bought some cattle,
30. I would have filled my father's kraal with a span of oxen,
31. I would be driving a span of red ones,
32. But at the white man's place I am busy with dances,
33. Together with women whose marriages have failed.
34. They leave their homes having been bewitched so as to fail (in a job situation).

35. The pack animals are loaded at Masopha's
 36. Most of them frequent Matsieng.
 37. I, when I approached Mankwaneng
 38. I saw my home mountains in their order,
 39. I saw Tsikwane, Mathebe and Thabanantlenyana,
 40. I also saw ten chiefs
 41. Of yonder at Khobotle and Thabanamorena,
 42. The place Silwe is Thabanamorena,
 43. I do not praise myself because I am a hero,
 44. But my heart rejoices over flames
 45. I am a loner with a shield ready,
 46. I hit a person with an assegai,
 47. Hitting him to destroy his facial appearance,
 48. So that even his family would not recognize him,
 49. After all, I do not even love my family.
 50. Just call me foreigners,
 51. So that I can sing praises like a crow
 52. This one of Modiehi's.
 53. I am a snake, snake of the courtyards,
 54. Ntjhwathi at the high mountains is called the stealthily walker,
 55. The beast, the stealthily walker hid his colour,
 56. When it heard the beast, leopard.
 57. I am addressing you, King Bereng,
 58. Masopha had said you should pardon him
 59. Because he was not even fighting.
 60. He was merely talking to the herdboys,
 61. He was talking to Masopha and Moeketsi.
 62. Out there between the area of Molala and Monale,
 63. Young woman there have overdeveloped breasts,
 64. The old men have strong desire to elope,
 65. Who can help you become young again?
 66. I cannot mould a human being,
 67. A human being is created by his God
 68. Even if I may be ugly but I haven't created myself,
 69. Being black with red eyes,
 70. After all, the mother does not abandon her crippled baby.
 71. Eyes are green, young and black with white spots,
 72. White spots do not surpass our dark grey one.
 73. My dark grey slept in the veldt,
 74. I woke up early in the morning to fetch it.
 75. I found black ones crammed at Bolese.
 76. I went inside and singled out our dark grey one,
 77. The darkness enveloped me, and I left.
 78. On the plateau the black ox stands.
 79. I learnt that at inspection it came back,
 80. I was joking.
 81. Young man, you are a joke to the ministers,
 82. Roaming at night, you leave yours around,
 83. People's colts are like a horse reluctant to resting,
 84. But go about causing mischief.

85. As it is, you have put a bull in other people's kraals,
 86. And it spent the night molesting the weak ones.
 87. It is a bull from Tinkane's,
 88. And to the weak, it stabs at delicate areas.
 89. The lean ones, it kills outright.
 90. The wind blew from an unexpected direction,
 91. And reached the noses of reebucks cold,
 92. Causing the leopards and the horses to shiver.
 93. Some keep on saying, make a fire, sir!
 94. A person is fine when he has taken off his blanket.
 95. The day we were to leave the following day,
 96. The day went to the white man's place,
 97. A woman witch got excited,
 98. She went outside and scratched her fringe skirt.
 99. She scratched the knots and said,
 100. The workers at their work place should return,
 101. And the ones here at home should never go away.
 102. You, take off your shoes and join us,
 103. We, the wanderers have been working in the mud,
 104. I am a cock, I, Radiengwane.
 105. It (cock) is as big as two mountains at the Kgolokwe,
 106. It is as big as Mohlohe and Mohlongwana
 107. From a yonder point at midday.
 108. There you are expected by the Basia ladies.
 109. You constantly say, cow low and say mmuu,
 110. It cries yonder at the king's place, at a small village
 111. It is a shame.
 112. Also where we are going there is a brown cow,
 113. A black cow might produce puss when milked.
 114. Do you still ask me questions seeing that bulls are fighting?
 115. Smoke could go up from the buffalo horns
 116. And everything stops including those of Matjhabenyane's,
 117. What is happening over there in the kraal?
 118. Young men are fighting over girls.
 119. And now, why is that you are angry, my friend?
 120. You are cross with the young men of Tomo's.
 121. I am not fighting; I am merely preventing a battle.
 122. I am a peer of Hobiane and Dibe of
 123. He of Madimabe's yonder at the rocks, at Madimatle's.
 124. I am peer of Mokebo, a man of Molete's,
 125. By saying peer I do not mean by birth,
 126. I mean that of riding together.
 127. But the chief loves the swindlers.
 128. For the chief enjoys to ride with me daily,
 129. I am always sent to Matsieng,
 130. Being said, can I please send you to Matsieng?
 131. And pass at Jesus' and the angels,
 132. They leave my home where there's good grazing
 133. They leave my home without any letters inviting them,
 134. They returned from Matsieng with letters read,

135. The reason being the tongue is man's witness,
 136. The Makgabane men have no cattle,
 137. They have no cattle and milk horses.
 138. The day we, men, leave for the Grey stone (Johannesburg),
 139. It (Joh'burg) is a sour plant of Rantahli's of the round ones,
 140. The Mankane we looked back at pack animal with marks,
 141. We even stopped Mokebisi speaking,
 142. Here I refer to somebody who once performed miracles,
 143. Who once became known by jailing people,
 144. At the time we were jailed with married men,
 145. And those who had junior wives tried to escape,
 146. Those were Nteuteu, Lesenyeho, Mosakaphalla
 147. And Poto; I refer to men such as Rantjantsho.
 148. One of the men kept on saying, I have married a second wife and am jealous,
 149. I even fear to go with shift group,
 150. I have a feeling that I may die,
 151. And leave my heifer (young wife) nice and fat.
 152. I, Nneko's father, I grumbled a lot that day,
 153. I started grumbling when we left the chief's place,
 154. That day the chief and his councillors had ordered me to keep quiet,
 155. It was obvious I was full of anger,
 156. Saemane, hit them so that they should stop,
 157. Because when they stabbed each other, they would cause a kraal to fall.
 158. I belong to Kgwading green pastures, Boleka among the stupid (people),
 159. I am chief Matsetlela at Thabalesoba in Peete's area,
 160. At Dikgakeng, Motshwene is the chief,
 161. At the home of Mahlomola Nkwebe, Dikgang and Tladi, the black one,
 162. The black Tladi who should not be passed by, pushing people
 163. Yes, the flash of lightning is fearful.
 164. Some say it has struck at Jopa's between Penya
 165. And Rantsane areas,
 166. There the rain has not fallen; it only made light showers,
 167. But the sound went down the black pastures,
 168. And Padine heard it although he was around the village,
 169. Through ears he has heard, through eyes he hasn't seen.
 170. Many were arguing and stating emphatically
 171. That at Jopa's and Penya's it (lightning) has swept everything,
 172. Saying that it is where it had its playing ground.
 173. Child of the Ndebele blood, I became sad,
 174. I was in great trouble and sorrows,
 175. Or was it because I did not belong here?
 176. My name is that of a dog,
 177. When they see me, they merely roar lying down,
 178. The one of dog's meat,
 179. The black one, brother of Modiehi, shout,
 180. Shout at the cowards at the shadows of houses,
 181. Being with women, the sly ones.
 182. Because now it is a very hard one,
 183. Child of Seeiso, I have a brave heart,
 184. I am like a huge rock, a person of the dog family.

185. You are busy asking why I am emaciated,
186. Even if you can feed me anyhow, I won't change, I live at Kwa-Thema location.
187. Location where onions are chopped into the meat,
188. I am but having funny ribs, child of Thulo.
189. This year this Kgopolo has begotten twins,
190. They are even two females,
191. Last year's calves lie at Mmabotle's,
192. Stones touch them at delicate spots,
193. I shall eventually go and inform Tanki,
194. He will go and inform my father in the fields,
195. To go and inspect Letebele, the main war will be tomorrow,
196. The main war will be tomorrow, I shall wake up very early in the morning,
197. When the chat over there starts moving,
198. The small weak bird,
199. It might thunder like a small cloud; people would say, foolish black clouds,
200. The black cloud is now on his way to Botha-Bothe,
201. They are of the orphan of Mohato's family.
202. You should eat them (cattle) but leave the bones,
203. Because the day I return, I shall demand them,
204. Leaving nothing behind, I, the small jewel.
205. You were unwise when you took the strong jewel's, the great one,
206. Manyekwane appeared from Thekotshweu's,
207. The cattle are not there, and you will have to return to fetch them.
208. I was born with gentlemen,
209. I, of Ketsi Leabua I was born with Mookho and Moliehi
210. I was born with the war axes type of girls,
211. When the bulls are fighting in the night, I never go out.
212. There it cuts off and goes!

(25) TUMELO MOFOKENG [THABANA-TSHOWANA]

1. *Sekgolokwana Thabana-Tshowana,*
2. *Ha ntate ha Kgolokwane motseng,*
3. *Moo nama ya teng e tsholwang ka marumo,*
4. *Monna wa teng o beola ka kgarafu,*
5. *Monna wa teng o phatsa ka selepe,*
6. *Batho ba botsana ba sa mpotse,*
7. *Ba botsana ke tshepileng ngwana Mmantshi.*
8. *Ka re ke tshepile bana ba ha Kgolokwane Bafokeng,*
9. *Ba itse ha ho le hobe, ba tla lahlela.*
10. *Ha kena lai thekge! Utlwa Swalakahla!*
11. *Badimo hlana! Tolo ke lena la ha Mmantshi.*
12. *Phomola ntate Mandela, phomola,*
13. *Phomola ntate Mandela, phomola,*
14. *O mohale ntate Mandela, o mohale,*
15. *O mohale ntate Mandela, o mahale,*
16. *O mohale wa bahale ntate Mandela o mohale.*
17. *A dula teronkong 27 years ntate Mandela, a dula,*
18. *A dula teronkong 27 years ntate Mandela, a dula.*
19. *Phomola Rolihlahla, phomola,*
20. *Phomola Rolihlahla, phomola,*
21. *Phomola ntate Madiba, phomola,*
22. *Phomola ntate Madiba phomola,*
23. *Phomola Qwaqwa phomola*
24. *Phomola Foreisetata phomola.*
25. *A ithoka moholwane wa lona thaka tsa ka,*
26. *A ithoka mohlankana wa dihoba tsa Thabanatshowana.*
27. *Mohlankana wa koting sa Madimong,*
28. *Mohlankana o fentse dikgeleke,*
29. *O ntsa hapa dikola ho bahale,*
30. *Le lemong sena o ntse a di hapa ho ya pele.*
31. *A ithoka moshanyana wa boMalefetsane,*
32. *Wa habo Sebolai le Tani,*
33. *Kgaitsemi ya Polo le Mmamokete,*
34. *Le ngwana ho fela Mmadineo.*
35. *Ka tshetjha ka etsa Mehlolohlolo,*
36. *Mmangwane Selina a o hlaba*
37. *A laola modidietsane.*
38. *A o hlaba a o hlabela dikgalala,*
39. *Ditshophe tse ntjha tsa bahlankana,*
40. *Ho tswa koting sa Madimong.*
41. *Tsa tlola tsa sheba Botjhabela,*
42. *Bashanyana ba ntshetleha ka ditlatse tse nyenyana,*
43. *Bana ba nthapella bophelo,*
44. *Bomme ba ntlhabela modidietsane,*
45. *Bontate ba ntlhabela mokorotlo.*
46. *Tsuu! Lona banna ba Qwaqwa,*
47. *Ha le le banna pula e ka na,*
48. *E ka na ya thapisa marole.*

49. *Bashanyana ba kola marutle hodima dithota,*
50. *Ke utlwa ba poreisa la dinone lebelo.*
51. *O kola lerutle le ntse le fofa.*
52. *Basotho, buang le ntate Pulapula,*
53. *Moshe kapa Mothibi,*
54. *A tlohele dipalangwang di eme,*
55. *Ke nyatsa ha kolo di etsa moferefere,*
56. *Koloi tsa thulana ke di shebile,*
57. *Tsa thulana tsa bakela batho qomatsi,*
58. *Kodi ya malla pakamahlomola,*
59. *Hodimo ho tsona ha hlaha ditopo,*
60. *Tona la Batjha,*
61. *Thabang Rampooane o jelwe ke lefu la mabidi!*

1. Home of the Kgolokwe people, Thabanatshowana,
2. At my father's home, at Kgolokwane village,
3. Where the meat is taken off the fire by means of spears,
4. A man shaves with a spade,
5. A man makes incisions with an axe,
6. People ask each other questions without asking me,
7. They ask what I am banking on, child of Mmantshi.
8. I said I am banking on the Kgolokwane's children, the Bafokeng,
9. They said that if things become bad, they would help.
10. In came a flash, thunder! Listen, inside I've come!
11. Ancestors turned round. Here is lightning at Mmantshi's.
12. Rest, Mr Mandela, take your rest,
13. Rest, Mr Mandela, take your rest,
14. You are a hero, Mr Mandela, you are a hero,
15. You are a hero, Mr Mandela, you are a hero.
16. You are a hero among heroes, Mr Mandela, you are a hero.
17. He stayed in jail 27 years, Mr Mandela, yes, he stayed,
18. He stayed in jail 27 years, Mr Mandela, yes, he stayed.
19. Rest, Rolihlahla, take a rest,
20. Rest, Rolihlahla, take a rest,
21. Rest, father Madiba, take a rest,
22. Rest, father Madiba, take a rest,
23. Rest, Qwaqwa, take a rest,
24. Rest, Free State, take a rest.
25. He praised himself, yours, my peers,
26. He praised himself, young war song man of Thabana Tshooana,
27. Young man of the Madimong ditch,
28. Young man has surpassed the eloquent ones,
29. He is receiving awards from the heroes,
30. Even this year he is busy collecting them continuously.
31. He praised himself, brother of the home of Malefetsane,
32. He of the home of Sebolai and Tani,
33. Brother of Polo and Mmamokete,
34. And the last born, Mmadineo.
35. I retreated and made miracles,

36. Aunt Selina started it,
37. And controlled it, the ululation.
38. She started it, starting it for the heroes,
39. Young springbok men
40. From the Madimong ditch
41. Jumped and faced the East,
42. Young boys applauded me lightly,
43. Children wished me long life,
44. Mothers started ululating for me,
45. Fathers started a war song for me.
46. Yes! You, men living in Qwaqwa,
47. If you are men, the rain may fall,
48. It may fall and wet the dust.
49. Boys are collecting locusts on the plains,
50. I hear them praising the speed of antelopes,
51. One catches a locust flying.
52. Basotho, talk to Mr Pulapula,
53. Moses or Mothibi,
54. To leave the vehicles to come to a standstill,
55. I am against vehicles causing trouble,
56. Vehicles collided while I was looking on,
57. They collided and caused an emergency,
58. Songs of lament, trouble makers,
59. On top of them there emerged the corpses,
60. Minister of the Youth,
61. Thabang Rampooane was killed in a car accident!

(26) THAPELO LETJORI [THABANA-TSHOWANA]

1. *Basotho ro kang dinatla, le tlohelle bahlalefi,*
2. *Mohlankana wa morena Phatoli ke ngwedi,*
3. *Molaodi wa mabotho a thuto,*
4. *Ho ya Mmokodi.*
5. *Mokotsobetsi wa thuto ka Katlehong Makaladitjhaba,*
6. *Ngaka ya mahloko a bafo fifing la thuto,*
7. *Moporofeta wa pelo le moya,*
8. *Fubeng tsa batjha o a halalela.*
9. *O phekola ka tjhoko, Basotho re a dumela*
10. *Banna, nna ke ntse ke tsota Morena Mmako.*
11. *Mofani wa bana ba Kweneng lefapheng la thuto,*
12. *O fane ka bitso la Mohale,*
13. *Kolong sa Mohale ho Morena.*
14. *Llang le tele, tjhaba sa bana ba Rantsho,*
15. *Maaforika a matle, ditjhabatjhaba,*
16. *Le lle ka moya le mohau*
17. *Pelo di thulame.*
18. *Le tshedisehe, bana ba Motlotlehi,*
19. *Lesotho le aparetswe ke bofifi,*
20. *Ho tsamaile mpodi ya dikgeleke,*
21. *Letsema Matshela, pulamadiboho.*
22. *Badimo, le hapa tse masene, dikakapa,*
23. *Le hapile Matšela le Mahlathene,*
24. *Bana ba masea ra hlomoha.*
25. *Re tla nwa sefe sediba re tsebe?*
26. *Mehlo di ya tjha.*
27. *Bokgeleke ba tjhaba sa Basotho,*
28. *Basotho ba lla ka mohau,*
29. *Ba le pelo di tlhomohi,*
30. *A bua a le maswabi, a phumola keledi, Maopadiatla.*
31. *Lefu le kena malapa ka ho fapana,*
32. *Ha le rerise,*
33. *Ekabe le rerisitse morena Letsema,*
34. *A bue le badumedi le mangeloi,*
35. *Ba tsebe monongwaha o orohile morena Letsema.*
36. *Menyako le diheke tsa lehodimo di bulwe,*
37. *A kene ka mosa le mohau, morena Letsema,*
38. *Banna o mo nkile, o mmeile teroneng Tlatlamatjholo.*
39. *Monongwaheng ona o a halalela, morena Letsema,*
40. *O tlohile lefatsheng ka moya,*
41. *A ikentse mohodi,*
42. *Lehodimong kwana ha fetoha lehlwa,*
43. *Bana ba Basotho, le tle le mo futse, morena Letsema,*
44. *Robala ka kgotso, ngwana wa Matshela!*

1. Basotho, praise the heroes and leave out the elite,
2. The young man of Phatoli is the moon,
3. The commander of the army of education
4. Up to Mmokodi.
5. The Baptist of education at Katlehong, the nation's wonder,
6. Doctor of the ailments of the poor amid darkness of education,
7. Prophet of the heart and soul,
8. In the chest of the youth, he is holy,
9. He treats the sick by means of chalk, we (the Basotho) affirm it,
10. Oh! People! I am amazed by Chief Mmako.
11. The giver of the children of the Bakwena in education,
12. He gave the name of Mohale (Hero),
13. At the school named Mohale,
14. Cry and forget, nation of the children of the black nation,
15. Beautiful Africans, many nations,
16. Cry in soul and mercy
17. Hearts being discontent,
18. Be consoled, children of His Majesty.
19. Lesotho is in mourning
20. He has departed, the hero among the eloquent,
21. Letsema Matšela, the pioneer,
22. Ancestors, you capture the wise ones, the heroes,
23. You captured Matšela and Mahlathini,
24. We, the babies, felt aggrieved,
25. From which fountain will we drink, that we may know?
26. Sources dried up,
27. Eloquence of the Basotho nation,
28. The Basotho lament mercifully,
29. Their hearts being discontented,
30. He mourned with sadness, wiping tears, the clapper of hands,
31. Death enters homesteads in different ways
32. Without warning,
33. It would have warned Chief Letsema,
34. To speak to the Christians and the angels,
35. To know that he has departed, Chief Letsema,
36. The doors and gates of heaven be opened
37. So that he enters in kindness and mercy, Chief Letsema.
38. People! He has taken and placed him on His throne, God
39. This year he is holy, Chief Letsema,
40. He left the world amid the storm
41. Turning into mist,
42. Yonder in heaven it turned into snow,
43. Children of the Basotho, take after him, Chief Letsema,
44. Rest in peace, child of Matšela!

(27) SEHLOHO LEHALEHALE [HUNTERSVILLE]

1. *Ha ithoka senatla,*
2. *Ntata Lebohang le Nthabiseng*
3. *Nata Ntwetsi sebele.*
4. *Morena o hlile o a nthata,*
5. *O ka mphepa jwang le jwang,*
6. *Nke ke be ka nona.*
7. *Ke ne ke dula le basadi ba le bararo,*
8. *Nna, ngwana pelo e telele,*
9. *Motho ke mo otlá,*
10. *Ke mo shebisa tlase,*
11. *Botlase ba hae ke bo shebisa hodimo,*
12. *Ke a mo phenyekolla,*
13. *Lebanta la masepa le be le kgaohe,*
14. *Dieta ha ke di rwale,*
15. *Ke tshaba dintja di ka ntoma!*

1. He praises himself, the hero,
2. Father of Lebohang and Nthabiseng,
3. Father of Ntwetsi truly,
4. The chief, he really is proud of me,
5. No matter how much you can feed me,
6. I will never grow fat,
7. I lived with women, three in number,
8. I, myself, child with a patient heart,
9. A person, I hit him,
10. Cause him face downwards ,
11. Turn him upside down.
12. I search him thoroughly,
13. Until the belt for excrements is broken,
14. As for shoes, I don't wear them,
15. I fear dogs may bite me!

(28) SERA KHAMOKHA [THE BASOTHO CULTURAL VILLAGE]

1. *Basotho ba batle ba Moshoeshoe,*
2. *Basotho, majarafuru ka mahetla,*
3. *Mohale ke nna ya tsohang ka meso,*
4. *Kgomong tsa heso,*
5. *Ho bapala banana le bashemane,*
6. *Mohale ke nna ya hlwang thaba ka matsoho,*
7. *Modisa ya disang ka Hlwahlweng,*
8. *Ya mahlomafubedu!*

1. The fine Basotho of Moshoeshoe,
2. The Basotho, carriers-of-forage on their shoulders,
3. I am the hero who wakes up early in the morning,
4. Among my home cattle
5. There play the girls and the boys,
6. I am the hero who climbs the mountain crawling on my hands,
7. A herd boy keeping watch at Hlwahlweng village,
8. One with red eyes!

(29) SELLO NTHAPO [MATSIENG]

1. *Moshanyana o teng phokong sa Masite,*
2. *Thelefishene mora wa Nkhahle,*
3. *Ke batla ho roka kwena, bodiba.*
4. *Ya tloha letsheng ya fihla Lepere, noha ya metsi,*
5. *Hobane ha e akgaka mangetse*
6. *Ya kena ka hare ha Tlhakanelo,*
7. *Ke bone ha e akgaka mangetse, noha ya metsi.*
8. *O ya kae, Serethe?*
9. *Ekare batho bana ba a o tihatjhametsa,*
10. *Eka o tla utlwa bohloko, noha ya metsi.*
11. *Ya kena ka hara metsi,*
12. *Bashanyana ting ba Thelefishene,*
13. *Ba motseng wa ka Tlhakanelo,*
14. *Kwena, bodiba ya kena ya kwatisa*
15. *Dikgomo ha se ho baleha,*
16. *Feela le romelle, le romelle histori ya Basotho,*
17. *Le e romelle ka hara Mohokare,*
18. *Moo nokana di betsang morabaraba.*
19. *Kwena hodimo, ngwana morena ha se ho utlwa bohloko,*
20. *Feela le jwetse Kerefise wa habo Theko,*
21. *Le jwetse morena Khoabane, le mo jwetse le re,*
22. *Kwena, bodiba e kene ka hara phiomoru,*
23. *Feela e sa tla ke e butle,*
24. *Ka hare ho Mohokare ke bone e nkile dithupa,*
25. *E di shebisitse hodimo.*
26. *E ya kae, ngwana morena?*
27. *Bahlankana, butleng ho pepetlolotsa, le baleha,*
28. *Le baleha lerole la mora Mphou,*
29. *Le tle le mo jwetse,*
30. *Le mo jwetse, le re poho di teng di qabane,*
31. *Di kene ka hara lekgotla*
32. *O ya kae, kwena bodiba?*
33. *Ke bone ha e tlola Mothathara, Merothoro, Meqhubung,*
34. *Ke bone e tihatjhametsa mmane,*
35. *Banna, matlapa a thellaka.*
36. *Utlwang kapelenyana, le shebeng haufinyana,*
37. *Lebitla la morena Moshoeshe,*
38. *Ke bona ha ho heleha,*
39. *Majakane a leba tlaase,*
40. *Ya tlolaka, kwena bodiba.*
41. *Mohale wa Mako, Makoanyane,*
42. *Wa bo Tlhatlhametsi, kwena bodiba.*
43. *Ya kena ka hare sekubung*
44. *Ya theosaka makhaleng.*
45. *Feela le bolelle morena Manamolela*
46. *Le re kwena, bodiba ke ena,*
47. *E tla e tihatjhametsa mmane,*
48. *Utlwang ha e fihla ka dikotopong*

49. *Banna, a hoeletsa kapelenyana, mora Mphou*
50. *O ne a hoeletsa a le Dipelana,*
51. *A re, o ya kae, mora wa Ferete*
52. *Wena o kgutlang, o ratang bommabohle?*
53. *Wena o ratang ho eletsa mmane?*
54. *Feela le romelle Kerefise,*
55. *Le mo jwetse, a tle ka Phamong,*
56. *Le mo jwetse, Kerefise wa habo,*
57. *Ke ngwana morena, tlokotsebe sa Mokhachane*
58. *A ke le reng, Shuu!*

1. There is a boy at the Masite cliff,
2. Television, son of Nkhahle,
3. I wish to praise the crocodile, an abyss.
4. It left a pool of water and reached Lepere, the water snake,
5. When it throws the mane from side to side,
6. It got inside at Tlhakanelo's,
7. I saw it throwing the mane from side to side, the water snake.
8. Where are you going to, Serethe?
9. It would appear that those people are pushing you,
10. It seems as if you will be hurt, you, the water snake.
11. It got into the water,
12. You, boys of Television!
13. From the village of Tlhakanelo,
14. Crocodile, into the deep pool it went and frightened
15. Cattle which ran off,
16. Yes, you should send, send the Basotho history,
17. Send it into the Caledon River
18. Where rivulets play morabaraba (mill game).
19. Crocodile up there, child of the king felt unhappy,
20. But you should inform Griffith, brother of Theko,
21. Inform chief Khoabane, tell him and say,
22. The crocodile got into the very deep pool,
23. But it will have to be steady.
24. Inside the Caledon River I saw it carrying sticks,
25. Holding them upwards.
26. Where is it going to, child of the king?
27. Young men, wait to run around fleeing,
28. Fleeing from the dust of the son of Mphou,
29. Inform him,
30. Inform him and say there are bulls that have clashed.
31. They are in court.
32. Where are you going to, crocodile of the deep pool?
33. I saw it when it crossed Mothathara, Merothoro, Meqhubung,
34. I saw it flashing lightning,
35. Oh People! The rocks became slippery.
36. Listen immediately and look closer,
37. On the grave of Moshoeshoe,
38. I saw some stones fall off,

39. The Christians went down.
40. It jumped about, the crocodile of the deep pool,
41. Hero of Makwa, Makwanyane,
42. He of Tlhahlametsi's, crocodile, the deep pool
43. It went inside like a hippo,
44. And went down along the aloes.
45. But you should inform chief Manamolela,
46. And say, here is the crocodile of the deep pool,
47. It comes flashing lightning.
48. Listen, when it reaches the culverts,
49. People, the son of Mphou sounded a call quickly,
50. He called being at Dipelana,
51. And said, where are you going, son of Ferete?
52. To you who is returning, to you who loves prostitutes,
53. To you who loves to advise the lightning,
54. Please send a message to Griffith,
55. Tell him to come over to Phamong,
56. Tell him, Griffith of his family,
57. It is the child of the king, the naughty one of Mokhachane.
58. Please say, it is enough!

(30) SHEKAI RATSATSI [MATSIENG]

1. *Fako sa ngwananyana wa Nkoebe,*
2. *Haholo sa ngwananyana lengau,*
3. *Se tlohileng hae pula e na,*
4. *Lefafatsane le entse mohodi,*
5. *Bahlankana ba tshaba ho palama.*
6. *A bua le Matlama ka la maobane,*
7. *Le lale le itekanya mesikaro,*
8. *Re tla palama ho sa le madungwadungwana,*
9. *Ha kgoho di theoha dikalaneng.*
10. *Sa palama fako sa Mokhachane,*
11. *Sa tshela Maphutseng le Makhaleng,*
12. *Tsela sa nka ya Thabanamorena,*
13. *Mmane wa sona ha se ho tshabeha.*
14. *Ngwana morena o tswile ka makgalo*
15. *Pakeng tsa Mafa le Ramabidikoe*
16. *Kwena tsosa maqhubu o yo hlwa kgorong ha Senei,*
17. *O teane teng le selahamarungwana.*
18. *A fapohela ho sona, a se botsa,*
19. *Sa mo phetela, sa se ke sa mo swetsa,*
20. *Sa re, ngwana morena Letsie o dihetse,*
21. *Ho setse Toi, mora wa Tele,*
22. *A tlalwa ke pelo, thaka Matlama*
23. *A re, ntekatekane wa maka wa mashano,*
24. *Phakisa kapele o yo bolela,*
25. *O mpotsetse ho morena Bohale,*
26. *O mpotsetse ho ntata Mmane,*
27. *O hle o mpotsetse ho Lerotholi hantle,*
28. *Ba re, Letlama, qhanolla pere di fule,*
29. *Ntwa bohola ke ya hosasa,*
30. *Letlama, leru la hlaha botjhabela,*
31. *La lopalla yaka hoja pula e a na,*
32. *Yaka kgwedi ha e hlaha thabadimahlwa,*
33. *Yaka naledi tsa meso ha di hlaha,*
34. *Mafube a rakana le selemela*
35. *Ke mohla ngwana a tla le tsheha*
36. *A re ha! ha!*
37. *Mmae a le tsheha a re, ha! ha!*
38. *Ntatae a le tsheha a re, ha! ha!*
39. *Ba re eo Mmaqhebu o kile a re kgola,*
40. *O tswa re latela ngaka esele masimong,*
41. *A re noha ya metsi e tlo re ja.*
42. *Letlama ba mmetsa ba le qhoweng,*
43. *Ba bile ba le leshome.*
44. *A tjhaya fatshe morena wa Matlama,*
45. *A tjhaya fatshe, hwa phatloha mangope,*
46. *Tjhabana sa bajwa hara lehlabula,*
47. *Otlwanyana sa tsoha mabeleng,*
48. *Difate tsa foforeha makgapetla,*

49. *Dirobebe tsa phurusetša matlong,*
50. *Nonyana tse hahelang difateng tsa baleha,*
51. *Ba patlapatla kaofela Bakwena,*
52. *Ba bang ba re ba theoha mokwallong,*
53. *Ba bang ba theoha sefikeng,*
54. *Yare ha maqheku a qala ho dula fatshe,*
55. *Ha a qala ho qetha mofufutso,*
56. *Moo a qalang ho ntsha letshwea,*
57. *A utlwa mोगathala o lwanne,*
58. *Ba ntsha dikoma tsa makgokgoma,*
59. *Ba tsuba dikwae,*
60. *Ba ne ba ntse ba tsuba maqheku,*
61. *Ba qala ho botsana,*
62. *Kerefise o mokae seemong?*
63. *Kerefise ha ho le motho ha a teng,*
64. *Le ka mahlo o ka mo tlola hodimo,*
65. *O mpa a kgantsha ho kgarametsa,*
66. *O kgantsha ho ema remeng,*
67. *Ebile o kgantsha le ho tswela pele,*
68. *Senaranarane, kwena ya Mabewana,*
69. *Kwena ya habo Api le Makhaola,*
70. *Motho a ka tswalwa a hlahlama Letsie?*
71. *A mpa a mo lwanetse molamu wa hlooho?*
72. *Kajeno lena molamu o boetse sefateng.*
73. *Qooane molakametsi wa Matlama a Mokhachane,*
74. *Ntinti le molomotshwanahadi,*
75. *Ledimo la Raseokamela batho,*
76. *Le jele bana ba Masopha,*
77. *La eja ba rangwane, metswalle,*
78. *La ba ja, la ba abela dinonyana.*
79. *Mohale wa Lekena,*
80. *Mabuelathoko, mabuela ho Matlama,*
81. *Hoja ho phehelanwe dikgang,*
82. *Langwane o hlile a rutla wa hae,*
83. *Tapole le yena a tla ka wa hae,*
84. *Kgutshwane le yena a tla ka wa hae,*
85. *Ba nna ba bolawa bana ba Masopha,*
86. *Sedi la Thwathwa.*
87. *Le ne le fose ka ho betsa morena,*
88. *Kerefise mohale wa Lerotholi,*
89. *Ke letolo, Mokwena, tolo la lapeng ha Mmabatho,*
90. *Letlama, tolo la duma ditjhabeng,*
91. *Tladi e hahile tlasa mafika.*
92. *Kwena!*

1. Hailstorm of the girl of Nkoebe,
2. More especially that of the girl of a leopard,
3. Leaving home when the rain was falling,

4. Light rain having made some mist,
5. Young men hesitating to ride.
6. He spoke to the Matlama (Binders Regiment) on the previous day:
7. You should sleep preparing your baggages,
8. We shall ride quite early in the morning,
9. When the fowls get off their perches.
10. He rode, the hailstorm of the son of Mokhachane,
11. It crossed Maphutseng and Makhaleng,
12. The path, it followed the one to Thabanamorena,
13. Oh! How fearful was its lightning!
14. The child of the king went through the passes,
15. Between Mafa and Ramabidikoe,
16. Crocodile, stirr the waves and cross over the pass at Senei's,
17. There meet a coward who absconded from the battle.
18. He turned off to him and asked,
19. He answered him without any malice,
20. He said, the child of king Letsie is in difficulties,
21. Toi, the son of Tele has remained.
22. He got angry, peer of Matlama,
23. And said: the runner, the great liar,
24. Rush and go to report,
25. Find out for me from chief Bohale,
26. Find out for me from Mmaneo's father,
27. Find out for me from Lerotholi in person.
28. They said, Letlama off-saddle the horses that they may graze,
29. The main battle is for tomorrow.
30. Letlama, the cloud appeared from the East,
31. It moved on as if it would rain,
32. As if the moon shining over the-mountains-covered-in-snow
33. As if the appearing of the morning stars,
34. The aurora colliding with the star Achernar.
35. That is the day a child will laugh at you
36. And say, ha-ha!
37. His mother will laugh and say, ha-ha!
38. His father will laugh and say ha-ha!
39. They say, that Mmaqhebu brought harm to us,
40. She has fetched a different doctor for us from the fields,
41. And said that the watersnake should come and eat us.
42. Letlama, they challenged him from a high place,
43. Even being ten in number,
44. He hit the ground, king of the Matlama.
45. He hit the ground and the dongas cracked,
46. The small nation got frost in mid summer,
47. Whirlwind rose among the sorghum,
48. Trees shed their leaves,
49. Sparrows flew into the houses,
50. Birds that have nests on trees fled.
51. The Bakwena all mingled around,
52. Some tried to leave the kraal gate,
53. Some left a heap of stones.

54. When old people began to sit down,
 55. When they began to wipe off the sweat,
 56. When they began to rest,
 57. Felt temporary reduction of fatigue,
 58. They took out their snuffboxes,
 59. And started smoking.
 60. They were still smoking, the old people,
 61. They began to ask one another,
 62. How big is Griffith in stature?
 63. Griffith is but a very short man,
 64. You may not easily recognise him,
 65. He is but popular in pushing around,
 66. He is popular in showing off his kingship,
 67. He is even popular in developing,
 68. Slow couch, crocodile of Mabewana,
 69. Crocodile of the house of Api and Makhaola,
 70. Can a person be born after Letsie?
 71. After fighting for him so bravely?
 72. Today revenge has taken place,
 73. Adder, fighter of Matlama (Binder Regiment) of Mokhachane,
 74. The very black beak, Ntinti,
 75. Giant of the towerer-above-the-people,
 76. It has eaten the children of Masopha,
 77. It ate an uncle's, friends,
 78. It ate them and apportioned them to the birds,
 79. Hero of Lekena,
 80. The-speaker-from-a-distance, the-speaker-to-Matlama,
 81. Amid great arguments,
 82. Langwane pulled out his on time,
 83. Tapole also came along with his,
 84. Kgutshwane also came along with his,
 85. In that manner they were killed, the children of Masopha
 86. Light from Thwathwa (lightning),
 87. You faltered by challenging the king,
 88. Griffith, the hero of Lerotholi,
 89. He is lightning, Mokwena, lightning of the house of Mmabatho,
 90. Letlama, thunder roared among foreign people,
 91. Lightning has made a nest under the rocks,
 92. Crocodile!

(31) ARSTON MPHOU [MATSIENG]

1. *Tholang lerata hee, e be tsielala, le lona mapepele!*
2. *Matlaila, masenyapina tsa batho,*
3. *Le ntse le roka marena dibatana bongata,*
4. *Etswe le roka marena ka ho lwana ntwā.*
5. *Ke re, ka mo roka tau e tshehla kgosi Mohato,*
6. *Ke tau e tshehla namane ya nare,*
7. *Ke namane ya pulamofedi,*
8. *O tswaletswe dikwete, Bokaota bodimatau,*
9. *Tshakgolo hodima letamo.*
10. *Mohla a tswetsweng, kgosi Mohato,*
11. *Ra na ra utlwa ka modidietsane,*
12. *Basadi ba o hlaba, ba o laola,*
13. *Matshosetsa a utlwa makote,*
14. *Ra qela banna Tshakgolo,*
15. *Ba ne ba dutse Kgwading,*
16. *O a tseba, ba o hlaba ba o laola mokorotlo,*
17. *Ba bina sehou, pina ya banna.*
18. *Basadi Tshakgolo ba lahla dihlana,*
19. *Ba kena Kgwading, ba tla ba tjhethja,*
20. *Ho a ipaka a thabile Makaota,*
21. *Eka hoja o tla dula Tebang.*
22. *Ba fihla ba phetela morena ditaba,*
23. *Ba re tjhee, mme Mmamohato o tswetse moshanyana,*
24. *Ngwana morena, tjhee, ke se mereto sebata,*
25. *Ke lesele le moruthu Mokwena,*
26. *Ke ngwana wa ntlokgolo, ngwana wa beng,*
27. *O bonwa ka ditshobotsi,*
28. *O tshwana le Seeiso le Lerotholi,*
29. *Le Thesele le Peete le Makhabane,*
30. *Ho a ipaka o tswalehile Mokwena,*
31. *Kgelele, joo, matona Tshakgolo*
32. *A utlwa bohloko matona,*
33. *Ke bolela a ka Tebang,*
34. *Alfonse le Taelo.*
35. *A tlalwa ke pelo, a utlwa bohloko,*
36. *A tlala kgalefo, a re hee,*
37. *Basadi le mashano ha le bue nnete,*
38. *Le tlohe Kgwading.*
39. *Ngwana e motshwana e moholo,*
40. *O tshwana le Mojela le Makhaola,*
41. *Ho a ipaka o tswalehile, lekaota,*
42. *Tjhee, moo teng ho bua Mphaphathi, moradi wa Malefane*
43. *A re bomme le thole lerata,*
44. *Le tshabe kgalefo,*
45. *O bona eka mosi o tla thunya nakeng la nare.*
46. *A tloha teng a se a hodile,*
47. *Ke re mohla a behwang kgosi Mohato,*
48. *E ne e le ka la 10 kgwedding ya December,*

49. *Ka Sesotho e ne e le Tshitwe*
50. *Dikgosi le bafo re ne re bitswe,*
51. *Hwa ba hwa bitswa le Barwa ba Sepiriti.*
52. *Ba botjhabela, bophirima, borwa, leboya,*
53. *Tlasa kgwedi le letsatsi,*
54. *Hwa qetellwa ka ho bitsa baruti,*
55. *Jwale ba hlohonolofaditse kgosana.*
56. *Bishop a beha letsoho patleng.*
57. *Re bone a mo etsetsa thapelo,*
58. *A re, ao! Modimo Ntate, Mmopi wa tsohle,*
59. *Ako mo thuse. Ntja e tshweu ya Lesupi,*
60. *Ke hlwele pereng ke se na boti,*
61. *Jwale Bajude Isiraele, utlwang,*
62. *Mangeloi a Jesu ke ana a fihla,*
63. *Le Maria ya se nang sekodi,*
64. *Ba tshwere Bebele, buka ya dibuka,*
65. *Ba phetlile ka ho Bakorinthe,*
66. *Ba ntse ba bala kgafetsa,*
67. *Ba qetella ka ho etsa thapelo.*
68. *Ho Matheu 10 Kgaolo e baleha ka mokgwa ona:*
69. *Ba re Modimo Ntate, bitso la hao le bokwe,*
70. *Tlotla le kganya di iswe lehodimong,*
71. *Kganya, tlaase lefatsheng,*
72. *Hoba Lesotho le tswaletswe kgosu, kgosana Mohato.*
73. *Ke re mohla a behwang Motlotlehi,*
74. *Kgosu Mohato, nthekathekane kgwedding ya Mphalane,*
75. *Ra na ra be re le Maseru teropong kwana,*
76. *Maseru, Mejametalana,*
77. *A behwa tulong sa ntatae sa puso,*
78. *Sa ho busa Basotho*
79. *Ba batsho, ba bitswang Majapere,*
80. *Tonakgolo Ntsu mora Mokhehle,*
81. *Maeba a a qhala le teropo,*
82. *Nonyanakgolo tsa rura le lefatshe lohle,*
83. *Hwa ba ha utlwahala mose mawatleng kwana*
84. *Motseng wa Cairo le Egepeta.*
85. *Jwale Heropa e a duma,*
86. *A ba a utlwa bohloko Heropa,*
87. *Kerosime ho lla tsa lefatshe,*
88. *Terompeta ho lla tsa lefatshe,*
89. *Terompeta ho lla tsa lehodimo*
90. *Ha utlwahala banna ha e sa le kgosu, e se e le king,*
91. *Basotho ra thaba, ra tsheha.*
92. *Ra kgumama ka mangole, ra etsa thapelo,*
93. *Ra re, Modimo Ntate, mmopi wa tsohle,*
94. *O mpe o re thuse!*
95. *Ke re ka le roka hodiotswana le lephatshwana,*
96. *Hodiotswana la hodimo la duma,*
97. *La kena ditenteng.*
98. *La nka mokgwaba le mokotswana*

99. *La tsamaya le inyaka, le ikgetla,*
100. *Ke roka ntsukobo, Kobo mora wa Seeiso,*
101. *Nong e thokwa ya lomong sa Matlakeng*
102. *E tshehla sefubeng.*
103. *Ha e fofa tedu di a e tshwanela*
104. *Bontate Tshwanamantata ba ja ka yona mariha*
105. *Majakane na ha se ho tseba saluti!*
106. *Ba e tjhaya, ba dumedisa marena,*
107. *Qetellong ba bua Sekgowa,*
108. *Ba re, 'Chief, good morning!*
109. *Dikgomo, ngwana ntlokgolo!'*
110. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. Be silent, please, let there be tranquillity, even you, bad singers,
2. Bad singers, spoilers of peoples' songs.
3. You are busy praising junior chiefs most of you,
4. Moreover, you praise kings according to wars fought.
5. I say, I praise him, the light brown lion, king Mohato,
6. He is the light brown lion, calf of a buffalo,
7. He is the calf, the-bringer-of-rain-to-an-end,
8. He was begotten the gentlemen at Bokaota, the lion-wisher,
9. Tshakgolo above the dam.
10. The day he was born, king Mohato,
11. We heard by ululation,
12. The women started and controlled it,
13. The scarer heard sods (raining on him),
14. We then asked the men at Tshakgolo,
15. Who were sitting at Kgwading,
16. You know, they started and controlled a war song,
17. And sang a lament, men's song.
18. The women at Tshakgolo retreated,
19. And entered Kgwading going backwards.
20. It was clear the inhabitants of the plains (Makaota) were happy,
21. As if he would reside at Tebang.
22. On arrival they brought the news to the king,
23. And said, mother Mmamohato has begotten a boy,
24. Child of the king, yes, it is a striped beast,
25. He is a warm baby, Mokwena,
26. He is the child from a senior house, the masters' child,
27. He is seen by physical appearance,
28. He resembles Seeiso and Lerotholi,
29. And Thesele, and Peete and Mokhachane,
30. It is evident he is a thoroughbred, Mokwena,
31. Oh! Yes! The Tshakgolo councillors,
32. The councillors felt unhappy,
33. I refer to the ones at Tebang,
34. Alfonse and Taelo.
35. They got angry and were unhappy,

36. They were full of anger, and said, hey!
 37. You women, you are lying, you are not telling the truth,
 38. You should leave Kgwading.
 39. The black child, the eldest one,
 40. Resembles Mojela and Makhaola,
 41. It is evident he is a thoroughbred, Lekaota (inhabitant on the plains),
 42. Yes! That was said by Mphaphathi, daughter of Malefane.
 43. She said, mothers please be quiet,
 44. And avoid anger,
 45. It seemed as if smoke would rise on the buffalo's horn.
 46. He left that place when he was old enough,
 47. I mean, the day he was enthroned, king Mohato.
 48. It was on 10 December,
 49. In Sesotho it was (the month) Tshitwe,
 50. Kings and commoners were invited,
 51. Even the Bushmen of Spirit were invited.
 52. From the east, west, south and north,
 53. Under the sun and the moon,
 54. The last to be invited were the ministers,
 55. Now they have blessed the prince.
 56. The bishop placed his hand on the forehead.
 57. We saw him praying for him,
 58. Saying, Oh! God, our father, Creator of all,
 59. May you please help him! The white dog from the ruins,
 60. I mounted my horse without a tie,
 61. Now, Jews from Israel, listen,
 62. Here are the angels of Jesus arriving,
 63. With Maria without a blemish,
 64. They are carrying a Bible, a book of books,
 65. They have opened in the Corinthians,
 66. They are reading it frequently,
 67. And ended up with a prayer.
 68. In Matthews 10, the chapter reads as follows:
 69. They said, God, our father, may your name be praised,
 70. Honour and glory to the heavens,
 71. Glory on earth,
 72. Because to Lesotho a king is born, prince Mohato.
 73. I am saying, the day he was enthroned, His Highness,
 74. Prince Mohato, towards the end of October,
 75. We were in Maseru, yonder in town,
 76. In Maseru Mejametalana.
 77. He was enthroned in his father's place,
 78. To rule the Basotho,
 79. The black ones termed Horse-eaters,
 80. The Prime minister, Ntsu, son of Mokhehle,
 81. The doves he scattered over the town,
 82. Big birds flew all over the whole earth,
 83. The message even reached overseas,
 84. At the city of Cairo and Egypt.
 85. Now Europe sounded,

86. He became unhappy, Europe
87. The earthly musical instruments sounded,
88. Trumpets sounded from the earth,
89. Trumpets sounded from heaven,
90. Then it was announced that he was no longer prince, but king,
91. The Basotho, we rejoiced and laughed.
92. We knelt down and prayed,
93. And said: God our father, Creator of everything,
94. May you help us!
95. I then praised the white black lightning,
96. The lightning from the cloud sounded,
97. It entered the tents,
98. It took the brown white freckled and the grey one,
99. Went away looking this side and that side, and looking back.
100. I praise the eagle, Kobo, son of Seeiso,
101. The grey vulture from the cliffs of Matlakeng,
102. The yellow one on the chest.
103. When it flies, the beards look elegant,
104. Tshwanamantata and others eat through its help in winter.
105. How good are the Christian at saluting!
106. They saluted, greeted the kings,
107. In the end they spoke English,
108. They said, "Chief, good morning".
109. We greet you, son from a senior house.
110. There it cuts off and goes!

(32) MORABARABA LEHLOHA [MATSIENG]

1. *Le thole lerata,*
2. *Le thole lerata ho be tsielala,*
3. *Le thole lerata diroki di roke,*
4. *Mokgosi wa motsheare phallang!*
5. *Wa bosiu o ntsha batho matlung!*
6. *Ka mo roka, kgabanesesane, setosadintwa,*
7. *Ka mo roka, morena Bereng,*
8. *Motjhesi wa mme Mmamohato hantle,*
9. *Lejaratjhoko ka lehetla, Phakane,*
10. *Kwenamoholo wa tau ya Marwala,*
11. *Ngwana madi wa Mokhachane, Phakane,*
12. *Wa madi wa morena Mantata.*
13. *Ke roka kanono ya dira, ngwana wa Seeiso,*
14. *Bata se maro, moena wa Masopha hantle,*
15. *Oho, pelo ya hao ke lefika, Phakane,*
16. *Pelo ya hao eka noto, Mokwena,*
17. *Ke kgale e kgopiswa ke baeletsi,*
18. *Baeletsi, bommatabana di ngata,*
19. *Ba re o kgopehe, o lahle setulo,*
20. *Borena ba lapeng habo Masopha,*
21. *Habo Mmampoi, la habo Thakane,*
22. *La habo Matheadira le Letsie,*
23. *La habo Api le Makhaola,*
24. *La habo Marakabei le Theko,*
25. *La habo Nkau le Mohlakwana.*
26. *Pelo ya hao ke lefika, Phakane,*
27. *Ke kgale e kgehlebanywa majweng,*
28. *Ba re o tshela, o ye mose lewatle, Phakane,*
29. *Dihlekehlekeng moo ho dulang tau le tshukudu,*
30. *Tsona tse phelang ka masapo a batho.*
31. *E ile yare ha a tloha Maseru, morena Bereng,*
32. *Ra bona ba mo kgarametsa, Mokwena,*
33. *Mapolesa a mo hlaha ka mahlakore.*
34. *E ile yare ha a fihla ka borokgong*
35. *Haufinyana ho motse wa ha Hoohlo*
36. *A dula fatshe a hlapantshwa.*
37. *A re le jwetse Matheadira Seeiso,*
38. *Matheadira a jwetse Masopha,*
39. *Masopha o jwetse Mohato,*
40. *Mohato a jwetse Seeiso,*
41. *Ba jwetse wa Rothe Mohlalefi,*
42. *Marena a dihlooho le a ditereke,*
43. *A re setjhaba ka moka,*
44. *Le tsebe jwale ke hlapantse,*
45. *Ke hlapantse lefu kapa bophelo,*
46. *Ke kgale ke tlola dithota di tletse,*
47. *Di tletse masapo a batho.*
48. *Lefu kapa mokgohlane.*

49. *E ile yare ha a tloha ka borokgong,*
50. *Yare ha a fihla Heresemethe,*
51. *Fofane sa siya ngwana wa Seeiso,*
52. *A kena tereneng ho potlaka,*
53. *E ile yare ha a fihla ka lewatle,*
54. *A fihla a re qii! Mokwena.*
55. *Lewatle la tlala monyaka,*
56. *La tlala monyaka wa ngwana wa kgosi.*
57. *Ra bona di mo laola dingaka,*
58. *Dingaka tsa Makula le tsa Makhalathe,*
59. *Di re o lorile mari o tshohile,*
60. *Montsane wa Lefora, ngwana moradi wa king George,*
61. *Montsane wa Lefora a mo lata,*
62. *Montsane wa Lefora a memetsa,*
63. *A bua le Maengelane le Maholandere, sebele,*
64. *Bona ba neng ba beha morena Bereng borena,*
65. *A re ngwana wa kgosi ya ka Lesotho, Phakane,*
66. *Ngwana wa kgosi o batlang mawatleng mona?*
67. *Dihlekehlekeng moo ho dulang tau le tshukudu?*
68. *Tsena tse phelang ka masapo a batho?*
69. *Maengelane ba fihlile e le hoseng,*
70. *Teng jwale ba mo botsa dipotso,*
71. *Ba re o batlang ngwana wa kgosi ya ka Lesotho?*
72. *O batlang mawatleng mona?*
73. *A ba araba morena Bereng,*
74. *A bua le bona a ntse a lla,*
75. *A itlhakola menyepetsi, a re haeso Lesotho hae,*
76. *Haeso Lesotho hae, motseng o moholo,*
77. *Haeso Lesotho e ntse a lwana,*
78. *Ke tloha haeso e ntse e lwana,*
79. *Ba re Phakane bua le mmuso wa hao,*
80. *Re bona o memetsa moferefere.*
81. *O bue le matona le bahanyetsi,*
82. *O hle o bue le Lekhanya hantle,*
83. *O mo jwetse a hle a tshware a tiye,*
84. *Re bona a tsosa tau maro e bothile*
85. *Jwale montsane wa Lefora a mo lata,*
86. *Ngwana moradi wa king George.*
87. *A dula letsatsi ho phetha molao,*
88. *Jwale Phakane, kwete e ntlehadi,*
89. *Kwete morena wa mabelete a Basotho,*
90. *A re le jwetse Masopha wa mme wa ntate,*
91. *Mohla ke shweleng a tlo ntata,*
92. *Lefu la ka le botswe ho Lekhanya,*
93. *Le kgomo ya ntlo, Leabua wa Jonathane,*
94. *Mme Mmantshebo a botswe,*
95. *Esita wa Rothe Mohlalefi a botswe,*
96. *A re Masopha wa mme,*
97. *O no bona, a qaleha manyofonyofo,*
98. *Taba di qaleha ka lapeng ha mma Motlotlehi,*

99. *A re mohla ke shweleng,*
100. *Le tle le Masopha a tlo ntata, a yo mpata.*
101. *Ba re ba hlabe dikgomo lomong sa Matlakeng,*
102. *Ba tle ba hlabe dikgomo Basotho ba thabe,*
103. *Ho tsa Mmamohato ba tle ba hlabe rankalese,*
104. *Ho tsa Masopha ba hlabe dimapa,*
105. *Le jwetse Matheadira a hlabe dinku ho etsa tebelo.*
106. *Oho mohlang a kgutlang lewatle, Phakane*
107. *Lewatle didimala maqhubu a fele,*
108. *Sekepe se fete sa ya ka Lesotho,*
109. *Sekepe se nkile ngwana wa kgosi,*
110. *Ngwana wa kgosi ya ka Lesotho, Phakane,*
111. *Tsatsi le tjhabe re mmone mahlong,*
112. *Re bone pelo kapa sefahleho,*
113. *E ile yare ha a fihla ka borokgong,*
114. *Haufinyana le motse wa ha Hoohlo,*
115. *Ra bona ho tsoha meya ya mefuta,*
116. *Difate tsa shebisa metso marung,*
117. *Dirobele tsa falla matlung,*
118. *Pela tsa tshabela matlapeng,*
119. *Le dinku di dutse di se na kgotso,*
120. *Ha di bona matshweletshwele a batho.*
121. *Jwale kwena e fofa tsullung tsa lehodimo*
122. *Ntshing tsa moya, mora Lerotholi,*
123. *O ntsa hoeletswa ke seinodi,*
124. *Nonyana ya metsing, tshiba di ntsho.*
125. *Sa hoballa sa sheba Matsieng,*
126. *Sa fihla sa tlola hodimo ho Qwaqwa,*
127. *Sa tlola Leribe hodimo,*
128. *Sa kena Maseru tsatsi le rapame.*
129. *E ile yare ha a fihla ha Nkopane pela kerekeng,*
130. *O fumane bahlankana ba mo emetse,*
131. *BoMphou wa Motaung, Masopha wa ha Modika,*
132. *Ke bala boFerefe wa Letebele,*
133. *Botebele le enwa metsi a Basotho,*
134. *Tebele la enwa metsi a Basotho,*
135. *Metsi a batho a nka Setebele,*
136. *E ile yare ha a tloha ha Nkopane kerekeng,*
137. *O ne a kaletse pitsi, ngwana wa Seeiso,*
138. *Ya tjetetjela, ya kgetha motsamao,*
139. *Ya reketla yaka tomo di ya wa,*
140. *Ya koba hlooho,*
141. *Ya sisinya lenyetse,*
142. *Ya diladila, kgomo ya motho wa dikgang Letebele,*
143. *A re, wena Letebele towe,*
144. *Melomo e mehlaba,*
145. *O tswang Kapa o ntse o batlwa,*
146. *Kgoma ntate, kgoma Seeiso,*
147. *A re, kgomo ntate, o se utlwe bohloko,*
148. *Ha se ya mafisa kgomo ena,*

149. *Ha se ya madi ha ke a patalwa,*
150. *A re ha se ya mafisa ha ke a nyallwa,*
151. *E ile yare ha a fihla ka Matlakeng,*
152. *Ho ne ho le hleke ho le hlekelele.*
153. *Ka bona re eja dijo tsa mefuta,*
154. *Anyanese e kgabellwa nameng,*
155. *Ditapole le mokopu,*
156. *Oho, e leba Maseru,*
157. *A duladula, hwa eba motsotswana,*
158. *A dula lomong sa Matlakeng,*
159. *A duladula, hwa eba motsotswana,*
160. *A dula letsatsi ho phetha molao,*
161. *Jwale e leba Maseru,*
162. *E leba Maseru, thaka Maburu,*
163. *O shebe dithaba boQwading le Qwatsaneng,*
164. *Dithaba tsa teng ha di sa bonala,*
165. *Dithaba di kwalwa ke mokgopi wa batho,*
166. *O leba Maseru, Mejamelana,*
167. *Le shebe le Leiborane (Ladybrand),*
168. *Le tle le bone thaba tsa teng ha di sa bonala,*
169. *Thaba di kwalwa ke mekgopi ya batho,*
170. *Oho, Phakane, kwete e ntlehadi, kwete,*
171. *O dula Maseru,*
172. *O dula le tonakgolo ya Lesotho, Mokhehle,*
173. *Ba ntse ba hopotsana Melao,*
174. *Ba hopola tsa maobane,*
175. *Tsa Thababosiu, mokgorong wa kgotla,*
176. *Mohla ho tla shwa morena Thinyane,*
177. *Phakane ha a fallela marung,*
178. *Phaleising o tlohile e le hoseng*
179. *O ile a bua le motjhesi wa hae,*
180. *A bua le mme Mmamohato hantle,*
181. *A re bosiu bo seleng bona,*
182. *Ke lorile ke bona ntate,*
183. *Ke bona Seeiso,*
184. *A ena le mohale wa 'Makwa,*
185. *Mohale wa 'Makonyane,*
186. *Ba re ba tlilo ntata,*
187. *Ba re lehodimong kwana ke a batleha,*
188. *Ke batlwa ke yena e motenya, Modimo,*
189. *O re ke di phethile dikano tsa lefatshe.*
190. *Jwale a kena ka tlung, a apara,*
191. *A nka kobo tsa lefu a apara,*
192. *A nka mabanta a madi, a itlama.*
193. *O tlohile ka Matlakeng e le hoseng,*
194. *Oho, Phakane ha a fallela marung,*
195. *Phaleising o tlohile e le hoseng,*
196. *Tsatsi la tjhaba, la mo sala morao,*
197. *La mpa la mo siya ka mahlasedi,*
198. *Mahlasedi a letsatsi, botjhabelanaha,*

199. *Nonyana tsa kwana ha Modimo di ntle,*
200. *Ha letsatsi le tjhaba di ba kgubedu,*
201. *Ha le dikela di ba talana,*
202. *A shwa a theohela lengopeng,*
203. *A tsoha bafung ka tsatsi la boraro,*
204. *A nyolohela lehodimong,*
205. *O dutse ka letsohong le letona ho Modimo, Ntate,*
206. *Modimo ya matla ohle,*
207. *O dutse le ntate Seeiso,*
208. *Le mme Mmaseeiso,*
209. *Mmaseeiso ke moradi wa hae,*
210. *Oho, ntekeletsane, tsela tsa lehodimo,*
211. *Le hoja lehodimong kwana ho a tjhakelwa,*
212. *Re ka be re tjhakela re be re kgutle,*
213. *Re sa ilo bona morena Bereng*
214. *Motjhesi wa mme Mmamohato hantle,*
215. *Lejarafuru ka lehetla, Phakane.*
216. *Mohla a shweleng morena Bereng,*
217. *Maqosa a rongwella Matsieng,*
218. *Loting kwana ha Seeiso,*
219. *Pakeng tsa Rasea le Ledingwana,*
220. *Oho, le Thababosiu le Lehana a tsebe,*
221. *Esita le Popa Seeiso a tsebe,*
222. *Ho be ho jwetswe le morena Shakhola,*
223. *Shwaepane, Mmamaja Kgongwane,*
224. *Yena modisa wa kgomo tsa Phakane,*
225. *Le jwetse Lebopo.*
226. *A jwetse badimo, a jwetse Molefe,*
227. *A jwetse Lehana, badimo ba Tlokweng*
228. *Ba hle ba tsebe Tshehlamolala wa Mmanthatise,*
229. *Monongwaha Seeiso o a tshabeha,*
230. *Monongwaha Seeiso o na le nare.*
231. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. Be quiet,
2. Be quiet and let there be tranquility!
3. Be quiet so that the praise poets may chant the praises,
4. Let daylight shouts of alarm come!
5. The night ones call people out of their homes!
6. I praise him, the elegant slender one, puller-of-wars,
7. I praise him, king Bereng,
8. A gentleman of mother Mmamohato precisely,
9. Forage carrier on the shoulder, Phakane,
10. Big crocodile of the Marwala lion,
11. A thoroughbred of Mokhachane Phakane,
12. A thoroughbred of chief Mantata.
13. I praise the cannon of the enemy, child of Seeiso,
14. A beast with claws, younger brother of Masopha, yes!
15. Oh! Your heart is a rock, Mokwena,

16. Your heart is like a hammer, Mokwena,
 17. It has been annoyed by the Advisors for too long.
 18. Advisors, those with many ideas,
 19. Saying that you should get annoyed and renounce your seat,
 20. Kingship of the family of Masopha,
 21. Of the house of Mmampoi, of the house of Thakane,
 22. Of the house of Matheadira and Letsie,
 23. Of the house of Api and Makgaola,
 24. Of the house of Marakabei and Theko,
 25. Of the house of Nkau and Mohlakwana.
 26. Your heart is a rock, Phakane,
 27. It has been knocked against the stones for too long,
 28. They were saying, you should cross and go overseas, Phakane,
 29. To the islands where the lion and rhinoceros live,
 30. The ones that live on human bones.
 31. When he left Maseru, king Bereng,
 32. We saw him being pushed, Mokwena,
 33. The police on both sides of him,
 34. When he reached the bridge (border gate),
 35. Next to the village of Hoohlo,
 36. He sat down and took an oath.
 37. He said, tell Matheadira Seeiso,
 38. Matheadire should inform Masopha,
 39. Masopha should inform Mohato,
 40. Mohato should inform Seeiso,
 41. They should inform Mohlalefi at Rothe,
 42. The senior chiefs as well as the district ones,
 43. He said the whole nation,
 44. Please note that I have taken an oath,
 45. I have sworn life or death,
 46. For too long I have been jumping full plains,
 47. Full of human bones,
 48. Sickness or colds.
 49. When he left the border gate (at the bridge),
 50. When he reached Harrismith (possibly Bloemfontein!)
 51. The aircraft left the child of Seeiso behind,
 52. He took a train to rush.
 53. When he reached the sea,
 54. He arrived, Mokwena.
 55. The sea rejoiced,
 56. It rejoiced over the child of the king.
 57. We saw doctors examining him,
 58. Indian and coloured doctors,
 59. They told him he dreamt a thunderstorm and is frightened.
 60. A young French girl, child of king George's daughter,
 61. A young French girl went to fetch him,
 62. A young French girl called (phoned),
 63. She spoke to the English and the Hollanders, yes!,
 64. The ones who enthroned king Bereng.
 65. She said, the child of the king of Lesotho, Phakane,

66. Child of the king, what does he want here at the sea?
 67. On the islands where the lion and rhinoceros live?
 68. The ones that live on human bones?
 69. The English arrived in the morning,
 70. Then they asked him questions,
 71. And said, what does the child of Lesotho king want?
 72. What does he want here at the seas?
 73. He answered them, king Bereng,
 74. He spoke to them amidst the crying,
 75. He wiped off tears and said, at home in Lesotho,
 76. At home in Lesotho, at the main village,
 77. At home in Lesotho there is war.
 78. I left home in the midst of war.
 79. They said, Phakane, speak to your government,
 80. We see them (government) seeking trouble.
 81. Speak to the ministers and the opposition,
 82. Indeed speak to Lekhanya in person,
 83. Tell him to hold the reins tightly,
 84. We see him causing unnecessary trouble.
 85. The young French then fetched him,
 86. The child of the daughter of King George.
 87. He spent a day according to custom,
 88. Now Phakane, the gentleman,
 89. The gentleman, king of the wild Basotho,
 90. Said, tell Masopha, my mother and father's child.
 91. The day I am dead, he should come to fetch me,
 92. Lekhanya should be answerable to my death,
 93. And the house bovine, Leabua Jonathan,
 94. Mother Mmantshebo should be asked,
 95. Even Mohlalefi at Rothe should be asked.
 96. He said, Masopha my mother's child,
 97. You saw it, troubles started,
 98. Things usually start at the home of the Royal Highness,
 99. Who said, the day I am dead,
 100. You should come with Masopha to come and bury me.
 101. They should slaughter cattle at the cliff of Matlakeng,
 102. They should slaughter cattle so that the Basotho may rejoice,
 103. From Mmamohato's they should slaughter Rinkals,
 104. From Masopha's, they should slaughter the fat ones,
 105. Tell Matheadira to slaughter sheep for the night vigil.
 106. Oh! The day he returns from overseas, Phakane,
 107. Ocean, be calm for the waves to stop,
 108. The ship should pass on the way to Lesotho,
 109. The ship carrying the child of the king,
 110. The child of the king of Lesotho, Phakane,
 111. The sun should rise so that we can see his face,
 112. See the heart or face.
 113. When he arrived at the bridge (border gate),
 114. Near the village of Hoohlo,
 115. We saw funny winds blowing,

116. Trees fell with roots in the air
 117. Sparrows left their nests,
 118. Dassies running to the rocks,
 119. Even the sheep remained without peace,
 120. When they saw the masses of people,
 121. Now the crocodile is flying up in the air,
 122. Up in the air, son of Lerotholi.
 123. He is being called by a fish eagle,
 124. A water bird with black feathers.
 125. It flew in the Matsieng direction,
 126. It flew and passed over Qwaqwa,
 127. It passed over Leribe,
 128. And entered Maseru in the afternoon.
 129. When he arrived at Nkopane's, next to the church,
 130. He found young men awaiting him,
 131. Such as Mphou of Motaung, Masopha of Modika,
 132. I mean Ferete, the Ndebele and others,
 133. The Ndebele drinking the Basotho water,
 134. The Ndebele drank the Basotho water,
 135. People's water had the smell of the Ndebeles.
 136. When he left at Nkopane's, at the church,
 137. He was riding on horseback, the child of Seeiso.
 138. It galloped and selected movements,
 139. It shivered as if the bridle was about to fall off,
 140. It bent its head,
 141. It shook the mane,
 142. It shook its hoofs like a cow of a stubborn Ndebele,
 143. He said, you, poor Ndebele!
 144. With light brown lips
 145. From the Cape, and sought by people,
 146. My father's cow, cow of Seeiso,
 147. He said, my father's cow, do not be grieved,
 148. It is not a loaned one, this cow,
 149. It is not a thoroughbred, I have not received any payment,
 150. He said it is not a loaned cow, I did not receive wedding cattle.
 151. When he arrived at Matlakeng,
 152. Everything was in abundance.
 153. I found us eating various kinds of food,
 154. Onions chopped into meat,
 155. Potatoes and pumpkins.
 156. Yes, he went to Maseru,
 157. He sat down for a while,
 158. He sat on the cliff of Matlakeng,
 159. He sat down for a while,
 160. He stayed for a day according to custom,
 161. He then went to Maseru,
 162. He went to Maseru, peer of the Boers,
 163. He looked at the mountains, Qwading and Qwatsaneng,
 164. The mountains over there are no longer visible,
 165. The mountains are covered by groups of people,

166. He went to Maseru Mejametalana,
 167. Look also at Ladybrand,
 168. And see that the mountains over there are no more visible,
 169. The mountains are covered by groups of people.
 170. Yes, Phakane, an elegant gentleman,
 171. He lives in Maseru,
 172. He lives with the Prime Minister of Lesotho, Mokhehle,
 173. They are busy reminding each other about the laws,
 174. They remember matters of the past years,
 175. Of Thababosiu at the hut of the court,
 176. The day chief Thinyane died.
 177. Phakane, when he departed to the clouds,
 178. From the palace he left in the morning,
 179. He spoke to his beloved wife,
 180. Spoke to mother, Mmamohato, yes!
 181. And said, this previous night,
 182. I dreamt seeing my father,
 183. Seeing Seeiso.
 184. He was with the hero, Mmakwa,
 185. The hero, Mmakonyane,
 186. Saying they have come to fetch me,
 187. Saying out in heaven I am needed,
 188. I am needed by him, the stout one, God,
 189. He says, I have completed the vows on earth.
 190. Then he went into the house, and dressed up,
 191. Took the death clothes, and put them on,
 192. Took the belts of blood, and fastened himself.
 193. He left Matlakeng early in the morning,
 194. Yes, Phakane, when he departed to the clouds,
 195. He left the palace in the morning,
 196. The sun rose and followed him from behind,
 197. It hastened rather too fast with its rays,
 198. Sun rays, the-shining-ones-on-the-country.
 199. The birds out there at God's are beautiful,
 200. When the sun rises, they become red,
 201. When it sets, they turn green.
 202. He died and went down into the donga,
 203. He rose from the dead on the third day,
 204. He went up to heaven,
 205. He is sitting on the right hand of God, the father,
 206. The almighty God,
 207. He is with father Seeiso,
 208. And mother Mmaseeiso,
 209. Mmaseeiso is his daughter.
 210. Oh! The narrow paths of heaven,
 211. If it were possible to visit heaven,
 212. We would visit and return,
 213. Going to see king Bereng,
 214. The beloved of mother Mmamohato, yes!
 215. Carrier-of-fodder-with-a-shoulder, Phakane,

216. The day he had died, king Bereng,
217. Messengers were sent to Matsieng,
218. On the Drakensberg mountains, at Seeiso's,
219. Between Rasea and Ledingwana.
220. Oh! Even at Thababosiu Lehana should be informed,
221. Even at Popa Seeiso should be informed,
222. Also to be informed should be King Shakhola,
223. Shwaepane, Mmamaja Kgongwane,
224. He, the herdsman of Phakane's cattle.
225. You should inform Lebopo,
226. He should inform the ancestors and Molefe,
227. He should inform Lehana, the ancestors of the Batlokwa,
228. They should know, Tshehlamolala of Mmanthatise,
229. This year Seeiso is fearful,
230. This year Seeiso has a buffalo.
231. There it cuts off and leaves!

(33) TSHEPO LETHUNYA [THE BASOTHO CULTURAL VILLAGE]

1. *Ke phatakalle e tshwana,*
2. *E tswalwang ke Lepheane, ngwana Lesia,*
3. *Ya tswalwang ke Bahlakwana le Bakwena.*
4. *Ke ahile Matsieng,*
5. *Ha Peete Ramatsie Mopeli.*
6. *E motsho, e mosesanyane,*
7. *Kgaitsemi ya Mantwa le Moleboheng.*
8. *Mantwa, meno a masweu*
9. *Eka phophi ya lebese!*
10. *Mantwa, meno a masweu*
11. *Eka phophi ya lebese!*
12. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

1. It's a black varana lizard,
2. Begotten by Lepheane, child of Lesia,
3. Who is begotten by the Bahlakwana and the Bakwena clans.
4. I live at Matsieng,
5. At the village of Peete Ramatsie Mopeli.
6. The black and lean one,
7. Brother of Mantwa and Moleboheng.
8. Mantwa, teeth are white
9. Are like a drop of milk!
10. Mantwa, teeth are white!
11. Are like a drop of milk!
12. There it cuts off and leaves!

(34)

PUISANO LE DIROKI MORIJA

PUISANO PAKENG TSA MOPROFESA MOKITIMI, MORUTI TŠIU LE DIROKI MORIJA MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES, LESOTHO, KA PHATO 2000

Mabitso a latelang ke a diroki tse hlahellang puisanong:

Qekise Moeletsi (Bela-bela, Berea)
Pheka Setlaba (Mafeteng)
Thulo Mokhele (Mafeteng)
'Mampho Chopho (Mafeteng)
Ralebatha Motsamai (Koena village, Berea)

- 1) Tšiu: Na le ngola boiqapelo ba lona ba *dithoko* le *difela*?
- 2) Moeletsi: E, re a di ngola ha ho etsahala hore ebe e le ntho eo o batlang ho e etsa ka ho e emisa hantle, e hlophehe hantle.
- 3) Chopho: Nna ke a di ngola. Tsena tseo ke ntseng ke di bua, ke di ngotse, ebile ke di thaepile.
- 4) Tšiu: Na kaofela le a di ngola kapa tjhe? Kapa le di ngotse ka hlohong?
- 5) Mokitimi: Ba sa tsebeng ho ngola, le di etsa jwang? Ha le qeta ho di qapa, le di boloka ka hlohong feela?
- 6) Mokhele: Hantlentle nna ke tseba ho ngola. Ntho tsa ka hangata ha ke di etsa, ha ke di ngole fatshe, ke di beha ka hlohong, mme ke a tseba hore ha ke tlosa leoto le letshehadi, mane moo le fihlang le hata teng, ke tla be fihla ke kenya le letona, mme ke dula ke ntse ke qobokisa jwalo hore ha ke tloha horeng ho itseng, ha ke tloha mona, ke ya hokae, ho fihlela ke etsa lethathamo lena la ka, ho fihlela ke utlwisisa hore hantlentle na le nepahetse, feela ke le bolokile ka hlohong, ke sa le beha fatshe.
- 7) Mokitimi: Ho a etsahala o ka nna wa qapa, wa etsa dithoko tse ntjha ka nako le motsotso, jwalo ka ha re bokane mona, o be se o qapa ho hang ka rona moo?
- 8) Mokhele: Ka mokgwa oo ke batlang ka teng!
- 9) Tšiu: Kapa ka nako eo o ntseng o roka, ho bo so fihla ho hong kelellong ya hao, o so bile o qapa ka yona nako eo, o tswela pele?
- 10) Mokhele: Ho a etsahala. Ke ntho e ka etsahalang.
- 11) Moeletsi: Ka nako e nngwe ha o ntse o etla o roka, ho tla lentswe le leng, le nyalanang hantle le seo o ntseng o se bua; o le thaepella hona moo tabeng ya hao.
- 12) Tšiu: Ka yona nako eo?
- 13) Moeletsi: Le a kena, le re kgaqa! O tla be o ipotse ha o se o dutse o le mong, o re "Feela ho ile ha etsahala jwang?" Feela mantswe ao a etsa hore o kgone ho etsa dithoko tse nkang dihora tse nne kapa tse hlano o ntse o ithoka feela.
- 14) Tšiu: Hora tse nne kapa tse hlano? Ka mokgwa o le mong feela?
- 15) Moeletsi: Ke mokgwa ona o utlwang ha re ithoka re ntse re re "Ya kgaola, ya ya!" Ke ho re re a di kgaola, ho lekanya nako. Ha e le tsona, nna ke nahana hore nka ithoka ntho e ka etsang 25 minutshe ha ke sa ntsane ke roka

Moeletsi Moses Qekise (thoko eo a sa tswa e etsa lebanteng). Ke mo qadile tswalong ho mo isa ho fihlela kajeno, mme ha ke bona hore nako e tla fapana le tshebetso, ke tla di kgaola moo ke lekantseng hore bonyane ke nke metsotso e leshome.

- 16) Mokitimi: A nke ke botse mona, hobane ho na le dithoko le difela tsa ditsamayanaha. Le ka re phapang ya dintho tseo tse pedi ke efeng? Le re bolelle letsatsing lena la kajeno hore difela le dithoko, ho motho ya sa tsebeng, le ka mo thusa jwang hore a tsebe hore hona ke sefela, hona ke dithoko, jwang?
- 17) Moeletsi: Dithoko mokgwa tsona di tjena: (Pointing upwards) Dithoko di ya hodimo. Di tsamaya jwalo ka tsela ya dikoloi. Di a phahama, di a theoaha, di a potela, di a kgutla, jwalo. Ke ntho e yang pele ka matla feela.
- 18) Chopho: Nna nka re phapang ya difela le dithoko ke hobane dithoko di na le ntho eo di hlileng di e tobang ho bua ka yona, athe difela ke ntho eo nka e thonakang feela. Athe dithoko di qolla ntho. A ke re ka mohlomong nka roka naha ena ya haeso ya Lesotho. Ke tla bua ka yona, ke e behe hore e jwang, e jwang, e jwang. Empa difela ke ntho e nngwe le e nngwe feela, eo nka ikgethelang yona. Phapang e hona mono, difela le dithoko. Phapang ke hore dithoko ke ho beha boemo ba ntho e itseng ka ho e qolla, athe difela ha di qolle ntho e le nngwe.
- 19) Mokitimi: Difela di tsamaya di bua ka ntho tse ngata, tse kang, ho ya merafong, ha etsahale eng, ho palama terene, jwalo. Empa ke utlwile ntate (Setlaba) a re yena o ne a bua ka dibaka le marena. (sefeleng seo a sa tswa se etsa lebanteng).
- 20) Setlaba: E! Nna ke ne ke bua ka Lesotho lena, hore na enwa o behuwe kae, morena enwa o behuwe kae. Ke ne ke bua Lesotho lena.
- 21) Mokitimi: O so kile wa fihla dibakeng tsee tseo o di tsebang hakaa, le marena a tsona?
- 22) Setlaba: Tse ding ha ke di tsebe, tse ding, tjhe, nkile ka fihla ho tsona, boLeribe kwana, boNqechane, ho ya kwana boPhamong nkile nne ka fihla. Tse ding ha ke eso fihle le ho tsona. Feela di teng ka hlohong ena ya ka ka mona.
- 23) Mokitimi: Tsona o di tsebile jwang hore mang o busa kae, mang o busa kae, hobane ke utlwile o bua ka boButha-Buthe, ka maloting ka mona...
- 24) Setlaba: Ha ke fihla Leribe mane, ke fihla Koenaneng, ke re "Mono ke ha morena mang?". "Ke ha morena nnyeo! Mane ke ha morena nnyeo!" Ke tla lekanya metse eo. Ke tla bua.
- 25) Mokitimi: Moo o so ka o fihla teng, o ye o tsebe jwang?
- 26) Setlaba: Moo ke sa fihlang teng, kgale ke sebetsa. Ke ile ka rutwa ke batho ba bangata ba habo Leribe kwana, ba re "Wena monna, nna ke tjena..." Jwale ba re ruta hore ke be ke nke tsa ka, ke di kopanye le tsa bona. Tse ding ha se tsa ka, ke di fuwe ke batho.
- 27) Mokhele: O a bona nthwena hantlentle ha eba o le motho wa Mosotho, o tseba ho etsa mohlala, o ka e tshwantsha le titjhere sekolong. Ha se hangata ha a bintsha bana ba sekolo, a nkang dipina tsa kgale, tsa nako e fetileng. Le yena o a qapa. Ke ka moo ereng hosane o utlwe a se a bina pina e nngwe, e ntjha, o sa tsebe hore o e nka kae. Jwale, hore dithoko le tsona di tle di fapane le difela, ka hanong ka mane, ha o qala ho bina, di se di ntse di o bolella hore dithoko di tsamaya ka tsela e

nngwe e itseng, difela di tsamaya ka tsela e nngwe e itseng. Mme phapang e kgolo ha o qala o fihla hona moo.

- 28) Mokitimi: E leng hore ke ntho e mona eo re yeng re re morethetho wa tsona, ha o tshwane?
- (29) Mokhele: Ho jwalo, mme.
- 30) Mokitimi: Le mpoelle ha eba ke fositse. Dithoko morethetho wa tsona o potlakile empa wa difela o butle.
- 31) Mokhele: Hona jwale ha eba ke etsa mohlala, dithoko tsena tsa ka tseo ke ntseng ke ithoka ka tsona, nka nna ka di fetola, ka di etsa difela. Ha eba ke supa jwalo ka motho eo ke reng ke buswa ke morena Letsie, ke ntse ke bolela.

*Phamong kwana ha morena Letsie,
Le tsamaye, le yo jwetsa Mmasenate.
Tsatsing le leng ka tla ka hlabeha,
Ka utlwa pelo ena ya ka e le bohloko,
Empa wena ha o batla ho ntseba ka nnete,
O ye, o yo botsa mme Mmasenate,
Hobane ke yena ya mpusang.*

O a utlwa hore ha e sa tshwana ntho ee? Ka hanong ka mona ha di sa tshwana. Feela ke ntse ke bua ntho e le nngwe.

- 32) Motsamai: Dithoko di fapane le difela. Batho ka phapanyetsano, ntho e kgolo ke hore na o sekametse ka hokae bophelong ba hao. O sekametse dithokong, o se o ntse o intshetsa pele jwalo ka titjhere e o rutang.
- 33) Mokitimi: Ke ye ke utlwe ka nako e nngwe dithokong kapa difeleng, ho ena le ntho e tshwanang. Ho ye ho be le taba e nngwe eo le buang ka ho tshwana. Ho ye be ho ile ha etsahala jwang?
- 34) Moeletsis: Ntho e etsahalang ke hore dithoko di tshwana le tlhaho. Dithoko di tshwana le bosotho. Mosotho le ha a ka ruteha, Mosotho le ha a ka rua, Mosotho le ha a ka futsaneha, o tswala Mosotho. Seroki se tswalwa ke seroki se seng. Mme o kgahlilwe ke lentswe le leng ka hara puo ya dithoko. Ha re mametse ntate mona ha a ntse a ithoka, o itse "Nna ha ke mangmang, ke se mosadi." Ntho eo e buuwa ke diroki tse ngata haholo mona Lesotho hobane ke thoko e tlang ho ba batona. Mme (o supa Mmachopho) o ne a ke ke a tjho jwalo `hobane yena o ne a ka e beha ka tsela ya hae hobane ke motho wa mme. Jwale o tla fumana hore mono ba fihla ba wela nthong e le nngwe kaofela. Boholo ba dithoko, phapanong le difela, ke hore hape dithoko ke dintho tsa ntwana. Ke ntho ya kgalefo, athe difela ke lekomo, motho wa teng o a komakoma, o llela mehlolo le mathata ao a kileng a a fumana bophelong ba tsela. Enwa wa dithoko o halefile, o a hlabana.
- 35) Tšiu: Ke motho wa marumo!
- 36) Mokitimi: Ke ditaba tsa marumo, tse buang ka bahale. Le wena (seroki) ka nako eo o ithokang, o mohale ka nako eo!
- 37) Motsamai: Ho jwalo!
- 38) Moeletsis: Le nthwane (kgalefo) e a nyoloha. Ha o ithoka, eka batho ba ka mamela dithoko tsa hao. Ha ba ka sitwa ho di mamela, o ka nna wa utlwa leleme lena le se le rarehile feela, o so sa tsebe ho ithoka hobane o so ntso tletse kgalefo ka hare.

- 39) Tšiu: Ntate mane (O supa Moeletsi) o itse seroki se tswalwa ke seroki se seng. Ke a kgolwa hore le boqaping ba sefela ho ntse ho le jwalo. Na ke nepile?
- 40) Moeletsi: Ntho ena ya difela, ha se ha bonolo e ka tsejwang ke motho ya ituletseng mane thabeng. O tla di tseba ha motho wa difela a ka di etsa hangata pela hae. Moo ekareng dimmaeneng, merafong, dikomponeng, moo ba nang le ho dula ka Meqebelo ba sa ya mesebetsing, ba hlile ba hlodisana ka tsona. Ke mona moo hangata o fumanang lentswe kapa moelelo o le mong. Batho ba difela ba bangata haholo ba atisa ho phekola mputulu (thokolosi) e patetse motseng; ke hobane ba hlodisane ditabeng, mme kaofela ha bona, ditaba tsa bona di ba tsamaisitse mathateng a bileng a etsa hore ba qetelle ba iphetotse dingaka, ho batla bophelo. A tsietswa ke thokolosi a le kaekae, a tswa bosiu a baleha, kapa yena a hlola thokolosi. Ba bang ba ntshwa ke ditshitshidi, di ba loma ka matlung. Ke dintho tseo e leng nnete, ba bua ka tsona, ba ile ba di nka ho bao ba neng ba le ka pele ho bona. Ke hore hantlentle e hlile e a futseha. Dithoko motho di ka nna tsa mo hlahela a le mong. Ha ke le etsetse mohlala; Thokong ena eo ke neng ke ithoka ka yona, ke na le moo ke reng:

*Ka na ka lawa ke Tatosi Lesaoana,
A re: 'Moeletsi tle re pate mahlo a be mafubedu,
Le se holofale hodima hloho.*

Ha ke a ka ka utlwa e etswa ke mang kapa mang lefatsheng. E ile ya ntlhahela. Thoko yona e ka o hlahela hobane thoko e bakwa ke bohale ba pelo. Difela ke mmimo, ke lekomo. Motho wa lona o a komakoma.

- 41) Setlaba: Hona jwale ha o ka utlwa, ha ke tloha Mafeteng, ke qala ho joina, ke leba ha ramakgowa kwana, tsela eo ke e tsamaileng, o tla fumana ke otlototse hore ke tsamaile hokae, ke fetile hokae, ho ya fihla moo ke neng ke eya teng. Ke ho re ntho tsohle le moo ke tsamaileng ke a tseba hore batho ba bang ba ka Leribe ke kopane le bona hokae, kwana Kroonstad ke hona moo ke o bolellang hore ke tla tsamaya tjena ho ya Mafeteng, ke tsamaya ka dibese le ka terene. Ke ntho eo ke iketseditseng yona. Feela ke tsela ya ka eo ke iketsetsang yona.
- 42) Mokhele: Ho na le ntho eo o tlamehang hore o e nahane. Dithoko ka botsona ke dintho tse tsamayang di hlaha feela, le hore jwalo ka lerato la ka, ha ke batla ho o roka ((o supa Mmamokitimi), hona jwale ke na le mosadi wa ka eo ke phelang le yena lapeng. Ke Mokgatla. Feela ba babedi. Ke na le e mong wa Mofokeng. Ha ke ithoka, o tla utlwa ke ntse ke re:

*A ithoka Motjhesi wa Mmatsotang (Ke Mofokeng)
A ithoka motho ya neng a itsekela ka mosadi wa hae bosiu,
O na utlwe ditaba ka Mmatsotang bosiu ke robotse,
A re ho nna: "Ntata Telekwa, tsoha o utlwe!
Jwale batho ke bana monyako wa seotlwana,
Ba sheba ka moya, ba tshaba ho bua,
Ba re ba laetswe ke ngaka ya bona, Mmamahlakela,
O itse ba tle ho wena, ba tlo o bolaya,*

*Nama tsena ba tle ba di tswake tsohle,
Mohlehlo ho ona hanyenyane,
Hobane o batla tlhare sa bontona.*

Ke batla hore ke re ntho eno o ka nahana feela hore o ka rokomenta motjhesi wa hao jwang.

- 43) Chopho: Dithokong o roka dintho tse hlaheletseng, tse kang Lesotho ka kakaretso, hape kereke ka kakaretso, empa jwale ha o fihla ho marena o tla qolla ya itseng, eo o ka bonang bophelo ba hae.

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(34) INTERVIEW WITH THE POETS AT MORIJA

INTERVIEW BETWEEN PROF. MOKITIMI, REV TŠIU AND THE POETS (*DIROKI*) AT MORIJA MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES, LESOTHO, IN AUGUST 2000

- 1) Tšiu: Do you write down your compositions of the *difela* and the *dithoko*?
- 2) Moeletsi: Yes, we write them down if it happens that there is something which you want to organize and arrange well.
- 3) Chopho: I do write them down. These which I am reciting, I have written them down and have typed them as well.
- 4) Tšiu: Do all of you write them down or not? Or have you written them down in your memory?
- 5) Mokitimi: Those who cannot write, what do you do with them? After composing them, do you only save them in your memory?
- 6) Mokhele: Actually, I know how to write. When I do most of my things, I do not write them down, I put them in my memory, and I know that when I move my left foot, there where it touches the ground, I will put in the right one, and I keep it that way, so that when I move from one point, I move to the next, until I create this long list of mine, and until I understand clearly whether it is correct, but keeping it in memory, and not written down.
- 7) Mokitimi: Does it happen that you can compose the new *dithoko* instantaneously as we are gathered here, and compose something about ourselves here?
- 8) Mokhele: Yes, in exactly the manner I want to compose!
- 9) Tšiu: Or whilst in the process of reciting think of something else and then compose about it and continue with it as being part of your composition?

- 10) Mokhele: It does happen. It is something that can happen.
- 11) Moeletsi: Sometimes when you are busy reciting, there comes a word into your mind, a word which agrees perfectly with what you are saying at a particular point in time; you include it in what you are saying.
- 12) Tšiu: At that particular point in time?
- 13) Moeletsi: It fits perfectly. You will even wonder when you are alone, and say to yourself “How did it happen?” But such words make it possible to compose the *dithoko* which take four to five hours of continuous recitation.
- 14) Tšiu: Four to five hours? Continuously reciting?
- 15) Moeletsi: That is why when we recite we keep on saying *Ya kgaola, ya ya!* (There it cuts off and leaves!). This means that we only cut the recitation because of the limitation of time. I think I can chant the thoko for about 25 minutes concentrating on praising Moeletsi Moses Qekise (referring to his *thoko* which has just been recorded on tape). I have started his praises from his birth until the present day, and when I realize that time will not be on my side, I cut them where I feel the recitation should take at least ten minutes.
- 16) Mokitimi: We have the *dithoko* as well as the *difela* (mine workers’ chants). What can you say the difference is between the two? You should tell us today, especially to a person who does not know the difference between the two, how can you help him/her know that this is *sefela*, and this is *thoko*? How?
- 17) Moeletsi: The characteristics of the *dithoko* are like this (pointing upwards). The *dithoko* go upwards. They are like the road on which the cars travel. They go upwards, they go downwards, they take a curve, they come back, and so on. It is something going forward with great power.
- 18) Chopho: I prefer to say the difference between the *difela* and the *dithoko* is that the *dithoko* have actually something they are specifically referring to and talking about, whereas the *difela* are something that one can just pick up. The *dithoko* highlight a specific thing. Let me say, for instance I am praising this country of mine, Lesotho. I will talk about it, and explain how it looks like, and so on. But the *difela* are but any thing which I can choose to talk about. The difference is just there between the *difela* and the *dithoko*. The difference is that the *dithoko* talk about how a particular thing looks like and this is done by highlighting it, whereas the *difela* do not highlight a particular thing.
- 19) Mokitimi: The *difela* talk about many things, like going to the mines, what happened, a journey on train, et cetera. But I have heard Mr Setlaba (in his recorded *sefela*) saying that he was talking about the places and the chiefs.
- 20) Setlaba: Yes! I was talking about this Lesotho, referring to who is stationed where, where the particular chief is stationed. I was talking about this whole Lesotho.
- 21) Mokitimi: Have you ever been to these places that you know so much about as well as their chiefs?
- 22) Setlaba: Some I do not know, some I have been to them, places such as Leribe, Nqechane, and places as far as Phamong, I have been to them. Some I have not been to them. But they are here in my head.

- 23) Mokitimi: These places, how did you know that so and so is a chief at such and such a place, as I heard you talk about places like Butha-Buthe, here in the Drakensberg areas?
- 24) Setlaba: When I arrive there at Leribe, for instance, at Koenaneng village, I say, "Who is the chief at this place?" "The chief of this place is so and so, and the chief at that place is so and so". I will commit the names of the villages to memory in this manner. Then I will be able to recite.
- 25) Mokitimi: Where you have never been to a place, how do you know?
- 26) Setlaba: Where I have never been, remember, I have long been employed. I was taught by many people from Leribe, who said, "You man, I am like this..." Now they teach us so that I am able to have those that are mine (the *difela*), and I incorporate theirs into mine. Some (*difela*) are not my original compositions; they have been given to me by other people.
- 27) Mokhele: You see, this thing, if really you are a Mosotho who knows how to make an example, you can compare it to a teacher at school. It is not common that the teacher, when teaching the children to sing uses old songs. He himself composes. This is why tomorrow you hear him singing another song, a new song, and not knowing where it comes from. Now, in order that the *dithoko* should differ from the *difela*, when you start chanting, they already make you aware that the *dithoko* move in one particular way, and the *difela* in the other. The difference becomes great once you are at that point.
- 28) Mokitimi: Are you referring to that thing which we normally call rhythmic framework? Is it not the same?
- 29) Mokhele: It is exactly like that.
- 30) Mokitimi: Tell me if I am wrong. The rhythm of the *dithoko* is much faster, and that of the *difela* much slower?
- 31) Mokhele: If at this moment I want to make an example, I can change the *thoko* which I have just chanted, to be the *sefela*. If I praise someone under chief Letsie, I can say something like,

*Phamong kwana ha morena Letsie,
 Le tsamaye, le yo jwetsa Mmasenate.
 Tsatsing le leng ka tla ka hlabeha,
 Ka utlwa pelo ena ya ka e le bohloko,
 Empa wena ha o batla ho ntseba ka nnete,
 O ye, o yo botsa mme Mmasenate,
 Hobane ke yena ya mpusang.*

*At Phamong yonder there at chief Letsie's,
 Go and tell Mmasenate,
 One day I was greatly offended,
 I felt my my heart was in pain,
 But you, if you truly want to know me,
 Go then, and ask mother Mmasenate,
 Because it is she who governs me.*

Are you aware that this piece is no more the same? The manner of speaking makes it different although I am still saying one and the same thing.

- 32) Motsamai: The *dithoko* are different from the *difela*. People differ, but the main thing is one's inclination in life. If you are inclined to the *dithoko*, you keep making progress along that line like a teacher who is teaching you.
- 33) Mokitimi: Sometimes, in the *dithoko* or the *difela* I hear people saying the same thing. There are some things you say the same way. How does this happen?
- 34) Moeletsi: What happens is that the *dithoko* are like nature. The *dithoko* are like Sothoism. Whether a Mosotho is educated, whether a Mosotho is rich, whether a Mosotho is poor, he begets a Mosotho. A poet is begotten by another poet. A person is impressed by a particular word in the language of the *thoko*. I heard one of the *diroki* chanting here say, "*Nna ha ke mangmang, ke se mosadi.*" (I, myself, am not so and so, because I am not a woman). That thing is said by too many *diroki* here in Lesotho because it is a *thoko* directed to the male poets. The woman (pointing at Mrs Chopho as a poetess) would not have said that because she is a woman; she would at least put it in her own way as a woman. Then you will find that they all use the same expression. The *dithoko* and the *difela* differ in that the *dithoko* are compositions mainly inspired by war. The *thoko* is something of emotion whereas the *difela* is *lekomo* (grumbling), a person reciting a *sefela* is grumbling and cries the miracles and the difficulties he experienced in life. The reciter of a *thoko* is full of inspiration, he is in a fighting spirit.
- 35) Tšiu: He is a person associated with the spears!
- 36) Mokitimi: It is information related to the spears (war) and is about the heroes. Even you, when you are praising, you are actually a hero at that point in time!
- 37) Motsamai: You are correct!
- 38) Moeletsi: Even that thing (inspiration) comes forth. When praising, it's as if all people can listen to your *thoko*. If they can fail to listen, you may even feel your tongue being so entangled that you are unable to recite because you are already full of inspiration inside yourself.
- 39) Tšiu: The *seroki* there (pointing at Moeletsi) has said that the *seroki* is begotten by another *seroki*. I believe that this is also applicable to the *difela*. Am I correct?
- 40) Moeletsi: This thing called the *difela* is not easy to be known by a person sitting alone there on the mountain. He will know them if the *difela* laureates can recite them many times before him. At places such as the mines and the compounds, where they sometimes don't work on Saturdays, they actually compete with these things. This is where you sometimes find a word or a meaning which is common. A large number of the *difela* reciters many a time have to chase away a *mputulu*, *thokolosi* (from the Zulu 'mpundulu', a mysterious being supposed to appear at certain places) attacking a village. It is because they have competed in what they said, and all of them have gone through the same difficult experiences which eventually made them decide to become traditional doctors in order to make a living. Somewhere he was attacked by a *thokolosi*, he went out at night and escaped for dear life. In some cases, he defeated the *thokolosi*. Others ran out of the houses as a result of the bed bugs biting them. These are true experiences, and

they talk about them, and have taken them from those who were before them. Actually this is something hereditary. The *dithoko*, on the other hand, can still inspire a person sitting alone. Let me make an example. In the praise poem which I have just recited, there is somewhere where I say,

*Ka na ka lauwa ke Tatosi Lesaoana,
A re: 'Moeletsi tle re pate mahlo a be mafubedu,
Le se holofale hodima hloho'.*

I was reprimanded by Tatosi Lesaoana,
He said: 'Moeletsi, we should cover eyes to be red,
You should not be lame on the head'.

I have never heard anybody say it anywhere. It inspired me. The *thoko* can inspire you because the *thoko* is the result of the inspiration of the heart. The *difela* are but a song; they constitute grumbling. The reciter thereof grumbles.

- 41) Setlaba: If you have been listening attentively to my *sefela*, when I left Mafeteng for the White men's places, the road I trod, you will realize that I clearly specified where I travelled, the places I passed through, until I reached my destination. That is to say, all the things as well as where I travelled, I know where I met some of the people from Leribe. At Kroonstad that is where I tell you that I will travel this way on my way to Mafeteng where I travel by buses and by train. This is my own composition, my own way of doing it.
- 42) Mokhele: There is something you are supposed to think about. The *dithoko* are but something that regularly emerges on its own. This I can do, for instance, when I want to praise a person very dear to my heart. I have a woman with whom I live at home. She is a Mokgatla by clan. But they are actually two. I have another one, a Mofokeng by clan. When I chant praises I normally say,

*A ithoka Motjhesi wa Mmatsotang (Mofokeng),
He praised himself, Motjhesi of Mmatsotang (a Mofokeng)
A ithoka motho ya neng a itsekela ka mosadi wa hae bosiu,
O na utlwe ditaba ka Mmatsotang bosiu ke robetse,
A re ho nna: 'Ntata Telekwa, tsoha, o utlwe!
Jwale batho ke bana monyako wa seotlwana,
Ba sheba ka moya, ba tshaba ho bua,
Ba re ba laetswe ke ngaka ya bona, Mmamahlakela,
O itse ba tle ho wena, ba tlo o bolaya,
Nama tsena ba tle ba di tswake tsohle,
Mohlehlo ho ona hanyenyane,
Hobane o batla tlhare sa bontona.*

He praised himself, Motjhesi of Mmatsotang,
He praised himself, he who claimed his wife at night,
He heard through Mmatsotang at night while I was asleep,
Saying to me, "Telekwa's father, wake up and listen!"

Now here are the people near the door of the enclosure,
Looking through the spirit, being afraid to talk,
Saying they've been instructed by their doctor, Mmamahlakela.
They should come and kill you,
The pieces of meat they should mix them all,
With a little piece of fat,
Because he needs the medicine to be a foreman.

I want to say this is something you can think of if you want to praise your loved one (*motjhesi*).

43) Chopho: In the *dithoko* you praise prominent things such as Lesotho and the churches in general, but now, when you come to the chiefs, you will have to choose a particular one, and then talk about his life.

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(35)

PUISANO LE DIROKI MATSIENG

PUISANO PAKENG TSA MOPROFESA MOKITIMI, MORUTI TŠIU LE DIROKI MATSIENG, LESOTHO, KA LOETSE 2000.

- 1) Mokitimi: Re utlwile ha le ntse le etsa dithoko tsa marena. Ba bang ha eba ke utlwile hantle, eka ba ne ba etsa difela moo. Potso ya ka ke hore na phapang ke efe pakeng tsa dithoko le difela? A le mong a ke a ntlhalosetse ka bokgutshwanyane feela hore motho ya sa tse beng a kgone ho bona phapang ya hore hona ke thoko, hona ke sefela?
- 2) Mphou: Dithoko le difela ha di a fapana. Di fapane feela ka ho bua, e leng bokgeleke bo etswang ke Basotho. Difela ho thwe ke seoma; ho thwe motho o tseba ho bua seoma, ke hore, difela. Tsona ha se dithoko tse phakisang; ke tse yang butle. Dithoko tsona di a phakisa.
- 3) Mokitimi: O re difela di etsa jwang?
- 4) Mphou: Difela di a dieha, di a bua. Tsona ke moqoqo.
- 5) Tšiu: Boqaping ba dithoko le difela, na le hotse ka tsona kapa le ithutile tsona hamorao bophelong?
- 6) Mahanetsa: Nna, ke hotse ka tsona.
- 7) Tšiu: Ka mantswe a mang, o rutilwe ke batho ba bang, ba o bontsha ka moo di etswang ka teng?
- 8) Mahanetsa: Ke rutuwe ke ntemoholo. Bontatemoholo ba dula kgwading, e leng kgotla.
- 9) Tšiu: Ka mantswe a mang, re a dumellana hore seroki ke motho ya rutilweng ke batho ba bang?
- 10) Ratsatsi: E! Ho jwalo!
- 11) Mokitimi: Ho teng ba bang, bao e leng diqapi, ba qapang feela ka nako eo ha ba bona taba, ebe ba se ba tswela pele ka boqapi ba bona! Na le ka qapa thoko kapa sefela hona jwale ka bontate baa ba babedi? (pointing at Prof. Irele and Prof. Swanepoel, crew leaders). Na le ka etsa jwalo, le ha e ka ba feela ka mela le ha e ka ba mmedi feela?
- 12) Mphou: (O a ithoka)
*Ke leboha ha ke bona bana ba basweu,
Bana ba Makgowa,
Ba re tliseditse kganya le kgotso tlase lefatsheng.
Haholo ke leboha le mmisisi wa bona,
Ya itelelseng hore a tlo re sebeletsa.
Ke a leboha.*
- 13) Diroki tse ding: Empa o a bua, ha o ithoke!
- 14) Ratsatsi: (o a ithoka):
*Enwa wa tse sootho,
O tswa kae?
Mose ho mawatle!
Ke bona o hlahlabatsa ditedu,
O sheba naha e ka mose, Matlakeng.
Matlakeng kwana ho ruuwe ditshephe,
Ho ruuwe banna ba ntwana,
Mme ha o fihla teng
O tlameha ho tsosa mohlaha,
O etsise banna ba kgale*

*Bao e kileng yare ha ba tloha
Ka hare ho naha ena
Ba ya Engelane.
Mahlo a bona a tutuboloha,
A tutubolotse Basotho!
Ya kgaola, ya ya!*

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**(35) INTERVIEW WITH THE *DIROKI* AT MATSIENG,
LESOTHO IN SEPTEMBER 2000**

(Led by Prof. Mokitimi and Moruti Tšiu)

- 1) Mokitimi: We were listening as you chanted your praise poems (*dithoko*) dedicated to the chiefs. Some of you, if my memory serves me well, were chanting the mine workers' chants (*difela*). My question is whether there is any difference between the *dithoko* and the *difela*? Will anyone briefly answer that, so that a person who is not familiar with these oral art forms can be able to distinguish between the *thoko* and the *sefela*?
- 2) Mphou: They do not differ. The only difference is brought about by the voice usage resulting from the Basotho's mastery of the language. The *difela* are called 'cries'. It is commonly said, a person knows how to chant 'the cries', that is, the *difela*. They are not, like the *dithoko* which are chanted fast – they are chanted slowly. The *dithoko*, by their nature, are chanted fast.
- 3) Mokitimi: What are you saying about the chanting speed of the *difela*?
- 4) Mphou: The *difela* are slow in chanting; they are actually talking. In fact, they constitute narration.
- 5) Tšiu: Regarding the composition of the *dithoko* and the *difela*, did you grow up knowing how to chant them, or did you learn the art later in life?
- 6) Mahanetsa: I grew up from childhood knowing the art of composing.
- 7) Tšiu: In other words, you were taught by other people who showed you how to go about chanting them.
- 8) Mahanetsa: I was taught by my grandfather. Our grandfathers used to spend a lot of time at the court (*kgotla*).
- 9) Tšiu: In other words, we agree that the poet is someone who learnt the art from others?
- 10) Ratsatsi: Yes, it is true!
- 11) Mokitimi: There are composers who can compose on the spur of the moment about any issue without any prior preparation at all! Can you compose the *thoko* or the *sefela* right now on these two gentlemen? (pointing at Prof. Irele and Prof. Swanepoel, crew leaders). Will anyone of you do that, even if it may be in just a few lines?
- 12) Mphou: (He recites a praise poem)

I'm thankful to see white children,

Children of the White men.
Have brought us light and peace down on earth,
Especially, I thank the 'missus' who is with them,
Who has sacrificed to come and work for us.
I thank you.

13) Other poets: (Complaining):

But you are actually talking! You are not chanting a praise poem!

14) Ratsatsi: (Chanting a praise poem):

This one in brown colours,
Where does he come from?
Yonder beyond the seas!
I see you with full beards,
You look at the country on the other side, Matlakeng.
Yonder at Matlakeng the springbuck are reared,
They are reared, those heroic men of war,
And on your arrival there
You are bound to prepare to fight (like a lion),
And follow in the footsteps of men of old
Who when they moved out
Leaving this country
Went to England.
Their eyes opened,
And opened the eyes of the Basotho.
There it cuts off and leaves!

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(36) Lepekola Sekgwane

First clan praise recitation:

1. *Ke tla thella jwang ke le Motloun,*
2. *Wa ha Makgekge, wa Sekgwane, Motloun,*
3. *Ke tla thella, ke thelle ho mang?*
4. *Ke tla thella ho hotsho ha maphiri a phirima,*
5. *Bata se phoofolo, ngwana Mothetho,*
6. *Ka mehla ena ka o hasa,*
7. *Wa hlaba batho ka marumo,*
8. *Wa re ke diphoofolo.*
9. *Ka ntsha kgomo, ka romela lehodimong,*
10. *Ho ntate Motloun Sekgwane,*
11. *Ke mohodi, wa di aparela dithaba,*
12. *Thatolla re sa di bona,*
13. *Ba re thentha tsebe, tlou maokgola,*
14. *O nke mahlokwa, o a menahanye,*
15. *O fate ditsebe, o utlwe hantle.*
16. *Mokgosi o teng, wa motsheare phallang!*
17. *Wa bosiu o ntsha batho matlung,*
18. *Tshepe towe, mokgosi ona o o tlohele,*
19. *Se maribana se ba le tshwene, Molapo,*
20. *Motho a tipa wa habo, a re ke moditjhaba,*
21. *Kgomo towe, ho tswa dipereng moloji a tuka,*
22. *Wa ntekatekane, wa leshano, a be se a fihla,*
23. *A re: 'Lepekola, monna wa ha Makgekge,*
24. *Lehodimong kwana o a bitswa, o a laetswa,*
25. *O bitswa ke morena wa tedu tsa mofuta mohodi'.*
26. *Ke mmatla kapele, ka be se ke fihla,*
27. *Ke fumana a bile a ntsa ipapalla morabaraba,*
28. *Kgomo ha e kgutla, e ntse e le sha, e le lekgutla,*
29. *E le makgutla, e le mmofu.*
30. *E le ntho tsena tsohle.*
31. *Ba mohla ba neng ba bitsa mofuta Mpai,*
32. *Ke re yena le bona,*
33. *A re kgethang wa lona,*
34. *Ke tla kgetha wa rona re le kae?*
35. *Batho ke bana ba feta,*
36. *Ke kopane le banana ba le bararo,*
37. *E ile yare ke re ho bona, 'dumelang!'*
38. *Ba re 'Ha re sa le banana, re basadi,*
39. *Banna ba rona ba shwetse Jubere!'*
40. *Hae ke tloha ke tswa Betjhwanalente, Batswaneng,*
41. *Basotho bana ba fetotse dipuo,*
42. *Matsoho ba ne ba a bitsa 'mabogo',*
43. *Hloho ena ba ne ba e bitsa 'sekopo',*
44. *Ditsebe tsena ba ne ba di bitsa 'dikgetla',*
45. *Mahlo ka ona ke sheba dinaha,*

46. *Dinko ka tsona ke sa tla thimola,*
47. *Molomo ka ona ke tla bua,*
48. *Tedu tsa ntshenya tshobotsi,*
49. *Lekgwaba ke lena le fihla,*
50. *La re:'Helele, Mosotho wa Motlounge!*
51. *Sekgwane, ntshehele nama, ke lapile!'*
52. *Tshwene ke ena, Ya re tshwene:*
53. *'O ke ke wa ja nama, o makgisa!*
54. *Tshwene towe, o busetsang makopo difahleho?*
55. *Tshwene ya bua ka lentswe le bohloko ho lekgwaba lena,*
56. *Ya re:'Lekgwaba towe, o ka be o le moruti hantle,*
57. *Ke bona kholloro ya hao e a o tshwanela,*
58. *Feela lekgwaba towe, o kgala nameng.*

First clan praise recitation:

1. How will I pay homage being a Motlong (member of the Elephant people),
2. Of the house of Makgekge, Sekgwane, a Motlounge,
3. I will pay homage, but to whom?
4. I will pay homage, I, the black one of the black darkness,
5. The wild Beast which is an animal, poor child of Mothetho!
6. At all times you dispersed
7. And stabbed people with the spears,
8. Thinking that they were like animals,
9. I sacrificed a bovine and sent a message to heaven,
10. To my father, Sekgwane, a Motlounge,
11. It is the thick mist which covered the mountains.
12. Unroll whilst we are ready to see,
13. Shake your ears, you elephant among the weeds,
14. Take the pieces of dry grass, put them together and
15. Clean them so that you may hear well,
16. There is a loud daytime shout of alarm forcing people to flee,
17. And the one at nighttime forcing people out of their houses,
18. You, the iron rod, bring a stop to this cry!
19. The small one is always with the baboon, you Molapo.
20. One hit one's fellow being taking him for an enemy,
21. You Bovine, from the horses a sorcerer was in flames,
22. An unknown one, a liar, then arrived,
23. And said:'Lepekola, man from Makgakge's,
24. There in heaven you are being called.
25. You are being called by a chief with grey beard like mist'.
26. I immediately prepared myself and arrived.
27. I found him playing the mill (Basotho game, *morabaraba*).
28. The movement of the stones ("the bovines") caused a point scoring,
29. A point scoring, a mixture of confusion.
30. It was all of these things.
31. That day they invited Mpai,
32. I say he was present with them,
33. He said they must choose one among themselves,
34. Where and how shall I choose one for myself?

35. Here are the people passing by.
36. I met the girls; they were three in number,
37. When I said to them 'Hallo there!'
38. They said, 'We are no more girls, but women.
39. Our husbands died at Jubere!'
40. Leaving home I was from Bechuanaland, from the Batswana,
41. These Basotho have changed languages,
42. The hands, *matsoho*, they used to call them *mabogo*,
43. This head, *hloho*, they used to call it *sekopo*,
44. These ears, *ditsebe*, they used to call them *dikgetla*,
45. With the eyes I look at the countryside,
46. With the nostrils I will sneeze,
47. With the mouth I will speak.
48. The beard spoiled my facial appearance.
49. Then here came the raven,
50. Saying, 'Hallo, you Mosotho, son of Motloug!
51. Sekgwane, please give me a piece of meat, I am hungry!'
52. Here is a baboon which responded,
53. 'You will not eat meat, you have long hair!'
54. 'You baboon! You with a protruding forehead? Said the raven.
55. With a feeling of resentment the baboon said to the raven,
56. 'You raven, you would have been a real Priest,
57. I can see your collar, it makes you look beautiful,
58. Except that, you raven, you like too much of meat!'

Second clan praise recitation:

Lines 1-30 remained unchanged, and lines 31-58 in the first recitation were replaced by the following lines 31-39:

31. *Loting kwana ha nyatsi ya Ntwetsi,*
 32. *Lokolla thethana e sale,*
 33. *Thoto e kgolo, mafito a yona*
 34. *A imela dipelesa.*
 35. *Bahlankana le ntjhebe lebitso thekeng mona.*
 36. *Mahanong mona le tla fumana*
 37. *Bitso la ka le fane.*
 38. *Ke Motloug wa ha Sekgwane.*
 39. *Ya kgaola, ya ya!*
-
29. There on the mountains, at Ntwetsi's concubine,
 30. Unfasten your fringe skirt and leave it behind,
 31. The luggage is too big; its knots
 32. Are too heavy for the animals to carry.
 33. Young men, look for my name here at my hips.
 34. In my mouth here you will find
 35. My name and surname.
 36. I am one of the Elephant people of the house of Sekgwane.
 37. There it cuts off and leaves!